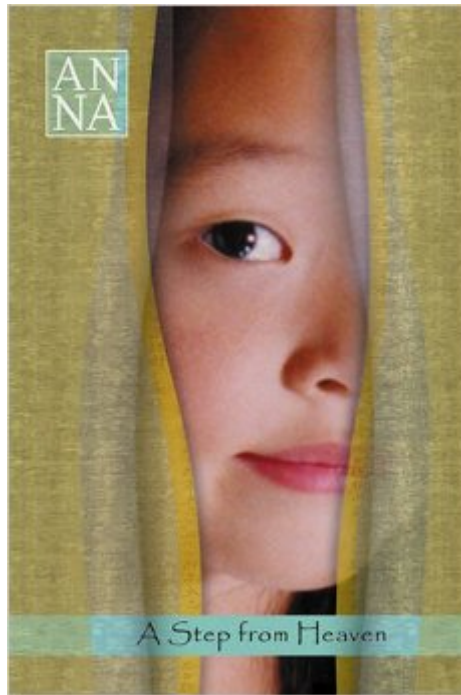


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# A Step From Heaven



## Synopsis

In this first novel, a young girl describes her family's bittersweet experience in the United States after their emigration from Korea. While going up and up into the sky on the flight from Korea to California, four-year-old Young Ju concludes that they are on their way to heaven - America is heaven! After they arrive, however, Young Ju and her parents and little brother struggle in their new world, weighed down by the difficulty of learning English, their insular family life, and the traditions of the country they left behind. An Na's striking language authentically reflects the process of acculturation as Young Ju grows from a child to an adult.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 670L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 176 pages

Publisher: Front Street imprint of Boyds Mills Press; 1st edition (April 30, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1886910588

ISBN-13: 978-1886910584

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.7 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (99 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,187,385 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #98 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Emigrants & Immigrants](#) #412 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American](#) #425 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > New Experiences](#)

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 9 - 12

## Customer Reviews

This book comes highly recommended. It received the Printz award for young adult literature, and is called a must-read by my writing instructor. On reading it, I can see why. On the surface, the book is about a child-immigrant's experience adapting to life in the United States. It is written more in the style of an adult novel than a YA novel. An Na rightly expects her readers to be able to handle more than a lot of books expect them to. The voice An Na uses to tell her story is fascinating. It begins with Young Ju as a four-year old who speaks no English. Instead of using normal names for things like "toilet paper", she describes them with amazing childlike and unusual words. When she is in

America, English dialogue is written how she hears it, not how it is spelled. Wonderful way to show how confusing a new language is. This book is full of touch and smell, as well as sight. She uses vivid descriptions --For just one example, the touch of her mother's rough hands feel like the lick of a cat's tongue. The book covers Young Ju's life from Age 4 to college age, and the voice matures with her, from the child who still believes magical things, like planes fly to heaven, to a woman who is becoming independent and American despite her's fathers wish to keep her Korean-thinking and subservient. This book is truly rich with experience. Nothing is flat. She uses many contrasts. We see her father reading the Korean newspaper avidly and then being stumped completely by a few immigration forms. And it goes on with wonderful details like that. And as for her father, his portrayal is superb. He is a mean-spirited violent alcoholic. Yet he is their father, and at times there are very good times. At times, he worked for the family very hard. We know how he is struggling with a new culture.

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