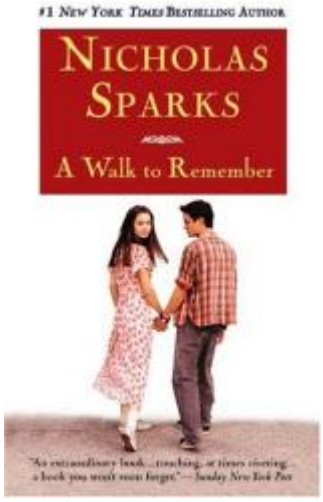
bookreporter

A Walk to Remember

by Nicholas Sparks



About the Book

There was a time when the world was sweeter...when the women in Beaufort, North Carolina, wore dresses, and the men donned hats...

Every April, when the wind smells of both the sea and lilacs, Landon Carter remembers 1958, his last year at Beaufort High. Landon had dated a girl or two, and even once sworn that he'd been in love. Certainly the last person he thought he'd fall for was Jamie, the shy, almost ethereal daughter of the town's Baptist minister...Jamie, who was destined to show him the depths of the human heart-and the joy and pain of living.

The inspiration for this novel came from Nicholas Sparks's sister: her life and her courage. From the internationally bestselling author Nicholas Sparks, comes his most moving story yet...

When I was seventeen, my life changed forever....I'm fifty-seven years old, but even now I remember everything from that year, down to the smallest details. I relive that year often in my mind, bringing it back to life, and I realize that when I do, I always feel a strange combination of sadness and joy....This is my story; I promise to leave nothing out.

First you will smile, and then you will cry-don't say you haven't been warned....

And so begins a tale of true love, first love, and everlasting love that you will never forget...

A WALK TO REMEMBER

A Main Selection of The Literary Guild® and of Doubleday Book Club®

Discussion Guide

1. How does Landon's mother play the role of both mother and father? Is her influence enough to make up for his father's absence? Conversely, how does Hegbert play the role of both mother and father? Do you think Hegbert should have remarried when Jamie was younger? Would Jamie have become a different person if he had?

2. Jamie accepts Landon's offer to attend the homecoming dance, and while there, she helps him not only get out of a fight, but cleans up Angela, making for a less than perfect evening. Would Landon have come to love Jamie if the "date" had been nicer? Would Jamie have asked him to be in the Christmas play?

3. Christianity plays a large role in both Jamie and Hegbert's lives. Which one seems to lead more of a Christian life? Should Jamie have been more outspoken about her faith? Was the fact that she didn't tell Landon about her sickness a "sin of omission?"

4. Why did Landon feel both a kinship and a rivalry with Eric? What was it about them that gave them such a special bond?

5. What are the major themes of the novel? How are they related?

6. For a long period, Landon refuses to admit to himself that he might like Jamie. Why does he refuse to admit this -- because of his friends or because of his own fears? Why, if he truly feels this, why does he often act in just the opposite way? When he says he loves her for the very first time, does he? How does his love change as the novel progresses?

7. At the end of the novel, Landon asks Jamie to marry him. Was he acting more to fulfill Jamie's wish than for himself? What does this say about Landon? What does it say about Jamie that she said 'yes'?

8. The Christmas Play was written by Hegbert to symbolize his belief that there was a period where he wasn't a good father, but he redeemed himself through the help of faith. What role does redemption play in the novel and how does faith play into that? How is Landon redeemed? Is Jamie redeemed?

9. What is the significance of the cemetery in the novel? How does that play into the major themes of the novel, faith and redemption?

10. The ending of the novel is purposely ambiguous. What did it mean to you and why? Should the ending have been spelled out more clearly? If you believe Jamie lived, what does that say about the story and themes? If you believe she died, what does that say? How do they differ?

11. How did the orphanage affect the relationship between Jamie and Landon?

Author Bio

Nicholas Sparks is the author of the #1 *New York Times* bestsellers THE RESCUE and NIGHTS IN RODANTHE, as well as THE NOTEBOOK, MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE, A WALK TO REMEMBER, A BEND IN THE ROAD, THE GUARDIAN, THE WEDDING, and his moving memoir, THREE WEEKS WITH MY BROTHER, written with his brother, Micah. All his books were *New York Times* and international bestsellers translated into more than 30 languages, and MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE, A WALK TO REMEMBER, and THE NOTEBOOK were adapted into major motion pictures. Nicholas Sparks lives in North Carolina with his wife and family.

Critical Praise

"Sparks has a winning combination of style and story."

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