



The Laughing Sutra

Mark Salzman

Download now

Read Online ➔

The Laughing Sutra

Mark Salzman

The Laughing Sutra Mark Salzman

Iron & Silk, Mark Salzman's bestselling account of his adventures as an English teacher and martial arts student in China, introduced a writer of enormous charm and keen insight into the cultural chasm between East and West. Now Salzman returns to China in his first novel, which follows the adventures of Hsun-ching, a naive but courageous orphan, and the formidable and mysterious Colonel Sun, who together travel from mainland China to San Francisco, risking everything to track down an elusive Buddhist scripture called The Laughing Sutra. Part Tom Sawyer, part Tom Jones, The Laughing Sutra draws us into an irresistible narrative of danger and comedy that speaks volumes about the nature of freedom and the meaning of loyalty.

The Laughing Sutra Details

Date : Published January 15th 1992 by Vintage (first published 1991)

ISBN : 9780679735465

Author : Mark Salzman

Format : Paperback 272 pages

Genre : Fiction, Fantasy, Cultural, China, Academic, School, Philosophy, Asia, Spirituality

 [Download The Laughing Sutra ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Laughing Sutra ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Laughing Sutra Mark Salzman

From Reader Review The Laughing Sutra for online ebook

Debbie Zapata says

The Laughing Sutra is the story of Hsun-ching, who travels from China to America to find a sacred scroll for Wei-ching an old monk who cared for Hsun-ching from the time he was a young boy, hoping to fulfill the old man's one desire in life, which was to read that particular sutra. Hsun-ching travels with a mysterious partner (you may call him Colonel Sun) who turned out to be essential to everything and a petty cool character.

I love Salzman's work, and this book was wonderful, but someday I want to come back to it and have a re-read, since this first time through was interrupted by more than a couple of real life events and I couldn't focus enough to truly catch the deeper thoughts on freedom and loyalty that are woven through the story. Hopefully next time I open the book I will be better able to concentrate!

Karen says

I really liked this book. The story was a great mix of fantasy, history, loyalty, love, you name it and it was part of the story. The characters were interesting and I found myself rooting for them at every turn of their adventures.

Mitch says

I am not sure why I didn't rate this one higher. It isn't a bad book at all; it just didn't strike me as better than average.

The storyline is a fantasy quest; a young student sets off in search of a miraculous sutra-scroll for his failing master. He is accompanied by a mythical creature who is trying to reconcile ancient values with the things he encounters in the modern world, often with mixed results.

The best bits, I felt, were those of cultural misunderstanding between the Chinese way(s) of looking at things, and the American way(s) of doing the same. The author played these for their humor, with an underlying edge of truth to them.

I enjoyed the ending- I like happy endings, after all- and therefore left with a better impression of the book than I had most of the time while I was reading it.

Judy says

This wasn't at all like the books I usually read, but I did enjoy it. This is said to be "a contemporary version of a classic tale." Now I'm curious about the original version (but I don't know that I'd want to read a long story from Chinese folklore).

p 95 About being truthful:

"... Sometimes telling the truth is important, but sometimes it isn't."

"It's just that I don't like lying," Hsun-ching said. "One you start, what's to stop you from doing it all the time?"

The colonel clicked his tongue with impatience. "Common sense, unless you're an idiot."

p 125 According to the colonel ...

"You can't live without suffering losses now and then, that's just a fact. But you can't lose spirit over it; it should strengthen your resolve!"

And on page 130,

"I have always been fascinated by loyalty. It fascinates me because it doesn't make sense!"

Loyalty is the basis of the story, with numerous examples and references, told using a mix of humor and classic wisdom.

Cynthia says

Lets just say Mark knows how to choose a book title:)

The Laughing Sutra is very different from what i've read before, for one it's set in China most of it and that's a first for me and its writing is so simple it makes it easier to get through. For me it partly read like a middle grade but it isn't a middle grade which is amazing. This book has a way of knocking your emotions of course. One second you're laughing and the next something has happened and your entire emotions shift. I'm so glad i picked it up and it made me want to read the rest of the books by Mark Sulzman.

Mary says

Excellent tale of enlightenment and struggle.

H. says

This seems like Christopher Moore's version of fun, and it is for readers too. What Salzman does best is write about China. He doesn't paint it as a bleak place of no hope, not does he sugar coat it. He simply turns it into an imaginable place.

The use of Monkey works, for the most part. Salzman is widely judicious with how much he leans on "INTO THE WEST", but it does get distracting sometimes... after the discovery of the pig train it seems there are to be more allusions to Monkey, but Sandy and the rest seem to have been left at home.

Kim says

A classic quest novel. My son was assigned it for summer reading so I picked it up. I can see how it worked well for his assignment. For leisure reading however, it was merely ok. A quick read that is unlikely to stay with me.

Gita says

I loved this book, though I can't remember much about it now. But I really enjoyed it!! Read it about 20 years ago, probably.

Toya Fish says

This is a slow start kind of book.

Does give you the reminder of the potential beauty of that lives within all of us and in the world around us if we have the courage to open our eyes to see it.

Spoiler of Opinion!!! ->

Unfortunately, I personally was looking for more technique. The martial arts for example are as lacking as a four year old writer. When you think those moves out in your head is one thing however to dramatically to empower the emotions needed to create the scene's credibility to the reader makes or breaks the book.

Owen Curtsinger says

Character development and stylish prose are definitely not Salzman's strong points as a novelist; The Laughing Sutra floats along with almost no real convincing and vivid descriptions of characters or scenes. What the novel relies on to move along is the plot itself, and I found this strikingly similar to most actual Chinese classical works. From what I've read, many classical tales rely on the plot for power and effect, relaying the main idea (or teaching) through the situations that characters find themselves in rather than artful descriptions of the characters or situations themselves. Characters are often described only by their most notable physical features and their job or station in life. It's then up to the plot line of the story to hook the reader in and impart an idea or lesson. Given this, I feel like Salzman has done a great job rendering his own sort of classical Chinese tale from those he's admired (the obvious one being Journey to the West). It was a joy to read, despite the flat characters, and had some really great moments of describing the clash of cultures between East and West that any seasoned Sinophile would find amusing.

Hu says

Delightful slapstick starring an unlucky Chinese peasant and mirthless 2000 year old warrior finding themselves in San Francisco attempting to steal a sacred Buddhist text to smuggle back into China.

Stephen Gallup says

What a delightful book! The wife and daughter both became curious about it when they heard my laughter and saw how reluctant I was to put it down. And yet, despite the humor it's not just fluff. (Which puts me in mind of a forgettable novel by Douglas Adams, in which it felt as if the author were trying too hard to be funny -- because in that case without the giggles there wasn't much else.) If the humor were stripped out, *The Laughing Sutra* would still be an engaging story. This is my fourth exposure to Mark Salzman and I must say he never disappoints.

Jacob says

I was skeptical about the idea of a westerner modernizing Journey to the West, but I ended up quite smitten with this book. It is both comfortable and exotic, and much like french fries and a milkshake is a successful combination of unlikely flavors. The outrageous characters in this book are what won my endearment. One particularly memorable scene sets our protagonist, a Chinese peasant turned "sent down youth"???, his Monkey King sidekick, and an American wannabe-bohemian-art-major female love interest at a water park, ala Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure. Not every author can pull that off!

I'd recommend this book to anyone with an interest in China, a taste for the eccentric, and an afternoon to fill.

tbears says

Will have you laughing out loud!
