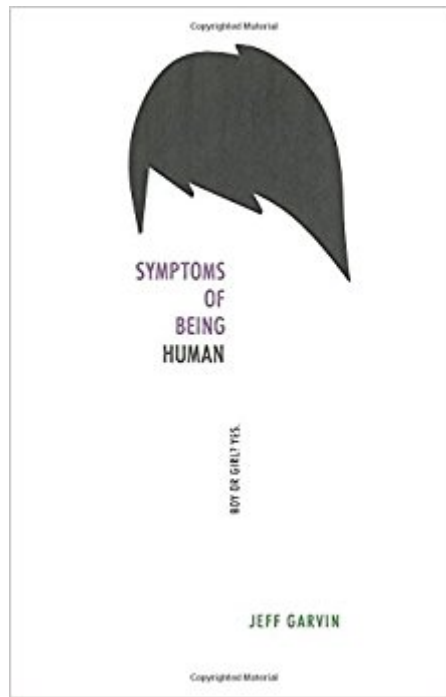


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# Symptoms Of Being Human



## Synopsis

A sharply honest and moving debut perfect for fans of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* and *Ask the Passengers*. Riley Cavanaugh is many things: Punk rock. Snarky. Rebellious. And gender fluid. Some days Riley identifies as a boy, and others as a girl. But Riley isn't exactly out yet. And between starting a new school and having a congressman father running for reelection in Åber-conservative Orange County, the pressure "media and otherwise" is building up in Riley's life. On the advice of a therapist, Riley starts an anonymous blog to vent those pent-up feelings and tell the truth of what it's really like to be a gender fluid teenager. But just as Riley's starting to settle in at school "even developing feelings for a mysterious outcast" the blog goes viral, and an unnamed commenter discovers Riley's real identity, threatening exposure. And Riley must make a choice: walk away from what the blog has created "a lifeline, new friends, a cause to believe in" or stand up, come out, and risk everything. From debut author Jeff Garvin comes a powerful and uplifting portrait of a modern teen struggling with high school, relationships, and what it means to be a person.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*SYMPTOMS OF BEING HUMAN* is an immensely entertaining, important, informational and educational read. It introduces a character who is likable and funny and brave and not-so-brave, who makes mistakes, who pushes themselves, who learns and grows and becomes someone who is comfortable with who they are. Riley is gender fluid, not identifying with just one gender. Riley

doesn't want to stand out. Riley doesn't want to make waves, especially with a parent who is running for re-election. Riley doesn't want to be labeled and yet finds themselves trying to attach a label to the people they meet. Riley just wants to find a way to navigate through school and life that doesn't make them feel uncomfortable in their own skin, that doesn't make them feel like they're living a lie, that doesn't make them feel stressed or anxious or panicked. Switching schools was not the solution Riley hoped it would be. But starting a blog, sharing their thoughts, offering advice, connecting with their followers, might prove to be the catalyst for change that Riley needs. Jeff Garvin did a phenomenal job of connecting readers with his character Riley, helping them understand, empathize, relate to what Riley is going through, educating and informing them about the different types of gender identities there are and what some of the challenges these individuals face are. The author created a story that is as engaging as it is informative. It has a wonderful flow that isn't interrupted by the education of the reader. The situations and experiences presented feel true to life for Riley.

Sometimes, after turning page after page of a truly great book, you think, with total conviction: this book could change someone's life. That's how I felt more than once while reading SYMPTOMS OF BEING HUMAN. But not only that—I also had another thought. This book could save someone's life. The protagonist in SYMPTOMS OF BEING HUMAN, Riley Cavanaugh, is gender fluid and identifies as both a boy and a girl, depending on the day. Some mornings, Riley wakes up and feels more girl; others, Riley's compass is pointing toward boy. Although Riley's parents don't know the truth, Riley starts a blog anonymously, under the name "Alix," to share what it's like to be a gender fluid teenager. As Alix, Riley is open and honest and real, and begins to realize the number of gender fluid and LGBT people looking for someone who understands—but Riley is still waiting for the right time to come out in real life. To add to this, Riley has just transferred schools and struck up a friendship—and maybe more—with enigmatic Bec, who has secrets of her own. Riley's voice is everything I could ever want in a YA narrator. Snarky, whip-smart, thoughtful, brave, and authentically teen. And I can honestly say that seeing the world through Riley's eyes opened mine. I loved that Riley wasn't perfect and at times, made the same judgments or assumptions about other people that people make about gender fluid or trans individuals. There are so many brilliant lines in this book, so many powerful truths. But this is my favorite one: "People are complicated. And messy. Seems too convenient that we'd all fit inside some multiple-choice question. Nobody should be confined to identifying as male or female if that doesn't match how they feel inside."

I really loved this book. I was so happy that I was part of the Sunday Street Team for this book, and was able to review an eARC from Edelweiss. This book was definitely 5 out of 5 stars in my opinion. This is a diverse novel, with the main character identifying as gender fluid. The story really sucks you in. A few things throughout the book were kind of predictable, at least to me, but I think I'm a pretty good guesser at what's going to happen in a book. I loved seeing the world through Riley's eyes, learning more about what being gender fluid really means. The writing was unique and absolutely beautiful. My stomach was full of butterflies, and a smile overtook my face often while reading. I even cried some. Besides my enormous love for Riley, I really liked Bec as well. Solo was okay at parts, especially towards the last half of the book. Riley's parents annoyed me here and there throughout the book. They were too demanding; helicopter parents always hovering and bugging Riley. I thought the blog posts were really interesting and informative. The romance wasn't very prominent in the book, but I loved it nevertheless. The pairing was absolutely adorable. I didn't find any book boyfriends in this book, but it was definitely still worth the read. The parts where I cried, my heart felt like it was breaking. I don't want to say what happened, because it would spoil the book, but wow, just wow. Some of my favorite lines: "Why does that make you think I'm from the Midwest?" Solo shrugs. "Where else could you develop such contempt for traditional American values?" • and "Ten minutes later we're speeding down the freeway, Solo's hatchback shuddering like a porta-potty in a 5.0 magnitude earthquake."

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