

《Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamsters》
巴尔扎克与中国小裁缝 (ISBN=9780385722209)》

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The Cultural Revolution of Chairman Mao Zedong altered Chinese history in the 1960s and '70s, forcibly sending hundreds of thousands of Chinese intellectuals to peasant villages for "re-education." This moving, often wrenching short novel by a writer who was himself re-educated in the '70s tells how two young men weather years of banishment, emphasizing the power of literature to free the mind. Sijie's unnamed 17-year-old protagonist and his best friend, Luo, are bourgeois doctors' sons, and so condemned to serve four years in a remote mountain village, carrying pails of excrement daily up a hill. Only their ingenuity helps them to survive. The two friends are good at storytelling, and the village headman commands them to put on "oral cinema shows" for the villagers, reciting the plots and dialogue of movies. When another city boy leaves the mountains, the friends steal a suitcase full of forbidden books he has been hiding, knowing he will be afraid to call the authorities. Enchanted by the prose of a host of European writers, they dare to tell the story of *The Count of Monte Cristo* to the village tailor and to read Balzac to his shy and beautiful young daughter. Luo, who adores the Little Seamstress, dreams of transforming her from a simple country girl into a sophisticated lover with his foreign tales. He succeeds beyond his expectations, but the result is not what he might have hoped for, and leads to an unexpected, droll and poignant conclusion. The warmth and humor of Sijie's prose and the clarity of Rilke's translation distinguish this slim first novel, a wonderfully human tale. (Sept. 17) Forecast: Sijie's debut was a best-seller and prize winner in France in 2000, and rights have been sold in 19 countries; it is also scheduled to be made into a film. Its charm translates admirably strong sales can be expected on this side of the Atlantic.

内容简介

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress is an enchanting tale that captures the magic of reading and the wonder of romantic awakening. An immediate international bestseller, it tells the story of two hapless city boys exiled to a remote mountain village for re-education during China's infamous Cultural Revolution. There the two friends meet the daughter of the local tailor and discover a hidden stash of Western classics in Chinese translation. As they flirt with the seamstress and secretly devour these banned works, the two friends find transit from their grim surroundings to worlds they never imagined.

作者简介

Born in China in 1954, Dai Sijie is a filmmaker who was himself "re-educated" between 1971 and 1974.

He left China in 1984 for France, where he has lived and worked ever since. This, his first novel, was an overnight sensation when it appeared in France in 2000, becoming an immediate best-seller and winning five prizes. Rights to the novel have been sold in nineteen countries, and it is soon to be made into a film.

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