
Mineko Iwasaki

Gejsza z Gion



Title: Gejsza z Gion

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Description

GEISHA, A LIFE ""No woman in the three-hundred-year history of the karyukai has ever come forward in public to tell her story. We have been constrained by unwritten rules not to do so, by the robes of tradition and by the sanctity of our exclusive calling...But I feel it is time to speak out.""

Celebrated as the most successful geisha of her generation, Mineko Iwasaki was only five years old when she left her parents' home for the world of the geisha. For the next twenty-five years, she would live a life filled with extraordinary professional demands and rich rewards. She would learn the formal customs and language of the geisha, and study the ancient arts of Japanese dance and music. She would enchant kings and princes, captains of industry, and titans of the entertainment world, some of whom would become her dearest friends. Through great pride and determination, she would be hailed as one of the most prized geishas in Japan's history, and one of the last great practitioners of this now fading art form.

In "Geisha, a Life," Mineko Iwasaki tells her story, from her warm early childhood, to her intense yet privileged upbringing in the Iwasaki okiya (household), to her years as a renowned geisha, and finally, to her decision at the age of twenty-nine to retire and marry, a move that would mirror the demise of geisha culture. Mineko brings to life the beauty and wonder of Gion Kobu, a place that "existed in a world apart, a special realm whose mission and identity depended on preserving the time-honored traditions of the past." She illustrates how it coexisted within post-World War II Japan at a time when the country was undergoing its radical transformation from apost-feudal society to a modern one.

"There is much mystery and misunderstanding about what it means to be a geisha. I hope this story will help explain what it is really like and also serve as a record of this unique component of Japan's cultural history," writes Mineko Iwasaki. "Geisha, a Life" is the first of its kind, as it delicately unfolds the fabric of a geisha's development. Told with great wisdom and sensitivity, it is a true story of beauty and heroism, and of a time and culture rarely revealed to the Western world.

Insightful reviews

Elizabeth: First, I would like to urge anyone who wants to learn more about geisha - READ THIS BOOK INSTEAD OF MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA. The author of that, Arthur Golden, interviewed Mineko Iwasaki and twisted her tales into falsities, making it seem that geisha were high class prostitutes. This is not the case - oiran, a high class courtesan, sold their bodies, not geisha. In fact, Iwasaki was extremely upset when she realized Golden had twisted her facts on the life of being a geisha, and decided to write her factual and realistic account. Her memoir reads as a beautiful balance between her personal recollections and facts on geisha (or the term used specifically in Kyoto, geiko) life in the 60s-70s. I expected a pretty basic factual account, but was pleasantly surprised by Mineko's escapades - hiding in the closet as a kid, working her hardest to embrace her passion for dancing, chasing down the pervy men who harassed her. Put straightforward, Mineko Iwasaki is a bad ass, and I would love to meet her one day if

possible. I highly recommend this memoir for anyone interested in personal stories, the lives of geisha or how Japanese society functioned in the 1950s through 1970s. 4.5/5 stars.

Katy: This was a pretty good book, but it was a little dry, probably due to the translation. Main point: Geisha are NOT prostitutes.

Skye: I read this in one day. The prose was clear, frank and accessible, not at all dry as some reviewers suggest. If you want dry, try reading an academic paper on the subject. The details she went into about the structure of the establishments at Gion were fascinating and cleared up many misconceptions about the Arts she practiced. I especially enjoyed the anecdotes of her time working in the ochaya (pl.) I can see how it may come across as self promoting and aggrandising, if it weren't for the fact that she actually was highly successful. Applying our own tall poppy syndrome and false modesty to another culture is inappropriate. For those with a genuine interest in traditional Japanese culture, this is a must-read.

Norah: i discovered this tale fascinating, in that it defined a tradition very a ways faraway from the informal means we are living in Britain today. Formalities have been so important, even for the children, and this woman selected for herself to depart her circle of relatives and subscribe to the home of Geisha to study as one, and suffer the entire hardships involved. She was once evidently very very stimulated and determined, and appeared chuffed many of the time. it truly is written within the voice of a child, although might be this is often as a result of translating from Japanese. in any case however, she left the ochaya, if that's the correct word, and married happily.

Cheryl: i began analyzing this as a memoir and learned my mistake simply because i used to be craving for extra emotion, extra of an realizing of the narrator. I must have been examining it as an autobiography as an alternative though, since it definitely has the feel of the conventional autobiography (rumors are, it used to be ghost-written). there's a lot right here in regards to the jap tradition and the photographs quite assist you position the descriptions. Mineko Iwasaki tells the tale of her existence as a geisha in Japan. Written after the well-known *Memoirs of a Geisha*, there's a lot hypothesis (even an alleged lawsuit) concerning the nonfiction being written as a rebuttal to the novel. In an internet interview with Golden approximately his novel, it truly is alleged that he had a fax that indicates how the geisha requested him to place her face in the market more, which leads you to think that after the publication grew to become successful with thousands of dollars, she sought after more. Golden created composite characters and assorted settings and situations in order that the unconventional may well learn like fiction, hence honoring the protection-of-privacy deal he'd had with the real-life geisha. within the end, she appeared to dislike the fictitious portrayal. What i did not like used to be the anger and chiding that loomed during the autobiography. the writer sought after humans to understand that geishas are usually not what they seem. Yes, we get it. It used to be the way she wrote it though, that was once off-putting: "We are de facto diplomats who've which will converse with anyone. yet this doesn't suggest we're doormats." Statements like this should not have been essential to say had she simply proven it. after which there's the chiding: "This is why the complete thought of geisha homes being dens of in poor health reputation is so ridiculous. males are slightly allowed inside..." there have been no longer loads of scenes of the geisha entertainment; instead, the writer and her translator selected to target the dancing and dance

lessons. in addition to conversing approximately her long term courting with a married guy and a few conferences with royalty, she does not rather cross right into a lot in regards to the entertaining. After analyzing Arthur Golden's well-written, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and feeling a few sympathy for the orphan woman compelled into that life, interpreting this actual tale used to be a piece difficult, because the actual geisha insists that it was once her choice, at 5 years old, to depart her parents, that she may perhaps stopover at them at any time, and that she had the higher hand at her geisha house. Really?

Petra X: The book, *Memoirs of a Geisha* by means of Arthur Golden used to be dependent round interviews with Mineko Iwasaki. She was once unsatisfied with the misuse of her phrases and wrote this, her autobiography. The publication information her existence as a geisha from formative years up till her retirement many years ago, in her 40s. within the West, at least, 'geisha' has consistently been regarded as a euphemism for a pricey whore, yet because the booklet shows, the ladies earn way more as geishas than they can ever wish to do on their backs. the realm of a geisha is one the place ladies run issues and make masses of cash when for all time taking a look just like the epitome of sweet, submissive femininity.

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