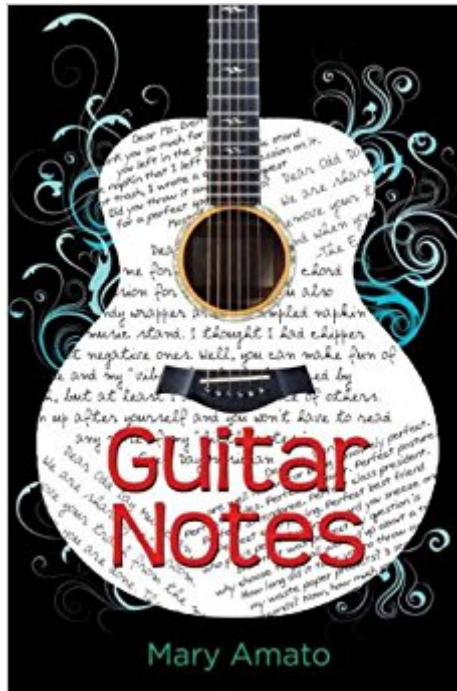


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Guitar Notes



Synopsis

A "sweet story of two different loners finding their counterpoint" (School Library Journal) from a star of state master and children's choice lists making her YA debut. Clean YA with the emotional resonancy of John Green and Sarah Dessen. On odd days, Tripp Broody uses a school practice room to let loose on a borrowed guitar. Eyes closed, strumming that beat-up instrument, Tripp escapes to a world where only the music matters. On even days, Lyla Marks uses the same practice room. To Tripp, she's trying to become even more perfect • she's already a straight-A student and an award-winning cellist. But when Lyla begins leaving notes for him in between the strings of the guitar, his life intersects with hers in a way he never expected. What starts as a series of snippy notes quickly blossoms into the sharing of interests and secrets and dreams, and the forging of a very unlikely friendship. Challenging each other to write songs, they begin to connect, even though circumstances threaten to tear them apart. From beloved author Mary Amato comes a YA novel of wit and wisdom, both heartfelt and heart-breaking, about the power of music and the unexpected chords that draw us together.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up-Two very different high school students discover a mutual appreciation for writing songs for

the guitar. Tripp Broody has lost a lot; his father died and his best friend moved away. He doesn't really connect with people, especially his nagging mother whose "help" isn't much appreciated. In contrast, Lyla Marks is perfect. She gets good grades, her teachers love her, and she plays the cello beautifully. Things are not perfect, however, as both her best friend and father suffocate her with unrealistic expectations and adulation over her talent. Forced to share a music practice room on alternating days at school, Lyla leaves a heated note one day when Tripp doesn't throw out his trash. This leads to a pen-pal-like exchange daily, and eventually in-person musical collaboration that promises to change both of their lives forever. Many chapters are structured as Tripp's and Lyla's notes, giving readers a unique vantage point into their burgeoning friendship. The teens find kindred spirits in one another, allowing them to develop lyrics for songs they write in a fluid and natural way. While the end of the novel has a bit of contrived tragedy, this is nevertheless a sweet story of two different loners finding their counterpoint.-Ryan P. Donovan, New York Public Library

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Mary Amato is the author of many acclaimed books for children including

Â Invisible Lines,Â which was nominated for the California Young Readers Medal and was selected for the Missouri Truman Awards Master List. Of that book,Â The Washington PostÂ states,

“you may come to learn . . . an important lesson about what really matters in life. But amid all that learning of important lessons, there will be a good bit of giggling, too.”

A prolific songwriter, Mary sings, plays the guitar, and teaches songwriting. She also performs in the Washington, DC, area.

Â Guitar NotesÂ is her first novel for young adult readers.Â Mary lives in Maryland with her family. You can visit her online at www.maryamato.com and learn more about writing your own music and the joy of thrumming at www.thrumsociety.com.

What a sweet book! Absolutely loved it. Loved it. It's been a while since I've read a contemporary fiction book and a really long while since a book has been this sweet. You can clearly read romance into the whole thing, but that's not really what it's about a friendship that develops over a period of time AND about doing what matters to you. The way it was written, the characters and the plot were just not something I've read in awhile, and it was a breath of fresh air!

