



Capricious by Gabrielle Prendergast

Orca Book Publishers, 2014

9781459814288: paperback

*Age Range: 12+

Grade Range: Grades 10+

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Ella's grade-eleven year was a disaster (*Audacious*), but as summer approaches, things are looking up.

She's back together with her brooding boyfriend, Samir, although they both want to keep that a secret. She's also best buddies with David and still not entirely sure about making him boyfriend number two. Though part of her wants to conform to high school norms, the temptation to be radical is just too great. Managing two secret boyfriends proves harder than Ella expected, especially when Samir and David face separate family crises, and Ella finds herself at the center of an emotional maelstrom. Someone will get hurt. Someone risks losing true love. Someone might finally learn that self-serving actions can have public consequences. And that someone is Ella.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"Prendergast's unrhymed verse not only tells the tale, but varies form and line length, the clipped rhythms capturing Ella's emotional turmoil...Sensitive and compelling." —[Kirkus Reviews](#)

"A quick read, thanks to the format and the dramatic plot. Prendergast varies the style of the narrative, seamlessly integrating rhymed couplets, acrostics, and more...Her candid approach to sex, lies, and friendship should attract a wide audience, especially readers who are drawn to deep and sometimes dark issues." —[School Library Journal](#)

"Ella is certainly audacious, capricious, and ultimately resilient as she maturely handles her delicate situation with both boys and reclaims her identity. Prendergast's compilation of various verse styles makes Ella's story approachable and poignant." —[Booklist](#)

Updated March 12, 2025

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"The poetry is accessible and refreshingly varied, capturing the many moods of Ella as well as the voice of Marika...and the secondary characters are well drawn enough to be participants in Ella's life rather than mere props. Readers who enjoy this will want to pick up the first one as well." —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"Ella's responses are generally thoughtful and consistently authentic. I like that Ella stands firm in her individuality and owns both her vulnerability and her nonconformity...Capricious could make an excellent independent study text for any high school reader who enjoys poetry, and it should be very popular in the teen section of public libraries." —*Resource Links*

"An unexpectedly addictive read...Bitterly real, Ella's bad choices and low self-esteem haunt her as she spirals through life, apparently unable to resist any chance at happiness, regardless of the cost to herself, her image, and to the people she loves...Capricious could be studied in high school as an example of how poetry is so much MORE than rhyming words and difficult interpretations...Prendergast is extraordinary. " —On Page 394 blog

"A young adult coming-of-age novel [that] covers a variety of other themes, including homosexuality, drug use, sex, religious prejudice, mental illness, bulimia and bullying. Prendergast is able to allude to these social problems with a sincere and honest voice. She does not drag the novel into some sort of moral sermonizing, nor does she trivialize the issues which Ella and other characters must confront....Prendergast is able to portray complete characters, an intricate plot and a variety of settings with a minimum of words. This has the advantage of allowing readers to use their imaginations to fill in the blanks with details surmised from the poetry...Highly Recommended." —[CM Magazine](#)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens | 2014 | Commended
- BC and Yukon Book Prizes - Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Prize | 2015 | Short-listed

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

Banned by Wilson County Schools. All the books on this list were removed from their libraries:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/tn/wcschools/Board.nsf/files/DA6S3Q70BCC6/%24file/Director's%20Report%20-%20October%2024%202024%20BOE%20Meeting.pdf>

*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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