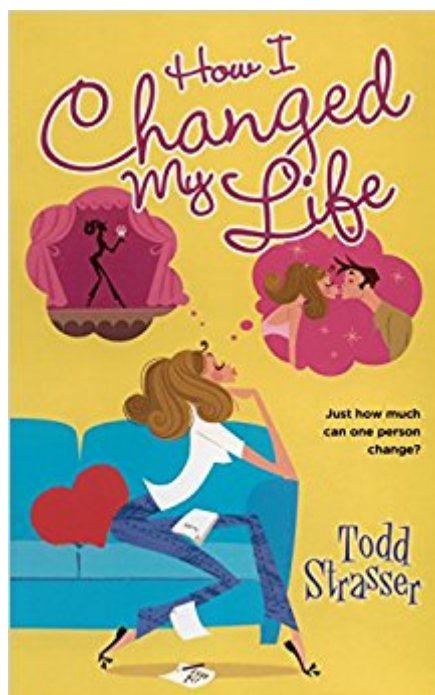


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# How I Changed My Life



## Synopsis

Bolita (Bo for short) and Kyle are not exactly in the same clique: She's the shy girl working backstage at the school play, and he's front and center as Time Zone High's star quarterback. But then Kyle blows out his knee, quits football, and joins the school play—and Bo decides it's time for a change. After a DIY makeover, Bo realizes she and Kyle aren't in such different cliques anymore. Now that she has his attention...can Bo turn Kyle into more than a friend?

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Aside from its jacket illustration of a pensive girl, this tautly written novel, alternately narrated by a sidelined jock and the pudgy introvert who has a crush on him, holds appeal to readers of both sexes. Benched by a football injury, high school senior Kyle is doing poorly even in the "Pinhead" classes, his old crowd-including picture-perfect girlfriend Chloe-bores him, while his stepmother Jackie and "IT," his toddler half-brother, give him no peace at home. For a change of pace, he accepts the leading male role in the school play, to the delight of co-narrator "Bo" Vine, the stage manager, and the dismay of Chloe, who, as usual, is the star. The wallflower/football hero/ prom queen triangle plays out, with Bo becoming increasingly svelte as she learns to stage-manage her own life, and Kyle learning the proper way to act both on and off the stage. But just as the story seems about to reach the classic payoff, Strasser (*The Accident*) gives it an unexpected and

refreshing twist. Bo may not get her man, but she does get the last word. Strasser's acknowledgment of enduring truths becomes all the more palatable for being so engagingly presented. Ages 12-up. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Grade 7 Up?Awkward senior Bovita Vine, nicknamed "Bo," specializes in managing the school plays from her favorite theater seat, the catwalk. Her work is crucial to the success of any production, but she has always avoided the spotlight. Now, she has a crush on Kyle, a football hunk whose career is cut short by a knee injury, whose cookie-cutter perfect girlfriend Chloe always has a leading role. The plot is old, and Strasser has used the character types before?demanding rich girls with big houses, accomplished smart girls, decent jocks reluctantly open to growth opportunities, and musicians who have learned about life?but the author's inimitable humor and sure grasp of high school sociometrics freshens them. Teens will be amused by the secretive pizza franchise based in the boys' restroom. They will probably accept that someone might want to break into a prison, and they will certainly recognize the PINS (Persons In Need of Supervision) who live to rattle teachers. Although the revolving first-person point of view (chapters alternate between Kyle and Bo) may be confusing to some readers, those who stay with the story will profit from Strasser's study of developing relationships. Kyle's growing acceptance of his baby half-brother and stepmother is satisfying and well defined; Bo Vine's becoming Dee Vine is funny.?Cindy Darling Codell, Clark Middle School, Winchester, KYCopyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

If you are in High School, then here is a book you might like. It's called How I Changed My Life. The school play is going to be The Diary of Anne Frank.In the book, Klye Winthrop is a football player, but quits when he suffers an injury. Klye's mom is dead, and his father re-married a woman named Jackie.Klye has a half-brother. Who is a baby. His name is Jake. But Klye's nickname for Jake is "IT." Against the advice of his girlfriend, Klye decides to act in the school play. His girlfriend name is Chole Frost.She will play Anne Frank. There is a girl named Bolita Vina (Bo), who talks Klye into doing the play. One Day a guy sells pizza in the boy's bathroom, to get his girlfriend a present. But ends up in jail for it. If you are in High School, then this is a book that you might like.

