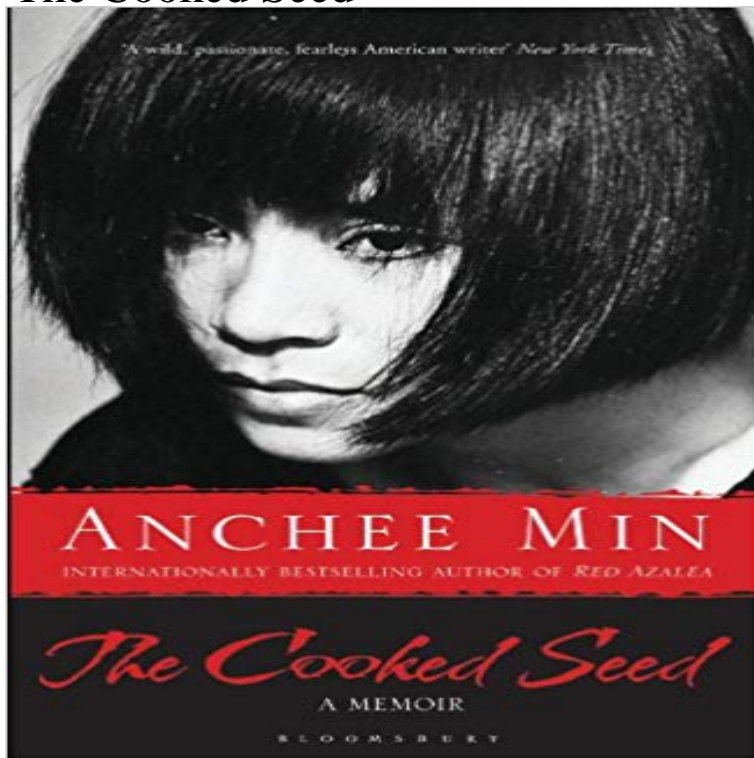


The Cooked Seed



In 1994, Anchee Min published *Red Azalea*, a memoir of growing up during the violent trauma of the Cultural Revolution. It became an international bestseller. Twenty years later, Min returns to give us the next chapter, as she moves from the shocking deprivations of her homeland to the sudden bounty of the promised land of America, without language, money or a clear path. With the help of actress Joan Chen, Anchee applies to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She shows a portfolio of her self-taught brush paintings at the US consulate and is granted an entry visa, but once in America, Anchee finds she is on her own, forced to survive by her wits and indomitable spirit. She teaches herself English by watching *Sesame Street*, has five jobs at once sleeps in unheated rooms in desolate neighbourhoods. As well as her struggle to understand her new country the food, the warm showers Anchee suffers rape, collapses from exhaustion, marries poorly and divorces after giving birth to her daughter, Lauryann. Despite her tough, lonely journey, Anchee finds that it is Lauryann who will save her and root her, finally, in America. As a child, Anchee understood herself as a mere bolt on the great machine that was Communism; in America she learns how to succeed in a radically different culture despite bitter hardships and countless setbacks. *The Cooked Seed* is an unforgettable story.

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