

Eve in Hollywood

Amor Towles

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Near the end of Amor Towles's bestselling novel *Rules of Civility*, the fiercely independent Evelyn Ross boards a train from New York to Chicago to visit her parents, but never disembarks. Six months later, she appears in a photograph in a gossip magazine exiting the Tropicana Club in Los Angeles on the arm of Olivia de Havilland.

In this chain of six richly detailed and atmospheric stories, each told from a different perspective, Towles unfolds the events that take Eve to the heart of Old Hollywood. Beginning in the dining car of the Golden State Limited in September 1938, we follow Eve to the elegant rooms of the Beverly Hills Hotel, the fabled tables of Antonio's, the amusement parks on the Santa Monica piers, the afro-Cuban dance clubs of Central Avenue, and ultimately the set of *Gone with The Wind*.

With the glamour and grit of the studio system's golden age as a backdrop, Towles introduces in each story a memorable new character whose fate may well be altered by their encounter with Eve. In following the thread of these varied encounters, we watch as Eve forges a new and unexpected life for herself in late 1930s Los Angeles.

Eve in Hollywood Details


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From Reader Review Eve in Hollywood for online ebook

Rebecca says

Towles set the bar high with Rules of Civility and this fell short. Drastically short. I still enjoyed his prose but the plot was lacking.

Susan says

I really loved the debut novel Rules of Civility, so I was delighted to find this book of six linked stories, which looks at what happened to character Evelyn Ross after she left New York. "Rules of Civility" was based around three friends - working girls Katey Kontent and Evelyn Ross, plus the wealthy and handsome Tinker Grey. Set in Jazz Age New York, the novel centres on Katey but, at the end of the novel, Eve leaves for home and somehow ends up in LA. These stories tell you how she made her way to Hollywood and what happens to her while she is there. However, it is not necessary to have read "Rules of Civility" to read these stories, which do stand alone.

The stories begin with Eve on a train, where she extends her trip from Chicago to Los Angeles. Along the way she meets a widow, a faded celebrity, makes the acquaintance of star Olivia de Havilland, a journalist and a lawyer. The last story is told from Eve's own viewpoint. In LA, the big story is the current casting of "Gone With the Wind" and it is a time of real Hollywood glamour. These are a good read and there is a sample of "Rules of Civility" at the end of the book. I really hope the author will write more about these characters and I look forward to reading his next novel.

Susan says

It's quite a while since I read Rules of Civility and I would perhaps have enjoyed these stories about how Eve got on in Hollywood after she had left New York at the end of that book, if I'd read them earlier. I liked these well written little stories, but found that they ended too abruptly, and seemed rather disjointed.....enjoyable, but just a little disappointing having enjoyed the original book so much.

Lavinia says

Why is Amor Towles working in finance when he writes such beautiful prose? Sure, Eve in Hollywood is no Rules of Civility but it's a very lovely novella. I never thought guys today can write so refined. 3,5*

Mellena says

For me, it isn't about what Towles writes as much as HOW he writes. Elegant, thoughtful. I fall into his stories and just go wherever they take me. This time it was to Hollywood and Los Angeles in the '30s, with

some interesting characters and stories.

I appreciate the author's sense of restraint. There seems to be as much in what he doesn't say, as what he does. I love the way he develops his characters. He doesn't overplay them, but lets me find each character in my own way. I like how he respects each character, thereby respecting the efforts of the reader as well.

I especially enjoyed his brilliant, quiet skewering of Hollywood's faults (as well as those of Hollywood-watcher's) while showing an often compassionate understanding of "Human nature; which is just a fancy term for the God-given flaws we have no intention of giving back."

Two things which did give me pause:

1) The Eve in this story feels different in character from the woman in "Rules of Civility". I can't determine exactly how; I'll have to go back and compare the two more closely. It may be that this book shows more insight into her personality through revelations of her past, and a closer look at how she thinks. She's not exactly who I thought she was, but much more likeable.

