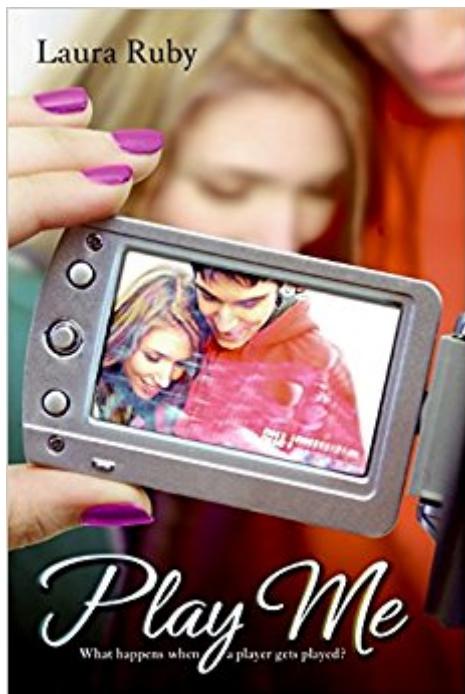


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# Play Me



## Synopsis

Eddy knows how to play the game of love. He has all the tricks down cold, and his favorite girls are the ones with cherry lipstick and long legs in fishnets. They know he doesn't make any promises. But as graduation looms, the game begins to shift for Eddy. He never expected unattainable and perfect Lucinda Dulko to walk into his life. For the first time ever, Eddy is not in control. To be with Lucinda, he has to play on her terms. But what happens to a player when the rules suddenly change? Will Eddy find a way to win it all? Or will he get played?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up • Set in Ruby's Good Girls (HarperTempest, 2006) universe, this is the story of 18-year-old filmmaker Edward "Eddy" Rochester (named for Orson Welles's version, not Brontë's original), who was raised on cinema by his struggling actress mother. Now she's left the family for a bit part on a formulaic Miami crime show. At the close of senior year, Eddy is not thinking college. His main concerns are making movies (getting MTV to produce Riot Grrl 16 that he and his friends shot) and making moves on girls (lately, the fierce, athletic, unattainable Lucinda Dulko). Normally accustomed to getting girls without getting caught up, he's enthralled. Eventually insecurities and differing game plans for their futures find Eddy in a new role • dumpee. This wrinkle, combined with his AWOL mother and threatened career goals, means an impromptu road trip (important but somewhat tacked on) and serious self-evaluation. Eddy is enjoyable in that charming, self-obsessed, heartbreaker way, and he's flawed and vulnerable enough to be real.

While readers will root for Riot Grrl 16's success, what will grab them is the focus on Eddy's relationships—with Lucinda, his mom, his friends (serious Joe, horn-dog video-clerk Rory, faux-punk and bluntly honest Gina), and his family of abandoned men. The best moments involve uncensored Gina or heartbreaking Meatball, Eddy's half brother, who spouts morbid factoids and "dies" various deaths waiting for Eddy to revive him. Pop culture (film related), innuendos, sexual situations (not graphic), and snappy dialogue are all a part of this relationship-centered read. •Danielle Serra, Cliffside Park Public Library, NJ Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“Eddy is enjoyable in that charming, self-obsessed, heartbreaker way, and he’s flawed and vulnerable enough to be real.” (School Library Journal) “Guy lit with a brain and a heart, this has plenty to offer both romantics and cynics about love, film, and transformation.” (Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books)

I own all of Laura Ruby's books (Good Girls, Bad Apple, & Play Me) but haven't read any until Play Me. The narrator was male, which made me like the book a little better. I don't think I would have liked it as much if Lucinda or Gina was the narrator. Now from the summary I was expecting the book to be mostly Eddy chasing after a bunch of different girls. This wasn't the case. His being a "player" wasn't really a big part of the book and I liked that his film making took more of an up front role. I liked all the discussion and quotes from different movies and especially their top five lists. I felt bad that Eddy's mother left them to go work on a TV show, but this added a lot to the book. If she hadn't left Eddy's father Marty and Meatball would never have had a role in the book. Eddy's family was one of the most unique I've ever heard, he lived with his father, stepfather, and stepbrother. They all had a great relationship and I liked how they all stuck together after Eddy's mother left them all. Riot Grrl 16 was the name of the show Eddy and his friends were filming as part of an MTV competition. They put the shows up online and they mostly had nice comments except for one rude commenter- The Tin Man. I wished that the Tin Man's identity was revealed at the end, though. I was thinking that this was going to be a big mystery revealed, but in the end it wasn't really a big deal. I liked all the characters though- Rory, Meatball, Gina. Lucinda wasn't my favorite and although I understand Eddy learned a lesson from her, I wished the ending didn't end as it did. The plot was original and I'm definitely looking forward to reading more by Laura Ruby. Her characters were great and the plot was also enjoyable. All in all I would recommend this book to everyone, and

although some parts weren't my favorite and the summary was a little misleading, it was an enjoyable read. I also really liked the cover.Rating:Plot: 8/10Characters: 8.5/10Ending: 8/10Enjoyment: 8.5/10Cover: 9.5/10\_\_Overall: 42.5/50=85%

