



## Waltz into Darkness

*Cornell Woolrich , William Irish (pseud.)*

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**Waltz into Darkness** Cornell Woolrich , William Irish (pseud.)

In this thrilling tale of greed and deception, Cornell Woolrich tells of middle-aged Louis Durand, whose fiancée has died fifteen years ago on the eve of their wedding. Now Louis decides to take one more chance at love by marrying Julia Russell, a woman he knows only by correspondence. When she arrives on the day of their wedding, she is younger and more beautiful than he expected--and far more deadly. Louis soon comes to realize that Julia is not who she claims to be--and they both embark on a waltz into darkness.

## Waltz into Darkness Details

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Author : Cornell Woolrich , William Irish (pseud.)

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## From Reader Review Waltz into Darkness for online ebook

### Terri says

After I finished reading *A Reliable Wife*, I read a few of the reviews on Amazon.com. There were several reviews that said *A Reliable Wife* bears a strong resemblance to *Waltz into Darkness* and opined that *Waltz into Darkness* is better. I wanted to decide for myself. It's fascinating how two novels share the skeleton of a story and are still different. *Waltz into Darkness* is a noir mystery; *A Reliable Wife* has more literary aspirations.

A lonely man whose first love died several years ago looks for a wife through personal ads. He proposes marriage to one of his correspondents, and when his fiancée arrives, she is much more attractive than the picture she sent to represent herself. She claims this is because she wanted to be appreciated for herself, and not her appearance. The couple marries despite the initial deception. The bride's intentions aren't honorable, and trouble ensues. In both novels there is another man in the bride's life and poison eventually comes into play, but these points are handled very differently. Oh, and a canary. The brides each have canaries as pets.

When I first finished this book, I gave it four stars--I really liked it. But now, I have to say simply, "I liked it." The deliberate storytelling was very suspenseful and enjoyable. The chapters are short, sometimes only two pages, inviting you to read the book one nibble at a time. Before you know it, you've read far more and longer than you planned. The ending has a small measure of satisfaction, if disappointing and unbelievable. My biggest complaint about the book is that when people are shot, they bleed. A murder is committed in the middle of the book; the perpetrator is very nearly caught. The cover-up is discussed in detail, but there is never any mention of blood. It's never seen, it's never cleaned. I can't imagine how you can shoot someone and roll them up in a rug without there being blood on the rug. Perhaps I've seen too much CSI. I've seen many old movies where people get shot and manage not to bleed. I always notice. Still, it is quite a tense scene in the book.

If you like noir fiction, if you like a good thriller with short chapters, you will enjoy this book.

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### Daniel says

Cornell Woolrich was a favorite of moviemakers: his novels and stories were adapted into more than 25 motion pictures, with *Rear Window* as probably the most famous. Two (Francois Truffaut's 1969 film *Mississippi Mermaid* and 2001's *Original Sin*—which, though it is already largely forgotten in whole, has achieved an extended internet lifespan in the form of a much-viewed clip of an explicit sex scene) were based on *Waltz into Darkness*, a 1947 novel published by Woolrich under the pseudonym William Irish. Both of these adaptations postdate Hollywood's noir explosion of the 40s and early 50s, and the story takes place not in hardboiled Chicago or Kansas City but in post-Civil War New Orleans. Still, this is a classic noir study of a femme fatale—in this case a woman who goes by the names Julia and Bonnie. The two women who have played Julia/Bonny, Catharine Deneuve and Angelina Jolie, are beautiful actresses who can possess a serpentine coolness on screen that is, despite the deficiencies of both films, appropriate for the role.

Louis Durand is a businessman hoping to augment his financial happiness with a marriage to a mail order bride. When he arrives at a steamboat dock to meet her for the first time he finds not the plain looking woman whose photograph he was sent but a beautiful young girl. The girl, Julia, gives an unconvincing explanation as to why she deceived him about her looks, and Louis, pleased by her beauty, lets none of her ensuing suspicious behavior—a coarse crossing of the legs, the neck snapping of a song bird—convince him

that she is not really the woman she claims to be, until, that is “Julia” cleans out his bank accounts and disappears. This expected betrayal, coming less than a third of the way through the book, turns Louis murderous: he stalks women who resemble Julia on the streets, hires a private detective, chases a mask wearing girl through Mardi Gras to press a revolver into her chest. These hallucinatory chapters are a fine writing performance by Mr. Woolrich, whose style throughout the book is more fluid and graceful than those of his tough guy peers.

