

Naked Earth (New York Review Books Classics)

Eileen Chang



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An NYRB Classics Original

Set in the early years of Mao's China, *Naked Earth* is the story of two earnest young people confronting the grim realities of revolutionary change. Liu Ch'üan and Su Nan meet in the countryside after volunteering to assist in the new land reform program. Eager to build a more just society, they are puzzled and shocked by the brutality, barely disguised corruption, and ruthless careerism they discover, but then quickly silenced by the barrage of propaganda and public criticism that is directed at anyone who appears to doubt a righteous cause. Joined together by the secret of their common dismay, they remain in touch when Liu departs to work on a newspaper in Peking, where Su Nan eventually also moves. Something like love begins to grow between them—but then a new round of purges sweeps through the revolutionary ranks.

One of the greatest and most loved of modern Chinese writers, Eileen Chang illuminates the dark corners of the human existence with a style of disorienting beauty. *Naked Earth*, unavailable in English for more than fifty years, is a harrowing tale of perverted ideals, damaged souls, deepest loneliness, and terror.

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