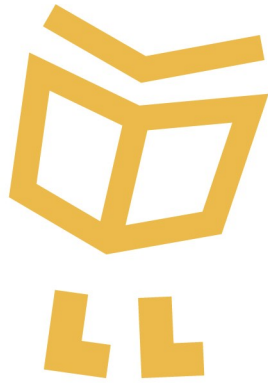


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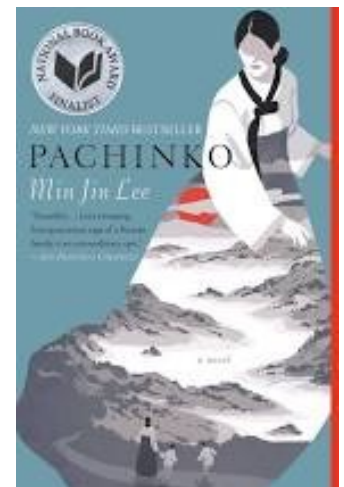


## Pachinko

Min Jin Lee

### Discussion Questions

1. “History has failed us, but no matter.” How does the opening line reflect the rest of the book -- and do you agree?
2. In a way, Sunja’s relationship with Isak progresses in reverse, as her pregnancy by another man brings them together and prompts Isak to propose marriage. How does Lee redefine intimacy and love with these two characters?
3. “Their eldest brother, Samoel, had been the brave one, the one who would’ve confronted the officers with audacity and grace, but Yoseb knew he was no hero....Yoseb didn’t see the point of anyone dying for his country or for some greater ideal. He understood survival and family.” What kinds of bravery are shown by different characters, and what motivates this bravery?
4. Compare Noa’s biological and adoptive fathers, Hansu and Isak: What qualities does each try to foster in Noa, and why? Whom does Noa most resemble?
5. What does “home” mean to each of the main characters? Does it ever change? In what ways does a yearning for home color the tone of the novel?
6. Compare the many parent-child relationships in the novel. How do they differ across families and generations? What hopes and dreams does each parent hold for their children --- and are these hopes rewarded?
7. How do courting and marriage alter from one generation to the next?
8. Compare the ways in which the women of this novel --- from Sunja to Hanav --- experience sex.
9. Why do you think the author chose *Pachinko* for the title?



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## About the Author

Min Jin Lee is a recipient of fellowships in Fiction from the Guggenheim Foundation (2018) and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard (2018-2019). Her novel *Pachinko* (2017) was a finalist for the National Book Award for Fiction, a runner-up for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, winner of the Medici Book Club Prize, and was one of the New York Times' "Ten Best Books of 2017." A New York Times bestseller, *Pachinko* was also one of the "Ten Best Books" of the year for BBC and the New York Public Library, and a "best international fiction" pick for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. In total, it was on over seventy-five best books of the year lists, including NPR, PBS, and CNN, and it was a selection for Now Read This, the joint book club of PBS NewsHour and the New York Times. *Pachinko* was translated into twenty-seven languages. Lee's debut novel *Free Food for Millionaires* (2007) was one of the best books of the year for the Times of London, NPR's Fresh Air, and USA Today, and it was a national bestseller. Her writings have appeared in the *New Yorker*, NPR's *Selected Shorts*, *One Story*, the *New York Review of Books*, the *New York Times Magazine*, the *New York Times Book Review*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, the *Guardian*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, the *Times of London*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. Lee served three consecutive seasons as a Morning Forum columnist of the Chosun Ilbo of South Korea. In 2018, she was named as one of *Adweek's* Creative 100 for being one of the "ten writers and editors who are changing the national conversation," and one of the *Guardian's* Frederick Douglass 200. She received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree from Monmouth College. She was a Writer-in-Residence at Amherst College from 2019-2022.

Via Grand Central Publishing (<https://www.grandcentralpublishing.com/contributor/min-jin-lee/>)

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