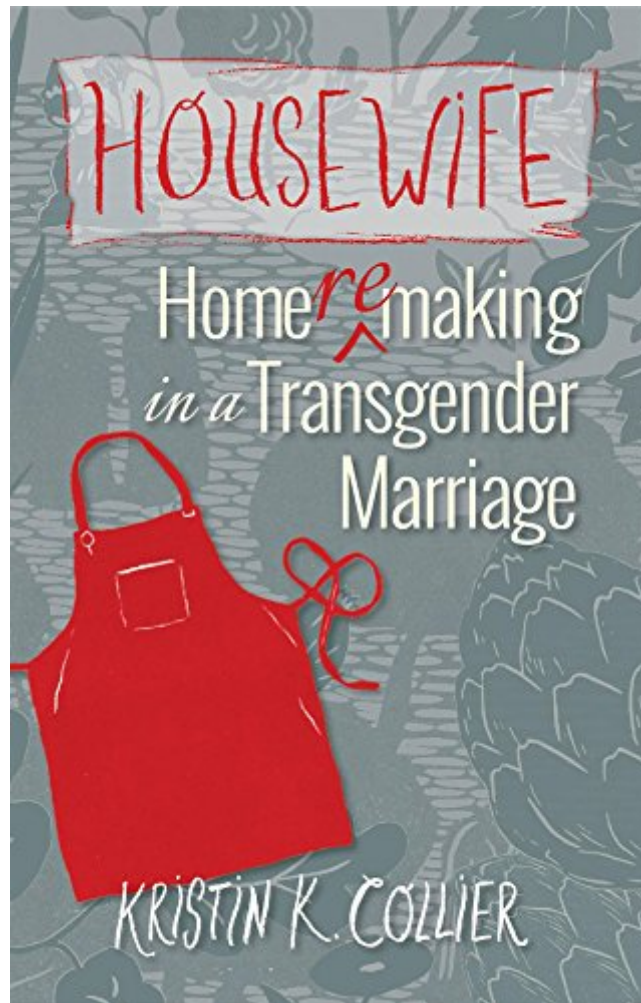




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Housewife: Home-remaking In A Transgender Marriage



Synopsis

Kristin Collier and her husband struggle to decide whether and how to stay together after it becomes apparent that he is transgender. As her husband transitions to live the rest of his life as a woman, Collier leans into her garden, community, and new romantic interests while she transforms in her own right, evolving as a woman, mother, and housewife. With honesty, humor, and grounded in her practice of Compassionate Communication, Collier redefines homemaking as she and her former husband continue to live and parent as partners in the same household. *Housewife* is an exceptionally rare personal account of a partner's response to gender transition. Including poetry, blog posts, and four pictures from before and after transition, Collier tells her story from the perspective of a woman and mother as her family breaks out of the box.

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Customer Reviews

When Kristin Collier's husband revealed to her that he suffered what medical jargon names as "gender dysphoria," she and he and the kids went to the library and came back with "books on dinosaurs, bugs, castles and transsexuals." Included in their haul was at least one good memoir detailing the

