



Miracle Creek

Written by Angie Kim

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Miracle Creek

Miracle Creek

By Angie Kim

Miracle Creek Review

A literary courtroom drama about a Korean immigrant family and a young, single mother accused of murdering her eight-year-old autistic son

Miracle Creek

Miracle Creek Book

My husband asked me to lie. Not a big lie. He probably didn't even consider it a lie, and neither did I, at first . . .

Miracle Creek Virginia

In the small town of Miracle Creek, Virginia, Young and Pak Yoo run an experimental medical treatment device known as the Miracle Submarine—a pressurized oxygen chamber that patients enter for therapeutic “dives” with the hopes of curing issues like autism or infertility. But when the Miracle Submarine mysteriously explodes, killing two people, a dramatic murder trial upends the Yoo’s small community.

Miracle Creek Angie Kim Review

Who or what caused the explosion? Was it the mother of one of the patients, who claimed to be sick that day but was smoking down by the creek? Or was it Young and Pak themselves, hoping to cash in on a big insurance payment and send their daughter to college? The ensuing trial uncovers unimaginable secrets from that night—trysts in the woods, mysterious notes, child-abuse charges—as well as tense rivalries and alliances among a group of people driven to extraordinary degrees of desperation and sacrifice.

Miracle Creek Kirkus

Angie Kim's *Miracle Creek* is a thoroughly contemporary take on the courtroom drama, drawing on the author's own life as a Korean immigrant, former trial lawyer, and mother of a real-life "submarine" patient. An addictive debut novel for fans of Liane Moriarty and Celeste Ng, *Miracle Creek* is both a twisty page-turner and a deeply moving story about the way inconsequential lies and secrets can add up with tragic consequences.

Or perhaps the newspapers were right. Perhaps Elizabeth had been desperate to get rid of her son, and now that he was dead, she finally had a measure of peace. Perhaps she had been a monster all along. I had to take some time away to really process this book. It wasn't easy. *Miracle Creek* absolutely ripped my heart out. It's a fantastic, utterly thrilling courtroom drama; it's a mystery, perhaps a murder mystery; and alongside these things, it's also a powerful character study that examines immigration, parenthood, grief, disability and caregiving.

The trial and the mystery are the compelling backdrop here, but this book explores so many things that it's hard to know where to begin describing it.

It's now a year since the night that took two lives and injured several others. Elizabeth, the single mother of one of the victims, is on trial for murder. On the night in question, she dropped her son off for his HBOT treatment and purportedly left to drink wine and smoke cigarettes nearby-- the same cigarettes responsible for the blast that killed her son while she was absent.

HBOT was new to me. It's a kind of oxygen treatment said to improve everything from male infertility to autism, and the author has personal experience with it. Elizabeth's son was on the autism spectrum and, as we soon see, the pressure of looking after him was pushing her to the edge. Whether it was enough for her to murder her son, though, is the real question. The more we learn, the less implausible it sounds.

Having a special-needs child didn't just change you; it transmuted you, transported you to a parallel world with an altered gravitational axis.

But there are many other characters in this book and they all play an important role. The third person narration moves through each of their perspectives, filling in the night in question, piece by piece. Each person is fleshed-out and flawed. Kim explores them all in depth, creating so many intimate portraits that all come together to form a bigger picture.

The HBOT facility was started by Pak and Young Yoo. As Korean immigrants, they have had to struggle

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with the dismissal of their business as silly "Eastern medicine", and with being forced apart when Young and their daughter first came to the United States without Pak. I was especially moved by the discussions about language barriers. Pak is a smart and eloquent man in his native language, but he suffers the indignity of appearing unintelligent in his broken, accented English:

Pak Yoo was a different person in English than in Korean. In a way, he supposed, it was inevitable for immigrants to become child versions of themselves, stripped of their verbal fluency and, with it, a layer of their competence and maturity.

Another interesting discussion was that about the "fetishization" of Asian women. Janine really struggles with her feelings about it. On the one hand, she thinks it is a potential problem, but she also wonders why men who have a preference for blondes do not get accused of having a "fetish". Why, she wonders, are Asian women portrayed as something perverse?

