



## Lulu and the Brontosaurus

*Judith Viorst , Lane Smith (Illustrator)*

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## **Lulu and the Brontosaurus** Judith Viorst , Lane Smith (Illustrator)

An illustrated chapter book from industry legends Judith Viorst and Lane Smith! "I'm gonna, I'm gonna, I'm gonna, gonna, get a bronto-bronto-bronto-bronto-saurus for a pet!"

Lulu is so accustomed to getting what she wants that when her parents deny her birthday request for a brontosaurus, she throws a four-day temper tantrum and then storms off into the forest in search of the dinosaur she clearly deserves. Lulu isn't particularly impressed with the snake, tiger, and bear she encounters, but then she finds him--a beautiful, long-necked, graceful brontosaurus. Mr. B completely agrees with Lulu that having a pet would be a wonderful thing, and Lulu thinks she's gotten her birthday wish at last. Until she realizes that Mr. Brontosaurus thinks that "she" would make an ideal pet for "him!"

How will Lulu ever get out of this sticky situation without throwing a fit (Mr. B does not respond well to those), or using force (Mr. B is much too tall to bonk on the head with her suitcase), or smushing her pickle sandwich? Beloved children's author Judith Viorst and Caldecott-winning illustrator Lane Smith offer a fresh and funny tale with several surprise endings!

## **Lulu and the Brontosaurus Details**

Date : Published September 14th 2010 by Atheneum Books for Young Readers (first published January 1st 2010)

ISBN : 9781416999614

Author : Judith Viorst , Lane Smith (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review Lulu and the Brontosaurus for online ebook

### Alyson (Kid Lit Frenzy) says

This is one fun book. Can't wait to read it aloud to first and second graders. Children will enjoy Lulu but there is also a great lesson and love the ending.

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### Mrs. Fornero says

Once again I love how Judith Viorst interacts with the reader. It makes the book even more fun and relatable. Fiesty, sassy Lulu is on an imaginative quest to find a pet Brontosaurus since her parents dared to say no. Along the way she has some run-ins with other forest animals. When Lulu finally meets the Brontosaurus, she ends up learning that kindness and good manners go a lot further than tantrums and meanness. And you have to love a book that offers not one, not two, but three different endings. Something for everyone:)

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### Leslie says

Do you know an early reader who is a spoiled? A reader, who, like Lulu, is a pain? Not “a pain in the elbow” or “a pain the knee,” but “a pain—a very big pain—in the butt” (3)? Maybe said person isn’t a reader but would be willing to sit down and enjoy a nice story by Judith Viorst and illustrations by Lane Smith? Of course you do not know any such small person. Good thing Lulu and the Brontosaurus isn’t only for them.

< synopsis >

What I had to appreciate about Lulu is that when she doesn’t get her way, “she takes matters into her own hands.” I can’t help but like independent minds, even when they reside in awful-behaving little children.

Lulu doesn’t have a hissy because she is helpless or incapable. And maybe that is why she truthfully seems so monstrous. It isn’t that she is demanding what she needs and is being denied it. Nor is it that she is asking the impossible and the parents are the only ones with access. (Yes, the brontosaurus is indeed possible in this story.) As she learns by the end of the book (regardless of which ending you choose), there are other means of finding what it is you want—because it isn’t the wanting that is bad, it is the way in which you ask for it. If one really wants something, perhaps they should consider more acceptable ways to go about it. Being polite, and offering gifts in trade (bribery) may be good options. "Lulu" would teach diplomacy.

"Lulu" also speaks to entitlement. Is what Lulu wants a bad thing? She wants a brontosaurus for a pet. Yes, impractical, but bad? “A pet is a very good thing” (52). Even the brontosaurus agrees. Of course, there is some miscommunication (of yet another form). Who gets to decide who the pet (read subordinate) is here? Why should the brontosaurus be the pet, why not Lulu as the pet? Which is a funny idea, especially in light of what we’ve seen Lulu do this far into the story: She defied her parents, squeezed a snake very hard, hit a tiger on the head with her suitcase, and stomped on a bear’s foot making him limp away. She would disrespect her parents, leave home, sing loudly and disturb the animals resting while she goes “tromping” through the forest, how would this giant mythic beast make Lulu into a pet? When it seems impossible that Lulu will be able to change, the impossible happens. She learns to empathize. She learns to regret her actions. And the epiphanies do not come easy nor out of character.

Judith Viorst (of *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*) is a poet and she implements her craft in "Lulu." Lulu has her catchy songs, and the text has a nice read-aloud quality. Viorst also plays to another of her strengths, defiance. The story is hardly predictable, and while imparting a few wise messages, she would share it for the child's sake, not the parents'. Really, the only heroic figure is the brontosaurus, who is noticeably more childlike and Lulu-like, than elderly and sage.

