



Where Yesterday Lives

Karen Kingsbury

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At thirty-one, Ellen Barrett has already won a Pulitzer prize. Sadly, though, her skill as a journalist far surpasses her ability to sort out her troubled past. When she returns to picturesque Petoskey, Michigan, for her beloved father's funeral, it's a traumatic emotional and spiritual journey for Ellen—a rediscovery of what is truly important and eternal.

Will facing her past tear Ellen apart—or teach her what is truly important in her life?

Ellen Barrett, thirty-one, is a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist with an uncertain marriage, a forgotten faith, and haunting memories of her picturesque hometown and the love she left behind. The eldest of five siblings, Ellen longs for the time, long ago, when they were happy—when they were a family.

Then tragedy strikes. Now Ellen's beloved father is dead, and she must leave Miami and return to her childhood home on the shores of Little Traverse Bay in Petoskey, Michigan.

As she returns to a world that was, an avalanche of memories is unleashed. And so Ellen's quest begins—a quest to make peace with the people who still live there, with the losses and changes that time has wrought, and with the future God has set before her.

Where Yesterday Lives Details

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Chantel says

I really wanted (and tried) liking this book, but it just wasn't for me. Although there were some parts that I did enjoy in this book. I just thought the book dragged in a lot of areas and I had a hard time connecting with the characters. Even though this wasn't my favorite I would like to try another book from this author.

Kristi says

This story gave me so many emotions. All the books by Karen Kingsbury have so far. There was laughter, crying, anger, and so much more. This story was so heartfelt.

Ellen Barrett overcame so many things in this story. It reminded me a little of a Nicholas Sparks book I read. Which this one came out first but I read his first. But they ended completely different. I think everyone should read Karen Kingsbury books. They are just THAT good.

Inspirational, heartfelt, heartwarming, sincere, breathtaking, so many words describe this one story. I cant come up with them all.

Jennifer Lombardi says

I LOVED this book and I will tell you why. The very FIRST page is captivating. You immediately want to know who this guy is and what is going on. That continues ALL the way through. I was absorbed in the characters. I wanted to know WHY they were the way they were. I wanted to know if they would be able to work it out or not. Not once did I get bored or want to put it down!

The way the author wrote this story was amazing to me. Just as I was getting to know a character and really want to know the details, the author switched it and put you in a different character's head. I found this to be both intriguing and frustrating (in a good way). I wanted to find out what the rest of the story was with the character so the author FULLY had my attention and I did NOT want to put this book down!

Let this be a warning to you all, you WILL cry when you read this. The last few chapters had me crying so hard I could hardly see the book. The emotions were radiating off the pages and I felt like I was there in real life watching all of this unfold. That just amazes me that a book could be so well written like that! Props to you Karen Kingbury! This is one of the best books I have ever read and I am proud to add it to my personal library!!!

Jerry says

Karen Kingsbury's writing, story, and characterization were all fabulous, as usual.

Michelle P says

I'm not sure if this was written by a ghost writer or really by Kingsbury, but I hated this book. I usually really like her books but this one is tough to read because the family story is so implausible and people's reactions to events are anything but normal.

Ellen Taylor says

I read this on recommendation from a good friend, who counts Kingsbury as one of her very favorite authors, and was sorely disappointed.... If one more person cried, I thought I would strangle them through the pages! Yes, a father's funeral is very sad, and old family hurts seem to inflame emotions during stressful times, but the week with the Barretts gave me a headache... I don't feel sorry for people who are hurt and want their friends/family to read their minds as to the reasons... talk, people! It's called communication! Sorry, I won't waste my time on another Kingsbury novel....

Veronica says

Stopped reading this one bc it kind of offended me as a Catholic. Starts out by saying the girl became a Christian, then mentions later she was raised Catholic. Last I checked, Catholics are and always have been Christians. Also implies that Catholics do not pray - what?! Kind of annoyed by the author's ignorant point of view. End rant, end book.

Michelle Robinson says

I wish I had not made such a harsh statement about Jane in my updates. She was horrible. I know she had reasons but the hate and bitterness she had were over the top. She and Aaron both seemed to be stuck in very adolescent stages of development. I understand why but it was still hard to listen to after a while.

I thought the ending was a little too pat for such a miserable dysfunctional group and it did not feel realistic. The mother was a paragon, there is no way I could have been as patient as she if my children behaved this horribly so soon after I lost my husband.

I had to go to the library and get this as a book because the play away stopped working halfway through, it was easier to read than to listen to. It felt like a constant barrage of negativity while I was reading.

Julie Horner says

Our "yesterdays" are always there, buried. When they resurface, questions become too involved. Too many thoughts and how to sort them out?

Ellen's dad passes away suddenly. She has to go home to Michigan to plan the wake and funeral with her mom and other siblings. The siblings don't get along. Each has their own version of why.

April says

Too much self involvement.

Valerie says

Out of all the Karen Kingsbury books I've read this is one of my least favorites. The story line dragged.

Stefanie says

I didn't appreciate the thinly veiled Catholicism bashing, and didn't appreciate the author's viewpoint coming through her characters that Catholics don't believe in the Bible, but the general story was good.

