



# Finally

*Wendy Mass*

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## Finally Wendy Mass

Get a cell phone. Stay home alone. Go to the mall with best friend and No Parents. Wear makeup. Get contact lenses. Attend a boy-girl party. Rory Swenson has been waiting her whole life to turn twelve. And she's got a list to prove it. Whenever Rory asks her parents for something, they always say, "When you're twelve . . ." Well, in exactly, 18 hours, 36 minutes, and 52 seconds it will finally happen. Rory's life will officially begin!

## Finally Details

Date : Published July 1st 2011 by Scholastic (first published March 1st 2010)

ISBN :

Author : Wendy Mass

Format : Kindle Edition 296 pages

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Young Adult, Realistic Fiction

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## From Reader Review Finally for online ebook

### **Sarah says**

So I just finished reading this book and I really enjoyed it. Poor Rory made me laugh out loud in parts of this story. It was really funny and a good story. The ending was a little sudden, but still very unique and cool. All of the connections were like "Ah-ha!" I have read the other two books in this series and I am secretly hoping another book will come out soon (hint, hint Wendy Mass...) Overall, this was a really good book.

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### **Kate says**

Rory Swenson has been waiting forever to turn twelve. It feels like that's the year she'll finally be able to do everything she's been waiting for. Buying a cell phone...getting her ears pierced...going to a boy-girl party. She's about to have everything she's ever wanted.

Except that everything she's ever wanted manages to go horribly, horribly wrong in the funniest ways possible. FINALLY had me laughing out loud over and over again. It's written in that fantastic, trademark Mass voice -- the one that would make you swear she's really twelve years old herself -- and the characters are real and wonderful.

FINALLY is set in the same world as ELEVEN BIRTHDAYS and has a touch of that same magical realism, but above all else, this is a warm, incredibly funny book about wanting to grow up and learning when it's okay to be a kid. Loved, loved, loved it. And every girl who's ever been impatient to be a little older will love it, too.

Reviewed from an ARC - due out from Scholastic on March 1, 2010.

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### **Kerry Cerra says**

Rory wants to be 12 like yesterday because her utterly-overprotective parents will FINALLY let her shave her legs, drink coffee, wear make-up, get a pet, go to boy-girl parties, and best of all, get her a cell phone. When the big day finally arrives, Rory makes a chart filled with all her deepest desires and proudly displays it in the living room. Tired of being blah and boring, Rory is set on standing out a little more. When news that teen heart-throb Jake Harrison will be filming a movie at Rory's school, she and her friends decide to try out as extras. What better way to break-free of her "baby" image, right?

As Rory fumbles through her list—and gets a role in the movie,—she flip-flops in her longing between the comfort of what's always been and the fear of what's new; between confidence and insecurity. We're lucky to have front row seats as we watch Rory grow-up before our eyes. Her mishaps and embarrassments are the highlights of the story which will have you laughing out loud. Finally, when Rory discovers that most things on her list are more work than they're worth, she realizes that being plain 'ol Rory isn't a bad thing after all, especially when she discovers that she actually has a very unique gift inside her.

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## **Jaina Rose says**

This review is also available on my blog, [Read Till Dawn](#).

Hopefully you will have read my review of *11 Birthdays*, the first book in the Willow Falls series, before reading this review. I am reviewing all four of the books in the series because I started rereading all of them when I was recovering from wrist surgery (side note: physical therapy is going well!). While I love the first book, I haven't actually purchased it yet. I don't really know why, but I've always just thought that if I wanted to read it I could get it from the library. I do, however, own this one. I bought it with a gift card almost 2 years ago, and have reread it countless times. It is arguably better than the first book, and was the book that truly cemented my love for the series.

The book follows Rory as she ticks off a birthday bucket list of sorts: she has been waiting her whole life to turn 12, which is when her parents will finally let her do "grown-up" things like drinking coffee and going to boy-girl parties and staying home alone. The first time I read this book, I had done practically nothing on Rory's list. Several years later, I have done most of the things on her list (still waiting for the coffee, though!). Rereading it now is like a step back in time to my first experiences with things like getting my ears pierced, babysitting, and getting contact lenses. Rory's experiences as a sheltered girl trying out grown up activities for the first time mirrors my life in more than one way, and out of all the characters I believe I share the most in common (both in life experiences and personality) with Rory. Though I have to say, my mishaps were never near the scale of hers.

You don't have to read these books in order. Well, at least you don't have to read the first two in order. The third one is much more enjoyable if you've read the first two, because the characters from the first two books are featured heavily in the third one. The fourth book is definitely much more meaningful and less confusing if you've read the other books 1st. But for the first two books, you can read them in either order. They are both built to be standalones, and are perfectly wonderful under their own power. I read them in order, but it wouldn't have mattered if I'd read *Finally* first. In fact, if the plot of the first book doesn't appeal to you, just read this one. They are very different books, but both are excellent reads.

Stay tuned for my review of *13 Gifts*!

