



IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (1934) – AFI Movie Club Pick of the Day

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

Directed by AFI Life Achievement Award recipient Frank Capra and starring Clark Gable and Claudette Colbert – both of whom were enshrined among AFI's greatest screen legends – IT HAPPENED ONE NIGHT (1934) is an iconic screwball comedy that's appeared on no fewer than four of AFI's lists of the greatest American films of all time – including among the top 10 funniest films ever to grace the silver screen.

Spoiled heiress Ellie Andrews (Colbert) escapes from her millionaire father Alexander's yacht when he kidnaps her after she elopes with and marries King Westley, a playboy aviator whom Andrews thinks is a fortune hunter. She boards a bus headed for New York and meets Peter Warne (Gable), a reporter who has just been fired. Despite their dislike for each other, the two manage to fulfill each other's needs and find redemption in their work and in their relationships. Streaming on Prime Video and YouTube.



The working title for this film was *Night Bus*, and it was to have starred Robert Montgomery, who was Frank Capra's original choice for the part of Peter Warne. Montgomery was replaced by Clark Gable, who was borrowed from M-G-M, while Claudette Colbert was borrowed from Paramount. In Capra's autobiography, he states that he variously sought Myrna Loy, Margaret Sullavan, Miriam Hopkins, and Constance Bennett for the role of Ellie Andrews before selecting Colbert.

In the five major categories, Best Picture, Best Direction, Best Screenplay, Best Actor, and Best Actress (Colbert was the first French-born actress to receive the honor). It was voted one of the ten best pictures of 1934 by the *FD* Poll of Critics and the National Board of Review, and on 20 Mar 1939, Gable and Colbert performed a radio version of it for the *Lux Radio Theater*.

Although many films are called "remakes" of *It Happened One Night* in modern sources, only 1956 musical *You Can't Run Away from It*, produced at Columbia, directed by Dick Powell and starring Jack Lemmon and June Allyson, was based on the same short story and used the same screenplay (with adaptations) as the Capra film. *It Happened One Night* was ranked 46th on AFI's 2007 100 Years...100 Movies–10th Anniversary Edition list of the greatest American films, moving down from the 35th position it held on AFI's 1997 list.

Until Next time, I'll see you at the movies!



HollywoodGlee celebrating the start of the 2019 AFI FEST presented by Audi. (Photo credit: Larry Gleeson)

About AFI Movie Club

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(Source: AFI News Release)

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