



Frangipani House (Caribbean Writers Series)


By Beryl Gilroy

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Set in Guyana, this book tells the story of Mama King. Trapped by age and infirmity, Mama becomes too much for her family who send her away to a dreary and claustrophobic rest home - but Mama King does not give in. This book won a GLC Black Literature Competition before publication.

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Frangipani House (Caribbean Writers Series) By Beryl Gilroy Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

Sixty-nine-year-old Mama King has been suffering from a series of ailments. Her daughters, both in the United States, send money to move Mama King to the Frangipani House, a place on the island for "aged old folk - black women...forty-three of them." As Mama King's health is restored, all she wants is to get away from the confinement and control of Miss Trask, the "Matron." Mama King, a strong woman who raised her daughters without a husband and her grandchildren without much help from their mothers, realizes that the boredom in this place will kill her before her health fails. Here at Frangipani House she misses "her faithful friends, work and hardship" and is heard mumbling to herself: "I am going lazy-handed to meet my Maker. Me mother dead with sod in her hair. Me father dead with rice grass underneath him. And me I sittin' till me bones get sore waitin'." So Mama King sits, knowing her clothes are disappearing, her letters to her daughters aren't being posted, and the injections the matron gives her are no good. Woven through the narrative are Mama King's memories, tales from the past that interconnect family and friends, and her plans for escape. Complete with births and deaths, confessions and dreams, *Frangipani House* is a warmly told story of the independence and spirit of an aging woman who demands a say in her own life. -- *For great reviews of books for girls, check out Let's Hear It for the Girls: 375 Great Books for Readers 2-14.* -- *From 500 Great Books by Women; review by Holly Smith*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Adrian Woodson:

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Melanie Roberts:

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Frederick Roark:

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