



***Uses for Boys* by Erica Lorraine Scheidt**

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*Age Range: 13–18

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Anna remembers a time before boys, when she was little and everything made sense. When she and her mom were a family, just the two of them against the world. But now her mom is gone most of the time, chasing the next marriage, bringing home the next stepfather. Anna is left on her own—until she discovers that she can make boys her family. From Desmond to Joey, Todd to Sam, Anna learns that if you give boys what they want, you can get what you need. But the price is high—the other kids make fun of her; the girls call her a slut. Anna's new friend, Toy, seems to have found a way around the loneliness, but Toy has her own secrets that even Anna can't know.

Then comes Sam. When Anna actually meets a boy who is more than just useful, whose family eats dinner together, laughs, and tells stories, the truth about love becomes clear. And she finally learns how it feels to have something to lose—and something to offer. Real, shocking, uplifting, and stunningly lyrical, *Uses for Boys* by Erica Lorraine Scheidt is a story of breaking down and growing up.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"I wish every young woman could gain the wisdom found in these pages. Quiet. Stark. Possibly life changing."
—Ellen Hopkins, #1 New York Times Bestselling author of the Crank trilogy

"Many girls will relate to the fact that 'there are no fathers in this story' . . . Scheidt's spare and poetic debut offers up pretty images for some decidedly unpretty situations ('the unmade bed is peaked and stormy'); at times, her prose feels as tightly wrought as a novel in verse. This is a story about where we come from, and how, sometimes, we have to break free from the past in order to shape our own future. . . . Lots of teens will see themselves in the pages of this beautiful, honest novel." —[Booklist](#) (Starred Review)

"Like its narrator, *Uses for Boys* is poetic, sensual, edgy and strong. Captivated, I finished it in two sittings and sobbed at the end." —Francesca Lia Block, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Weetzie Bat* and *I was a Teenage Fairy*

"If somebody had handed me this book when I was fifteen, I would have felt 75 percent less alone and 100 percent less crazy." —Pam Houston, award-winning author of *Cowboys Are My Weakness* and *Contents May Have Shifted*

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“Some writers know how to make something terribly complicated and true . . . simple. That's what Erica Lorraine Scheidt does in *Uses for Boys*. With stark, lucid prose, she hones in on that experience we girls know well: we believe boys will fill our emptiness.” —Kerry Cohen, author of *Loose Girl*

“This strong debut has received a disturbing critical reception in certain corners. As they are in life, women are judged harshly in fiction, particularly when it comes to sexuality. . . . Writing like this allows experiences that are all too often ignored to be seen, to be heard.” —[Roxane Gay, Los Angeles Review of Books](#)

“Haunting, frank, and unputdownable.” —[Kirkus Reviews](#)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Named a Best First Book for Youth by ALA's *Booklist*
- Nominated as a 2014 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

[Article](#) by Sarah McCarry on the vitriolic response to *Uses for Boys*

[Interview with author](#)

[Background](#) on author's work with the nonprofit 826 Valencia

*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.