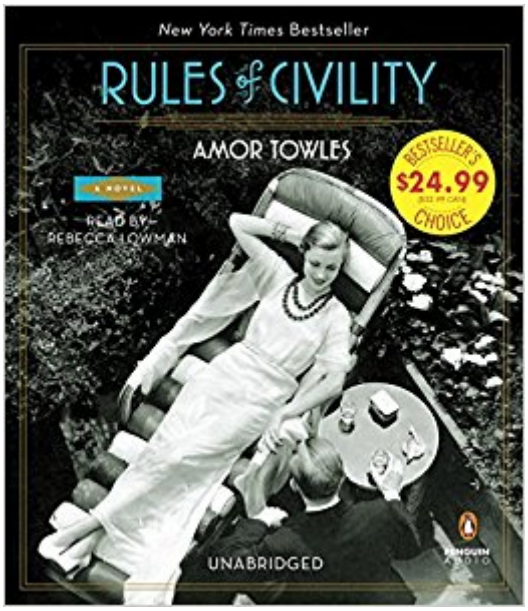
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Rules Of Civility: A Novel



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Synopsis

The New York Times bestselling novel that Ã¢â ¬Å“enchants on first reading and only improves on the secondÃ¢â ¬Â•Ã Â (The Philadelphia Inquirer)A Gentleman in MoscowÃ¢â ¬â •the highly anticipated new novel from Amor TowlesÃ¢â ¬â •is available now from VikingThis Ã¢â ¬Å“wonderfulÃ¢â ¬Â• (Chicago Tribune) and Ã¢â ¬Å“sharply stylishÃ¢â ¬Â• (Boston Globe) debut novel presents the story of a young woman whose life is on the brink of transformation. On the last night of 1937, twenty-five-year-old Katey Kontent is in a second-rate Greenwich Village jazz bar when Tinker Grey, a handsome banker, happens to sit down at the neighboring table. This chance encounter and its startling consequences propel Katey on a year-long journey into the upper echelons of New York societyÃ¢â ¬â •where she will have little to rely upon other than a bracing wit and her own brand of cool nerve.With its sparkling depiction of New YorkÃ¢â ¬â„¢s social strata, its intricate imagery and themes, and its immensely appealing characters,Ã Â Rules of Civility won the hearts of readers and critics alike.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Best Books of the Month, August 2011 Set during the hazy, enchanting, and martini-filled world of New York City circa 1938, Rules of Civility follows three friends--Katey, Eve, and Tinker--from their chance meeting at a jazz club on New Year's Eve through a year of enlightening and occasionally tragic adventures. Tinker orbits in the world of the wealthy; Katey and Eve stretch their few dollars out each evening on the town. While all three are complex characters, Katey is the story's shining star. She is a fully realized heroine, unique in her strong sense of self amidst her life's continual

fluctuations. Towles' writing also paints an inviting picture of New York City, without forgetting its sharp edges. Reminiscent of Fitzgerald, Rules of Civility is full of delicious sentences you can sit back and savor (most appropriately with a martini or two). --Caley Anderson A sophisticated and entertaining debut novel about an irresistible young woman with an uncommon sense of purpose. Set in New York City in 1938, Rules of Civility tells the story of a watershed year in the life of an uncompromising twenty-five-year- old named Katey Kontent. Armed with little more than a formidable intellect, a bracing wit, and her own brand of cool nerve, Katey embarks on a journey from a Wall Street secretarial pool through the upper echelons of New York society in search of a brighter future. The story opens on New Year's Eve in a Greenwich Village jazz bar, where Katey and her boardinghouse roommate Eve happen to meet Tinker Grey, a handsome banker with royal blue eyes and a ready smile. This chance encounter and its startling consequences cast Katey off her current course, but end up providing her unexpected access to the rarified offices of Conde Nast and a glittering new social circle. Befriended in turn by a shy, principled multimillionaire, an Upper East Side ne'er-do-well, and a single-minded widow who is ahead of her times, Katey has the chance to experience first hand the poise secured by wealth and station, but also the aspirations, envy, disloyalty, and desires that reside just below the surface. Even as she waits for circumstances to bring Tinker back into her orbit, she will learn how individual choices become the means by which life crystallizes loss. Elegant and captivating, Rules of Civility turns a Jamesian eye on how spur of the moment decisions define life for decades to come. A love letter to a great American city at the end of the Depression, readers will quickly fall under its spell of crisp writing, sparkling atmosphere and breathtaking revelations, as Towles evokes the ghosts of Fitzgerald, Capote, and McCarthy. Amor Towles's Rules of Civility Playlist You can listen to the playlist here. While jazz is not central to the narrative of Rules of Civility, the music and its various formulations are an important component of the bookÃ¢â ¬â„¢s backdrop. On the night of January 16, 1938, Benny Goodman assembled a bi-racial orchestra to play jazz to a sold-out Carnegie Hall--the first jazz performance in the hallowed hall and one which is now famous for bringing jazz (and black performers) to a wider audience. I am not a jazz historian, but for me the concert marks something of a turning point in jazz itself--from the big-band, swing-era sound that dominated the 1930s (and which the orchestra emphasized on stage that night) towards the more introspective, smaller group styles that would soon spawn bebop and its smoky aftereffects (ultimately reaching an apogee with Miles DavisÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Kind of Blue in 1957). For it is also in 1938 that Coleman Hawkins recorded the bebop antecedent "Body & Soul" and MintonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Playhouse, one of the key bebop gathering spots, opened in Harlem. By 1939, Blue Note Records was recording, and Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie

