



Anne of Hollywood

Carol Wolper

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Carol Wolper re-tells the story of Anne Boleyn set in contemporary Los Angeles.

“I wasn’t prepared for the enemies. Had I been as gorgeous as a supermodel, or as rich as an heiress, or an actress with an Oscar to my credit, people would still not be happy that I had Henry’s attention, but they’d understand. What they resented was the king coupling with a ‘nobody.’”

Skirts may be shorter now, and messages sent by iPhone, but passion, intrigue, and a lust for power don’t change. National bestselling author Carol Wolper spins a mesmerizing tale of a twenty-first-century Anne Boleyn.

Wily, intelligent, and seductive, with a dark beauty that stands out among the curvy California beach blondes, Anne attracts the attention of Henry Tudor, the handsome corporate mogul who reigns in Hollywood. Every starlet, socialite, and shark wants a piece of Henry, but he only wants Anne. The question is: can she keep him?

Welcome to a privileged world where hidden motives abound, everyone has something to sell, and safe havens don’t exist. With her older sister Mary, a pathetic example of a royal has-been, Anne schemes to win her beloved Henry in the only way that gives a promise of forever—marriage. Success will mean contending with backstabbing “friends,” Henry’s furious ex-wife, and the machinations of her own ambitious family, and staying married to a man who has more options than most and less guilt than is good for either of them will take all her skill. Anne will do anything to hold on to the man—and the lifestyle—she adores, however, even if sticking your neck out in Hollywood means risking far worse than a broken heart. With Henry’s closest confidante scheming against her, and another beautiful contender waiting in the wings, Anne is fighting for her life. Can she muster the charm and wit to pull off her very own Hollywood ending?

Anne of Hollywood Details

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From Reader Review Anne of Hollywood for online ebook

Shelly says

When I first started reading this book I sort of figured I would not enjoy it. Certain adult situations could have been worded more tactfully. I would be a tad embarrassed to lend this to my mom because of certain scenarios. However, the story drew me in and I enjoyed it. I am grateful a certain character got some backbone at the end of the story.

Per FTC guidelines I must disclose that I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads.

Sherri Huntley says

I won this book from Goodreads and I enjoyed every second of it. It's the story of Anne Boleyn and Henry Tudor but set in modern day California. It is a fun tale told completely from Anne's perspective, Henry's mindset doesn't really factor in. The characters are all 21st first century but Wolper makes it easy to see what their role would have been in Tudor England. The book follows Anne's romance and relationships with Henry, with her older sister Mary who used to date Henry, and various pseudo friends that come into her life. Anne faces challenges in holding Henry's attention and his heart. The big question is if she is successful in changing the fate that befell the original Anne!

Kat A says

This started out slowly, got really good in the middle, and then sort of petered out to an unsatisfying finish. If you don't go for an execution, there really isn't much else that will do, really. :)

I love, love, love historical fiction and this is definitely that kind of book. Wolper takes the story of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn and sets it in 2012 Los Angeles. I really liked the way she changes the characters, for example making Thomas Cromwell a Theresa, and changing Thomas Wyatt the poet's name and occupation to just the first name of Wyatt who is a musician. I loved the joke of turning Cardinal Wolsey (who is was yet another Thomas, no wonder she changed all the names) into Carl Wolsey, a slimy investor who ends up going down for fraud.

All the major players are there, in the right capacity, Henry Tudor, Maren Tudor, Elizabeth Tudor, Catherine Aragorn, Ferdinand Aragorn, Leo De Vince (although I can't find a mention of Leonardo Da Vinci ever having painted a Tudor) Mary Boleyn, George Boleyn, the Boleyn parents (although, not named, as the father is another Thomas, and the mother is Elizabeth) and another character named Cliff, assistant to Theresa, that I have yet to figure out which 16th century person he is modelled on specifically.

I'm not a huge fan of shifting 1st person/3rd person narratives, but in this case, it worked. A good read, especially if you are a history nut like me.

