



Walter: The Story of a Rat

Barbara Wersba , Donna Diamond (Illustrator)

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This is the story of a writer and a reader. The writer is a person. The reader is a rat. They share an old house on Long Island, but have never met. Walter, the rat, would love to know Miss Pomeroy, the writer. Miss Pomeroy is an irritable recluse and has no desire to know ANYONE. How these two lonely creatures discover one another is the essence of this story.

Walter: The Story of a Rat Details

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Author : Barbara Wersba , Donna Diamond (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Walter: The Story of a Rat for online ebook

Anna says

This book is often described as a children's book, however, whilst this is one description it vastly underestimates its depth and pathos. It is outstanding as an adult book both in physical quality and content. Both the child and adult within you may enjoy this at the same time! Unforgettable on the first and every subsequent reading.

Jennifer says

This is a lovely little book, that is very hard to categorize. It is short and has a literate rat as a main character, but it is certainly not a children's book. Recommended for misanthropes and those with lonely artistic hearts.

Krista the Krazy Kataloguer says

What a cute story! I read this one aloud to my cats. They loved it! Walter is a rat who loves to read, living in the house of an old lady who writes children's books. Will Walter and Miss Pomeroy ever be friends? I hated for the story to end. It was so descriptive, a gentle story, and Donna Diamond's soft gray illustrations perfectly matched the mood. As Walter himself pointed out, you don't often see stories where rats are depicted in a positive light. Recommended for all readers, human and rodent!

wally says

weird...my review disappeared...i enjoyed this story that about readers and writers...short sweet easy read...does the description say something about 'children's literature' this that the other? sometimes labels help and as often they just make me want to drive faster, get out of dodge. onward, upward.

Jenny says

This is a wonderful story of an unlikely friendship between a rat and a human. As a children's story, it's a nice account of an elderly rat finding a home with an elderly woman, and it's cute because Walter breaks the stereotypes that humans have about rats. Walter loves to read and was born with the ability to when no other rat around him was. It's a fun story, but as an adult reading it, I see that there's so much more than the surface. It's a story about breaking barriers and not allowing misconceptions and preconceived notions to get into the way of love and friendship. People are different, and they're allowed to be. Walter and Miss Pomeroy don't try to change each other. They try to make each other better and accept each other for who they are rather than for what they are. There are many life lessons in this small book that both children and adults can appreciate.

I highly recommend this book to children (and therefore to parents) but also to anybody who enjoys stories

of unconventional friendships.

My only complaint about the book is that the ending was somewhat abrupt and anticlimactic. But it was also beautiful, so I can overlook that.

Lisa Vegan says

Thanks to my Goodreads friend Krista's cats, I read this book. The cats enjoyed it so I figured it must be a good book.

This book is so charming that I as I was reading there were times I could barely stand it. It was very amusing and also extremely lovely and it definitely got to me emotionally. I ached for and felt affection for both the main characters.

This is a very text heavy long story picture book. I'd call it an illustrated novella more than a picture book.

The story is continually and unexpectedly funny, very funny in parts. There is one somewhat gruesome reference that managed to be funny too: "...Walter, had committed only one crime. In a moment of hunger and confusion he had eaten two of his offspring, but he had been only eight months old at the time – a young, impetuous rat – and he had never done it again." I also enjoyed how the author bio information is one of Miss Pomeroy's children's books (about mice) was no longer accurate. It made me think about the validity of those author bios on book covers. I loved the book within the book which is also titled "Walter: The Story of a Rat" and how it comes to be written.

I loved Walter (a lonely rat who can read, and write) and Miss Pomeroy (a solitary children's books author), but I'm afraid this book won't win me over to rats in the house (I have had them in my apartment building, luckily never right in my unit except long ago under the cabinet covered kitchen sink) any more than Charlotte's Web reduced my fear of spiders. But Walter, and Miss Pomeroy too, are heroes in this book.

I enjoyed all the references, made by Walter, to many books, mostly those written for adults in the first 2/3 of the book and then to children's books in the latter 1/3 of the book.

