



***Cursed* by Karol Ruth Silverstein**

Charlesbridge Teen, Charlesbridge, 2019

ISBN: 9781580899406 Hardcover, 9781623541835 Paperback

\*Age Range: 12 and up, Grades 9 and up

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

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A debut novel for fans of *The Fault in Our Stars* that thoughtfully and humorously depicts teen Ricky Bloom's struggles with a recent chronic illness diagnosis.

“Silverstein sheds a powerful light on disease and how managing it can bring out one’s inner warrior. A blistering coming-of-age tale that will propel readers into Ricky’s corner.” —Booklist

As if her parents’ divorce and sister’s departure for college weren’t bad enough, fourteen-year-old Ricky Bloom has just been diagnosed with a life-changing chronic illness. Her days consist of cursing everyone out, skipping school—which has become a nightmare—daydreaming about her crush, Julio, and trying to keep her parents from realizing just how bad things are. But she can't keep her ruse up forever.

Ricky’s afraid, angry, alone, and one suspension away from repeating ninth grade when she realizes she can't be held back. She’ll do whatever it takes to move forward—even if it means changing the person she’s become. Lured out of her funk by a quirky classmate, Oliver, who’s been there too, Ricky's porcupine exterior begins to shed some spines. Maybe asking for help isn’t the worst thing in the world. Maybe accepting circumstances doesn’t mean giving up.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

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“Ricky’s sharp, flowing, uninhibited voice makes this a page-turner . . . Protagonists with chronic nonmalignant pain and illness are far too rare; this does the job.” —*Kirkus Reviews*

“Silverstein’s debut young adult novel is an accurate portrayal of the challenging relationship between parents and teens, as well as the frustration of living with a chronic illness. Readers will enjoy this contemporary coming-of-age story featuring a resilient protagonist and charming plot.” —*School Library Journal*

“Silverstein, who was diagnosed with arthritis as a teen, excels at evoking the physical and emotional pain Ricky endures without having Ricky’s condition define her. She emerges as a likable, relatable heroine whose wit and sense of hope will prove inspiring.” —*Publishers Weekly*

Updated 1/13/25

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## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- ALA Schneider Family Book Award (Teens: 13-18, Winner)
- Westchester Fiction Award

## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Cursed Trailer](#)
- [Cursed Reader's Guide](#)
- [TeachingBooks Book Reading | Cursed](#)
- [CURSED card game](#)

## AUTHOR STATEMENT

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I was diagnosed with juvenile arthritis, a painful and often misunderstood chronic illness, at thirteen. The only stories I could find about disabled and/or chronically ill kids never reflected my experience. They featured protagonists who were strong, inspirational good sports, showered with love and support from family and friends. Where were the angry, overwhelmed kids? The kids whose friends were so uncomfortable they just disappeared? The ones whose families were so tangled up in their own problems they didn't have the bandwidth to give their kids much-needed support and compassion? I wrote *Cursed* for kids like me—who feel alone, scared and pissed off. I wanted to grant them permission to have all those messy feelings—even if that meant cursing all the time or cutting school—and to let them know there is a way through.

## \*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

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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.

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