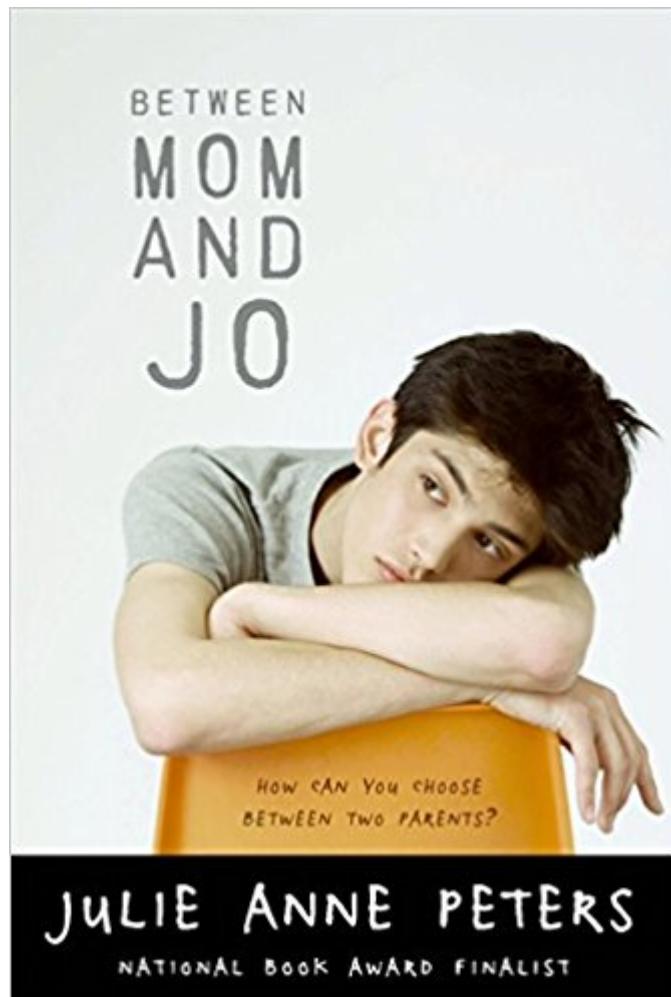


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## Between Mom And Jo



## **Synopsis**

Nick has a three-legged dog named Lucky, some pet fish, and two moms who think he's the greatest kid ever. And he happens to think he has the greatest Moms ever, but everything changes when his birth mom and her wife, Jo, start to have marital problems. Suddenly, Nick is in the middle, and instead of having two Moms to turn to for advice, he has no one. Nick's emotional struggle to redefine his relationships with his parents will remind readers that a family's love can survive even the most difficult times.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 7 Up-Nicholas Nathaniel Thomas Tyler has four first names and two mothers. As the only child in his class with gay parents, he endures the taunts and prejudices of classmates and adults over the years as best he can, drawing reassurance and strength from his parents. Challenges nearly overwhelm him, though, when their relationship ends; Jo moves out, and Nick, now a teenager, is left with Erin, his birth mother. Peters captures the voice of an adolescent sorting through the memories of his childhood in poignant prose that rings with truth. As Nick develops from a boy to a young man, he must address his own sexuality, his ties to his family, and his need to assert his individuality. This novel is a timely exploration of the struggles faced by same-sex couples and their children, and while the issues are significant, the story is never overwhelmed by them. Because Jo lacks biological or legal relationship to Nick, he can be cut off from her with no recourse, which makes his experience slightly different from that of other children of divorcing

parents. This coming-of-age novel powerfully portrays the universal pain of a family breakup. It also portrays what is still a weird situation to many people (as reflected in the behavior of Nick's babysitter) as totally normal from one young man's point of view.-Beth Gallego, Los Angeles Public Library, North Hollywood Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gr. 8-11. Fourteen-year-old Nick has two moms who couldn't be more different. His biological mother, Mom, is dependable and careful; Jo, Mom's partner, is irresponsible and impulsive. Nick tells their story in vignettes, including little things, such as the teasing he gets at school, as well as big things, such as Mom's cancer and Jo's alcoholism. Eventually these vignettes turn into a divorce story: Mom finds a new partner; Jo, who has no rights to Nick, struggles on her own; and Nick breaks down after Mom refuses to allow him to see Jo, with whom he wants to live. Nick's incapacitating depression and Mom's refusal to acknowledge it drag on far too long, turning into turgid melodrama. Yet Peters deftly depicts Nick's relationship with his moms and theirs with each other, and the story stays rooted in Nick's sensitive but limited perspective. A novel that will spark discussion. Krista HutleyCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Amazing. My parents never split up nor were they same-sex, but my daughter IS the product of a split up and now lives with me and my wife (same-sex marriage). When she's old enough for the material, this will be the first book I give her. I loved how the relationships were depicted realistically and the main character's actions were also realistic and characteristic of depression and neglect. I have this book on Kindle and in hardcover and love it. I really hope my wife and I never split up, but if we do, I hope this book would help my daughter understand. I also hope it helps her understand more about why I split up with her daddy. We still love each other, just not in the same way, just like Erin and Jo in this book. Wonderful, realistic, and helpful.

