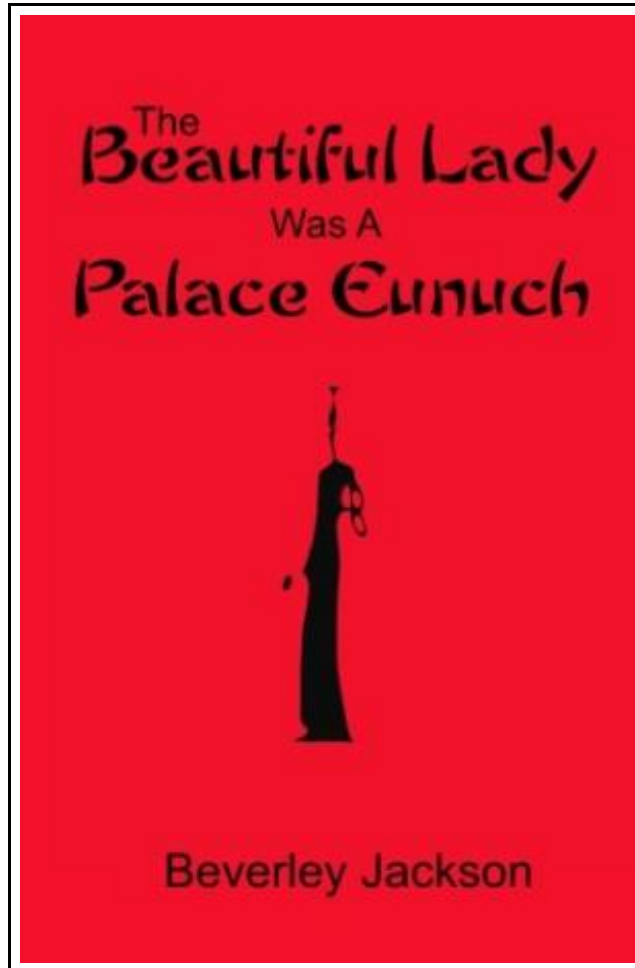


The Beautiful Lady Was A Palace Eunuch



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Reviews

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THE BEAUTIFUL LADY WAS A PALACE EUNUCH

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CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Book Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. Paperback. 170 pages. Dimensions: 8.5in. x 5.5in. x 0.5in. Author, sinophile, and society doyenne Beverley Jackson has long informed Americans on Chinas cultural traditions with her exotic collections, provocative lectures, and prize-winning nonfiction that include five books published by Random House. Ever on the vanguard, Jacksons latest effort, *The Beautiful Lady was a Palace Eunuch*, unfolds in Chinas Forbidden City. An exploration of art and artifice, the erotically charged work of historical fiction is a revealing study of Asian aesthetics in its own right, albeit one with a razor-sharp edge. Her first novel, Jacksons scintillating story of a boy named Li opens in the early 19th century with an unflinching look at cultural norms. Lis mother has him castrated at the age of 6, a desperate grasp at a future for her son, one of servitude in the Imperial Palace. With his porcelain doll features and songbird voice, little Li gains swift entree to the palaces eunuch acting school and trains for the Chinese opera. But further suffering and cruelty await. To clinch his performance in coveted female roles, the boys feet are forcibly broken and bound into tiny golden lotus, a status-boosting disfigurement by tradition exacted upon young girls. And among his teachers lurk violent lao koun (impotent old roosters), sexual predators rumored to exploit their classroom charges. The Forbidden City had 30, 000 eunuchs in residence at its zenith, Jackson says, some of them splendidly dressed, on ceremonial days with dragons of gold stitching slithering up and down their robes. To my knowledge, there has not been a novel about eunuchs in China. I wanted to show what life was like for them behind those imposing red walls. Luck and discipline bring shape to Lis...

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