



# Golden Boy: Memories of a Hong Kong Childhood

*Martin Booth*

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## **Golden Boy: Memories of a Hong Kong Childhood** Martin Booth

At seven years old, Martin Booth found himself with all of Hong Kong at his feet. His father was posted there in 1952, and this memoir is his telling of that youth, a time when he had access to the corners of a colony normally closed to a "Gweilo," a "pale fellow" like him.

His experiences were colorful and vast. Befriending rickshaw coolies and local stallholders, he learned Cantonese, sampled delicacies such as boiled water beetles and one-hundred-year-old eggs, and participated in vibrant festivals. He even entered the forbidden Kowloon Walled City, wandered into a secret lair of Triads, and visited an opium den.

From the plink-plonk man with his dancing monkey to the Queen of Kowloon (a crazed tramp who may have been a Romanov), Martin Booth saw it all---but his memoir illustrates the deeper challenges he faced in his warring parents: a broad-minded mother who embraced all things Chinese and a bigoted father who was enraged by his family's interest in "going native."

Martin Booth's compelling memoir, the last book he completed before dying, glows with infectious curiosity and humor and is an intimate representation of the now extinct time and place of his growing up.

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