



## **Megume and the Trees**

*Sarah Toshiko Hasu*

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## **Megume and the Trees** Sarah Toshiko Hasu

Fifteen-year old Megume wakes to find herself in the woods, with no idea of how she got there beyond a murky memory of chasing her lost dog, Sasurai. But with the pain of her past and her family fragmented after the death of her mother, Megume finds that she doesn't really mind being lost. Yet strange encounters with others in the woods - including Kat, a woman who seems stuck in the moment Pearl Harbor was bombed - and incidents that feel right out of fairytales and Japanese stories she heard as a child, combined with her own vivid dreams, leave Megume to sort out the difference between her own mind and reality, all while trying to navigate her way out of this deceptive forest. Shortlisted for a 2012 Lambda Literary Award in Debut Fiction.

## **Megume and the Trees Details**

Date : Published October 20th 2011 by Megami Press LLC (first published January 9th 2011)

ISBN : 9780615404462

Author : Sarah Toshiko Hasu

Format : Paperback 122 pages

Genre : Lgbt, Young Adult, Fiction, Gblt, Queer, Cultural, Japan, Lesbian, Thriller, Mystery Thriller

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# From Reader Review Megume and the Trees for online ebook

## Jenn says

This is a quick and easy read. It starts out quite mysteriously... and then I found it quite sad and disturbing. I started to figure out how it would end about halfway through. I was kind of hoping it would end differently, but at the same time I'm glad the author didn't wimp out and opt for a happier ending.

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## Terry says

This was a very strange young adult novel. Weird, yet compelling. I wanted to finish to see where the young lady would lead us with this story. The author did a wonderful job writing through 15 year old Megume's eyes. Good descriptive prose, but somewhat hard to keep straight at times. Dark, serious, depressing work; one not easily forgotten.

Not a novel to be read lightly.

(Contains painful, yet important issues which teens deal with - self-mutilation, suicide, lesbianism, etc. Has a list of helpful organizations in the back).

\*\*\*Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free through Goodreads. (Thank you Sarah Toshiko Hasu for the opportunity to read this book). I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

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## Scott says

dark and trippy, like a really good twilight zone episode...loved it! thanks goodreads for the complimentary book!

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## Lucy says

We were very kindly sent this wonderful magical book by the author Sarah. Having just finished reading it I feel conscious that I need to do the book justice through my review.

Our site is all about the positive side of being gay. To be honest I have been so lucky that I had forgotten how it felt when I was younger and struggled with my sexuality, that it was such a shameful thing and that those closest didn't know me, the feeling of deceit.

This book focuses on a fifteen year old girl called Megume. It is written in her voice. You meet her as she is running through a forest, the book is as though she is within a dream. The situations she finds herself in are analogies of her thoughts and her situation. It is a very dark book, she is in a very dark place.

Sarah talks of friends who she has lost in her life who didn't make it out of the nightmare that they found themselves in. There is a brilliantly informative interview with Sarah in Curve magazine, she so eloquently describes the thoughts we have as gay individuals. I remember so well thinking I would lose my family and friends if they knew who I really was.

'I have many loving, warm people in my life who can't fathom how people could be so worried that everyone who's always loved them would stop loving them because of who they are. But when you're realizing that about yourself and your identity and you're getting ready to come out, even if you think you know things about yourself, your family and your friends, you're always scared that it would be different when it comes to you. You have to steel yourself against risking losing everything just to have your truth and its frightening. And sometimes it goes really well and everyone still loves you and sometimes it goes horribly wrong.'

Sarah has written this book as a light at the end of the tunnel for all those in the dark who are terrified of what their future holds. There is a wonderful part in the book where she meets Kat and all her woes become clear to her.

This is a very powerful book, a book that has reminded me of my journey and made me realise if I needed to, how lucky I am to be me and loved by those about me - no matter who I am!

I would say that if you know of people who you believe are struggling, give them a copy of this book, show them that there is a way out of the deep dark wood.

Thank you so much Sarah for sending me this magical book... I read it yesterday as I was travelling in London and was so lost within its pages that I almost missed my stop on the tube.

I definitely recommend this book.

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### **Sal Noel says**

Bought on a whim-was a teenage read and there are times that's just what I fancy. Some interesting and challenging issues brought up but skimmed over and could have been expanded on. So, some disappointment- overall seemed rushed but thumbs up for making an attempt. Would hope that this author develops over time.

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### **Emily Rothbaum says**

I purchased this for .25 cents at a garage sale. The best I can say is that it did have potential.

This is a dark work but for no compelling reason. Interesting issues and challenges were skimmed over or given the insight of a pre-teen in angst.

Once I began to follow the story, (it jumps around and around again), I found the plot disappointing and the expressions of painful emotions juvenile.

I looked for a follow up by this author and was not surprised to find none.

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## Desiree says

As the Young Adult market has become ever saturated with light reads about “dark” romances and adventures with the flavor-of-the-moment paranormal/supernatural entity, Sarah Toshiko Hasu’s debut novella, *Megume and the Trees*, lays itself before the reader with a sober yet powerful question: What cost is escapism from your world and your inner turmoil worth? Do the ends justify the means, even if it means a final end?

The narrative thrives on questioning the line between reality and imagination, where the titular Megume begins the story in-media-res as she awakens and finds herself lost to the woods. Where the woods are or how she got there is irrelevant, as if the woods were a character in and of itself, guiding Megume ever deeper inside; this journey correlates into Megume’s inner journey into her own consciousness and how her circumstances come to be, especially in regards to her family’s crumbling bond in the wake of her mother’s death. Hasu’s character building of Megume in such a short amount of space cannot be understated in its excellence; the more Megume reveals her perspective on her parents and her relationship to and with them is heard through Megume’s voice, especially in regards to her late mother, the loneliness and hopelessness inside Megume begins to set in as a lazy river beginning to build and it continues to grow with each passing page. When combined with the mysterious appearances of supernatural and ghostly beings entering Megume’s space, the reader is left with a consistent, if incredibly somber tone throughout the story.

Speaking of tone, that brings me to the opening question I proposed and the answers (or perhaps non-answers, depending on the individual’s perspective) that Hasu provides manages to be realistic without being condescending or overly self-righteous. While the book is a scant 122 pages, it is deceptively so; its lasting impressions with Hasu’s storytelling, character development, and stage setting accomplishes more with its substance and core messages than most young adult novels do with twice the amount of space and words.

Once the book is at its end, Hasu’s anti-suicide expression of hope and courage overcoming despair—even if the story does not necessarily reflect that in Megume herself—is palpable yet humble, something that I personally feel is sorely lacking in today’s market for readers entering adulthood. *Megume and the Trees* is a sobering experience, but one that I encourage everyone who enjoys a fictional narrative along with a message regarding a courageous social issue(s) to read and become engaged with.

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## Melissa says

I won this from [goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com)

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## Gi-Gi says

I'd like to thank Sarah for sending me a signed copy of her book. I enjoyed every minute of her beautifully written story. I loved the style of writing as it switched from Megume's story to the letters her friend Emiko wrote her. Also how the story also incorporated so many messages along with the feel of how I used to feel while watching the twilight zone. Absolutely loved it.

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## **Eva says**

This was a firstread giveaway. All though it was a short story it took me a while to read. It was a hard book to get into and to follow. Once I got into the plot I was disappointed it is a depressing story to read. The story jumps you around to much. I would start understanding what was going on and the events would change and I would be lost again.

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