Parker and Thelonious Monk were all congregating in New York City. From 1935-1939, Goodman himself was stepping out of the big-band limelight to make more intimate improvisational recordings with a quartet including Gene Krupa and Lionel Hampton. My assertion of this as a turning point (like most such assertions) is rough, inexact and misleading, but it helps give shape to an evolution and bring into relief two ends of a jazz spectrum. On the big-band front, the power of the music naturally springs from the collective and orchestration. In numbers like "Sing, Sing, Sing," the carefully layered, precisely timed waning and waxing of rhythm and instrumentation towards moments of unified musical ecstasy simply demand that the audience collaborate through dance, cheers, and other outward expressions of joy. While in the smaller groups of bebop and beyond, the expressive power springs more from the soloist and his personal exploration of the music, his instrument, and his emotional state at that precise moment in time. This inevitably inspires in the listener a cigarette, a scotch, and a little more introspection. In a sense, the two ends of this jazz spectrum are like the public/private paradox of Walker EvansÃ¢â ¬â„¢s subway photographs (and of life in the metropolis itself.) If you are interested, I have created an playlist of music from roughly 1935-1945 that spans this transition. The playlist is not meant to be comprehensive or exact. Among other items, it includes swinging live performances from GoodmanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Carnegie Hall Concert as well as examples of his smaller group work; there are precursors to bebop like Coleman Hawkins and some early Charlie Parker. As a strange historical footnote, there was a strike in 1942Ã¢â ¬â œ1944 by the American Federation of Musicians, during which no official recordings were made. As such, this period at the onset of bebop was virtually undocumented and thus the records of 1945 reflect something of a culmination of early bebop rather than its starting point. The playlist also reflects the influence of the great American songbook giants (Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Irving Berlin, Rodgers & Hart, the Gershwins), many of whom were at the height of their powers in the 1930s. --Amor Towles Listen to the playlist --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Impossibly glamorous, RULES OF CIVILITY takes in 1930s New York with a dry martini and a side order of sharp-tongued wit. with vintage period detail verging on the nostalgic, it’s a stylish tale of ambitious, wisecracking gals on the make in Manhattan...With love at its heart (love lost, regained, betrayed and shared), this book is so much more than the sum of its parts as it takes in ambition, manner and the American Dream along the way. Where it excels is not letting the style become its only substance...Rules of Civility has the feel of a classic, one that’s as rich in story as in nostalgia and love for New York...With crackling prose, a compelling story and a beautiful way with words, this

