

In the Pond (Vintage International)

Ha Jin



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National Book Award-winner Ha Jin's arresting debut novel, **In the Pond**, is a darkly funny portrait of an amateur calligrapher who wields his delicate artist's brush as a weapon against the powerful party bureaucrats who rule his provincial Chinese town.

Shao Bin is a downtrodden worker at the Harvest Fertilizer Plant by day and an aspiring artist by night. Passed over on the list to receive a decent apartment for his young family, while those in favor with the party's leaders are selected ahead of him, Shao Bin chafes at his powerlessness. When he attempts to expose his corrupt superiors by circulating satirical cartoons, he provokes an escalating series of merciless counterattacks that send ripples beyond his small community. Artfully crafted and suffused with earthy wit, **In the Pond** is a moving tale about humble lives caught up in larger social forces.

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