



The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices

By Xinran



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When Deng Xiaoping's efforts to "open up" China took root in the late 1980s, Xinran recognized an invaluable opportunity. As an employee for the state radio system, she had long wanted to help improve the lives of Chinese women. But when she was given clearance to host a radio call-in show, she barely anticipated the enthusiasm it would quickly generate. Operating within the constraints imposed by government censors, "Words on the Night Breeze" sparked a tremendous outpouring, and the hours of tape on her answering machines were soon filled every night. Whether angry or muted, posing questions or simply relating experiences, these anonymous women bore witness to decades of civil strife, and of halting attempts at self-understanding in a painfully restrictive society. In this collection, by turns heartrending and inspiring, Xinran brings us the stories that affected her most, and offers a graphically detailed, altogether unprecedented work of oral history.

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The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices By Xinran Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #434778 in Books
- Brand: Xinran/ Tyldesley, Esther
- Published on: 2003-11-11
- Released on: 2003-11-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .60" w x 5.20" l, .43 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 256 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In 1988, Xinran (ne Xue Hue) was selected to work in state media and ended up at the Nanjing radio station, where she began broadcasting "Words on the Night Breeze" a year later. The show featured letters and calls from ordinary women discussing their problems, and was hugely successful and revelatory, as women had few avenues, public or private, for talking about their lives, which were frequently grim and often harrowing. Xinran quit the show in 1995 to try to help her listeners directly, but by 1997 she had burned out. She persuaded the radio station authorities to let her travel to England, where she began teaching Chinese, met and married English book agent Toby Eady and wrote this memoir of her experiences on the program, including a compendium of some of the most painful of the "Night Breeze" stories. She presents narratives from women who live "in emotionless political marriages" and those, the majority, who struggle "amid poverty and hardship." They have commonly experienced sexual abuse: rape, frequently gang rape. Apparently designed to bring the women's horrific stories to light, the book doesn't do enough to situate them clearly in the context of the show as a state-produced product, or within Xinran's own difficulties in processing and presenting the material on the air (or in this book). The results will leave readers sympathetic to the grave enormity of the women's circumstances, but—due perhaps to minor translation problems and Xinran's lingering political worries—somewhat confused about how Xinran tried to deal with their plights. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From [The New Yorker](#)

In 1989, Xinran, a Beijing journalist, began broadcasting a nightly program on state radio that was devoted entirely to personal affairs—a radical concept in Communist China. In response, she received thousands of letters from women, many with questions about sexuality; one woman wondered "why her heart beat faster when she accidentally bumped into a man on the bus." Eventually, Xinran persuaded her superiors to let her share some of these letters on the air, and in this groundbreaking book, written after she moved to London, in 1997, she has also included stories that didn't make it past government censors. A teen-ager commits suicide after learning that a neighbor has seen her boyfriend kiss her forehead; a university student speaks casually of becoming a "personal secretary," or mistress, to a rich man; a Kuomintang general's daughter goes mad after witnessing the torture of the family that sheltered her. This intimate record reads like an act of defiance, and the unvarnished prose allows each story to stand as testimony. Copyright © 2005 *The New Yorker*

From [Booklist](#)

When an assailant cornered Xinran just outside a London trainstation and demanded that she hand over her purse, the author fought ferociously to keep her belongings. Cash and credit cards were not at the source of her tenacity; it was the manuscript lying within titled *The Good Women of China*. Its loss would have been emotionally devastating to Xinran because writing the tragic true stories of China's forgotten women had been a spiritually debilitating experience that she could not endure again. The book took root while Xinran was hosting a daily radio show in China. She knew that through the centuries the female population had been kept uninformed about issues of sexuality and that China's political mayhem had on so many levels neutralized emotional affection. As Xinran shifted the focus of her program to women's issues, she began to receive letters from her female listeners that told of unspeakable horrors and unbelievably painful lives. *The Good Women of China* is a moving compilation of these stories that will bring even the hardest of hearts to tears. *Elsa Gaztambide*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gerald Hackler:

The book The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices give you a sense of feeling enjoy for your spare time. You should use to make your capable more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem with your subject. If you can make reading a book The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices to be your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your own personal capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You may know everything if you like available and read a publication The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science publication or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this guide?

Helen Williams:

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Athena Thornton:

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book specially book entitled The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices your head will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe unfamiliar for but surely can be your mind friends. Imaging just about every word written in a publication then become one web form conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get before. The The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices giving you yet another experience more than blown away your brain but also giving you useful facts for your better life in this particular era. So now let us show you the relaxing pattern at this point is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary paying spare time activity?

Myrta Bundy:

The book untitled The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices contain a lot of information on this. The writer explains your girlfriend idea with easy method. The language is very simple to implement all the people, so do not really worry, you can easy to read that. The book was compiled by famous author. The author gives you in the new age of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can continue reading your smart phone, or product, so you can read the book inside anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can open their official web-site and also order it. Have a nice study.

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