



# The Waiting Hours

*Ellie Dean*

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**The Waiting Hours** Ellie Dean

**The thirteenth heart-warming novel in the Beach View Boarding House series, from *Sunday Times* bestselling author Ellie Dean.**

As the war continues to keep her family far away Peggy Reilly must continue to look after her girls at the Beach View Boarding House, and maintain hope that this dreadful war will soon be over.

## The Waiting Hours Details

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Author : Ellie Dean

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# From Reader Review The Waiting Hours for online ebook

## Spotty Dog says

I love the Beach View Series and whilst I enjoyed this book I missed the story being centered predominately around Cliffhaven. Perhaps it may have been better as a stand alone story about the D-Day Rehearsal, a part of WW2 history I personally was quite ignorant of. I think Ellie Dean did a wonderful job with the research, etc but I did miss becoming involved in the lives of the usual Beach View residents.

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## Pat Langhelt says

Another great story about Peggy and her family look forward to the next book

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## Teresa says

I've been dithering between three and four stars for this read and settled on four because of the research that went into it and the story.

I read this series because I love Cliffhaven and Peggy Reilly and her family. The antics of Ron and Harvey, the girls who lodge there and Cordelia and her hearing aid are a source of joy. All the ups and downs of family life during wartime make this a wonderful series.

However, we have very little of Cliffhaven itself in this book. It mostly takes place in Devon. We go to London on the odd journey too. So this disappointed me a lot.

I know the author wanted to write this story and she did it very well but I can't help feeling it would have been better as a stand alone book. The disaster that happened was one I wasn't familiar with so it was interesting to read about it. There is quite a bit about army life and the rehearsal for the D-Day landings. At times it bogged me down and I had to push myself to keep reading.

On it's own it's a very good read. As part of the Cliffhaven series not as good as usual.

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## Abby Slater- Fairbrother says

An engaging WW2 saga, about love, loss and family! The year is 1943, with the novel actually building up to the events of Christmas 1943 and right through to D-Day invasions. Although not a Christmas novel, the fact that it covers the Christmas period in-depth means, it would make for the perfect Christmas gift!

Carol Porter knows the pain and hardships WW2 can bring to innocent civilians, having lost both her husband and baby. She is alone in her grief and sets out to become a land girl, in an effort to channel her pain. Carol starts work at the Coombe farm, ran by the Burnley family. Cantankerous yet loveable Jack Burnley and his battle-axe wife Millicent. The work is hard and makes for long days of manual labour. The other land girls Maisie, Pru and Ida at only 21yrs old, have fled London after their homes were destroyed in the bombings. Carol is a lonely character, that you often pity and admire in equal measure.

But carol has family and they make for quite the multitude of characters themselves.....

Carol's mother Dolly, is quite an unusual woman. Known for her fur coats, high heels and glamorous lifestyle. But what Dolly's daughters don't know, is that she secretly works for the SOE and is involved in missions relating to operation overlord. Upon hearing of the requisition of Slapton Sands and knowing Carol's house stands to be taken over by American forces. Dolly descends upon Slapton Sands. But there is a mysterious American who means both betrayal and love to Dolly that she wishes to avoid at all costs!

Carol's sister Peggy lives locally at Cliffhaven with her husband Jim, daughters Daisy, Cissy and Anne, sons Bob and Charlie. She is a family orientated woman, who is a ray of sunshine bring love and warmth to everyone she meets. She is often the closest protector of her sister-in-law Pauline. Pauline having experienced the loss of two of her sons in the war and with a husband and surviving son still serving, is awash with nerves and worry!

American General Felix Addmington and his British Sgt Cornwallis arrive in Slapton Sands to a very cool/uneasy welcoming. The locals don't want to be forced out of their homes and cannot gather the importance at the mission being created around them due to its top secret nature.

Can Felix win over the locals?

Why does Dolly avoid Felix like the plague?

At times the novel felt overly descriptive and I felt it needed some tweaks on historical accuracy. But it is a saga and therefore, to be told from the character's point of view. Which it does incredibly well.

There is a wealth of characters from all ages, that resonate with the reader. The relationships and the impact of the war is always at the forefront of the story. The Devonshire setting adds to the location, giving of a 'local' feel to the way the characters interact with one another. The moment when Pauline waves off her surviving son Brendon to war, I felt tears sting my eyes. It reminded me of my grandmother (90yrs old) telling me "that every mother on her street, lost a son in the war".

