

Love, Alba

Sophy Burnham

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Narrated by an articulate cat, this feline examination of human behavior offers a unique perspective on relationships. Sophy Burnham's *Love, Alba* is a touching reflection on life in a conversational storyteller's style.

Alba is only one of the personified cats featured in this heartfelt novel set in Washington, DC. Without question, these sage creatures dominate the plot. Mystical, angelic, and occasionally overbearing, they contribute much more than insignificant details. The feline world depicted in Burnham's book constitutes a subplot that is perhaps more interesting than its human counterpart.

Late that night I moved to the moonlit window. A bat flew past, a silent blur of black, and deep in the grass came the scurrying of mice and moles. In the distance a garbage can lid fell with a clatter—the work of an urban raccoon. The city was bathed in an amber glow, and with eyes half-closed I settled into the silent cat-space that connected me with Puma across the river, communing mind to mind.

Entwining love stories compete for prominence. Lorna's romance with a younger man leads the novel, and it is her activities and personality that Alba finds fascinating. Hilarious commentary and imaginative asides create mood as well as atmosphere in scenes that reveal contradiction, hesitancy, and eccentricity ... from a cat's point of view, of course. Heavy on social pondering yet light on lectures, the narrative explores every pathway to potential happiness.

Sophy Burnham is an award-winning author and playwright best known for her inspirational work.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (Fall 2015)

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