Elizabeth Mahon says

When I first heard about this book, I thought, 'You have to be kidding me! Anne Boleyn in Hollywood?' Still there was something about the idea that intrigued me. Perhaps it was the fact that this mash-up didn't turn Anne into a werewolf, a vampire or a succubus! So I downloaded a sample of the book onto my NOOK, and gave it a quick read. What I read made me want to read the whole book, but I confess, I took the book out of the library instead of buying it. A girl has to economize!

The idea of translating the Tudors into contemporary Hollywood shouldn't work but it somehow does. Henry VIII in Wolper's version is Henry Tudor who owns a studio, a web-site ala The Huffington Post, as well as other interests. He's referred to as "the King" of Hollywood by various characters in the book. But Henry is not content with just being the Kingpin of Hollywood, he's seeking the Governorship of California. All of the usual suspects that most readers will be familiar with are here, Thomas Cromwell as been reinterpreted as Theresa Cromwell, Henry's right hand woman, Cardinal Wolsey is now crooked money manager Carl Wolsey, Catherine is Catherine Aragon, the daughter of a wealthy power-broker Ferdinand, she and Henry have a daughter Maren who is boarding school. As the book opens, they are wrangling not just over the divorce but over the property settlement. Catherine, obsessed with Henry, has become a devout Catholic, who pops pills to get through her day. Mary is a former model turned party girl who failed to snag Henry, so she becomes a pot-smoking hippie. All the Boleyn hopes are now pinned on Anne. See daddy Thomas Boleyn, unlike the successful courtier of Tudor Times, is an entertainment lawyer, who failed when he started his own firm. Now he creeps around the fringes of power with his face pressed against the window, trying to get in. George is a bisexual actor, who gets a job on a cop show thanks to Henry. Jane Boleyn is now Lacy, who hates Anne because George loves her so much. And then there's Jane Seymour who is now a jewelry designer and a friend of Theresa's.

The novel is written in an easy, breezy style from the points of view of various characters, mainly Anne (in the first person), Theresa, and a hanger-on Cliff Craven. Anne is a likeable narrator, who genuinely seems to love Henry for himself, not just for what he can do for her family. Theresa Cromwell feels threatened by Anne, particularly when she takes over Henry's philanthropic foundation, which was Theresa's pet project. There are two big weaknesses in this novel, the first is that Wolper fails to make the reader understand why everyone, apart from Catherine and Lacy, hates Anne so much. She doesn't really throw her weight around, everyone agrees that she is vibrant, sexy, and charismatic. Unlike the real Anne, she doesn't confront Henry with his infidelities, she seems to roll with the punches. She's a freelance writer, but unlike Lacy, she doesn't use her position as Henry's wife to snag a cushy job. Nor is she really one of those Hollywood wives who spend most of their times lunching. We don't really see Anne doing much of anything, apart from giving birth to Elizabeth, and hoping to get pregnant with a male heir for Henry. Apparently even in 2012, a daughter isn't good enough.

The other weakness in the novel is that Henry remains off-stage throughout most of the book. He's a cipher, a Howard Hughes figure but without the OCD. It's unclear how he became so rich, or powerful. After awhile, I began to lose interest in the story, or even care how Anne was going to get her comeuppance in this version of her life. Clearly, she's not going to be executed but somehow banished from her glitzy lifestyle. I've read Jackie Collins novels with more pizzazz and punch than this book which is really a shame because it's an intriguing idea.

Verdict: Only for real fans of Anne Boleyn, or readers who love reading about Hollywood.

Stephanie Tracy says

This was a really fun, witty twist on the classic and tragic tale of Anne Boleyn. The author did a great job setting up a believable and easy-to-understand modern setting... Hollywood, of course, led by "the King," a billionaire businessman, Henry Tudor. Anne Boleyn is, of course, a beautiful, stylish and clever girl who catches his heart during his long divorce with his first wife Catherine Aragon. Right from the first page I was sucked into the story which immediately struck me as wildly clever. The author makes some funny changes, such as "Theresa Cromwell," "Maren Tudor," Lacy Rochford," and a musician simply named Wyatt. Of course, these characters are all QUITE similar to their respective historical figures, but it's so much fun to read about them in a modern light. While this story involves all the manipulation and deception of the Tudor court, it also includes drinking, sex, marijuana, and texting. Definitely a different take on the story, but just as satisfying and fun to read about. I highly recommend it for the Tudor enthusiast who is interested in a light-hearted Tudor read. Know your history before you pick this book up and it will be even funnier!

