



# The Headmaster's Wager

*Vincent Lam*

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**The Headmaster's Wager** Vincent Lam

**A superbly crafted, highly suspenseful, and deeply affecting debut novel about one man's loyalty to his country, his family and his heritage**

Percival Chen is the headmaster of the most respected English academy in 1960s Saigon, and he is well accustomed to bribing a forever-changing list of government officials in order to maintain the elite status of his school. Fiercely proud of his Chinese heritage, he is quick to spot the business opportunities rife in a divided country, though he also harbors a weakness for gambling haunts and the women who frequent them. He devotedly ignores all news of the fighting that swirls around him, but when his only son gets in trouble with the Vietnamese authorities, Percival faces the limits of his connections and wealth and is forced to send him away.

In the loneliness that follows, Percival finds solace in Jacqueline, a beautiful woman of mixed French and Vietnamese heritage whom he is able to confide in. But Percival's new-found happiness is precarious, and as the complexities of war encroach further into his world, he must confront the tragedy of all he has refused to see.

Graced with intriguingly flawed but wonderfully human characters moving through a richly drawn historical landscape, *The Headmaster's Wager* is an unforgettable story of love, betrayal and sacrifice.

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