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## **Lainey E. says**

### **Summary**

Rory is turning twelve and in her eleven years she made a list of things her parents promised her she could do when she turned twelve. On her birthday she gave a presentation to her parents about each thing on the list and how important it was to her. At Rory's school her best friend Annabelle told her that the famous teenage movie star was going to star in a movie that was shooting at their school. Annabelle and Rory tried out for extras and made it! The whole week Rory's mom decided to help her with her list of things she wanted to do. For example Rory tried to shave her legs by herself for the first time with no one knowing or helping her, she cut herself pretty bad and her legs were bright red. Then she tried to get a makeover at the mall and had a reaction to it and her face was swollen. And last but not least her mom took her to get her ears pierced and it turns out she is allergic to gold, then they tried to get her contacts and she poked her eye when she tried to get it out and after they found out what happened she had to wear an eye patch. Rory also helped

lots of people and soon she figured out that they are all related to each other.

#### Main characters

The main characters are Rory the narrator figures out that everything she wants didn't turn out like she thought it would, her mom who helps her with her list of things she wanted to do, dad helped her with her confidence, brother who is a trouble maker, Annabelle Rory's best friend and is always there for her, and Kyle R. was Rory's bunny for a little while.

#### Setting

The setting takes place at Rory's school

#### Conflict

Everything on Rory's list didn't go as she expected it to go. Everything back fired and especially since she was an extra for the movie.

#### Resolution of conflict

The directors understood her problem and didn't cut her from the extras group for the movie, they just placed her in the back of all of the scenes.

#### Recommendations

My opinion of this book, it is very interesting and I would recommend this book to teens and preteens because they could probably relate to the book more because the narrator is speaking like she is twelve, and we can relate with trying new things.

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### **Shreya says**

Finally was a great book with the classic lesson, don't rush to grow up. Have fun while it lasts because when you grow up later, you might realize it's not fun being older and you wish you were younger but like they say, there's no turning back now. I would recommend this book to any good reader who loves an interesting story and I'm excited to read more from Wendy Mass! Amazing Book :)

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### **Savannah says**

I'm a fan of Wendy Mass, but unfortunately, her talents seem to have gone to waste here. The whole book was an uncomfortably heavy-handed lesson about how selfish teenagers can be and how they need to learn to appreciate life's core values. The main character, Rory, got reward after reward for her twelfth birthday, and every single one was ruined in the most contrived way possible. Never once was it stated *why* wanting these things was so bad. Sure, her wishes were materialistic, but since she didn't let them override the necessities, it certainly didn't warrant the endless line of punishments she received. It's nothing you haven't already seen in countless after school specials.

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### **Georgia says**

The fact that our main character in this book was so much like me that it made the book all the more enjoy

able.

Rory Swenson is turning 12 and has a list of things she is looking forward to. She actually has a list of all the things her parents have promised her over the years. "When your twelve" is the constant refrain. But the beginning of the story starts with Rory and her class on a field trip to the town water source. She somehow gets stuck in a drain pipe and gets helped out by an old lady who mysteriously tells her that she must "Get what you need before you can have what you want".

Rory turns 12 and gets a cell phone, a makeover and more but they all go wrong. She also try's out for the part of an extra in the new Jake Harrison movie (the hottest teen age movie star ever).

This book was different from the other books in the series. They way it was played out was quit different, although I still immensely enjoyed it.

Now I would like to tell you the similarities between me and Rory. Rory gets a bunny. Why, I have a bunny. Her mother quotes " With great power comes great responsibility". Rory reads my mind and says "Isn't that what Peter Parker Says when he becomes SPIDERMAN?" (I am a HUGE Spidey fan <3) Her mother also says " WMEN ARE TOUGH CAUSE THEY HAVE BABYS!" This is what my mom has been saying to me a lot lately.

I really am loving Wendy Mass's books and will continue to read them.:)

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### **Dolores says**

Okay, I was really disappointed with this one. I liked "11 Birthdays" and loved "Every Soul a Star" so I expected to like this one too. Not so much. First of all, I didn't really think that the items on Rory's list were especially ambitious. I am an overprotective parent. Her parents were whack-jobs. Okay, whatever. They set their parameters and they stuck to them. I can accept that. However. You don't go from helicopter parent to totally cutting your kid loose overnight just because she turns 12. Pick your own cell phone. Ask us to limit your calls on your own. (Even though we are more than likely being charged for every incoming wrong number call, which you as a child have no idea about.) Learn to shave your legs (even if you cut yourself with dangerous sharp object so badly you scar yourself for life) on your own. They set her up for failure at every turn. Which brings me to the running joke of the book. BIG SPOILER HERE: I can accept if some of the things on her wish list went wrong. That would have been only natural. She had built up some pretty big expectations. That's what happens when adults assign a "magical age" to behaviors instead of talking things out. **HOWEVER**, the fact that **EVERYTHING** went badly was absurd and cheapened the message of not trying to grow up too soon. It turned what could have been a meaningful book into slapstick.

