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Houndsley and Catina and the Birthday Surprise

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Howe, James. *Houndsley and Catina and the Birthday Surprise*. Illustrated by Marie-Louise Gay. Candlewick, 2006. ISBN 0763624055. \$14.99. 48 p.

Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway

Reading Level: Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Animal stories;

Subject: Friendship--Juvenile fiction; Birthdays--Juvenile fiction; Parties--Juvenile fiction;

Books--Reviews;

Houndsley is a sad canine--he doesn't know when his birthday is. As he and his feline friend Catina walk in the rain, Catina becomes sad when she realizes that she doesn't know her birthday either. Unaware of the other's plan, they each determine to cheer up the other one. Houndsley bakes a beautiful cake. Catina knits a sweater. Both plan surprise parties. The surprised and happy friends decide to share their birthday celebration every year.

The sequel to *Houndsley and Catina*, this three-chapter beginning reader would make an enjoyable birthday gift to read again and again. Watercolor, pencil, and collage illustrations capture the moods of the characters and add to the festive celebration. A useful addition to school and public libraries.

As their second book (see *Houndsley and Catina*, BCCB 9/06) opens, Catina (a tiny white cat) is questioning why her friend Houndsley (a floppy-eared dog) seems so sad. Houndsley insists that it is not because of the rain, or because of the holes in his sweater, or because Do you want to read the rest of this article? Request full-text. In the "The Birthday Surprise" book, I enjoyed the story weaving of sadness feeling with a surprise idea with cake and sweater making. Read more. Helpful.Â Houndsley didn't mean to make Catina sad, so he decides to make her a surprise. Little does he know that Catina has a plan, too! Young readers will get a lot out of this book. Birthdays are so important to children that they tend to obsess about it. What about those who don't get to be so excited for their birthdays (for whatever reason)? After reading this short chapter book, kids may be inspired to do something special for others. Even if they aren't, they will still enjoy the sweet illustrations and kind message. James Howe, Marie-Louise Gay. Great friends think alike, as James Howe and Marie-Louise Gay bring a beguiling duo back for their second adventure. Houndsley is sad. Not because it is raining or because there are holes in his sweater, but because he doesn't know when his birthday is. All of a sudden Catina is sad, too. But friends are very good at cheering each other up, and Houndsley and Catina are the very best of friends. So it won't be long before they each discover, in a most surprising way, how a first-rate friend can brighten even the saddest days. show more.