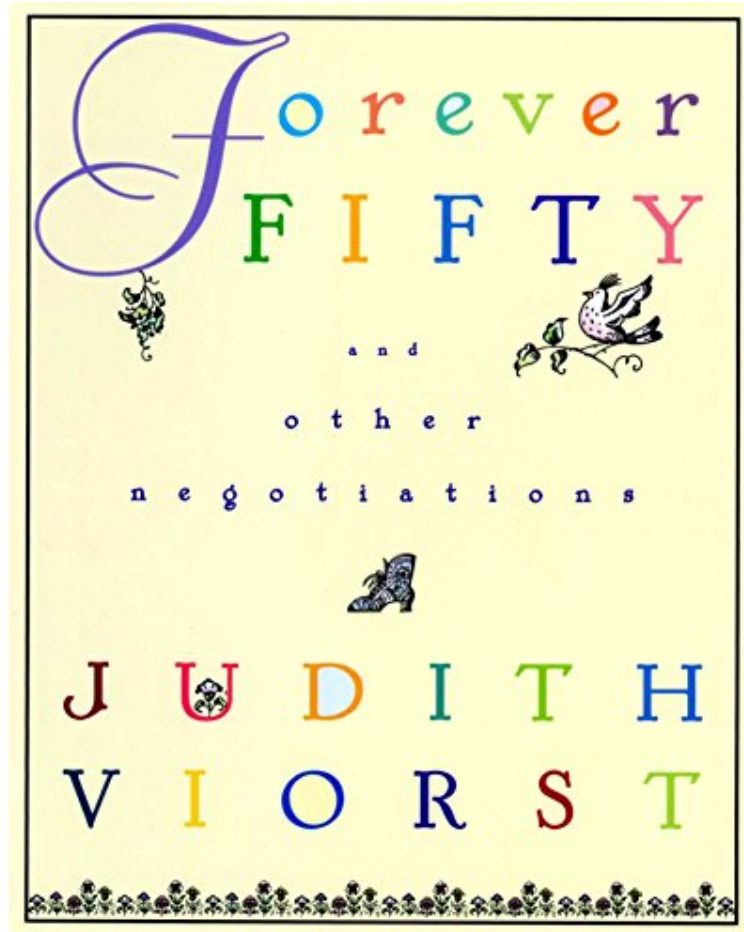


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Forever Fifty

Judith Viorst

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Judith Viorst : Forever Fifty before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Forever Fifty:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerPerfect gift for a 50 year old!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Bookwormgreat as a gift. very funny. easy to identify with, especially if you're turning 50.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Forever FiftyBy Isabelle JollyJudith Viorst has produced a poetry book every decade since she did thirty, and is now up to seventy! The poems are about relationships with family and friends. Many are humorous, many are touching, and all very readable. She really hits home with her lines, and the reader can relate with no trouble at all.She also writes children's books and has written a mystery full of wonderful characters! All three genres are exceedingly good.

Judith Viorst is known and loved by readers of all ages, for children's books such as Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day; nonfiction titles, including the bestseller Necessary Losses; and her collections of

humorous poetry, which make perfect gifts for birthdays, Mother's Day, graduation, Christmas, Chanukah, or at any time of year. Now Judith Viorst looks at what it's like to be (gulp) fifty. Writing with the warmth and authenticity that have become her trademarks, Viorst once again demonstrates her uncanny ability to transform our daily realities into poems that make us laugh with recognition. Whether her subject is the decline of the body ("It's hard to be devil-may-care/When there are pleats in your derriere") or future aspirations ("Before I go, I'd like to have high cheekbones./I'd like to talk less like New Jersey, and more like Claire Bloom"), she always speaks directly to our condition. Her funny, compassionate poems shed a reassuring light on the fine art of aging, and will delight anyone who is now (or forever) fifty.

