

White Lily

Ting-Xing Ye

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Nearly a century ago, in the Forbidden City, China's last emperor reigned from his dragon throne. Although he was only a boy, the imperial decrees issued in his name echoed in every corner of the country. Every man had to shave his head and wear a single pigtail to symbolize his submission to the emperor, and every woman was second in importance to the men in her family. Women were obedient to their fathers and brothers and later to the husbands in their arranged marriages. Certainly no woman was encouraged to attend school or to show any independence.

Into this world, in a village in the lower reaches of the Yangtze River, White Lily was born. She had a happy childhood, running and playing, until, at the age of four, she was forced to undergo the painful procedure of foot binding required for all females of her social class. But White Lily has her heart set on more than a traditional role in society, and she enlists the support of her beloved elder brother. Together they devise a plan to defy tradition and convince their father that White Lily's feet and mind must be allowed to grow.

From the Trade Paperback edition.



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Rosalind Bowlin:

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