



Tales from a Mountain City: A Vietnam War Memoir

Quynh Dao

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*** Shortlisted for the Asher Literary Award in 2011 ***

*** Shortlisted for the William Saroyan International Prize for Writing in 2012 ***

What happens to a Vietnamese family when a change of government turns their whole world upside down? How would you feel if your money lost its value overnight? If a group of soldiers moved into your house? If your books were thrown on a bonfire in your yard? If your children were taught to chant slogans at school instead of learning language, and dug holes instead of studying science?

Tales from a Mountain City is a blend of history and memoir told by a young Vietnamese girl growing up during the last years of the war and the communist regime. This is a poignant account of the innocence of a child, the innocence of a people, shattered again and again by the cruel tides of power and dogma, clinging tenaciously to their traditions, their home provinces, their hometowns, until the sheer pervasiveness of a communist value system drives them to suicide or exile.

Indirectly, this story raises many questions on nationalism and qualities of power, freedom and independence, human rights and human nature.

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