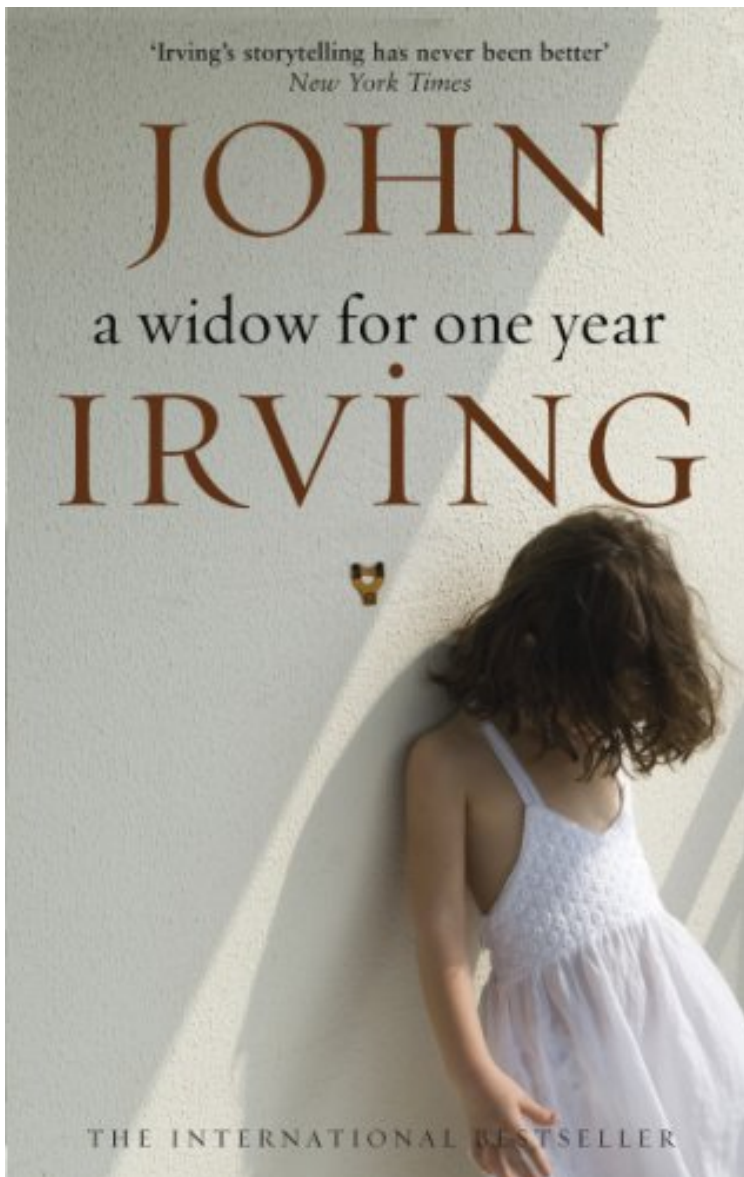


[Mobile ebook] File size: 74.Mb

# A Widow For One Year



*Par John Irving*  
DOC / \*audiobook | ebooks |  
Download PDF | ePub

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #102450 dans eBooksPubli le: 2012-05-10Sorti le: 2012-05-10Format: Ebook Kindle

[Mobile ebook] A Widow For One Year

**Par John Irving : A Widow For One Year** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Widow For One Year:

Download

Read Online

## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur'One night when she was four and sleeping in the bottom bunk of her bunk bed, Ruth Cole awoke to the sound of lovemaking - it was coming from her parents' bedroom.'This is the story of Ruth Cole. It is told in three parts: on Long Island, in the summer of 1958, when she is only four; in 1990, when she is an unmarried woman whose personal life is not nearly as successful as her literary career; and in the autumn of 1995, when Ruth Cole is a forty-one-year-old widow and mother. She's also about to fall in love for the first time....comJohn Irving's A Widow For One Year is the epic story of a family, dysfunctional at best, unable to cope with tragedy--or with each other. The unabridged audiobook, narrated by George Guidall (The Cat Who Sang for the Birds, The Inner Sanctum, The Legacy) draws the listener in with a