The narrator admits to taking liberties with the story and inserts funny parantheticals along the way. And pretty much immediately, the narrator reflects an irreverence, defying institutional dictates—like paleontologists' (right) decision to rename the brontosaurus as apatosaurus. If you don't mind the narrator's willfulness then proceed and experience it some more—the blame is on the reader, they were given an out. The narrator, though unspecified, is hardly typical in the way one ending after another is discarded in favor of something a bit more suitable. As the narrator would engage the reader in the story-telling process, the multiple endings are hardly surprising, nor is the narrator's encouragement for them to pick the one they like. There is something co-conspiratorial about the whole book.

Lane Smith (illustrator of *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*) translates the sassy Lulu into an irrepressible figure who, even when small still dominates the page. She never looks helpless for long—because, well, she isn't. He really complements the text. I dig his use of stripes, circles, and sharp angles. And the pencil on pastel paper creates a nice texture to the black/white images. The divider pages (as seen above) are a nice green that bridges mad-house walls and nature's forests. The juxtaposition/sequences of classical elements with the non-traditional is wondermous.

Viorst, Lane, and "Lulu" play with what is expected and the unsuspecting. I would encourage anyone to play along.

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recommendations: early-young readers and non-readers. Lulu is usually found in Juvenile Fiction, where parents of pre-schoolers should be browsing anyway. For people who like their independent-minded children to remain so and yet still have manners and empathy. For story-tellers and lovers of the ridiculous and smart.

L @ omphaloskepsis  
<http://contemplatrix.wordpress.com/20...>

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## **K.M. says**

I am jointly reviewing this book with my 11 year old daughter Isabelle. We got it both in hardcover form and on audio CD. The book itself was very attractive with black, off-white, and green illustrations. Some of them span two pages, allowing the reader a little break from the actual words as the images take over to forward the story. For some inexplicable reason, the pictures reminded me of the Beetlejuice movie with Michael Keaton (!). The drawings are soothing, not a distraction at all to the story but instead a seamless part of it. I also liked that Lulu's Mom was drawn as much taller than Dad in the picture...not something you see all the time.

I liked the way some of the print was in bold, and some was in italics, and the pages have lots of white space. There was some ornate script that was a little tough to decipher at times. For example, at the beginning of one chapter (the first Chapter 13, as it happens!) Izzy and I had some discussion about what the first letter was. She thought it was an "H" and I thought it was an "A" but after using context and both of our brains we figured out that it was actually the word "It".

The author uses rhyming (" She mainly wasn't a pain") and repetition to tell the story of Lulu and her quest

for the brontosaurus that she wants but that her parents do not. The day before her birthday she leaves to hunt for one herself. Along the way, she meets a snake, a bear, a tiger. She eventually does in fact find a brontosaurus, who proceeds to teach her (among other things) some manners. There is a refrain that Lulu sings (like a Greek chorus of one) throughout the book that Izzy especially liked. It helped to have the audio book in this case because it gave a tune for the words that really brought it and Lulu to life.

Isabelle liked the way the chapters were titled: "Maybe the end" and "Chapter 13 again". She also liked that the chapters weren't too long. We both really enjoyed this book. Izzy's final evaluation was this: "I don't think she (Judith Viorst) could have added any more or taken any more out." Really, what better praise could you have than this?

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### **Roya says**

Why are picture books such literary disasters in children's literature? Why why why?  
I might as well make a new shelf called children-disempowering. This one fits it perfectly.

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### **Amy Vana says**

Lulu and the Brontosaurus was written by Judith Viorst and illustrated by Lane Smith. This humorous book has won many awards including the Junior Library Guild Selection, NCTE Notable Children's Books in the Language Arts, Notable Children's Trade Book Language (AR), Children's Book Committee Bank Street College of Education Best Children's Books of the Year 2011, 2013 Beehive Children's Award, and was a 2013 Monarch Nominee. I accessed this piece of fantasy through a local library.

The relatable character of Lulu is a spoiled girl, who wants a brontosaurus for her birthday. Viorst acknowledges that dinosaurs and people didn't live at the same time, but since this is her book she is going to do what she wants. When Lulu's parents say no, she throws herself down on the floor, kicks her heels, waves her arms, and screeches. After that tantrum did not work she decides she will find the brontosaurus on her own. On her journey in the forest Lulu comes across three intimidating animals; a snake, a tiger, and a bear. All of which she has to fight off using her rude ways. While sleeping the brontosaurus finds Lulu. They agree that having a pet would be a great idea. Lulu soon realizes the brontosaurus wants her as a pet. On her journey Lulu learns the importance of manners. There are three alternate endings which leave all readers satisfied.

