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This study guide consists of approximately 44 pages of chapter summaries, quotes, character analysis, topics, and more – everything you need to sharpen your knowledge of the good smell of Strange Mountain. This section contains 1035 words (about 3 pages at 400 words per page) The story takes the form of old man's memories and recent attempts to deal with the past as he approaches his own death. Dao, nearly 100 years old, is a Vietnamese man living in New Orleans, Louisiana. Dao believes his death is imminent, so he summons important people from the past, including the spirit of his old friend Ho Chi Minh, a communist nationalist who helped gain Vietnam's independence from France. In 1917, Dao and Ho Chi Minh, then went by his first name Nguyen Ai Quoc, were both young men living in London and Paris. In London Ho worked as a pastry chef and Dao worked as a dishwasher. Now, when He appears before Dao, his hands are covered with sugar, because he is trying to make a special glaze. However, he has trouble remembering how to do it right. Dao has reached a point in... (more) This section contains 1035 words (approx. 3 pages at 400 words per page) Copyright Good smell from Strange Mountain of Gale. ©2005-2006 Thomson Gale, part of Thomson Corporation. All rights reserved. Good fragrance from Strange Mountain First edition coverAuthorRobert Olen ButlerCover artistJacket illustration neil flewellenjacket design Carin GoldbergCountryUnited StatesLanguageEnglishPublished1992 (Henry Holt)Media typePrint (hardback & paperback)Pages249 pp (first edition, hardback)ISBN0-8050-1986-3 (first edition, hardback)OCLC24285600Dewey Decimal813/.54 20LC ClassPS3552.U8278 G66 1992 Good Fragrance from Strange Mountain is a 1992 collection of short stories by Robert Olen Butler. In 1993, she received the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Each story in the collection is told by another Vietnamese immigrant living in the US state of Louisiana. The stories are largely character-driven, with cultural differences between Vietnam and the United States as an important topic. Many stories were first published in magazines. The collection was re-released in 2001 with two other stories, Salem and Missing. Content Story Originally published in Open Arms Missouri Review Mr. Green Hudson Review The Trip Back Southern Review Fairy Tale Virginia Quarterly Reviews Crickets Letters from My Father Cimarron Reviews Love Writers Forum Mid-Autumn Hawaii Review In Clearing Icarus Ghost Story Colorado Reviews Snow New Orleans Review Relic Gettysburg Review Preparation Sewanee Reviews American Couple Good Smell from Strange Mountain New England Review Salem Mississippi Reviews Missing Gentlemen Quarterly Synopsis Open Arms Opening Story is during the Vietnam War. The narrator, a translator of Australian forces, tells the story of a North American communist named Thập who joins Australian forces as a spy after the Communists massacre his family. When Australian soldiers bring him to a screening of pornographic films, it seems that Thập is overwhelmed and disgusted. The narrator speculates that, as a former communist, he considers pornography immoral and that it also reminds him of his longing for his dead wife. Thập later kills an Australian soldier and himself. Mr. Green Mr. Green is narrated by a Catholic woman whom her grandfather taught about ancestances. As a child, she was saddened when her grandfather told her that she could not care about worshipping her family members because she was a woman. Mr. Green is a talking parrot that belonged to her great-grandfather; After his death, she takes care of the parrot and brings him with her to the United States. As Mr. Green gets older and melancholy, she rips out her own feathers, the narrator kills him by twisting his neck, as she learned from her mother and grandmother. This story is about gender values. The narrator must come to terms with his grandfather's own misogyny and establish his own self-esteem as a woman. This story focuses on the conflict between ancient, honest but cymmoth values and the modern promotion of femininity. When the narrator leaves Vietnam, he recalls with her this bond of Confucian values in the form of Mr. Green. Mr. Green's death is therefore symbolic. Trip Back The Trip Back is about Canha going to the airport to pick up his wife's grandfather, Mr. Chinh. Kánh is shocked to discover that Mr. Chinh is accompanied by his cousin Huong, and during his trip home he realizes that Alzheimer's disease affects Mr. Chinh. Khanh is deeply concerned and worried about ever forgetting his wife, whom he loves deeply. The situation gets worse when his wife realizes that her grandfather doesn't remember her. Fairy Tale Story is about a Vietnamese prostitute nicknamed Miss Noi who was brought to the United States as the wife of an American GI. She divorces her husband and becomes a prostitute again, and