Gitte - Bookworm's Closet says

I feel like I'm the target of some kind of vigilante justice but what am I guilty of? Being with a king?

Anne of Hollywood is a fun twist on Tudor history. Anne Boleyn, a beautiful and ambitious woman, marries her sister's ex-boyfriend, Henry Tudor, a man so rich and powerful, he's almost royalty. Anne is, by Hollywood standards, a nobody, and she's being punished for marrying above her. And for not just slipping into the background, as a good little trophy wife is meant to do. She's dangerous, and must be gotten rid of.

I'm no Tudor expert, but as far as I can tell, Anne of Hollywood is a pretty good interpretation of what we know of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. And the adaption of the story into a crazy Hollywood life was fun. And truly terrifying. It was a bit hard to read a book where almost all the characters are so utterly unsympathetic that you would run away screaming if you met them in real life.

It bothered me that I didn't really understand Anne Boleyn. She made more sense to me in the 1500s than in present day America. I guess it's a Hollywood thing. One thing I didn't get was what she saw in Henry and why she's so desperate to stay with him. Yeah yeah, he's rich and powerful and provides a certain life style. But he's not a nice person and Anne doesn't seem to be in love with him. Instead she spends her time trying desperately to please him. I.e. when she's not worrying about his numerous lovers. I kept wishing for a twist where she would simply leave him, get a nice apartment and settle down with a cute guy who'll ask her how her day was and cuddle on the couch while watching Netflix.

How many guys could have dated sister, dumping one and marrying the other ... survived an ugly divorce and his ex-wife's accidental overdose, has dated more wild girls in the past than a rock star and still be leading in the polls for a major political office?

I liked how the novel ended but I didn't care for the way it was carried out. It seemed rushed. In a matter of two pages, Anne went through a drastic development that just didn't seem credible.

My blog: The Bookworm's Closet

Melia says

Loved the idea of the book but there were too many things from Tudor England that just don't translate to modern times. The religion aspect, the divorce being a scandal, Anne being reviled by the public, Cromwell and Wolsey, the political scheming...it just doesn't ring true to the actual historical events and felt like a letdown. Anne comes out of nowhere and captures the "king" of Hollywood. Big deal. Then she loses him very quickly. Again, it didn't seem like a big deal as she started over and began a new life without Henry. The story hinted at some of the side plot lines of the other characters, i.e. George being accused of bisexuality/homosexuality and his overly affectionate relationship with Anne and the ensuing jealousy and outright hatred of her sister in law, Wyatt being enamored with Anne, Cromwell forming uneasy alliances while controlling Henry's interests, Jane Seymour being thrust forward as Anne's replacement...it was well written and kept my attention for awhile, but again, the political and social mechanisms of modern day aren't comparable to the times of Henry Tudor and his royal court.

Mary (BookHounds) says

MY THOUGHTS

ABSOLUTELY LOVED IT

I mean really LOVE LOVE LOVED this one! This is brilliant!

So, you probably already know the story of Anne Boleyn and the Tudors, but you have never read anything as interesting and fun as this new interpretation. Henry is re imagined as a billionaire power broker that rules Hollywood as his kingdom. Anne is the daughter of a social climbing entertainment lawyer with two siblings that are great successes. Mary had a fling with Henry years ago while she was a young model while her brother George may or may not be a bisexual and struggling actor. The whole story fits in nicely with the backstabbing and social climbing that occurs daily in Hollywood with the details much like a Shakespearean play. Anne is witty, fun and a bit scheming although not really overt about it. She is also a bit naive about money and the power plays that go on behind the scenes or at least that is the way she is portrayed in the book and history.

All I can say is this book is FUN and I really didn't want it to end. I can now imagine more retelling of famous historical figures and their lives much like the Austen fiction that has become so popular these days. There is all of the soap opera goings on in this retelling but what I really enjoyed was Wolper's attention to detail and how she redid some of the characters. Cardinal Wolsey is an investment manager in a Madoff kind of way with the name play of Carl Wolsey -- which sounds very similar. Theresa Cromwell, plays the trusted advisor to Henry who schemes to get Anne out of the picture while his ex wife, Catherine is portrayed as a basket case with insomnia and a new found religious bent. So at least, in this story, Anne is just banished, not beheaded and in true chick lit fashion, she ends up back on her feet! I guess women have come a long way since the days of the real Tudor court.

