

?Epub? → The Small Backs of Children Author Lidia Yuknavitch – Soccerjerseys-wholesale.co

Posted on 04 September 2019 By Lidia Yuknavitch

I loved this book in the beginning I read an e galley of this on my kindle and as I often do , I started to highlight passages that stand out for me or that get me in the gut After a few pages , I realized that I had highlighted than half of what I had read The writing was gorgeous From the first page , it is marked by an intensity , by language that was beautiful even as it was laden with metaphors of pain and grief and the brutalities of war and death.It s a different sort of read The characters except one and she is not named until 2 3 through are without names but it doesn t matter , the author makes you know who they are even without knowing their names The Girl, The Writer, The Photographer , The Widow , The Poet,The Playwright , The Filmmaker , the Writer s Husband I couldn t wait to see how The Girl and The Writer would connect.Then , I couldn t have been disappointed The direction of the book changed The Poet s sexual encounters were way over the top for me gritty and graphic , a bit much And the Painter really All of this seemed so blatantly contrived and I just didn t get I wanted it to continue to be the story of The Girl and the Writer and it just wasn t There are so many beautiful passages here and what I thought was a beautiful story was lost for me The Kirkus review , which by the way recommends this as buy now , had it right for me with this comment..Yuknavich is a gifted writer whose dizzying passages are often as compelling as they are grotesque But it s not a pretty story and the novel s affected musings on the nature of art, gratuitous sexual excesses, and casual violence may overpower the grace of its words for some

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readers And it did for me.I ve never rated a book I didn t finish but there s always a first time and this is it I did get about 80% through and then I didn t care any I have read a few of the rave reviews but none have really convinced me to read that last 20% Maybe I m just not a sophisticated enough reader to appreciate it I give it 2 stars for the amazing writing and the possibility that it offered in the beginning.Thanks to Harper Collins and Edelweiss. National BestsellerA Masterful Literary Talent Explores The Treacherous, Often Violent Borders Between War And Sex, Love And Art With The Flash Of A Camera, One Girl S Life Is Shattered, And A Host Of Others Altered Forever In A War Torn Village In Eastern Europe, An American Photographer Captures A Heart Stopping Image A Young Girl Flying Toward The Lens, Fleeing A Fiery Explosion That Has Engulfed Her Home And Family The Image Wins Acclaim And Prizes, Becoming An Icon For Millions And A Subject Of Obsession For One Writer, The Photographer S Best Friend, Who Has Suffered A Devastating Tragedy Of Her OwnAs The Writer Plunges Into A Suicidal Depression, Her Filmmaker Husband Enlists Several Friends, Including A Fearless Bisexual Poet And An Ingenuous Performance Artist, To Save Her By Rescuing The Unknown Girl And Bringing Her To The United States And Yet, As Their Plot Unfolds, Everything We Know About The Story Comes Into Question What Does The Writer Really Want Who Is Controlling The Action And What Will Happen When These Two Worlds East And West, Real And Virtual Collide A Fierce, Provocative, And Deeply Affecting Novel Of Both Ideas And Action That Blends The Tight Construction Of Julian Barnes S The Sense Of An Ending With The Emotional Power Of Anthony Marra S A Constellation Of Vital Phenomena, Lidia Yuknavitch S The Small Backs Of Children Is A Major Step Forward From One Of Our Most Avidly Watched Writers This is one of those rare books that I cannot describe, only to say that it hit me at gut level Sometimes so much so that I had to set it aside, as it had it s way with me It is a book about artists and their art, but the characters do not have names, simply, the photographer, the painter, etc Their lives become intertwined but artistry is everything The plot is one of the inner journey, and with it there can be violence The writing is exquisite, raw, and filled with meaning Be warned however, there is sex that is graphic,

