

Long Journey for Love: The Story of Patrick McBride

Ross Glover

Lulu

(296pp)

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Long Journey for Love is a historical novel that's centered by a love story between a young man and the woman he can't let go of.

In Ross Glover's coming-of-age historical novel *Long Journey for Love*, a man can't forget his first love.

Patrick has a passion for history, and in 1921, following the death of his father, he decides to travel the world. Aboard the RMS *Aquitania*, he meets beautiful Beth, whose marriage to a dying elderly man is a sham on both sides. During the five-day trip, Patrick and Beth fall in love, so much so that they're unable to forget each other, even years later. Misunderstandings tear them apart, though, and Patrick spends years as an American police officer, trying to forget Beth. Crime, engagements, and death fill the time they spend apart.

Characters' behaviors contradict their stated traits, though, leading to confusion. Patrick, who is declared kind and sensitive, on multiple occasions behaves in ways that are shallow and dangerous. He expresses disgust at the prospect of dancing with, or being set up with, fat women; he uses his police status to intimidate witnesses and bystanders. Beth, meanwhile, is light on personality, present most to love Patrick: even after losing a dear friend, and in the midst of a legal battle that might leave her destitute, he is all that she can think about.

Characters' interactions are stiff. Some volunteer personal information to strangers, and their conversations are often nonsensical in other ways, too. Romantic declarations are made, but in trite terms, and three women fall in love with Patrick at first sight, though he despairs of his awkwardness around women.

It is unclear why Beth and Patrick are so drawn to each other. Patrick thinks Beth is beautiful and fun, while Beth thinks that Patrick is kind; the hours that they are said to spend talking to each other happen mostly off-page. They spend the vast majority of the book apart; their continued pining for one another strains credulity. Upon finding out that Patrick left for good, Beth attempts to starve herself, but her actions are handled in a cavalier way.

Within the book, language repeats, sometimes in single sentences. Information is repeated as well. Further, questions are asked whose answers appeared in the text just before, and characters consider doing things that they did in the prior chapter. The book's grammatical and spelling errors are a further impediment.

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CAROLINA CIUCCI (July 9, 2020)

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