CoffeeTimeRomance andMore says

Anne Boleyn has never been anybody special, until she catches the eye of Henry Tudor, king of Hollywood's elite "A" list. After watching her older sister, Mary, be added to a backlist of Henry's discarded mistresses, Anne is certain she has a foolproof plan. Now she only has to keep him interested, convincing him that marriage is in his best interest, if only everyone else in Hollywood do not constantly try to knock Anne off her pedestal.

Against the backdrop of the rich and powerful, Anne must navigate the murky waters of social climbing in a cutthroat world. Henry's grasping ex-wife, Katherine, is ready to hang him out to dry. His corporate VP Theresa wants all the power her position demands, willing to supplant Anne with a hot, new model to get it done. Anne has only her brother, George, to help her in her bid to claw her way to the top.

As Anne immerses deep in the game of keeping her claws firmly seated in Henry's considerable coattails, she begins to see the players around her more clearly. They climb high, and they fall far. When the king of Hollywood decides to run for public office, the stakes get higher and the price becomes steeper. In the end, Anne will learn that ruling the world can happen in so many different ways.

This fresh take on the destructive attraction between Anne Boleyn and Henry Tudor includes all of your favorite historical characters in their new modern personas. While it is fascinating to see the twist that Ms. Wolper brings to the tale of an English king and queen with American identities and values, the story is complex and often a little murky in nature. However, this book will be an utter delight to lovers of Tudor myths and gossipy history.

Kaitlin

Kylie Cheung says

The unforgettable story of Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's best loved but most tragic wife, is recreated at least once a year in some dry, predictable historical novel -- and in Wolper's "Anne of Hollywood", it is recreated once again: but with a twist. An avid fan of Anne Boleyn eager to get my hands on just about any fictional depiction of her, I've searched and searched and believe me: I haven't found another like this. If you think about it, the ruthless and amorous court of Tudor England shares a lot with 2012 Hollywood, which Wolper sharply describes as "high school with money". Ripe with scandal; harsh, dry Hollywood humor; and scandalously steamy 'bodice-ripping', sixteenth-century characters are brilliantly reincarnated into saucy modern day counterparts.

In this Hollywood, there is no such thing as a traditional black-and-white relationship-- and if there is you can bet that infidelity will follow soon. Henry and Anne get together fast -- a bit too fast in my opinion: their ten year relationship is condensed to four. They are already a pair at the novel's beginning, and are living under the same roof within a couple of chapters and Anne pregnant by the hundredth page. If their relationship, in history, is famous for anything, it's the long delay in Anne getting on her back. But on a positive note, Wolper's clever storytelling really brings the 'spirit' of Anne to life -- she is hotheaded, witty and a formidable foe with an iron grip on her king: the one thing that's missing is -- what on earth is this woman doing except for Henry? Anne Boleyn donated endlessly to charity, worked endlessly to shape national religion, and was overall just an endlessly intelligent linguist, reader, enthusiastic and artistic patron of both education and art; however, none of these deeds translate into much, in the book, and she is not seen

doing much of anything.

Drugs. Threesomes. Hard partying. Dangerous Hollywood plots. Sex and deception. Funny but political, sexy but smart, Wolper has this creative style to her writing that I doubt any reader could resist: celebrities and partying meet the lascivious Tudor court and its deadly conspiracies -- frankly, who on earth could?

Amanda says

Everyone knows the tragic, soap opera-like (though, true) story of Anne Boleyn, who seduced Henry VIII away from his wife Catherine of Aragon and convinced the monarch to break with the Catholic church -all with the promise of providing him with a son, which she never had.

Author Carol Wolper puts a twist on Anne's often-explored story by placing it in modern-day holiday, where powerful connections, seduction and Hollywood near-royalty are just as important as they once were in Tudor-era England. Wolper casts Anne as a rising young socialite, who uses her intelligence, charm and sex appeal to ensnare the powerful Henry Tudor, even after he's used Anne's sister and discarded her. Anne must deal with harsh Hollywood politics, backstabbing friends, a jealous ex-wife and others who would dare take Anne's place.