The characters feel real and authentic, you root for them and the various troubles the face! 4\*

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## **Gail Amendt says**

This installment of my favorite WWII series was quite different from the previous books, but not necessarily in a bad way. Firstly, the focus was not on our beloved Peggy Reilly and the colorful cast of characters that inhabit her boarding house. Rather, we got to know some of her extended family a bit better, and finally met Ron's mysterious contact in the SOE. Secondly, for the first time in the series, the story back-tracked in time, running parallel to the events in the previous book. This seemed strange at first, but by the end I accepted it quite easily. There was just so much going on in the final months leading up to D-Day that there was too much to cram into one book.

In this book the author introduces us to a piece of little known WWII history, the rehearsals for D-Day staged by the Americans at Slapton. The military took over 30 000 acres of land, temporarily relocating thousands of residents, and staged large scale exercises in preparation for the D-Day landings. Not everything went smoothly or according to plan, but little was known about what went on there as it was kept secret. I found this story fascinating.

The only flaw in this book for me was some of the new characters. We meet several new characters in this

book, and also get to know several previously very peripheral characters much better. Most were great characters, albeit a bit one dimensional and stereotypical at times. Peggy's brother-in-law Frank, his wife Pauline, and their son Brendan have been minor characters almost since the beginning of the series. In this book they are greatly enlarged upon, and while I liked Frank, and really liked Brendan, I found myself really struggling with the portrait painted of Pauline. The Pauline in this book is very weak and fragile, having suffered the loss of two of her three sons earlier in the series. I felt that this version of Pauline was not consistent with what little we had been told about her in the previous books. The tragic events that led to her breakdown in this book happened many books ago. Why are we just getting to know her now? The Peggy we know and love would have taken her under her wing long ago. This story line just doesn't seem consistent with the series, and it feels like it was rather awkwardly introduced as an afterthought to facilitate telling the story of Slapton. Another reviewer suggested that this should have been a stand alone book, and while I partly agree with that, I really like Brendan, Carol, Dolly and Felix, and hope to meet them again in the series sometime. I know this is a rather rambling review, but I am just left feeling that this story could have been better told.

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## **AnnMarie says**

The Waiting Hours is the 13th book in the Beach View Boarding House series by Ellie Dean. It can be read as a stand alone but as Peggy Reilly, her family and her boarding house have been the central theme to this series, it's wonderful to read the whole series from the start.

Have you ever wondered what it would have been like to live through World War 2? What would it be like to have your men leave to fight, never knowing if they would return? Could you cope with the rationing during the war or the constant fear of being bombed? Could you deal with having your children sent away for their safety? Could you see yourself as a land girl and coping with the copious amount of hard work they had to do? Well, wonder no more because those and many other situations are dealt with in this series and this book. The author's descriptions of life during war time are so thorough that you can easily put yourself into those situations. In fact, it feels like Peggy, her family, and all that have stayed at the boarding house are close friends to yourself by the time you are fully engrossed in the story.

As this book is set during the harsh times of the war you could be forgiven for imagining that it could be a very depressing story. You would be wrong. Yes, there are very emotional moments when your heart feels like it could break. At the same time, the author makes sure she adds just the right amount of light hearted fun moments that will have you smiling. You are never made to feel that there is no light at the end of the tunnel. Our characters keep their spirits lifted as much as possible and try to remain positive. They don't feel guilty when they find something to laugh about. The war continued for so long that they really had no choice but to keep that stiff British upper lip as best they could. I absolutely loved reading about how people, even strangers, rally around to help others in need. The war may have been horrendous but it really did bring out the kindness in people.

I absolutely adored this book, as I have the whole series. I wish that it could be made into a TV Series, it definitely would be the top of my viewing list. Until then I will happily make do with these books as they are ones that I will be able to read over and over again.

I voluntarily read an advanced readers' copy of this book.

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## **Tracey says**

The 13th book in the Beach View Boarding House did not disappoint. Ellie Dean is my favourite author and has been since I read "There'll be Blue Skies". She writes with an incredible warmth, fantastic historical research and includes believable characters.

