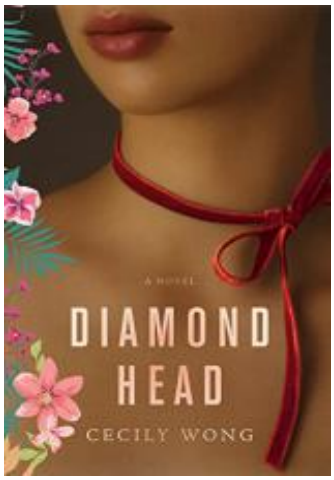
Diamond Head

by Cecily Wong



About the Book

A sweeping debut, crossing from China to Hawaii, that follows three generations of a wealthy dynasty whose rise and decline is riddled with secrets and tragic love --- from a young, powerful new voice in fiction.

Frank Leong, a prominent shipping industrialist and head of the celebrated Leong family, brings his loved ones from China to Hawaii at the turn of the 20th century, abandoning his interests at the port of Tsingtao when the Japanese invade. But something ancient follows the Leongs to the islands, haunting them --- the parable of the red string of fate. According to Chinese legend, the red string binds one to her intended beloved, but also punishes for mistakes in love, twisting any misstep into a destructive knot that passes down through generations.

Told through the eyes of the Leongs' secret-keeping daughters and wives --- and spanning the Boxer Rebellion, Pearl Harbor and 1960s Hawaii --- DIAMOND HEAD is an exploration of whether there's such a thing as a legacy of the heart. Passionate and devastating, it is a story filled with love, lies, loss and --- most astounding of all --- hope.

Discussion Guide

1. Consider the red string motif that runs throughout DIAMOND HEAD. Do you believe in the idea of a red string or a superstition that runs through generations, connecting them? Can you think of an example from your own family?

2. How is love defined in this novel? Is it defined by passion, (financial) security, obligation, etc.? Does the story suggest that love is predestined or that love can be chosen and cultivated?

3. Discuss the role of guilt throughout the novel. What kind of guilt does each character feel, where does it come from and how does that guilt affect them throughout the novel?

4. DIAMOND HEAD offers a commentary about the role of women in Chinese culture. Considering Lin, Amy and

Theresa, what is the role of women throughout the novel, and does it change over the course of the three generations?

5. Though most of the novel is told from the perspectives of Lin, Theresa and Amy, Hong plays a very important role. Discuss Hong?s character and her role in the story.

6. Is Amy to blame, at least partly, for Frank?s death? Do you think she deserves to carry that burden? Why or why not?

7. Discuss the role of the men in the novel. Consider Bohai, Frank, Henry and Grandpa Chan. How is masculinity viewed within the culture and society?

8. Is there a single protagonist in this story? How did hearing all the different voices and perspectives inform your attachment to the characters?

9. The story weaves in and out through distance and across time. What is the purpose of telling the story in this way? How does the story?s structure tie in with the overall theme of the novel?

10. Explore the mother-daughter relationships in the novel. Do the women in the novel end up forging new lives for themselves outside of their mothers? influences, or do they end up becoming products of their mothers? mistakes?

11. At the end of novel, Hong explains what she believes is the difference between fate and destiny. Do you agree with her differentiation? Which characters relied on fate and which characters relied on destiny?

Enhance Your Discussion

Cecily Wong would love to be involved in your book club?s discussions of her work, by phone/video chat or in person, if possible.Contact her at cecily@cecilywong.com.

Author Bio

Cecily Wong is the author of the novels KALEIDOSCOPE and DIAMOND HEAD, which was a Barnes & Noble Discover Great New Writers selection, the recipient of an *Elle* Readers? Prize, and voted a best debut of the Brooklyn Book Festival. Her work has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Self Magazine*, *Bustle* and elsewhere. She is a graduate of Barnard College and lives in New York, where she is a writer at *Atlas Obscura*.

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Publication Date: March 29, 2016
Genres: Fiction, Historical Fiction
Paperback: 336 pages
Publisher: Harper Perennial
ISBN-10: 0062345443
ISBN-13: 9780062345448