



# **Trees Without Wind: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia)**

*Rui Li*

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# Trees Without Wind: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia)

Rui Li

## Trees Without Wind: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia) Rui Li

Unfolding in the tense years of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), *Trees Without Wind* takes place in a remote Shanxi village in which a rare affliction has left the residents physically stunted. Director Liu, an older revolutionary and local commune head, becomes embroiled in a power struggle with Zhang Weiguo, a young ideologue who believes he is the model of a true revolutionary. Complicating matters is a woman named Nuanyu, who, like Zhang Weiguo and Director Liu, is an outsider untouched by the village's disease. "Wedded" to all of the male villagers, Nuanyu lives a polyandrous lifestyle based on necessity and at odds with the puritanical idealism of the Cultural Revolution.

The deformed villagers, representing the manipulated masses of China, become pawns in the Party representatives' factional infighting. Director Liu and Zhang Weiguo's explosive tug-of-war is part of a larger battle among politics, self-interest, and passion gripping a world undone by ideological extremism. A collectively told narrative powered by distinctive subjectivities, *Trees Without Wind* is a milestone in the fictional treatment of a horrific event.

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