



By the River: Seven Contemporary Chinese Novellas (Chinese Literature Today Book Series)

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The novella, as the editors of this volume explain, is in many ways the “native habitat” of modern Chinese literary production—the ideal fictional form for revealing the various facets of contemporary Chinese culture. The seven novellas collected here resoundingly support their claim. Featuring works by award winners and rising stars, women and men, *By the River* presents a confluence of some of the most compelling voices in China today. Together, their narratives reflect the rich diversity of Chinese experience in the modern era.

These novellas are stories of coming of age in the countryside, of romance in the shadow of an electrical power station or in the watery landscape of a lost love, of a daughter’s epic journey to find her estranged mother. Whether telling of love or loss, of work or play along the river of experience, the narratives are replete with details that bring literary depth to the everyday—the mark of the novella. These details and the novellas into which they are woven defy simple answers to moral and political questions about modern life, leaving readers with the feeling that their world has been made larger, that they have seen through different eyes for a moment, if not forever.

Reflecting modern Chinese life in the city and in the country, and among diverse regional cultures, *By the River* showcases the best of contemporary Chinese long-form fiction.

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