



# Ferris Beach

*Jill McCorkle*

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"A really fine read. . . . A thoroughly believable picture of growing up in a middle-class small-town family in the New South."--The New York Times Book Review. "Whimsically entertaining and dramatically compelling."--The Boston Globe. "One of the best in the new generation of Southern writers."--Atlanta Journal & Constitution.

## Ferris Beach Details

Date : Published October 21st 1997 by Ballantine Books (first published October 1st 1990)

ISBN : 9780449912522

Author : Jill McCorkle

Format : Paperback 343 pages

Genre : Fiction, Young Adult, Coming Of Age, American, Southern

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## From Reader Review Ferris Beach for online ebook

### Stephanie says

For some reason this coming-of-age story draws me in almost 20 years after I first read it. There is a certain sense of isolation in Kate's story, and maybe it's those feelings of disconnect that many of us felt as teens that I see mirrored in her story.

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### Alyssa says

I enjoyed the characters, and I didn't find the story terribly predictable. In fact, I didn't see the last part coming at all. Not the best thing I've read from Jill McCorkle, but not bad.

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### Holly says

I used to read this book constantly when I was younger. I would always check it out from the public library over and over. I found a hardback copy of the book at my local Goodwill and had to buy it.

When I started reading, I was bored. I couldn't for the life of me remember why I had liked the book so much. But I trudged on.

And then I remembered. I had always wished my life had been exciting like theirs was. A secret boyfriend in the woods, school functions (which we never had), a bff next door (in the country you don't have that), and a bff's parents that were like your own.

I have to admit, I was saddened when the book was over. I wanted to know more; did her mom remarry? Did her and Merle ever meet back up? Did Angela really make it with husband #4?

I will definitely be keeping this book on my shelf and rereading it, as well as sharing it with my daughter, when she is old enough to read the more "adult" scenes.

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### Kari says

Jill McCorkle has this uncanny ability to delve deep into the mindset of each and every one of her characters. For this reason, her writing is some of the most relatable and realistic I've encountered. She also writes about the South. And for these reasons...I looooooove her!

My latest of McCorkle reads is Ferris Beach, the story of Mary Katherine "Kitty" Burns growing up in 1970s North Carolina. Kate is the only child of two middle-aged parents, Cleva and Frank, that she finds mismatched, liking them to Jack Sprat and his wife. Life at the Burns house holds little excitement for Kate, save the occasional appearance of her older cousin Angela who blows in from the nearby Ferris Beach and seems to always bring with her a storm. Kate equates Angela and Ferris Beach with everything her own life lacks—glamour, excitement, sophistication—but her imagination masks the underlying tension between Angela and Cleva that Kate won't discover until she's older and the glitter has faded.

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When Misty Rhodes moves from Ferris Beach into the new housing development across from the Burns' house, Kate finds a best friend whose life is practically the exact opposite of her own. Misty is bold, fun, and vivacious with an eccentric mother, Mo, that contrasts Kate's reserved and practical one. Kate depends on Misty for excitement. No one else has forced Kate out of her comfort zone, into a world and mentality that extends beyond their small neighborhood. They live in a world of childhood and adolescent dreams until a sudden event one Fourth of July forces them to grow up fast.

So much happens in Ferris Beach that it's kind of hard to review. It's a coming-of-age story; it's the portrait of a character; it's a look at her environment; it's a snapshot of the times. It pinpoints the awkwardness and constant yearning that comes with adolescence. It's simple but complicated by its characters, who are raw with real interactions and relationships in which history and class sometimes play a role. Kate is a bit of a passive character. Some may find her boring, but I found her incredibly relatable when you look back on those teen years. It's like when you sometimes feel so awkward, like you just don't fit in anywhere, that it's better to stand back and watch than risk active participation.

And the setting is great. Avocado-colored appliances and shag carpet were before my time, but it made me want to hop in a car and drive home where I can lay on the ground under the trees, look up through the branches, and be completely alone with my thoughts.

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### Lily says

Jill McCorkle has what so many great writers have: Voice. I have had the pleasure of hearing her read at Bennington College several times, and have been mesmerized by the sound of her actual voice each time. When I finally bought Ferris Beach and opened it to the first page, it was her writing voice that kept me going all the way through.

McCorkle's attention to detail brings the reader back to the mid-1970s. The characters and setting seem so real, that I found myself on Google Earth trying to locate the little town! Her insight into the sixteen-year-old mind of the protagonist rings true while full of the wisdom of years. I would recommend [Ferris Beach](#) to everyone.

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### Sara says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It was a basic read, but entertaining. It made me cry, which isn't an easy task, but it was also touching on something that just happens to be going on in my own life too, so I was sensitive to it. However, it was all done very well. This is your basic coming of age story, however unlike other basic coming of age stories, I actually felt like this one was incredibly realistic. The interactions between the characters, the way situations developed, all very life like.

The story is of Katie, she starts very young, ends at the age of 16. You follow her through the many trials and tribulations of growing up including self confidence issues, parental relationships and conflicts, building friendships and relationships and understanding the way people change as they grow up. I really liked the way the story wraps up in the end, but I don't want to say much more because I don't want to give anything away.

