



Take Two

Shira Anthony

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Lights, camera, action! When Professor Wesley Coolidge accepts a summer job as a historical consultant to a pirate movie being filmed in North Carolina, the last person he expects to bump into is his soon-to-be-ex, movie star Sander Carson.

Just like the flamboyant pirate he's playing, Sander, aka Sam Carr, is used to getting what he wants, and he makes it clear he wants Wesley back in his life. Sam lost Wesley when he left their life in New York City behind for a career in Hollywood. But Wesley has finally managed to put the pieces of his heart back together, and he isn't interested in Sam and Wesley: The Sequel.

Convincing Wesley to give their relationship a second chance will take much more than Sam's apologies and reminders of good times past. If Sam wants Wesley back, he'll have to show Wesley that they really can sail into the sunset together—a real-life happily-ever-after that won't end once the final credits roll.

Take Two Details

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From Reader Review Take Two for online ebook

Ceres says

Je suis tellement ravie d'avoir lu ce titre comme première romance M/M! L'histoire de Wes et Sam est vraiment très belle. J'ai beaucoup aimé l'authenticité de leurs sentiments mais aussi la réalité à laquelle ils doivent faire face, les compromis, les sacrifices... Au delà de la simple reconquête, Sam et Wes se posent les bonnes questions pour affronter un futur ensemble. Qu'ils se connaissent depuis 10 ans à apporter une belle crédibilité à leur relation et leurs réactions.

Le tout dans un décor de film de pirates sur une très belle île et le tour est joué. Une romance agréable que j'ai dévorée en quelques heures seulement.

Lelyana says

SPOILER ALERT!

The idea of a Professor and a movie star can be entertaining if only there's not too much drama at the end of the book. Made me tired just for reading about the 'details' about the storm and everything.

Not the kind of drama that the two MCs fight and jealous or whatever. Actually, after three years separation, and 'moved on', they're not too wild in three years of their separation, you know what I mean? Wesley moved on with Carl, that whore of a bitch Carl (thank God Wesley found out about him at the right time).

Good for Sam, who's actually didn't want a divorce. He's a movie star, he didn't care about his husband's loneliness, busy, busy, busy. Still love Wesley like crazy, but you know, couple ignorance when they become too comfortable to each other. No cheating whatsoever.

But Wesley was lonely and he found Carl whose resembled a bit about Sam.

So after the official filling of divorce paper, he started dating Carl. Ugh.

Good thing is, they're just dating for four months and no mention about their sex life, which was good for my weak heart.

Overall this one is bearable. I'm not crazy about this, but Sam is kind of sweet guy, and romantic, and Wesley is some clueless Professor. Actually, adorable.

Need a little cut off some details, less telling, this story is going to be great.

ARC was given by publisher for a fair and unbiased review. No high rating required.

Ami says

[Carl sleeping with his boss (hide spoiler)]

Line says

This book was a 3.68 stars for me.

But I seriously love this new trend with low-angst and high cozy-ness.

So Sam and Wesley have been married for 10 years, but Wesley has asked for a divorce, since their marriage have been going down-hill after Sam moved to Hollywood to pursue his career as a movie star. Wesley is a professor and after he filed for divorce he has been trying to get his life on track again. He's dating a new man, and working like his life was depending on it.

Sam is NOT ready to be divorced and he finagles a way for Wesley to be a consultant on his latest movie, so he can convince him, that they are not done.

There is not much more to the book than this. It is the story of KNOWING someone, but still not listening and being there for each other. It is the story of being swept up in all the 'white noise' surrounding us, and forgetting the important things, because the important things will OF CORSE not disappear just because. I loved Sam... Yes, he acted careless before, but he is really trying to redeem himself, and he is not ready to let Wesley go, which I thought was wonderful. Sam really is trying to get his head out of his ass!

There is NO cheating, (view spoiler) the smexy times are not CRAZY, but they're sweet, there is humor, there are a few flashbacks from when they met and when their marriage was falling apart and then there is love.

Seriously this book can be put in the same category as Open Road and Not a Game; cozy books with low (but some) angst and make-you-feel-good-writing in spades.