Nick faces all the traditional challenges of growing up: school, girls, dealing with his family. But his family is anything but "traditional" --- Nick has two lesbian moms. When Nick is young, he doesn't realize anything is unusual; he loves his birth mom and Jo, and they love him. When he splits open his chin on the coffee table, Jo rushes him to the hospital for stitches. When they lounge in the backyard eating watermelon, they end up in a silly seed-spitting contest. But as soon as Nick starts school, he begins to realize that his family is different.Nick's classmates pick up on his uniqueness

right away, and the teasing begins as early as kindergarten. Some of his teachers even treat him differently, uncomfortable with his family situation. Nick doesn't have a lot of friends, but he deals with it. He finds a lot of his happiness at home with his music, his vast aquarium hobby, and his relationships with his moms, especially Jo. His birth mom tends to be a bit more practical, worrying about putting food on the table and paying the bills. But Jo is different. She's the one who cheers away his tears and takes him paintball shooting. She's the one who talks to him about important topics like sex and death, who teaches him to stand up for himself and respect others. Even though Jo didn't give birth to him (or even officially adopt him), she's his mom in every single way. But life isn't always fun and games at home. Jo starts drinking too much, and it puts a big strain on the family. And then the three of them battle cancer together when Nick's birth mom is diagnosed with the disease. It may never be easy or traditional, but his family is Nick's whole world. And then one day his family starts to fall apart...Julie Anne Peters has created an amazing story with **BETWEEN MOM AND JO**. The diverse characters have incredible personalities with multiple layers; they quickly become very real and relatable. The emotional depths visited in this special story will have readers both laughing and crying and everything in between. Many of the issues addressed are a bit touchy yet necessary as they are happening in our world. Very highly recommended for everyone, young people and adults alike. --- Reviewed by Chris Shanley-Dillman (author of **FINDING MY LIGHT** and **THE BLACK POND**)

**BETWEEN MOM AND JO** is the first book I've read by Julie Anne Peters, but it won't be my last. In fact, as soon as I finished this book, I went and read **KEEPING YOU A SECRET** and **LUNA**. And while we're on confessions, this is also the first book I've read dealing with GLBT issues, but again, it won't be the last. This book grabbed at my emotions, affecting me with every word so deeply that I finished it in only a matter of hours--and have been thinking about it ever since. Nicholas Nathaniel Thomas Tyler has always only known one type of family life. He's the only child of mom Erin--and mom Jo. His earliest memories revolve around one or the other of his mothers, but it's usually Jo who is prominent, making him forget about the need for stitches at age three or tangling with the homophobic teacher he had in third grade. His mothers, of course, have their ups and downs like all parents do. Mom Erin complains about mom Jo's drinking and her inability to hold down a steady job; mom Jo can't stand mom Erin's stony silences when she's angry. For Nick, having two mothers is just the way life is. He's heard all the "queers" and "faggots" through the years, he's wondered about the father that donated sperm for his conception, and he's been haunted over whether having two lesbians for parents will make him gay. Most of all, though, Nick has experienced love from two

women who only want him to be happy. He has a three-legged dog named Lucky 2, a ton of fish that he takes care of religiously, and there's even a feral cat named Savage thrown into the mix to keep things interesting. Nick's life is pretty normal--or as normal as it can ever be--until the year he turns fourteen, and Jo moves out. After a marriage, a child, lost jobs, meetings at AA, college courses, and a relationship that they'd always promised would remain whole, his mothers break up. Nick is suddenly thrust into turmoil, and his whole world falls apart. He's left with mom Erin, his biological mother, even though what he wants most in the world is to be allowed to live with mom Jo. Erin won't hear of it, however, even though she's the one with Kerri, her new girlfriend. She's the real parent, and Jo let trust get in the way of legally adopting Nick, so there's no out. As Nick descends deeper into depression, as Erin becomes fanatical about not allowing her son to even to talk to Jo on the telephone, as Kerri moves into their home, something has to give. **BETWEEN MOM AND JO** is heartfelt, genuine, and painfully honest. For anyone who has ever watched the breakup of a family, or for those with gay or lesbian parents, this is the book for you. I promise it will stay with you for quite awhile. Reviewed by: Jennifer Wardrip, aka "The Genius"

Even though kids at school make fun of him for having two moms, Nick still manages to have a pretty happy childhood. When he turns 14, Erin and Jo decide to split up. Erin, Nick's birthmother, insists on sole custody of her son, despite the feelings of both Nick and her now ex-partner, a recovering alcoholic, that Jo is responsible enough to care for him. Things escalate when Erin invites her new girlfriend, Kerri, to move in with them. Nick struggles with angst, depression, and rage as the tug-of-war battle ensues. In terms of plot, this is an average entry in the literary canon of bibliotherapy. The ending is a bit rushed and too easily resolved, but it may, in any case, be therapeutic for teens suffering from similar issues. Recommended for Ages 15-Up.

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