



Typical American (Vintage Contemporaries)

Gish Jen

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From the beloved author of *Mona in the Promised Land* and *The Love Wife* comes this comic masterpiece, an insightful novel of immigrants experiencing the triumphs and trials of American life. Gish Jen reinvents the American immigrant story through the Chang family, who first come to the United States with no intention of staying. When the Communists assume control of China in 1949, though, Ralph Chang, his sister Theresa, and his wife Helen, find themselves in a crisis. At first, they cling to their old-world ideas of themselves.

But as they begin to dream the American dream of self-invention, they move poignantly and ironically from people who disparage all that is “typical American” to people who might be seen as typically American themselves. With droll humor and a deep empathy for her characters, Gish Jen creates here a superbly engrossing story that resonates with wit and wisdom even as it challenges the reader to reconsider what a typical American might be today.

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