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Captains and the Kings

Angelique

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The Robe

The Last Enchantment

The Game of Kings

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Calico Palace

Jubilee Trail

Shogun: A Novel of Japan

Celia Garth

The Heaven Tree Trilogy

The Concubine

intense, and completely creeped me out. This was an experience for me, I was taken to places I've never explored. A book I will never forget. I do love postmodernism when it is done right and it is done brilliantly here. There is just something I adore about authors willing to play with genre, with conventions, and with style. The first few chapters had me glued to the page and I knew I was reading something extraordinary. I loved this a lot but the last quarter did not quite work for me. Juxtaposing the horror of war in Eastern Europe with the quiet horror of grief of an US American writer, Lidia Yuknavitch shows the whole range of human emotions in a way that is stylized than true to life but still feels completely real and honest. Her short chapters read like short stories but still connect to a whole that is greater than its parts. She made me gasp audibly, choke back tears and suppress laughter, she made me feel and she made me think I am not going to try to give a synopsis because this book's plot is nearly irrelevant as it takes the backseat to vignettes of human behaviour and of pure art. This book is beyond impressive and I am already excited to read other books written by Lidia Yuknavitch. Sometimes you just know that an author is bound to be a favourite and this was one of those cases for me. She writes the kind of clever fiction that still has a human heart at its core that I just adore beyond measure. I admired a lot of what Yuknavitch did with this book, the layering of characters, the spinning of plot, but I did not love it. She is a