



The Lost Daughter of Happiness : A Novel

By Geling Yan

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This powerful novel tells the story of a love affair between an enigmatic Chinese prostitute and the Caucasian boy who worships her. It follows the main characters from childhood to old age, and is filled with a vivid cast of peripheral characters, from missionaries to gangsters. The book includes moments of tremendous cruelty and incredible human tenderness.

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The Lost Daughter of Happiness : A Novel By Geling Yan Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Yan, who fled her native China after the Tiananmen Square massacre, counts herself part of the "fifth wave" of Chinese immigrants to California. In this potentially intriguing but flatly told novel, she tells the story of a "first wave" forebear, Chinese prostitute Fusang, who became a celebrity in 1870s San Francisco. Kidnapped from her village in China to be sold as a prostitute in "Gold Mountain," as the Chinese immigrants dubbed San Francisco, Fusang distinguishes herself through her extraordinary serenity, which many take for slow-wittedness. Once in the U. S., she runs afoul of her madams by refusing to hawk herself aggressively to potential customers. Despite Fusang's reserve, she attracts a slew of devoted lovers, including Chris, a "little white devil" who is only 12 when he first purchases Fusang's services. Chris tails Fusang around San Francisco's Chinatown and follows her adventures over the next four decades. After prompting a bloody battle between two suitors, nearly dying of tuberculosis and being healed by the Christian ladies of the Rescue society, Fusang is stolen by the charismatic Chinese gangster Ah Ding, who changes his name to Da Yong to elude his enemies. The fugitive pair encounter the sordid splendor of Chinatown, witnessing slave auctions and mob riots and enduring attacks by threatened whites. Fusang is a real historical figure about whom little is known; Yan's account does little to clarify Fusang's motives. Such opacity creates an intriguing mystery, but lack of resolution frustrates the reader. Yan's detached, dispassionate tone contributes to the sense of unreality pervading her narrative. (Apr.)China in 1985, wrote the script for the movie *Xiu Xiu: The Sent-Down Girl*.

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From Library Journal

In this first novel, a young Chinese woman named Fusang is kidnapped and sold into prostitution in San Francisco during the Gold Rush. Based on an actual historical character, she is here presented through the sometimes distracting voice of the imagined writer, a descendant of Chinese immigrants, who compares impressions of Fusang's time with her own. Fusang is especially appealing in her simplicity and beauty, and she is loved and pursued by two different men a young, well-to-do white man, Chris, and a charismatic Chinese criminal, Da Yong. Her story reveals a brutal and lawless time and place when the Chinese were a despised group. Though the historical setting is intriguing, Fusang never becomes a fully realized character, and it is unclear whether she survives her ordeals through the power of her personality or a lack of intellect. Purchase only where there will be a strong interest in the subject. Cathleen A. Towey, Port Washington P.L., NY

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Review

". . . a courageous and immensely talented writer . . . she has dared to face down the twin monsters of racism and sexual slavery . . ." -- *Aimee Liu, author of Cloud Mountain*

". . . combines myth and history and opens a new perspective on the American immigrant experience . . . an ambitious, eloquent, and unique book." -- *Ha Jin, author of Waiting*

". . . extraordinary novel . . . finally a contemporary immigrant's testament to the Adam and Eve of a poisoned American garden." -- *Bharati Mukherjee, author of Jasmine*

"A beautifully published novel meant to be bought by Asian and Caucasian alike." -- *Washington Post*

"An erotic epic bursting with intelligence, forbidden emotions, and disregard for easy answers . . . first great post-multicultural novel." -- *David Henry Hwang, author of M. Butterfly*

"Geling Yan . . . writes with such haunting imagery that the reader is gently drawn into her world . . . the novel works." -- *San Francisco Chronicle*

At turns poignant and brutal, the novel captures... the era's intense desire for a better life . -- *Travel & Leisure*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Concepcion Maldonado:

As people who live in typically the modest era should be change about what going on or information even knowledge to make these keep up with the era that is always change and move forward. Some of you maybe can update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice to suit your needs but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know what kind you should start with. This *The Lost Daughter of Happiness : A Novel* is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Betty Borgen:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Would you like to something different to fill your free time/ holiday? May be reading a book could be option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing you will ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the publication untitled *The Lost Daughter of Happiness : A Novel* can be very good book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Krystal Wilson:

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Darlene Lewis:

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