



The Laws of Evening: Stories

Mary Yukari Waters

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In this dazzling debut collection, Mary Yukari Waters, a remarkably gifted, award-winning Japanese-American writer, opens a window onto a foreign culture as she reveals the universal humanity of her characters. These uncommonly elegant and assured stories explore Japanese society caught between the long shadow of World War II and the rapid advance of Westernization. The women and children who inhabit these crystalline tales have lost husbands and fathers in the war and now face a world dramatically altered by Western influence.

In "Aftermath," a mother watches her son play American dodgeball and eat Western food as she desperately tries to keep alive the memory of his father, who was killed in the war. "Since My House Burned Down" depicts a Japanese widow, permanently displaced from her kitchen by her daughter-in-law, reflecting on the deprivations of wartime as the acidic, foreign smell of tomato sauce wafts upstairs. In "Egg-Face," latent hope kindles for thirty-year-old, jobless Ritsuko when a matchmaker arranges for her to meet a handsome young man. And "The Way Love Works" explores favoritism in three generations of women when a Japanese American teenager returns to Japan with her mother.

These finely etched portraits of upheaval and renewal, estrangement and reconciliation, provide keen insight into the Japanese experience and sensibility. A virtuoso collection infused with a warmth that invites readers to feel at home in a world that might otherwise seem alien, *The Laws of Evening* will undoubtedly place Mary Yukari Waters in the company of our most revered writers.

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