



## The Starter Wife

By Gigi Levangie Grazer

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From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Maneater* comes a sexy, savvy, and wickedly funny novel about one woman's life after her divorce from a Hollywood studio head.

When her husband, Kenny, dumps her by cell phone (!) mere months before their ten-year wedding anniversary, Gracie Pollock is dazed and confused. Though life as the wife of a semi-famous Hollywood studio executive often left her yawning, Gracie always believed she and Kenny were different from other Hollywood couples. She never thought she'd be a starter wife.

But Kenny has upgraded, and with images of his new pop tartlet girlfriend everywhere Gracie turns, she seeks refuge at her best friend's Malibu mansion. Then a mysterious hunk saves her from drowning and suddenly drowning in her sorrows seems like a waste of time. And when she takes up with Kenny's boss, one of Hollywood's better-known Lotharios, she discovers that maybe life after divorce—Hollywood-style—isn't so bad after all!

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## **The Starter Wife** By Gigi Levangie Grazer Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Review

"The third and funniest in a succession of novels about the cutthroat social mores of the entertainment industry by a woman who has witnessed them up close." -- *The New York Times Book Review*

"Lively, wry." -- *The Washington Post Book World*

"Fearless and fabulous. Only an insider like Gigi Grazer could have so much wicked fun with the intricacies of Hollywood's power couples." -- Lauren Weisberger, author of *The Devil Wears Prada*

### About the Author

Gigi Levangie Grazer wrote the screenplay for *Stepmom*, the Columbia TriStar movie starring Julia Roberts and Susan Sarandon. Her previous novel, *Rescue Me*, is being developed into a film at Fox Searchlight. Grazer lives in Los Angeles with her two young sons and three miniature dachshunds.

### From The Washington Post

Gracie Pollock should have suspected that her movie executive husband, Kenny, was cheating on her when he began to wear the earring. But she missed the clues, and at the age of 41 -- which makes her, as a Hollywood woman, almost assisted-living-ready -- Kenny dumps her via cell phone, weeks before their pre-nup would have expired. The heroine of Gigi Levangie Grazer's third novel, *The Starter Wife*, thus plummets from being a classic Wife Of, botoxed and boob-jobbed -- "easy on the eyes and hard on the 401(k)" -- to being a single mother confronting survival without resources. Well, not quite without resources: She and her 4-year-old-daughter are invited to housesit another Wife Of's glam Malibu digs. So she has a reprieve during which to become reacquainted with her true self and, with luck, snare another man.

"Could a woman over a certain age in Los Angeles be able to find a (reasonable) date?" No reader of this good-natured, fluffy novel will doubt for an instant that she can. Grazer, herself the wife of a Hollywood producer, wrote the screenplay for the feel-good tearjerker "*Stepmom*," and *Starter Wife* is the same kind of gentle cultural commentary. It is a world where children behave like children in movies, lobbing winsome, kids-say-the-darnedest-things lines but never causing too much trouble; where money never poses much of an issue in divorce because all the available abodes are as lavish as movie sets; and where single mothers over a certain age look like Susan Sarandon -- and if such women can't get dates, they might as well just drop dead.

Before her life as a Hollywood wife, Gracie had an identity of her own as a successful children's book writer (nothing so threatening as a satirical novelist). As well as having quite nice feet, Gracie is supposed to be observant, with a sharp wit. This Hollywood wife can actually identify lines from Shakespeare. (Okay, she can't tell "*Hamlet*" from "*Macbeth*," but we must remember that this is L.A; Gracie's brains, on a 1-to-10 scale, may be "about a seven" in the world at large, but "on the west side of L.A. she was pushing a nine, nine and a half, easy." ) The novel's setup promises that Gracie will serve as "the Jane Goodall of the Beach-Bimbos-and-Bentleys set," skewering Hollywood pretensions. The most enjoyable sections of *The Starter Wife* do exactly that:

"The demands of a life filled with petty concerns -- Why are the tennis court lights on at eight a.m.? The air-conditioning went above 72 degrees in the guesthouse sitting room! We need new flower arrangements twice

a week. Why won't the remote (that cost as much as a new Toyota) turn off the Flat Screen TV in the bar? What is the proper ratio of studio to talent for a dinner party? The orchids in the foyer are dying. Should we serve lamb or salmon at our third dinner party this month? I want a phone on the left side of the master toilet. Who has (imaginary) food allergies? The pool is overflowing. Who doesn't eat meat? That painting doesn't work with the new couch. Who doesn't eat bread? I need another iPod (pre-programmed with Julia Roberts's favorites). The gardener cut the grass too low. The made-in-Tibet screening-room curtains won't open -- had devoured not only Gracie's creativity but, more important, her spirit."

Grazer clearly knows this scene, and is a lively, wry reporter of Hollywood's strident triviality and narcissism. But the novel falters, as many screenplays do, after the setup. The plot twist involving Kenny's new girlfriend, Britney Spears, is flat-out unfunny and reveals the problem with mixing fictional and real characters in a Hollywood novel. Spears feels like an old joke here. Another novelist of Hollywood, Bruce Wagner, has more success using only invented characters as protagonists; he manages to make them even more outré and bizarre than their real-life models.

When Gracie meets her love interest, The Starter Wife leaves comedy behind for romance-novel territory. Gracie and Sam Knight (allusion to Jane Austen's Knightley?) meet cute, when he rescues her from a kayaking accident. He is manly yet sensitive. He is a great kisser. He is also homeless -- but no reader will doubt that he'll turn out to be the prince in pauper's clothing who will not only love Gracie for her spunk, but also allow her to stay in Malibu, entertaining in style her loyal friends (a trio that includes the prerequisite straight-talking, gay interior decorator).

"It's a Malibu fairy tale," Gracie sighs. Indeed. At least the Hollywood version -- real fairy tales, as any reader of the Grimms knows, tend to be a lot nastier and more grisly.

Reviewed by Lisa Zeidner

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Allen Scheiber:**

The feeling that you get from The Starter Wife is a more deep you excavating the information that hide inside the words the more you get enthusiastic about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to be aware of but The Starter Wife giving you thrill feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in selected way that can be understood by means of anyone who read that because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. That book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. So it is easy to understand then can go along, both in printed or e-book style are available. We recommend you for having this The Starter Wife instantly.

#### **Beverly McClendon:**

Reading can called thoughts hangout, why? Because when you find yourself reading a book especially book entitled The Starter Wife your mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in each and every aspect that maybe unknown for but surely will become your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a reserve then become one form conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get before. The The Starter Wife giving you a different experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you

useful information for your better life with this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind are going to be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary wasting spare time activity?

**Tiffany Reyes:**

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