Sandra says

4.5 stars for this lovely, romantic second-chance-at-love novel by the ever so fabulous Shira Anthony.

First off, I adore second chance at love stories, especially when there's a bit of animosity to begin with.

Wesley Coolidge is a History professor with extensive knowledge of pirates. When he's hired to be a consultant on a new pirate movie, he doesn't realize that the lead actor of the movie is none other than his soon-to-be ex-husband Sander Carson, aka Sam Carr.

Sam/Sander has finagled Wesley being hired for the movie, which is being shot on Bald Head Island, therefore mostly cut off from the mainland, except for the daily ferry runs, and plans to win back Wesley's affection after realizing he himself is mostly to blame for the demise of their marriage and relationship. Miscommunication and taking Wesley for granted, while Sam was running off chasing his Hollywood dreams, all contributed to the end of their marriage.

Wesley has no interest in rekindling the flames, having filed for divorce and moved on to a new boyfriend. Sort of. Sam still gets under his skin, but he remains firm in not wanting to start anything again, and seems to basically use his new BF as a shield.

Until he can't, for reasons you'll find out when you read this fantastic book.

Sam makes no excuses for wanting Wesley, and pulls out all the stops to win him, even when he's advised to not make grand gestures, but fails epically at first.

There's a bit of a subplot with the movie director and the assistant, and I actually quite liked the juxtaposition of that developing romance against Sam and Wesley's reunification.

The author's exquisite writing style and beautifully written descriptions of the island and its surroundings painted a complete picture, and I couldn't help but read and read and read until the climactic high-point and subsequent happy ending.

This book won't rate high on the steam scale, and if that's all you're looking for, you might be disappointed. There are really only a couple of bedroom scenes, though the book isn't about what happens between the sheets but about two men, who are still in love with each other finding their way not back, but to a new, better version of their marriage. There is still much hurt and pain, especially on Wesley's side, and it takes time for him and Sam to work through those issues. Both Wesley and Sam have lessons to learn, and I would say that it's Sam who grows most in this book. I may even venture to say that he matures in front of the reader's eyes, especially when he finally realizes that it's not about what he wants but about the man he loves, and giving him what he needs, and actually listening to what he's saying.

A sweet second-chance romance set against a beautiful backdrop, this book will sweep you off your feet. Highly recommended.

** I received a free copy of this book from its publisher. A positive review was not promised in return. **

DaisyGirl says

3.5 (4.0) Stars

This story is about an established couple, Wesley and Sam, who were in love, married, but are now in the midst of finalizing their divorce when they are thrown back together during a movie production. Sam's meteoric rise in Hollywood and hiding in the closet led to their divorce, despite the fact that Sam loves Wesley and Wesley loves Sam. Sam works hard to show Wesley that he wants to make things work but it's a painful road (and read) because he keeps missing the point. For example, Sam is always making grand gestures in an effort to show Wesley that he's committed to getting him back but Wesley is not one who enjoys the spotlight. He's often shying away from these grand gestures and tries desperately to find his footing despite Sam's overtures. The story attempted at times to be funny but I felt mostly sad because the pain for Wesley ran deep and the road to redemption was not easy. Things worked out in the end and I enjoyed their story overall but it was trying.

Bottom line: Take two was kinda tough but, in the end, worthwhile.

Pianka *call me PIU* says

“Second chance” romances always make me feel good and needless to say I adored “Take Two”. It was sweet, fun with the correct amount of emotions to make it a perfect second chance read. The characters were very likable and I felt their love and pain in equal measures. Plus the location of the story took me on a mental spin through the azure waters of the ocean on an adventure. Very nice plot, a healthy amount of angst and a great HEA at the end, builds up into a great reading experience.

