



Serendipity and Me

Judith L. Roth

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Sara has always loved cats. She surrounds herself with pictures of cats, stuffed cats, even cat-headed slippers. But she's never been allowed to have a real cat of her own. Her father has always told her no, for reasons he won't explain.

So when a fluffy snowball of a kitten darts through their front door and into her life, Sara believes her dream might finally come true. But convincing her father to break his strict No Cats policy seems impossible. She has less than a week to persuade him that this kitten is exactly what their lonely, broken family of two needs to heal.

Told in lyrical, spare verse, *Serendipity & Me* is a sparkling novel that elegantly handles the topic of loss for a middle grade audience.

Serendipity and Me Details

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Author : Judith L. Roth

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From Reader Review Serendipity and Me for online ebook

Bobbi Wiley says

I loved this book. It had every component --- laughter, tears, and relatability. This book is proof that pets save us, just as much as we save them (and probably more). I am now a HUGE Judith Roth fan!

Jessica Vallejos says

Sweet sweet novel in verse!! I'm an adult, and I LOVED this book. Such a cute m, but emotionally packed story about Sara, her father, and a little fur snowball named Serendipity. Put it on your class shelf, you won't regret it.

Jennifer Lavoie says

Not ashamed to admit it. But the time I got to the end of this story told in verse, I was a 28-year-old middle school English teacher curled up in bed with her own cat, crying.

Yes. This book made me cry real tears.

It tugged on every emotional heartstring I had, but it was WORTH it. This book, while a fast read, had so much packed into it. Sara wants to be Wendy in the school play, but gets sick. And the choice of Peter Pan for this book was perfect since Sara would be playing a motherly role, when she herself has no mother.

I don't want to give away too much, but suffice to say this book is well worth adding to any classroom library. I already have a list of students waiting to borrow it!

Hannah says

I didn't cry when I read this book.

Just kidding, I was totally sniffing at the end. **This is beautiful.**

The first time I picked this book up was last year, but I realized it was a poetry book, and I immediately put it back on the shelf. *Don't make this mistake.* I decided to read it again this year when I realized my love for all things poetry and lyrical. I'm so glad I did, or else I would be missing out big time.

I loved the poetry format. Everything was written in a specific order and spacing, and I felt like this contributed to the sob factor.

*His eyes are like the deep craggy holes
in broken trees*

and they're pointed

right at me.

That isn't even a good example. But anyways, the writing is **flawless**. It's gorgeous and I love how the language used isn't even super complicated or anything: it's simple language for a simple story.

This book's story is actually really simple. We follow Sara, a cat lover who needs something to hold on to. Her mother died in a car accident, her father isn't ever really there, and to top it off, she got the flu and won't be able to play as Wendy in her school play. When she gets the flu, a little white kitten jumps into her life, and Sara must try and find a way to convince her dad to let her keep Serendipity.

Serendipity and Me is a coming-of-age, family story... aka, **a freaking horrible tear-jerker**. Horrible meaning "Serendipity and Me, why would you do this to me I can't stop crying." It's truly a sweet book, but poetry isn't for everyone. If you do enjoy reading poetry, I'd definitely recommend. Get your tissues ready.

Kaijsa says

A beautifully written children's book. (Ages 9 to 13?) Made me cry. Deals with some serious issues like death of a mother and school crushes and honesty and loneliness. I love how it is written all in free verse. My 10 yr-old (who is very well-read) said this was the very best book she has ever read and by far the most beautiful.

Grace Dodson says

This book is about a girl named Sara and she's wanted a cat for a long time but her dad wouldn't let her because her mom was in a car accident going to adopt a cat and h just couldn't bear the thought. This book was a book of poetry and it was definitely a tear jerker. I love how they wrote this book and how they used special words

Mr. Paul says

Come for the cats. Stay for the writing.

Kat Kinch says

Admittedly, I bought this book because of the adorable kitten on the cover and the blurb about it being about a girl wanting to keep said kitten. Having been at the end of many a plan to keep cats, this story intrigued me.

From the first page, we are set into a world of prose. I inwardly groaned thinking of Ellen Hopkins long books of horrors that happen to teenagers but I was swept long into the story of Sara and a mischievous little

kitten that appeared at her door one night while Sara recovering from the flu.

What I was not expecting was the raw, unparalleled emotion from Sarah and the writing itself. The fact it is poetry rings true from her upbringing, it makes sense to be written in poetry and not prose. There are at least three parallels in this story that while I recognized as a writer, weren't so obvious as to be obnoxious, they were just there, unassuming. It's smart writing. It made me cry because they hit home.

Annie says

Ooh, I read this book in one night!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It was that good! I'm a sucker for Kittens so I grabbed this book base on the photo. I fanned through it later to find that it looked like poetry. Sometimes I get turned off in that kind of format but I decided to read it anyways. I was so surprised! It is not poetry but it also kind of is. So I guess it might be kind of a free verse poem or it's just a clever way to describe what is happening in snapshots. It is beautifully written and holds lots of emotions. This kitten helps bond this little girl and her grieving father back into a family. It is touching, light hearted and very realistic. It helps young readers understand the pains of grief and how a little pet can lighten everything up.

Rachel says

Sara loves cats and has always wanted one of her own. All she really wants is something to make her empty house happy again. Her father does not want a cat for unknown reasons but Sara thinks of a plan anyway. She wants to learn about her past and her mother. Sara's dad won't talk about anything from before her mother's death, in fact, he barely talks to Sara at all. Even though the kitten is new, it already feels like Sara's family. Will she be able to convince her father to let her keep the cat, or will he give Serendipity away?