Like the famous godfather of teen movies, John Hughes, Todd Strasser has captured what it's like to be a teenager in the 1990s (opposed to the '80s) with problems surrounded by the cliquey teen

caste system. In this book, Todd Strasser introduces his first of the Time Zone High trilogy (opposed to John Hughes's Shermer High quartet), with the chubby and drama queen, Bolita "Bo" Vine and the handsome and injured Kyle Winthrop. Bo and Kyle are from opposite ends of the social pool. Bo is a smart, calm misfit who most likely be with the rebels and weirdos, while Kyle is a brave, hunky jock, who's knee is injured, and who is most likely invited to all the good parties by the rich and popular students. The action starts there. The fall play is starting and Bo is, as usual, the stage manager, although she'd rather be center stage. Pretty shadowed, she hides with her Goth bud and her artist-cute friend on the catwalk in the auditorium. Bo is tired of being the way she is--when she finds out Kyle is what she wants. Kyle is tired of sitting out, watching the games and being his pretty, smart and popular girlfriend, Chloe Frost's little puppet, not doing what he wants. So he does something rebellious--he signs up for the school play. Bo and Kyle clash a lot while she babysits his half-brother, and they both go swimming--she to work out, him to get away and exercise his legs. When Bo changes her entire look from a drab, sulky look to a pretty, gorgeous look, she tries to win Kyle over, but it's not that easy. Kyle still has major feelings for Chloe, even if she is a real ... and she's always being the lead in the plays. Bo is lovestruck. This book is a typical, but comedic, story about high school love from different social stratesphere. It cycles the life of two teens, who are different but have the same problems. It's a cross between *Pretty in Pink* and *Sixteen Candles*--but the outcome is not going to be so fair. Read this. It's amazing. It's like the John Hughes movies-turned-books.

Bo is a high school student, a nobody, really, with a huge crush. The object of her crush is Kyle, a handsome student who used to be a star quarterback on the football team. Kyle has always been in low level classes and football was what he counted on to carry him to college. Then he hurt his knee. It needed surgery, and he will never play football again. Suddenly Kyle's life is adrift. He begins to realize that he counted on football too much, that he thinks the kids in his classes are losers, and that he doesn't have much in common with his former teammates anymore. Even worse, he seems to be losing touch with his obnoxious perfectionist girlfriend, Chloe. Bo thinks that there might be a chance for something between her and Kyle, especially since she's begun losing weight and is trying to be more outgoing. And even better, Kyle is in the play that Bo stage-manages. But will Kyle ever see her as more than the girl who babysits his little brother? I liked how the narration went back and forth from Kyle to Bo, to show how each thought about each other and the situation they were in. I also liked how Bo took control over her own life and was able to change things to make herself happier. The characters, though, could have been better developed. They were pretty

cardboard.

I liked *How I Changed My Life* by Todd Strasser a lot. It is about a girl named Bolita Vine (Bo for short) who is a shy kind of student. She isn't very popular and isn't known around school much. She just goes to class and her theatre group. Her theatre group is mainly her life. She spends most of her time sitting on the cat walk above stage. But then one day she decides to change. She changes her self image from the hair she had since she was in 3rd grade to the new high school looking hair-do. People finally start to notice her after she loses a few pounds and changes her self image. She has always had a major crush on the former football captain, Kyle Winthrop. He especially never notices her since he has the great and most perfect and popular Chole for a girlfriend. But when Kyle and Chole's relationship starts to disintegrate after Kyle's knee injury, they feel like the world is falling apart. It is a very exciting book! It can really boost a teen's self esteem. The only reason I gave this book four stars is because they talk about some mature types of things and they very often use foul language. But if that doesn't bother you, read it!

"Don't try to be who you're not." One of Todd Strasser's characters in the book *How I Changed My Life*, a fiction book, states this quote. This quotation is what the book is mostly about. This book shows high-school students trying to find who they really are. "A good actor becomes the character he's playing." A high-school boy named Kyle Winthrop injured his knee and can no longer play football and be with his "team". He decides to audition for the school play, against the advice of his girlfriend, Chloe, whom herself is a very good actress. Bo is the stage manager for this play and sees Kyle as a major hunk and she has a crush on him. Chloe and Kyle seem to be growing closer to each other. As Bo spends more time with Kyle, she wants to work on her self-image, losing weight and becoming more assertive. "And if you hate your name, change it." This concludes, if you don't like who you're becoming to grow as a person, you can always change yourself to who you want to be.

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