Wesley Coolidge has been hired to be the resident pirate consultant on a new Hollywood movie. With his boyfriend away working on his research, Wesley has nothing to do during the summer vacation until he lands the consulting gig. It's easy money plus he gets to spend more than a month on a gorgeous beach, so it would have been a no brainer that he will enjoy it. But when the lead hero of the movie is none other than Wesley's gorgeous ex-husband, things are about to get a little dicey. Wesley needs to move on from his past but staying in close proximity with the love of his life is not helping matters. To top that, **Sam Carr**, Wesley's ex has decided that he will get Wesley back, whatever it takes. So in between grand gestures by Sam and Wesley trying very hard to resist his deep-seated feelings for Sam, they find their way to each other. **Sam and Wesley need a second take in their romance/marriage to get their Happily Ever After!!!**

Wesley and Sam have history and we get the feel of their past lives through the flashbacks in the story. They were in love, they still are but because of bad timing and especially due to a huge lack of communication, their marriage falls apart. After almost 3 years of being separated when Wesley meets Sam again, the old memories are not ready to remain buried. The feelings are still there as strong as ever, Wesley and Sam just needs to talk and figure out what went wrong in the first place before they can even hope for a second chance.

I loved both the men. Sam was very cute and romantic with his grand gestures to woo Wesley back. His hard work backfired sometimes but at the end it was the little things and a whole new outlook towards their relationship that brings the lovebirds together again. Wesley has been hurt but he is still in love so he cannot resist Sam but he can't let the problems go either. Both men struggle to reach their HEA a second time and at the end their effort pays off big time.

The reason behind Wesley and Sam's unsuccessful marriage was very realistic and I loved how they both finally talk and lay out their problems in the open and try to work them out. At the end, despite of a 10 year old marriage behind them, this new rekindling of their romance was new and different in many ways. There will definitely be problems that will test them but their new understanding of each other will go a long way to save their love the next time around.

All in all, it was a very sweet and angsty romance. I cheered for the sweet couple and I was extremely satisfied with their “Take Two” in Love/Marriage. I really enjoyed this story and would love to read more by Shira Anthony.

This review has been cross posted at GayBookReviews

Ele says

3.5 stars

I have mixed feelings about this book, and I went back and forth on my rating a lot of times. It was a good book, and I liked some things a lot, but others didn't work all that well for me.

What I liked:

-I really like Mrs Anthony's writing style. It's so smooth and...romantic. Yes, I know that "romantic" doesn't describe someone's writing, but it's the first one that comes to mind when I'm thinking about this author.

-I love, love, LOVE second chance stories.

-The setting of the story was pretty amazing.

-I liked that above all else the MCs were friends. Even when Sam's intentions became clear, even when there was seemingly no hope for the two of them, they tried for friendship.

-In the end, no matter how frustrating the journey was, the characters reached **that** point, where they **talked with honesty, understood what went wrong without blaming each other, and started changing the things that broke them.** And this is important.

What didn't work:

-Wesley. Wesley didn't work. Not because of (view spoiler). This, I really appreciated and his explanation as to why resonated with me a lot. But I feel that he was sending mixed signals, or even leading Sam on sometimes. His back and forth got irritating. Maybe that is why I felt that the story was a bit **repetitive**. Had it been shorter, it might have worked better for me.

-This is low on steam. I'm not complaining because I'm a perv. Well, I am but that's not the point. I just expected more passion and fire between these two, considering they still love each other and have been apart for the last three years. The couple of sex scenes are very hot, though.

-This is more like a personal niggle, so it might not bother others, but I felt like some plot points were not the MC's choices, but external causes (or even excuses) that brought them together, like (view spoiler). But, again, this is MY personal preference, not the author's wrong.

Overall, this was a good story, light but with a lot of depth. While I didn't love it, I certainly liked it.

Review cross-posted on Gay Book Reviews.

Ruthie Taylor says

~~I received a free copy of this book to read and review for Wicked Reads ~~

I really enjoyed this book, but have to admit that the cover doesn't represent what I read very well at all. In my mind Wesley may be a geeky academic, but he specialises in pirates (!), he runs to keep fit, and he is not immature. It is rare for me to mention a cover, but I think that you may underestimate how good the book is based on it.

