



Moment in Peking: A Novel of Contemporary Chinese Life

By Lin Yutang

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Moment in Peking: A Novel of Contemporary Chinese Life By Lin Yutang

Plot there is none, but plenty of incident and background. The family is the unit, one might almost say the personality, in China, and Moment in Peking is a story of a group of families - rich, middle-class families chiefly - brought together by accident, the first of which is a dramatic kidnapping of Mulan in the Boxer uprising. Each family is a little society of its own, living in a complex dwelling of courts, gardens, men and women's quarters, and made up of a puzzling assemblage of patriarchs and matriarchs, number one and number two sons, daughters, concubines, hand servants (Cold Fragrance, Pear Blossom, Siverscreen), and miscellaneous attendants. It is a state within a state, better organized and far more important than the state. The family is ChinaIt is a story of sisters-in-law trying to adjust themselves to the family, of lovemaking under difficulties, of jealous mothers, of faithful servants, of old men watching their children go Western, of children tasting new freedom and liking it, of Chinese women, especially trying to adapt their virtues of loyalty and tenderness and family pride to new temptations.

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