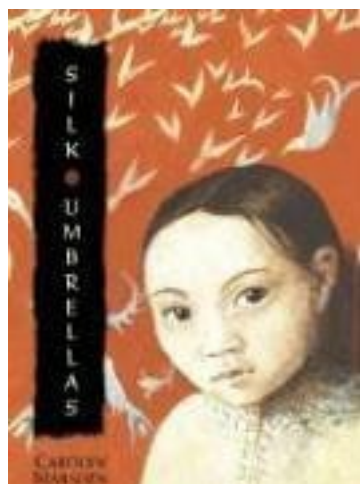


Silk Umbrellas



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With spare, sure strokes evoking the customs and language of Thailand, the acclaimed author of *THE GOLD-THREADED DRESS* tells the graceful tale of a young artist's coming of age.

"Your trembling is good, Noi," said Kun Ya. "That's the way the butterfly moves. Let the movement spread to your whole body, not just your fingers. Paint with all of you. Become the butterfly."

Eleven-year-old Noi is learning to paint like her grandmother. She and her older sister, Ting, spend many rapt hours in the jungle watching as Kun Ya paints delicate silk umbrellas to sell at the market. But one day Kun Ma and Kun Pa announce that Ting must start working at a local radio factory to help support the family. As the days and weeks pass, Noi anxiously sees her own fate reflected in her sister's constricting world. Can Noi find a way to master her fear of failure and stand up for her gift — and Kun Ya's tradition — before the future masters her?

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