

Review of Vickie Gendreau's *Testament*
by Stephanie Talbot

Vickie Gendreau's auto-fictional novel *Testament* is an intimate and emotional read, accomplished by blending together true events in her life and fictional outcomes she imagines will happen. *Testament* is the mixture of stories from Gendreau's life before her diagnosis, during the treatment of her terminal brain cancer, as well as the reactions of those around her following her own death. The chapters begin like a will and then alternate between the perspective of the writer and her friends, family, ex-lovers who are responding to her words. She bequeaths text, poetry, and items to these people that have touched her life in one way or another, be it positive or negative. She writes about entertaining men in the strip clubs of Montreal, the men she has been with, those who paid her, the one she loved and now hates, her friends, her mother, her brother, sharing with each of them her raw and honest emotions while at the same time writing what she feels are their own thoughts and feelings on the matters relating to her actions before her diagnosis, her illness, or later death. Gendreau was diagnosed with a brain tumour in June 2012, *Testament* was published that fall and Gendreau passed away in the spring of 2013. Published in French, Aimee Wall who holds a degree in Translation Studies, and working with Gendreau's close friend Mathieu, was able to translate *Testament* to English in a way that does not impede the impact of Gendreau's emotional writing. I am thankful this book is available in English as I otherwise would not have been able to experience the joy in reading it.