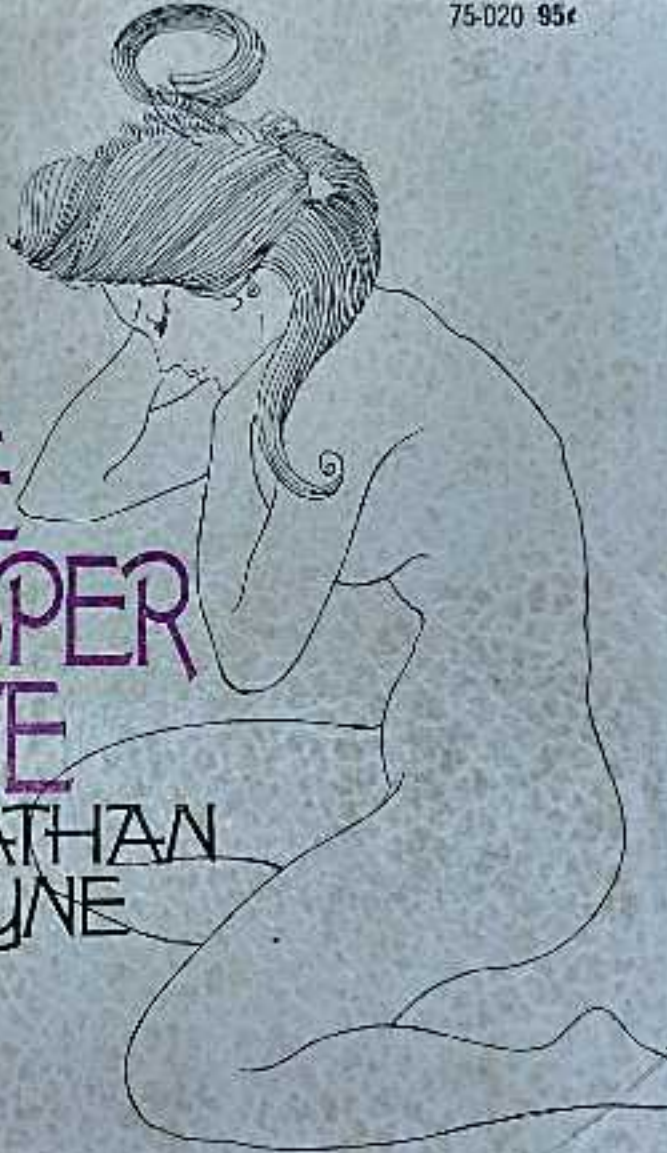


The memoirs of a Chinese courtesan

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THE ART OF MYSTERIOUS JOY

From the age of fourteen—when her parents sold her to keep their other children alive—she lived in what the Chinese call “the Land of Wind and Willows.” In simple terms, prostitution. But not really so simple. For in China, even in the turbulent times of Japanese occupation and Red revolution, the erotic involves more than bodies. The secrets of Taoist sages, the delights of music and sparkling wit, the ancient skills and arts of love...

“From childhood I was trained to divine a man’s mood, to smooth away his worries, to arouse the drowsy senses of the elderly and jaded, extracting from them such prodigious youthful feats as to make them believe winter is giving way to spring. I am glad to have been a courtesan, for in truth I am fond of men and I enjoy each fresh recognition of my power to give exquisite pleasure...”

Jonathan Quayne, who set down this exotic life story, extracted it in daily hours of conversation over many months with the woman known as Mysterious Joy. He is currently preparing a sequel giving her further reminiscences of a now-vanished world. He studied Chinese at Oxford University, has taught at universities in

Taiwan and Hong Kong, and now lives in Thailand.