Eddy cares about two things--filmmaking, and his family. Not the slew of girls he's had by his side and lusting after him over the years. To him, they're just looking for a good time, and not anything substantial. But then the unattainable, fierce, and independent Lucinda Dulko comes along and sweeps him off his feet. Suddenly years of meaningless relationships appear to be wasted time. Eddy and Lucinda have something real, something far more important than anything Eddy has ever experienced before. Or so he thought.Written with wry humor, startling honesty, great emotion and a good dose of irony, *Play Me* is one knockout of a read. It's not often that female authors dare to tell the story from a male perspective, but Ruby not only accomplishes this, she excels at it. Her talent is not only obvious in the way that she crafts Eddy and his friends' personalities and tendencies, but also in her ability to pull together the multitudes of details, no matter how big or small, to create a singular story. *Play Me* is a hard and pragmatic look at teen life today, free of euphemisms, fairy tale crafted happy endings, and plotlines that condescend to the reality of being a teen. The result is a read that any teen can feel an immediate connection with.

Ever since he was really little, Eddy has been a huge fan of movies --- mostly because his mother "...ate movies like other people eat potato chips, one after the other, never getting enough." And now, although close to graduation, he is totally tied up in his latest project, the hit online TV show "Riot Grrl 16." It's actually been chosen for an MTV competition, so the pressure is on to step it up. He has a great team (well, sometimes they're great) to work with and a most unusual family.Gina --- Eddy's leading lady has all the moves down. Perfect for this role, Gina "is in full costume: black cherry lipstick, pink and black hair spiked as high as she could get it, striped shirt, and camos." She creates the right edge needed to help move "Riot Grrl 16" into the big win --- that is, unless she's having one of her psychotic breakdowns.Rory --- All the technical aspects are handled by Eddy's geeky buddy, Rory, who has built everything from booms to cams. He does his job with only a few sneers and gestures of rebellion. Given something to tinker with, he's the man.Joe --- Although he's an actor, too, Joe is great at handling the "human" part of the production, giving the other actors "suggestions, motivations, pretensions." He's a method actor, immersing himself in his roles and losing an extra 12 pounds for his part in "Riot Grrl 16." "His face looks like a carved pumpkin. A pissed-off carved pumpkin."Tippi Hedren --- Tippi is not a movie actress but a very verbal parakeet

who loves being carried on Eddy's shoulder. She seems to have a smart remark about everything. "Tippi has her own birdbrained way of thinking about things, but most of what she says is vaguely prophetic, like spam." So when Tippi says, "I think you're a louse", Eddy listens to her. Meatball, aka Matthew --- Meatball is Eddy's nine-year-old half-brother. "[M]ost of the time he sounds like a professor. He even looks like a professor." Meatball keeps things from ever being dull around their house as he sets up fake trauma scenes for Eddy to figure out. He's also obsessed with a book about corpses called *STIFF* by Mary Roach. Marty --- Marty is Eddy's stepfather and Meatball's real dad, though Meatball looks more like Eddy than Marty. It's all very complicated as Eddy's dad, Marty and Meatball all sort of live together. Dysfunctional doesn't quite describe their antics. Shelby Rochester Fishbone --- Otherwise known as "Mom," Shelby is living in Miami where she's working on a kind of CSI series. Eddy and Meatball have lots of mixed feelings over this relationship. Their mom's absence is a deep pain, though they cleverly work hard at hiding it. Lucinda Dulko --- Though he didn't mean to, Eddy is suddenly hooked on Lucinda. Their competitive tennis games drive him crazy as she stomps him every time. Lucinda just has that free spirit that won't be tied down. She also brings out the hormones in Eddy. And while he dreams about her and worries about Joe's attraction to her, he's totally lost to her beauty. With lots of quick dialogue and constant movie references (everything from *Citizen Kane* to the Coen Brothers), Eddy's story moves at a fast pace. This is one book where the teens actually talk like teens. When Eddy's world begins to go upside down, it is the unexpected support of Gina that carries him through. Though he reaches out to his mother, he begins to see that their worlds don't come together. Being the big player teaches him that he, ultimately, is not the one in charge. Laura Ruby perfectly captures the sense of teen angst and churning energy in these wonderful characters. Sharp, intuitive, funny and sad, teens will feast on this one! --- Reviewed by Sally M. Tibbetts

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