



Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family

Amy Ellis Nutt

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK • NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *PEOPLE* AND ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *MEN'S JOURNAL* • A STONEWALL HONOR BOOK IN NONFICTION • FINALIST FOR THE LAMBDA LITERARY AWARD FOR TRANSGENDER NONFICTION

The inspiring true story of a transgender girl, her identical twin brother, and an ordinary American family's extraordinary journey to understand, nurture, and celebrate the uniqueness in us all, from the Pulitzer Prize-winning science reporter for *The Washington Post*

When Wayne and Kelly Maines adopted identical twin boys, they thought their lives were complete. But it wasn't long before they noticed a marked difference between Jonas and his brother, Wyatt. Jonas preferred sports and trucks and many of the things little boys were "supposed" to like; but Wyatt liked princess dolls and dress-up and playing Little Mermaid. By the time the twins were toddlers, confusion over Wyatt's insistence that he was female began to tear the family apart. In the years that followed, the Maineses came to question their long-held views on gender and identity, to accept and embrace Wyatt's transition to Nicole, and to undergo an emotionally wrenching transformation of their own that would change all their lives forever.

Becoming Nicole chronicles a journey that could have destroyed a family but instead brought it closer together. It's the story of a mother whose instincts told her that her child needed love and acceptance, not ostracism and disapproval; of a Republican, Air Force veteran father who overcame his deepest fears to become a vocal advocate for trans rights; of a loving brother who bravely stuck up for his twin sister; and of a town forced to confront its prejudices, a school compelled to rewrite its rules, and a courageous community of transgender activists determined to make their voices heard. Ultimately, *Becoming Nicole* is the story of an extraordinary girl who fought for the right to be herself.

Granted wide-ranging access to personal diaries, home videos, clinical journals, legal documents, medical records, and the Maineses themselves, Amy Ellis Nutt spent almost four years reporting this immersive account of an American family confronting an issue that is at the center of today's cultural debate. *Becoming Nicole* will resonate with anyone who's ever raised a child, felt at odds with society's conventions and norms, or had to embrace life when it plays out unexpectedly. It's a story of standing up for your beliefs and yourself—and it will inspire all of us to do the same.

Praise for *Becoming Nicole*

"A profoundly moving true story about one remarkable family's evolution."—*People*

"Fascinating and enlightening."—**Cheryl Strayed**

"Exceptional . . . 'Stories move the walls that need to be moved,' Nicole told her father last year. In telling Nicole's story and those of her brother and parents luminously, and with great compassion and intelligence, that is exactly what Amy Ellis Nutt has done."—*The Washington Post*

“If you aren’t moved by *Becoming Nicole*, I’d suggest there’s a lump of dark matter where your heart should be.”—**Jennifer Senior**, *The New York Times*

“Extraordinary . . . a wonderful and inspiring story.”—**Minneapolis Star Tribune**

“A downright necessary book—and a remarkable act of generosity by the Maines family.”—**BuzzFeed**

From the Hardcover edition.

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