



## When It Happens

By Susane Colasanti

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At the start of her senior year in high school, Sara wants two things: to get into a top college and to find true love. Tobey also wants two things for his senior year: to win Battle of the Bands and to make Sara fall in love with him. However, a popular jock named Dave moves in on Sara first. But Tobey's quirky wit and big blue eyes are hard for Sara to ignore. Plus, he gets the little things that matter to her. Can a slacker rock-star wannabe win the heart of a pretty class brain like Sara?

Hilariously and movingly told through Tobey and Sara's authentic voices, Susane Colasanti's debut novel sizzles in its portrayal of two young people searching for The One.

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## **When It Happens** By Susane Colasanti **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—In the first chapter, readers find out that Sara is entering her senior year hoping that she'll find true love. She is encouraged when Dave asks her out. He is part of the in crowd, and she begins to hang out with his friends, at the expense of her relationships with her girlfriends. Next, readers hear from Tobey. He has slept with a couple of girls, but is uncomfortable with that kind of relationship. He thinks Sara is his real thing, and he asks her friend Laila to help him win her over. Tobey and Sara become partners in music class and find they have much in common. Dave, on the other hand, is a disappointment to her. When he pressures Sara to sleep with him, she finally realizes that she confused her attraction to his good looks and connections with honest feelings. Through alternating chapters, readers get the perspectives of Tobey and Sara about their developing relationship. The easy style of the writing reflects how teens speak, and some of the characters' language is realistically gritty. This is a fun romance with lots of dialogue that, due to the many popular-culture references, will become dated quickly.—*Karen Hoth, Marathon Middle/High School, FL*

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#### From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 9-12. Told from the alternating perspectives of its two main characters, both seniors in high school, this story owes much to (and occasionally references) the 1989 teen romance film *Say Anything*. To brainy and beautiful Sara, Tobey is nothing more than a slacker band guy with no future prospects. This is unfortunate for Tobey, who has dedicated himself to winning her affections--a special challenge given the presence of Dave, Sara's stereotypically gorgeous, popular, and (of course) rotten boyfriend. It's a well-known and well-loved construct; unfortunately, Sara is not quite as likable as readers might wish, given her rigidity and often unkind behavior. Tobey's appeal is real, but is spoiled by occasionally loutish sexual thoughts (fantasies involve "his headboard . . . bumping against the wall") and by the ease with which he discards his worldview to impress his crush. Unlike *Say Anything*, this love story doesn't come together, but the premise will inevitably draw a crowd, and there is real charm in the vibrant supporting characters and their authentic, humorous dialogue. *Holly Koelling*

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#### Review

Issues that matter most to teens make this story happen. Like Sarah Dessen, Colasanti knows how teens operate. -- *Kirkus Reviews*

[R]eaders will enjoy the dynamics of Sara and Tobey . . . a fully satisfying story that will please young adult readers. -- *Debbie Clifford, VOYA*

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### Robert Carroll:

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