This book sees the main part of the story set away from Beach View, although of course we do get to read a little about Peggy and her wonderful family. Carol lives in Slapton, Devon which is where the rehearsals took place for the D Day landings. She is connected to Cliffhaven as her Sister, Pauline is Peggy's sister in law. The story also features her mother, Dolly who has a secret job and is forced to confront secrets from her past.

Once again, can't wait till the next book.

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## **Janette says**

I love family sagas but was unsure about reading this book as it was so far into the series. I always like to start at the beginning of the series and work my way through. But I am so pleased I did read it as loved it and will now have to read all of the other 12 books!

It is a wonderful book with a fascinating storyline. The characters are ordinary people but are really interesting and emotive. I loved how the women are portrayed as strong characters and how the war affected them and their daily lives. The tragedy of what happened at Slapton Sands was heartrendering and the fact that it was covered up is horrific.

Beautifully written, I couldn't put this book down. I am excited to begin the rest of the series.

Thank you to NetGalley and the publisher for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Linden Sheffield says**

I'm a massive fan of the whole Beach View series but a couple of things about this particular book made me grit my teeth. First of all, it runs parallel to the previous book in the series so in the early part of the book Peggy is once again considering going out to work. Other small details irritated me as I felt the lack of continuity showed poor editing - both Ann and Cissy now call Peggy 'Mam' whereas in the earlier books she's 'Mum' - why the change? Also in an earlier book Sally's aunt Vi, with whom Ernie and Peggy's boys are billeted initially and where eventually Sally and Ann also evacuate to, has three grown-up daughters, but in this book she's childless. Added to the transposition of characters between Fran and Suzy in the earlier books, I feel readers of this lovely series are somewhat disrespected!

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## **moira manson says**

### **Waiting**

As ever Ellie Dean writes another fascinating instalment about beach view boarding house and all the extended family members the research that has gone into this book is amazing. The story of Dolly . Felix .Carol was fascinating I thoroughly enjoyed it and give it 5 STARS .

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## **Emma Crowley says**

I really enjoy historical fiction and love nothing better than reading a good family saga so I was delighted to discover Ellie Dean, a new author for me, although I had previously read one book with her writing under the name Tamara McKinley which I adored. Judging on the blurb *The Waiting Hours* looked like it would be a good read and I was keen to give Ellie Dean's writing a try, it was only later I discovered that this was book thirteen in the Cliffhaven series. Normally I wouldn't go near a book so deep into a series if I hadn't read any of the other stories. I'm one of those people who likes to start at the beginning of something and work their way through, I hate the feeling of missing out on a crucial plot or character. Even with a TV series I'd have to start at series one and bring myself up-to-date.

So I readily admit I was apprehensive about this book because I felt so much must have previously happened and the characters, setting and plot-lines would be so well established that I feared I would be lost and find it very confusing. The fact that the book was well over 500 pages didn't help matters either but I went ahead with it and boy am I glad I did. If ever there was a book that proves you can read it as a standalone then this it. It took a few chapters for me to settle into the story and the background of the numerous characters and where they were in 1943, four years into the war but once I became familiar with everything I raced through the book. I didn't notice all those pages flying by and this proved to be a just one more chapter kind of book and then you notice you have read a 100 pages or more, one that's hard to leave it out of your hands once you really get stuck into it.

Ellie Dean has written a wonderful saga with characters full of heart and strength at its centre. Clearly a lot of care and attention has gone into building up these characters over the course of the series and it radiates from the pages. This book for the most part focuses on Carol who is working as a land girl on Coombe Farm in Devon. She has her own cottage nearby but lives alone following the death of her husband away fighting in the war but also she bears the loss of her baby. Carol right from the outset struck me as someone very capable, confident and independent. She guards her privacy and works hard on the farm with the other girls but relishes her time away in her own cottage where she can continue to grieve by herself. That's not to say she doesn't enjoy friendships with the girls and the camaraderie they share together. I loved the character of Carol from beginning to end and I would have loved to have read more of her back story which I presume must have featured in the book previous to *The Waiting Hours*, she was intriguing and full of determination.

Carol was dedicated and passionate and would do anything even if it seemed inconsequential to her to help with the war effort. This was never more called in to question than when the area she is living in is requisitioned by the army who need the land around Slapton Sands to practice for a major push in the next stages of the war. The culminating event of this within the book left me in horror at what unfolded and such needless loss of life was infuriating. I think it was just awful that so many people had to give up their homes,

packing up everything and moving to a random place away from their home comforts and all things familiar. I know it was only for a year or two but still if you have lived there all your life and put your heart and soul into the land and your home it must have been beyond heartbreaking to be forced to leave not fully knowing will your house be standing upon your return. Carol and all the residents were brave and selfless in their actions as they could see it was to help with the bigger war picture. She was lucky she could move to the farm during this time.