This is a sweet, fun read about two men who found that life got in the way of their marriage. We are straight into the story in present day, but get a few insights into Sam and Wesley's earlier years together along the way, and just what went wrong. Sam is prepared to do anything to fix things, but Wesley needs something else, and it is a race against time for Sam to work out just what that is. I loved the side characters, such as Jeffrey and Cyrus, as they added a positive element as well as being fun. The filming elements are entertaining, especially some of the terrible lines!

If you want a book with a lovely outcome and a fun way to get there, this is just right!

Shira Anthony says

My first humorous novel is set in one of my favorite places: Bald Head Island. I wanted to write a funny, sweet romance with a touch of angst about a second chance at love. Wes is a slightly uptight history professor. Sam is action star "Sander Carson." The two met in grad school, years before, but their relationship has fallen apart.

Sam, in a desperate attempt to win Wes back, agrees to act in a D-movie about the real-life "gentleman pirate," Stede Bonnet. Silliness ensues, including anachronistic weapons, costumes, and dialogue that make pirate expert Wes grind his teeth in frustration.

I hope you enjoy this sweet and funny story about true love that won't quit, and finding your way back to your heart's home.

Jaymie says

Who knew making a pirate movie could promote romance for a cute nerdy History Professor and a big name Movie Actor? Take two is such a good read, I absolutely loved it. While I worried that it would be a bit on the fluffy side, it wasn't. There is plenty of angst and even some moments I thought I might shed a few tears. But mostly this story is full of laughs and romance.

Sam was my favorite by far, I fell for him pretty much immediately. He's such a sweetheart and he loves Wesley like crazy. He may have made some major mistakes in the past but he is truly repentant and wants to fix things. He's pretty much an all around good guy. Wesley was funny most of the time but, truth be told, towards the end I was getting a bit tired of his stubbornness. I just wanted them to be together and rode off into the sunset together.

Overall I loved this story, I definitely recommend it. The writing was well done, there were great characters and a unique storyline.

It's a 4.5 Star read!

A copy of this book was provided by Dreamspinner Press in exchange for an honest and fair review

Deanna says

I love a second chance romance, it might be my favorite behind GFY. This is one of the best I have read, loved everything about it.

Sam and Wesley have been married for ten years. Wesley is a college history professor in New York while Sam has moved to LA to peruse an acting career as Sander Carson. The time apart has Wesley filing for divorce after three years on loneliness.

Wesley has moved on, he is dating someone on staff at the college, he is up for a new grant at work and has been promoted. Life is perfect until everything starts to unravel. Wesley was supposed to spend the summer at a dig site with his new boyfriend but the plans change and Wesley isn't able to go along. With a whole summer open Wesley isn't sure what to do until a big Hollywood studio calls and asks him to help with historical accuracy on a pirate movie being filmed in North Carolina.

A summer in North Carolina, what could go wrong? What Wesley doesn't know is that Sam has orchestrated this entire thing to win him back. Figuring that if they spend some time together Wesley will fall back into his arms. Sam doesn't factor in that Wesley may not want to give Sam a second chance. He only has the summer to prove to Wesley that he's a changed man and he can be the husband that Wesley deserves.

The book ran the whole spectrum of emotion. I was laughing, I was crying, I was depressed, and I was super happy. The author writes about the couples struggles in a way that makes you feel everything but without it being overly dramatic or angsty.

The whole cast of characters were well developed and relatable. I loved Sam's assistant, Jeff. Super cute, super young. He was adorable.

The story was well thought out and entertaining. I loved that it spanned over a good bit of time, I'm not a huge fan of books that take place over a weekend.

This is one of my favorite reads of the summer!

ARC provided by author/publisher in exchange for an honest review by Two Chicks Obsessed.

SheReadsALot says

3.5 Hearts--

"We don't feel like a couple. It's like we're running in the same direction, but we're not on the same team."

I've had this song [Charlie Puth - "We Don't Talk Anymore"] stuck on my brain the entire time while reading *Take Two* by Shira Anthony. This awesome song and a fave couple from Sense8 (fans of the show should figure out which closeted couple) on my brain I should say.

Why? This story is about how non-communication can break down a relationship. A couple who suffers from "right person, wrong time." Love, sex and compatibility are definitely big key factors to have a great relationship, but the biggest is communication. Without it, the strongest can even fail. As what happened in *Take Two*.

