

***Little Sister Left Behind* – a synopsis**

By Samantha Lê

In this, her first novel, Samantha Lê composes a stunning requiem of childhood, loss, and transformation with the aid of memory and heart. The novel transports us to Viet Nam in 1974 where a family's strong bonds are weakened by radical social change. We follow our heroine's father, mother, and sisters as they overcome peeping-toms, near drownings, and marital infidelities. We are with them on their trip to Bangkok, San Francisco, and finally to San Jose, California, where old familial bonds give way to the frustrations written into our "American Dream"...frustrations with which all immigrants are familiar. The story culminates in the life-and-death struggle between Father's unrealized aspirations and our heroine's fated attempt to free herself from the bonds of tradition and circumstance.

*Little Sister Left Behind* is a tender, unapologetic look at the Vietnamese experience over the last thirty years—both in Vietnam and in America. The troubled relationship between our heroine and her family ultimately reveals the universal human tenderness and cruelty that places in high relief the ties that bond us with one another.