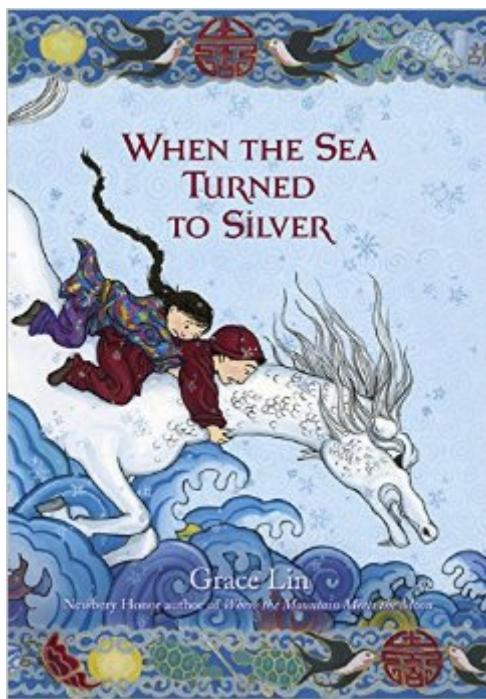


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# When The Sea Turned To Silver



## **Synopsis**

A breathtaking, full-color illustrated fantasy inspired by Chinese folklore, a companion to the Newbery Honor winner *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* Pinmei's gentle, loving grandmother always has the most exciting tales for her granddaughter and the other villagers. However, the peace is shattered one night when soldiers of the Emperor arrive and kidnap the storyteller. Everyone knows that the Emperor wants something called the Luminous Stone That Lights the Night. Determined to have her grandmother returned, Pinmei embarks on a journey to find the Luminous Stone alongside her friend Yishan, a mysterious boy who seems to have his own secrets to hide. Together, the two must face obstacles usually found only in legends to find the Luminous Stone and save Pinmei's grandmother--before it's too late. A fast-paced adventure that is extraordinarily written and beautifully illustrated, *When the Sea Turned to Silver* is a masterpiece companion novel to *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon* and *Starry River of the Sky*.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 750 (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (19 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,388 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Asia #40 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Multigenerational #149 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

Not familiar with the first two books in this series, this reader joined in on the 3rd. The first two are not necessary for enjoying the storyline. It's a wonderfully told story. Pinmei, a quiet girl living on a mountain with her grandmother, Amah, "the Storyteller." A new cruel emperor comes to take the

village men to work on the great wall, and he imprisons Amah. With a youthful male friend, Yishan, they set off to find the luminous stone that lights the night to free her grandmother. Pinmei continues the tradition of her grandmother through story telling. Impossible feats and impossible creatures prove to be real and problems to overcome. Will Pinmei's faith in justice, doing the right thing, and love be borne out? Will it be enough? Overall, Lin has penned a touching story with developed, likeable characters, and an interesting inside look into some Chinese history. It's definitely one to add to the shelves for people who like to re-read books. The depth of the story will lend itself well to repeated reading. Artwork in the Advance Reader Copy is not finished, but looks promising.

