



Memories of My Ghost Brother

Heinz Insu Fenkl

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Heinz Insu Fenkl is the son of a German-American soldier who married a Korean woman when he was stationed near Seoul. In this haunting novel he explores the coming-of-age of an Amerasian in Korea, torn between his mother's world -- haunted by ghosts, fox demons, and the specter of Japanese occupations -- and his father's transplanted America.

Young Insu grows up in the chaotic streets of Pupyong, a district in the city of Inchon, the site of General Douglas MacArthur's historic invasion. His mother trafficks in everything, skilled in manipulating the black market to support her family. Insu's arrival at the orderly American school does little to resolve the conflicts between the cultures in which he must live. He may learn the language, but his eyes will never be blue, nor his hair yellow like his father's. And always, there is the memory of his lost half-brother, the baby that his mother sacrificed to marry his father, who refused to raise another man's child.

With its ghost stories, folktales, mother-father conflicts, strange joys and violent tragedies, *Memories of My Ghost Brother* resonates with literary works like Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, Jerzy Kosinski's *The Painted Bird*, and Gus Lee's *China Boy*. Evocative and compelling, and introducing a unique new voice in American fiction, *Memories of My Ghost Brother* provides a rare, beautiful, and sometimes painful glimpse of the creation of one young man's identity.

Memories of My Ghost Brother Details

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Brooke says

Wonderful narrative. Touching, real, eye-opening. But somehow the author makes it all feel like a distant memory. I wrote my senior thesis in college on this novel, and it is truly one of the better ones I've come across as far as I'm concerned. It's ghostly, funny and very human.

Brandylien says

What can I say? This is one of my faves of all time. I had the privilege of interviewing the author for my master's thesis, and our conversation added an incredible amount of depth to an already complex and moving book. This book is so haunting, even more so on a second read. I don't often read books more than once, but this is one of those to which I turn now and again.

Jalilah says

This is a difficult book to rate. Parts like the mythical stories, are beautiful and spellbinding but the realistic parts often ugly and disturbing. (comparisons to The Painted Bird are accurate) The author who is half American half Korean accurately and honestly conveys the multiethnic experience. In the case of this book it can be painful to read about.

Joannapercy says

Haunting, atmospheric, well worth reading.

Elisa says

Interesting details of a childhood in 60's Korea near an American Army base.

Joe says

Really drags you into the mystical world of the author, however, I found it quite confusing and depressing at times. I guess it was an ok "one-time" read.
