



Love, Ruby Lavender

Deborah Wiles

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Love, Ruby Lavender Details

Date : Published (first published 2001)

ISBN :

Author : Deborah Wiles

Format : Kindle Edition 229 pages

Genre : Realistic Fiction, Childrens, Fiction, Young Adult

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From Reader Review Love, Ruby Lavender for online ebook

Margaret says

Ruby Lavender is such a delightful, did I just write that? Delightful? Ruby is such a lucky young girl whose grandmother is someone that I hope to be, full of fun and nurturing in a healthy positive way. I am not much for books for the younger generation but I do enjoy ones like this that has a mature approach. Which means there is intelligent writing that propels a message or storyline that the child or adult such as myself can learn or grow from. I feel no matter how old a person is, I think we all are perpetually learning until we leave this life. This book also reminded me that if all adults were to remember how magical childhood is, we would help keep that alive in ourselves and subsequently in our children and grandchildren. A delightful book indeed!

Qt says

I really enjoyed this one! The first couple of chapters were a bit hard to get into, but once I got into the swing of things it was a really easy, fun read--perfect for summer, especially because of the lovely little everyday details, which I really like in a book. Although the underlying theme is a serious one--Ruby dealing with her grandfather's death--the book is, on the whole, humorous. It has a sort of timeless feel to it--I couldn't say for sure what decade it was set in, and I think that is a really neat thing in a book. And, as a letter-writer myself, I quite appreciated how Ruby and her grandmother exchange letters :-). And of course I *loved* the chicken aspect :-). I will definitely be on the look-out for more of the author's books.

Also note that there are Reading Group Discussion Questions in the back and a fun interview with the author.

Ms. Arca says

This is a good book and I got swept into caring about the main character. She is a bit young for a main character. I had just come off of reading 'Each Little Bird that Sings' so I think I wanted to keep seeing the world through a bit older eyes. However, by the end, this book was nuanced and thoughtful. I love the way Deborah Wiles writes, thinks, and shares about death. She isn't afraid to put it in her writing and it makes me reflect and think so much!

Marie says

This book in one (made up) word: heartmelting. (That's one joyous moment past heartwarming.)

This was a *perfect* summer read! The story takes place over the course of one summer, and it's a light little Juv book, so I didn't have to concentrate hard on it.

Nine year old Ruby Lavender is best friends with her grandmother, Miss Eula. They write letters to each other nearly every day, and leave them in a knot in an oak tree. Ruby Lavender spends her days hanging out

at her grandmother's store, where her great aunt also works, or with her mom. The book grabbed me right from the start! The opening scene has Ruby Lavender "liberating" some chickens from a nearby egg farm with her grandmother. Suddenly though, Ruby Lavender finds her routine upset: Miss Eula is going to be spending the summer in Hawaii with her son, daughter-in-law, and their brand new baby. As the summer unfolds, the reader hears all about Hallelujah, Mississippi through letters that Ruby Lavender sends to her grandma.

Good garden of peas! Hallelujah, Mississippi could be Mitford, North Carolina! ("Good garden of peas!" is the exclamatory used by Ruby Lavender and her grandmother. I love it, and am considering adopting it myself.) So this is totally unorthodox, but I would definitely say that At Home in Mitford by Jan Karon (an adult fiction) would be a readalike.

As I began listening to this gem, I found many scenarios to laugh along with. As the book unfolded, I discovered a great depth to the story. Slightly sobering, but not too heavy, the underlying plot surrounding Ruby Lavender's relationship to her grandmother, and one of the reasons that Miss Eula is traveling to Hawaii for the summer, is a bit more serious than one would initially assume.

The writing in Love, Ruby Lavender is superb. Mostly epistolary, with a bit of narrative thrown in to fill in the blanks, the reader really gets to know Ruby Lavender. And if you're anything like me, you'll fall head over heels for this spunky redhead.

A note on narration (since I listened to this on CD): the accent seemed just a tad overdone, but the pacing is good, as is the regularity of volume. I see in other reviews that there is artwork in the book, which I missed seeing. So I would maybe recommend this as a print or ebook rather than audio.

Heidi-Marie says

A light-hearted, simple story that was perfect for what I needed in my listening reading life right now. I loved the narrator. She did such great accents and I felt a part of that small, southern town. (I had my own memories of TX and WV, too!) Sweet and funny. Cute, too. I even almost cried at one part. A good book. Always fun to grab something off the shelf without knowing about it and discovering that it is enjoyable.

Sue says

Lovely story told in prose and in letters about young girl dealing with some very weighty issues. Her grandfather's drowning death has caused her life to change in many ways and the one person she has always clung to is her grandmother. They write letters and leave them in a tree, but when Miss Eula goes on a trip to Hawaii the letters become much more important as Ruby tries to deal with a mean rival and some hatching chicks. There's comedy, tragedy, and growing up in this delightful story.

