

# DEAR SWEET PEA



*Juvenile*

**By Julie Murphy**

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## **Book Summary:**

A young teenage girl's life becomes turbulent upon discovering her father is homosexual and her parents have decided to divorce.

## **Summary of Concerns:**

This book concerns alternate sexualities.

**1** / 5  
**Child Guidance**  
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
42	It's like the universe is trying to tell fat people not to bother looking nice.
45	<p>"Because society has taught us that there's no use in dressing bigger bodies in beautiful clothes, because we do not value bodies of all shapes and sizes. And you want to know who's fed that lie to society?"</p> <p>I can feel a small crowd gathering as everyone in the juniors' section holds their breath. Mom doesn't give poor Judith with her perfectly numbered freckles and big, wide saucer eyes a moment to answer. "The patriarchy!"</p>
47	<p>"Mom?" I ask.</p> <p>"Yes, Sweet Pea," she says.</p> <p>"What's the patriarchy?"</p>
95	<p>Maybe it's all in my head, but there are hushed whispers as I walk by, and I swear I hear it—the word Dad used to explain why he couldn't stay with Mom and how it was no one's fault.</p> <p>Gay.</p> <p>...Besides Mrs. Young and her wife, there are only a few other gay people in town that I know of, so it shouldn't surprise me that people—even well-meaning ones—can't seem to talk about anything else.</p>
96	It's not just Dad they're talking about. In a way, it's Oscar too. But whether or not Oscar is gay, it doesn't matter, because these people are just flat-out wrong.
109	"I don't know, Liz. It's not Kiera's fault that her father's a homophobe. And I thought maybe she and Sweet Pea had made up. Stranger things have happened." He pauses for a moment. "They don't really cover this in all your parenting books, you know. There's no chapter on 'I've just told my daughter I'm gay and am attempting to navigate her social food chain while maintaining my own sanity.'"
140	<p>Dad squeezed my hand and gave me a hopeless-looking smile. "I'm not sick. There's nothing wrong with me. But Sweet Pea, I'm gay."</p> <p>...Besides Mrs. Young and her wife, most of the gay people I knew of were on TV. Mom and Dad had always made sure I knew there was nothing wrong about being gay, and they'd even made a point of making me watch all the celebrations on the news when gay marriage was legalized. Mom said it was history being made. And I think one of Dad's cousins is gay. But other than that and the possibility of Oscar being gay, I hadn't thought about it very much.</p> <p>In the end, though, Dad being gay was the kind of information I filed away in my brain to deal with some other time, because the real, looming issue I couldn't stop thinking about was the fact that my family was suddenly falling apart.</p>
170	<p>"Um, so you know what your mom was talking about out there, right?"</p> <p>"About my dad and your dad?"</p> <p>"And how my dad is gay now."</p>
172	I'd be lying if I said this wasn't the first time I wondered if part of the reason Kiera ditched me was because she was tired of being friends with the fat girl. I saw in one of Mom's magazines once a diagram of all the different shapes women are supposed to be, and they didn't really have anything that looked like my body, because no one in magazines writes about girls who are shaped like oranges with Popsicle sticks for legs. I'm okay with who I am and what I look like, or at least I try to be. I just wish people, Kiera included, would feel the same way.

Page	Content
196	My parents are divorced. My dad is gay, and my mom has a new boyfriend.
204	There are sibling rivalries, questions about home-brewed cleaning supplies, a woman who's gay and trying to figure out how best to tell her family, parents having trouble communicating with their kids, a scandal involving a recipe thief at the county fair, someone who borrowed money from a friend and can't pay it back, and many, many more.
245	"Everything was fine before Dad . . . well . . ." "Before your father announced he was gay."
253	Dad looked over my head to Mom and then back to me before saying, "You know, part of it is that Mr. Bryant has never really known a gay person as a close friend, and part of it was that seeing me and your mom get a divorce while he's having a hard time with his marriage hit pretty close to home."