



Natalie Tan's Book of Luck and Fortune

Written by Roselle Lim

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Natalie Tan's Book of Luck and Fortune

By Roselle Lim

Natalie Tan's Book Of Luck And Fortune

At the news of her mother's death, Natalie Tan returns home. The two women hadn't spoken since Natalie left in anger seven years ago, when her mother refused to support her chosen career as a chef. Natalie is shocked to discover the vibrant neighborhood of San Francisco's Chinatown that she remembers from her childhood is fading, with businesses failing and families moving out. She's even more surprised to learn she has inherited her grandmother's restaurant.

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The neighborhood seer reads the restaurant's fortune in the leaves: Natalie must cook three recipes from her grandmother's cookbook to aid her struggling neighbors before the restaurant will succeed. Unfortunately, Natalie has no desire to help them try to turn things around--she resents the local shopkeepers for leaving her alone to take care of her agoraphobic mother when she was growing up. But with the support of a surprising new friend and a budding romance, Natalie starts to realize that maybe her neighbors really have been there for her all along.

I absolutely loved this book. It's warm and bubbly and filled with magic, community, and great food. They need to make a movie of it, and you want to read it. And then watch it.

Natalie Tan's Book Of Luck And Fortune Pdf

On sale now! Review first posted on Fantasy Literature:

A bitter, ongoing quarrel with her mother about her career plans to be a chef led Natalie Tan to leave her San Francisco home in anger. Seven years of stubborn silence and globe-wandering later, Natalie is called home by a neighbor at her mother's passing. She still deeply desires to be a chef and to have her own authentic Chinese restaurant, like her grandmother Qiao had done many years earlier, and now she'll have the chance: Natalie has i

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A psychically-gifted neighbor returns Qiao's old, handmade recipe book to Natalie, along with a prediction: if Natalie cooks three recipes from the book to help three of her neighbors, as her laolao did many years ago, and is able to save these neighbors, her restaurant will be the jewel of Chinatown and the neighborhood will be revitalized. Natalie is initially dubious and reluctant - she feels like her neighbors had let her down when she was struggling to deal with her mother's agoraphobia years ago - but she soon enters into the spirit of the endeavor, and magical things begin to happen when her neighbors eat her food. As I watched, fractures ran along the surface of their skin, reminding me of shattered porcelain. The cracks deepened as they ate. Once they were finished, tiny streams of glittering gold filled the cracks: mending, repairing what was broken, and transforming it into something far more beautiful. It was similar to a piece of kintsukuroi I'd picked up in Tokyo, repaired pottery that had been mended with gold. As Natalie begins cooking in Qiao's restaurant, the scent of fried dumplings even leads a handsome young man to her restaurant and her life. But neither love nor her quest to help the neighborhood is as easy as Natalie had expected.

Natalie Tan's Book of Luck and Fortune is a charming, sweet tale with a dash of magical realism. I expected something like *The Joy Luck Club* or a Chinese-American version of *Like Water for Chocolate*. What I got was more like a literary version of a Hallmark TV romance movie. It's so lightweight as to approach being fluffy, though the immersion in Chinese culture and food serves to give it some heft and make the story more memorable. Several Chinese recipes are included in the novel, and they and the luscious descriptions of Natalie's cooking made my mouth water. The romance subplot wasn't particularly well-developed or romantically satisfying; I got far more enjoyment out of reading about the "plump prawns" and "tender steamed rice noodles and crunchy golden fritters."

Debut author Roselle Lim incorporates a few serious issues into her tale, including mental illness and the loss of ethnic urban neighborhoods. Her writing is sometimes clunky; phrases like “gathering fog brewed at the base of the gate the way steam rises from a perfect bowl of noodle soup” and “hoping the fog would thicken like salted duck congee to conceal my arrival” struck me as unintentionally humorous.

Natalie Tan’s *Book of Luck and Fortune* is a warmhearted tale with an authentic Chinese voice, if not as deep and literary as one might hope. Don’t expect too much from this book and you may enjoy it.

Thanks to the publisher and NetGalley for the ARC! ...more

“Wishes are worth nothing because there’s so many of them. If they turned into stars, there will be no sky left.”

There is something magical about books in the magic realism genre, I mean not literally because that would be obvious but I mean in my relationship with these books. The first book I read in this genre was a big NO for me, the same for the second when I decided the genre is just not for me and I won’t be reading more books in it. I read 3 books after that because I always realize “Wishes are worth nothing because there’s so many of them. If they turned into stars, there will be no sky left.”

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Disclaimer: I received an ARC of this book from the publisher through Edelweiss in exchange of an honest review.

This book is about Natalie Tan’s adventure to restore her grandma’s restaurant including all the challenges, secrets and relationships that she will face. It is a book about food, but much more than that!

I liked Lim’s writing, she seems experienced and not an amateur, it didn’t feel like a debut for me and I am reading more adults books now which is a good thing because I am enjoying them more and more. The book has some recipes that I felt eager to go and try and it put me in the mood to make some food! It is not a cook book so you can just skim the preparation pages! Be ware that you shouldn’t read it while you are hungry though.

The characters were good too, I liked Natalie’s character and how she was human, she had

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perseverance but she also had her bad moments, all of which made her realistic and not too perfect! The romance is kind of an insta-love but it is not central to the story so I could overlook that!

☺☺☺ The magic realism part did not add much and I think the book would have been better if it was realistic without magic, some of the magic is that the food she cooks can bring effects to those who eat it such as happiness and romance etc. There is also another magical part but I will skip it because I am keeping this spoiler free.

☺☺☺ Summary: the book is well written and did not feel like a debut, it was not perfect but I think it is a very good book for those of us who appreciate food, there were magical elements that were un-necessary but an enjoyable experience all in all! ...more