



Dork in Disguise (Volume 1)

By Carol Gorman

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At his new school, Jerry Flack is determined to stop being a dork and start being a cool guy—but does this science nerd really have what it takes to be popular? Jerry Flack is starting middle school in a new town where no one knows him and he can be anybody he wants. Jerry has a plan: He is finally going to be cool. But that turns out to be easier said than done. As his lies begin to pile up, Jerry knows he's going to slip up soon, and everyone will see him for who he really is. Can Jerry keep the act going? Or is it possible that a dork can actually be . . . well, cool?

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Dork in Disguise (Volume 1) By Carol Gorman Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Gorman (*The Marvelous Makeover of Lizard Flanagan*) retreads Polonius's well-worn exhortation in this familiar tale of a sixth-grader who wants to be "cool." When his family moves, science-loving Jerry resolves to shed his "dork" image. Hence he starts at his new school in a blur, because he leaves his uncool glasses at home. However, his vision isn't so fuzzy that he can't see and fall hard for gorgeous airhead Cinnamon, who, in turn, is impressed by the handsome and equally vacuous Gabe. What's a dork to do? Under the unlikely tutelage of classmate Brenda (who tells Jerry that it takes a dork to know one), he learns to rip his new jeans fashionably and to strut, and with his new look and the self-promoting lies he spins, he's in like Flynn. The only problem is that Jerry finds that he's happier with Brenda and the other science club members than with Cinnamon's vapid crowd. It doesn't take much to figure out which group Jerry will ultimately decide to stick with. The story is essentially amiable, but even though Gorman has one of the "cool" boys furtively express an interest in science, the portrayal of good-looking kids as shallow ignoramuses and intellectuals as unattractive misfits perpetuates stereotypes. Ages 8-12. (Sept.)

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From School Library Journal

Grade 3-6-Jerry Flack is really smart-smart enough to have been labeled dork, geek, and nerd throughout his school career. When his family moves to a new town, he sees the possibilities for a major lifestyle change. Hiding his glasses in his backpack and his academic abilities behind ripped jeans and a cool-guy strut (which he perfects in the mirror at home), Jerry manages to insinuate himself into the coolest group in the sixth grade. He is puzzled and disappointed when life isn't as exciting as he expected, and he is unsure how to respond when he's invited to join the science team, based on his outstanding record from his previous school. Jerry loves science (he is even building a working hovercraft at home), but competing on the team is definitely uncool. On the other hand, the science-team kids are more interesting to be around. It's a tough choice, but in the end Jerry decides that being himself is a lot more fun than being cool. *Dork in Disguise* is similar in setting, mood, and message to Gorman's *The Miraculous Makeover of Lizard Flanagan* (HarperCollins, 1994), about a sixth-grade girl trying to reconcile her identity as a jock with the social expectations that come along with entering middle school. As with that title, many readers will enjoy and identify with this humorous story.

Susan L. Rogers, Chestnut Hill Academy, PA

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From [Booklist](#)

Jerry Flack has always scored high on the "dorkometer" of life, but this year, at a new school, he's determined to get into the cool group. The first thing to go is his glasses. Cool guys do not wear glasses. On the first day, a girl asks outright why he's not wearing them. She noticed his squinting and the dents on the sides of his nose. Right away she's blown his cover. Jerry quickly discovers that Brenda McAdams reads him like a book, but she's still friendly and even offers to help him change his image. After telling a few lies about himself, Jerry is soon "in." But there's a cost: he absolutely adores science, but he can't be on the science team. He also has to keep lying, and he can't be true to the feelings he begins to have for Brenda. In this hilarious novel, wonderfully constructed and beautifully paced, Jerry and Brenda are believable, as is their friendship, which Jerry fortunately chooses instead of maintaining his guise. *Shelley Townsend-Hudson*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Detra Satterwhite:

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Paul Day:

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