crisp, methodical vocal presentation. Guidall portrays each character with a convincingly distinct voice, accurately impersonating the characters' intonations and verbal habits. The interaction between characters is both conversational and believable. We first meet Ruth Cole in the summer of 1958 when she walks in on her mother having sex with 16-year-old Eddie O'Hare, the assistant to Ruth's alcoholic father. The death of Ruth's older brothers (years before she was born) turns her mother, Marion, into a zombie who is unable to love her surviving daughter. Ted Cole is a semisuccessful writer and illustrator of disturbingly creepy children's novels. His womanizing habits prove he's "as deceitful as a damaged condom," but he remains the only stable figure in Ruth's life. The tempestuous tale fast-forwards to the year 1990 when Ruth's soaring writing career is faring far better than her lackluster love life. The final segment of the novel ends in 1995 when 41-year-old Ruth is ready to fall in love for the first time. This profoundly absorbing story expresses the depths of misery and the healing power of love. Irving writes as a true storyteller, and Guidall executes the narrative with vigor and enthusiasm. (Running time: 24.5 hours, 14 cassettes) --Gina Kaysen

Extrait  
Summer 1958  
The Inadequate Lamp Shade  
One night when she was four and sleeping in the bottom bunk of her bunk bed, Ruth Cole woke to the sound of lovemaking it was coming from her parents' bedroom. It was a totally unfamiliar sound to her. Ruth had recently been ill with a stomach flu; when she first heard her mother making love, Ruth thought that her mother was throwing up. It was not as simple a matter as her parents having separate bedrooms; that summer they had separate houses, although Ruth never saw the other house. Her parents spent alternate nights in the family house with Ruth; there was a rental house nearby, where Ruth's mother or father stayed when they weren't staying with Ruth. It was one of those ridiculous arrangements that couples make when they are separating, but before they are divorced when they still imagine that children and property can be shared with more magnanimity than recrimination. When Ruth woke to the foreign sound, she at first wasn't sure if it was her mother or her father who was throwing up; then, despite the unfamiliarity of the disturbance, Ruth recognized that measure of melancholy and contained hysteria which was often detectable in her mother's voice. Ruth also remembered that it was her mother's turn to stay with her. The master bathroom separated Ruth's room from the master bedroom. When the four-year-old padded barefoot through the bathroom, she took a towel with her. (When she'd been sick with the stomach flu, her father had encouraged her to vomit in a towel.) Poor Mommy! Ruth thought, bringing her the towel. In the dim moonlight, and in the even dimmer and erratic light from the night-light that Ruth's father had installed in the bathroom, Ruth saw the pale faces of her dead brothers in the photographs on the bathroom wall. There were photos of her dead brothers throughout the house, on all the walls; although the two boys had died as teenagers, before Ruth was born (before she was even conceived), Ruth felt that she knew these vanished young men far better than she knew her mother or father. The tall, dark one with the angular face was Thomas; even at Ruth's age, when he'd been only four, Thomas had had a leading man's kind of handsomeness--a combination of poise and thuggery that, in his teenage years, gave him the seeming confidence of a much older man. (Thomas had been the driver of the doomed car.) The younger, insecure-looking one was Timothy; even as a teenager, he was baby-faced and appeared to have just been startled by something. In many of the photographs, Timothy seemed to be caught in a moment of indecision, as if he were perpetually reluctant to imitate an incredibly difficult stunt that Thomas had mastered with apparent ease. (In the end, it was something as basic as driving a car that Thomas failed to master sufficiently.) When Ruth Cole entered her parents' bedroom, she saw the naked young man who had mounted her mother from behind; he was holding her mother's breasts in his hands and humping her on all fours, like a dog, but it was neither the violence nor the repugnance of the sexual act that caused Ruth to scream. The four-year-old didn't know that she was witnessing a sexual act nor did the young man and her mother's activity strike Ruth as entirely unpleasant. In fact, Ruth was relieved to see that her mother was not throwing up. And it wasn't the young man's nakedness that caused Ruth to scream; she had seen her father and her mother naked nakedness was not hidden among the Coles. It was the young man himself who made Ruth scream, because she was certain he was one of her dead brothers; he looked so much like Thomas, the confident one, that Ruth Cole believed she had seen a ghost. A four-year-old's scream is a piercing sound. Ruth was astonished at the speed with which her mother's young lover dismounted; indeed, he removed himself from both the woman and her bed with such a combination of panic and zeal that he appeared to be propelled it was almost as if a cannonball had dislodged him. He fell over the night table, and, in an effort to conceal his nakedness, removed the lamp shade from the broken bedside lamp. As such, he seemed a less menacing sort of ghost than Ruth had first judged him to be; furthermore, now that Ruth took a closer look at him, she recognized him. He was the boy who occupied the most distant guest room, the boy who drove her father's car the boy

