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Tall Story

By Candy Gourlay



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Andi is short. And she has lots of wishes. She wishes she could play on the school basketball team, she wishes for her own bedroom, but most of all she wishes that her long-lost half-brother, Bernardo, could come and live in London where he belongs.

Then Andi's biggest wish comes true and she's minutes away from becoming someone's little sister. As she waits anxiously for Bernardo to arrive from the Philippines, she hopes he'll turn out to be tall and just as crazy as she is about basketball. When he finally arrives, he's tall all right. *Eight feet tall*, in fact—plagued by condition called Gigantism and troubled by secrets that he believes led to his phenomenal growth.

In a novel packed with quirkiness and humor, Gourlay explores a touching sibling relationship and the clash of two very different cultures.

From the Hardcover edition.



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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Working through the many meanings of “tall story,” first-time author Gourlay slam-dunks this tale of a towering boy from the Philippines and the pint-size, basketball-crazy half sister with whom he has recently been reunited. Told in the alternating voices of Bernardo, who suffers from gigantism, and Andi, who longs to play point guard on her school’s b-ball team, the novel effortlessly encompasses real-world dreams as well as magic realism. Bernardo was left behind when his mother, a nurse, immigrated to the UK and forged a new family. In San Andres, Bernardo is seen as a reincarnated folk-hero giant who protects the area from earthquakes, though he believes the blame for his freakish height falls on the local witches who cursed him. In contrast to Bernardo’s anxieties over coming to the UK, Andi’s struggles of readjustment to her changed family appear minor. Wonderfully, though, Gourlay uses the dual viewpoints to show that Andi’s concerns are no less important. And, it turns out, she finds that there is more than one thing worth wishing for. This will capture the hearts and minds of sports lovers—and just about everyone else as well. Grades 6-9. --Karen Cruze

Review

Starred Review, School Library Journal, March 2011:

"Contemporary Tagalog and British vernacular enhance the brother/sister narration and enliven the depiction of cultures. In her first young adult novel, Gourlay offers an appealing blend of diverse characters, emotional conflicts, well-paced action, and an upbeat finale. The challenges facing separated, immigrant families and the universal teen desire for acceptance and respect ring true."

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

CANDY GOURLAY was born in Manila during the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. After working as a journalist for some years, she moved to the U.K. in her twenties. Candy is now a full-time writer across a range of mediums: short stories, blogs, Web sites, journalistic features, and radio programs. *Tall Story* is Candy's first full-length published novel. Visit her on the Web at CandyGourlay.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Tiffany Hassell:

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