Thirty nine year old NY history professor Wesley Coolidge is finally getting his life back on track. Work's great, he has a new academic boyfriend and...he's weeks away from having his divorce finalized. His soon to be ex-husband is famous actor thirty five year old Sander Carson aka Sam Carr. With a marriage of ten years and a separation of three years, it's time for them to move on.

Even though Wesley loves Sam just as much as Sam loves Wesley.

Even though their spark never faded.

The problem is the lines of communications faltered as Sam made it in Hollywood and hid their marriage in the closet. (The closet isn't to blame for the divorce)

The author bills the story as funny, and it might have had a moment or two that made me smile...I don't think it was funny. It's more fluffy and cute. It could have easily been another addition to the Dreamspun line, if you squinted just right.

Second romance, established couple, big grand gestures and sneaky machinations to make your lover realize the spark is still there...all key elements for a light second chance romance. Sam is very stubborn and charming. He tricks Wesley to North Carolina to his pirate set for a job and goes out the way to make sure Wesley know he doesn't want the divorce. (There's no cheating & low angst)

There is something about Shira Anthony's writing that is infectious for me. I get swept away in her characters. They're not outrageous or OTT, simple men who have real life problems and don't mind a little romance.

I do have quibbles. My main one being Wesley realizes why he needs to divorce Sam. At least, I think he did. Wesley is shy, doesn't seem to like grand, dramatic gestures (which after a decade....Sam should have known) and he didn't want to fall under the charismatic Sam spell. He admits it's hard to resist but seems to be on the same communication wavelength that Sam wasn't trying to find. Sam was more of a talk at Wesley than listen and talk to him type of man. I wanted more from Sam. I needed more from Sam. I could see the new boyfriend plot device. from a mile away. I could see the natural disaster plot device from ten feet away.

What I wanted to see was Sam finally get the light bulb upstairs and quit the personal 'CGI' and get real with his man. Wesley held strong...mostly. It might come off as wishy-washy, but I think Wesley explains his reactions.

I did wish the boyfriend angle was non existent. I don't think it really added to the story. The entire HEA seemed like a rebound which defeats the purpose of reconciliation for me, if they're trying to avoid making the same mistakes again.

But it's light and happy. And I shouldn't go looking for depth and maturity. That's not this book.

It's a good read. Sweet love scenes (minimal sex scenes, it's more about reconnection) Not my favorite Shira Anthony, that of course being the deceptively angsty ones like Prelude.

Sweet, light, big romantic gestures, established couple yum yum (not my kink, tbh), pirate actors (definitely my kink), geeks and hunky actors can all be found in Shira Anthony's Take Two.

A copy provided for an honest review.

Les Joseph says

3.5 rounded up to 4 stars

Super cute cover for Shira Anthony's sweet and romantic new book, Take Two. Second chance love stories just get me in the feels every time and I found myself rooting for Sam and Wesley from the get go. Add in a fantastic setting with some pirate lore and this was an entertaining read from beginning to end.

Sam Carr might be a big star, he even has a stage name, who has his pick of scripts and most anything else he wants ... except for his soon to be ex-husband Wesley Coolidge. He comes up with a plan and pulls out all the stops, some quite over the top to be sure, to try to win Wesley back, starting with ensuring that Wesley spends his summer in North Carolina consulting on a movie about pirates. A movie Sam just happens to be the star in. There's a yacht, delicious dinners, romantic walks on the beach all set in motion to try to show Wesley that they still belong to one another.

Wesley has just barely managed to move on from Sam after three years of separation. He has a job he loves, a new boyfriend whom he's crazy about, even if their plans to spend the summer together get derailed after his boyfriend goes away to do research. When the opportunity arises to work on a movie set as an expert on pirate lore, he takes it. It doesn't take long for Wesley to discover Sam's hidden (well, it's not really so hidden since the entire cast and crew seems to know what Sam's motivations are) agenda. This was a fun book. All the pirate information was entertaining and different to read and Sam and Wesley were really quite sweet together. A bit TOO sweet and terribly sappy for my tastes. And Wesley is a bit of a whiner and extremely wishy washy, his mixed signals to Sam gave me whiplash. Even so, I found myself smiling often and enjoyed this book. Give it a go, you won't be sorry.