who worked for her daddy, her mommy had said. Once or twice the boy had driven Ruth and her babysitter to the beach. That summer, Ruth had three different nannies; each of them had commented on how pale the boy was, but Ruth's mother had told her that some people just didn't like the sun. The child had never before seen the boy without his clothes, of course; yet Ruth was certain that the young man's name was Eddie and that he wasn't a ghost. Nevertheless, the four-year-old screamed again. Her mother, still on all fours on her bed, looked characteristically unsurprised; she merely viewed her daughter with an expression of discouragement edged with despair. Before Ruth could cry out a third time, her mother said, "Don't scream, honey. It's just Eddie and me. Go back to bed." Ruth Cole did as she was told, once more passing those photographs more ghostly-seeming now than her mother's fallen ghost of a lover. Eddie, while attempting to hide himself with the lamp shade, had been oblivious to the fact that the lamp shade, being open at both ends, afforded Ruth an unobstructed view of his diminishing penis. At four, Ruth was too young to ever remember Eddie or his penis with the greatest detail, but he would remember her. Thirty-six years later, when he was fifty-two and Ruth was forty, this ill-fated young man would fall in love with Ruth Cole. Yet not even then would he regret having fucked Ruth's mother. Alas, that would be Eddie's problem. This is Ruth's story. That her parents had expected her to be a third son was not the reason Ruth Cole became a writer; a more likely source of her imagination was that she grew up in a house where the photographs of her dead brothers were a stronger presence than any "presence" she detected in either her mother or her father and that, after her mother abandoned her and her father (and took with her almost all the photos of her lost sons), Ruth would wonder why her father left the picture hooks stuck in the bare walls. The picture hooks were part of the reason she became a writer for years after her mother left, Ruth would try to remember which of the photographs had hung from which of the hooks. And, failing to recall the actual pictures of her perished brothers to her satisfaction, Ruth began to invent all the captured moments in their short lives, which she had missed. That Thomas and Timothy were killed before she was born was another part of the reason Ruth Cole became a writer; from her earliest memory, she was forced to imagine them. It was one of those automobile accidents involving teenagers that, in the aftermath, revealed that both boys had been "good kids" and that neither of them had been drinking. Worst of all, to the endless torment of their parents, the coincidence of Thomas and Timothy being in that car at that exact time, and in that specific place, was the result of an altogether avoidable quarrel between the boys' mother and father. The poor parents would relive the tragic results of their trivial argument for the rest of their lives. Later Ruth was told that she was conceived in a well-intentioned but passionless act. Ruth's parents were mistaken to even imagine that their sons were replaceable nor did they pause to consider that the new baby who would bear the burden of their impossible expectations might be a girl. That Ruth Cole would grow up to be that rare combination of a well-respected literary novelist and an internationally best-selling author is not as remarkable as the fact that she managed to grow up at all. Those handsome young men in the photographs had stolen most of her mother's affection; however, her mother's rejection was more bearable to Ruth than growing up in the shadow of the coldness that passed between her parents. Ted Cole, a best-selling author and illustrator of books for children, was a handsome man who was better at writing and drawing for children than he was at fulfilling the daily responsibilities of fatherhood. And until Ruth was four-and-a-half, while Ted Cole was not always drunk, he frequently drank too much. It's also true that, while Ted was not a womanizer every waking minute, at no time in his life was he ever entirely not a womanizer. (Granted, this made him more unreliable with women than he was with children.) Ted had ended up writing for children by default. His literary debut was an overpraised adult novel of an indisputably literary sort. The two novels that followed aren't worth mentioning, except to say that no one especially Ted Cole's publisher had expressed any noticeable interest in a fourth novel, which was never written. Instead, Ted wrote his first children's book. Called *The Mouse Crawling Between the Walls*, it was very nearly not published; at first glance, it appeared to be one of those children's books that are of dubious appeal to parents and remain memorable to children only because children remember being frightened. At least Thomas and Timothy were frightened by *The Mouse Crawling Between the Walls* when Ted first told them the story; by the time Ted told it to Ruth, *The Mouse Crawling Between the Walls* had already frightened about nine or ten million children, in more than thirty languages, around the world. Like her dead brothers, Ruth grew up on her father's stories. When Ruth first read these stories in a book, it felt like a violation of her privacy. She'd imagined that her father had created these stories for her alone. Later she would wonder if her dead brothers had felt that their privacy had been...