



China Run

David Ball

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"Instead, she was heading upriver, deeper into the heart of China...."

AS FRESH AS TODAY'S HEADLINES -- THE CHILLING, SUSPENSEFUL STORY OF A MOTHER, A NEWLY ADOPTED CHILD, AND A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT TRYING TO SEPARATE THEM...

For Allison Turk, the journey to China to claim the daughter she is adopting had been a trying experience, a series of false starts and long waits. Forced to travel without her husband, she makes the trip with her nine-year-old stepson. She hopes it will be a bonding experience, but so far this hasn't happened.

When she finally holds the little girl in her arms, however, she knows that the trip has been worth all the effort and aggravation. In only two days, she will board a plane for home, taking with her the greatest pride and joy she has ever known.

Then suddenly everything unravels. Summoned to an emergency meeting of the adoptive parents, Allison is told a mistake has been made -- a "clerical error." The Americans have been given healthy infants rather than children with special needs, for which they are technically qualified, and they are told they must exchange their babies for different children. Allison is faced with a terrible decision: Should she capitulate and surrender the child she has come to love intensely, or risk an attempt to reach the American consulate in Shanghai, where she might at least have a chance to negotiate and keep her baby?

Joining with several other American couples caught in the same dilemma, Allison chooses to run. There is a more sinister reason underlying the nightmare than they know about, and their flight spawns a massive manhunt led by a ruthless police colonel wielding all the terrifying apparatus of a police state. What ensues is tense, dramatic, and totally believable -- a race in which Allison not only struggles with her infant daughter and recalcitrant stepson, but is caught in a political tug-of-war that forces her to display a depth of courage and a strength of will she had never known she possessed.

Inspired by a true-life incident, "China Run" takes the reader on a breathtaking chase across China that is gripping, compulsively readable, and frighteningly real.

China Run Details

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Author : David Ball

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Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review China Run for online ebook

Bert Tomlin says

I chose this audiobook basically to hear narrator George Guidall. He keeps you on the edge of your seat. Quite a change from other mysteries I have read recently. Loved listening to it.

Jan says

I consider it another layer of immersion in a culture to read about it as I wander around the streets of a country. This book is no exception, although it gave me chills a few times with the graphic explanation of the female trade in China for adoption, sex, and organ donation. Ball certainly creates a story that undermines the governmental role with crime connections.

Well written, full of surprise turns and cultural information, long but interesting; an overall good read. Now I want to know if the Chinese government is tracking my every move.

Larry Bassett says

I paid \$1 for China Run from a bargain counter at a Target, not my usual source of reading material. But I was in the process of adopting a little girl from China and this book seemed to be begging to be read. I started it but was soon distracted by the process of the adoption and the rest of life. The adoption completed going on four years ago, I recently pulled the book from its pile and thought I would try again. I am glad I did. There is a good deal of mystery, suspense, travelogue, history, culture, violent death and adventure here.

Whatever you have heard negative about China this novel will confirm! From bribery and other corrupt processes to selling children into the Asian sex trade and selling babies into black market adoptions, it is all here. China PR does not fair well here although as you might suspect there are some good Chinese people who make the story happen. In fact, maybe they are a little too good, several risking and some loosing their lives for the main characters. The kind of characters that you often find in mystery and spy and adventure stories and usually seem unlikely to me but essential to the story.

China Run was probably researched in the late 1990s. And there was a good deal of research done, that is certain. But research about 20th century China has a half-life of about 5 years. Things are changing so rapidly that a book published in 2002 is probably out of date in many ways by 2010. I don't know at what point you refer to a book as historical fiction. It probably isn't ten years but maybe we should use cat years for China and call it 55 years instead of 10.

China Run is nearly nonstop international intrigue with a nine year old playing an unlikely central role, people taking big risks for people they don't know, characters managing to hold onto their luggage throughout their fugitive experience including escaping from a sinking boat. The airlines should only be so good at hanging onto suitcases! But how would the baby have had enough formula powder for the entire book otherwise? I guess this books counts on you willingly suspending disbelief for a lot of its effectiveness. But I would say that it is worth the effort. Anyway, I got my dollar's worth.

Dorothyd says

J'ai lu ce livre étant attirée par son thème: l'adoption! Le début est poignant et on ne peut que ressentir l'émotion de ces nouveaux parents à l'idée de perdre leurs enfants. Que l'on comprenne ou non la décision de cette femme de s'enfuir avec son bébé dans une Chine très stricte sur la réglementation des adoptions et où l'on ne voyage pas facilement et discrètement... on rentre dans l'histoire très facilement et avec trépidation, que va-t-il leur arriver? Vont-ils y arriver?
La 1ère moitié du livre, très bien!