2) The ending doesn't feel as much like an ending as a segue into the next chapter, which, sadly is not there. I would like to journey on with Eve to the rest of the places on her "list".

After recommending "Rules of Civility" to friends, I found they either loved it or very much disliked it, with the complaints being it was "too depressing" or "didn't like some of the characters". It seemed people either got it or didn't. But for me, with this book of stories, as well as "Rules", I loved it. No one else, today, writes like he does. The man knows how to construct and express a thought in lovely language, and isn't afraid to do so. For an avid reader in an arid desert of literacy these days, this is a treat, so I do hope he will be publishing more.

Caitlin says

This is an enjoyable, if slightly unsatisfying, follow up to Rules of Civility. The book is set up as a series of short stories about what happened to Evelyn Ross when she moved to Hollywood, each told from the perspective of a different character. It has Amor Towles' beautiful writing and rich character development, but it's brief and like I said, a tad unsatisfying. But if you loved Rules of Civility, I'd still definitely recommend it.

Jgrace says

Eve in Hollywood – Amor Towles

4 stars

Rules of Civility was one of those books. I didn't want it to end. I wanted to go back and start over as soon as it was done. Mostly, I wanted to know what happened to Eve. My curiosity was not completely satisfied with this short story collection, but it does provide six fascinating glimpses into the life of a remarkable

character. The first five stories look at Eve through other eyes. The last story is specifically Eve's.

Just as the original book made me want to time travel back to an earlier New York City, these stories make me wish for a trip to the hey days of Hollywood. I want to walk through the revolving doors of the Beverly Hills Hotel and have a drink in the bar with Eve and Olivia de Haviland.

First, you should read **Rules of Civility**. When the first book leaves you wanting a bit more, follow Eve to Hollywood.

Cynthia says

Almost

Towles characters are so alive they almost lift off the pages. "Eve" picks up where "Rules" finished just as Eve is fleeing New York in 1938. She's on her way home to Chicago but at the last minute decides to stay on the train and continue on to Hollywood and another adventure begins. She meets an aging actor at a famous hotel and this gives her the entre she needs to meet other celebrities namely Olivia DeHaviland right as Olivia is about to begin shooting "Gone with the Wind". Eve is out of her element but true to character soon settles in and makes Hollywood her own.

The story is told alternately from Eve's perspective as well as other character's viewpoints. I loved the inside old Hollywood feel of the book but it lacks focus and the ending peters out. While the plot is going it easily held my interest and it's every bit as exciting as "Rules of Civility" but the ending stumbles as the story stops abruptly. Was Amor writing a sequel to "Rules" and his publishers stepped in and hurried him to get something to press? If so they did him a disservice. Since I read an advanced e-galley from the publisher I'm hoping this will be altered prior to publication. Concerning characterization however there's no better writer today than Towles.

This review is based on an advanced readers copy supplied by the publisher.
(Disclaimer given per FTC requirement.)

Erin says

Brief yet marvelous, Eve in Hollywood is the sonnet for LA, whereas Rules of Civility was a love letter for New York. While essentially a novella, Eve in Hollywood is made up of six short stories, each from the perspective of a different character. I loved seeing Eve from the points of view of innocent bystanders (including Olivia DeHaviland!) instead of her Rules of Civility co-star, and then, finally, hearing from Eve her herself. She is a freight train.

Overall, the takeaway is, this man can WRITE. From his description of the opening of the great west as "...giving way to the high, lonely deserts west of Exodus and east of John," I'm hooked, impressed, envious. I'll read anything he ever writes. Please let there be more.

See more at:

<http://booksforherreviews.com>

Jennifer says

This little novella picks up where *Rules of Civility* (a book I loved) leaves off for Evelyn Ross. What happens when she boards a train but doesn't get off in Chicago as planned? She stays on and takes Hollywood by storm. Towles has a wonderful way with setting - just as I loved Old New York in *Rules*, I loved Hollywood of the 1930's in this story. The format was interesting - 6 different chapters told from different perspectives. Five of them are people Eve meets on this journey and the last one is Eve herself. Some of these voices and story lines work better than others but all of them are fun and well written. I enjoyed being back in Towles world for a couple hours.

