



Love and Other Small Wars

Donna-Marie Riley

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Love and Other Small Wars reminds us that when you come back from combat usually the most fatal of wounds are not visible. Riley's debut collection is an arsenal of deeply personal poems that embody an intensity that is truly impressive yet their hands are tender. She enlists you. She gives you camouflage & a pair of boots so you can stay the course through the minefield of her heart. You will track the lovely flow of her soft yet fierce voice through a jungle of powerful imagery on womanhood, relationships, family, grief, sexuality & love, amidst other matters. Battles with the heart aren't easily won but Riley hits every mark. You'll be relieved that you're on the same side. Much like war, you'll come back from this book changed.

Love and Other Small Wars Details

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Author : Donna-Marie Riley

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From Reader Review Love and Other Small Wars for online ebook

Noura says

This made my heart ache in the best way possible reminding me that I'm alive.

Liz Janet says

This book was read for the #readwomen month.

Her "How To Love Your Depressed Lover" was the one reason I even looked at this short book, a poem about what it is like to have someone next to you, laying beside you, but unable to reach them, for their mind is far away, in a void that only shines black at them when the world only wishes to shine for them. And then I read her other poems and realized she is not a one-hit-wonder. No, her poetry has a level of allure and truthfulness that calls you to her. Riley's voice murmurs by your ear, and no matter how low, it is still there, a constant sign of uplifting spirits and verity. I recommend one listens to Avicii's "Hope There's Someone" when reading this, it will make the experience even more enjoyable.

mentalexotica says

This woman has a gift and it's practically osmosing onto these pages you read. I don't know if you can call this writing. It seems more like a direct transference of self. Because it comes from deeper within the heart or even the mind, and goes beyond the word straight to the intestines. Your guts. That's what she wants. That's what it will take to read this and not dismantle.

Ana says

This poetry collection tears you apart and puts you back together again. One of my absolute favorites by a poet with a soft presence capable of making you feel everything and all at once with her craft. A definite must read if you have not done so.

Leen says

Thank you, Noura, for recommending Love and Other Small Wars to me. <3

This was a very violent and undisguised read. The poems balance out raw emotion and wonder so well. I loved it.

Rund says

While reading this book;
I teared when words gathered around to speak out things i failed to word out by myself.
I cried,
In my bed,
At work and the doctor's waiting room,
Even cried in a cashier-queue
But i cried the most when it ended.

Hessa Al Ajmani says

It's the type of poetry that cuts you open, shows you all the parts you didn't know were hidden there (or at least tried your best to ignore), sticks needles in and pokes all around, leaves a huge mess, then stitches you back together. It will give you a sheet of Panadol, and tells you you're good to go.

NO. But ok.

Ps. thanks Noura for sharing this with me.

Nadia Mars says

These poems speak to me in so many levels. I felt every word <3

Chelsea says

My English teacher told me about Donna-Marie Riley and gave me the link to her Tumblr. I remember being so shocked to realise that I had become familiar with some of her work already. When he told me that her first poetry book was "witty," I knew I had to buy it.

It was delivered today, and I dove in and have come out a person with a new perspective of poetry and the world. Her words are so interesting and wild. They're not sophisticated, but that's what makes it so gorgeous. Donna-Marie (I knew her as Lenore online) throws her poetry at you; it's a force to be reckoned with.

I loved every second of it.

Christine says

The words cut you open, shushes at you, then sews you back up, leaving you the same on the outside as the

day you picked it up. But inside, you feel so much different.

Vivek Tejuja says

There is love. There are its expressions. There are ways in which one chooses to talk about it. And then there is poetry, which seems to be the solution to every pain, heartbreak and every possible wound that is unseen or unheard.

I do not read much of poetry. Somehow, I don't get the genre, but when something does get my attention, then that poet is booked for life for me. "Love and Other Small Wars" by Donna-Marie Riley is one such book of poems that I am hooked to. I have reread it thrice already and I know that I will go on for more, because it is that heartbreakingly beautiful and honest.

