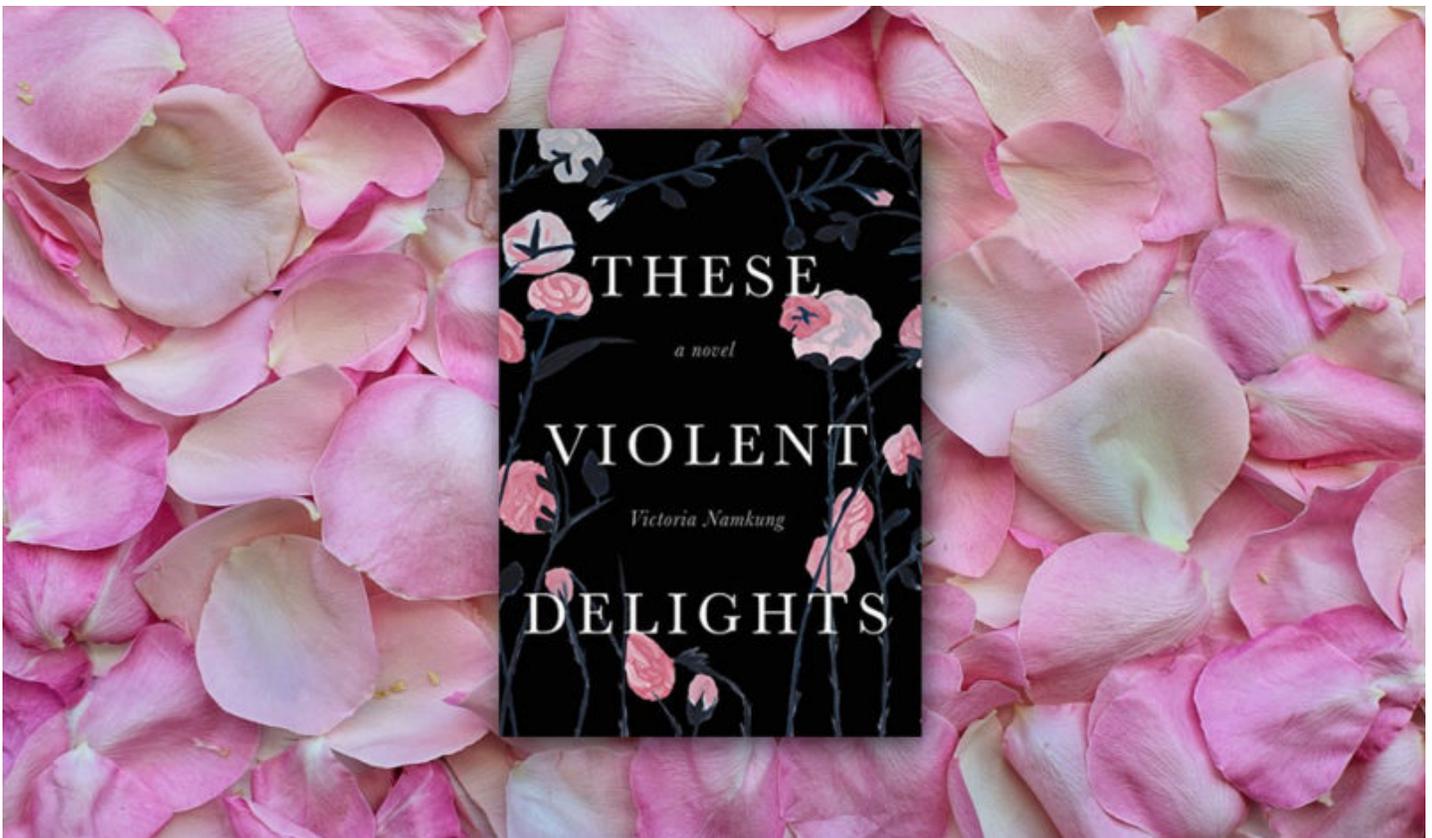


Marianne Pestana

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NAMKUNG'S THESE VIOLENT DELIGHTS DEPICTS TRUE TO LIFE ENDS

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By [Victoria Davis](#), staff writer & journalist

Just in the last couple months, the world of sports, Hollywood and popular news networks have exploded with sexual assault and harassment accusations. 83 women, according to USA Today, have come forward claiming sexual harassment from producer Harvey Weinstein. CBS fired veteran journalist Charlie Rose due to allegations of sexual misconduct and Olympic Gymnastics physician Larry Nassar has been sentenced to 40 to 175 years in prison after 156 female athletes spoke out about decades of enduring the doctor's sexual abuse.

