



Pocketful of Poseys

Thomas Reed

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Simultaneously heartwrenching and comical, Thomas Reed's novel *Pocketful of Poseys* follows a family from the death of their matriarch to their journey to scatter her ashes.

Cinny Posey, for all her upper-class panache, is an eccentric at heart. Three years after the death of her husband and facing a severe illness, she chooses to starve herself to death, to the protestations, but eventual acceptance, of those around her. Upon her death, a new adventure begins for her family.

More than a cursory tale of a family adventure, the book finds its footing in the rawness and imperfection of single moments. Scattering Cinny's ashes to fulfill her final request holds a certain poetry in theory, but the practicalities of doing so lead to moments of irreverence that are both comical and moving. And Cinny's family is treated with the same nuance: each member has their own life outside of their relationship to her. For example, Brian's shift from dating a man to a woman is a nonissue in his own mind; the backlash he experiences is more about his family's perceptions. Sage struggles following the sexual assault of her best friend, and the emotional burden she carries is palpable. The realities of what it means to be a mother, sister, brother, or the youngest person in the family are considered too.

As the journey begins, a chapter is set aside for each location. These chapters include letters from Cinny that outline her wishes and provide context; her voice is a beautiful blend of vulgarity and sophistication. And at the end of her family's journey, their lives—in all their mundane glory—resume. Subtle and meaningful, the novel *Pocketful of Poseys* is about the complexities of family.

DEBBIE MCCARTHY (September / October 2023)

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