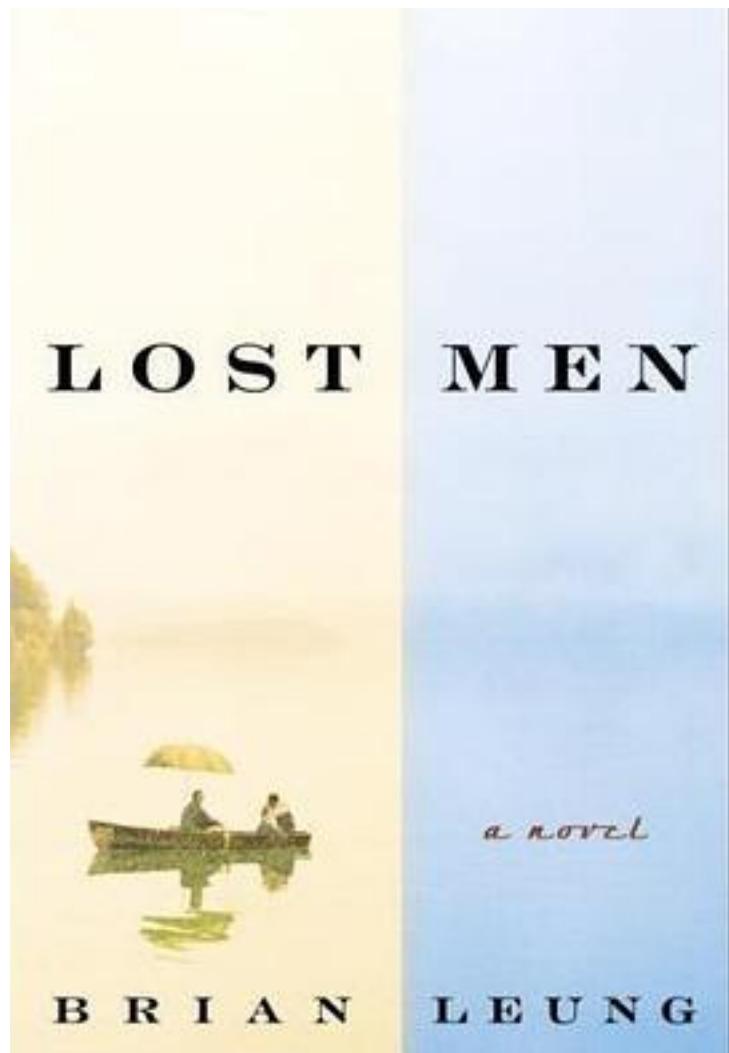


Lost Men



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Leung gingerly reacquaints an estranged father and son who travel through China in this sagacious and lyrical debut novel. When Westen Chan's American mother died, his Chinese father, Xin, left him with his Caucasian great-aunt and uncle in rural Washington State, promising one day to return and take his son on a journey to Xin's village in China. More than 20 years have passed when Xin's invitation finally arrives. Westen is 32, but in many ways still childlike: insecure, resentful and stubborn. A virgin, he at least partially blames his romantic difficulties, with both men and women, on being abandoned by his father. Xin, now elderly, ill and trying to cope with his own guilt, is unsure if he can reconnect with his son. The two haltingly reintroduce and explain themselves, and while on the trip, Xin confides in Westen about the hardship he left behind in his village and shares ancient traditions. The stories of the two men, told in an alternating first person, become increasingly gripping: "Be careful about judging people without knowing all their history," says Xin, who also bears an unopened letter from Westen's mother to her son. Throughout, Leung handles the complex father-son relationship with care, and does a marvelous job negotiating the two men's fraught cultural and emotional legacies. (June)

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