



# Small Beauty

*jia qing wilson-yang*

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## **Small Beauty** jia qing wilson-yang

*Small Beauty* tells the story of Mei, who in coping with the death of her cousin abandons her life in the city to live in his now empty house in a small town. There she connects with his history as well as her own, learns about her aunt's long-term secret relationship, and reflects on the trans women she left behind. She also brushes up against some local trans mysteries and gets advice from departed loved ones with a lot to say.

## **Small Beauty Details**

Date : Published May 12th 2016 by Metonymy Press

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Author : jia qing wilson-yang

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Genre : Fiction, Glbt, Queer, Lgbt, Transgender, Cultural, Canada, Adult Fiction



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## From Reader Review Small Beauty for online ebook

### Grant says

A touching tale that jumps around in its chronology about a young trans woman dealing with the deaths in her family and the secrets they inevitably reveal.

Well written, with a quick pace, but never feeling rushed; Wilson-Yang captures the life of her characters with ease. Each character is unique and diverse and have an interesting world-view.

This book is a low-stakes observation of self in relation to family and small-town ideals. Where an mixed race trans woman attempts to find her future in after the loss of her family members.

If you like introspective literature with a focus on immigrant families and LGBTQ+ identities, with a touch of the unreal: read this book.

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### CaseyTheCanadianLesbrarian says

I love when you read a book without many expectations and it exceeds them easily. This was so great, I loved it. Read my full review on my blog

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### Anna says

reviewed on the lesbrary here: <http://lesbrary.com/2017/08/24/anna-m...>

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### Khashayar Mohammadi says

Great story; poignant and intriguing. Its one of the staples of modern Trans literature and a true gem of non-binary exploration of Identity; but as much as I enjoyed the narrative, I can't say the prose was anything out of the ordinary.

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### Bogi Takács says

Several people recommended me this recent literary novel, and even more asked for my opinion, so here it is :) I think this book is a good way to start the year (and not just because it's winter-themed). It's a Lambda award winner and that happened for a reason.

Read my full review here:

<http://www.bogireadsttheworld.com/nove...>

Source of the book: Bought with my own money

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### **Tamsien West (Babbling Books) says**

A quiet book about grief, loss, family secrets, and rage of injustice. There are so many moments of casual cruelty both examined and allowed to pass in this book, that I felt myself wondering when the next blow would strike.

The flow of the narrative was beautifully structured to give insights into a series of people connected to Mei, the protagonist, who is a transgender woman trying to cope with the recent death of her cousin and close friend Sandy. Sandy in his sections, set in the past, is working through the loss of his mother and rage at her absent partner, and so on, each perspective illuminating the others in a tapestry of love and loss.

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### **Jessica says**

This book broke my heart.

It is exactly what it says on the cover: a small beauty.

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### **Jenna says**

Beautiful, meditative book about the experiences of Mei, a mixed-race Canadian trans woman. This story gives the reader the opportunity to spend some quiet time with Mei as she is dealing with past and present grief and trauma. The mostly rural setting of the book provides beautiful imagery as a backdrop to haunting scenes of loneliness and loss.

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### **Rain Merton says**

This is one of the most touching, sensitive, wonderful books I've read. It's quiet with grief and sorrow and unacknowledged anger, and compassion and the struggle it takes to live at the intersection of myriad marginalizations that render the space the protagonist occupies into an infinitesimal niche.

The small beauty emerges thus in this tiny space. Mei's losses, almost as many as the influences on her life, become less overwhelming than a mere fact of life. Yet wilson-yang manages to keep despair at bay by shifting perspectives, by placing the reader in the point of view of Mei's close ones, to show how complex life is, how there is life and empathy to be gained from that complexity, how joy is to be found in the irreducibility of a person's existence to individuality. Mei's families--blood and chosen--guide her constantly while also being at odds with one another, another trait in diasporic trans/queer lives, in which duty and responsibility cannot be easily cleaved into separate compartments. The way this genealogy of influence appears through Mei's aunt adds to the many facets of this wonderful novel.

Highly recommended

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### **Mik says**

One of the best books I've read yet this year. A very honest (and therefore hard at times) read but so worth it for the amazing writing, exposition, and characters. There are passages I will certainly return to.

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### **Nathaniel says**

*"The city, despite all the ways it pushed callouses into her, softened her tolerance for cold. She used to spend whole days in snowy woods, lost and a little stoned. Now she stays on the path as best as she can, for a few hours at most. She feels her blood heating up as she takes step after careful step, keeping a pace that is more habit than intention. Her feet break through the crust of fallen snow, lost for an instant below the brittle curvature of the trail. A shell cracking. Her thighs sting from the cold, and her sweat freezes on the hair of her brow. Where she had been engulfed in the landscape as a child, she is now caught in her body's reaction to it."*

\*

*"They listen to the radio. Leave it all behind. Forget your life before. Make up your mind, live for now! The previous song had the same message: risk everything, do something adventurous, follow a devastatingly handsome young white boy to sure and certain heartbreak. Cut the strings that hold you."*

\*

a quiet (despite its moments of transmisogynist violence), many-layered, skillfully executed book, especially for one so short. although the main part of the narrative is set in the winter, it feels more autumnal to me somehow — so much so that I was considering making seasonal shelves and trying to sort books based on their vibe. thinking about silence and water and being in a body and setting the world on fire.

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### **Briar says**

Not sure if this book is for cis people, but I'd still recommend you read it and maybe try to understand. It was a really quick read, and I didn't really understand the Point until the end, but yeah this book took a part of my soul from me. I really don't have words for the feelings contained in this book.

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### **Hannah says**

stunning, specific. necessary for this moment of queer & trans intergenerational trauma, beautiful blood & chosen family lineages, sharp smart everyday accuracy about the lovely and the fucked of queer & trans communities. one of those rare gay gems set north of the border (in a fictional ontario small town & big city) that nails "community" right on the head.

also jia qing's reading was one of the nicest i've ever been to! full of fam. preview of kai cheng thom's forthcoming FIERCE FEMMES AND NOTORIOUS LIARS: A DANGEROUS TRANS GIRL'S FABULOUS MEMOIR because we are spoiled here in mtl summer ;)

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**Julie Rogers says**

Loved this. The language and imagery was so beautiful-it flowed like water & I felt fortunate to swim along with it. It is a story of an intersectional life. We watch as Mei deals with life as Chinese trans woman grieving her family while discovering who they are & consequently who she is. What I like is this is her as just that-life. There is no embroidering it with mystique & glamour-that's the point she's a person living a life, as we do.

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**Morgan M. Page says**

This book is more than a novel, it's a blueprint for survival.

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