



The Garlic Ballads: A Novel

By Mo Yan

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The Garlic Ballads: A Novel By Mo Yan

The farmers of Paradise County have been leading a hardscrabble life unchanged for generations. The Communist government has encouraged them to plant garlic, but selling the crop is not as simple as they believed. Warehouses fill up, taxes skyrocket, and government officials maltreat even those who have traveled for days to sell their harvest. A surplus on the garlic market ensues, and the farmers must watch in horror as their crops wither and rot in the fields. Families are destroyed by the random imprisonment of young and old for supposed crimes against the state.

The prisoners languish in horrifying conditions in their cells, with only their strength of character and thoughts of their loved ones to save them from madness. Meanwhile, a blind minstrel incites the masses to take the law into their own hands, and a riot of apocalyptic proportions follows with savage and unforgettable consequences. *The Garlic Ballads* is a powerful vision of life under the heel of an inflexible and uncaring government. It is also a delicate story of love between man and woman, father and child, friend and friend—and the struggle to maintain that love despite overwhelming obstacles.

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The Garlic Ballads: A Novel By Mo Yan Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #402365 in Books
- Published on: 2012-11-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 5.60" w x 5.50" l, .69 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 304 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Through this powerful, fiercely lyrical story of a Chinese garlic farmer's 1988 revolt, Mo Yan (Red Sorghum) uncompromisingly portrays the harsh realities of an existence difficult to comprehend. Garlic farmer Gao Ma aches with love for Fang Jinju, whose parents are using her as a pawn in an arranged marriage. Defying her two thuggish brothers and her father, who in the past has savagely beaten her, Jinju, pregnant with Gao Ma's child, runs away with him but meets a tragic end. The grief-stricken farmer is thrown in jail for his alleged role as ringleader of a farmer's riot—an angry mob has destroyed a government building to protest a county official's refusal to buy the garlic crop amid a surfeit. Gao Ma's fate is entwined with that of another imprisoned protestor, Gao Yang, who preserves his sanity through the love of his wife and blind 10-year-old daughter. Mo Yan fuses gritty realism, stunning imagery, acid satire, bawdiness, dream sequences, interior monologues, and flashbacks to the Cultural Revolution. His luminous prose lays bare the corrupt bureaucracy, grinding poverty and pervasive oppression borne by millions of inhabitants in the People's Republic.

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From Library Journal

Mo Yan, author of the critically acclaimed *Red Sorghum* (LJ 3/15/93), which was made into a film directed by Zhang Yimou, presents a tale of brutality and corruption set in China in 1988. The novel focuses on the lives of three individuals imprisoned for their roles in the garlic revolt, a peasant uprising against corrupt government. Gao Ma has additional problems: his beloved has been promised to another in direct violation of the Marriage Laws, but the officials are siding with her family. The peasants are seen as adhering to the idealism of socialism and wondering how the new social formation came to be embodied in such corrupt officials. The action of the novel goes backward and forward in time, alternating between fact and fantasy. Overall, a very violent book, occasionally interrupted by scenes of domestic harmony; for a specialized readership. Debbie Bogenschutz, Cincinnati Technical Coll.

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From [Booklist](#)

China's most popular novelist again takes us to the setting he so vividly brought to life in the very successfully filmed *Red Sorghum* the peasant villages of China that he depicts as situated in a myth-ridden, brutal, and hyperreal landscape. This time his novel unfolds in the late 1980s, when a bumper crop of a village's lifeblood, garlic, turns the community upside down, for this year garlic is a glut on the market--blame official corruption. Against this backdrop, three cleverly intertwined stories, as fanciful as a French farce, as fantastic as a Latin American tale, play out. In them we see both the lyricism and the absurdity of contemporary Chinese life conjured by the deft hand of a talented writer. Mo Yan's is a powerful and original voice, using sophisticated techniques to get at some very raw truths. *Mary Ellen Sullivan*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Anthony Laflamme:

Now a day individuals who Living in the era wherever everything reachable by match the internet and the resources inside it can be true or not require people to be aware of each data they get. How individuals to be

smart in obtaining any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Reading through a book can help men and women out of this uncertainty. Information mainly this The Garlic Ballads: A Novel book since this book offers you rich information and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred % guarantees there is no doubt in it you may already know.

Andre Roberts:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic in the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book may be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the e-book untitled The Garlic Ballads: A Novel can be great book to read. May be it can be best activity to you.

Ross Fletcher:

The Garlic Ballads: A Novel can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to put every word into delight arrangement in writing The Garlic Ballads: A Novel although doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource details that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can certainly drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial pondering.

Rose Davies:

That reserve can make you to feel relax. This kind of book The Garlic Ballads: A Novel was colourful and of course has pictures on there. As we know that book The Garlic Ballads: A Novel has many kinds or style. Start from kids until young adults. For example Naruto or Investigator Conan you can read and think that you are the character on there. Therefore , not at all of book are generally make you bored, any it offers up you feel happy, fun and rest. Try to choose the best book for you personally and try to like reading which.

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