I think I could write my own book about all the avenues this fascinating book goes down. I haven't even said anything about the in-depth look at parenting and parental sacrifice. But I should stop before this review becomes ridiculously long.

The final way I will summarize Miracle Creek is that it's a book about so many interesting characters who all want the best for their family, but grind themselves into the ground in the process - Elizabeth driven to the edge by parenting an autistic child, Pak the lonely "goose father" who wants the best for his family, Young who worked such long hours that she alienated her daughter, and there are others too.

I found it such a beautiful and sad literary mystery.

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Miracle Creek Angie

"But that was the way life worked. Every human being was the result of a million different factors mixing together... Good things and bad-every friendship and romance formed, every accident, every illness-resulted from the conspiracy of hundreds of little things, in and of themselves inconsequential."

Oh boy. Where do I begin? It's quite possible that this book means so much to me because it's my unicorn-the perfect fit for this reader-and that may make my review a bit biased, so please keep that "But that was the way life worked. Every human being was the result of a million different factors mixing together... Good things and bad-every friendship and romance formed, every accident, every illness-resulted from the conspiracy of hundreds of little things, in and of themselves inconsequential."

Oh boy. Where do I begin? It's quite possible that this book means so much to me because it's my unicorn-the perfect fit for this reader-and that may make my review a bit biased, so please keep that in mind as you delve into my thoughts below. Miracle Creek is a novel so precisely tailored to my wants and needs as a reader, I was left pondering just how the author crawled into my brain and extracted such specific thoughts and needs before placing them in her tale. Full disclosure-I almost missed this book, and likely wouldn't have picked it up if it hadn't been for Emily May's recommendation. I was worried it would be too difficult for me to read, but I'm glad I tossed those notions aside, because feeling this wide spectrum of emotion was a needed exercise in facing some of my own issues and embarking on a journey of healing and acceptance.

Please know going in that this is not an easy read. It is disturbing at times, but in a natural way and not done for shock value. Miracle Creek is an emotional rollercoaster, and I cannot imagine you, reader, not being moved by this story if you are indeed a human being. There are some timely topics discussed that are difficult to read, but Ms. Kim has touched on these in such a delicate, respectful, and honorable way that it takes some of the sting away and replaces it with a softer approach. I really don't want to discuss the plot in deep detail here, as this is a literary courtroom novel and you'll want to find out all the juicy details on your own, but this is just as much a profound study on grief and the ripple effects of a few rash choices that spiral out of control.

"It was ironic-of all the parents of their patients, Elizabeth had been the most disheveled, and yet she'd had by far the most manageable child. Henry, her only child, had been a well-mannered boy who, unlike many other patients, could walk, talk, was toilet-trained, and didn't have tantrums. During orientation, when the mother of twins with autism and epilepsy asked Elizabeth, "Sorry, but what's Henry here for? He seems so normal," she'd frowned as if offended. She recited a list-OCD, ADHD, sensory and autism spectrum disorders, anxiety-then said how hard it was, spending all her days researching experimental treatments. She seemed to have no clue how she sounded complaining while surrounded by kids with wheelchairs and feeding tubes."

And, cue the sobbing once again. This won't likely be a popular opinion, and for those of you who have

Miracle Creek

already read the book, I hope you don't think less of me, but I related to Elizabeth so much and felt a deep sorrow well up inside of me for who she could have been, and for how her story played out. You see, I have been almost precisely in her shoes. My 6 year old daughter was diagnosed with autism spectrum and sensory disorders, OCD, and generalized anxiety at the age of 3. The doctors have been preparing us for years for the likelihood of an ADHD diagnosis in a few years, as it goes hand in hand with her particular side of the spectrum. She has asthma, moderate stomach issues, and I'll be damned if I haven't spent years of my life trying to find ways to alleviate those symptoms for her. Please do not misunderstand, the idea behind this book and my own thoughts are not to "cure" autism; the point here is that the pressurized dives were a means of treatment of unwanted symptoms, not unlike any other form of therapy.

