



Girlish: Growing Up in a Lesbian Home

Lara Lillibridge

Skyhorse Publishing (Apr 3, 2018)

Hardcover \$25.99 (364pp)

978-1-5107-2391-7

Stark, moving, and filled with rays of light, Lara Lillibridge's memoir of growing up straight in a dysfunctional lesbian home takes readers far beyond names and labels into the heart of what it means to be "family."

Written as though she is standing outside of the girl she had been, referring to herself only as "Girl" throughout, Lillibridge reveals that growing up straight in a lesbian home was the least of her problems. Surrounded by dysfunctional people and afloat in a sea of confusion, secrets, and lies, all she wants is something to believe in—something that feels like family.

Girl doesn't mind that her mother is gay, but she does mind that everyone else makes it a big deal. She's concerned that her mother is so needy that she puts up with abuse rather than be alone, she's affected by her stepmother's mental illness, and she's confused by her father's serial marriages and attitudes on sex that border on perversion.

Girl struggles to fill the gaping hole in the center of her chest with dreams of marriage and children, her passport to a land of white picket fences and normalcy, but she's haunted by nightmares in which she's transformed into a lesbian, making her even more an outcast than her unusual family, nerdiness, and less-than-cheerleader-caliber looks already have.

Acts of rebellion take center stage as she becomes aware that the adults around her harbor dark, inner stirrings. Girl's cheering for Republican floats at parades, saying it was because they threw more candy than did the Democrats, morphed into experimenting with sex, alcohol, drugs, and running away from home into the arms of unsuitable lovers. "Girl bobbed and traveled the currents of childhood unable to steer her own course or choose her own ocean, and she understood that the surrounding sea didn't get to choose either," writes Lillibridge.

Written through the eyes of a girl gifted with wit, courage, and wisdom far beyond her years, this is a troubling yet hopeful story of brokenness, resilience, and love.

KRISTINE MORRIS (LGBTQ+ 2018)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.