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### **Laura says**

My husband smiles as he hears the ruckus coming from my daughter's room. She and I are lying on her bed, howling with laughter, tears running down our faces. And so it was every night as I read *Finally* by Wendy Mass to my 8 year-old daughter. Needless to say, we have become instant fans of this new to us author.

The story is about Rory Swenson who upon turning twelve has a wish list of things she is now allowed to do and has wanted to do for so long, such as getting a cell phone, drinking coffee, staying home alone, getting her ears pierced, and shaving her legs. Even as I write this, I cannot help giggling as I remember each

incident that happens as she asserts and tests her newly acquired independence.

Rory is a sweet, down-to-earth girl, and my daughter and I liked her immediately. I also liked the “strict” parents who were understanding, loving, and had a sense of humour. We easily related to Rory and her family. And the book’s message is a good one: Maturity doesn’t necessarily come when one hits a certain age, twelve, in this case. Rory is told by a mysterious older woman at the beginning of the story that, “You won’t get what you want, until you see what you need.” The meaning of this becomes clear at the end of the story. I won’t say more, only that it’s a great book that uses humour to deal with the issues that all young tweens and parents struggle with—autonomy, growing up, and embracing those developmental milestones.

This is an excellent mother/daughter book to read together or for a book club. We both didn’t want this book to end, relishing the bedtime reading we knew would bring pleasure and laughter. My daughter is hoping for a sequel. I think I will just go out and get her another Wendy Mass book, and give it to her as a gift.

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### **Clare Cannon says**

I didn’t expect to enjoy this book so much! Better than 11 Birthdays. It had me laughing with tears in my eyes - growing up was just like this. And what a great thread running behind the story, not forced or preachy but so wise.

There are a few wincing moments - Rory is always managing to injure herself and you really feel her pain - so it’s not for a squeamish young reader. And while Rory has a beautiful simplicity and is courageously independent (at least by the end of the book) the behaviour of her classmates and even her nice friends at a party leaves a bit to be desired. But even this is a good talking point with readers who can be encouraged - like Rory - to think for themselves.

It is a great contemporary story for girls between 9 and 12 who show signs of wanting to grow up too fast. As Ghandi said, 'There's more to life than increasing its speed'.

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### **Jennifer Wardrip says**

Reviewed by Sally Kruger aka "Readingjunk" for TeensReadToo.com

Do you remember when your parents used to tell you "wait until you're 12" or "wait until you're 16"? You were, no doubt, just like Rory Swenson and created a list of things you would "someday" be able to do or have. FINALLY, that day has arrived for Rory.

Being 12 means being on the edge of her teen years. Rory can hardly sleep the night before. She's thinking of her list - getting a cell phone, getting her ears pierced, getting a pet, and getting to go to her first boy/girl party. Those are just a few of the things she is excited about finally being about to do.

Let's take the cell phone. She can't believe it's true when she finds the box that looks like it's her dream come true. Imagine her disappointment when she opens it to find a cell phone, but not the one she's dreamed of.

Instead, this is an ugly thing with two buttons. Count them! Just two buttons! One to call home and the other to call 911. WT\*! Leave it to her parents to give her the second present, which is a box filled with cell phone brochures and calling plans. They confess that the two button phone is some sort of sick joke, and then tell her since the phone will be her responsibility, she must investigate all the choices and make a presentation about which are the best - and then they'll make the purchase.

Next, imagine Rory getting her cell phone and managing to lose it in 15 minutes before they've even left the mall where it was purchased. Yep, that's how being 12 begins for Rory.

**FINALLY** is one girl's experience as she reaches the magical age where everything seems possible. Whatever can go wrong, does. There are incidents involving leg shaving, make-up, being home alone, and contact lenses, just to name a few. Author Wendy Mass captures the frustration of pre-teens as they reach the magical time that allows them to begin experiencing tidbits from the grown-up world. **FINALLY** will have readers laughing, nodding in agreement, and sighing in sympathy as they follow Rory's tale of reaching 12.

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### **Tori M. says**

I thought this book was really good. It has a series of unfortunate events. This book kept the reader's on their feet. The book was somewhat suspenseful to see what was going to happen next. I recommend for people to read this book.

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### **NewFranklin School says**

I had loved 11 Birthdays and so was especially disappointed with this pseudo-sequel (really, pretty much a completely independent story). Much of it takes place in a mall, following the main character who has finally turned 12 and will now get to do a whole list of things her family said she had to wait until she was 12 to do - like get a pet, get her ears pierced, etc (all activities that are accomplished by going to the mall, pretty much). Her list is lame, her parents are lame, and there are a whole bunch of weird side plots that seem like they are going somewhere but never do. And then, all of a sudden, after you get used to the fact that you will be reading this dumb book for the rest of your life (it is really long), it wraps up with a slapped on author's message not really played out in the plot. - Ms. Patterson

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### **kate says**

haha i read this like 4 years ago or something and didn't even know it was the 2nd book in a series; it's the only one i read whoops

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