I'm ashamed to admit that, in the darkest of days, I have thought and spoken things into the empty void that I would never truly mean, but fortunately for me, I have a strong, loving, and caring support system that holds me together when I cannot hold myself up. I wanted to dip into this book, reach out, and hold Elizabeth. I wanted to comfort her and tell her that her child's needs were valid, even when other parents told her that her child was too "normal" and undeserving of receiving the therapies. I wanted her to know that it was ok to have those dark moments, because we are all human. But this was also a beautiful wake-up call, reminding me to live in the moment and appreciate all that my beautiful McKenna brings to our family. It was an endearing and heart-wrenching reminder that, if I ever lost our joy baby, that my life would essentially cease to exist. I could never survive if that bright light was extinguished from my life, and it hit me like a ton of bricks at how desperately we need to live each day to the fullest, and how grateful and privileged I am to be entrusted as a care giver to this incredibly gifted, loving, and special child.

I could go on and on about this book, but I won't. Between the setting, although containing a fictional town in Virginia was set geographically within miles of my home, the deep, relatable characters, and a riveting plot that kept me glued from beginning to end, I cannot recommend Miracle Creek highly enough. I'm going ahead and calling it now-this will be THE debut novel of 2019, and I'm not just saying that because it was tailored so perfectly to my every whim. Do yourself a favor and pick this one up the moment you can get your hands on it. If you're a BOTM member, make this your April selection!

*Many thanks to the publisher for providing my review copy via NetGalley. ...more

It's really gotten to the point where I literally just see a pretty cover and add the book to my TBR as a natural reflex!!!! Send help!!!!

Miracle Creek Barnes And Noble

This fascinating debut novel covers all the bases - family drama, mystery, courtroom drama. A Korean couple opens an alternative health clinic that provides HBOT - hyperbaric oxygenation, which is supposed to help with autism, infertility, CP and other health problems. On a day that protesters have gathered outside the facility, it explodes. The same day one of the mothers chooses not to accompany her autistic son into the chamber. The same day the couple are both away from the controls of the chamber. So, who exactly is to blame when all the participants are either killed or injured? Who could be that much of a monster?

Told from multiple points of view, we get to see both the day of the "accident", their lives prior to it and the ensuing court case when the mother is charged with murder. The multiple points of view are extremely effective. "Teresa hadn't expected an exact match between his memories and hers - she watched Law and Order; she wasn't that naive- but still the difference was unnerving."

We are taken into the world of parenting autistic children; the anguish and the hardships but also the bliss of a small achievement.

Some of the scenes described are gruesome. They're also so incredibly well described you feel like you're there. The image of a child's adult teeth exposed above the baby teeth will stay with me for ages.

OMG, I loved these characters. They all seem to have something to hide, they all are so achingly imperfect. So often thinking that their one little omission doesn't matter. Kim uses these omissions to keep the reader guessing. Every time I thought I had figured out who the murderer was, Kim would throw a wrench into the mix and it would all be up for grabs again.

And the writing is spot on perfect. Not necessarily lush, but so descriptive. I found myself repeatedly nodding my head in agreement. There are some fascinating philosophical issues raised here. This would make a great book club selection. Highly recommend!

My thanks to netgalley and Farrah, Stroud and Giroux for an advance copy of this book.

...more

Super impressed with this debut novel! It's a solid mystery/courtroom drama in which there are so

Miracle Creek

many suspects you really aren't really sure who is guilty or what exactly happened until the very end. The author masterfully weaves some complex issues into the story which just take the book to a higher level than most others in the genre.

The Miracle Submarine is a pressurized oxygen chamber run by Young and Pak Yoo. It's a controversial and experimental treatment for patients hoping to cure such things as autism and infertility. A mysterious fire breaks out one day and two people are killed. The mother of the boy killed in the explosion is now on trial for the double murder. But is she the only one with motive to start the fire? Of course not, this is one of those books in which just about everyone is a suspect.

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The mystery in my opinion was really well done and that's reason enough to read this book. The Miracle Submarine has a bit of a futuristic feel to it but the story itself reads like a good, old fashioned whodunit. I love what the author chose to bring to the table in terms of making this more than just a mystery. The experiences of a Korean immigrant family were fascinating to read but what I enjoyed the most out of the story was reading the perspectives of the parents who had children with health concerns. There's just so much to take away from the book that I think it will appeal to many readers. Highly recommend checking this one out!

I won an advance copy of this book in a giveaway but was under no obligation to post a review. All views expressed are my honest opinion.