I was told by a dear friend about her and I could not help but check out her Tumblr page and also the wonderful verse and prose which she writes. Donna-Marie's writing is a breeze, a welcome change from everything that I have read when it comes to verse.

She makes the simple extraordinary. The emotion, the pain and the expectations from life and what others expect from us, bleeds through these pages and that is what makes it beautiful. Riley's poems are from the heart, they are from the gut, they are from every pore of her body – she does not mince words, she will not sugar-coat it for you and you will thank her for it.

From "How to Be Alone: A Twelve-Step Program" which is my favourite poem to "Consequences" – a poem about her gay brother and his boyfriend (who I could relate to more than anything else) to, "A Poem for the Insomniacs" and every other poem, Riley draws a picture so real and struggling with different emotions and life, that it feels like chewing on glass. It feels that wounded and real and somewhere down the line, you enjoy the treat so much, that you want to keep coming back to it – again and again and again.

Here is something for you from my favourite poem in the book:

"Learn to love yourself
like it is the hardest math equation
you have ever been asked to solve."

Maha A says

*Sometimes I can understand
why Sylvia Plath put her head
in an oven; there are things
in my head, too,
that I would like to catch fire.*

Cheyenne says

Poetry to make you ache. As always Donna writes beautifully, and this book is a treasure to pull out on rainy days and sad nights, or whenever you need to breathe.

Azra Tabassum says

You know when you know a person you tend to forget how amazing they are. Not because you don't love them or because that love somehow makes them average, but because you spend so long in their company that you get engulfed in their genius and just, sort of...forget. I've known Donna (Lenny) for about three years now. I fell in love with her because of *How To Love Your Depressed Lover* and stayed in love with her because not only is she a talented and raw writer, she's also an incredibly funny, smart and witty person. The writing, eventually, took the back burner. She stopped me Lenore the writer, and became Lenny the friend.

That is until *Love and Other Small Wars* arrived at my door. I read it in one sitting which is impressive enough because I haven't managed to finish any book (poetry or otherwise) for months on end. The thing is, I'd forgotten what words can do to you. I'm picky about poetry. I go halfway through a piece and lose interest. I shrug and think to myself "I've got the feel of this piece and now I don't need to read anymore of it. I know."

I didn't know with Lenny's work. I sat, lump in throat, tears in my eyes, and devoured this entire volume. And then I held it to my chest and thought to myself "Jesus Christ, I am so grateful and so thankful to have known her."

Friendship aside, Lenny writes lines that work as a sucker punch. One to the stomach, and one to the throat and before you know it, you're huddled in a fetal position on the floor, making strange hiccuping noises. Because of words, damn it, her words. Words she takes very gently between her two palms, before twisting them into exactly the kind of shape she wants them to be. And oh, what beautiful shapes she makes. Her writing, reminiscent of Jeanann Verlee, at some points, reminiscent of the raw bloody fists of Siken, take you by the throat and shake you. With lines like "call you mother, remember that you are the only person who knows what her heart sounds like from the inside" and "the first night we made love, I learned God exists. I found Him in the lining of your skin, I found Him in your throat" this book is a killer. A stone cold one. Who makes you enjoy it.

So Lenny, hats off, I salute you for the pleasure and even more, for the pain.

Chaneli says

Finally was able to read Donna's amazing collection of poetry and it's just as amazing as I imagined it. On first discovering her poetry through tumblr and falling more in love with her words and the honesty in her pieces she soon became one of my favorite poets. With amazing powerful pieces such as *Consequences* which speaks about the struggle with sexuality. *The Battle* i've made of loving really hit on a personal level. *Exhibit X* touches on all the small wars that no one talks and gets dust under the rug because as Andrea Gibson said, "Nobody wants to hear you cry about the grief inside your bones." I completely loved A

Conversation with my grief... because this poem takes you through a journey that many of us have in our minds and in the end you reach a sense of acceptance. As a whole this collection of poems is unforgettable, honest, powerful, liberating, filled with love, acceptance in yourself and helps you understand your sadness and grief in ways I couldn't possibly put to words. I can't wait to re-read this beautiful book!