The main characters: Lyla was great. Funny and real and determined and sweet. I liked her a lot. She wasn't perfect, although everyone at school thinks she is. Her struggle was so believable. I felt for her. She wants to make everyone happy, but is finding that in doing so she's not happy herself. But like most teenagers, she

doesn't know how to change anything. No Tripp - he's great too. Super funny and if he was a girl I'd call him a spitfire! What he does to get back at his mom is great! But what I really liked was the depth to his character. I gained an understanding about why he behaved how he did, and it was wonderful to have that depth build into him. The two of them together were a perfect match (and not really in the romantic way!). It was so great to watch their friendship grow and see how they pushed each other. Wonderful. I was actually sad at the end of the book, because I wanted to experience them more. Their story was just a great place to be. And if that isn't enough to get you to read the book - I read it in one evening. That RARELY happens with me!

This is a fascinating story you can easily relate to, and warning you may cry and laugh out loud! Tripp Broody is a shy, awkward boy that just wants to be alone and play his guitar. Lyla Marks on the other hand is the perfect, organized, strait A student. Tripp's mom has a plan to help him "socialize", so she takes away his guitar. He finds a guitar at the school but doesn't have time to play it. So he schedules to use the practice room on odd days. Lyla also uses the practice rooms on even days. These two personalities could never mix. Or could they? Rude notes back and forth turn into making plans to write songs together. This is a fun book with teenagers and twists! I liked this book because I could see myself in a situation similar to that. I loved how thought to be enemies turned out to be best of friends. This is a great story that pulled me in and I could literally not stop reading. If you like realistic fiction that you can put yourself into this book is for you! I loved how the characters got out of their comfort zones and went for their dreams. Guitar notes is a great read about music, friendship, and passion! Written by Aspen, 7th grader

I'm a junior high teacher and I'm constantly buying books for my classroom library. I bought this one recently and decided to read it myself before putting it on the shelf (Hey, that rhymes!). Guitar Notes is a story told through the eyes of Lyla Marks (a seemingly perfect honor student/cellist) and Tripp Broody (a seemingly odd slacker/guitarist). The story opens on the first day of school. Tripp finds out his mom hijacks his beloved guitar because she feels all he does is lock himself in his room and play it. She wants him to become more social and bring up his grades. Needless to say, he is MAD...and desperate. Switch to Lyla...she is starting to suffer anxiety from being under so much pressure all the time to be a perfect daughter/friend and serious musician. Tripp and Lyla's paths cross when they both sign up to use a music practice room during lunch. For Tripp, this is a way around his mother's punishment since he will get to use one of the school's guitar when he uses the

practice room. For Lyla, it's a way to escape the stress that surrounds her and be alone for a while. Soon, they start leaving behind notes for one another in the practice room, which start over Tripp leaving behind some trash one day, but quickly evolve into notes about music and their lives. It was a cute story and I LOVED the idea of a boy and girl communicating through notes. It sounds very romantic. HOWEVER, if you're looking for more romance, then look elsewhere. Guitar Notes is the story of a great friendship between a girl and a boy, but I wouldn't call it a romance. I can see Lyla and Tripp getting together sometime in the future, but this book didn't go that far. And that's ok. I think Lyla and Tripp both needed a friend first, someone to "get" them, and they found that in one another. My main complaint with the book is the climax/falling action/resolution. It happens WAY too fast. I kept waiting to see how Lyla was going to deal with her father who expected her to follow in her mother's footsteps to be a professional cellist and attend a prestigious music school. Lyla figures out she might not want this, but doesn't know how to tell her father. I was also looking forward to how Lyla would deal with her suffocating friendship with Annie. Annie wasn't a bad person, but she was very intense and kept expecting Lyla to care as much as she did about auditions, talent shows, and getting accepted to a prestigious music school. However, we don't get to "see" Lyla deal with them at all. The climax is traumatic, yes. But it's over fairly quickly, and this lessens the emotional impact of the event. Then it's fast forward to the end. I felt like I was missing a few chapters at this point. We're left guessing that the climax must be the catalyst that "helps" Lyla solve her problems, but I think the story would've been much stronger if there had been more showing than telling at this point. Guitar Notes is a clean story. No profanity that I can recall, and no drug use, violence, or sexual situations. Definitely appropriate for ages 10+.

This book review is being written by a teenager. In my opinion, this book was great, and although the character's don't follow the brick and mortar values and morals, they are great and lovable characters, while the few who aren't push full personality and at the very least be understood by the reader. The book follows through with it's summary, and is a very warm and lovable book. It has good elements of Romance, Humor and Reality, mixed together nearly perfectly. That is until one reaches around 60% of the way through. No spoilers here, but the author made some choices that really made me dislike the progression, but for it going against my wishes and also seeming to be put from dramatization and plot-progression. Otherwise, it is a beautiful book well worth a read, standing on par with the likes of John Green.

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