...more

Miracle Creek Npr

If you've ever watched one of the many iterations of the *Law & Order* series on television, you know that every episode follows a similar pattern, at least at the start—an incident occurs, every sign points to a particular perpetrator, everyone starts to wonder if they've caught the right person, and as the story veers to its conclusion you're not sure exactly what is going to happen.

This is exactly how I felt reading Angie Kim's debut novel, *Miracle Creek*, a story that seemed so clear-cut. If you've ever watched one of the many iterations of the *Law & Order* series on television, you know that every episode follows a similar pattern, at least at the start—an incident occurs, every sign points to a particular perpetrator, everyone starts to wonder if they've caught the right person, and as the story veers to its conclusion you're not sure exactly what is going to happen.

This is exactly how I felt reading Angie Kim's debut novel, *Miracle Creek*, a story that seemed so clear-cut at first had so many layers, so much going on, and I couldn't stop reading it. Were the characters as straight-forward as they were being portrayed, or were they hiding secrets? Would the actual perpetrator ever be brought to justice?

Amazingly, the book's courtroom drama was only a part of this book's appeal—it was a tremendously compelling and poignant story about the struggles of parenting, particularly when your child has special needs, the desire to protect your family and yourself, and the lies we tell ourselves to get by.

"Tragedies don't inoculate you against further tragedies, and misfortune doesn't get sprinkled out in fair proportions; bad things get hurled at you in clumps and batches, unmanageable and messy."

Korean immigrants Young and Pak Yoo run Miracle Submarine, a device that delivers hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) through pressurized "dives." Some believe HBOT can treat diseases like cancer, diabetes, or infertility, and others believe in its effectiveness to help treat children with autism and cerebral palsy. The Yoos have a regular group of customers, but they also have attracted a fairly energized group of protestors, who believe HBOT is a sham, and that Miracle Submarine should be shut down.

One day, in the midst of protests, power outages, and drama among the patients, a fire breaks out and the oxygen tank explodes, killing two patients and injuring others, including Pak and his teenage daughter, Mary. After their investigation, law enforcement apprehends their suspect, and a sensational, emotional trial is about to begin. Everyone wants to put the events of that day behind them and get to the truth.

But what really happened that day? Were the protestors that warned of the threat of fires to blame? Was it the mother of one of the autistic children being treated, had she finally cracked under the pressure of caring for her son? Was it Pak and Yoo themselves, hoping to take the insurance money and

Miracle Creek

cash in on a better life? The lies, the secrets, the painful truths will all collide as everyone tries to make sense of that fateful incident which affected far more lives than at first glance.

Miracle Creek is a beautifully written and emotional story. The further you get into the book, the more you realize that the pervasive pall of sadness that hangs over the story is caused by more than the tragic explosion—it's an emotional heaviness surrounding all of the characters for different reasons, each of which played a contributing factor in what occurred.

Kim does such a masterful job telling this story. There were characters I disliked at the outset that I started to warm up to as the story unfolded, and others that became less sympathetic. There also were a few characters that I didn't feel quite transcended stereotypical roles, but the book would have been much longer if Kim had spent time dwelling on their motivation, too.

There has been a lot of hype surrounding Miracle Creek in the months leading up to its publication. That hype really is justified. Much like the incident that is at the book's core, the book itself is far more complex, complicated, and compelling than it initially seems. It's both cerebral and sensational.

See all of my reviews at itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com.

Check out my list of the best books I read in 2018 at <https://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com/2019/01/the-best-books-i-read-in-2018.html>.

You can follow me on Instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/the.bookishworld.of.yrralh/>. ...more

The hype is real- this book is GOOD! • • • • •

Miracle Creek takes place in a small Virginia town of the same name. Young and Pak Yoo are the owners of an experimental treatment called the Miracle Submarine, which is a pressurized oxygen chamber. Its dives are believed to be therapeutic for autism among other disabilities or conditions.

The Miracle Submarine mysteriously exploded, and two people are killed. This small town is transformed forever.

At first, it's unclear who the suspect or suspect • • • • •

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At first, it's unclear who the suspect or suspects are. Could it be the mother of one of the patients? Or the Yoos? Both may have probable motives.