Anne of Hollywood is basically like a semi-Gossip Girl-like modern retelling of the Anne Boleyn story, complete with backstabbing and all kinds of juicy social politics. Wolper's version of the tale is an interesting balance of the modern and the classic, where she attempts to keep the integrity of the tale while bringing it into the 21st century. Some of the differences may bother history junkies like myself -such as Thomas Cromwell becoming Theresa Cromwell -but once I got deeper into the story, I found the changes a welcome twist that breathes new life into a story I've read far too many times. Though this time, there's much more overt sex, and not as much at stake -and heads don't roll. I especially enjoyed Henry's run for political office, it just fit.

There are a few things that bothered me here though, where the translation of the story just didn't work as well in modern times. First, Henry and Catherine are already divorced at the start of the novel, as divorces are much easier to attain now. This, of course, got rid of all the drama of Henry's divorce from Catherine that created much of the conflict in the original story. Anne of Hollywood is also completely devoid of religious issue which, again, makes sense in the modern context, but the religious issues that Henry and Anne dealt with changed the course of history. There's also the whole having a son thing, which was the thing that finally pushed Henry into divorcing Catherine and marrying Anne -and that ultimately led to Anne's death. Though this isn't a centerpiece in Anne of Hollywood, the book's approach to this seems a little flimsy. Instead, the book leans more on Henry's tendencies to change his mind than on his desperate need to have a son and heir.

To really enjoy Anne of Hollywood, I just had to let these items go. Once I did, the book became much easier to read and took on a life of its own. I wouldn't say that this is a book for history lovers (like me), it's more for fans of contemporary chick lit novels who could use some good political backstabbing. But still, a unique read.

Jessica says

Reading the summary, this book sounded SO good! That is probably why I was so unprepared for how boring it ended up being. The story of Anne Boleyn was so interesting and scandalous, but this book was nowhere near capturing that emotion.

The main problem I had with this book was the writing style. Almost the entire story was made up of thoughts and descriptions with very little dialogue/action going on whatsoever. This made the story seem to drag on and I found myself skimming pages at a time because I felt like they were pointless. Because of this, there didn't seem to be a real storyline going on, so time was so jumpy and I wasn't even aware so much time had passed until something had happened that wasn't supposed to happen until months down the road. This made me confused while reading and I just didn't feel like the book was worth the effort to understand what all was going on.

The characters were okay, but I wasn't a fan of anyone in the book. Anne got annoying, Henry was a jerk, and everyone else just hated each other, so it got annoying real fast. Anne kept on referring to Henry as "the King" even though this was supposed to be a Hollywood adaptation. I still don't really understand what Henry did and I wish it had more of a hollywood aspect to it.

What I did love was the cover! That color is so pretty and I love how it's the royalty-like chair with a martini to mix the old story with Hollywood. But that's really the only good thing about this book. As much as I wanted to like Anne of Hollywood, it just hit the mark for me.

Michael says

I don't even know where to start with this book...it was just awful. I should probably point out that, as a recipient of a Goodreads giveaway, I probably would not be a normal target reader for this book. That being said, I thought this novel would take the heart of a well-known story from history and reinvent it within the confines of contemporary society...and the intro letter accompanying the book in the mail promised a "witty re-imagining," but all I got was a shallow caricature of a historical event.

First off, we have the author's desperate attempt to remind readers that this is a story about a king. Henry Tudor, multimillionaire internet mogul, is referred to throughout the book as "The King." It was clever the first few times, but then you realize it's not going to stop. everyone is obsessed with "the king," his "court," etc...I understand Ms. Wolper was trying to juxtapose Tudor among Hollywood royalty by giving him an almost absolute celebrity status, but she tried to unofficially turn him into an actual ruling monarch. every reference to Henry and Anne's relationship was spotted with the idea that they were actual royalty with a legitimate say in what went on. furthermore, supporting characters like Cliff and Theresa were so shallow, readers only learned about them through their obsession/disdain for the couple.

