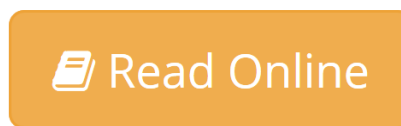


Message from an Unknown Chinese Mother: Stories of Loss and Love

By Xinran



Message from an Unknown Chinese Mother: Stories of Loss and Love By Xinran

Now in paperback one of the most stirring accounts of the lives of Chinese women since *Wild Swans* “full of heart-rending tales....shocking, simply told...a very powerful polemic” (*The New York Times Book Review*).

Following her internationally bestselling book *The Good Women of China*, Xinran has written one of the most powerful accounts of the lives of Chinese women. She has gained entrance to the most pained, secret chambers in the hearts of Chinese mothers—students, successful businesswomen, midwives, peasants—who, whether as a consequence of the single-child policy, destructive age-old traditions, or hideous economic necessity, have given up their daughters. Xinran beautifully portrays the “extra-birth guerrillas” who travel the roads and the railways, evading the system, trying to hold on to more than one baby; naïve young girl students who have made life-wrecking mistakes; the “pebble mother” on the banks of the Yangtze River still looking into the depths for her stolen daughter; peasant women rejected by their families because they can’t produce a male heir; and Little Snow, the orphaned baby fostered by Xinran but confiscated by the state.

For parents of adopted Chinese children and for the children themselves, this is an indispensable, powerful, and intensely moving book. *Message from an Unknown Chinese Mother* is powered by love and by heartbreak and will stay with readers long after they have turned the final page.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Xinran (*Good Women of China*) collects the heartbreaking stories of Chinese women forced to give up their baby girls because of the one-child-only policy or feudal traditions that prefer boys, in an oral history written for those abandoned daughters. Speaking with midwives, students, businesswomen, adoption workers, peasants, and "extra-birth guerrilla troops" (people who live on the lam eluding the system so they can have more than one baby), Xinran is compassionate and remarkably adept at getting her interviewees to open up about their most painful memories: how some mothers were forced to put their babies up for adoption or abandon them at hospitals, orphanages, or on the street, and how they've seen newborns drowned or smothered at birth. She shows how outdated traditions, modern policies, and punishing poverty spur the abandonment of so many female infants, and an abnormally high suicide rate for women of childbearing age. This is a brutally honest book written for those relinquished children, so that they will know how much their birth mothers loved them and how--in the words of one mother who gave up her daughter--"they paid for that love with an endless stream of bitter tears." (Mar.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review The author of *The Good Women of China* (2002) now offers a gut-wrenching account of Chinese women forced to give up (or worse) their daughters in the 1980s and 1990s because of China's one child policy. Implemented to control China's booming population, the law led to the abandonment and murder of countless female babies, as many families stood to lose land if they didn't have a son to inherit and manage it. Formerly a popular radio personality in Nanjing, Xinran sought out the sad stories of women whose daughters were taken from them after birth. And not all the families who gave up their daughters were peasants struggling to hold onto their land. Xinran was horrified to witness a father doting on his young daughter on a train, only to abandon her hours later. Xinran gives Chinese women who lost their daughters a voice in this powerful volume, laying bare their raw pain. This eye-opening work is made even more shocking by how recent most of these women's stories are, even as Xinran counterbalances the heartbreak with letters from families outside China who have adopted Chinese babies. --Kristine Huntley

Review

"A touching book...[Xinran] gives voice to the silent heartbreak of tens of thousands of Chinese women."
—*New York Post*

"This collection is powerful and heartbreaking. It's a must-read for families who have adopted children from China, as well as for anyone who has an interest in what women's lives are like in the economic powerhouse China has become." --Lisa See

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