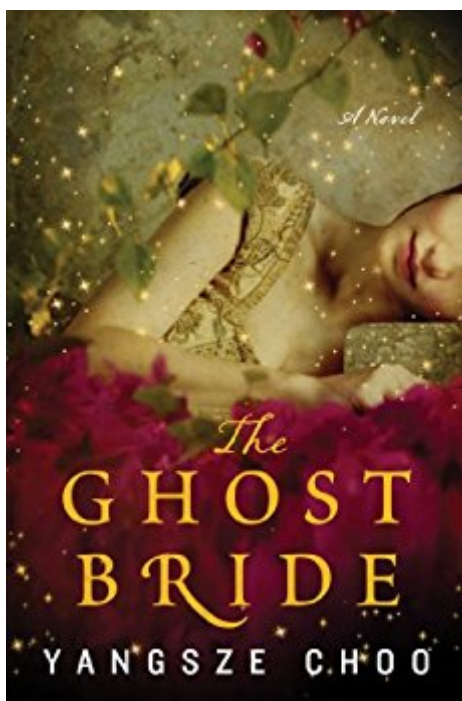


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The Ghost Bride: A Novel (P.S.)



Synopsis

"One evening, my father asked me if I would like to become a ghost bride..."Part 19th century novel, part magical journey to the Chinese world of the dead, Yangsze Choo's debut novel *The Ghost Bride* is a startlingly original historical fantasy infused with Chinese folklore, romantic intrigue, and unexpected supernatural twists. Reminiscent of Lisa See's *Peony in Love* and Neil Gaiman's *Neverwhere*, *The Ghost Bride* is a wondrous coming-of-age story from a remarkable new voice in fiction. *Oprah.com*'s "Book of the Week," Indie Next List pick, "Good Housekeeping August Book Pick," "Glamour Magazine Beach Read," "The Bookseller Editor's Pick," "Library Journal Barbara's Pick" "Choo's clear and charming style creates an alternate reality where the stakes are just as high as in the real world, combining grounded period storytelling with the supernatural."

Publishers Weekly "What makes all this work is the sumptuous world of Chinese immigrant culture and the love story that flows under it all--the kind so full of longing, the pages practically sigh as you turn each one." *Oprah.com - Book of the Week* "The *Ghost Bride*', an impressive first novel, takes readers on one of the wildest rides since Alice fell down the rabbit hole." *San Jose Mercury News* "Choo's remarkably strong and arresting first novel explores the concept of Chinese "spirit marriages" in late-nineteenth-century Malaya through the eyes of the highly relatable Li Lan...With its gripping tangles of plot and engaging characters, this truly compelling read is sure to garner much well deserved attention." *Booklist* Li Lan, the daughter of a genteel but bankrupt family, has few prospects. But fate intervenes when she receives an unusual proposal from the wealthy and powerful Lim family. They want her to become a ghost bride for the family's only son, who recently died under mysterious circumstances. Rarely practiced, a traditional ghost marriage is used to placate a restless spirit. Such a union would guarantee Li Lan a home for the rest of her days, but at a terrible price. After an ominous visit to the opulent Lim mansion, Li Lan finds herself haunted not only by her ghostly would-be suitor, but also by her desire for the Lim's handsome new heir, Tian Bai. Night after night, she is drawn into the shadowy parallel world of the Chinese afterlife, with its ghost cities, paper funeral offerings, vengeful spirits and monstrous bureaucracy--including the mysterious Er Lang, a charming but unpredictable guardian spirit. Li Lan must uncover the Lim family's darkest secrets--and the truth about her own family--before she is trapped in this ghostly world forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When you start your book with a notable first sentence such as:"One evening, my father asked me whether I would like to become a ghost bride"you had better be able to deliver, and WOW does this debut author do just that. Not since "The Night Circus" has a book been so astonishingly rich in visuals and imagination. Typically not the type of book I would gravitate towards, however, the structure, prose, pacing and characters are so extraordinary I would feel confident recommending for anybody.The story takes place in Malaya in 1893. Li Lan is a bright and adventurous 18 year old from a once noble family who has lost their fortune. Her father has never reconciled to his wife's death and spends his days smoking opium. Her Amah (nanny) has raised Li Lan and is the glue that holds the family together. Due to their diminished circumstances, her father asks Li Lan if she would like to become a ghost bride for the wealthy Lim family? Their son, Lim Tian Ching had taken a fancy to Li Lan before his untimely death, which may have been a murder. Though she vehemently rejects this proposal the insolent and spoiled Lim Tian Ching will not take no for an answer and begins to haunt her dreams. During a visit to the Lim mansion, Li Lan meets their nephew Tian Bai who is now the heir to the Lim family fortune. He evokes the exact opposite feelings in Li Lan, who is dismayed to learn that their arrangement to be married has been dissolved due to the death of his cousin. Tortured by her dreams and in a weakened state, Li Lan and her Amah consult a medium who gives Li Lan a powder to drink before bed and tells her to burn money for the dead. Let the

adventure begin.....

In the back of this book are Notes explaining some of the Chinese myths, which are the basis for much of this story, making it more understandable and a page turner. Li Lan, an attractive young Chinese maiden, whose mother was deceased, her father was an heavy opium smoker who allowed the family finances to disintegrate. Her father was approached by a wealthy family whose son, Lim Tian Ching, had died and although he was now a ghost, the family wanted Li Lan to marry this deceased son, thereby becoming a ghost bride. Although it would not be a physical marriage, she would be treated as a daughter-in-law, her family's bills all be paid and she would be treated as a wealthy widow. Li Lan was aware of this practice, but was not interested. Soon she began having nightmares where she met Lim in her dreams and he showed her all he owned and what she might expect to get by becoming his bride. Actually he was rather repugnant to her and she resisted these dreams, although he continued to persistently haunt her. Her Amah had educated her regarding the various ghosts and effects of this spiritual world after death. Later she met his half-brother Tian Bai, to whom she was attracted. He repaired clocks as a hobby and because of Lim's death, would become head of this household upon their father's death. Li was an inquisitive woman, couldn't leave well enough alone, and as a result she stepped into dangerous waters of the afterlife, death, living dead, living ghosts and the many rules and actions of those who died, or hung around neither dead nor alive. She met many strange people as she attempted to understand this world as she was drawn more and more into it. Although this is basically a ghost story, I could not wait to see what would happen next.

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