Virginia Messina says

In the opening scene of this book, Ruby and her grandmother Miss Eula (who, according to the Agricultural Page of the Aurora County News, is "long known for her commitment to animal rights and lost causes,")

rescue a group of chickens headed for slaughter.

And it gets even better from that point on.

Like *Each Little Bird That Sings*, this takes place in a small Mississippi town, presumably in the 1950s-60s. In the three books I've read by Deborah Wiles, there are some great recurring themes regarding friendship. One focuses on warm relationships between young people and older family members in multi-generational homes. In contrast, each of the girls in these books has been deeply wounded by a good friend and is faced with the difficult challenge of forgiveness. It's fascinating to read these books one right after the other to see the parallels.

Like the "Life Notices" in *Each Little Bird*, the letters between Ruby and her grandmother are absolute gems. They cross in the mail, too, so Miss Eula is often several letters behind in her reactions to events in Ruby's life. This is a fast and highly entertaining book for older kids that deals with friendship, family, death, guilt, loneliness, the personhood of animals, and small town southern life.

As Ruby would say, Free Advice: You should read this book.

Chanel Sharp says

Mom and I had a fun time reading it. It felt very typical middle school problems. A girl has problems with the popular girl and she deals with it by writing letters to her grandmother, who is away right now helping her aunt and uncle deal with a new baby. (Her grandmother is her confidant.)

The twist however is how honest Ruby is and that she does deal with her problems and the adults do help her and are not these evil villains.

Love Ruby Lavender is a quick read but one mom and I say is worth it.

babyhippoface says

Wiles' second best (*Each Little Bird* wins that title, hands-down). Great characters, great laughs, great emotion. Wonderful read.

Jeanette says

I absolutely loved this book about Ruby Lavender, her chickens, her quirky grandmother and how Ruby copes with a tragic accident that caused the death of her grandfather.

Amanda says

This review pertains to the audio version of this book:

It is summer time in Hallelujah, Mississippi and Ruby Lavender has a lot to deal with. She is taking care of some recently "liberated" chickens, missing her grandmother Miss Eula, who is on an extended visit to her son in Hawaii, and dealing with a nemesis, Melba Jane, all while trying to come to terms with a recent family tragedy. The heart of this story is the correspondence between Ruby and her grandmother while they spend this summer apart.

I can not praise this audio book highly enough. This wonderful children's book is just made to be read aloud. Judith Ivey gives a memorable performance and brings the book to life in a way that I have rarely experienced. The accents and voice pitch she employs are truly remarkable and convey many different emotions and ages. It has been days since we finished this book and it still sits vividly on my mind.

Don't be misled by the cover of this book. The colorful watercolor style picture along with the cozy font led me to expect a light and airy kids book that would keep the kids happy for a few hours as we drove around, but have little depth or meaning beyond light entertainment. It is so much more than that. This is a very deep and affecting story which sucks you in from the beginning and really grabs you by the heart.

Half way through the book my kids said with such feeling "I HATE Melba Jane!" I love it when they get emotional about their "reading". I wondered aloud whether they would feel the same about that character by the end of the story and a great conversation ensued and continued when the book ended. Not only was there great character development in the pages of this book there was also some positive growth and empathy occurring in my car. This book will tear at your heart

Take my advice and hear this book. You will not be sorry.

Elizabeth (NC) says

Originally read 2009

As I reread this for Battle of the Books, I kept thinking the story sounded really familiar--glad to see that I have read it before, but wish my memory was just a little bit better!

Tracy says

I loved this book, I have always looked at the cover, but never picked it up. I listened to it. The narrator was a tiny bit over the top, but the story is a happy, sad, gentle book.

Brenda Kahn says

What a beautiful little novel! How in the world did I miss this? So glad that I was assigned a later companion book to review. Poignant, hilarious, engaging and lovely.

Linda Lipko says

Because I loved Each Little Bird That Sings, I wanted to read the this first work by the author. While Each

Little Bird That Sings resonated with me more than this tale, still, Love, Ruby Lavender is delightful and poignant and worth the time spent in reading.

Ruby lost her beloved grandfather. Now, a year later, her very special grandmother needs time away from Halleluia, Mississippi. Leaving Ruby heartbroken, through a series of letters the two remain connected.

When Ruby lost a grandfather, her classmate and enemy Melba Jane lost her father in the same car accident. While grief tugs at both, they tear at each other verbally and physically. Wishing her grandmother was there to guide her, Ruby finds a way to reach out through the pain and work toward healing.

Ruby Lavender melts your heart with her endearing, quirky personality.

Recommended.
