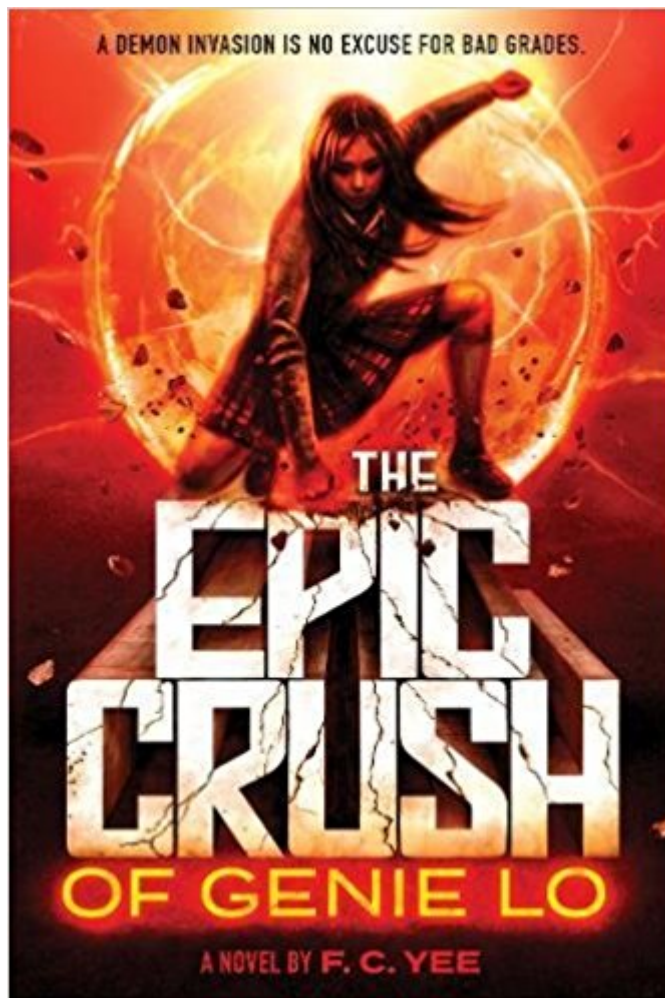


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The Epic Crush Of Genie Lo



Synopsis

The struggle to get into a top-tier college consumes sixteen-year-old Genie's every waking thought. But when she discovers she's a celestial spirit who's powerful enough to bash through the gates of heaven with her fists, her perfectionist existence is shattered. Enter Quentin, a transfer student from China whose tone-deaf assertiveness beguiles Genie to the brink of madness. Quentin nurtures Genie's outrageous transformation "sometimes gently, sometimes aggressively" as her sleepy suburb in the Bay Area comes under siege from hell-spawn. This epic YA debut draws from Chinese folklore, features a larger-than-life heroine, and perfectly balances the realities of Genie's grounded high school life with the absurd supernatural world she finds herself commanding. Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

****STARRED REVIEW**** "In this dazzlingly fun debut, Yee mixes humor, Chinese folklore, and action to deliver a rousing, irreverent adventure packed with sharp-edged banter." (Publishers Weekly)
****STARRED REVIEW**** "A tough, self-disciplined Chinese-American teen deals with the supernatural derailing of her college-prep activities in this speculative fiction novel that draws on the folklore of the Chinese Monkey King... An exciting, engaging, and humorous debut that will appeal widely, this wraps up neatly enough but leaves an opening for further installments" here's hoping." (Kirkus)
****STARRED REVIEW**** "Genie's perspective on the strange turn her life has taken will have readers laughing out loud...Hilarious and action-packed, this fantastically executed tale of the Monkey King in modern-day California introduces a great new character in Genie Lo."

(School Library Journal)"Genie is a unique and uniquely funny heroine, a trove of biting cultural commentary, insight on life as an Asian-American teen, and compelling interpretations of ancient Eastern legends." (Chicago Tribune)"It's refreshing to see the Chinese pantheon steal some of the literary attention lavished on the Greek, Roman, and Nordic gods, and Lee handily gets Western readers up to speed on requisite backstories and proclivities." (Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books)

F. C. Yee grew up in New Jersey and studied economics at Brown University. For his debut novel, he drew inspiration from the best and wisest people in his life. Outside of writing, he practices capoeira, a Brazilian form of martial arts. He currently calls the San Francisco Bay Area home. A

I knew this book would be great. I just had this innate feeling that this book would rocket up my list of best reads of the year (so far, of course). And it did. If you buy one book this year, let it be The Epic Crush of Genie Lo. With a diverse cast, a world both unlike anything I've read but also made highly accessible, and a story that had me tearing through the pages, I devoured this book much like a yaoguai would a human. For starters, Genie is Chinese American. I'm not, so I can't speak to the rep of this book but I'll say that I think Yee addressed stereotypes of Asian-American people that I've heard over the years and instead of enforcing them, gave a more realistic view to this culture subset. There were differences in the way that Genie and her mom interacted, and with some of the comments Genie made about the world, that differed from my home life and that of others I know and I liked seeing a new side of the world. My own background has been relatively sheltered and whitewashed because of where I live, and I haven't had the chance to expand beyond that but I think this book was definitely a step in the right direction, and I encourage everyone to read it for that experience alone because there's a lot we can learn from fiction beyond how to defeat demons. Then there's the mythology woven into the world. I love mythology, especially from cultures that aren't as prevalent (Greek mythology is great, y'all, but let's change it up). This book focuses on Ancient Chinese folklore and brings those stories to life through the characters (quite literally). I think the way Yee presented the tales isn't as a wise storyteller trying to impart wisdom, but as a teenager making sense of the stories really worked both to show Genie's character as well as make a likely unfamiliar topic accessible to a lot of readers. Genie has become one of my favorite YA heroines. She's got such much going on in her life, it's a wonder she manages it all and successfully at that. There was just the right balance here of