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## **Robin says**

A 70's coming of age story. Great companion for snowy weather!

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## **Lisa says**

This is a coming of age book about two teenage girls and the emotions and angst of those teen years ; the idea of the potential for second chances in life was the basis for the story. I got bored with it at times which is one of the reasons it took me so long to read, but in the end it was worth the time.

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## **Sue says**

strong female characters, especially Kate or Kitty and her best friend Misty, as they mature and enter high school. Southern culture and class struggles present points of growth for the young girls who struggle with tragic losses and overcome self-consciousness. good book for young adults.

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## **Cara says**

Memory already hazy about this book... about all I remember is the girl is best friends with the girl across the street, whose mother runs off with a family friend and then dies in a car wreck. Later, the main character girl falls in love with the boy from the notorious/poor family down the road. There's some sweet love story stuff there. Later, the girl's dad dies. Her mom is kind of a cold bitch throughout the book.

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## **Vade says**

Kate Burns has heard of Ferris Beach all her life, but it seems like an unreachable dream. She is trapped with her demanding mother and individualist dad, then Misty moves to her town. Kate wants her family to be fun, daring and outrageous like Misty's family. The two girls end up growing up together and one-fourth of July Kate learns about life's little surprises. Also, you realize life is sometimes the harder part and it gets easier to cope with

Some of the conflicts that the characters have are a loss of a family member or conflicts between the parents and themselves. The conflicts that the characters face are identifiable and most families had similar experiences. The problem that the main character faced was with her family and not letting Kate see her other side of the family. I could relate to one of the characters that lost a family member because I have lost one of my family members before. An internal conflict that Misty is faced with is coping with the death of a family member or letting go.

I think that ages 11 and up could read this because it is a challenging read and is very emotional. This book did engage my emotions when Misty lost her mother and I have lost somebody in my family from my dad's side. This book was kind of hard to follow because I did not know some of the definitions of the words. The writing style was engaging because it could touch my emotion and there was also some funny moments in the story. The book was incomplete to me because I felt like there were some parts left out.

Some negatives of the book are that it leaves out details on important parts when Kate and Misty do

something they put it in past tense and a little too wordy. When the book says something important it might leave out some key details that need to be in the book. When Kate and Misty do something they put the action into past tense and doesn't really go into detail. The book was a little too wordy and there could have been some words taken out. These are my three negatives of the book.

Some positives of the book you can connect to it, there is emotion in the story, every place in the story is detailed. People can connect to the book duping on the event that it is telling the reader. There are emotions in the story in the story that you can relate to or could either make you want to cry because of what is happening in the story. The places in the story are very detailed which allowed you to feel apart of the action in the book.

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### **Chris says**

Slow...confusing...pointless...boring.  
Life is too short to read bad books!

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### **Yak says**

Fort some reason this took a hell of a long time to read; either it was longer than it looked in paperback, or it wasn't holding my interest. And in truth it did seem longer than it \*needed\* to be, while still interesting. Summary: a girl in North Carolina makes best friends with new neighbor, tragedy strikes, love happens, mysterious relative drifts in and out, she comes of age. Characterizations were pretty good, especially the father; not so sure about the plotting.

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### **Calista Manns says**

Ferris Beach is a well written book by Jill McCorkle for this generation. When I started the book I did not really know what I was getting into. The book started out very slow but surprisingly, it taught some truths about the world with quirky moments. It seemed dragged out at times and felt just like your average book. But, It is a gentle book and Jill McCorkle does an excellent job of showing the characters mindsets and goes deep into descriptions. All of the characters are unique and can be found into today's society and possibly yourself. The main character, Katie or "Kitty", has live experiences with her best friend, Misty. Katie lives in a small town in the 70's. She finds little interest in her own house and resorts to playing games in her room that are strange to play at her age, but it is quite entertaining. She went to Ferris Beach and met her cousin, Angela, that intrigues her because of her beauty and attitude. Her mother, Cleva, has secrets that are not known. The book does a fantastic job of capturing the breaking and mending of relationships with family and also friends. There are best friend and mother-daughter fights that can bring back memories in one's own life. There are humorous moments that are experienced but sad ones as well. Get through to beginning and you won't be disappointed, which goes for many other books as well! It's definitely a good book to pick up.

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### **Erin says**

I bought this book at a bargain bin in a grocery store and I can see why it was there. It began with an intriguing opening sentence and then descended into every cliché possible. There are easily ten thousand other books exactly like this one, so why a publisher chose to foist another one on us is beyond me. The author is a writing professor and this book is the embodiment of the old saying, "Those who can't, teach". The situation in the blurb occurs less than halfway through the book and I spent the rest of the time waiting for something to happen..... but nothing did, except for wasting my time.

A little side note here, a professor should research a little and not perpetuate false PC history. The man her character claims invented the traffic light not only did not invent anything similar to what we use, but wasn't even among the first fifty patents issued to possible traffic light prototypes. The left has this insatiable need to attribute inventions to blacks, but more often than not, five minutes on a search engine will debunk all of these claims. There was a lot of tiresome ideology in this book. It's outdated.

Overall, this was a waste of a tree. I wish I had bought anything else with my three dollars.

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