Kari Coleman says

Title: Where Yesterday Lives

Author: Karen Kingsbury

Date Finished: July 18, 2008

Pages: 416

If you have never read a book by Karen Kingsbury before, I strongly suggest you pick one up. I was introduced to her books a couple years ago and every time I read one, the same thing happens... I cannot put it down. I started this book Friday evening and was so involved in the world of the Barrett family, that I did not want to leave, so I continued to read page after page until I finally finished somewhere around 2 a.m.

Before I go into all the reasons why this book touched me so, I would like to tell you a little about the author. Karen Kingsbury is a Christian writer and puts not only her love for the Lord in every book, but really tries to connect with readers on a personal level. This particular book was her first novel, and with it being so, happened to be somewhat autobiographical. For those of you who are hesitant to read any book that is labeled "Christian" for whatever reason, I would ask you to give this author a chance. Not once have I felt like her books were preaching at me, or trying to make me believe a certain religion is better than another. They are just stories that make you remember that God is good, and he does good things in our lives, and no matter how far we've wandered, or how big our problem may seem to us, they are never too big for Him in all his mighty power.

This story begins with John Barrett the father of Ellen, Jane, Megan, Amy and Aaron collapsing from a heart attack in the hallway. His last minutes are spent looking up at the pictures of his children hanging on the wall. As the family comes together to mourn the loss of their father, they are struggling to make it through

one week together as all their past demons resurface. Throughout this one week, temptation, old sibling rivalries, and hidden secrets are keeping these five children and their mother from offering each other the kind of comfort and emotional support they are all looking for.

Ellen, the oldest daughter, is struggling to find the outlet to grieve that she desperately needs, only to be brushed off by her husband because he is busy with work and does not like funerals. As the week begins and she is constantly being snubbed and criticized by her next sister, Jane, she finds herself turning to her first true love, whom she never really stopped loving. Having him drop everything to be by her side almost proves too much for Ellen to bear as she watches her family fall apart around her.

Jane, being the only sibling to have children of her own, is struggling with an emotionally scarring secret that she has never before shared with anyone. Right before she leaves to join her family for the funeral preparations, she finally tells her husband why it is that she does not feel anything about the death of her father. My heart breaks for Jane as she is constantly attacking Ellen, much to the other's dismay for what seems to be for no particular reason.

Megan, still living in the same town as her parents offers to let Ellen, Jane and her children stay with her. Trying to be the referee and keep the girls from each other's throats proves to be an emotionally draining task for Megan. She is just trying to abide by their mothers wishes that for one week, they act like a family who cares about each other.

Amy, the youngest girl, has always felt like she is being ignored and cutoff by the others, and does not go anywhere without her husband. As the story progresses, you see a transformation in Amy, as she starts to stand up for herself and show the others that she is an adult just like they are.

Aaron, being the only boy in the family has a rough time showing his emotions. Whenever he is confronted, Aaron becomes violent and then abruptly will disappear in his car.

As the funeral approached, their mother asks each of them to write a few words about their father for them to read at the ceremony. Ellen, being a writer has no problem with this, and takes the time to help some of the others who are struggling with what to say. The purpose is to share with everyone what their father meant to them, and their family. The ending to this book proved to be very emotional for me on several levels. As each of the children approach the podium to share their stories it becomes clear that each child saw their father in a different light. For each of them, he was the man they needed him to be. Whether that be a cheerleader, an ear to listen, a shoulder to cry on, or just a friend, John Barrett was that for each of his children, loving all of them equally in the way that was most important and meaningful for them.

Anyone who has ever lost a family member, or had a fight with a sibling will find someone in this book that they can relate to. It shows how wonderful the power of family can really be, and that in the end, you can always turn to your family for support, no matter how far away you've drifted over the years. There is something very special about the bonds of a family intertwined with the power of prayer.

Erin says

Anyone who thinks Karen Kingsbury only writes about perfect families should check out this book. Then again, if they read this one they might not read any of her others. The inter-family fighting is so strong in this book that I actually had to put it down and step away from it for several days. There are so many similarities

between this book and the Baxter family - except that Baxters don't hate each other. I would suggest you skip this title and move straight to "Redemption".

LadyCalico says

This book was so bad that it makes me ill that I wasted good money on it. The story just doesn't ring true, and the phoniness of the characters with their unrealistic responses really grated on my nerve. So Ellen's supposed to be responsible for her idiot sister's rape (exactly how makes no sense at all) so everybody still hates her many years later, and all the other gutless morons let the idiot sister run roughshod over them no matter how idiotically bad the idiot behaves. The idiot sister, although supposedly totally damaged, still somehow manages to be a great wife and mother, even though her husband is a castrated wonder who doesn't seem to care that his wife wastes so much of her life making a total idiot of herself with embarrassing hysterics and pure meanness. The boorish and boring behavior is taking place at a funeral no less. Kingsbury must have been in a contest with someone to see who could create the biggest pile of soap opera histrionics, and apparently won. On the plus side I did like the brother Aaron because he was smart enough to run away from this ridiculous story as fast as possible and as often as possible--the only one in this story with a human brain. For soap opera fanatics only. I have since read other Kingsbury books that were much better, and some that were really bad--but none as bad as this.
