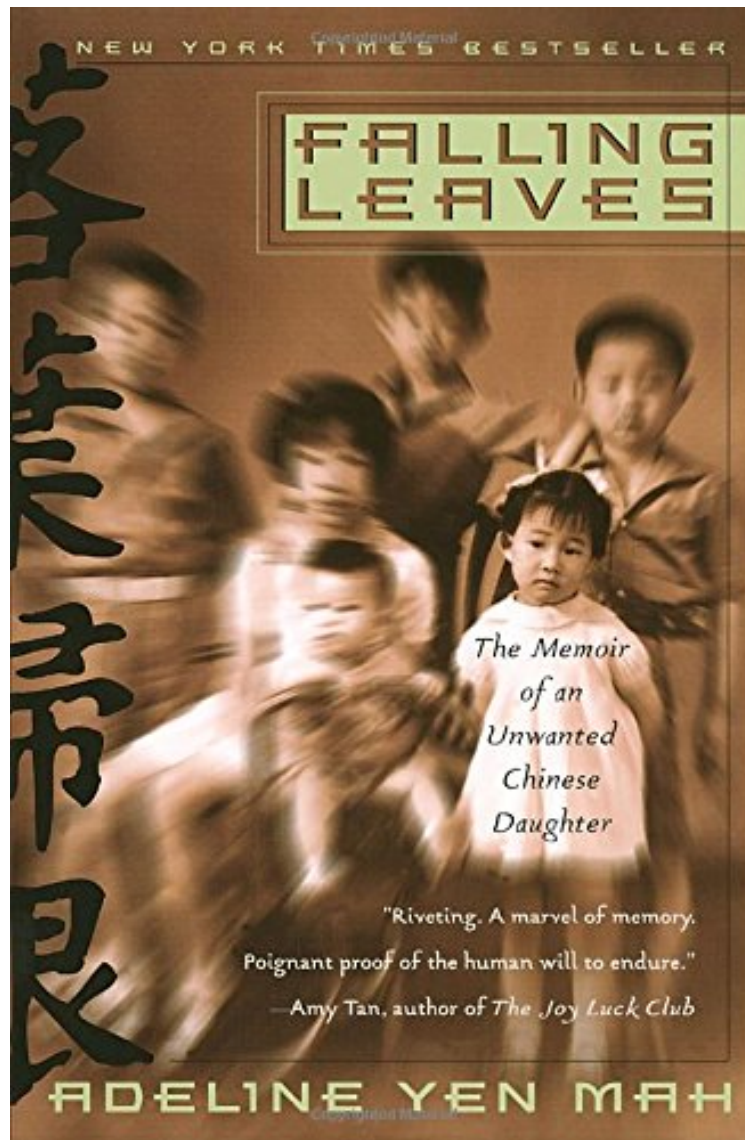


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## Falling Leaves: The Memoir of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter

*Adeline Yen Mah*

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**Adeline Yen Mah : Falling Leaves: The Memoir of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Falling Leaves: The Memoir of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Poignant, plaintive picture of the heart's desire to belong. By Floyd Johnson Kierkegaard writes of one imprisoned by a tyrant in a brazen bull and slowly tortured over a steady fire. The cries of the victim could not be heard so as to strike terror into the victim's heart. When the cries of the one imprisoned

finally do reach the tyrant's ears, they sounded like sweet music. As men crowd around they say to the prisoner, "Sing for us soon again." This prisoner Kierkegaard calls the poet. The sweet music of *Falling Leaves* comes from such a tortured heart. Mah is a lyrical poet, singing of cruelty, bitterness, revenge, and finally the triumph of the heart's longing to belong. If you do not weep when you read this account of suffering, make an appointment with your mortician.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. *The Plight Of An Unloved Child* By M. Galindo Although this book was difficult at times to read, the author did keep me fascinated with her story. She has an ease of writing that very much feels as if she is having a conversation with the reader, and the book just flows. The story is one that is ageless: a man marries a woman and they have several children (in this case 5). When the youngest is born, the woman dies from complications, and the man in his loneliness quickly finds another woman to marry. He concerns himself more with outward appearances than with character, and ends up with wife #2 who is controlling, domineering, and wishes she had been wife #1 instead of wife #2. She really doesn't care for the fact that her husband has 5 children from wife #1, but no matter. Since her husband is weak and does as she wishes, she can treat them as she likes. Which isn't pleasant. Adeline is the youngest of the 5 siblings and therefore the recipient of not only her stepmother's wrath, but most often her 4 siblings as well. Unlike some children, Adeline never seems to truly stand up for herself, and that might be her personality or it might be cultural. Whatever it is, it defines her. Some reviewers here think Adeline is "whiny", especially after she reaches adulthood. Perhaps. However, if anyone knows somebody who was treated as though they were unwanted and/or unloved as a child - and my mother was such a one - then they might very well see the same behavior Adeline portrays as an adult. I thought this book was fascinating and a terrific tale of the healing power of the human spirit. At times I just wished I could have reached through the pages of this book and snatched Adeline away to a safe place where she could be nurtured and feel safe.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I would have raked my leaves from their roots... By Ruth Gunter Mitchell Oh, how I admire Adeline Yen Mah after having read *FALLING LEAVES*. I have always been in awe of the family loyalty trait of the Chinese, but I never knew just how far that loyalty could reach. Reading about Adeline's Niang and her cruelty, I have such a new appreciation for forgiveness. Adeline is my new heroine. My own suffering seems nothing compared to hers. I only wish this could be required reading for young people in America so they could truly understand the phrase, "God bless America!"

The emotionally wrenching yet ultimately uplifting memoir of a Chinese woman struggling to win the love and acceptance of her family. Born in 1937 in a port city a thousand miles north of Shanghai, Adeline Yen Mah was the youngest child of an affluent Chinese family who enjoyed rare privileges during a time of political and cultural upheaval. But wealth and position could not shield Adeline from a childhood of appalling emotional abuse at the hands of a cruel and manipulative stepmother. Determined to survive through her enduring faith in family unity, Adeline struggled for independence as she moved from Hong Kong to England and eventually to the United States to become a physician and writer. A compelling, painful, and ultimately triumphant story of a girl's journey into adulthood, Adeline's story is a testament to the most basic of human needs: acceptance, love, and understanding. With a powerful voice that speaks of the harsh realities of growing up female in a family and society that kept girls in emotional chains, *Falling Leaves* is a work of heartfelt intimacy and a rare authentic portrait of twentieth-century China. "Riveting. A marvel of memory. Poignant proof of the human will to endure." Amy Tan