The courtroom drama plays out with BIG intrigue and lots of emotion. This aspect of this story was extraordinary and authentic.

The author is a Korean immigrant and former trial lawyer, so that certainly adds to the authenticity of her characterization and subsequent unraveling of the courtroom plot. She is also the mother of a "submarine" patient, so the genuine emotion is firmly there.

Ok, friends, don't miss this one. If you enjoy emotional reads, this book is for you. If courtroom dramas are your bag, definitely don't miss this. And everyone else? Well, this one is for you all, too. It's just too good to pass up! It's a twisty, dynamite page-turner with smooth writing and a compelling plot. Miracle Creek is an all-around fresh and refreshing read.

I received a complimentary copy. All opinions are my own.

My reviews can also be found on my blog: www.jennifertarheelreader.com ...more

Miracle Creek A Novel By Angie Kim

When I requested this title, I had no idea what to expect. After eading Miracle Creek I know one thing: I'll follow Angie Kim and reach out for her next book.

Miracle Creek is a courtroom drama and a thriller telling a story of an explosion that kills a child and an adult, and leaves several people injured. The tragic circumstance is that Miracle Submarine provides an unconventional treatment for several chronic diseases, autism among others, and is operated by Korean immigrant family who, having

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Miracle Creek is a courtroom drama and a thriller telling a story of an explosion that kills a child and an adult, and leaves several people injured. The tragic circumstance is that Miracle Submarine provides an unconventional treatment for several chronic diseases, autism among others, and is operated by Korean immigrant family who, having lived in the USA for some years, still are trying to find their way in the new surroundings. There are several characters and we learn gradually the truth, which is a perfect way of narrating a story, at least for me. I enjoy discovering new threads with every page, and Miracle Creek leads me meandering beautifully.

Truly unputdownable!!

Many thanks to Angie Kim, Farrar, Straus and Giroux for providing me with ARC in exchange for my honest review. ...more

Long ... but no spoilers!!!!

Great Balls of FIRE....

...literally and figuratively...

From the first sentence, the reader is hooked.

I am completely jubilant about this book....

with a fascinating medical exploration of Hyerbaric oxygen therapy - a treatment used for decompression sickness of scuba diving hazards - but is also used to treat a variety of medical conditions, such is the case in this story.

Medical evidence is sufficient in treating autism, Bellâ€™s palsy, infertility, and a long list o Long ... but no spoilers!!!!

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diseases.

Parents brought their children with special needs to the oxygen tank.

Each session (the dives) were an hour long.

Pak Yoo, Korean immigrant,

sent his wife, Young, and their daughter, Mary to live with a host family in Baltimore. Pak wanted his daughter to get an American education.

Young had to work at a run-down supermarket with bulletproof doors (gangs at night in the area), 7 days a week. Young worked like a slave in exchange for the host family (the Kangs), paying for Mary's American education.

In the meantime, it took another 4 years until Pak joined his wife and daughter in the Baltimore.

Pak opened his Hyperbaric oxygen therapy here in the states. His wife, Young and their daughter, Mary were clearly not happy - about their life in America.

I couldn't blame them.

Their daily lives were compromised severely. Pak made all the final decisions in that family.

I personally wanted to kick him in the balls!

Pak said HBOT was popular with Asian acupuncture clients. The Asian community in Japan and Korea had wellness centers with infrared saunas and HBOT

He had years of experience in Seoul

Pak had been an Acupuncturist for 30 years..

But gave it up in the states for his oxygen wellness therapy.

Pak and Young's daughter, Mary was frustrated -lonely and - angry for numerous reasons. Her life as a teenager in the states was completely jeopardized due to their parents choices.

Mary questioned why she needed to get an American education when the math classes in Korea were far superior. In fact all of the education was more advanced than in the states. So.. I wondered about their argument as to why they came to America myself.

After the explosion -

Mary's personality flipped from a hot tempered talkative girl to a detached mute facsimile of her daughter's.

Doctors diagnosed Mary with posttraumatic stress disorder PTSD.

She missed taking her SAT classes that day.... and everything about her life went from worse to worse.

“Miracle Submarine”, (the oxygen chamber is shaped like a submarine), exploded at 8:25pm on August 26th, 2008, starting an uncontrollable fire. Pak, the owner lied big time that night. His wife was a victim to her husband's lie.