clever and sassy book is not only dull of charm, it's shockingly good fun too. * Fiction Uncovered * Rattles along at the pace of a riotous night out in the book's vividly evoked Manhattan. It is atmospheric, satisfying Great Gatsby-lite complete, with fish-out-of-water first-person narration, country house parties and a fabulously wealthy male protagonist who is not all that he seems. * Ben Hoyle, The Times * Even the most jaded New Yorker can see the beauty in Amor Towles' RULES OF CIVILITY the antiqued portrait of an unlikely jet set making the most of Manhattan. * San Francisco Chronicle * This book feels special...Towles was born to write * Sun Herald * Set against a soundtrack of clinking glasses and saxophones, the book is a love letter to the city and the era, so confidently written it instantly plunges you into Thirties New York. Towles creates a narrative that sparkles with sentences so beautiful you'll stop and re-read them. A delicious and memorable novel that will leave you wistful - and desperate for a martini * Stylist * ...my book of the year. If the unthinkable happened and I could never read another new work of fiction in 2011, I'd simply re-read this sparkling, stylish book, with yet another round of martinis as dry as the author's wit * Jackie McGlone, Herald * Jazz-age New York is the setting for martinis and girls on the make in Rules of Civility by Amor Towles. As glamorous as it is gut-wrenching, this is the summer's must-read * ELLE * Because who doesn't want to be transported to Thirties Manhattan? * Lucy Mangan * Irresistible... A cross between Dorothy Parker and Holly Golightly, Katey Kontent is a priceless narrator in her own right - the brains of a bluestocking with the legs of a flapper and the mores of Carrie Bradshaw * Elena Seymenliyska, Telegraph * This is a flesh-and-blood tale you believe in, with fabulous period detail. It's all too rare to find a fun, glamorous, semi-literary tale to get lost in... While you're lost in the whirl of silk stockings, fur and hip flasks, all you care about is what Katey Kontent does next * Viv Groskop, Observer * Terrific. A smart, witty, charming dry-martini of a novel * David Nicholls, author of One Day * The summer's must-read: gripping and beautiful * Sunday Times * Achingly stylish...witty, slick production, replete with dark intrigue, period details, and a suitably Katharine Hepburn-like heroine * Guardian * Impossibly glamorous . . . Towles conjures up vintage New York so marvellously that it made me feel nostalgic for a place I've never been to. * The Times * --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

New York City's elite lived a rarified life of gentility and elegance. Although it was ruled by the brahmin class of inheritance, the young, beautiful, and gifted could gain access. This book is the story of one such young woman who ventured into the haute monde of New York society in the late 30s. It is a richly drawn tale of love, betrayal, and the good life. The prose is exquisite. The characters are all people you would love to know - or be. The New York in "Rules of Civility" is no

more but you can visit it in the pages of this delicious novel.

Thorough character detailing...the story line is not too intricate to allow putting it down for a short time, then coming back and remembering exactly what happened to whom. Brilliant period descriptions. Author did lots of research to make this totally authentic. I felt like I was complicit in some of the escapades myself. I had to stop reading once in a while so I could make the experience linger.

I never wanted this book to end.Every night I could not wait to climb into 1938 in Katey’s life.This book is descriptively written you can feel and see everything.It is a masterpiece!I would LOVE a movie to be made about this intriguing story.I am now into A Gentleman in Moscow by same authorHe is just brilliant

It started off a little slow for me. Once it got going, I was more interested. My impression was that this is a modern telling of "Sex and the City" if "Sex and the City" was set in 1937. The writing was fine, nothing special to me. I read it for book club, and I am glad I read it, but it wasn’t gripping.

As one who works in NYC, I enjoyed this romp immensely. The witty repartee and wonderfully expressive writing made it fun from start to finish. The one thing I found curious was the lack of quotes for dialogÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â •it annoys me when authors do that since it makes reading harder, thus less enjoyable. Still, high marks for a jolly story.

To be truthful this book reads slowly, however the characters are fascinatingly alive. It was a delve into secret Lives and ambitions which became real. Katherine manages to slide through life without becoming too jaded or cynical by her experiences.Perhaps it’s this ability to remain above the fray which kept me interested .

I really loved the writing in this book, the movie it produced in my head as I was reading it was really lush and vibrant. The author’s descriptions of New York at that time made me wish I could time travel for a weekend and experience it myself, particularly the Russian nightclub in the Lower East Side and the Jazz club in the Village. In terms of the characters, I was always rooting for our narrator even when I disagreed with her choices which wasn’t often. The supporting cast of characters were all interesting, complex and beautifully flawed people trying to make a go of it under

often difficult circumstances. I highly recommend this read

This book is poetic in its language, whether in descriptions of people or setting. Katey, a secretary who is an avid reader of good fiction, grammar books and the people around her, happens to join in with a fast wealthy crowd and 1938 is the cornerstone of her coming if age.

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