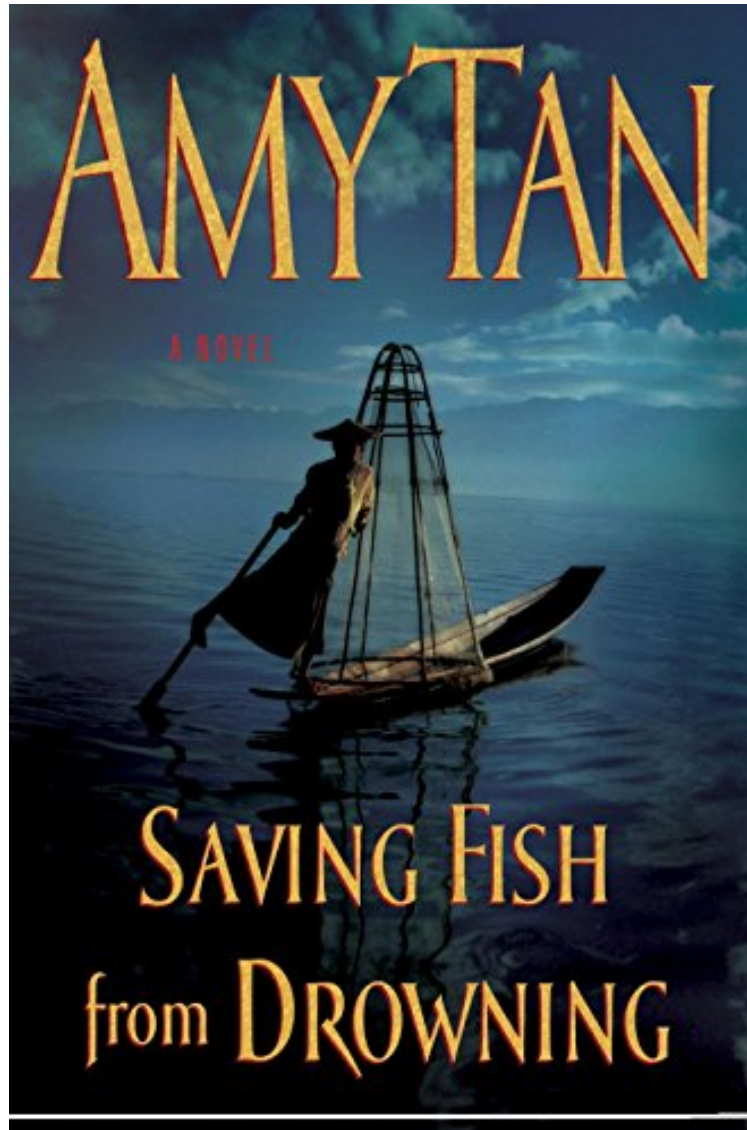


[E-BOOK] Saving Fish from Drowning

Saving Fish from Drowning

Von Amy Tan

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Von Amy Tan : Saving Fish from Drowning before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Saving Fish from Drowning:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Rich Karmic Ironies AboundVon Donald MitchellIf you are looking for a "typical" Amy Tan novel about a Chinese mother and daughter, please be aware that this book doesn't follow Ms. Tan's marvelous prior novels into that rich story-telling vein. If you like satirical novels, you will wonder why Ms. Tan takes so long to lay waste to her targets.But if

you like novels rich in cultural and psychological irony, you've found a gem. I emphasize that point because irony is something that many readers avoid or don't enjoy very much. I find that there are too few well-written ironic novels, and I treasure all those that I find. Like most stories about ironies, this one takes on such a broad theme that it can be easy to miss the message: Unintended consequences cause your purest impulses to backfire on you and on those you want to help. Ms. Tan's choice of a title gives a broad clue, in referring to an anonymous tale about a pious man who "saves" the lives of fish from drowning by catching them. When the fish die, he's disappointed but realizing that one must never waste anything, he sells the dead fishes to buy more nets . . . so he can save more fish from drowning. Like a good symphony composer, Ms. Tan then endows her major characters with story lines that let them each play out that theme in their own variations. To make sure we get the point, each personal story is imbued with ironies that are both richly developed and humorous. To be sure we understand that there are other forces at work, Ms. Tan sets as her initial narrator a wealthy patron of the arts who has just died . . . but is still lingering around to observe her own funeral . . . and the actions of the tour group she had organized. Although other such "friendly" spirits do not narrate, we can enjoy their visitations to the living throughout the novel. One of the beauties of the book is that Ms. Tan takes us into the cultural realities of those from many different nations and backgrounds. Those contrasts make it more obvious how much of what we do is the result of our histories, family circumstances and education. Enjoy a great read!