Smith's pencil on pastel paper opening illustration give a clear view of Lulu's bratty and stubborn personality. She drew Lulu as an angry faced, huge-headed, bob-haired girl with her arms disobediently crossed. Her illustrations highlight the suspense and situations encountered along Lulu's journey.

This book is a 4.8 accelerated reader and would be best for children ages 6 to 10. This early chapter book that is very well done and would be engaging to a range of children. This text could be used to discuss Lulu's behavior and how her choices and actions played while meeting each animal. A teacher could challenge children to predict their own endings and then compare their predictions with the several different ending is the book. This text is ideal for young readers as the text on each page would not be as overwhelming, there is some repetitive text, and the pictures highlight the feelings and emotions along the way.

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### **Elissa Schaeffer says**

This was a light, fun read with lots of fairy tale feelings to it.

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### **Alex says**

I enjoyed this book because I liked the part when Lulu didn't get a brontosaurus (at first, she wanted a brontosaurus for a pet). I did not like this book because I do not like forests. I also did not like this book because I do not like dinosaurs. When Lulu met the brontosaurus, the brontosaurus wanted Lulu to be his pet, but Lulu escaped.

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### **Bailey Hauge says**

Lulu was a bad girl and she wanted a brontosaurus for her birthday. Her parents hardly ever said no to her. But this time they did. And then Lulu said WHY!! My favorite part about the book was when the brontosaurus told Lulu that she should be HIS pet. This book had 3 different endings. You could choose your favorite ending. I liked the third ending best. I took this book to my teacher because I liked it so much. She is reading it to my whole class. This week we are learning about animal's needs and people's needs. This book is helping us to think about that. I liked it a lot.

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### **Zaz says**

This hybrid between a chapter book and a picture book was well done. The pages and chapters were short and the black and white illustrations were really pleasant. The story was easy to follow and a little compelling, with Lulu's adventures and her quest to find a brontosaurus (great quest, really!). However, I liked none of the characters and the story lacked a little something more. One thing I appreciated was the fact that there was a narrator-author talking to the reader and that she/he offered different endings to the story.

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### **Kate says**

I have always liked Judith Viorst's pissy children characters. I think they are funny. Like pissy adults.

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### **Kari Yergin says**

Kid book club? Good language. Varied sentence lengths. 3 alternate endings.

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### **Hope says**

I thought this book was very funny and young readers would be able to read it and comprehend the text because it easy to relate to as well very funny! Once children surpass easy readers and picture books I think this would be a cute next step book to have in a classroom, it could also be used as a read aloud to introduce students to chapter book in early grades.

All LuLu wants for her birthday from her parents for her birthday is a pet Brontosaurus of course Lulu's parents tell her absolutely not. Lulu was not used to this because she usually would get anything she asked for, but not this time. Since Lulu did not know how to deal with this she began to whine, throw fits, and tantrums. She sets on an adventure to find a pet brontosaurus herself and the story follows her through out her adventure in the forest. I like the morals that this books shows in a fun way that you can not always get what you want and you must listen to your parents. Young readers would truly be enthralled with this story and the funny adventures that Lulu finds herself getting into.

The illustrations are also very funny and go well with the text. They are dark colored and not bright like many other children's books, but they still have a unique and cute cartoonish quality to them that children would enjoy. I really enjoyed the illustrations and think children would too.

This is definitely a book I would like to have in my classroom as a fun read aloud or independent reading book!

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### **Alicia Oldre says**

Lulu was a fun and engaging character, even if she was rude and obnoxious. By the end, you couldn't help but like her for the growth she showed throughout the story.

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### **Becky says**

First sentence: There was once a girl named Lulu, and she was a pain. She wasn't a pain in the elbow. She wasn't a pain in the knee. She was a pain--a very big pain--in the butt.

Premise/plot: Will Lulu, the oh-so-selfish, oh-so-thoughtless, oh-so-spoiled child, learn her lesson in Judith Viorst's new book? She may when her wish, no, her DEMAND, backfires on her a bit. Lulu demands a brontosaurus for her birthday. When her parents refuse--consistently refuse--she decides to run away...and she runs right into TROUBLE.

My thoughts: I liked this one. It was amusing. It was enjoyable in an over-the-top, don't-take-it-too-seriously way. Lulu deserves what she almost gets. Perhaps there's a little Lulu in all of us that needs a reminder now and then that there's more than one perspective in the world.

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