After a chance dinner invitation brings Louis back in contact with Julia, who explains that her real name is Bonny, and he is placated by her flimsy sob story, we know that loss of money was not what drove Louis to near insanity but the loss of love. And to protect this woman he will not only cheat and murder but allow himself to be murdered.

As is typical in noir the femme fatale’s motives are ambiguous. We see her through Louis’s eyes, and are only privy to the carefully chosen thoughts she shares with him. She exists as much as hints and clues left behind—as when the name “Billy” is seen on a burnt letter in a fireplace—as she does as a full bodied presence. Julia/Bonny, however, has more depth than other characters of her type—since she is revealed early on as a thief and liar, the reader doesn’t have to spend a lot of time wondering when she will show her evil, but rather is given a few hundred pages to watch her vacillate between the world she is comfortable in, that of con games and crime, and that which she aspires to, the high class life of New York fashions and fine dining. That her behavior in both of these worlds is that of a sociopath is hardly surprising, given the way that female strivers were commonly portrayed. (And perhaps still are: one of the more frequently voiced views of Hillary Clinton was the ominous one that she would “do anything to win.”) I’ll leave to the reader to judge whether the ending reveals that Julia/Bonny is a more complex being than we imagined or a hopelessly cardboard figure having an unconvincing epiphany. That Louis becomes a vehicle for her redemption, short-lived though it may be, just as she is the vehicle of his brilliantly described downfall is a nifty turnaround of a noir convention.

<http://mullatari.parastrophy.com/arch...>

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## Andy says

Post-Civil war tale set in the capital of all disguises, New Orleans, about a woman who is not all she seems. A lonely man marries a woman he barely knows (they correspond a lot, like mySpace), and she keeps leading him on and disappearing. All signs lead to her running off with his money but she keeps coming back acting mysteriously. I was engaged at the beginning of the book, but clocking in at 312 pages made it a little too long to keep me involved. At half the length it would have been a better book.

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## Metodi Markov says

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until the end, which I found confusing and false.

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### **Antje says**

Mich dürfte meine Enttäuschung gar nicht verwundern, konnte ich schon nichts Truffauts Verfilmung "Das Geheimnis der falschen Braut" abgewinnen und dass obwohl er zu meinen Lieblingsregisseuren zählt. Aber nach dem begeisterten Lesen zweier Woolrich-Bücher wagte ich nun das Unterfangen. Leider!

Wie im Film werde ich mit den beiden Protagonisten nie warm - im Gegenteil, sie nerven alle Beide. Ebenso langweilte mich in diesem Werk Woolrichs Erzählstil, der mir vielerorts zu unnötig ausschweifend ausfiel. - Die Idee an sich fand ich originell: Ein Mann wartet am Hafen auf das Schiff mit seiner Verlobten, die er bislang nur von einer Fotografie kennt. Aber statt ihrer taucht eine ganz andere Frau auf, die sich als eben seine Braut ausgibt und die er schließlich auch heiratet. - Als er endlich den Betrug bemerkt, wurde es für mich als Leserin zum ersten Mal spannend. Das Erzähltempo wurde eilig so wie Durand aus seiner Lethargie erwachte. Endlich nahm die Handlung an Fahrt auf, vor allem als weitere Charaktere ins Spiel kamen: die Schwester der wirklichen Braut und ein Privatdetektiv. Auch die anschließende Flucht und Durands fatale Fehlentscheidungen ließen sich recht flott lesen, um im letzten Viertel erneut in gähnender Langweile zu enden.

Durands Naivität - nein, Dummheit - und bedingungsloses Dahinschmachten für jenes Frauenzimmer, seine und ihre hohlen Liebesschwüre konnte mir letztlich kein Hurra entlocken.

Schade eigentlich, die Geschichte hätte mehr hergeben können ...

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### **Grizsdina says**

The movie "Original Sin" with Angelina Jolie is based on it so I had to read this book;-)  
It's a really good book and Cornell Woolrich is a "worth to read" author

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### **Anika Orange says**

The movie Original sin is based offthis book I love the movie and the cinematography of it. The book was hard to get from the library it was out of print. The story in the book is the same but I like the movie better ( usually I like the book better) The physical descipion of Julia is not in likeness to Angelina Jolie so I didn't like that. The book was great and a must read I would love to find a hardcover copy.

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### **Agir(????) says**

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