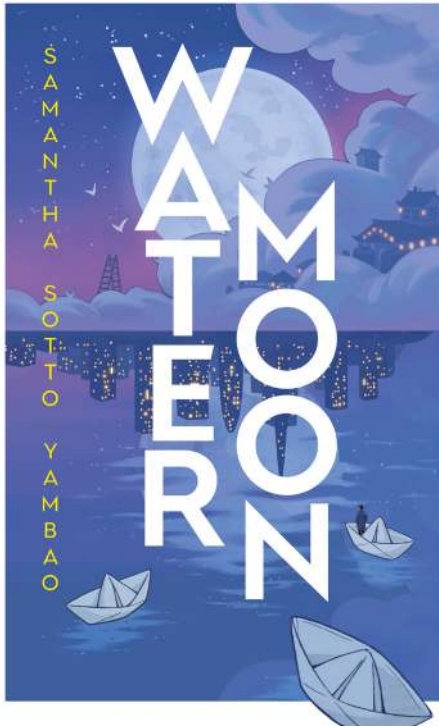


WATER MOON

By Samantha Sotto Yambao

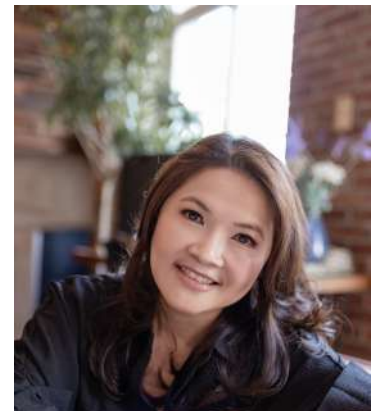
AN ADVENTURE FOR EVERYONE READ. SHARE. RECOMMEND



Bantam, Transworld, Penguin Random House, 2025

About the Author:

Samantha Sotto Yambao is a professional daydreamer, aspiring time traveller, and speculative fiction writer based in Manila. She is the author of *Before Ever After*, *Love and Gravity*, *A Dream of Trees*, and *The Beginning of Always*. *Water Moon* is her latest novel and UK debut.



Samantha Sotto Yambao
©Charm Cataag

About the Book:

On a backstreet in Tokyo lies a pawnshop, but not everyone can find it. Most will see only a cosy ramen restaurant. And just the chosen ones – those who are lost – will find a place to pawn their life choices and deepest regrets.

Hana Ishikawa wakes on her first morning as the pawnshop's new owner to find it ransacked, the shop's most precious acquisition stolen and her father missing. And then into the shop stumbles a charming stranger, quite unlike other customers. For he offers help, instead of seeking it.

Together, they must journey through a mystical world to find Hana's father and the stolen choice – through rain puddles, hitching rides on paper cranes, across the bridge between midnight and morning and through a night market in the clouds.

But as they get closer to the truth, Hana must reveal a secret of her own – and risk making a choice she will never be able to take back.

Other Books by the Author:

Before Ever After (2011), *Love and Gravity* (2017), *A Dream of Trees* (2019), *The Beginning of Always* (2020).

Discussion Points:

- At the heart of *Water Moon* is the idea that people can pawn their regrets. What do you think the novel is saying about the nature of regret? If you could trade one of your own choices, would you?
- The stolen choice is central to the plot. What does the novel suggest about the impact of the choices we make (or don't make)? How do Hana and the stranger each approach decision-making?
- Hana inherits more than a pawnshop - she inherits mystery, loss, and legacy. How does grief shape her decisions? In what ways do her memories of her father affect her quest?
- How does Japanese folklore, symbolism (like the paper cranes), and cultural nuance add to your understanding of the story? What layers of meaning did you notice beneath the surface of the fantasy?
- How does Hana's character change from the beginning to the end of the novel?
- What did you think of the way the novel ended? Was it satisfying? Do you think Hana's journey has truly been resolved?

Useful Links:

- [The Lily Cafe - Book review: Water Moon by Samantha Sotto Yambao](#)
- [Random House - Samantha Sotto Yambao introduces WATER MOON](#)
- [Books Burgers and Backpacks - Book review: Water Moon by Samantha Sotto Yambao \(Studio Ghibli influenced healing fiction\)](#)

Suggested Further Reading:

Before the Coffee Gets Cold by Toshikazu Kawaguchi
The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern
The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Wise Children by Angela Carter
The Art of Making Memories by Meik Wiking

Connect with the Author:

www.samanthasotto.com



@samanthasottoyambao



@samanthasotto