Puis... j'ai commencé à m'ennuyer et à m'agacer, que de catastrophes jalonnent leurs routes (accident, naufrage,...), ça en devient complètement irréaliste, trop de malheurs s'abattent sur eux, je n'y croyais plus! J'ai malgré tout lu jusqu'au bout, cela se redresse un peu à la fin mais malgré tout, bilan mitigé de cette lecture. Ça ne me laisse pas un souvenir génial, tellement j'ai cessé d'adhérer à la fin.

Trudy Wyss says

I really was sucked in by this book at first. I listened to half of the audiobook but gradually got more and more bothered by my inability to believe that the characters would actually do what Ball said they were doing. They were running with babies when they had been promised other babies. It wasn't like they would go home without a child. I understand they had bonded with those babies, but still. They're running through a country they don't know, the police and government officials are after them, and then people actually start to die! People are dying and risking everything to help Americans who prefer the babies they have to other babies. And the main character, Allison, is running with her 9-year-old stepson, putting him at risk not to save this baby she's known for 4 days—the baby's safety is never at risk—but to keep her. The motivation just didn't fit the extremes to which the characters were willing to go.

Lartemis says

I listened to the audio-book. The story was action packed! I enjoyed the author's descriptions of the local colors, smells, and sounds: from the big city hotel to the rural pig-sty, I felt I was there. The author is explicit in describing the treatment of abandoned and orphaned children, mostly girls. He deals with the Chinese mafia, police brutality, and other issues. I am hopeful that these problems have improved in the ten years since the book was written, especially with the lifting of China's "one-child-policy". I am not naive enough to imagine that there is total reform, especially as sex-trafficking has become an issue even in my little area of Wisconsin.

Erin (Brown) Vrugic says

A true account of the culture, society, and government of China. I knew from the first chapter that the author really did his research to show the inside view of the layers of Chinese corruption, closed doors, and every day life of the people.

I listened to the audio version on a road trip. The character voices were a bit challenging to adjust to. The vocalics get better once the characters developed. Some parts of the book just kept going, so I was tempted to skip a few scenes 3/4 of the way through.

It opened my eyes to the reality of adapting from China, but it will not deter me from adapting some day.

Kaity Pullon says

China Run

I am going to give it positive review. I liked the book a lot it was one of my more favorite books. I liked the book because it is usually the kind of books I read. I liked the book because it is so adventures and outgoing. I do not like the book because it is so long. It is still a great book even though it is so long.

Yes it did seem like it was really happening. It was kind of both. In some areas of the book you knew what was going to happen. But in other parts of the book you did not know what was going to happen. It moves very fast for me. But the chapters in the book are so long. It felt like it toke me forever because of the long chapters.

There are a lot of parts where the author writes in Chinese because he writes their conversations. Yes I do like there still of writing. Why because I was reading a book about China Run. So it would make sense that there would be some Chinese words. No the writing is not too simple or to wordy at all. No the author does not over develop things and the author does not under- develop things either. The writing was relatable because I would have done the same things those parents did for their kids. They did not try to make you understand the writing it was very easy to understand. Yes the dialogue is realistic I could see people on a boat running from the government easily.

The point of the book was for people to put their feet into their shoes. To see how it would to be a mother and then get your kid taken away from them. No there really was nothing that would stick with me. People should get out of this book that it is hard to be parents that adopt kids from another country. Also it is hard to just give up your kid that you just got. You should learn to follow all the rules of another country so you do not end up running everywhere in another country. It made me realize that parents will do anything for their kids.

Carolyn says

This book is a special one to me - I found this one solely because it was read by George Guidall and I could get it downloaded to my phone. I was having a hard time following all of the characters and on Shelfari (now defunct) most books had a characters list that I could reference or at least print off and make notes as I went. This one did not have such a character list so somehow I found him (I think probably he has a website - it's been a few years) and I wrote him with a request for the list. He didn't have one handy but took the time to write one up for me and e-mailed it back! It was so cool!

Sally Walker says

This was an interesting book about a culture I have only read a few books about so I was open to learning new things about the Chinese. I am very grateful the author, David Ball, included a map (you'll need it if you read it to follow along). The reason I gave this book 4 stars was that it was so suspenseful and the love that

Allison had for her adoptive daughter was amazing. So believable and beautiful. It actually opened my mind (which previously never considered adopting a child since my body does okay producing them on its own) to the real love that a woman can feel for a child that is not her own flesh and blood. My conclusion is that love knows no boundaries.

