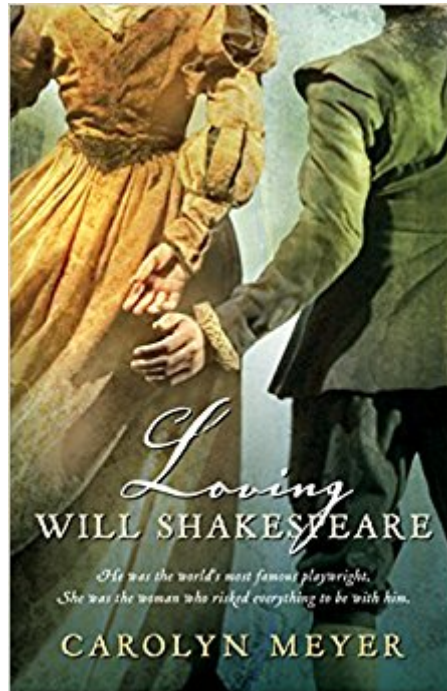




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Loving Will Shakespeare



Synopsis

Poor Anne Hathaway is still living with her callous stepmother, and her prospects for marriage and a home of her own are becoming grim. However, she can't seem to get charismatic Will Shakespeare out of her mind--even though he is much too young for her. But then one day Will impulsively kisses his childhood friend Anne, changing the course of their lives forever.Â Â Â Â

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 950L (What's this?)

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; 1 edition (June 1, 2008)

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 8 Upâ “With little factual material to work with (other than the famous second best bed bequeathed to her in Shakespeare’s will), Meyer has created a fascinating, complex young woman. Agnes Anne Hathaway lost her mother in her early teen years, and her stepmother was cantankerous and verbally abusive. This first-person narrative follows the ups and downs of the subject’s life as more children enter the home and she continues to feel lonely, shunted aside, and fearful of ever gaining real happiness. Since she’s seven years older and a close friend of the family, she has known Will since his birth, and when he blossoms into a handsome, intelligent 18-year-old, she is mesmerized by his energy, charm, and creativity. Teenage girls will relate to Anne’s rebellion against life’s limitations and her fear of never being loved, and rural Elizabethan life is vividly depicted in this bittersweet romance.â “Melissa Moore, Union University Library, Jackson, TN Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

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Agnes Hathaway's childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood have plenty of Cinderella elements: a wicked stepmother, at least one wicked stepsister (actually half sister) and her eventual rescue by an immature 18-year-old Will Shakespeare. Meyer does her usual fine job of weaving a fictionalized life tapestry from historical lives and events. Since little is actually known about Shakespeare, and even less about Agnes (Anne) Hathaway, Meyer had only snippets of information from which to work. Her speculations make for fascinating reading, as she works the slim facts into a story about a young woman frustrated by her inability to escape her family and drawn into a love, deemed socially inappropriate, for a much younger man. Readers looking for insight into Shakespeare will be disappointed. Those open to meeting a feisty young woman who is determined to live her own life in spite of societal confines, though, will be quickly absorbed by Meyer's vividly imagined portrayal of a courageous, long-suffering wife. Suggest Laurie Lawlor's *The Two Lives of Will Shakespeare* (2006) as a follow-up. Frances Bradburn

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Easy-going story for the most part, with some pretty neat surprises. It's a good read for when you need to slow your brain down or your nerves are rattled. It relaxed me. Not one of my very favorite CM books, but I will keep it and read again.

This was an amazing book! I was devastated when I turned the last page and the story was over!!! Your heart breaks for the characters and you feel as though you know them personally.

Loving Will Shakespeare by Carolyn Meyer We know him for his famous plays, sonnets, and invention of many of the common words in our language. Additionally, he created cultural icons that we still refer to today in common situations: Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, King Lear. In case you're about 600 years behind, I'm talking about William Shakespeare. Yes, the William Shakespeare. We know him for his work and influence on English literature, and historians speculate who he really was in private and what he did, but, Carolyn Meyer takes this in-depth speculation to a new level when she writes a fictional novel from the view point of Shakespeare's wife, Anne. Some of you may remember Anne as the wife Shakespeare left his second best bed to, but Meyer makes Anne just a little more memorable than history has allowed. Although most of the events portrayed are correctly arranged as to when they happened and the outcome, the conversations are predominantly

fictional. Born around 1555 and 1556, Anne Hathaway was Shakespeare's elder by eight or nine years. She bore his children, managed his home, and waited for his return, but all in girlish vain as Shakespeare began a very public and prominent life in London. Historically speaking, not much is known about Anne Hathaway, but there is speculation that the Shakespeare-Hathaway marriage was result of a pregnancy and that the wedding that was forced on Shakespeare by the Hathaway family ended in a desperate loathing between Hathaway and Shakespeare. Meyer, however, portrays a much more pleasant version of the story, and aims to fill in the gaps with fiction. In Meyer's version, Hathaway is a simple, English country girl who is living in a cramped cottage with her siblings and father after her mother's death. Hathaway is treated cruelly when her father remarries, but is already past the ideal marrying age and is doomed to be stuck with her parents forever. Enter Shakespeare, stage left: he's young, handsome, eager to please, and sees past Hathaway's progressing age. They begin something of a courtship before consummating their relationship, and resulting in the pregnancy that led to their marriage. Shakespeare promises to marry Hathaway, and he does, just before he begins his theater career in London. Emotionally alone with children and living in the attic of Shakespeare's parent's house, Hathaway progresses through the rapidly shifting and changing emotions and stages of her relationship with Shakespeare, as she struggles with raising her children, being content, and loving Will Shakespeare. Overall, the book was very endearing and insightful into the ways of the Medieval English customs, but it also introduces readers to a new facet of the Shakespeare phenomenon. I highly recommend this book for those who love historical fiction, lovers of the Tudor age, and those who just love a good love story.

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