Some might say that the world has changed, that sexual predators are lurking on our doorsteps more than ever before. Victoria Namkung, author of *These Violent Delights*, believes the world has not become more dangerous, but

that people are just more aware.

“Because of social media and all these new websites that weren’t around when I was growing up in the 80s, we have access to see more than we used to,” said Namkung. “We can see what children are missing, where sex offenders live in our area. If someone makes an accusation, it’s put on the internet almost right away.”

This newfound awareness, knowing that they are not alone, has helped to support women, and men, coming forward and sharing their stories. This, in turn, has given journalists and authors like Namkung the opportunity to share those stories with the world.

These Violent Delights was just published at the start of this month and has already received raving reviews on Goodreads, with over 60% being four or five stars. The book tells the story of three women who, while attending an all-girls private high school in Los Angeles, experience sexual advances from their married English teacher, Dr. Gregory Copeland. Caryn, Eva and Sasha are all from different graduating classes at Windemere and all had different encounters with Dr. Copeland. But when Caryn publishes an essay titled, “My Tenth-Grade Teacher Claims He Fell In Love With Me,” during her college internship at the Los Angeles Daily, the three women realize they have more in common than they thought. Caryn’s essay kick-starts an investigation and, with the help of esteemed reporter Jane March, the women begin the process of healing, finding justice and making peace with their everyday lives.

Namkung takes an interesting approach to this story, with each chapter narrating the first-person perspective of one of the four women. The first few chapters alternate between narrations from Caryn and Jane, but as Eva and Sasha enter the picture, the chapters become more diverse. This was an extraordinary choice of storytelling because it brings the reader into the heart and soul of each woman. They are not just mothers, writers or victims. They are people with deep hurts and pains. The varying first-person perspectives also helped distinguish what make each woman different and how each of their experiences with Copeland impacted them individually.

Having used her journalism skills to interview real victims and private school students and teachers for her book, Namkung creates an emotional journey that is real and raw. The accounts of Sasha and Eva specifically are very detailed, recalling instances of groping, intercourse and emotional abuse post-relationship from Copeland. However, this makes up only a portion of the story. *These Violent Delights* also covers Caryn’s feelings of estrangement from her family, Sasha’s Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Jane’s compensation for past mistakes and corruption within private schools and their board members.

Perhaps one of the most overpowering topics addressed in this book is the effects of severe mental disorders. The sociopathic and pedophilia state of mind is expressed, not through a man in a black hoodie hiding in the bushes and waiting to attack, but in a seemingly typical family man and beloved teacher.

“Most of these predators are found to be people that look normal,” said Namkung. “We see them everyday and they can even be people we’ve known for a long time and trust.”

As the women in the book sort through their experiences one step at a time, the reader will go through the same process. Things that didn’t raise red-flags in the earlier chapters will set off alarms toward the book’s conclusion. One of these examples being when Caryn says in the book, “I remember he [Copeland] told me his students were his friends during the interview I did with him so many years ago. At the time, I didn’t realize how sad and strange that sounded.”

Despite the heartbreaking stories and emotional toll this story takes on one's soul, Namkung leaves readers with hope rather than hopelessness, that a happy life after trauma is possible and that when one of us speaks out, the rest will raise their voices. Justice is not perfect, and the world is filled with uncertainty. While we don't always get the answers we ask for, *These Violent Delights* speaks truth that when someone takes a chance and reaches out their hand, someone will be there to help pull them up.

"I want women and men to feel empowered to speak out against the things that are wrong in this world," said Namkung. "They are not alone, all it takes is one person."

You can visit Victoria Namkung's website at <http://victorianamkung.com>

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