experience of transitioning, but no account of what the experience might be like for a gender-changer's spouse. A Yahoo Groups forum for old partners of newly transitioning folks eventually provided a common ground where she could learn, explore, and exchange. After a certain point, though, she felt called to take into account her own circumstances and map out the winding path to truth as she had come to know it. "I have attempted to write the book," she says, as heart-opening memoirs often do, "that I was longing for at that time. It's a boots-on-the-ground odyssey through norms, expectations, inner experience, the phases and nuances of coming to terms with one's own changes when the acknowledged inner truth of a loved one changes radically. Her prose is at once straight forward and evocative. The cast of characters that pass through her kitchen in the progressive college town where she lives are recognizable, and yet singular. Each is given the dignity of his or her own life, and understanding of that life. As a spoiler her former husband transitions successfully, they continue to live under the same roof with their two kids, and they become "parenting partners. These facts, though, are just the book's skeleton. Its flesh and blood is the narrative of uncertainty, and of the acceptance of uncertainty, that she works through as she learns to stay in close and trusting relationship with her parenting partner while exploring her need for community and testing her hope for romantic intimacy. Quite sufficient, but never excessive, details are provided about both the changes in her sexual relationship with her parenting partner, as well as her exploration of the unsought freedom that comes to her after they agree to stop sharing a bed. I thought it was in these details that her book achieved its most artful transparency. The courage and skill with which she laid bare, discretely, but with some completeness, both the inner landscapes and outer circumstances of her new relationships took my breath away. It occurs to me that perhaps her candor was inspired by her parenting partner Seda's coming out as female-identified. Because Kristin, in effect, outs herself as cis-gendered. She writes of her experience of femininity, of what she wanted in a relationship, what she got, and what the differences were and what they might mean. She owns her desires, ponders them, experiments with them. Her descriptions of the men in her life achieve an even-handed vulnerability that give the sometimes loose narrative of the second part a potent charm. One gets the impression that from an early age and by necessity she was self-reliant, but that in her attempt to nurture fresh love that she can integrate into her existing family structure she achieved a remarkably clear vision of who she is in relation to all that she desires.

This book is from a perspective almost identical to my own, and I am glad to hear from someone else about transitioning as a spouse. I identified with many of Kristin's feelings, and also my spouse has gone through a lot of the transition steps that Seda has. We have 3 kids and are living together co-parenting. Thank you Kristin for sharing your story. I am glad to know that I am not alone, and you inspire me to make myself available to be an empathetic ear for other spouses going through transition.

A very good book written by a very talented lady. I would highly recommend this book for any couple who have a transitioning partner. I just wish that this book had been available when i started my transition to female to help my wife thru the transition. I could relate with Fred's transition to female, just as Kristen transitioned in the marriage with the transition. My wife is reading the book now and i know it will give her a better understanding.

What an amazing book...well written and absorbing. An eye opener to what this family has gone through to keep their love alive. Bravo!

I loved the fact this book explores the feelings and process involved for the spouse/significant other. There are several resources out there for the Mtf and Ftm folks but not much for the families. It was great to hear about their transition. I hope it helps other loved ones and their children by showing a loving and compassionate way to help them cope with this new change.

I read this book on the recommendation of a friend, although I was not entirely sure that I would be able to really get into it or relate in any way to the author's experiences. As it turns out though, this book is very engaging and the author's natural abilities as a writer had me hooked a few pages in. I thought she did an excellent job of recounting the day to day trials and tribulations of trying to maintain a relationship and manage a family while their world was drastically changing due to her partners changing gender identity. I found myself rooting for her and the rest of the family, because it was so clear that they were all good, loving people who were just trying to keep their balance while dealing with such a seismic upheaval. Its easy to see how these situations could be very difficult, and often tragic, for everyone involved and I came to appreciate that in the end this could be anyone's friend or family, and that each individual has the same right to pursuit of happiness. I'll admit most of my questions were of the mundane variety, such as how do you make it work financially, or as parents, are you still married or do people always divorce, etc and I thought the

book did a great job of explaining these things, and so it became something I actually could relate to and learn from. All in all, a good read and definitely worth checking out.

Have you watched and enjoyed the tv series "Transparent"? If so, you will very much enjoy this real life story of a family facing the truth about their father figure. This true story is told from the perspective of the mother and wife. She explains in poetic, loving prose her own transition within the marriage as her husband discovers his true identity and becomes the woman she always knew she was. This is a very challenging book to read. It took me a few sessions - definitely not something I could read all through the night. I had to put it down and process some of the revelations in the book before I could read more. Here is a real life housewife (though she is so much more than that term implies) through many years coping with a huge change in her life drawing you into her world and the many questions she had to answer about herself as her husband changed in front of her eyes. Can you imagine? With this book you are forced to examine your own prejudices and left floundering with the question "what does it mean to be a woman?"

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