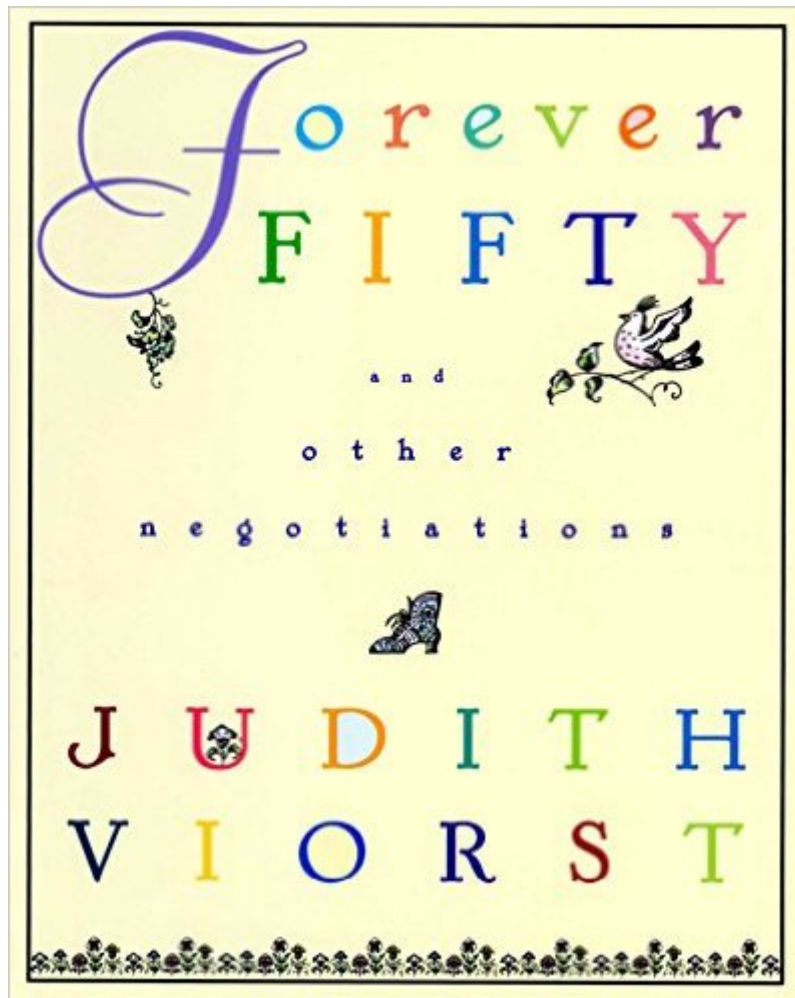


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Forever Fifty



Synopsis

Judith Viorst is known and loved by readers of all ages, for children's books such as *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*; nonfiction titles, including the bestseller *Necessary Losses*; and her collections of humorous poetry, which make perfect gifts for birthdays, Mother's Day, graduation, Christmas, Chanukah, or at any time of year. Now Judith Viorst looks at what it's like to be (gulp) fifty. Writing with the warmth and authenticity that have become her trademarks, Viorst once again demonstrates her uncanny ability to transform our daily realities into poems that make us laugh with recognition. Whether her subject is the decline of the body ("It's hard to be devil-may-care/When there are pleats in your derriÃ"re") or future aspirations ("Before I go, I'd like to have high cheekbones./I'd like to talk less like New Jersey, and more like Claire Bloom"), she always speaks directly to our condition. Her funny, compassionate poems shed a reassuring light on the fine art of aging, and will delight anyone who is now (or forever) fifty.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the fourth of Judith Viorst's books of poetry about crossing decades in one's life. Perhaps this one will become one of her most popular in the next 10 years as record numbers of baby boomers turn 50 every day. Although both women and men will find plenty that speaks to them, the book is very much in a woman's voice and will resonate more powerfully with many female readers. Each poem deserves its own comment, but I would exceed my word quota if I did that. Let me see if I can group them a bit for you. Some of the poems focus on how things have changed with age. "Wild Thing" is a good example, which lists a lot of things the author does when she's feeling

wild -- like "I didn't bother flossing before bedtime." "Second Marriage" is the tale of a widow and widower whose family situations keep them from following their hearts. "To a Middle-Aged Friend Considering Adultery" advises the woman in question to give up the idea of a young male lover. It won't last and it's not worth it. She also finds plenty to be pleased about in being 50. In "Exercising Options," she skips all of the strenuous exercises in favor of floating on her back in a pool. In "Happiness," many simple blessings like good health turn out to be the most enduring sources of happiness. Children are never far out of the picture. The brief joy of the empty nest quickly evaporates as they all return to stay (some with spouse or children in tow) in "They're Back." "How Can People Want to Bring Children into This Terrible World" is a poetic discussion with a daughter-in-law about the author's desire to have a grandchild. There's always an edge of unsettled concern in these.

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