



God's Boat

Kaori Ekuni, translated by Chikako Kobayashi

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Description

A poignant tale of love and loss and a mother-daughter relationship, by a bestselling Japanese author.

Yoko teaches piano during the day, works at a bar at night and dreams of her disappeared lover every single minute. “Wherever you are, whatever you are doing, I swear I will find you again”, he promised, and Yoko never stopped believing he would return. Her ten-year-old daughter Soko, born out of this brief passionate affair that marked her mother for ever, has had her life shaped by Yoko’s constant yearning, as the desperate search for the elusive man of her dreams means moving house more times than either of them can remember. The two travel through life on what Yoko calls “God’s boat”, moving from town to town, and for Soko from school to school, just as the narrative too shifts between the perspectives of the daughter and her mother, tracing them through the years as little by little the story of Yoko’s past emerges, and Soko tries to somehow build herself a future.

This haunting and sensitive novel combines the everyday patterns of the lives of mother and daughter, their rituals, their conversations, while always beyond these ordinary daily events lies what is hidden by Yoko’s seemingly unshakeable certainty: the spectre of madness and the indescribable pain of loss, so inextricably linked to the dazzling joy that only love can bring.

Readership: Fans of romance and contemporary literature.

About the Author

Kaori Ekuni began her career in children’s literature, and her debut children’s book was awarded a children’s literature prize. When she turned her hand to adult fiction, her debut *Kira kira hikaru (Twinkle Twinkle)* became a bestseller and was awarded the Murasaki Shikibu Literary Prize in 1992. Since then her essays and love stories have gained her a devoted following of readers, as well as critical acclaim – she won the 2002 Yamamoto Shugoro Prize for *Oyogu no ni anzen demo tekisetsu demo arimasen (Neither Safe nor Suitable for Swimming)*, while in 2004 she was awarded the prestigious Naoki Prize for *Gyoku suru junbi wa dekite ita (Ready to Cry at Any Moment)*.

Chikako Kobayashi was born in Hong Kong and grew up speaking English and Japanese while moving within Hong Kong, Japan and the United States with her family. After graduating from Brown University with a BA in East Asian studies in 2000, she joined a non-profit research organization in New York. Since 2003 she has been based in Tokyo as a freelance translator. She has also worked as a Japanese–English interpreter for various organizations.

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