



Forgotten Country

Catherine Chung

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A Booklist Top 10 First Novels of 2012 pick
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On the night Janie waits for her sister, Hannah, to be born, her grandmother tells her a story: Since the Japanese occupation of Korea, their family has lost a daughter in every generation, so Janie is charged with keeping Hannah safe. As time passes, Janie hears more stories, while facts remain unspoken. Her father tells tales about numbers, and in his stories everything works out. In her mother's stories, deer explode in fields, frogs bury their loved ones in the ocean, and girls jump from cliffs and fall like flowers into the sea. Within all these stories are warnings.

Years later, when Hannah inexplicably cuts all ties and disappears, Janie embarks on a mission to find her sister and finally uncover the truth beneath her family's silence. To do so, she must confront their history, the reason for her parents' sudden move to America twenty years earlier, and ultimately her conflicted feelings toward her sister and her own role in the betrayal behind their estrangement.

Weaving Korean folklore within a modern narrative of immigration and identity, *Forgotten Country* is a fierce exploration of the inevitability of loss, the conflict between obligation and freedom, and a family struggling to find its way out of silence and back to one another.

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