



To Live: A Novel

By Yu Hua

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To Live: A Novel By Yu Hua

From the author of *Brothers* and *China in Ten Words*: this celebrated contemporary classic of Chinese literature was also adapted for film by Zhang Yimou. This searing novel, originally banned in China but later named one of that nation's most influential books, portrays one man's transformation from the spoiled son of a landlord to a kindhearted peasant. After squandering his family's fortune in gambling dens and brothels, the young, deeply penitent Fugui settles down to do the honest work of a farmer. Forced by the Nationalist Army to leave behind his family, he witnesses the horrors and privations of the Civil War, only to return years later to face a string of hardships brought on by the ravages of the Cultural Revolution. Left with an ox as the companion of his final years, Fugui stands as a model of gritty authenticity, buoyed by his appreciation for life in this narrative of humbling power.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

One man's mythically tragic life encapsulates the horrors of communist China in this nearly overpowering yet vivifying saga. Initially banned in China, internationally acclaimed, made into an award-winning movie, and newly translated into English, Yu Hua's close-to-the-bone tale portrays the reckless son of a wealthy landowner who gambles away the family fortune. Fugui is humbled by the loyalty of his loved ones, and comes to accept the severe hardships of his altered life, but fate has only begun its brutal work. Fugui is forcibly conscripted into the army, then, barely alive upon his release, struggles with so-called land reform and the ensuing famine. As Fugui's family die terrible, often bitterly ironic deaths and this stoic survivor makes do with less and less in an increasingly surreal world, Yu Hua, writing with masterful simplicity about the unfathomable complexities of existence, tells a galvanizing story that is at once a shattering indictment of China's ongoing nightmare and testimony to the tenacity of the human spirit. A translation of Yu Hua's *Chronicle of a Blood Merchant* is on the way. *Donna Seaman*

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Review

“A work of astounding emotional power.” —Dai Sijie, author of **Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress**

“Yu Hua is the most profound voice coming out of China today. **To Live** reaches not only into the very essence of China and the Chinese people but into the blood and bones core of what it means to be a human being.” —Lisa See, author of **On Gold Mountain**

“A Chinese Book of Job, **To Live** is a heart-wrenching saga, written with beauty, defiance, and hope. Yu Hua’s books deserve a place on the highest shelf.” —Wang Ping, author of **Aching for Beauty** and **Foreign Devil**

“A major contemporary novelist, Yu Hua writes with a cold eye but a warm heart. His novels are ingeniously structured and exude a mythical aura. Though unmistakably Chinese, they are universally resonant.” —Ha Jin, author of **Waiting**

“A book of subtle power and poignant drama. You love Yu Hua’s characters because they are flawed, vibrant, soulful, and real: you celebrate with them the small wonders of life, and feel their pain as they overcome tragedy. Ultimately, **To Live** is a redemptive story of the human spirit, one that is universal in its emotional depth.” —Terrence Cheng, author of **Sons of Heaven**

From the Trade Paperback edition.

From the Inside Flap

An award-winning, internationally acclaimed Chinese bestseller, originally banned in China but recently named one of the last decade's ten most influential books there, “To Live tells the epic story of one man's transformation from the spoiled son of a rich landlord to an honorable and kindhearted peasant.

After squandering his family's fortune in gambling dens and brothels, the young, deeply penitent Fugui settles down to do the honest work of a farmer. Forced by the Nationalist Army to leave behind his family, he witnesses the horrors and privations of the Civil War, only to return years later to face a string of hardships brought on by the ravages of the Cultural Revolution. Left with an ox as the companion of his final

years, Fugui stands as a model of flinty authenticity, buoyed by his appreciation for life in this narrative of humbling power.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Roxie Spencer:

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Anthony Sierra:

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