



## Socks

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Newbery Medal-winning author Beverly Cleary charms readers with yet another lovable character—Socks, a jealous cat who must learn to share his owners with their new baby.

Socks is one happy cat. He lives the good life with his affectionate owners, Mr. and Mrs. Bricker. Ever since the day they saved him from a life spent in a mailbox drop slot, Socks has been the center of their world. And he always has everything he needs—tasty kitty treats and all the lap room he could want!

But when a new baby arrives, suddenly the Brickers have less and less time for Socks. Little Charles William is the one getting all the attention. Socks feels left out—and to show it, he starts getting into all sorts of trouble! What will it take to make Socks realize just how much the Brickers care about him?

For generations, Beverly Cleary has entertained readers of all ages with the hilarious scrapes and hijinks of characters such as Ramona Quimby, Henry Huggins, Ribsy, and Ralph S. Mouse. *Socks* is no exception—as *School Library Journal* raves, it will make "both children and adults with roar with laughter."

## Socks Details

Date : Published April 14th 2015 by HarperCollins (first published 1973)

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Author : Beverly Cleary , Tracy Dockray (Illustrations)

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## From Reader Review Socks for online ebook

### Susann says

With this reading, I paid much more attention to Mrs. Bricker. :)

December 7, 2011:

When my sister told me that my nephew was overcome with glee after the cat jumped into his crib, I knew I needed to track down an older edition of *Socks* for both of them.

Cleary writes from the cat's perspective and shows a pretty sweet life with the Brickers, until a BABY comes to stay. Baby life is a tough transition for everyone, especially Socks, but baby and *kitty* ticky eventually triumph together in a friendship scene equal to Rick and Louis at the end of *Casablanca*.

I strongly recommend reading an older edition with the original illustrations. Beatrice Darwin's drawings are a perfect match for the book's early 1970s setting and for Socks' personality.

Last read: January, 2006

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### Jeff says

Do you know how sometimes you find just the right book for the moment? As a bit of serendipity, *Socks* written one year before I was born found its way into my families' life at just the right moment this year. My daughter is five-years-old now and a few months ago we welcomed her brother into the family. The new addition hasn't been 100% smooth. As anyone that has lived with a five-year-old and a new born will attest they both demand a good bit of attention. Particularly when the five-year-old has been used to getting all of the attention as a single child. When a new baby arrives, there is bound to be a bit of upheaval as roles and routines in the family inevitably shift. *Socks*, a book about a cat, captures this upheaval perfectly in a way that no "big sister" book could.

I picked up the book because my daughter is obsessed with cats and thought it would be a good possible read-aloud for bedtime, and it proved to be just that. Beverly Cleary clearly knows cats. She captures Socks actions and implied motivations perfectly. My daughter loved the illustrations and each of the actions of the cat.

However the underlying story is what drew me and my wife to really love this book. The challenges of new parenthood are captured just as accurately as the life of a cat as well as the ups and downs of pet ownership. Most importantly the themes of family love and belonging are central to the tale and make an enduring story for any kid experiencing a new sibling.

We aren't sure that our daughter caught on to the parallels between her and Socks, but the story was engrossing and a perfect bedtime treat for all of us. We look forward to reconnecting with more Beverly Cleary books, an author both my wife and I read some of as children.

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### **Catherine says**

Purrfect! I thought my 6-year-old might read this on his own, after he requested a book about a cat, but I ended up reading it to him and his 8-year-old brother. Socks reminded us of our grey tabby, Pete.

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### **Linda says**

OMGosh. I laughed so hard. Beverly Cleary is surely a cat person, because she has totally pegged the way a cat acts and thinks. Poor Socks has a terrible time when his family brings a baby named Charles William home to live with them. His antics trying to regain their affection are adorable. Cleary's spare, understated prose lend to the appeal for kids, and although it was first released in 1973, any cat lover today will howl with laughter. If you don't enjoy this book, then you're probably a dog person.

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### **Kathryn says**

A friend recommended this when I was pregnant with my first. We have a beloved calico who had been Princess of Everything to that point and I'm sure she would give Socks' story five purrrs and empathize with him wholeheartedly (though thank goodness we did not have to go to any extremes with her like they did with Socks). I actually didn't get around to reading this until after my second was born and I'm glad I waited because the story is even more poignant and humorous and heartbreakingly sweet and wise when Socks is seen not just as the displaced cat but in the older sibling role. I'm sure my oldest son could relate to Socks, too! I could empathize with the new parents, so caught up with their baby and desperate to ensure his well being, though I do wish Socks hadn't been put into one situation. Still, it served its purpose and, while I don't want to give any spoilers, I will say that I was happy with how the story ended. I've never been a Cleary fan but I really liked this book and felt she did a marvelous job getting inside the head and heart of the "older sibling" (be that a fur-baby or human child) as well as these of the new parents who loved them both.

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### **Hilary says**

Socks is a white-footed kitten taken in to a perfect home: he always has a lap, and is generally spoiled... until the day the baby arrives. Now his position in the household is threatened by the new pet.

It's a wonderful story about the impact of a baby from the cat's perspective - dated by a couple of passing references, but not too obviously for children - and the adaptations made. A good reminder for any new parents with pets, as well as for encouraging empathy in children!