formidable talent on the sentence image poetic level, and I could see what she was going for with the focus on the body violence sex love life art but there were things that undermined the power of the book for me. I felt like the graphic sex was supposed to seem transgressive, but for me it felt only gratuitous. And one scene if you've read the novel, the painter's paint orgy seemed utterly ridiculous. Maybe I'm jaded. But it was hard for me to make the leaps required for this book to feel wholly satisfying. Don't get me wrong, I like the challenge of the narrative, and the playing with the novel form. I felt the strongest parts were about the Eastern European girl and the writer. The parts about the filmmaker, the playwright, the photographer, the poet. Meh. I didn't care that much. And the painter. Please. But I will say that I am very interested to read Yuknavitch's memoir *The Chronology of Water*. I think she is intense and smart and has

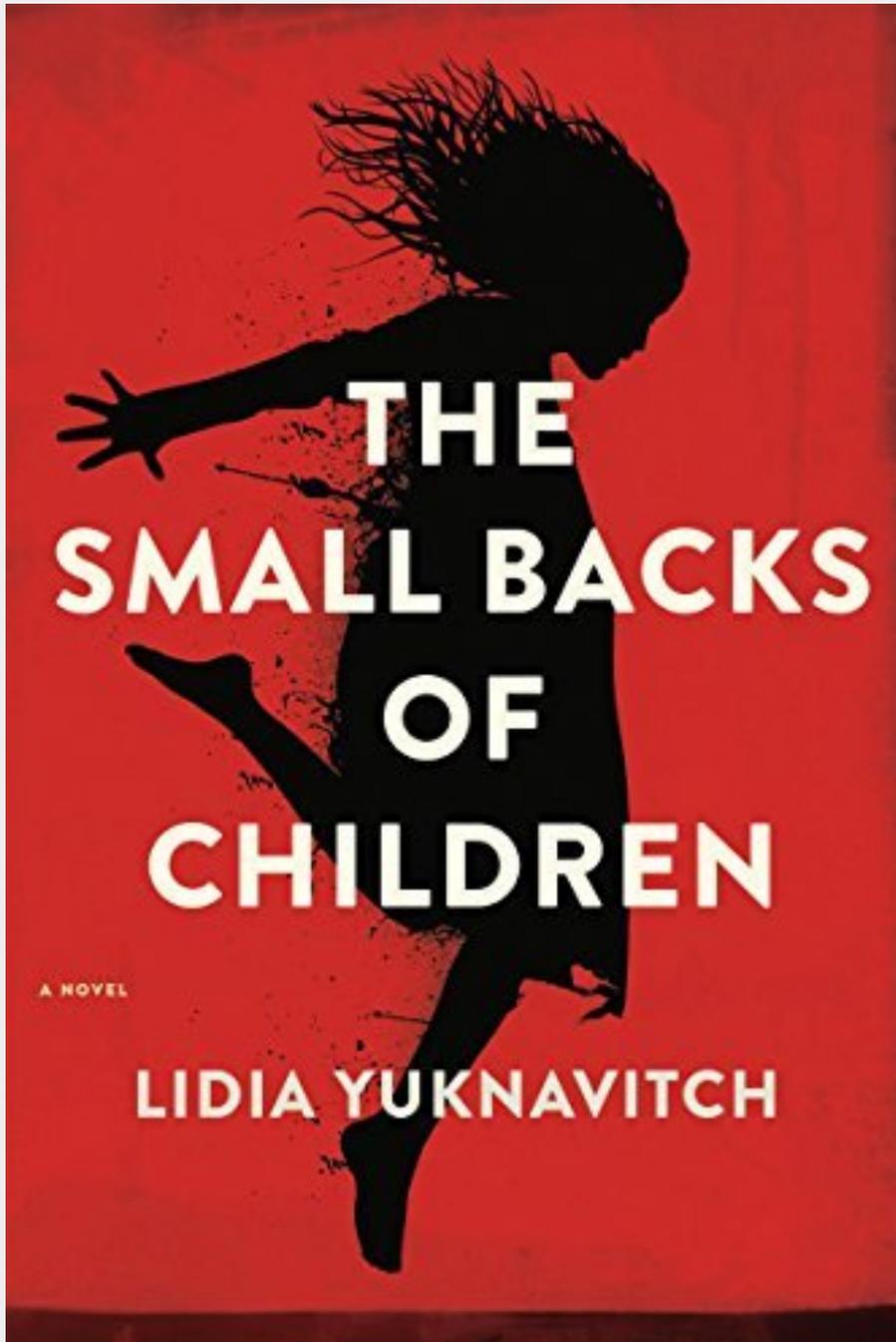
powerful things to say. It is the little girl from Trang Bang, a village north of Saigon, running naked and screaming from pain and bombs and napalm. Her name is Kim Phuc. It is the electrifying stare of an Afghan teen, her head wrapped in a blood red scarf, her green eyes pulsing with anger and fear at the Soviet invasion that has decimated her home. Her name is Sharbat Gula. It is the Sudanese child dying of starvation, stalked by a vulture. We don't know the child's name or what became of her. The photojournalist took his own life two months later. These captured moments are real; they stand as records of war and poverty and our lack of humanity. They are images bound to the politics that created them. Do we call them art? These are girls whose bodies were used as canvases of emotion. Looking at them from our safe remove, we shake our heads and tut tut. So sad, we say. Someone should do something. And then we turn away.

