

[PDF] Stargirl

Jerry Spinelli - pdf download free book



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Author: Jerry Spinelli
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Description:

"She was homeschooling gone amok." "She was an alien." "Her parents were circus acrobats." These are only a few of the theories concocted to explain Stargirl Caraway, a new 10th grader at Arizona's Mica Area High School who wears pioneer dresses and kimonos to school, strums a ukulele in the cafeteria, laughs when there are no jokes, and dances when there is no music. The whole school, not exactly a "hotbed of nonconformity," is stunned by her, including our 16-year-old narrator Leo Borlock: "She was elusive. She was today. She was tomorrow. She was the faintest scent of a cactus flower, the flitting shadow of an elf owl."

In time, incredulity gives way to out-and-out adoration as the student body finds itself helpless to

resist Stargirl's wide-eyed charm, pure-spirited friendliness, and penchant for celebrating the achievements of others. In the ultimate high school symbol of acceptance, she is even recruited as a cheerleader. Popularity, of course, is a fragile and fleeting state, and bit by bit, Mica sours on their new idol. Why is Stargirl showing up at the funerals of strangers? Worse, why does she cheer for the opposing basketball teams? The growing hostility comes to a head when she is verbally flogged by resentful students on Leo's televised *Hot Seat* show in an episode that is too terrible to air. While the playful, chin-held-high Stargirl seems impervious to the shunning that ensues, Leo, who is in the throes of first love (and therefore scornfully deemed "Starboy"), is not made of such strong stuff: "I became angry. I resented having to choose. I refused to choose. I imagined my life without her and without them, and I didn't like it either way."

Jerry Spinelli, author of Newbery Medalist , Newbery Honor Book , and many other excellent books for teens, elegantly and accurately captures the collective, not-always-pretty emotions of a high school microcosm in which individuality is pitted against conformity. Spinelli's Stargirl is a supernatural teen character--absolutely egoless, altruistic, in touch with life's primitive rhythms, meditative, untouched by popular culture, and supremely self-confident. It is the sensitive Leo whom readers will relate to as he grapples with who she is, who he is, who they are together as Stargirl and Starboy, and indeed, what it means to be a human being on a planet that is rich with wonders. (Ages 10 to 14) --*Karin Snelson* --This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly Part fairy godmother, part outcast, part dream-come-true, the star of Spinelli's novel shares many of the mythical qualities as the protagonist of his *Maniac Magee*. Spinelli poses searching questions about loyalty to one's friends and oneself and leaves readers to form their own answers, said PW in our Best Books citation. Ages 12-up.
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