



The First Part Last

By Angela Johnson

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The First Part Last By Angela Johnson

This little thing with the perfect face and hands doing nothing but counting on me. And me wanting nothing else but to run crying into my own mom's room and have her do the whole thing.

It's not going to happen....

Bobby is your classic urban teenaged boy -- impulsive, eager, restless. On his sixteenth birthday he gets some news from his girlfriend, Nia, that changes his life forever. She's pregnant. Bobby's going to be a father. Suddenly things like school and house parties and hanging with friends no longer seem important as they're replaced by visits to Nia's obstetrician and a social worker who says that the only way for Nia and Bobby to lead a normal life is to put their baby up for adoption.

With powerful language and keen insight, Johnson looks at the male side of teen pregnancy as she delves into one young man's struggle to figure out what "the right thing" is and then to do it. No matter what the cost.

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The First Part Last By Angela Johnson Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #66485 in Books
- Brand: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers
- Published on: 2010-01-05
- Released on: 2010-01-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x .40" w x 5.50" l, .30 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 144 pages

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 8 Up-Brief, poetic, and absolutely riveting, this gem of a novel tells the story of a young father struggling to raise an infant. Bobby, 16, is a sensitive and intelligent narrator. His parents are supportive but refuse to take over the child-care duties, so he struggles to balance parenting, school, and friends who don't comprehend his new role. Alternate chapters go back to the story of Bobby's relationship with his girlfriend Nia and how parents and friends reacted to the news of her pregnancy. Bobby's parents are well-developed characters, Nia's upper-class family somewhat less so. Flashbacks lead to the revelation in the final chapters that Nia is in an irreversible coma caused by eclampsia. This twist, which explains why Bobby is raising Feather on his own against the advice of both families, seems melodramatic. So does a chapter in which Bobby snaps from the pressure and spends an entire day spray painting a picture on a brick wall, only to be arrested for vandalism. However, any flaws in the plot are overshadowed by the beautiful writing. Scenes in which Bobby expresses his love for his daughter are breathtaking. Teens who enjoyed Margaret Bechard's *Hanging on to Max* (Millbrook, 2002) will love this book, too, despite very different conclusions. The attractive cover photo of a young black man cradling an infant will attract readers.

Miranda Doyle, San Francisco Public Library

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 6-12. Bobby, the teenage artist and single-parent dad in Johnson's Coretta Scott King Award winner, *Heaven* (1998), tells his story here. At 16, he's scared to be raising his baby, Feather, but he's totally devoted to caring for her, even as she keeps him up all night, and he knows that his college plans are on hold. In short chapters alternating between "now" and "then," he talks about the baby that now fills his life, and he remembers the pregnancy of his beloved girlfriend, Nia. Yes, the teens' parents were right. The couple should have used birth control; adoption could have meant freedom. But when Nia suffers irreversible postpartum brain damage, Bobby takes their newborn baby home. There's no romanticizing. The exhaustion is real, and Bobby gets in trouble with the police and nearly messes up everything. But from the first page, readers feel the physical reality of Bobby's new world: what it's like to hold Feather on his stomach, smell her skin, touch her clenched fists, feel her shiver, and kiss the top of her curly head. Johnson makes poetry with the simplest words in short, spare sentences that teens will read again and again. The great cover photo shows the strong African American teen holding his tiny baby in his arms. *Hazel Rochman*

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Review

"SLJ, " starred review Brief, poetic, and absolutely riveting.

"Booklist, " starred review Poetry.

"U.S. News and World Report" Johnson has carved a niche writing realistically about young people's issues.

"Publishers Weekly, " starred review Readers will only clamor for more.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Brad Black:

Book is to be different for every grade. Book for children until adult are different content. To be sure that book is very important for all of us. The book The First Part Last has been making you to know about other expertise and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The publication The First Part Last is not only giving you more new information but also to be your friend when you feel bored. You can spend your own spend time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship together with the book The First Part Last. You never experience lose out for everything in case you read some books.

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David Fulton:

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