

Transitions: A Mother's Journey

Élodie Durand

Evan McGorray, Translator

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The mother of a transgender child grows to accept her son in Élodie Durand's graphic novel *Transitions*.

Anne is a biology researcher. With her husband, she raises their two boys plus her child from her previous marriage. Then Anne's seventeen-year-old announces that they've been seeing a therapist with gender questions; they come out as a boy and ask to be called Alex, throwing Anne's world into disarray.

Girded by her strong love for her child, Anne learns more about sex, gender, and gender expression. Alex's other family members do, too. Over time, they begin to accept Alex's refreshed identity.

Based on interactions between Durand and the woman who inspired Anne's character, the book's point of view is intriguing—both close to Alex's experiences and also removed from them. Anne is sympathetic: she wants to accept her son, but she is held back by persistent concerns. She is hesitant to approve of Alex altering his otherwise healthy body through hormone treatments.

Figurative art punctuates the book, highlighting the confusion, acceptance, and—in the end—beauty of gender identity. Also included are diagrams, academic quotes regarding gender and sexuality, and fascinating sex and gender facts from the animal world. Alex's voice is included as well, in conversation with his mother and in an affecting email to her near the end of the book.

Transitions is a heartfelt graphic novel that reckons with a family member's changing gender.

PETER DABBENE (November / December 2023)

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