Almost as much as the Royal references were the literal placements of characters, events, titles...a think I had to put the book down when i read the first chapter involving Henry's ex wife Catherine Aragon, living in her Spanish-style mansion, and her father Ferdinand. I found many other references in this book to be lust as literal; maybe it would have been just personal preference, but I would have liked a little more imagination in the use of characterizations such as this. additionally, I was exhausted by the constant bombardment of contemporary allusions and celebrity name-dropping. none of the references really contributed anything substantial to the plot, or to positive feelings I might have had about the book. I suppose a reference to Kim Kardashian's hind quarters could help set the novel in our time, because it's vaguely relevant, but it's not

something I really care to read about. Nor do I want to read Anne keep saying 'it's 2012, it's 2012,' when clearly very little about this not-so-witty re-imagining strikes me as very 21st century.

If there's one thing I did like (although lack of motivation made me take longer than usual to read a 352 page book), it's that each chapter was short, and featured the point of view of a different character each time. I found it interesting that only Anne's chapters were in the first-person. I was frustrated by a lack of point-of-view from Henry; instead, I was stuck reading about everyone's blind adoration of him.

*****8POILER ALERT*****

it's not until one of the very last chapters that we DO actually hear from Henry directly, but he really has nothing of importance to tell, and I don't find that it provides much insight to him, other than some morsels of advice about letting go that his father imparted to him. once again, we also witness Wolper's difficulty truly integrating Tudor into modern times, as Henry speaks as the second son, more or less alluding to his older brother's inheritance of their father's company through primogeniture, and his unexpected marriage, out of duty, to his brother's girlfriend Catherine (after his brother dies).

Equally disappointing is Anne's ending. I was under the impression, again from the accompanying letter, that Anne would get the second chance that she obviously did not get historically. I suppose she did: while Anne Boleyn was not beheaded this time around, she ended up literally where she started. Woohoo, she's feeling productive on her own! but why isn't she with Wyatt? and what happened to Cliff and Theresa? Cliff was just beginning to show some moral confidence, and I wanted Theresa to get what was coming to her...but alas, no room left for that! we were too busy reading a poor attempt at modernizing a story that could have been done well, but needed to time and way more effort to do.

Cecilia says

I still have yet to finish The Tudors with the ever-lusty Jonathan Rhys Meyer because my DVD player broke down, but with 2 seasons under my belt, I feel confident that I knew all there was to know about Anne Boleyn to dive into Anne of Hollywood. Unfortunately, the scandalous lives of the 16th century nobility do not mirror the scandalous lives of the Hollywood elite as well as I had expected. The characters and their motives, while present, fell a little flat, and not enough time was spent to develop these modern personalities to match their infamous historical counterparts. It is one thing to know whom Henry Tudor represented, but it is another to see that charisma ooze out of the pages. I wanted to see steam rise up from the pages of Anne of Hollywood with all the lust and love and betrayal and dramatic tension, but what I got was a bunch of characters who did not ace their history test. Anne of Hollywood reminded me of Gigi Levange Grazer books, so fans of The Starter Wife or Maneater may appreciate another literary spin on the Hollywood scene. As for me, I will stick with Hollywood on silver screen.

Kate says

So terrible that I checked it out, started reading, started to skim it, and then returned it the very next day because I didn't want it hanging around my house. In fact, when the library's automated returns system glitched and wouldn't accept the book at first, I felt a surge of panic at the prospect of being forced to spend another day with this title hanging around.

I was tempted by this one because I'm interested in the Anne Boleyn story. I think the Anne Boleyn plot, or at least how we conceive of her story these days, is one of those frameworks that you can use and use and use again. Like the plots of *Sense and Sensibility* or *Pride and Prejudice*, for instance. And Hollywood seemed like a rich setting for the tale to play out.

Btw, SPOILER, want to know this author's modern analog for the Boleyn beheading? She's forced to return to her old one-bedroom apartment. Which is kind of funny Hollywood satire, but not actually funny in the book, and I think that's a pretty good example of how seriously this was bungled.

Hey, you know what would have been good? If Jane Smiley had done Hollywood Anne Boleyn instead of Hollywood Decameron. OK, I'm done.