In the book *Serendipity and Me*, the author wrote a book with both pros and cons. The plot of the book was interesting throughout the middle and end of the book, but in the beginning there were added details that were not important later on. Because this was a verse novel the book didn't flow as well as it would have in a regular format and looked and felt a little choppy. The personalities of the characters were very interesting and the characters interacted with each other well. This was one of the things that made the book good. The story was sad and heart warming at the same time. I give this book three out of five stars.

Roth, Judith L. *Serendipity & Me*. New York: Penguin Group, 2013. Print.

Riley says

Serendipity is a cat who needs a home, Sara is a girl who needs a friend. Together they have a great bond, except for one problem. Sara's dad is not afraid to break this duo's relationship. Read *Serendipity And Me* to find out if everything works out accordingly. I recommend this story to anyone who likes to read about adorable animals and sticky situations. In this book I really enjoyed how realistic it was. I found many connections that I could make to either my own or someone I know's life. This novel really pulled my attention to how lucky I am to have my family. And although the ending was quite predictable, I was still intrigued.

This book was great but my problem with it is the predictability. It was obvious Sara would keep Serendipity. Her dad would give in, the story wouldn't just end without Serendipity. If the story included more suspense, it would be ideal. There were many parts that I enjoyed, but one that caught my eye was when Sara's dad revealed that she could keep the cat, but there was a problem. Serendipity was lost outside, and was nowhere to be found. I really wanted to know what would happen if they couldn't find Serendipity. Would Sara choose a new cat to have? Or will Serendipity make her way home? This was definitely a "nerve-wracking" situation.

The format of the book, is really interesting. It's like a poem. I found it very unique. Something else I found very intriguing, is how they first introduced the characters. They were very believable. They face the same daily tasks and challenges as we do. Also, Sara does not not have a mother. When Sara was younger, her mother was in a tragic car accident. This book encouraged me to value the time I have with my family. I feel so bad for Sara, she wishes her dad would be more open to talk to her about her mother. Sara wants to remember her mom, as her Father on the other hand, just wants to keep quiet about her. It's a very sad event. I stepped into Sara's shoes, and realized how different and awful my life would be without my mom. I wouldn't like it at all.

Overall I would really recommend this book to anyone of my friends. It has a mixture of joyful, upsetting, and even frightening emotions. It's a great book, and portrays a great lesson as well. I realized that I am very lucky to have my family, as some people don't. It was an inspirational book, and I'd love to read more by this author.

Spoiler Alert Warning

Sara lies to her Father, she sneaks out of the house in desperate need to find Serendipity. She is punished for lying to her father, and for leaving the house without permission. Her Father gives himself a punishment too, but his is more of a present. I thought this was pretty funny, getting a cat is the best punishment I've ever heard of.

Lisa says

It's about a girl, Sara, living a very lonely life with her father who cannot get over his wife's death. Sara can't get any answers about her mother so she finds comfort in a new kitty. But can she get her dad to let her keep it? The book is sad but does have some very happy and comforting elements: a loving neighbor, a loyal friend, a cute boy, and a fluffy white kitten. It has a touch of romance and a lot of emotion and a good ending. Great coming of age book for a girl, 5th grade and older. Best Part, written in verse! Quick and easy read!

Ms. Yingling says

Sara's life is very sad, and about to get sadder. Her mother was killed in a car crash several years ago, and her father has never really gotten over it. Not only that, but Sara gets very ill and has to miss playing Wendy in a school production of Peter Pan, where she stars opposite a boy she likes. When a graduate student who is babysitting her drops off a small, white kitten, Sara tries to talk her father into letting her keep the cat, and also to tell her why he is so against having a cat in the house. He refuses to talk about her mother, and she feels that the prohibition against cats is somehow tied to her.

Almost HomeStrengths: Awesome cover that just begs to be displayed with Almost Home! If you need a book about grief that is in verse, this would be the book.

Weaknesses: Hand-wringingly sad, and in the sort of verse that you wouldn't realize was verse were someone to read it aloud to you. This is quite a picture of an extremely dysfunctional father who can't get over his own grief to help his own daughter.

Suhani says

Serendipity and Me is a coming-of-age story of a young girl, learning to cope with her loneliness and growing up without the support of a still-grieving father from the loss of his wife.

This story revolves around a young girl named Sara, whose mother died several years ago. She loves cats, and is surrounded by pictures of them in her room. She has longed for a cat "forever", so that her house wouldn't be empty anymore. Her father has always said no to the kittens, as though it brings back a bad memory.

One day, a kitten shows up at the front door. Sara instantly falls in love with it, and names her Serendipity. She tries to convince her dad to keep the kitten, but he says no. Sara didn't just try to keep the kitten, but she also tries to figure out why her father always says no to kittens.

Sara acts like a mother to the kitten. Sara was supposed to play a mothering role in a school play but misses it, because she falls sick.

This book is a tear-jerker. It makes you think about your own life, and what you think is missing from it. It also makes you feel grateful for what you have.

I think this book would be good for 5th graders and up.

madalyn (polaroid books) says

I loved this book. I have had it for 2 years and I read it every single year because this book is so good. This book is about a girl named Sara whose Mom has died. Now, she needs somebody to hold on to when times get rough. When a cute little white furball comes to her door, Sara instantly falls in love. She has to get her Dad to keep the adorable white kitten. Will she be able to keep it?

I really loved this book and I think everybody that has been through tough times and love cats should read this book. It will melt your heart.