This review will also be posted on www.diversereader.blogspot.com

Lisa The Novel Approach says

I am a sucker for second chance romance stories and this one had all the feels.

The characters were great, the pacing was on point, the feelings for both Wesley and Sam are realistic, and the secondary characters were well developed. Yup—you could say I thoroughly enjoyed this story.

Take Two is, ultimately, about two men who love each other, and never stopped, but lack of communication shattered their marriage; Sam, in his quest to be the next big thing in Hollywood, staying closeted and spending more and more time putting his career as a priority, leaving Wesley with whatever scraps of time he had left after everyone else had their share; Wesley losing hope and feeling less and less valued, without articulating his feelings to his husband, eventually gives up and walks away. Of course, as it happens so often in relationships—"you don't know what you've got till it's gone"—and once faced with losing Wesley, Sam realizes his mistakes. Despite the lack of time he spent with Wesley, Wesley was his anchor in the fast-paced world of Hollywood, keeping him centered without even knowing his role in Sam's life.

The story starts just as Wesley is finding his feet and moving on with someone else, weeks away from the divorce being final, and Sam is giving a last ditch effort to win back the love of his life.

Was some of the plot over the top? Probably. The way Sam arranged everything to get Wesley to the movie set was borderline unbelievable. Regardless, I was completely okay with it because of how much I enjoyed reading the events unfold once Wesley figured out what was happening. Not to mention, I like a little bit of unbelievable every now and again, especially when it is written with such captivating characters and plot.

Communication. It is an essential element in any relationship and is also the word that keeps popping up during this entire story echoing in my head, and these guys just don't have it.

Sam is so focused on winning Wesley back he does things that are not what Wesley needs or wants; the gestures and actions were based more off ones he would have wanted done for him. Some might find this unbelievable that after a decade of marriage he seems to not even know his soon to be ex-husband, who he loves and claims to know so well. I would disagree with those people; I found it to be realistic. People often tend to make gestures based on personal wants or desires, and when desperation and fear are added to the mix, often objectivity is lost. Sam had spent so many years in Hollywood, around people who are extroverts—like himself—that he has failed to truly take into account Wesley's desires and feelings. All Sam knows is he can't lose him. Yet, Sam hasn't taken the time to figure out exactly why he is losing Wesley to begin with.

Wesley never stopped loving Sam, but he was not happy with his marriage. He continues to be attracted and the physical pull and chemistry is off the charts, but it wasn't enough to keep them together because he didn't talk about what he was feeling when he started to feel it. Since Wesley is not confrontational by nature and doesn't appreciate the spotlight, rather than confronting Sam as he saw the signs of his marriage collapsing, he ignored it, until he couldn't, then simply walked away. When Sam enters into the picture trying to win him back, he still avoids explaining the real reasons he walked away; rather, he spends his time trying to push Sam and his advances back.

I adore Shira Anthony's writing style in this book; she adds enough humor to keep the very realistic cause of the divorce from being too depressing, and most of the characters were likable. I was very happy to find there was no definitive person whose actions resulted in the marriage falling apart. So often in stories like this, I find there is a finger being pointed at one particular person who ends up having to take the majority of the blame, but it is clear in this book both MCs are responsible to some degree, and I felt deeply for both of them as I cheered them on and yelled at them to just talk to get it out there.

If I had any niggle with the book, it was Wesley's boyfriend and the situation with him. I predicted in the first chapter what was going to happen, and although I understood the reason for his character to be in the book, I had hoped the outcome with him wouldn't have been as predictable as it was. Since he is more on the outskirts, and the focus is on Sam and Wesley, I can easily overlook this because of how much everything

else worked for me.

This was a delightful second chance romance and an engaging read which I recommend to anyone who is looking for a sweet story with just enough angst and humor.

Reviewed by Lindsey for The Novel Approach Reviews