seems content with her position in life. He meets a Vietnam War veteran named Mr. Fontenot, who proposes to her with an apple and gives her a good life. Crickets Crickets is about a man named Ted (Thiğu) who tries to teach his Americanized son how to make crickets fight, which was thiğu's favorite game as a boy in Vietnam. His son's not interested, and Thiğu eventually gives up. Thiğu and his new bride fled Vietnam by boat and ended up in the state of Louisiana, where the country was very much like the Mecko Delta. They tried to adapt to a new country and language, while their son, Bill, adapted easily, but had little knowledge of his Vietnamese cultural background. Despite the obstacles of age and language, Thiğu tries to educate his son to be more Vietnamese. Letters from my father Letters from my father is the story of a Vietnamese teenager who grew up without his American father. After the father arranges for his wife and daughter to come to the United States, he is not sure how to react to his daughter, because all he knows about her is from pictures and letters. His daughter learns more from her father by discovering some letters he wrote to the United States government in which he angrily and poetically demands his daughter's release, and longs for him to love her as he expressed his love in those letters. Love Love is about a former Vietnamese spy who has a beautiful wife, Buróm. As a spy in Vietnam, he was able to direct American missiles into the homes of men who aroused his jealousy by looking at or flirting with his wife. After moving to New Orleans, he suspects his wife of having an affair with a Vietnamese restaurant owner and consults a voodoo doctor. Preparation A woman prepares her boyfriend's body for burial combs and envies the beautiful hair she combed and envied when the girls were in Saigon. Mid-autumn and clearing stories mid-autumn and in the clearing are similar, in that they deal heavily in Vietnamese mysticism. Both are parent-child dialogues and refer to supernatural beings. Mid-Autumn is about the mother's first lost love; There's an apology from father to son in the clearing for leaving his family in Vietnam. Ghost Story In Ghost Story, a man tells a story that he claims to know is true about the spirit of a beautiful woman who saves a man from disaster, then reappears to eat. Snow Snow is the story of a woman named Giàu who works as a waitress in a Chinese restaurant. A Jewish lawyer named Cohen, who shares a fear of snow with Giàu, talks to her as he waits for a takeaway on Christmas Eve. They realize that despite their different backgrounds, they have several things in common, and arrange to go on a date. American couple American couple is the longest story in the collection at 80 pages. It is narrated by a Vietnamese woman named Gabrielle on vacation in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. They meet an American couple, Frank and Eileen. Frank is a Vietnam veteran who longs to talk about his experiences. Vinh and Frank begin a strange and secretive relationship in which hostility about their roles in the Vietnam War sometimes manifests itself. The story is told from the perspective of Vinh's wife, who had little access to her husband's experience as a soldier. It's an outsider perspective of Vietnam veterans, which is why Frank and Vinh are observed on A good smell from a strange mountain is the last story. This is a grandfather, slowly dying, and seeing the vision of Ho Chi Minh, with whom he worked and lived. The policy of Vietnamese refugees continues even after they have arrived in America, as their new home country struggles to cope with the newly communist united Vietnam. Salem Salem is the story of a Vietnamese soldier who works alone in the jungles of Vietnam and murders American soldiers who stumble on his way. His job is to kill American soldiers and take the things they carry with them and hand things over to the government so they can identify American soldiers. A Vietnamese soldier gets a pack of Salem cigarettes from a dead American soldier he just killed. In a pack of cigarettes is a photograph of the wife of a dead American soldier. Missing Missing is one of two other articles that have been added in later releases. This story is about an American soldier who stayed in Vietnam after the war and married a Vietnamese girl. An American soldier sees his face, a photograph, in a newspaper and is named Missing. People believe she's missing. That's why he's starting to think he's missing in Vietnam, identity. Variant editions Two more stories are available in later editions, Salem and Missing. External links the New York Times review to a good smell from Strange Mountain Reviews of Good Smells from Strange Mountain's 1985 interview with Robert Olen Butler (RealAudio) Photos from the first edition of A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain Taken from

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