



## Love, Sara

*Mary Beth Lundgren*

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*"From the computer files of Sara J. Reichert:  
My life, from the last day of summer vacation,  
to almost spring of my Junior year.  
No matter what you might have heard,  
this is the real story."*

*Love, Sara* is the story of two teenage best friends, Sara and Dulcie. Sara, the narrator, comes from a troubled family and has been sexually abused by her father. After a string of false starts she finally lands in a foster home where people genuinely care about her. Korean-born Dulcie, who had been adopted as a baby by a close-knit, middle-class family, finds her own life spinning out of control when she and a popular football player fall in love. When his wealthy, bigoted parents learn that Dulcie is pregnant, they throw him out of the house. Without resources, the two come up with a desperate plan. And it is Sara, with the help of her foster mother, who must race against time to try to prevent her friends' impending suicide.

This fast-paced and powerful novel is told through e-mail exchanges between the two friends, through Sara's journal entries, her school essays, newspaper clippings, poems, and quotations. With vivid characters, *Love, Sara* is unique in its narrative form and honest and forthright in the themes it presents.

## Love, Sara Details

Date : Published October 1st 2001 by Henry Holt and Co. (BYR)

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Author : Mary Beth Lundgren

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## From Reader Review Love, Sara for online ebook

### Sydney Faestel says

This book is about a girl named Sara and her best friend Dulcie. They are both in high school together. Dulcie has a huge crush on a guy named John. Sara doesn't really like John very much. She thinks that John is just some jock that wants to take advantage of Dulcie. Sara tries to tell Dulcie not to go out with John, but she doesn't listen. John and his friends are popular, but Sara and Dulcie aren't as popular. Since Sara and Dulcie aren't very popular, Sara doesn't think she will fit in with John. After a while Sara realizes that John and his friends are fun people to be around. Dulcie and John are in love, but their parents do not approve. John's parents tell him he is not allowed to see Dulcie anymore, but he does anyways. Dulcie has now found out that she is pregnant. John wants her to get an abortion, but she can't do it. John and Dulcie decide that they only have one option, suicide. Dulcie tells Sara about their plan, and Sara said she was going to do it with them. She didn't want to be without her best friend. Sara was supposed to meet John and Dulcie where they were going to kill themselves, but Sara changed her mind. She was going to try and talk them out of it. By the time she got there it was too late, John and Dulcie were dead.

Sara is a sophomore in high school. She has been in foster care her whole life, and she was kind of an outsider in school. She has lived with several different families, and she's scared that the one she's in now will let her go too. Sara is a nice girl, and she is very good at writing.

This was a pretty good book. I rated it a 3. I only rated it a 3 because I don't like the way it was written. When the two girls talk back forth together it's in emails. Since their conversations are in emails their grammar isn't right, and they abbreviate words. It bugs me when it's like that. I would recommend this book to girls in middle school and high school. Since it's about two girls mostly talking about a guy, I don't think boys would really like it.

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### Diane says

Sara is in yet another foster home. And although Carol has been more patient than most, Sara knows it's only a matter of time before she gets sent back. But at least she has a friend in this school - Dulcie. Through emails and journal entries, we begin to understand Sara's life. But Dulcie gets involved with Jon and soon that relationship becomes the center of everyone's life. Jon's family is very rich and very white. Dulcie's family is middle class and Dulcie is an adopted Asian-American. Sara has no one else to talk to so she deals with her troubles through her creative writing assignments. But things escalate with Dulcie and Jon and they draw Sara into their problems.

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### Laura says

I didn't realize it was going to be so depressing!!! I liked the way it was written though and I guess \*some\* good did come out in the end but still...it tore my heart!!!

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### Rachel Burt says

This book deals with issues of sexual abuse, teen pregnancy, suicide, and learning to trust. Written in a series

of e-mails, journal entries, and main character Sara's honors English papers.

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**Lillian says**

interesting read.

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**Claire Berslow says**

I relate to the main character very much, so i really liked the book.

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**Jessie Wilkens says**

This was very well written. I was sucked in and read it in one sitting. The characters were so real they practically breathed. I so wanted a happy ending.

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**Shakayle says**

This is a very sad story but is really worth the read.

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**Jennie Lopez says**

So I'm on page 8 I can't say much about the book yet but i'll post up ASAP(:

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**Emily U. says**

Even though this book had great descriptions, various interesting ways to tell the story, and a GREAT ending. The plot of the story just didn't draw me in.