The story had lots of other characters to focus on, and it took some time to figure out all their connections and who may have had major storylines in previous books, but the author did provide back stories and information on the relevant characters. The reader just had to piece these aspects together. It was very helpful to have a family tree at the beginning of the book and I often referred back to it to see who was related to who or had married into what family. For new readers like me this was very beneficial and I would hope this would be included in every book.

Peggy Reilly seems to be the matriarch figure in this series and she runs the Beachview Boarding House. She wasn't the dominant figure in this book but I can sense she has played an important role in the previous books. She is a real mother hen figure and is doing her best to keep everything going while her husband Jim is away fighting. Midway through the books chapters from Jim's viewpoint appeared and I thought it quite random at first but then in fact the scenes from Burma were so well written and vivid I wanted even more from them. In fact the book moved around quite a bit from Peggy and her sister-in-law Pauline in Cliffhaven, to Carol near Slapton Sands and even London where Carol's mother Dolly was working. This would have normally really frustrated me in a book having too many characters and too many settings but here it all felt so well established and each storyline played a crucial role in the overall plot of the book and they all gelled so well together.

There is a lot more depth to *The Waiting Hours* than some sagas I have read and I found myself deeply invested in the characters and how they were coping with everything the war was throwing at them. They were affected on a day-to-day basis but they kept their chins up and were determined that their spirits would remain strong. I can't imagine what it would have been like to live in fear everyday that bad news would come of a loved one lost but also their lives had to continue on which in turn brought their share of dramas and traumas. That's what I think sets this book apart from other sagas I have read is that the author writes of ordinary people and the challenges they face in their lives but do so in such a realistic, down to earth way that I felt like I was reading about friends and I was allowed an opportunity to have a glimpse into their lives for a brief period. The author never spared the emotions or the highs and lows as experienced by all the characters.

I think having the book set solely on Carol wouldn't have made for as good a read, all the different characters made for a fascinating read and in particular the work Dolly was partaking in. It made me realise how multi faceted all the strands of the war were and how no one was left untouched by such a life changing event. As alluded to by the author, Dolly may not have been the best of mothers to Carol and Pauline but I felt her she really showed her metal. She may have come across as slightly ditzy and not the role model she should be but she kept secrets the reader was privy too and I think she deserved much admiration. I did have a sneaking suspicion as to the connection with the General Felix Addington brought over from America to lead the manoeuvres at Slapton Sands. I was proven to be correct but in no way did it take away from my overall enjoyment of the story.

I really enjoyed the time I spent reading *The Waiting Hours* and would definitely read future books written based in and around Cliffhaven. I really got that feeling of discovering a new and exciting author that would become a firm favourite. I want to go back and read the series from the beginning and I know I have the



pleasure of being able to read one after the other which I will prove a real treat. Saga fans will love The Waiting Hours and I would definite recommend you buy it as soon as possible.

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## **MRS CHRISTINE SITTON says**

### **The best one so far**

Having been hooked from the first book and really enjoyed them all this one was even better. Loved all the new characters as well as the regulars. Was fascinated by Dolly and her secret life as an agent from the last war. The research that Ellie had to do I can't begin to imagine how she managed it. Loved the way this story ran parallel to the last one once I realised it. As usual Ron and Harvey were up to their antics which always makes me smile. So sad with the tragic loss of life. Have already pre ordered the next one which I can't wait for.

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## **Ruby Boyer says**

I LOVE Ellie Dean and her world at beach view boarding house! Every time her next book is released, it is like coming home. This book works along side her last one but it doesn't matter because she is bringing a whole new family in and going into further detail of what happened to others rather than always focusing on Peggy or her 'chicks'. Now to wait another 5 months for the next..