From these stories of children caught in the world of men, Lidia Yuknavitch adds an imaginary other: a girl airborne like an angel as her home and family are atomized behind her, in a village on the edge of a Lithuanian forest. Like the iconic images above, this photo travels around the world, garnering gasps and accolades. A copy of it hangs on the wall of a writer's home; she is the photographer's former lover haunting the writer as she moves from one marriage to another, birthing a son, becoming pregnant with a daughter. The photographer wins a Pulitzer and moves on, to other conflicts, other subjects, other lovers. We learn, much later, that the girl's name is Menas. On the surface, the premise of *The Small Backs of Children* seems simple, the plot a means to distinguish this work as a novel rather than a prose poem. The writer lay dying of grief in a hospital in Portland. She cannot climb out of the hole created by the birthdeath of her stillborn daughter. In an effort to save her soul, her friends determine the girl in the photograph, now a young woman, if she is still alive must be found and brought to the States. Two lives saved. But this daughterless mother and motherless daughter do not meet until near the end. And the end could be one of many that Yuknavitch offers up, as if to say, Does it matter? There is no end. Not even in death is there an end. What happens in between is a howl. A series of howls, ripped from the body in ecstasy and terror. *The Small Backs of Children* is an exploration of the body, the body as art, the

body as politic, all the ways we use and lose control of our bodies, or have them used against us Yuknavitch shocks again and again, until it seems these characters are holes into and out of which pour the fluids of sex and addiction, art and death Nearly all but the writer, her filmmaker husband, and the girl mirror selves of the author, her husband and their ghost daughter seem driven by their basest desires, or become victims of their own obsessions And although there is only one Performance Artist, they all seem to be playing at their artistic selves, conflating art and life The premise may be transparent, but the execution of the plot the shifting of the narrative between voices, countries, and eras becomes something political and murky, a metafiction loop of invented words, fragile sound bites, and acts of literary revolution Virginia Woolf is a palimpsest beneath the narrative As in *The Waves*, *The Small Backs of Children* is told through several voices that loop and leap in quicksilver language Yet unlike Woolf's Bernard, Susan, Rhoda, Neville, Jinny, and Louis, we know Yuknavitch's characters only by their artistic occupations The Writer, The Filmmaker, The Poet, The Playwright, The Performance Artist, The Photographer, and, perhaps standing in for Percival, The Girl This unnamng keeps us at a distance But to read Yuknavitch is to know she honors experimental forms and shoves away convention Gustave Flaubert, arguably the creator of the modern novel, stated, An author in his work must be like God in the universe present everywhere and visible nowhere What would Flaubert make of Lidia Yuknavitch For in *The Small Backs of Children*, the author is visible everywhere In each word and image and scene, we inhabit her visceral presence If you scooped up and ate her body memoir *The Chronology of Water*, you will recognize not only the themes of child loss, savage sexuality, rape, addiction, the vulnerability of girls, the release and capture of water, you will recognize scenes and words and images It is as if we are in a continuation of Yuknavitch's memoir, swimming in her stream of consciousness She transcends the notion of the novel and enters something larger the intersection of prose and poetry and memoir and reportage And the reader spins around this crossroads, trying to make sense of it all The language propelled me forward, even as I felt the story spinning me away Like a work of visual art that is meant to provoke, that is devoid

of answers, redemption, resolution the photograph of a young girl in a moment of terror or loss say *The Small Backs of Children* drained me until I was a shell without reason, reduced to a body quivering with animal emotion. Part of me just wants to say this wasn't the book for me But a larger part of me is saying, Who the heck is this book for As advertised, it is about the intersection of violence, sex, and art But it all felt largely gratuitous The style was this forced literary thing where all of the characters had jobs instead of names The Writer, The Photographer, The Poet, The Playwright, The Filmmaker, The Painter, and, central to the story, The Girl Firstly, if a majority of artists are so self involved and downright ridiculous, I'm glad I don't know many The few I do know couldn't be different Narcissism runs rampant well, I guess they're in love with their art than themselves, but they are also oversexed in a selfish sort of way And though the horror of The Girl's life is treated as art in the story in a way that is clearly supposed to be social commentary, it still felt like Luknavitch was doing the same thing. For those doing readers advisory, major red flags here graphic sex and violence both involving way bodily fluid than I want to read about as well as lots of language Yikes. I need to find a small photo of Lidia Yuknavitch so I can worship it. 4 enthusiastic STARS Wow deep breath I finished this book several days ago and only now am I able to corral my thoughts, harness them, slow them down to the point where I can capture them in words on paper The challenge to sharing my thoughts is they incessantly changed, expanded, contracted, twisted and turned long after absorbing the final page This book was hauntingly evocative Yeah that's the word I was looking for haunting Eerily haunting Corporeally sorrowful I loved this book I hated this book I was repulsed and intrigued, fascinated I knew exactly what was happening I was confused, frustrated and lost It's an exploration of creation through art, destruction by war the destruction of women It speaks to sex, violence, suffering A chimera of sex and violence Love and pain hurt Violence for violence to cure suffering This book involves a group of American artists and the misogynistic violence of Eastern Europe At times it was crystal clear, grotesquely poignant At times I had no idea what it meant or what was happening It meant nothing and so many different things at the same time Vague as a dream disturbing as a

nightmare Laced with symbolism and metaphors statements about men and war and American indifference. For me this book is a work of art in and of itself Literary realism, abstraction and surrealism all blended together, fading in and out of focus and intensity, like a mural size painting at an art museum, subject to interpretation in so many different ways image error The writing was good, but I found all the characters extremely narcissistic except maybe for the film maker and the widow No names were provided for any people or places, except America which is bashed along with most men through out the book As a non American I wasn't quite sure what to make of this every country has it's own problems I think To be fair I think that because I don't agree with the main message Art is important than love, this probably colored my perception of the whole book Lastly, I don't normally have a problem with sex in books, but this was way too much for me I may just be too vanilla for this author



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