

(Full Text) River East, River West: A Novel by Aube Rey Lescure

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By: Aube Rey Lescure

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SHORTLISTED FOR THE WOMEN'S PRIZE FOR FICTIONSet against the backdrop of developing modern China, this mesmerizing literary debut is part coming-of-age tale, part family and social drama, as it follows two generations searching for belonging and opportunity in a rapidly changing worldperfect for readers ofBehold the Dreamers,White Ivy, andThe Leavers.Shanghai, 2007 Fourteen-year-old Alva has always longed for more. Raised by her American expat mother, shes never known her Chinese father, and is certain a better life awaits them in America. But when her mother announces her engagement to their wealthy Chinese landlord, Lu Fang, Alvas hopes are dashed, and so she plots for the next best thing the American School in Shanghai. Upon admission, though, Alva is surprised to discover an institution run by an exclusive community of expats and the ever-wilder thrills of a city where foreigners can ostensibly act as they please.1985 In the seaside city of Qingdao, Lu Fang is a young, married man and a lowly clerk in a shipping yard. Though he once dreamed of a bright future, he is one of many casualties in his countrys harsh political reforms. So when China opens its doors to the first wave of foreigners in decades, Lu Fangs world is split wide openafter he meets an American woman who makes him confront difficult questions abouthis current status in life, and how much will ever be enough.In a stunning reversal of the east-to-west immigrant narrative and set against Chinas political history and economic rise,River East, River Westis an intimate family drama and a sharp social novel. Alternating between Alva and Lu Fangs points of view, this is a profoundlymoving exploration of race and class, cultural identity and belonging, and the often-false promise of the American Dream.

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