The illustrations are beautifully fitting in gray tone. There are not illustrations on every page and on the pages that have them, they are relatively small and take up much less room than the text story. But the pictures that are there greatly enhance the story.

And, in the end, I really think this is a book for young adults and adults. It's fun to be familiar with all Walter's quotes from various books, books that most kids won't know until they're adolescents or adults.

Extra credit for this unusual story of a friendship between a rat and a woman seem nothing but amiable and sweet, and not at all disgusting.

Oh, quite a bit of accurate information about rats is included too, though not the ability to read & write parts, obviously.

Cynthia Vanaria says

I LOVED this story--it touched my heart and imagination beyond what I can express. Everyone should read this book! I hope there will be sequels--I would love to see these two friends have many adventures together and I wish they lived next door to me.

Elke says

"Klein aber fein" - das trifft nicht nur auf den Protagonisten, eine Ratte namens Walter, zu, sondern auch auf das Buch selbst. Nicht weltbewegend aber herzerwärmend und eine Freude für jeden Buchliebhaber. Selbst mein Sohn (5), bei dem ich dachte das Buch wäre vielleicht doch noch zu anspruchsvoll und lang(weilig) für ihn, hörte mir gebannt zu und wollte unbedingt bis zum Ende weiter mitlesen. Das perfekte Weihnachtsgeschenk für alle anderen - und einen selbst.

Melody says

What a wonderful, wonderful book. Walter is a very literary rodent, much given to the apropos snippet of poetry. When he busted out "My candle burns at both ends" I whooped with laughter. The central conceit works so well here. Walter lives with an author and is dismayed to learn that her books are about *mice*. The story of the odd and awkward relationship between the woman and the rat is both poignant and amusing. The illustrations resonate at the exact same frequency as the prose. Highly recommended.

My thanks to Lisa Vegan for her review, which led me to this book. I'd never have found it otherwise.

Virginia Messina says

I loved this book! It's a beautifully-told story about the friendship between a lonely writer and a lonely rat. It's funny and poignant with great illustrations and really good writing--just an all-around wonderful tale. I just bought a copy to give to a friend. I think I'll buy one for myself, too.

Cheryl Hager says

I ordered this book from my library after reading about the author passing this past February. I had never come across her work--not being a fan of YA problem fiction. This book, though, I like. Books about books.

Amy says

This book is a perfect example as to why we should never judge a book by its cover OR its title for that matter! I found it to be a tribute to both writers and readers as well as a charming story about friendship and

acceptance.

Melissa says

Awwwwwww. A cute, 50-page story (seriously, with illustrations!) about an unexpected friendship. Oh, and it almost made me feel bad about the hundreds of rats I cursed while living in the city this summer...

Katey says

A sweet story of a rat named Walter who learns to read and write (and he reads all the good stuff too) and befriends a solitary writer. I bought it for my boyfriend's son, but read it before I gave it to him. I need my own copy.

Kirsten says

This lovely children's chapter book is about an elderly rat who lives in the home of a writer of children's books. He is intrigued by Miss Pomeroy and her loneliness, but is also hurt because she writes a series of books about heroic mice, with nary a rat to be found: "Walter sat on Miss Pomeroy's ladder studying these books, and he did not know whether to laugh or cry. He felt betrayed -- for why had Miss Pomeroy chosen to write about mice when she could have just as easily chosen rats? How could she not have known that rats are more interesting than mice, more intelligent, and more adaptable? To put it bluntly, how could she not have known that rats are more magnificent?"

Walter wants to make contact with Miss Pomeroy, so that he can ask her about why she has neglected rats so (in truth, he's rather angry), but he doesn't want to come right out and ask her first thing, so he writes her his first note: *My name is Walter. I live here, too.* And the pair embark on what turns into a wonderful friendship. The drawings, by Donna Diamond, are great -- she clearly has a pet rat or has spent a lot of time with one, because all the poses are wonderfully ratty.
