



Beauty Plus Pity

Kevin Chong

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"Beauty plus pity—that is the closest we can get to a definition of art."—Vladimir Nabokov

In this tragicomic modern immigrant's tale, Malcolm Kwan is a slacker twentysomething Asian-Canadian living in Vancouver who is about to embark on a modelling career when his life is suddenly derailed by two near-simultaneous events: the death of his filmmaker father, and the betrayal of his fiancée who has left him. Soon he meets Hadley, the half-sister he never knew existed?the result of his father's extramarital affair?and as their tentative relationship grows, Malcolm is forced to confront his past relationships with women, including his own mother, an art teacher working through her grief as well as her resentment at her son befriendng her husband's daughter.

Written with a winsome yet plaintive eye, *Beauty Plus Pity* is about a young man who's forced to reckon with the past as he works through his lifelong ambivalence toward his hyphenated cultural identity, and between two parents holding intolerable secrets.

Kevin Chong is the author of the novel *Baroque-a-Nova* (Plume) and the memoir *Neil Young Nation* (Greystone Books).

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