



***Beating Heart Baby* by Lio Min**

Flatiron Books, Macmillan Publishers, 2022

ISBN: 9781250819093 (Hardcover); 9781250819116 (Trade Paperback)

\*Age Range: 14–18 (Suggested by Publisher)

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

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From debut author Lio Min comes *Beating Heart Baby*, a tender love letter to internet friendships, anime, and indie rock, perfect for fans of *Heartstopper*

When Santi arrives in Los Angeles, he hopes he can move past the loss of the childhood internet friend he'd known only as Memo. And in his new high school's marching band, Santi gets a taste of the community he's always longed for. Even the clashes with his section leader, Suwa, lead to Suwa opening up to Santi first as a friend, then something more. But when Suwa gets a shot at the rock star life he's always dreamed of, the very thing that drew them to each other—a shared devotion to art—tests their budding relationship.

Over years, Santi and Suwa glide and soar, crash and fall, together and apart. This twinned tale about the transitions between boyhood and manhood, internet confidants and IRL friends, the face in the crowd and the star on the stage, stakes and succeeds in making the bold claim: that Santi and Suwa's fantastic dreams are as essential as art and love and life itself.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

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"A master class in modern loss and reconnection, and in ways that are both wholly universal and deeply unique to queer and trans communities. I loved every minute of the roller coaster ride from joy to devastation and back again." —[The New York Times](#)

"[Min shows] us the violence and ecstasy of what it means to become an artist, to really be seen, both as and beyond a young adult." —[Chicago Review of Books](#)

"This book is alive with ache, grief, hunger, love, pain and awe. . . . It should be read for the reasons all good books should be read: because it's beautiful and moving, nuanced and humane. Most of all, because it's fun." —[Los Angeles Times](#)

★ "An artful debut about the joys and heartaches that come with existing as your own self." —[Booklist](#), **starred review**

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Flatiron Books

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★ “[A] gorgeous debut . . . a must-have for all collections serving older teens—especially those looking to add more high-quality realistic queer fiction to their shelves.” —[School Library Journal](#), **starred review**

★ “Min’s exploration of coming out and owning your story as an artist is particularly exhilarating and nuanced. . . . It’s an epic tale of queer validation, filtered through the light of the California sun and Sailor Moon, and an essential read for anyone searching for a blueprint of their soul.” —[BookPage](#), **starred review**

★ “A lyrical, rhythmic, and promising debut, this queer romance is a hit.” —[Kirkus Reviews](#), **starred review**

“A luminous homage to music, art, and the power of found family. . . . achingly romantic.” —[Publishers Weekly](#), **starred review**

“At times incredibly romantic, at times wildly devastating, this debut about identity, belonging, kinship, fandom, and starting over is one of the best books you’ll read all year.” —BuzzFeed

“Blistering, deeply emo, and shimmering with the messiness of intimacy, *Beating Heart Baby* is a dizzying, occasionally infuriating, gleefully sexy, and utterly heartfelt exploration of identity, culture, and finding home within your art and in yourself. Brimming with music, profoundly specific internet, and the magic of cooked food with chosen family, Lio Min’s debut is as much a salve as it is nourishment.” —Mary H. K. Choi, author of *Yolk*

“A stunning heartbreak of a novel that will mean so much to so many. I couldn’t put it down—following the always tender and often romantic journeys of these beautiful boys. A story about how love can shape you and open up the entire world. Lio Min is a superstar to watch.” —Maurene Goo, author of *Throwback*

“A beautiful story about finding family, messy first loves, and the power of music. *Beating Heart Baby* will break your heart in the best way.” —Emiko Jean, author of *Tokyo Ever After*

“You know that feeling, when you hear your favorite song for the first time? Lio Min has captured it in electrifying prose. *Beating Heart Baby* reached deep inside me and healed wounds I always assumed I’d be carrying forever.” —Adib Khorram, author of *Darius the Great Is Not Okay*

“*Beating Heart Baby* combines an anime-addled queer coming-of-age with a luxurious, sensual love story. You won’t know whether to swoon or seethe with jealousy that you weren’t this cool in high school.” —Meredith Russo, author of *If I Was Your Girl*

“An altogether wildly moving story of finding yourself while chasing down dreams, *Beating Heart Baby* reads like the best kind of love song and leaves you wanting to hit repeat, with chapter after chapter positively humming in your head. And the beating heart of this beautiful novel? A story of love and forgiveness like no other.” —Eric Smith, author of *Don’t Read the Comments*

“A vivid and vital gift to queer teens everywhere.” —Peyton Thomas, author of *Both Sides Now*

“*Beating Heart Baby* creates the eclectic, stylish world of every teen weirdo’s dreams. Readers will connect to the struggle and yearning of young queer love while finding warmth and acceptance within its diverse and compassionate cast.” —Jen Wang, author of *The Prince and the Dressmaker*

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## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- BookPage Best Books of the Year
- Publishers Weekly Best Books of the Year

## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Publishers Weekly author Q&A](#)
- [San Mateo County Libraries author video interview](#)
- [The Nerd Daily author Q&A](#)
- [Geeks Out author interview](#)
- [School Library Journal's Teen Library Toolbox guest post by Lio Min](#)
- [Lio Min essay in Catapult Magazine](#)
- [Teaching Books resources](#)

## \*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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