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## **Pearl says**

The Waiting Hours written by Ellie Dean was another great read by one of my favourite authors, this is certainly not one of my favourite books from this wonderful series yet I still enjoyed it as immediately I was able to connect with each character and feel their emotions through the vivid and addictive writing of Ellie Dean. Once again, we are brought back into the lives of Peggy and the loveable rogue Ron but for me, I felt the story was not based enough around their lives but based on the lives of far out friends and family who were connected through Ron's elder son Frank. Yet it showed a part of the Second World War history which I knew very little about and for that reason makes this a very easy book for me to recommend. I loved how we have seen the beauty of Devon and through two new characters Carol and Dolly, we get to know Pauline and why she is the way she was especially when it comes to the loss of her sons.

Ellie Dean has a wonderful gift of storytelling and once again she has written a book which showed characters which I wanted to know more about.

Like all readers, I did notice that some of the storylines was already told in the last book of this series and when Ellie Dean explained her reason for this I did understand why she did write two books based on the same period though at times found me rather questioning my own memory.

I am already looking forward to the next book in this brilliant series though I am in a way dreading it as it is supposed to be the last book in this magnificent series which should be made into a television series as the storylines are so well told I felt I was a bystander watching history take place right in front of me.

The Waiting Hours written by the super talented Ellie Dean is a wonderful read and one I am happy to recommend to all readers of historical fiction based on the era of the Second World War.

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## Karen Cole says

This is Ellie Dean's thirteenth Cliffhaven novel but the first I have read. There are references to events that occurred in the previous books, and mention of other characters who don't play a major role in this instalment but I didn't find it hindered my enjoyment in any way and found the book worked as a standalone - although obviously it would make sense to read the series in order to really appreciate Ellie Dean's long story arc.

This novel had everything I love about historical sagas; the time period is one of my favourites, I'm often drawn to novels set during the Second World War, particularly those that feature the Home Front. I love that Ellie Dean writes about the strength of women and how the war affected them, not just as mothers, wives and girlfriends hoping their men would come home but also how they coped with the changes to their daily life under a constant cloud of uncertainty about the war.

The Waiting Hours is a character driven novel, this is a warm and engaging book filled with ordinary people who were forced to live under extraordinary circumstances but somehow kept going day to day, year after year. Carol Porter, the main protagonist is a case in point. A young widow who lost her unborn child after her husband's death, she now works as a land girl, determined to keep going despite her losses. She has found some solace from her grief through the home she shared with her husband and from her visits to the village cemetery but her quiet life is thrown into disarray when she learns the area she lives in is to be requisitioned urgently for military purposes, all villagers forced to move elsewhere. Carol is an immensely likeable, relatable character, she's sensible, level-headed and kindhearted. In Cliffhaven, her sister, Pauline is also grief stricken, having lost two of her sons to the war she has become over-protective of her surviving boy, and has become withdrawn from her husband, Frank. Their mother, Dolly is a more glamorous figure who left her parents to raise her daughters, despite this they adore her and as the book progresses it transpires she is far more than the rather flighty and shallow character she may initially appear to be. Meanwhile, Peggy, stalwart owner of the Beach View boarding house in Cliffhaven is an ever loving, perceptive and nurturing presence - this is perhaps where I missed out not having read the previous books as it's clear that she has been an important constant offering sanctuary, wisdom and no-nonsense home truths throughout the series. I would have liked to know her history and look forward to a retrospective catching up. As the book progressed I became immersed in the lives of these characters, and their friends and relations; I held my breath as Peggy's husband, Jim faced danger fighting in Burma, I laughed at his father, Ron's poaching escapades; I crossed my fingers for Carol's best friend, Betty, I enjoyed the bickering, love and support at the boarding house. There's a secret at the heart of The Waiting Hours, I'd worked it out before the reveal but it didn't matter, it was the characters' lives I'd become invested in, how would discovering long concealed truths threaten the ties that bind people together?

As well as the trials and tribulations of the characters, Ellie Dean has included real life events in the book as tragedy comes to Slapton. In 1943 Operation Tiger was to be a rehearsal for what would become the D-Day Landings, however, it was to become a terrible tragedy, resulting in the deaths of many hundreds of American soldiers. Seen through the eyes of characters we've grown to know and to care for gives a human face to the catastrophe as we experience it through them. The awful shock and anger is palpable, knowing with the benefit of hindsight that there were orders to cover up the tragedy makes it even more heartrending. I really enjoyed The Waiting Hours; with its touching, poignant and warm storytelling, I'm not surprised this series has so many fans, this book will undoubtedly please both those who already love Ellie Dean's books and newcomers to Cliffhaven.

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