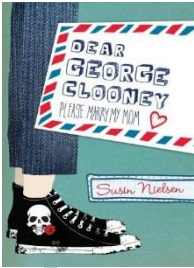




## Fr. Michael Goetz Library Learning Commons Teacher's Book Review



*Dear George Clooney, Please Marry My Mom*, Susin Nielsen  
Reviewed by Ms. Cosgrove, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

The challenges faced by teenagers today, unfortunately, are numerous and varied. The emotional suffering caused by activities, such as cyber bullying, are unique to this century, while other problems have existed for decades. Today's book focuses on a young girl named Violet, whose family life has been turned upside-down when it is discovered that her father had been unfaithful to her mother, culminating in her father starting a new family with a much younger second wife. The emotional fallout of divorce, and specifically its effects on children, is the focus of this novel.

The author of this book tackles the subject of divorce with much humour, yet she never diminishes the significant role it plays in a young person's emotional development. Violet is a smart and sensitive young woman, who in some secret place in her heart yearns for her mother to remain single for the rest of her life so that Violet doesn't have to risk witnessing her mother suffering again or enduring it herself, should a second marriage fail. Her mother's commitment to a new relationship is the catalyst for Violet's decision to send a letter to the famous actor, George Clooney, who met her mother doing film work when she was much younger. On some level she knows that the chance of George Clooney marrying her mother is beyond slim. Violet pursues this bizarre plan as a diversion from having to deal with the real men who are vying for her mother's affection. To this mixture, add a "wise-beyond-her-years" best friend, a couple of school bullies, a nerdy suitor at the doorstep, and the new boy at school and you have the recipe for a really good read.

The main character is a very funny and insightful person and the cast of characters that surrounds her is equally intriguing. Violet's love for her little sister, Rosie, makes for some poignant moments in the novel and the author presents some really interesting questions regarding what it means to be a family. I found myself really admiring Violet's honesty, as well as her mother's determination to find love once again, despite her history of pain and disappointment. This is a book that will make you smile and maybe even laugh as you cheer on this smart young woman in her quest not to just find the perfect husband for her mother, but to heal her own broken heart.