

The Star Fisher



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From Publishers Weekly Based on the author's own experiences, this Christopher Award winner movingly describes a Chinese American family's adjustment to their new home in West Virginia in 1927 and the prejudice they encounter there. Ages 10-14. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. From School Library Journal Grade 6-8-- On the first night in their new home in a small West Virginia town, 15-year-old Joan Lee lulls her little sister to sleep with the story of a magical kingfisher who is held captive in human form by her mortal husband, but who is later helped by her daughter. She soon joins her mother in the stars, but is sometimes seen, cometlike, attempting to bridge heaven and Earth. Joan, the oldest daughter of the only Chinese family in 1927 Clarksburg, at first sees only herself in the story's symbols: caught between two worlds. As she braves the curiosity and prejudice of the townspeople, helps bridge a friendship between her mother and an elderly neighbor, and gets acquainted with an enigmatic classmate, she realizes that she is not the only one struggling to find a niche. Joan's story will appeal to any reader who has ever felt excluded, but she and her family seem to hold many more stories begging to be shared. Based on tales Yep gleaned from his mother and her family, whose resilience and humor shine through, The Star Fisher offers tantalizing glimpses of interesting characters, but abruptly shifts focus from a family story with

the younger sister as a strong character to a relationship between mother and daughter. Basically, there is too much depth and complexity here to be confined to one book. --Carla Kozak, San Francisco Public Library
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