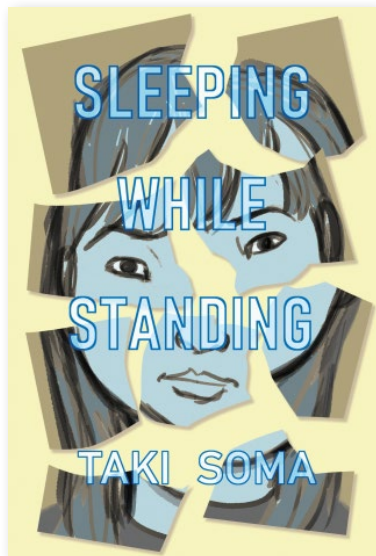


READER'S GUIDE

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Sleeping While Standing (Avery Hill)



An autobiography by debut author and illustrator Taki Soma, her unique voice and unflinching examination of life's ups and downs make *Sleeping While Standing* a relatable choice for memoir enthusiasts and contemporary fiction fans alike.

CREATOR: Taki Soma

ABOUT: These are the moments of Taki Soma's life: her early childhood in Japan in the early 80s, moving to Minnesota, the separation of her parents, childhood trauma, teenage angst, death, drugs, comics, health issues, love, fertility, pets and zombies. *Sleeping While Standing* is an unflinching look at both joyful and harrowing moments, but threaded through with levity and love. In her author/illustrator graphic novel debut, Soma takes us through the important events in her life that shaped who she is today, told in her genuine, compelling, and humorous authorial voice.

“

“The stories’ strength lies in Soma’s straightforward approach, as she holds up each fragment and examines it for meaning. Some moments baffle both her and readers’ interpretation—Soma asks what to make of her mother’s repeated attempts to give her up for adoption—but all contribute to her adult sense of self. Readers will find it akin to flipping through an old album with a friend who’s just as curious about the pictures as they’re likely to be.” —Publishers Weekly, 2022



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. By the end of the first chapter, Adoption, do you agree with Soma's perception of being “unwanted” by her family?
2. How does the comics medium influence your perception of Soma's stories? Do you feel more or less empathy for her?
3. Which pop culture references do you recognize in Soma's stories? What other references do you remember from similar periods in your own life?
4. Considering the “eras” in your own life that align with Soma's, what single words would describe the chapters telling your stories?

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