Althea Ann says

This book didn't sound too great to me, from the cover blurb, but I'd read and really really liked both of David Ball's other novels, *Empires of Sand* and *Ironfire* (also published as *The Sword and the Scimitar*). Both of those are big, dramatic historical epics full of blood and romance. *China Run*, on the other hand, is a contemporary thriller about adoption in China. Not the most thrilling topic, to me. But like I said, I REALLY liked his other two novels, so I picked this book up.

I didn't expect it to be as good - but I also didn't expect it to be this BAD. This book is sheer, 100% anti-China propaganda. Now, I'm not saying that the Chinese government isn't bad - the problems with China and its government could indeed fill whole books. But this novel relies on shock tactics. The problem isn't the facts, but the way it's written.

A group of Americans go to China to adopt baby girls. They're given a set of babies, but after a couple of days, they're told there was a mistake - they were supposed to get handicapped children, not healthy infants. Some of the group refuse to accept this, kidnap the babies, and go on a dangerous flight through China. Interestingly, Ball doesn't make the Americans ideal parents. They include a blatant racist and a psychotically violent man, and the main character, Allison, who's made out to be a hero, is obviously really a nutcase, who has already taken a birth mother to court to try to take her baby, in America, and is just like, "YOU WILL NOT TAKE ANOTHER BABY FROM ME! I WANT A BABY!" - even though she already has a stepson!

OK, so the fleeing Americans put themselves, the babies and others in danger, a lot of people die, and it's only by chance that a Chinese investigator discovers a secret orphanage where the best-and-brightest orphans are adopted for a premium fee, some pretty girls are trained to be high-priced escorts and prostitutes, and terminally ill orphans have organs removed for transplants when they die. Is any of that really that horrific? I don't think so. But apparently we're supposed to think it is. Anyway, the investigator gets executed for his pains, as do a lot of other people of varying degrees of guilt, and one Chinese baby gets to come back to America and live with a psycho pseudo-mom.

Whatever.

Mmtimes4 says

""Allison realized she'd been awake for twenty-four hours. She hadn't done that since college. It had been the

most remarkable twenty-four hours of her life -- hours in which, for better or worse, a choice had been made, a line crossed. There was no going back. Each time she thought about it, she felt the same strange shock: She was a straitlaced civil engineer from Denver, huddled in the bowels of a broken-down cargo boat on the Wan Li Chang Jiang, the Yangtze River. Hunted by police, with her stepson and a baby that wasn't legally hers. "With all that, she was not even heading toward Shanghai, toward home.

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Inspired by a true-life incident, "China Run" takes the reader on a breathtaking chase across China that is gripping, compulsively readable, and frighteningly real.

This book was recommended by a friend. I enjoyed it and wondered how much was truth and what was fiction. As a parent of adopted child, I know how much you love them from the minute you set your eyes on them. It gave me a chance to think about people who have gone before us to make adopting from China possible. I have a friend in the process of adopting a medically fragile little girl of China, so excited for them and for this little girl to have a chance to be part of a loving home. A good exciting read.

Lindee says

I know I'm pretty provincial when it comes to this sort of thing, but I know that swearing will turn me off almost any book immediately. Due to my upbringing, the sound of any swear word, said or read grates upon the ear. If the story had been one iota more exciting or the characters one bit less believable and likable, I'd have dumped the book back in the drop.

One thing I disliked was how the author would summarize his next section in one sentence before explaining the actual events. "It was three o'clock the next day when the guard saw Tyler." He then explains how the guard seeing Tyler comes about. It's done numerous times and began to bother me.

Other than that, the book was amazing. It was a great book to add to my dossier of knowledge concerning other cultures.

Rob & Liz says

A very informative book about trying to outwit the ways a controlled society works in tracking people. Though the book is based on a true story, the question is what part, children, corrupt officials, war lords, human organs being sold, its law, saving face or human compassion.

I enjoyed the authors' pace with its sudden turns of events and mixture of people with some who think outside the state's expectation and others who see money to be made regardless of who is affected.

Right or wrong, three USA women escape through China with their adopted children that the officials want back and will replace them with other children. This adventure brings out the story of the China Run and the author exposes items we hear about but do not think about all the time. Perhaps some parts are expanded for the story but it is based on a country that is still one party and one way.

Time will tell

Rob

Lora says

I listened to this audiobook. Although it has taken me months to listen to it, I didn't lose my place between listening times because the plot held my interest and the prose wasn't complicated. I learned about China and how the government treats its people, especially children. The characters were pretty believable, though somewhat stereotyped, and the ending wasn't really a surprise, but it was satisfying after such a long book to have a happy ending. The reader did a good job with the various characters.