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Kurzbeschreibung A provocative new novel from the bestselling author of *The Joy Luck Club* and *The Bonesetter's Daughter*. On an ill-fated art expedition into the southern Shan state of Burma, eleven Americans leave their Floating

Island Resort for a Christmas-morning tour-and disappear. Through twists of fate, curses, and just plain human error, they find themselves deep in the jungle, where they encounter a tribe awaiting the return of the leader and the mythical book of wisdom that will protect them from the ravages and destruction of the Myanmar military regime. Saving Fish From Drownings seduces the reader with a facade of Buddhist illusions, magician's tricks, and light comedy, even as the absurd and picaresque spiral into a gripping morality tale about the consequences of intentions-both good and bad-and about the shared responsibility that individuals must accept for the actions of others. A pious man explained to his followers: "It is evil to take lives and noble to save them. Each day I pledge to save a hundred lives. I drop my net in the lake and scoop out a hundred fishes. I place the fishes on the bank, where they flop and twirl. 'Don't be scared,' I tell those fishes. 'I am saving you from drowning.' Soon enough, the fishes grow calm and lie still. Yet, sad to say, I am always too late. The fishes expire. And because it is evil to waste anything, I take those dead fishes to market and I sell them for a good price. With the money I receive, I buy more nets so I can save more fishes." deAmy Tan, who has an unerring eye for relationships between mothers and daughters, especially Chinese-American, has departed from her well-known genre in Saving Fish From Drowning. She would be well advised to revisit that theme which she writes about so well. The title of the book is derived from the practice of Myanmar fishermen who "scoop up the fish and bring them to shore. They say they are saving the fish from drowning. Unfortunately... the fish do not recover," This kind of magical thinking or hypocrisy or mystical attitude or sheer stupidity is a fair metaphor for the entire book. It may be read as a satire, a political statement, a picaresque tale with several "picaros" or simply a story about a tour gone wrong. Bibi Chen, San Francisco socialite and art vendor to the stars, plans to lead a trip for 12 friends: "My friends, those lovers of art, most of them rich, intelligent, and spoiled, would spend a week in China and arrive in Burma on Christmas Day." Unfortunately, Bibi dies, in very strange circumstances, before the tour begins. After wrangling about it, the group decides to go after all. The leader they choose is indecisive and epileptic, a dangerous combo. Bibi goes along as the disembodied voice-over. Once in Myanmar, finally, they are noticed by a group of Karen tribesmen who decide that Rupert, the 15-year-old son of a bamboo grower is, in fact, Younger White Brother, or The Lord of the Nats. He can do card tricks and is carrying a Stephen King paperback. These are adjudged to be signs of his deity and ability to save them from marauding soldiers. The group is "kidnapped," although they think they are setting out for a Christmas Day surprise, and taken deep into the jungle where they languish, develop malaria, learn to eat slimy things and wait to be rescued. Nats are "believed to be the spirits of nature--the lake, the trees, the mountains, the snakes and birds. They were numberless ... They were everywhere, as were bad luck and the need to find reasons for it." Philosophy or cynicism? This elusive point of view is found throughout the novel--a bald statement is made and then Tan pulls her punches as if she is unwilling to make a statement that might set a more serious tone. There are some goofy parts about Harry, the member of the group who is left behind, and his encounter with two newswomen from Global News Network, some slapstick sex scenes and a great deal of dog-loving dialogue. These all contribute to a novel that is silly but not really funny, could have an occasionally serious theme which suddenly disappears, and is about a group of stereotypical characters that it's hard to care about. It was time for Amy Tan to write another book; too bad this was it. --Valerie Ryan.com Amy Tan, who has an unerring eye for relationships between mothers and daughters, especially Chinese-American, has departed from her well-known genre in Saving Fish From Drowning. She would be well advised to revisit that theme which she writes about so well. The title of the book is derived from the practice of Myanmar fishermen who "scoop up the fish and bring them to shore. They say they are saving the fish from drowning. Unfortunately... the fish do not recover," This kind of magical thinking or hypocrisy or mystical attitude or sheer stupidity is a fair metaphor for the entire book. 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