



Three Brightnesses: The Quintessential Story of Learning Chinese and Falling in Love in China-Over and Over Again

William Shoemaker

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Here is a frank, personal, and funny account of a young American's confused plunge into the unfamiliar world of small-town Fujian. Working as an English teacher at a university in Sanming (the city's name means "three brightnesses") in southern China's Fujian Province, William Shoemaker explores the personal challenges that go along with uprooting one's life to move to a far-away place--and the at times humiliating, exhilarating, and exhausting task of learning Chinese and coming to know, and love, China. In a narrative that remains light and accessible while providing context on the state of affairs in modern China, Shoemaker tells the story of a handful of ordinary Chinese citizens: a middle class father willing to compromise his ideals to get rich, a single mom struggling to provide a secure future for her daughter, and a stuck-in-a-rut Chinese teacher haunted by a tragic past. Three Brightnesses is about forgotten places, arbitrarily overlooked people, and the struggle to create lasting and fulfilling relationships in one of the world's most populous, swiftly changing places.

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