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# The Old Woman Who Named Things



## Synopsis

How does an old woman who has outlived all her friends keep from being lonely? By naming the things in her life she knows she will never outlive--like her house, Franklin, and her bed, Roxanne. When a shy brown puppy appears at her front gate, the old woman won't name it, because it might not outlive her. Tender watercolors capture the charm of this heartwarming story of an old woman who doesn't know she's lonely until she meets a plucky puppy who needs a name--and someone to love.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

The unlikely protagonist of this quirky and tenderhearted story is a little old lady with cat glasses and a beehive who might have stepped out of *The Far Side*. Lonely, she names inanimate objects--her car is Betsy, her bed is Roxanne. A stray dog wanders into her life but she refuses to name it; after losing many friends "she named only those things she knew she could never outlive." When the dog disappears, however, she realizes that finding him--and subsequently naming him--is worth the risk of outliving him. Brown's (Boris) hilarious, disproportionate depictions of the cowboy-booted woman and her belongings give this tale much of its bounce. Betsy the car has grinning grillwork and huge fins; Fred the chair has buttons for eyes and a rearing, pompadour-like back cushion. This sweet and silly story has solid kid appeal and the Larsonesque visuals will tickle more than a few

grown-ups. Ages 4-8. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kindergarten-Grade 3?Having outlived all of her friends, an inventive elderly woman intends to outsmart loneliness by naming the significant inanimate objects in her life. Confident that she will never outlive any of them, she resides complacently with a sturdy armchair named Fred and a firm bed named Roxanne inside a well-built house named Franklin. One day, a stray brown puppy appears. She hesitantly offers scraps of food but no commitment of friendship. After a few months time, the persevering puppy grows up to be a shy brown dog, but the woman does not acquiesce. However, one day when the dog does not appear, she is filled with concern. After a valiant attempt to locate it on her own, she enlists the help of the local dogcatcher. The old woman then makes a quick but firm decision to provide the dog with a name, acknowledging his place in her affections. Oddly enough, she remains nameless throughout the story. Themes of resilience and acceptance help make the narrative meaningful. Brown's watercolor illustrations show the independent woman in her cozy, somewhat cluttered surroundings, and the engaging pup who is sure to win readers' hearts as he does hers. Although the premise of the story may be a bit sophisticated for younger children, the happy resolution is most satisfying. Lucky the children who meet Lucky.?Mary Margaret Pitts, Boston Public Library, Hyde Park, Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

My kindergartener brought it home from the school library and I had to buy it. As an adult, I was a bit put off on my first read. The idea that the main character has outlived everyone important to her so she isn't going to allow herself to get attached to things that she'll outlive is heavy. I dreaded the gagillion questions I was expecting about death and being lonely, but they didn't come. My kids (3, 6, and 8) focused very little on that aspect of the book and I quickly grew to love the book as much as they do.

This is a beautiful story for children who are ready for more text and a slightly deeper story. The old woman has outlived her friends and is lonely. She doesn't want to outlive anything else that she cares about, so she only names things that will last longer than she will. That concept is difficult for the smallest children to grasp, but some will understand her loneliness and fear of losing loved ones. It teaches the lesson of trusting in love because we must - that is our humanity. And, in the end, it is a gift, whether we outlive those we love or not. The old woman learns that in this lovely

book by Cynthia Rylant, one of my favorite authors.

Thank you

enjoyed

This very old woman lives alone in a friendly old house, sleeps in a friendly old bed, sits in a friendly old chair and drives a friendly old car. Does this have anything to do with why she doesn't want any NEW friends? Yes, she's afraid. You'll have to discover just what she's afraid of. And I think you'll understand. She may be old and tough and determined, but she does have a weak side. And that weakness somehow turns her into a different person--or, maybe, it turns her back into the person she once was. You'll feel the aloneness, and you'll discover what that weakness is (something we all have) that brings her happiness and even excitement. Picture Book: Realistic Fiction The Creative Teacher: Activities for Language Arts (Grades 4 through 8 and Up)

I loved this short unique story . Missing her letter connections , which made her feel lonely, she eventually found a new friend. For meshe represents the strength and resilience of older senior women living alone. Susan

This is simply a beautiful book. The illustrations are marvelous - real works of art!!! Sometimes illustrations don't do justice to a storyline - but in this case it really works. The book is very emotional. I actually got choked up reading the story a couple of times to my young daughter. It's a book I never tire of reading. It's deep, philosophical and contains meaningful life lessons (ie. how to come to terms with one's death, the choices we make, whether we choose to embrace life or reject/fear it, the value we place in material things). In other words, it's a book that makes you think. Young and old would appreciate this book as a gift. It's written in a sweet, gentle voice and how Cynthia Rylant has a way with words!!! I love this book so much, I bought it for my child's teacher. Please check out this book - you won't be disappointed.

This is such a sweet story and the illustrations are fabulous!

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