



# The Vagrants: A Novel

*Yiyun Li*

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**The Vagrants: A Novel** Yiyun Li

**Shortlisted for the 2011 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award**

In luminous prose, award-winning author Yiyun Li weaves together the lives of unforgettable characters who are forced to make moral choices, and choices for survival, in China in the late 1970s.

As morning dawns on the provincial city of Muddy River, a spirited young woman, Gu Shan, once a devoted follower of Chairman Mao, has renounced her faith in Communism. Now a political prisoner, she is to be executed for her dissent. While Gu Shan's distraught mother makes bold decisions, her father begins to retreat into memories. Neither of them imagines that their daughter's death will have profound and far-reaching effects, in Muddy River and beyond. Among the characters affected are Kai, a beautiful radio announcer who is married to a man from a powerful family; Tong, a lonely seven-year-old boy; and Nini, a hungry young girl. Beijing is being rocked by the Democratic Wall Movement, an anti-Communist groundswell designed to move the country toward a more enlightened and open society, but the government backlash will be severe.

In this spellbinding novel, the brilliant Yiyun Li gives us a powerful and beautiful portrait of human courage and despair in dramatic times.

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