



Rebecca's Rules

Books Reviewed:

[Rebecca's Rules](#) [1]

Issue:

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Reviewer:

[Andrea Reece](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Anna Carey's debut novel [The Real Rebecca](#) [4] was much praised on publication, attracting enthusiastic reviews, and winning the Irish Children's Book of the Year Award. **Rebecca's Rules** is the follow up, and further proof of Carey's talent. It's another fresh and funny tale of teen life, if anything even warmer and more perceptive than the first.

The book opens with Rebecca heart-broken. Her perfect boyfriend and his family have moved to Canada and she is convinced that she will never love another boy again. At least her friends are supportive, and patient. They encourage her to channel her misery by writing songs for their band, Hey Dollface, though as Cass points out, Rebecca's lyrics for *The End of the World* might be a bit *too* gloomy. Distraction is provided first by the awful Vanessa Finn's mega birthday party (which is filmed for a reality TV show) and then when the girls decide to audition for the school musical.

It's with the descriptions of the **Mary Poppins** rehearsals that the book really takes off: Carey captures the excitement, camaraderie and tensions of a school, or indeed any amateur production, brilliantly. Rebecca gets a part in the chorus, from where she is perfectly placed to make droll but sharp observations on the proceedings, and cast and crew. She also finds herself a new romance with the cool, cigarette smoking, Kerouac fan who is playing Mr Banks.

Anna Carey has a sharp ear for dialogue and the book's diary format highlights this. Rebecca reports her new beau's pronouncements word for word, on everything from poetry to his parents (his parents, he says, 'only care about money and trivial things', adding, 'I can't stand their inane chatter.'). She's smitten, but we know, as she does too really, that for all his posing, he's shallow and selfish, and he gets his comeuppance.

The teen voice is spot on throughout, and the portraits Rebecca gives us of her friends and family will resonate with readers. Few authors describe teen girls' friendships and family relationships so well, and for all its humour, this is a remarkably tender book.

Links:

- [1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk-www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/rebeccas-rules>
- [2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk-www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/197>
- [3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk-www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/andrea-reece>
- [4] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk-www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/reviewbow/the-real-rebecca>