



Green Island: A novel

By Shawna Yang Ryan

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“Shawna Yang Ryan’s propulsive storytelling carries us through a bloody time in Taiwanese history, its implications still reverberating today. The story is haunted by questions about whether Taiwan is a part of China or its own country, what the costs are of standing up for one’s beliefs and by the choices made by one father and his daughter. *Green Island* is a tough, unsentimental and moving novel that is a memorial not only to the heroes, but also to the survivors.” —Viet Thanh Nguyen, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sympathizer*

A stunning story of love, betrayal, and family, set against the backdrop of a changing Taiwan over the course of the twentieth century.

February 28, 1947: Trapped inside the family home amid an uprising that has rocked Taipei, Dr. Tsai delivers his youngest daughter, the unnamed narrator of *Green Island*, just after midnight as the city is plunged into martial law. In the following weeks, as the Chinese Nationalists act to crush the opposition, Dr. Tsai becomes one of the many thousands of people dragged away from their families and thrown into prison. His return, after more than a decade, is marked by alienation from his loved ones and paranoia among his community—conflicts that loom over the growing bond he forms with his youngest daughter. Years later, this troubled past follows her to the United States, where, as a mother and a wife, she too is forced to decide between what is right and what might save her family—the same choice she witnessed her father make many years before.

As the novel sweeps across six decades and two continents, the life of the narrator shadows the course of Taiwan’s history from the end of Japanese colonial rule to the decades under martial law and, finally, to Taiwan’s transformation into a democracy. But, above all, *Green Island* is a lush and lyrical story of a family and a nation grappling with the nuances of complicity and survival, raising the question: how far would you be willing to go for the ones you love?

From the Hardcover edition.

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Green Island: A novel By Shawna Yang Ryan Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

An Amazon Best Book of February 2016: *Green Island* by Shawna Yang Ryan is a moving and enthralling exploration of family, betrayal, survival, and cultural identity as told through the history of one Taiwanese family. Dr. Tsai is a revered and wealthy doctor, but when he speaks out after the February 28 Massacre, the anti-government uprising in Taiwan, his life and that of his family will be forever changed. Missing for a decade, his family struggles to endure. Told from the perspective of his youngest daughter, the Tsai family and thousands of others negotiate the suspicion and violence that lurks in every doorway. As she grows up, becoming first a wife and then a mother in California, she once again bears witness to the violent tentacles of her father's legacy and her own family's wellbeing is threatened when her husband speaks his mind. Fraught with treachery, love, and the desire to do what is right, *Green Island* tells an unforgettable story of a family caught in the middle of Taiwan's complicated history as it transitioned from colonial rule to Martial Law to a democracy. Rendered with taut emotion, Shawna Yang Ryan explores the heartbreaking decisions parents make to save their families. -- *Al Woodworth*

From Publishers Weekly

Ryan (*Water Ghosts*) reshapes the immigrant tale in this precise and poetic work. The book garners depth from its ambitious desire to take on "rather than sidestep" the shifting political climate of its Taiwanese landscape. The unnamed narrator is born in 1947 at the start of a government-led massacre in Taipei, and she enters into a turbulent time of lies and violence "one she seems incapable of escaping no matter how far she goes from her home. She settles years later in California. Though in her youth she questions the betrayal her father makes in order to protect his family, she finds herself confronting the same problem as an adult. The vigilant government seeks to silence all critique of the dictatorial regime; it threatens her safety and that of her children, leading to a loss that even her past cannot prepare her for. "How far back would my wishes have to go to erase all of it?" she thinks. First through the experiences of the narrator's birth family in Taiwan, and then through the gaze of the family she creates in Berkeley with her activist husband, Ryan grants readers a closer look at the deep connections between familial love and the inescapability of history, both personal and political. This is a significant work, full of carefully researched detail that results in a moving and indelible story. Agent Daniel Lazar, Writers House. (Feb.)

Review

"A tough, unsentimental, and moving novel that is a memorial not only to the heroes, but also to the survivors." —Viet Thanh Nguyen, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Sympathizer*

"Sweeping . . . as epic in scope as the story is intimate." —*The Arizona Republic*

"A chilling, convincing picture of Taiwan during the years of authoritarian rule." —*Los Angeles Times*

"Ryan embraces the complexity of the situation, by not creating heroes but instead exploring the truth of compromise, survival and belonging." —*The New York Times*

"Moving and suspenseful. . . Full of compassion." —*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Norma Harrell:

Why don't make it to be your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important action, like looking for your favorite guide and reading a guide. Beside you can solve your trouble; you can add your knowledge by the reserve entitled Green Island: A novel. Try to make the book Green Island: A novel as your good friend. It means that it can for being your friend when you sense alone and beside that course make you smarter than before. Yeah, it is very fortunate for you. The book makes you considerably more confidence because you can know everything by the book. So , let us make new experience and also knowledge with this book.

Chris Robins:

Do you one among people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained inside straightway, hold on guys this specific aren't like that. This Green Island: A novel book is readable by simply you who hate the straight word style. You will find the details here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to provide to you. The writer regarding Green Island: A novel content conveys objective easily to understand by many individuals. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different in the form of it. So , do you even now thinking Green Island: A novel is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

Raymond Littlefield:

Reading a book can be one of a lot of exercise that everyone in the world really likes. Do you like reading book consequently. There are a lot of reasons why people fantastic. First reading a guide will give you a lot of new details. When you read a e-book you will get new information mainly because book is one of a number of ways to share the information or their idea. Second, examining a book will make you more imaginative. When you reading through a book especially fictional book the author will bring you to imagine the story how the people do it anything. Third, it is possible to share your knowledge to some others. When you read this Green Island: A novel, you could tells your family, friends in addition to soon about yours book. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a publication.

Larry Mason:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to complete! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book might be option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing that you will ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to consider look for book, may be the reserve untitled Green Island: A novel can be great book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

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