



Secret of a Thousand Beauties

Mingmei Yip

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Set against the vibrant and intrigue-laden backdrop of 1930s China, Mingmei Yip's enthralling novel explores one woman's defiant pursuit of independence.

Spring Swallow was promised in marriage while still in her mother's belly. When the groom dies before a wedding can take place, seventeen-year-old Spring Swallow is ordered to become a ghost bride to appease his spirit. Under her in-laws' protection, she will be little more than a servant, unable to know real love or bear children. Refusing to accept her fate as a "bad-luck woman," Spring Swallow flees on her wedding day.

In the city of Soochow, Spring Swallow joins a community of renowned embroiderers. The women work for Aunty Peony, whose exquisite stitching once earned her the Emperor's love. But when Aunty Peony agrees to replicate a famous painting--a lucrative assignment that will take a year to complete--betrayal and jealousy emerges within the group. Spring Swallow becomes entangled in each woman's story of heartbreak, even while she embarks on a dangerous affair with a young revolutionary. On a journey that leads from the remote hillsides around Soochow to cosmopolitan Peking, Spring Swallow draws on the secret techniques learned from Aunty Peony and her own indomitable strength, determined to forge a life that is truly her own.

Praise For The Novels Of Mingmei Yip

"A unique and enthralling style. . .flawless." --*Baltimore Books Examiner* on *The Nine Fold Heaven*

"Surprising and often funny. . .Part epic, part coming-of-age story, part modern fairy tale." --*Publishers Weekly* on *Song of the Silk Road*

"A serious, engaging story of faith, devotion, and the commingling of cultures." --*Booklist* on *Petals From the Sky*

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