Pinmei appears to be a quiet little mouse of a girl, but if you are familiar with Grace Lin's stories, you know that appearances are deceiving. She lives safely, if frugally, on the mountain with her grandmother, Amah, the Storyteller. Her life has been sheltered and protected with little contact with the outside world, except the few villagers that seek her grandmother's sewing and/or stories and the boy Yishan who lives further up the mountain. But that is about to change as the new emperor, with a grudge against the mountain and its people, comes to take the men of the village men to work on the Vast Wall, along with Amah. With Yishan's help, Pinmei needs to get a Luminous Stone That Lights The Night in order to secure Amah's release. So the mousy girl and the impish boy set off for the City of Bright Moonlight. As with Ms. Lin's two prior works in this series, the story is told both as a direct narration and as stories within the story. Pinmei is, after all, the Storyteller's granddaughter; stories are the only weapons she carries. But these are no ordinary stories. The fantastical creatures and impossible feats told of in the stories are real and only through the stories can Pinmei's quest be solved. The characters in the story itself weave into the characters in the stories within the story and figuring out each character's true identity is part of the delight of the work. All the stories, including the main one, blend seamlessly "almost impossibly so" to create an almost mystical sense in which the impossible becomes the only possibility. The book is deeply satisfying on all levels with rich, deeply noble characters that we can only love. The story is really one of faith. Not religious faith per se, although there are certainly threads of Eastern religion entwined throughout the story. But it is really more about faith in the universe, faith in life itself, and faith that there is meaning and justice in the world; a faith that doing the right thing and being a humble, loving person matters, even "especially" in the face of fear and horror. We must not act from our fear, but instead find that still, small place of calm and faith where truth can be seen and evil conquered. In that way it is a fable for our times. This book is somewhat darker and heavier than the

first book, which I found rather light hearted. This book deals much more in cruelty and power (and the overcoming thereof through humility and understanding). Perhaps for that reason, I found it even more powerful and moving than the first, which I enjoyed immensely in its own right. (I have also read the second, which I enjoyed, but didn't find as good as either the first or the third.) In thinking of all the 900+ reviews I have written, I don't think I've ever used the word *masterpiece*, but it is surely applicable here. I bow to Ms. Lin in the humblest kowtow and I hope that this is not the end. Whatever your age, do yourself a favor and read this book.

Repeatedly. Note, the other books in this series have been richly and beautifully illustrated, as it appears this one will be too. However, my advanced reader's copy does not yet have final artwork, which was quite a disappointment. I have already ordered a final hard copy of this book for my permanent collection as the artwork is too rich, beautiful and important a part of the work as a whole not to have it. Ms. Lin is a master artist as much as a master storyteller.

Amah is the local Storyteller, Pinmei is her granddaughter. They live together in a small quiet village. Pinmei has a friend, a boy whose name is Yishan. All is well until one night, dark in more ways than one, the new emperor sends his soldiers to take away the village men, and pillage all that he can from the already poor residents. They take only young capable men, but for one exception. Amah. Pinmei is determined to find her grandmother and accompanied by Yishan, she sets out to do so. Surprisingly, one night Pinmei finds herself telling a story. She repeats a story she heard from her grandmother to a kind family that has taken them in to give them shelter for the night. Perhaps this changes Pinmei? Perhaps it makes her stronger? This is an unusual, although beautifully written book. It is filled with stories within the original stories. Since I have not read the first 2 books in this series, I am not sure if they do the same. I have thought long and hard about this, and to be honest, I can't see any of the children I know being drawn to this unique book. I think it would do best in a classroom setting where the stories can be discussed and the many lessons shared and considered.

Grace Lin is a brilliant author, and *When the Sea Turned to Silver* showcases her gifts beautifully. *When The Sea Turned to Silver* is a beautiful story filled with folklore, memorable characters and intoxicating scenery that will surely enchant readers and transport them to far off lands. Unfortunately, this book is going to require a very patient reader to fully appreciate the author's efforts. Rather intricate construction, a slow moving plot and a detached tone make this book rather tedious at times and will make it a hard recommend for young readers. Examining it as fine literature

leads to many points to recommend, but as an entertaining story, most readers will find this wanting.

The story is interwoven with stories told by Pinmei's grandmother, the Storyteller, and later by Pinmei herself--and the plight of the Black Tortoise of Winter. During Pinmei's quest--she's joined by a young neighbor--to rescue her grandmother after she was taken by the Emperor's soldiers and their hut burned down, Pinmei meets a variety of characters and the white and wonderful horse, BaiMa. The stories are somehow connected to the past, affecting the present. Pinmei's quest is dangerous, and she is surrounded by mysteries, This ARC had only one sample of the art that will illustrate the story, but it is beautiful, and I think it makes the book worth buying.

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