

Children's Literature Reviews

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Pino and the Signora's pasta

Janet Pedersen.

[Contributor biographical information](#)

[Publisher description](#)

Cambridge, Mass. : Candlewick Press, 2005.

1 v. : col. ill. ; 24 x 28 cm.



Annotations:

Tired of the pasta that the Signora brings him and the other cats of Rome every day, Pino sets out to sample other delicacies.

Horn Book Guide:

Spring 2006 Picture Books Rating 3, Recommended, satisfactory in style, content, and/or illustration.

Reading Measurement Programs:

Accelerated Reader

Interest Level Lower Grade

Book Level 2.6

Accelerated Reader Points **0.5**

Reviews:

Ilene Cooper (Booklist, Sep. 1, 2005 (Vol. 102, No. 1))

The cats roaming around Rome have one thing in common--they all love the Signora's pasta. Each day she brings it, fresh and spicy. But Pino is bored with the pasta. How about some fish? A chop? Some stew? Taking a literal leap, he lands in a cafe, but the waiter shoos him away. He gets a few crumbs at a pizzeria; at a trattoria, he knocks over a bowl of stew that he gobbles before he is pushed out. As Pino wanders through the lonely alleyways, he realizes that, despite all his efforts, he is not full and he is not content. Then he catches the aroma of the Signora's pasta and winds his way home. The story is a little thin, but that's obscured by the robust line-and-watercolor artwork that captures the energy of Rome and Pino's audacity. The art also homes in on details: the expressions on Pino's face and the Greek (well, maybe Italian) chorus of cats commentary on Pino's finicky behavior. Full of life. Category: Books for the Young--Fiction. 2005, Candlewick, \$16.99. *PreS-Gr. 1.*

Beverley Fahey (Children's Literature)

All the cats know that Signora makes the best pasta, sweet and fresh and spiced to perfection. One cat, Pino, is bored with the sameness of dinner and sets off through Rome to find a "special meal." His adventure takes him to several fine restaurants where his finicky palate is satisfied yet there is something missing. Cold and lonely he trudges home when a delectable smell wafts beneath his nose. It can only be the Signora's pasta-- sweet and fresh, spiced to perfection, and served with love. With the inviting city of Rome as a backdrop, Pedersen serves up a story as delicious as the Signora's pasta, reminding readers that it is often easy to overlook what is right in front of us. Warm watercolors accented with crayon and outlined with pen invite the reader in. The cats' expressive faces are priceless. 2005, Candlewick Press, \$16.99. Ages 4 to 7.

Gwynne Spencer (Children's Literature)

If you could cross Lydia's Family Kitchen show with Jack Gantos' Rotten Ralph, this might be the tasty result.

Signora feeds her many cats pasta, pasta, and more pasta. But Pino is tired of it and goes in search of fish, pizza, stew--and ends up hungry and alone under the light of the full moon. He finds his way back to signora and her pasta, and finishes up his dinner as full as the bright white moon. This would team up nicely with *Strega Nona* by Tomie de Paola for a pasta-making lesson in the classroom. Whether a fearless teacher would want to make pasta from scratch or just share a basic cooking lesson about hot water and packaged pasta, kids (and cats) would no doubt enjoy the results. Similar recipe- related titles can be found at <http://www.cookingupreading.com>. 2005, Candlewick Press, \$16.99. Ages 5 to 9.

Kirkus (Kirkus Reviews, August 15, 2005 (Vol. 73, No. 16))

Pedersen dishes up a tale about the homeless cats in Rome, the Signora who feeds them pasta and one grande gatto who wants a special meal that will make him purr like music. Unlike the other cats, Pino is tired of pasta and wants something better. His food foray to sample fish at the outdoor cafT, crusts at the pizzeria and stew at the trattoria causes chaos, leaving a trail of broken crockery, startled waiters and annoyed diners, all shoing him away. Yet the fine cuisine leaves him with a pitiful purr, until Pino realizes that the most satisfying meal is Signora's pasta, because it fills his heart with love and keeps him purring. Illustrations of gouache, watercolor, crayon and pen have a spontaneous air with sketchy lines drolly expressing feline and human reactions. The Rome setting won't matter to kids because they'll focus on Pino's escapades, which are the spice in the sauce here. 2005, Candlewick, 32p, \$16.99. Category: Picture book. Ages 5 to 8. © 2005 Kirkus Reviews/VNU eMedia, Inc. All rights reserved.

Lisa Lea Hardey (Library Media Connection, February 2006)

Signora cooks pasta fit for a Roman emperor. It is sweet, spicy, cooked to perfection, and served with love to a grateful gang of homeless gattos! One fine day, a saucy orange and white striped cat known as Pino decides he has had enough pasta. He sets off prowling the streets of Rome in search of the perfect meal, one that will make him "purr as loud as a lion!" In a cafT he samples fresh fish. In a pizzeria, he feasts on golden crusts. He moves on to a fine stew, but he discovers that even the finest cuisine leaves him lonely and unsatisfied. He lifts his tired head to Luna, the moon, and imagines that her face looks like someone he knows . . . Signora? Yes! Pino realizes that only Signora's pasta served with love makes him purr like the "best-loved cat in all of Rome!" The text of this delightful book is peppered with Italian words that add authenticity to the story. The gouache, watercolor, crayon, and pen illustrations bring the attitudes of each character to life. The soft pastel background further enhances the illustrations, depicting the eateries, the cats, and other characters. Recommended. 2005, Candlewick Press, 32pp., \$16.99 hc. Ages 5 to 11.

Horn Book (The Horn Book Guide, Spring 2006)

Signora feeds Rome's hungry cats with her delectable pasta. Tired of the one-dish menu, Pino, a rotund feline, seeks alternative cuisine only to find that Signora's pasta, delivered with love and affection, feeds not only the stomach but warms his heart as well. Playful mixed-media illustrations picture Pino's determined attempts to find satisfaction in other culinary treats. Category: Picture Books. 2005, Candlewick, 32pp, 16.99. *Ages 4 to 9*. Rating: 3: Recommended, satisfactory in style, content, and/or illustration.

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