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**Anony-miss a-non-y-miss says**

Saddest book I've ever read.

I loved this story: very quick read, moving, etc. The characters were easy to identify, know, pick up on, and were relatable to teens today. Towards the end of this book, I'd started bawling like a baby as I read Sara's suicide notes to her mother, brother, sister, and that small note she left to one of her teachers. I felt miserable for Sara, and for Dulcie, and for Jon. Jon was a good guy . . and Dulcie was lovable.

This book, for others as well, is a reminder:  
Don't. Do. Suicide.

It's tempting to teens. Some can't get help, are scared of talking about it, and feel like it's too late.

It isn't. It's only too late when you hang yourself, or pull the trigger.

I wept over the death of Dulcie and Jon, even if they were made-up characters. Their story was touching, moving.

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### **Beth says**

Foster child and incest-survivor Sara has a multitude of problems ranging from peer acceptance to sibling rivalry to acting out. When her best buddy Dulcie begins dating a jock, Sara takes a long time to accept him and his clique but Jon's parents are even slower at accepting Dulcie as Jon's Vietnamese-American girlfriend, and when she becomes pregnant, both are disowned. Depressed, desperate and alone, they contemplate a double-suicide. Can Sara save them and herself?

Because Sara is an aspiring writer, the novel is delivered through emails, school assignments, journal entries, and news articles. The unconventional format was a delight and the English papers modeling famous short stories was a great plot device. As a writer and librarian, I really enjoyed the many allusions and literary styles in Love Sara. Smart Lundgren manages to make her teens sound like normal cussing teens without spelling out offending swear words -- the use of chat slang was very clever.

I could not put the book down, and in fact, I was so upset by the ending that after I went to sleep, I dreamed about the characters and devised a happier ending in my dream! Lundgren has created a American tragedy in the Shakespearean style.

The plot itself is a little overwhelmed with its many issues: incest, foster care, multicultural romance, teen pregnancy, depression, and peer approval, and the ending is resolved a bit quickly (I would have liked to see more of Sara's healing process) but the narrator's voice is raw and fresh.

The ending is an unexpected shocker that doesn't take the easy way out. Perfect for fans of Speak.

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### **Annika says**

"Here's what I think: As long as you're alive, I guess you've got a shot at life getting better.... Not I guess. I KNOW."

Even though this book was written before I was born, I thought it was so relevant and real. Lundgren weaves an amazing story, and while doing so, she handles the topics of teen pregnancy, suicide, and sexual abuse with care. I could tell that this story came from a teenager's perspective (even though she is an adult writer), and that just made the story all the more powerful.

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## Shelby Russell says

The Book Love, Sara by Mary Beth Lundgren is a book that is placed in Sara's life from her last day she had of her summer vacation through her Junior year of high school. Sara is the main character through the book whose life is told through the story. Delucie is her best friend who changes throughout the story to different friend groups and who is forever in love with her boyfriend. Jon is Delucies boyfriend who is also forever hooked on Delucie and follows her around everywhere. In Love, Sara Sara was placed with a foster family after a troubled childhood. She was raped by her father and other men but she is now trying to put her past behind her witch isn't very easy because of the struggles she has faced. She is trying to reconnect with the world but her past always is coming back to haunt her.

I really enjoyed this book. It makes you reflect on how if Sara didn't get placed with a foster family she wouldn't have gotten away she would still be living a life full of hate. It makes me thankful for the family and the dad I have. It's a sad book at times but also a happy book at other times. One of the sad times is when Sara writes her english papers she writes them about her old life and all that's happened she writes ,” She says Daddy knows what's best for us. I don't ever disagreeing with him” (135). This is one of the many sad things she writes. This quote is sad because it helps us realize she never knew what her dad was doing to her was wrong. She was told it was okay and it was what was best for her so she didn't argue, she didn't know any different.

Other people might want to read this book because it is an interesting book. It is sad but it help show one of our bad days is a great day in the eyes of others. It is a pretty easy read. There were a few times I got confused because it goes from text messages to english papers to help tell the story. Overall this was a easy read and a great book.

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## Stephanie Smiley says

Love, Sara by Mary Beth Lundgren is a book that at first I didn't think I was going to like. The first 100 pages are very slow and boring. Although once you get past it, you start wanting to know what happens next. This is a good book, but I wish that the pace was a little faster. This book at times can be a little tough to process all the information given at once. Love, Sara although wouldn't be my first choice it was a good read. I would recommend this book to teenage girls.

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