

## **Pansy**

This memoir was beautiful, moving, and relatable. We follow Jaz from their childhood in late 90s Memphis, through their 20s as a struggling writer in New York to present day. The story ebbs and flows through timelines, grouping around similar aspects of Jaz's self-discovery and autonomy. The chapters are spilling over with unabashed honesty shown through Jaz's mistakes and learning. Their unwavering optimism and self-awareness contrasts with their impulsivity and grandiose idealism to create a space of vulnerability within the pages. Jaz is a human, flaws and all, and the way they demand you to see that in this book is admirable. Especially now that I have read all the struggle, pain, and heartache it took to get them there.

The mixture of prose and poetry lent itself to a layered experience that kept my attention. The non-linear structure gave us a general outline of Jaz and their life before delving into the deeper details. This allowed the reader to get to know the author more organically. I even had to remind myself I don't know the author personally. I think one of the reasons this was so effective was the style of memoir. Coined by Audre Lorde (my favorite author and role model) a "biomythography" defies traditional non-fiction rules by mixing myths with history and biography to create a story that both moves and is moved by the reader. This allows each person to empathize with the author's plight even if they can't personally relate. Although I have very recently come out as non-binary so Jaz's struggles with their gender identity struck a deep chord within myself. And the only reason this book is not five stars is because it was too wordy for me in some places and it took me away from Jaz's story, which was so captivating.

All in all, this heartwarming and heartbreaking memoir is a must-read. From the coming-of-age stories to the gender discovery, you will shed a tear by the end. Not to mention feeling as though you've known the author for years. If you like atypical storytelling and queer experiences you are in the right place. Happy reading!