



Tiger's Heart: The Story of a Modern Chinese Woman

Aisling Juanjuan Shen

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"Like a suspense novel, this book is impossible to put down. All readers interested in China, as well as memoir fans (especially of success stories), *must* read this astonishing title."--*Library Journal* (Starred Review)

"In *Aisling Juanjuan Shen*'s remarkable and assured memoir, a peasant girl born to illiterate parents and bleak prospects rises to prominence as the first person in her village to graduate college. Determined to escape the trappings of rural village life, she leaves the stability of a government-assigned teaching post behind and bravely ventures to the south in search of wealth and happiness. *Shen* offers a brutally honest and vivid portrait of the early days of China's economic boom, the fascinating interplay between the provinces, the lives of those who leave and those who remain behind, and the cost of abandoning tradition for the promise of prosperity."—Felicia C. Sullivan, *The Sky Isn't Visible from Here*

"A brave and honest tale of one woman's struggle to overcome her circumstances and triumph against all odds."—Alison Weaver, *Gone to the Crazies: A Memoir*

Aisling Juanjuan Shen was born to illiterate peasants in a tiny rice-farming hamlet in China's Yangtze Delta in 1974. Pronounced useless by her parents because she wasn't good at planting rice, she became the first person from her village ever to attend college. After graduating from teachers college, she was assigned by the government to a remote and low-paying teaching job that she was expected to hold for the rest of her life. Deeply dissatisfied, she bought her way out of her secure government job and left for the special economic zones of southern China in search of happiness and success in the business world.

A Tiger's Heart chronicles *Aisling*'s rise from poverty in the rice fields of rural China to a successful career in business in the early days of the country's economic boom, illustrating the massive economic and social changes that have taken place in China over the past several decades. Her story is emblematic of a new generation of Chinese women who are leaving the rice paddies and government jobs in order to enter the free market and determine the course of their own lives.

Aisling Juanjuan Shen worked as a teacher, saleswoman, and translator in China before immigrating to the United States in 2000. In 2005 she graduated *magna cum laude* from Wellesley College; she currently works for an investment management firm in Boston. Excerpts of *A Tiger's Heart* have appeared in *Pindeldyboz* and *H.O.W.*



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