Comfort Woman Nora Okja Keller

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Life As A “Comfort Woman” - Story of Kim Bok-Dong | STAY CURIOUS #9 | A Short Movie on Comfort Woman Nora Okja Keller | Long Story Short with Leslie Wilcox The Woman Left Behind by Linda Howard (Audiobook) | Australian comfort woman Jan Ruff-O’Hane | Comfort woman and the war’s human detritus and the fierce love between a mother and daughter.

Nora Okja Keller, the acclaimed author of Comfort Woman, tells the shocking story of a group of young people abandoned after the Korean War. At the center of the tale are two teenagers—Hyun Jin and Sookie, a Korean-American girl growing up in Hawaii, as she uncovers the dark secrets of her mother’s dislocated past. From being sold into prostitution in the Japanese “recreation camps” of World War II to the death of her first child and her unhappy marriage to an American missionary; Beccah understands why her mother lives in a spirit world she cannot share, and that clearly marks her as ‘other’. Powerful and lucid, Keller beautifully explores the depths of anguish and love that exist in the universally complicated relationship of mother and daughter.

On the fifth anniversary of my father’s death, my mother confessed to his murder…’ Thus begins Nora Okja Keller’s breathtaking first novel, which follows Beccah, a young Korean-American girl growing up in Hawaii, as she uncovers the dark secrets of her mother’s dislocated past. From being sold into prostitution in the Japanese ‘recreation camps’ of World War II to the death of her first child and her unhappy marriage to an American missionary; Beccah understands why her mother lives in a spirit world she cannot share, and that clearly marks her as ‘other’. Powerful and lucid, Keller beautifully explores the depths of anguish and love that exist in the universally complicated relationship of mother and daughter.

The second novel from the critically acclaimed New York Times–bestselling author Chang-rae Lee. His remarkable debut novel was called “rapturous” (The New York Times Book Review), “revelatory” (Vogue), and “wholly innovative” (Kirkus Reviews). It was the recipient of six major awards, including the prestigious Hemingway Foundation/PEN award. Now Chang-rae Lee has written a powerful and beautifully crafted second novel that leaves no doubt about the extraordinary depth and range of his talent. A Gesture Life is the story of a proper man, an upstanding citizen who has come to epitomize the decorous values of his New York suburban town. Courteous, honest, hardworking, and impenetrable, Franklin Hata, a Japanese man of Korean birth, is careful never to overstep his boundaries and to make his neighbors comfortable in his presence. Yet as his story unfolds, precipitated by the small events surrounding him, we see his life begin to unravel. Gradually we learn the mystery that has shaped the core of his being: his terrible, forbidden love for a young Korean Comfort Woman when he served as a medic in the Japanese army during World War II. In

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DECOLONIZING THE BILDUNGSROMAN: NARRATIVES OF WAR AND WOMANHOOD IN NORA OKJA KELLER’S COMFORT WOMAN DECOLONIZING THE BILDUNGSROMAN: NARRATIVES OF WAR AND WOMANHOOD IN NORA OKJA KELLER’S COMFORT WOMAN...

Possessing a wisdom and maturity rarely found in a first novelist, Korean-American writer Nora Okja Keller tells a heartwrenching and enthralling tale in this, her literary debut. Comfort Woman is the story of Akiko, a Korean refugee of World War II, and Beccah, her daughter by an American missionary. The two women are living on the edge of society—and sanity—in Honolulu, plagued by Akiko’s periodic encounters with the spirits of the dead, and by Beccah’s struggles to reclaim her mother from her past. Slowly and painfully Akiko reveals her tragic story and the horrifying years she was forced to serve as a “comfort woman” to Japanese soldiers. As Beccah uncovers these truths, she discovers her own strength and the secret of the powers she herself possesses—the precious gifts her mother has given her. A San Francisco Chronicle bestseller In 1985, Nora Okja Keller received the Pushcart Prize for "Mother Tongue", a piece that is part of Comfort Woman.

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During the Pacific War, more than 200,000 Korean girls were forced into sexual servitude for Japanese soldiers. They lived in horrific conditions in “comfort stations” across Japanese-occupied territories. Barely 10 percent survived to return to Korea, where they lived as social outcasts. Since then, self-declared comfort women have come forward only to have their testimonies and calls for compensation largely denied by the Japanese government. Kim Soom tells the story of a woman who was kidnapped at the age of thirteen while gathering snails for her starving family. The horrors of her life as a sex slave follow her back to Korea, where she lives in isolation gripped by the fear that her past will be discovered. Yet, when she learns that the last known comfort woman is dying, she decides to tell her there will still be “one left” after her passing, and embarks on a painful journey. One Left is a provocative, extensively researched novel constructed from the testimonies of dozens of comfort women. The first Korean novel devoted to this subject, it rekindled conversations about comfort women as well as the violent legacies of Japanese colonialism. This first-ever English translation recovers the overlooked and disavowed stories of Korea’s most marginalized women.

Tracing the development of a new genre in contemporary American literature that was engendered in the civil rights, feminist, and ethnic empowerment struggles of the 1960s and 1970s, Bridges to Memory shows how these movements authorized African American and ethnic American women writers to reimagine the tragic histories that form their ancestral inheritance and define their contemporary identities. Drawing on the concept of postmemory—a paradigm developed to describe the relationship that children of Holocaust survivors have to their parents’ traumatic experiences—Maria Bellamy examines narrative representations of this inherited form of trauma in the work of contemporary African American and ethnic American women writers. Focusing on Gayl Jones’s Corregidora, Octavia Butler’s Kindred, Phyllis Aleia Perry’s Stigmata, Cristina García’s Dreaming in Cuban, Nora Okja Keller’s Comfort Woman, and Edwidge Danticat’s The Dew Breaker, Bellamy shows how cultural context determines the ways in which traumatic history is remembered and transmitted to future generations. Taken together, these narratives of postmemory manifest the haunting presence of the past in the present and constitute an archive of textual witness and global relevance that builds cross-cultural understanding and ethical engagement with the suffering of others.

During World War II more than one thousand Filipinas were kidnapped by the Imperial Japanese Army. Lolas’ House tells the stories of sixteen surviving Filipina “comfort women.” M. Evelina Galang enters into the lives of the women at Lolas’ House, a community center in metro Manila. She accompanies them to the sites of their abduction and protests with them at the gates of the Japanese embassy. Each woman gives her testimony, and even though the women relive their horror at each telling, they offer their stories so that no woman anywhere should suffer wartime rape and torture. Lolas’ House is a book of testimony, but it is also a book of witness, of survival, and of the female body. Intensely personal and globally political, it is the legacy of Lolas’ House to the world.

American Book Award Winner: A “stunning” memoir of surviving WWII Latvia—and the long journey to healing that followed (The New York Times Book Review). “A heart breaking yet inspiring memoir of tragedy and healing.” A Woman in Amber tells the story of how the occupation of Latvia during World War II affected a woman’s relationship with her mother and husband for years to come (Tim O’Brien). Though Agate Nesaule eventually immigrated to the United States and became successful in her professional life, she found herself suffering from depression and unable to come to terms with the events that happened to her and her family at the hands of invading Russian soldiers. In a true story that “draws the reader forward with the suspense of a novel,” Nesaule reveals the effects of hunger, both physical and emotional, in stories about begging Russian soldiers for food, the abusive relationship with her first husband, and the redemption that came when she met her second (The New York Times Book Review).