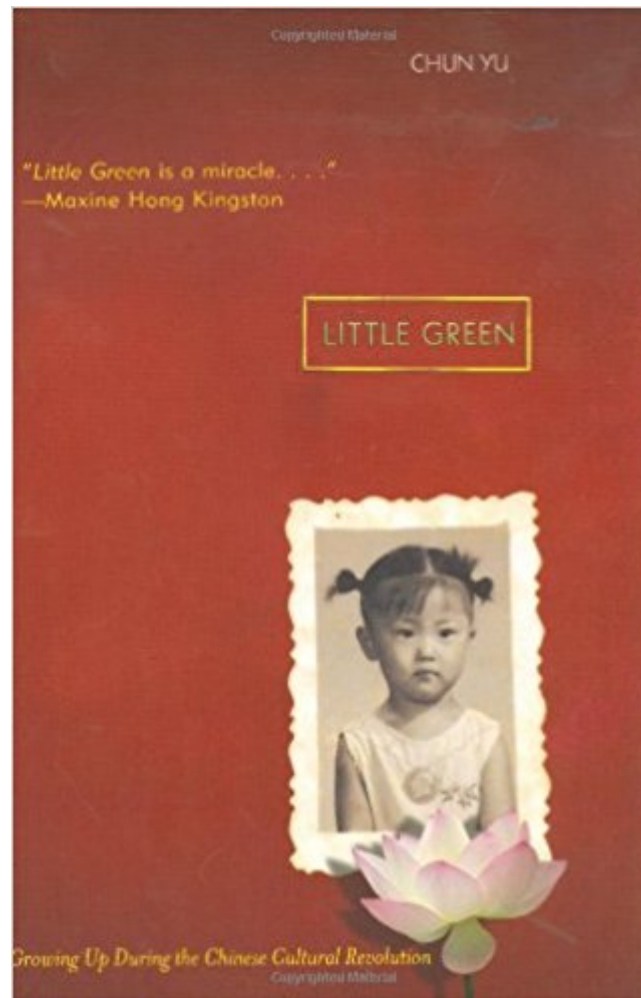




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# Little Green: Growing Up During The Chinese Cultural Revolution



## Synopsis

I was born in a small city near the East Sea, when the Great Cultural Revolution began. My name is Little Green, my country Zhong Guo, the Middle Kingdom. When I was ten years old, our leader had died and the revolution ended. And this is how I remember it. When Chun Yu was born in a small city in China, she was born into a country in revolution. The streets were filled with roaming Red Guards, the walls were covered with slogans, and reeducation meetings were held in all workplaces. Every family faced danger and humiliation, even the youngest children. Shortly after Chun's birth, her beloved father was sent to a peasant village in the countryside to be reeducated in the ways of Chairman Mao. Chun and her brother stayed behind with their mother, who taught in a country middle school where Mao's Little Red Book was a part of every child's education. Chun Yu's young life was witness to a country in turmoil, struggle, and revolution -- the only life she knew. This first-person memoir of a child's view of the Chinese Cultural Revolution is a stunning account of a country in crisis and a testimony to the spirit of the individual -- no matter how young or how innocent.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 9

## Customer Reviews

Grade 5-8Xiao Qing, or Little Green, was born at the very beginning of the Cultural

Revolution, and when she turned 10, Chairman Mao died. Because her father worked in the city before he was sent to the countryside for re-education and her mother taught first in a country school and later in the city, Little Green and her two siblings lived much of their younger years with their grandmother. This memoir, written as poetry, chronicles her daily life and reveals her perceptions of the world. Her story is revealed in snippets, much the way one remembers scenes from the distant past. The earlier poems reflect the emotions and fears of a young child while the later poems show an increasing awareness of the meaning of what is taking place. While poetry is an excellent vehicle for a memoir of this sort, the verse itself is uneven in quality. The author is at her best when describing life in the country where many of her depictions of the natural world are lyrical and full of beauty. The form works less well in the more narrative parts, where the poetry is not far removed from prose. Ji-Li Jiang's *Red Scarf Girl* (HarperCollins, 1997) and Da Chen's *China's Son* (Delacorte, 2001) also tell the story of young people living through this era. What makes *Little Green* slightly different is the younger age of the protagonist and the immediacy of the experience provided by the poetry. As such, it complements and extends those more substantial narratives.

— Barbara Scotto, Michael Driscoll School, Brookline, MA

Gr. 7-10. Chun Yu was born in China in 1966, the year the Great Cultural Revolution began, and in spare poetry she remembers the first 10 years of her life. True to a child's bewildered viewpoint and augmented by occasional, small black-and-white family photos, Yu gets across the grief at home and the school indoctrination. She feels her father's depression; plays war games against "Foreign Devils

Growing up during the Cultural Revolution is a good companion piece to Gao Xingjina's *One Man's Bible*.

This is a really wonderful account of what happened during the Cultural Revolution by a very skilled highly-qualified Chinese native. You won't be disappointed- I promise.

It is a easy reading book and I would recommend to parents who have kids want to know the childhood of a parent. My kid started to ask what looked like when I was a kid. Beyond my childhood stories, I bought this book for him to read. He really enjoyed it.

In *Little Green*, it is wonderful how the author captures her childhood, the feeling of childhood in

general, her family and surroundings and experiences, and finally her young perception of the Cultural Revolution in beautiful and poetic, yet simple language. I knew about the Red Guards and so on, but I had never before read anything about how children were indoctrinated during that time. Little Green is an endearing childhood memoir.

Wonderful insight from a child's perspective of such a turbulent time in China's history. Interesting and informative. Recommended highly for summer reading.

Interesting depiction of family life during Cultural Revolution. Lacking literary style; I felt like reading a primary school notebook. But it allows to know how revolution affected people.

The sensory imagery of this longform autobiographical poem is luminous and magical. The author wraps us immediately in the experience of her younger self, and through her eyes we participate in her open immersion in the life and seasons and relationships of her childhood. Slowly the joy and innocence of her trusting heart are pierced and dismayed by the realization that her world is becoming mad and dangerous as Mao unleashes the primitive class hatreds of his people. She sees her beloved family and friends suffer, and she experiences the hunger and deprivation of her unraveling world, but never abandons her poet's vision and heartfelt portrayal of her sense experience. The language is crystalline and at times other-worldly. As I read a magnificent scene of a sailboat slowly passing on a canal, I felt the floor and the room in which I sat tip and roll. This is a magnificent work of art by a profound soul at the peak of her powers. Highly recommended.

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