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### **Cheryl says**

I adored this when I was young (even though I was a bit older than the target audience when it was released)

and was delighted to find that I still do. So much wisdom, insight, adventure, and humor packed into such a very short book. Perfect for a family read-aloud for all ages. Even minor characters are full-on individuals.

And since it's a cat displaced by the baby, it's 'metaphorical' and you can apply it as bibliotherapy to your first-born without being dismissed as teachy-preachy.

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### **Irene says**

Being as big a fan of Beverly Cleary as I am, I can't believe I hadn't read this one before. As it turns out, I think this book would be a good read not only for elementary school-aged kids, but also for first-time expectant parents, especially those with pets, and also parents who are expecting their second child (to gently remind them not to inadvertently neglect the first-born).

Socks is a cat who was adopted by a lovely couple. He had a happy life until the day the couple had their own baby. As the first-time parents fussed over their precious Charles William - with a certain amount of comical cluelessness that I recall from my own first days as a new parent! - poor Socks was ignored, overlooked, and actually relegated to the laundry room.

The good news is, there is a happy ending. But along the way, I really felt for Socks! Poor thing. He deserved better.

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### **Michelle Isenhoff says**

Socks is written in true Beverly Cleary style. The cat for whom the book is named was the Bricker's only pet, pampered, loved and a little spoiled. But his mistress' comfortable lap began to shrink, and then one day Mr. and Mrs. Bricker brought home a new pet. One that wailed and smelled funny and stole all the attention that used to be lavished on Socks.

Written for ages six to nine (though probably independent only for the upper half), Socks will resonate with any child who's owned a pet or been part of an expanding family, and it will lend the experiences to children who haven't. It's a light-hearted read, told from the perspective of a slightly selfish, slightly arrogant cat who gets into lots of mischief, from stealing wieners off the counter to destroying Nana's wig while she sleeps. And can't every kid identify with being just a little self-centered and naughty? Socks' antics are sure to draw lots of smiles.

Cleary's works always includes an overarching theme of family – of love, acceptance and togetherness – and this one's no exception. The Bricker's family simply includes a rambunctious but loveable, four-legged member named Socks.

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### **Jennifer Margulis says**

This book for young readers is told from the point of view of Socks, a kitten with white feet who becomes the beloved pet of a young married couple, the Brickers. The first chapter takes place outside a grocery store where a brother and sister are trying to find homes for their "nice, fresh kittens." When a harried looking

mom with too many children agrees to take Socks, the siblings hide him in the mailbox. They don't want their favorite kitten to be mistreated by too many little hands.

The Brickers, though, do not turn out to be the best adoptive parents. Though Socks is well cared for, the Brickers soon have another pet on the way and this creature, Charles William, consumes their attention. Poor Socks. He finds himself shut in the laundry, and then banished entirely from the house. It's only when he gets into a nasty brawl with a much bigger cat that the Brickers finally take notice...

This is a clever book. I have read it before. This time I read it out loud to my four and a half year old daughter. The reason I gave it three stars is that I think the shift from the brother and sister giving away kittens (first chapter) to the Brickers (second chapter) is confusing for younger readers. Having everything from the cat's point of view, while wonderfully clever, makes the book a little hard to follow and the story a little fragmented. While that mimics an animal's consciousness quite well, I found that the book did not hold my preschooler's attention as much as other Beverly Clearly books have.

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### **Tegan says**

It was good, but too sad.

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### **Smokinjbc says**

Ok.. some embarrassing sentimental reviewing follows. Read at your own peril.

My boss, who just got a little tabby kitten for her 6 year old, was looking for books for her to read this summer. So of course, I think immediately of Socks and the summer I was six years old and got my own tabby kitten and read "Socks" sometime immediately after that. Changed my life.. or at least sparked my reading of books. So for all you parents out there...

1. Get your kid a tabby kitten (Tabbies are the best- I'm 35 and on my 5th and 6th Tabby cats- I promise you will not be disappointed with it.)
2. Get your kid this book.
3. Watch your kid turn into a reader. Hope that it doesn't result in a serious animal collecting habit.

I forgot about this book until this whole thing with my boss and her daughter's little tabby cat and then it hit me what a big huge influence this book had on me as a small child with an AWESOME tabby cat (a 15 lb male mouser cat named Blueberry Muffin.. what can I say? I was six!)

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### **Sarah Allen says**

This was my ME book when I was a kid. It meant everything to me.

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### **Dolly says**

We haven't read as many books by Beverly Cleary together as I thought we would, but every once in awhile, I sneak one in. I think at this point, I will encourage our youngest to read them on her own, since many of them are still age-appropriate for her. She brought this book out from our bookshelves and read it for her independent reading for school and I read it after she did.

It's an entertaining story about the cat of a household and the turmoil that disturbs his happy life when a baby joins the family. The story is quite dated and I'm not sure this book has the timelessness that others have, but it's still an entertaining read. Our youngest also brought home Ribsy from her school, so we'll likely read this one next.

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### **Pclaiborn08 says**

Oh how we love Beverly Cleary at our house. My son (4) belly laughed out loud at some of Charles William's antics and would randomly bring up events from the book in conversation. I'm pretty sure if we ever get a cat, it will be named in honor of this feisty protagonist. As soon as we finished this book, we started the mouse and a motorcycle for the second time. ?

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