



Forgive Me If I've Told You This Before

By Karelia Stetz-Waters

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Shy, intellectual, and living in rural Oregon, Triinu Hoffman just doesn't fit in. She does her best to hide behind her dyed hair and black wardrobe, but it's hard to ignore the bullying of Pip Weston and Principal Pinn. It's even harder to ignore the allure of other girls. As Triinu tumbles headlong into first love and teenage independence, she realizes that the differences that make her a target are also the differences that can set her free. With everyone in town taking sides in the battle for equal rights in Oregon, Triinu must stand up for herself, learn what it is to love and have her heart broken, and become her own woman.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 10 Up—It's 1989, and the state of Oregon is attempting to pass legislation against gays, and Triinu Hoffman's high school principal makes no secret about how he feels on the issue. The teen knows she is a lesbian, understands that she might be up for a challenge. Classmate Pip Weston has bullied her for years, but she doesn't let that stop her from continuing to discover who she is. The principal does not make it easy for Triinu and neither do the girls she encounters in her quest for companionship. This is a true coming-of-age novel that is open and honest as relationships develop between Triinu and several love interests. High schools will not be able to keep this book on the shelves as it intertwines a variety of issues and challenges that teens endure. There are some sex scenes as the protagonist develops relationships with different young women and strong language that is organic to the situations in which they occur. Adult characters are real with strong opinions for and against the gay population; Triinu's parents are presented as a major part of her support system. A good discussion starter for mature teens.—Karen Alexander, Lake Fenton High School, Linden, MI

Review

Take a deep breath. Step back twenty years to a virulent antigay political campaign, when being queer meant being branded a pariah and an abomination. Walk with Triinu, a shy and achingly honest girl who tries to navigate love and friendship, hold to her faith, and accept her draw to other young women. At the end of the road, you'll thank author Karelia Stetz-Waters for this bold and lucid story that is compelling, compassionate, and leavened with humor. Stetz-Waters dedicates her book to "queer kids everywhere," but you needn't be queer or a kid to appreciate *Forgive Me If I've Told You This Before*. - Ruth Tenzer Feldman, Oregon Book Award-winning author
(Ruth Tenzer Feldman)

Gr 10 Up?It's 1989, and the state of Oregon is attempting to pass legislation against gays, and Triinu Hoffman's high school principal makes no secret about how he feels on the issue. The teen knows she is a lesbian, understands that she might be up for a challenge. Classmate Pip Weston has bullied her for years, but she doesn't let that stop her from continuing to discover who she is. The principal does not make it easy for Triinu and neither do the girls she encounters in her quest for companionship. This is a true coming-of-age novel that is open and honest as relationships develop between Triinu and several love interests. High schools will not be able to keep this book on the shelves as it intertwines a variety of issues and challenges that teens endure. There are some sex scenes as the protagonist develops relationships with different young women and strong language that is organic to the situations in which they occur. Adult characters are real with strong opinions for and against the gay population; Triinu's parents are presented as a major part of her support system. A good discussion starter for mature teens.?Karen Alexander, Lake Fenton High School, Linden, MI
(School Library Journal)

Smartly set in a dangerous time, when the politicizing and normalizing of a virulent homophobia was gripping Oregon, a teen must find the audacity to simply be who she is. Stetz-Waters has drawn a genuine young heroine who reminds us, not without humor, that small acts of courage move the world forward. - Heather Lyn McDonald, director of the documentary film *Ballot Measure 9*

(Heather Lyn McDonald)

I absolutely loved this book. I cried my eyes out, so touched and amazed to read something that so closely echoed my own adolescence... The injustice and fear that homophobia unleashes on society's young people has twisted so many coming-out stories into ones of tragedy. I will cherish *Forgive Me* and its message of kindness and hope while cheering the trailblazers who came before me; in their simple acts of defiance and love, they have changed the world. - Sara Quin, of Tegan and Sara

(Sara Quin)

About the Author

Karelia Stetz-Waters is the author of the novel *The Admirer* and the serial novel *The Eastbank Killer*; her work has also appeared in *Calyx* and *First Time: An Anthology of Lost Virginity*. She holds a master's degree in English from the University of Oregon and a bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature from Smith College. A member of Willamette Writers and the Gold Crown Literary Society, Karelia teaches technical writing and English composition at Linn-Benton Community College. She lives in Albany, Oregon, with her wife, Fay, their pug, Lord Byron, and their cat, Cyrus the Disembowler. Having grown up during the violent political debate surrounding Oregon's infamous anti-gay Ballot Measure 9, Karelia's first young adult novel, *Forgive Me If I've Told You This Before*, is loosely based on her own experiences of growing up gay in Oregon in the early nineties.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Do you have favorite book? If you have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to know everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim or even goal; it means that book has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. They are reading whatever they consider because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Consider the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, person feel need book after they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you'll have this *Forgive Me If I've Told You This Before*.

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