6 people were inside the Submarine chamber.

3 people were in the immediate area.

Miracle Creek

2 died.

4 were severely injured" hospitalized for months, paralyzed limbs amputated.

Outside the treatment center, on the night of the tragic event, protesters gathered: angry - wanting to close down the Submarine oxygen business. Maybe- but doubtful - that one of the prosecutors were the cause of the explosion.

But possible...

I started to think "many" people were to blame - not just one person.

THIS STORY IS GRIPPING ... and got inside my head.

Even though I felt I knew the number 1 culprit- (not saying if I was right or not)...

I kept thinking about the pros and cons of oxygen medical treatments. The medical fiction was equally as interesting to me as the page turning courtroom drama.

A treatment center opened just 2 miles from my house over a year ago.

Expensive as hell!!!

I've been curious about the BIG TANK in our neighborhood- but it was this book that "really" piqued my interest.

Something went VERY WONG the night of the explosion in Miracle Creek.

Accident or intentional?

And what's the miracle?

A year after the explosion

....a terrific courtroom case began.

Elizabeth Ward was charged with arson, battery, attempted murder. Her own son died.

Elizabeth's defense attorney, Shannon Haug...was stellar during the courtroom trial. She didn't believe Elizabeth was guilty. Neither did I...

but Elizabeth and everyone had reason to want to explode the treatment center. Everyone was hiding something.

The town "Miracle Creek" could have been "Liars Creek" . A community of liars.

Abraham Patterley the prosecutor...wasn't a fan of Shannon Haug -and vice versa. (Making the courtroom drama fun for our reading).

Steve Pierson, an arson specialists and witness verified that the fire started outside the chamber....and Elizabeth "was" outside the chamber the night of the explosion.

Elizabeth's son, Henry, who had autism was one of the victims killed while in the "Miracle Submarine" chamber. Doesn't seem quite like a miracle when people are killed and injured.

But did this mother really cause the fire explosion...

Miracle Creek

that killed her own child?

We got a clear look

at Elizabeth's daily demands for her son.

Elizabeth was "Henry-centric". No time left over for friends and socializing.

"During the day, Elizabeth drove Henry to seven types of therapy" speech, occupational, physical, auditory processing (Tomatis), social skills (RDI), vision processing, neurofeedback"and, between those, roamed holistic/organic stores for peanut/gluten/casein/dairy/fish/egg-free foods. At night she prepared Henry's foods and supplements and went on autism treatment boards such as HBOTkids and AutismDoctorMoms".

Sounds like a committed mother - yet Elizabeth was THE ACCUSED.

Or?? who else was to blame?

The two dead victims were Kim Kozlowski (the defendant's long time friend), and Henry Ward, the defendant's own 8 year old son.

I was totally intrigued with this book! I liked everything about it...

...the medical issues

...the top notch courtroom drama,

and...

...the immigration story - (from Korea to the United States).

4 trial days..

We hear from a full cast of witnesses:

...Matt Thompson was the first witness. A medical doctor - Caucasian - married to Janine Cho - Asian -(also a medical doctor/ internist).

Matt had fingers amputated from being in the chamber during the fire that night in August 2008.

Others witnesses:

PakYoo, owner of HBOT

Young Yoo (wife of Pak)

Elizabeth Ward, (the accused) ... and once married to Victor

Janine Cho, (Matt's wife)

Teresa ... mother of Rosa, a teen daughter with cerebral palsy, due to an illness.

Author Angie Kim did an outstanding job with this novel. As a preteen she moved from Seoul, Korea to the suburbs of Baltimore.

She attended University and Harvard Law school.

This was a phenomenal enjoyable debut novel.

The cast is large - but was very easy for me to keep track of everyone. LOVE THIS BOOK!!!

Miracle Creek

This was the BEST courtroom drama Iâ€™ve read since â€œDefending Jacobâ€• ...by William Landry.
Plus this novel had added enrichment topics: medical fiction and immigration.

Smokin-hot-storytelling!!!

One of my FAVORITES!!!

Thank you Farrar, Straus, Giroux, Netgalley, and Angie Kim

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