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Otherwise (Gravel Road)



Synopsis

A law has been passed. There will be no more genders. Everyone must appear gender neutral. No more boys. No more girls. Just ... Otherwise. Same bland clothes. Same fuzzy heads. Spark dreads the countdown leading up to the finality of the new law's passage. Her parents are for it. They're tired of conforming to society's standards. But they allow her to take off for a quick camping trip to gather her thoughts. At the campsite, she meets Whistler. And the attraction is instant and mutual. But who is Whistler? And what is Whistler? Boy? Or girl? This gender-bending story in verse will make readers question everything they thought they knew about love, chemistry, and cultural norms. Hard-hitting, contemporary young adult fiction is not trendy--it's not dystopia. There are no vampires, no werewolves, no castles. It's real life. It's unflinching. *Gravel Road* highlights the talent of YA authors committed to creating realistic fiction with emotional authenticity. No topic is off-limits: suicide, homosexuality, drugs, rape, gangs, bullying. Teens live with this reality each day. And they find a way to survive. Each paperback book is 200 to 275 pages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gravel Road - What if identification with a particular gender became illegal? What if the powers that be decided that overpopulation and other unspecified societal ills could be solved by requiring all citizens to appear not male or female but "otherwise"? In this book set decades into the future, Pennsylvania is the last state to sign off on S868A, just such a bill. Unfortunately, this bizarre dystopian novel-in-verse lacks an internal logic that would help make its premise tenable enough. A teen girl chooses the unisex name Spark when she meets a gender-unknown love interest at a New

Jersey campground. Just as for Spark, who becomes attracted to another without knowing their sex roles, so the author attempts to hide from readers the gender of Whistler, a person who follows Spark home to her parents' house with less than a month before gender identification becomes unlawful. This hi-lo offering fails to deliver a satisfying narrative. Even if the ideas could pique the interest of reluctant readers, who desire a slim book with plenty of white space, its convoluted logic undermines teens' potential enjoyment. — Suzanne Gordon, Lanier High School, Sugar Hill, GA

I grabbed this one in the library. The cover looked interesting, the back blurb intriguing. I did not flip thru it or notice the small print on the back... VERSE. An idea that had so much potential ended up disappointing. I cannot read this new way of writing. I just can't. I tried but it lacks so much. If you like books like this, the idea sounded appealing and maybe it will work for you.

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