Rachel Bayles says

In a decade, people are going to be teaching courses centered around his work. As creative as Dinesen, but with a thoroughly American voice. Maybe the next Twain?

"On top of the stack that Miss Ross was straightening at that very moment was a motion to dismiss—which had presumably begun its journey as a tree. Solitary and majestic, that tree had provided shade to some little patch of America: in a churchyard, perhaps, or a pasture, or along a bend in the river where Whistling Billy McGuire had cast his line. And then, after half a century of providing relief from the sun so reliably, this tree had been unceremoniously felled—so that a middle-aged man without a wife or children sitting in an office a thousand miles away could string his carefully qualified arguments together end-to-end."

DebsD says

3+ stars. Towles' writing is excellent, as usual, and I very much liked the creativity of telling the story in almost-unrelated chapters, each told from a different perspective.

Blair says

A follow-up to Amor Towles' debut novel *Rules of Civility*, *Eve in Hollywood* contains six short stories focusing on the character of Eve, the secondary protagonist from the first book. Starting in the midst of Eve's journey from New York to Hollywood, it offers some explanation of where the character went and what she got up to during her absence from the 'stage' in *Rules*. Each story is told from the point of view of a new character who meets or in some way encounters Eve, with the final chapter taking up Eve's own viewpoint. With the same calm, assured narration of the original, this collection is a good, if very slight, read. I enjoyed these stories, but with an extract from *Rules of Civility* taking up more than a quarter of the book, it doesn't

really feel substantial enough to be a standalone volume. Given that Towles' debut has been out for a while, I expected more from this - it feels more like the sort of thing that would come out *before* the publication of a full novel, as a sampler of the author's style. At the very least, I think it should be priced lower than it is (it's only £1.99, which is obviously cheap anyway, but I don't think it's worth any more than 99p). Worth a look if you enjoyed *Rules*, but don't get your hopes up too high for a proper sequel.

MTK says

Επειδ' μου 'ρεσε πολ' το "Rules of civility" του 'διου συγγραφέα, αγ'ρασα αυτ' τη νουβ'λα που ακολουθε' την παρ'λληλη πορε'α εν'ς απ' τους χαρακτ'ρες του προηγ'μενου βιβλ'ου αφο' αποχ'ρησε απ' την πλοκ'. Ομολογ' 'τι απογοητε'τηκα, πρ'τον, γιατ' δεν πρ'κειται καν για ιστορ'α, 'στ'ω και σ'ντομη, αλλ' απλ' παρ'θεση μερικ'ν σκ'πριων περιστατικ'ν, και, δε'τερον, γιατ' δεν αφορο'ν στην πραγματικ'τητα την Eve, η οπο'α ε'ναι απλ'ς η αφορμ' για να φτι'ξει ο συγγραφέας μερικ' λεκτικ' σκ'τσα του προπολεμικο' Χ'λιγουντ. Ε'ναι καλογραμμ'να και ενδιαφ'ροντα, αλλ' αυτ' το υλικ' συν'θως το βρ'σκει κανε'ς ως μπ'νους σε κ'ποια επετειακ' 'κδοση του κυρ'ως βιβλ'ου ' στην ιστοσελ'δα του συγγραφέα και το διαβ'ζει δωρε'ν. Δε θα συνιστο'σα σε κ'ποιον να πληρ'σει για αυτ'.

Diane S ? says

3.5 Loved Rules of Civility and this novella follows Eve after she boards her train. In a series of short takes, Eve is seen influencing the lives of the people she comes in contact with. I really enjoyed the tour of Old Hollywood and its many players, old has bens, current stars, and photographers trying to grab the next big catch. The set of Gone with Wind and a brief appearance by Selznick. Towles is wonderful at setting the mood, at coming up with brilliant lines and situations. Look forward to his next full length book.
