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Parrotfish

By Ellen Wittlinger



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Angela Katz-McNair has never felt quite right as a girl, but it's a shock to everyone when she cuts her hair short, buys some men's clothes, and announces she'd like to be called by a new name, Grady. Grady is happy about his decision to finally be true to himself, despite the practical complications, like which gym locker room to use. And though he didn't expect his family and friends to be happy about his decision, he also didn't expect kids at school to be downright nasty about it. But as the victim of some cruel jokes, Grady also finds unexpected allies in this thought-provoking novel that explores struggles any reader can relate to.



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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—As in *Hard Love* (S & S, 1999), Wittlinger tackles GLBT issues, introducing readers to Grady McNair, formerly known as Angela. This fast read follows Grady through the days between Thanksgiving and Christmas as he comes out as transgendered, faces issues of acceptance and rejection at school and at home, and falls in love with the hottest girl in school. Funny and thought-provoking in turns, the book does suffer from a few structural problems. The narrator's voice is very feminine for somebody who has internally always felt like a boy, and with little effort on his part, Grady ends the book with family approval, new and old friends, a previously forbidden pet, and the end of an embarrassing family holiday tradition. Flaws aside, the book is an excellent resource for building awareness about, and serving the increasing number of, transgendered teens. Helpful resources include Web sites and further-reading material. The lack of similar titles available, except for Julie Ann Peters's *Luna* (Little, Brown, 2004), and Wittlinger's captivating storytelling ability combine to make this a book that most libraries should stock. Grady eventually decides that he will always straddle the 50 yard line of gender, and the book should help teens be comfortable with their own place on that football field.—*Cara von Wrangel Kinsey, New York Public Library*
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From [Booklist](#)

Angela McNair is a boy! Oh, to the rest of the world she's obviously a girl. But the transgendered high-school junior *knows* that she's a boy. And so, bravely, Angela cuts her hair short, buys boys' clothing, and announces that his name is now Grady and that he is beginning his true new life as a boy. Of course, it's not as simple as that; Grady encounters an array of reactions ranging from outright hostility to loving support. To her credit, Wittlinger has managed to avoid the operatic (no blood is shed, no lives are threatened) but some readers may wonder if--in so doing--she has made things a bit too easy for Grady. His initially bewildered family rallies around him; he finds a champion in a female gym teacher; he loses but then regains a best friend while falling in love with a beautiful, mixed-race girl. Wittlinger, who is exploring new, potentially off-putting ground here (only Julie Anne Peters' *Luna*, 2004, has dealt with this subject before in such detail), manages to create a story sufficiently nonthreatening to appeal to--and enlighten--a broad range of readers, including those at the lower end of the YA spectrum. She has also done a superb job of untangling the complexities of gender identity and showing the person behind labels like "gender dysphoria." Grady turns out to be a very normal boy who, like every teen, must deal with vexing issues of self-identity. To his credit, he does this with courage and grace, managing to discover not only the "him" in self but, also, the "my."

Michael Cart

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Review

"A thought-provoking discussion of gender roles, gender identity, and the influence of nature, nurture, and social construction on both."—*The Horn Book Magazine*

"A compelling and richly detailed story."—*The BCCB*

"Peopled with wonderfully wacky characters and scenes, this narrative snaps and crackles with wit, even while it touches the spirit of the sensitive reader. Wittlinger scores another success with this highly recommended novel."—*VOYA*

"Wittlinger's writing skill will help YA readers understand transgender issues, and those readers will be

entertained and moved as they read.”—*KLIATT*

“The author demonstrates well the complexity faced by transgendered people and makes the teen’s frustration with having to “fit into a category” fully apparent.”—*Publishers Weekly*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Floyd Wyatt:

This Parrotfish are generally reliable for you who want to certainly be a successful person, why. The explanation of this Parrotfish can be one of several great books you must have is usually giving you more than just simple looking at food but feed an individual with information that maybe will shock your preceding knowledge. This book is handy, you can bring it all over the place and whenever your conditions in e-book and printed people. Beside that this Parrotfish forcing you to have an enormous of experience for example rich vocabulary, giving you trial run of critical thinking that we understand it useful in your day task. So , let's have it and revel in reading.

Linda Bryant:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to try and do! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic inside park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Do you need to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book could be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the book untitled Parrotfish can be great book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Sophia Hardee:

Playing with family in a very park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try matter that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition of knowledge. Even you love Parrotfish, you could enjoy both. It is good combination right, you still desire to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh come on its mind hangout folks. What? Still don't buy it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Yolanda Harris:

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