



[Home](#) > [Throwaway Daughter](#)

---

# Throwaway Daughter

Books Reviewed:

[Throwaway Daughter](#) [1]

Issue:

[147](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

Ting-xing Ye is the author of the best-selling **A Leaf in the Bitter Wind**, a harrowing autobiographical account of growing up in China during the cruel excesses of the Cultural Revolution. She now lives in Canada and this is her first book for young adults. Its protagonist, Grace Dong-mei Parker, is a young woman of Chinese origin adopted by a Canadian family. The novel, which moves between past and present, Canada and China, traces her growing awareness of her background and the circumstances of her adoption. Ye is not primarily concerned with questions of personal or cultural identity, although these do form part of the story. Rather, she uses Dong-mei's experience to reveal the position of women in Chinese society and particularly the fate of baby girls at the time of China's rigid enforcement of a policy of one child per family. Ye uses key figures to take a turn in telling their own story. This gradually delivers an indictment of injustice, while carefully setting out the historical and social context, and emphasises the complex inter-dependent relationships, both economic and emotional, that can touch people on opposite sides of the world. The fictional Grace is representative of a number of real Chinese baby girls, who were adopted by childless parents in Canada and the USA. Ye creates a rich cast of characters and invites us to listen to them all carefully and seek to understand. The novel gathers power and pace in its second half as Dong-mei returns to China to search for her birth-mother; and the personal and the political come together in a compelling finale that allows the last world to the re-united mother and daughter. Ye's restraint is her strength, requiring from her readers patience, sensitivity and intellectual engagement rather than a simple emotional response. It's a book which asks us to think as much as to feel.

Running Order:

4

---

Source URL (retrieved on *Oct '21*): <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/147/childrens-books/reviews/throwaway-daughter>

**Links:**

[1] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/throwaway-daughter>

[2] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/147>

[3] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/clive-barnes>