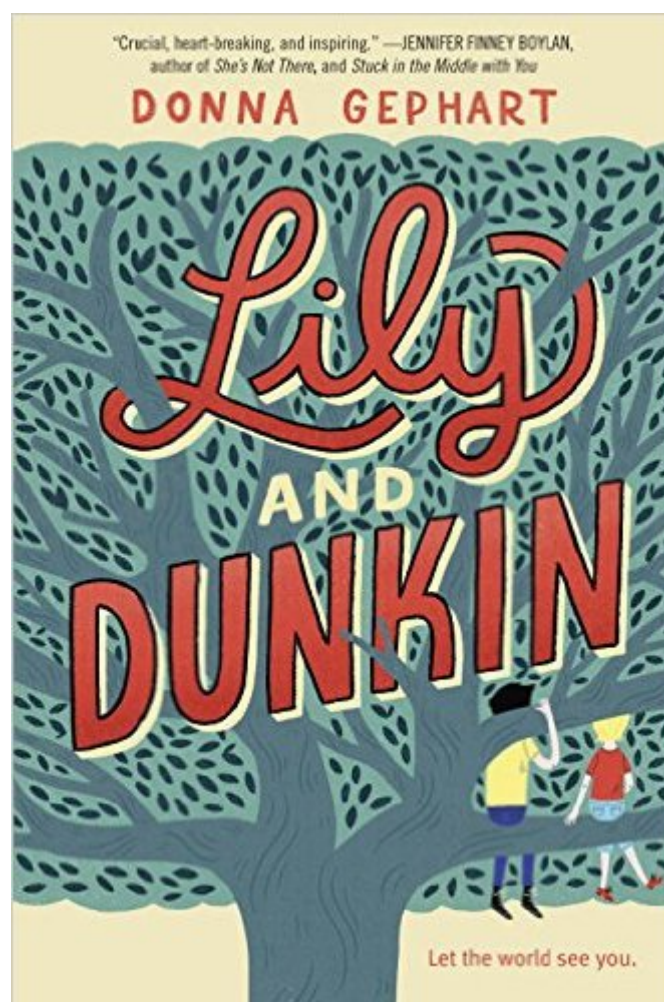


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# Lily And Dunkin



## Synopsis

"Gephart has written a story that will speak not just to one specific community, but to humanity as a whole."--VOYA For readers who enjoyed *Wonder* and *Counting by 7's*, award-winning author Donna Gephart crafts a compelling dual narrative about two remarkable young people: Lily, a transgender girl, and Dunkin, a boy dealing with bipolar disorder. Their powerful story will shred your heart, then stitch it back together with kindness, humor, bravery, and love. "Lily and Dunkin" is a delight. Here's a book for anyone who's ever struggled with being different--or anyone who's ever loved someone who bears the burden of difference. Donna Gephart's book is about trans children, and bipolar children, and their parents, of course, but what it's really about is friendship, and the redeeming power of love. Crucial, heart-breaking, and inspiring. "Jennifer Finney Boylan, author of *She's Not There*, and *Stuck in the Middle with You*. Lily Jo McGrother, born Timothy McGrother, is a girl. But being a girl is not so easy when you look like a boy. Especially when you're in the eighth grade. Dunkin Dorfman, birth name Norbert Dorfman, is dealing with bipolar disorder and has just moved from the New Jersey town he's called home for the past thirteen years. This would be hard enough, but the fact that he is also hiding from a painful secret makes it even worse. One summer morning, Lily Jo McGrother meets Dunkin Dorfman, and their lives forever change. A JLG Selection! An Indie Next Pick! Best Book of the Month! CBC's May Hot Off the Press! An NAIBA Seasonal Pick! Another Indie Favorite Title! "Gephart clearly has a lot of heart, and she tells their stories with compassion."--Kirkus "A thoughtfully and sensitively written work of character-driven fiction that dramatically addresses two important subjects that deserve more widespread attention."--Booklist, starred "Gephart sympathetically contrasts the physical awkwardness, uncertainty, and longings of these two outsiders during a few tightly-plotted months, building to a crescendo of revelation" [A] valuable portrait of two teenagers whose journeys are just beginning. --PW "This would be a fantastic addition to any middle grade library collection, and is highly recommended for all ages."--VOYA

## Book Information

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[Growing Up & Facts of Life > Fiction](#) #414 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of](#)

[Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Emotions & Feelings](#)

Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

It's the culture that keeps you from living the life one was born to live. It's the closure that lets one begin to live again after a loss. And it's the comfort of a limb one can climb out onto--climb out upon that reminds us that the phrase, "life and limb" takes on new meaning depending upon how close one might be to a tree at the time. Gephart creates something very special in the characters of Tim (Lily) and Norbert (Dunkin) in this new-to-me-and-you but celebrated-by-early-readers within her new book for upper middle-grade readers (description says ten and up). I read LILY AND DUNKIN in one day. This is not-so-odd as it is time for the annual push for Donalyn Miller (The Book Whisperer) and her #bookaday challenge. And I needed Gephart's book to get me back into that swing of daily reading again after closing up a very busy school year. I started reading the book in the morning and I kept coming back all day long to "read just a little bit more." The description of the book tells you what to expect from a chance meeting of a transgender and a bi-polar character at the end of one summer going into a new school year. What the description does NOT tell you--by way of humble brag--is that Gephart has written a new FREAK THE MIGHTY for a new generation of readers. Gephart works the symbiotic relationship well through the book even building in a little bit of tension for the reader as Dunkin violates some of the motifs of the familiar convention. But, what we do have--like the MG classic FTM--is a character defied by her own body matched up with a larger character having difficulty finding the words for the associated feelings that come of losing a loved one. But none of this is formulaic.

I must say I was skeptical of this book going in. So Ms. Gephart thinks she's capable of handling not only transgenderism but also mental illness (bipolar disorder) accurately and authentically? In the same book? For middle grade/young adult readers? And it's not going to come off as some

preachy â€˜diversityâ€™ book with an â€˜eat your vegetablesâ€™ flavor to it? Well, if thatâ€™s what Ms. Gephart thinks, sheâ€™s right. I was very pleasantly surprised by this book. Both the transgender and the mental illness issues in this book are handled competently, authentically and respectfully and itâ€™s a great story to boot.[Note: itâ€™s difficult to use pronouns appropriately when talking about a transgender person who is pre- or mid-transition. For much of this book, Lily presents as a boy even though she experiences herself as a girl. I mostly try to refer to her with feminine pronouns, but at times when she presents as â€˜Timâ€™, it makes more sense to use masculine pronouns.]The story is told in short, alternating sections. We meet â€˜Timâ€™ first who is in the closet. Literally. His motherâ€™s closet, to be specific. Or, rather, her motherâ€™s closet. â€˜Timâ€™ is in fact a transgender girl who identifies herself as â€˜Lilyâ€™ and sheâ€™s starting to think and plan for how to actually be Lily to the world. Unfortunately, her dad has different ideas, as Tim learns once again when he â€˜practicesâ€™ going out in his motherâ€™s dress. Dad is terribly worried should someone see Tim dressed like that, what they will think and, most importantly, what they might do to him. Unfortunately for Dad, someone does see â€˜ a new boy in the neighborhood. Fortunately for Tim, or, rather, for Lily, all he sees is a pretty girl in a red dress. And he smiles.

Accepting yourself and having others accept you are critically important. For â€˜ tweens and teens, this is one of the most daunting challenges they face as they mature. Donna Gephartâ€™s â€˜Lily and Dunkinâ€™ is a sensitive and important novel that addresses gender identity and mental health issues without proselytizing or demanding that the reader agree with the premises she presents. From early childhood, Timothy McGrother has known he was meant to be a girl. Preferring to be called Lily Jo, she shares this knowledge with only her immediate family and her best friend Dare. Dare encourages Lily to reveal her true identity. â€˜ If you canâ€™t be comfortable with who you really are â€˜ how do you expect anyone else to be â€˜ ? Her sister and mother fully accept Lilyâ€™s true self and support her desire to begin hormone treatments. â€˜ Mom changed. Sheâ€™s really embracing the new me. The true me â€˜ ? Her father is upset with and angry about his son Timothy becoming his daughter Lily. â€˜ I feel like no matter what I do, I canâ€™t win â€˜ . Eighth grade is set to begin and Lily must deal as well as she is able with the cruel taunts and bullying of the â€˜ Neanderthalsâ€™ , a group of athletes. â€˜ Hiding in my boy-appropriate clothes was a good idea â€˜ . Norbert Dorfman â€˜ soon to be nicknamed Dunkin, after his favorite donuts - and his mother moved to Florida from New Jersey; they live with his grandmother. He meets Lily before school begins and, when classes begin, is surprised to meet her as Timothy. Like Lily, Dunkin has a secret â€˜ he is dealing with mental illness. Wanting to be accepted, Dunkin joins the

basketball team â “ even though he is a terrible athlete. A breakdown during one game brings Dunkinâ ™s issue to the forefront.

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