And Now You Want To Know If There Is Anything Good To Say... Before I Go Brief Encounter At The Delicatessen By My Age Christmas Presents For Fifty Years And Over Confusion Eight Basic Facts About Memory Exercising Options Happiness How Can People Want To Bring Children ... Medical Tests More Questions The Pleasures Of An Ordinary Life Postmortems Second Marriage A Sexy Old Lady Some Advice From A Mother To Her Married Son They're Back To A Middle-aged Friend Considering Adultery ... When Asked To What They Owe The Success Of Their Marriage... Wild Thing You Might As Well Laugh You Say You Want To Know How Old I Am? You Say You Want To Know How The Children Are Doing? -- Table of Poems from Poem Finder® About the Author Judith Viorst was born and brought up in New Jersey and has lived in Washington, DC, since 1960, when she married Milton Viorst, a political writer. A graduate in 1981 of the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute, Viorst writes in many different areas: science books, children's chapter and picture books—including the beloved *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, which has sold some four million copies; adult fiction and nonfiction including the New York Times bestseller, *Necessary Losses*; poetry for children and adults, and four musicals. Her most recent book of poetry for children, *What Are You Glad About? What Are You Mad About?* was published in 2016. *Lulu Is Getting a Sister* is the fourth book in the Lulu series. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Chapter 1 You Say You Want to Know How Old I Am? I don't mind telling my age. I honestly don't mind telling my age. But why are you asking? I don't pretend I'm still young. I don't expect to be thought of as young. So why are you asking? I never lie about age. It's undignified to lie about age. But why are you asking? We're only as old as we feel. You know we're only as old as we feel. So why are you asking? I'm told I look good for my age. I've often told I look good for my age. Now why are you asking? No, I'm not ashamed of my age. And if you insist, I'll tell you my age. You're what? Still asking? You Say You Want to Know How the Children Are Doing? Shawn teaches windsurfing. Dawn is a certified midwife. Kim has converted from atheist to Bahai. Justin has finally fallen in love with a practically perfect person, except he's a guy. Holly quit teaching first grade to go into arbitrage. Keith runs a health club and Kyle's a computer whiz. Robin, who's on her second divorce and fourth therapist, feels that she's starting to learn who she is. Brandon has dropped out of medical school to write screenplays. Josh has abjured material wealth to do good. Kirsten and Stacy and Maya and Tracy have opted for partnership track over motherhood. Andrea is a professional acupuncturist. Damian's making a killing in real estate. Tara has already given birth to Rebecca and Joseph and Jacob, and plans to have eight. Kevin has given up socks and acquired two earrings. Devon has given up sweets and eats nothing impure. And so, if you want to know how the children are doing, the answer is, We're not exactly sure. Wild Thing I went for a walk in the sun without wearing my sunscreen. I went out of town without making a reservation. I placed my mouth directly upon a public drinking fountain, and took a sip. I didn't bother flossing my teeth before bedtime. I pumped my own gasoline at a self-service station. I ate the deviled egg instead of the cauliflower with low-fat yoghurt dip. I bought, without reading Consumer Reports, a new dryer. I left my checking account unreconciled. I know that the consequences could be dire, but sometimes a woman simply has to run wild. Exercising Options I've been told that the vigorous moving-about of my body could discourage all ills from loose flesh to a heart attack. But there isn't a fitness routine that strikes me as anything less than obscene, so I float on my back. I respect those brave ladies who're burning their flab off with Fonda. They still wear bikinis. I long ago switched to a sack. But my horror of thickening thighs is surpassed by my horror of exercise, so I float on my back. I admire all those stalwarts out jogging in blizzards and heat waves but if I want torture, I'd just as soon head for the rack. Let my upper arms droop, I aspire to no exertion that makes me perspire, so I float on my back. And I know that I richly deserve the whole world's condemnation for the firmness that both my torso and character lack. Yes, my body's a total disgrace but there is this big happy smile on my face as I float on my back. Postmortems On the way home with my husband from the dinner party, I thought I'd very tactfully point out that he shouldn't interrupt, and that he shouldn't talk with his hands, and that he shouldn't, when discussing politics, shout. And that he shouldn't tell that story while people are eating, and that he shouldn't tell that joke for the rest of his life, and that he shouldn't have said what he said about that terrible lady in red because she happens to be the person-he-said-it-to's wife. And that he didn't need that second helping of mousse cake, and that he didn't need to finish the Chardonnay. But after thirty years of marriage I finally understand what not to say. On the way home with my husband from a dinner party. Confusion I can't figure out if it's gas or a coronary. I can't figure out if it's hostile or benign. I can't figure out if I'm turning into a hypochondriac, or just being sensible. I can't figure out when we stop supporting our children. (At twenty-one? At thirty? Forty-nine?) I can't figure

out if not bothering to change the sheets in the guest room in between houseguests is ever an option, or always reprehensible. I can't figure out why men won't ask for directions. (Is this genetic or could they be retrained?) I can't figure out, when dressed in the height of fashion, if I'm looking incredibly chic or slightly ridiculous. I can't figure out if my tale is enthralling or boring. (What are those facial expressions? Spellbound? Or pained?) I can't figure out if wanting all the hangers in my closet to face the same way means I'm obsessive-compulsive, or merely meticulous. I can't figure out if I've gone from stable to stodgy. (Is "reliable" what I want as my epitaph?) I can't figure out if helping yourself to a shrimp from your spouse's plate ought to be viewed as intimacy or intrusion. I can't figure out if I've lost my sense of humor or if, after fifty, it just gets harder to laugh. And I can't figure out if everyone else has figured everything out, or whether we are all in a state of confusion. To a Middle-Aged Friend Considering Adultery with a Younger Man It's hard to be devil-may-care When there are pleats in your derriere And it's time to expose what your panty hose are concealing. And although a husband's fond eyes Make certain allowances for your thighs, Young lovers might look less benignly at what you're revealing. It's hard to surrender to sin While trying to hold your stomach in And hoping your blusher's still brightening up your complexion, And hoping he isn't aware As he runs his fingers through your dark hair, That you've grown unmistakably gray in a whole other section. It's hard to experience bliss When sinus intrudes on every kiss And when, in the tricky positions, your back starts to hurt you. And when you add all it entails To teach him what turns you on and what fails, You might want to reconsider the virtues of virtue. Happiness (RECONSIDERED) Happiness Is a clean bill of health from the doctor, And the kids shouldn't move back home for more than a year, And not being audited, overdrawn, in Wilkes-Barre, in a lawsuit or in traction. Happiness Is falling asleep without Valium, And having two breasts to put in my brassiere, And not (yet) needing to get my blood pressure lowered, my eyelids raised or a second opinion. And on Saturday nights When my husband and I have rented Something with Fred Astaire for the VCR, And we're sitting around in our robes discussing The state of the world, back exercises, our Keoghs, And whether to fix the transmission or buy a new car, And we're eating a pint of rum-raisin ice cream on the grounds that Tomorrow we're starting a diet of fish, fruit and grain, And my dad's in Miami dating a very nice widow, And no one we love is in serious trouble or pain, And our bringing-up-baby days are far behind us, But our senior-citizen clays have not begun, It's not what I called happiness When I was twenty-one, But it's turning out to be What happiness is. Text copyright © 1989 by Judith Viorst Illustrations copyright © 1989 by John Alcorn