

***Birthday* by Meredith Russo**

Flatiron Books, Macmillan 2020

ISBN: 9781250129857 (Trade Paperback)

*Age Range: 13-18 (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: 9 and up (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Two best friends. A shared birthday. Six years...

ERIC: There was the day we were born. There was the minute Morgan and I decided we were best friends for life. The years where we stuck by each other's side—as Morgan's mom died, as he moved across town, as I joined the football team, as my parents started fighting. But sometimes I worry that Morgan and I won't be best friends forever. That there'll be a day, a minute, a second, where it all falls apart and there's no turning back the clock.

MORGAN: I know that every birthday should feel like a new beginning, but I'm trapped in this mixed-up body, in this wrong life, in Nowheresville, Tennessee, on repeat. With a dad who cares about his football team more than me, a mom I miss more than anything, and a best friend who can never know my biggest secret. Maybe one day I'll be ready to become the person I am inside. To become her. To tell the world. To tell Eric. But when?

*Six years of birthdays reveal Eric and Morgan's destiny as they come together, drift apart, fall in love, and discover who they're meant to be—and if they're meant to be together. From the award-winning author of *If I Was Your Girl*, Meredith Russo, comes a heart-wrenching and universal story of identity, first love, and fate.*

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ *"Beautifully written, *Birthday* is an altogether singular contribution to the gradually growing body of transgender literature and, indeed, to mainstream literature, as well."* —ALA Booklist, **starred review**

*"Lovers who surmount the odds have always been intense emotional fodder, but rarely have we seen a story like Meredith Russo's *Birthday*. Russo is herself trans, and she brings her whole heart to a story laced with pain that, in the end, lifts with hope. The birthday structure could feel like a gimmick, but it works thanks to her characters, especially Morgan, who is true and raw, haunting and undeniable." —[The New York Times Book Review](#)*

"A sensitive, uplifting narrative, one that feels much-needed." —Nylon, Best Book of the Month

8.28.2024

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Emily Day, emily.day@macmillan.com

“In addition to being exquisitely written, Birthday showcases the best of YA: its ability to instill empathy in readers. Written by a trans author, Birthday gives an essential perspective into the trans experience.” —Refinery29, Best Book of the Month

“Meredith Russo, the author of If I Was Your Girl, is back with a gorgeous story of first love. Eric and Morgan share a birthday, and everything else, too. This book follows the two on six of their birthdays—only on their birthday—and in the process, tells a wrenching story about love, friendship, sexuality, and gender.” —Bustle, Best Book of the Month

“Russo seamlessly melds difficulties with joy and impossibilities with solutions, to create a resonating 'love story eighteen years in the making.’” —[Shelf Awareness](#)

“Morgan and Eric’s struggles feel so real that they broke my heart, twisted it, and made me tear up. This book is incredibly fast-paced, so much so that I couldn’t put it down. Recommended to lovers of realistic literature and romance.” —The Missourian


“Stonewall Award winner Russo captures the intense longing of two teens who feel trapped in their small town. An emotional, winning touchdown.” —[Kirkus Reviews](#)

“Stonewall Award winner Russo (If I Was Your Girl) tackles teen love, heartbreak, sexuality, and gender identity in this novel told over the course of six years through the alternating voices of transgender girl Morgan and cisgender boy Eric, two childhood best friends who share the same birthday. A realistic picture of the challenges that teens may face when finding themselves and falling in love.” —[Publishers Weekly](#)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- New York Public Library Top 10 Teen Book of the Year, [2019](#)
- Chicago Public Library “Best of the Best”, [2019](#)
- Nominated for the 2020 Carnegie Medal
- Texas Library Association’s Tayshas [Top 10 Book](#)
- YALSA’s Best Fiction for Young Adults List, [2020](#)
- ALA’s Rainbow Book List, [2020](#)
- We Need Diverse Books’ Walter Dean Myers Award Honor Book
- Goodreads Readers’ Choice Award Finalist, [2019](#)
- Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year
- Kirkus Best Book of the Year
- Lambda Literary Award Finalist [29th Annual](#)
- Bustle Best YA Book of the Year
- YALSA Top 10 Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers
- YALSA Teens’ Top 10 Pick
- Indie Next Top 10 Pick

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

 [Vlog: Birthday by Meredith Russo](#)

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Emily Day, emily.day@macmillan.com

***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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