fantastical demon hunting and the pressures of school (getting good grades, getting into a good college, not disappointing your parents, all the things that go with being a teen). She's a fluid character in that she felt real, as though this is someone I might run into on the street but who could also smash a god into the ground. She's down-to-earth and takes each situation in stride. This is the kind of heroine I want teens to read about, the kind of character that every reader can find a piece of themselves in. Not that the other characters were slouches. Quentin cracked me up, partially because the two of them together reminded me way too much of InuYasha and Kagome from the anime InuYasha (and yes, I understand the cultural differences between this book and the show, I am comparing the characters and the story itself in this case). Honestly, the comparisons were so prominent I could write a whole post about them on their own (and I might). He sees something in Genie that she hasn't seen herself yet and watching their friendship grow was a great display of how people feed off each other. They both learned something in the process of the grand adventure. A smaller note but I loved the twist on Genie's identity. It wasn't what I was expecting at all but added yet another interesting element to this book. Before I start rambling too much more, let me just say that The Epic Crush of Genie Lo was one of the most unique and entertaining books I've read in a while. It's beautifully diverse and original, one part superhero tale, one part mythological goodness. Everyone needs to read this book. No exceptions. Get on it, y'all!

I put this book on my Kindle wishlist a while ago, and by the time it came out I had forgotten what it was about, so I thought it was a superhero type book. But it was much more like a Rick Riordan "Mythology is everywhere!" style book and I'm SO GLAD it was because those are among my favorite types of books. Needless to say I was captivated by this book and absolutely enjoyed the heck out of it. Genie Lo as a character was very well crafted. Her voice was clear and consistent, and I could relate to her desire to do well in school. Genie is at first very skeptical of Quentin, but their friendship and then relationship was pleasant to read about. I'm not always for straight ships but I did root for them getting together, and I like that Genie was never head-over-heels YA protagonist drooling over Quentin, even though he was good looking. The best part of this story is the mythology. I won't claim to be an expert on Chinese legends but I have heard of some of them, and so I liked hearing about more of them! Genie's powers are brutal and unrelenting and I like that a girl in a YA story gets to bring the hurt on the bad guys instead of just casting spells from a distance away. I wanted Genie to beat up all the demons! I find that very cathartic. Even though I read this for the fantasy aspects, the more real life aspects in the book were still interesting to me.

Genie has a unique family dynamic and I feel like that storyline was very well described and had a lot of verisimilitude. I like that Genie still went to school and tried to live a normal life after Quentin turns it upside down. It felt fresh and I appreciated that. Again, a wonderful book. The only thing it was missing was some LGBT+ characters but it was such a quality book that I'll let that slide.

What a pleasurable read! The Epic Crush of Genie Lo is a book that would appeal to all readers. This story has it all, epic battles, good versus evil, romance, Chinese mythology, I could keep going on and on! This story was better than I ever expected, I just couldn't get enough and I hope against hope that it will turn into a series!! Genie Lo is not your average teenager. She spent all her free time hyper-focused on getting into a top-tier college and her entire life was centered on that goal until the day she met Quentin Sun. Quentin was not your average transfer student, in fact there was something very unique about him indeed. Once he came into her life, reality as she knew it turned itself upside down. Quentin was relentless in his pursuit of Genie, I thought that was just adorable. What he wanted from Genie was not very clear, at the start, but what was clear was that once demons start showing up in this small California city Genie needed Quentin's experience fighting these demons. Together they will come against an epic force that will strip Genie to the core and force her to face her inner capabilities. Seriously, this was an exciting read and I had fun reading every page! Genie's character was fully realized and her voice was exactly what I would expect from a teenage girl with the expectations she has set for herself. The way that Quentin and Genie speak to each other is very relatable and frank. It has snark, sarcasm, and created a real team feel between the characters. I know that I absolutely want more of them! In addition, the friendship between Genie and her best friend Yunie was just wonderful. I do wish that there had been more of Yunie in this book because I really enjoyed their interactions. Yunie was a great supporting character and the scenes she was in had me laughing out loud! Quentin was a character and a half. From the moment he came on the scene he was intense, comedic, and a great anti-hero. He was just adorable and his intensity towards Genie was perfect. At the start, he came off stalkerish but when you learn why he was drawn to her it will all make sense. I loved, loved, loved, that Quentin was not an alpha-male towards Genie. He respected her, not saying that he didn't try to get heavy handed at the start, but he quickly gave Genie the space she needed to improve. This story has the "chosen one" trope but it is not cliché. As the story develops you quickly realize that the characters have layers and the chosen one has not been chosen for an obvious reason. It is quite hilarious actually how Genie came to be the "chosen one." I absolutely enjoyed the Chinese mythology that was written into this

storyline. I liked that I knew what to expect with the folklore but that there were unique differences and that they were relatable in a modern way. One thing that really endeared me to the story was that the story was about Genie and at no point did the male characters take away from that. Quentin was very much the stronger of the two characters but he was secondary in the battles because it was about Genie training, overcoming her struggles, and coming into her strengths. Definitely a book that inspires girl power. Overall I found every aspect about The Epic Crush of Genie Lo to be memorable. The characters were just fantastic and layered. The relationship between Genie and her parents is comical and heartwarming. There are pop culture references used that keep the story tethered in the here and now. With much of the storyline tied up with mythological creatures and fighting demons the references help to keep the story where it was intended. I believe that the author did an amazing job blending action, badassery, and Chinese mythology into a book that will appeal to all readers! This review is based on a complimentary book I received from NetGalley. It is an honest and voluntary review. The complimentary receipt of it in no way affected my review or rating.

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