

**Title: *Butterfly Yellow***  
**Author: Thanhà Lại**  
**Genre: Historical Fiction**

**Reviewer Name and Grade: Alyssa P. 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

**Date Reviewed: March 27, 2020**

In Vietnam, determined to find a way to America, Hâng and her little brother Linh are in the airport, hoping to be accepted as orphans and taken to a land full of promises and bright futures. In a split second, Linh is ripped from her arms at the mere age of five. While he is taken away, Hâng is left in her war-torn homeland. Six years pass, and Hâng has gone through immense torment to reach her brother on the other side of the world. He is her only family remaining. She finally arrives in Texas, a land so flat and dry Hâng feels as if she was transported to another planet. The language, English, although she knows some words, here sounds hissy, as if it were spoken like a snake. This world around her is so foreign; the language, the people, the environment, the transportation. All is different from the life she led in Vietnam with her family. Then, she meets LeeRoy, a city boy aspiring to play cowboy. LeeRoy loves adages and using them whenever he can slip them into a sentence. He read books of cowboy lingo and studied their mannerisms, yet has never worked like they do. Hâng can barely express what she needs to say, for all of the people she tries to talk to cannot understand her. By a stroke of luck, Hâng is pushed into LeeRoy's gleaming red truck. When they first meet each other, they clash; their personalities are polar opposites. They have completely different life stories and goals. When LeeRoy is on a road trip to see his favorite cowboy, Hâng is forced into LeeRoy's car. He refuses to be a 'taxi driver' for someone he doesn't know, but eventually gives in. Yet when they arrive at their destination, what Hâng sees is not her brother. Instead, an old lady named Mrs. Brown with a christmas card from a family with an eleven-year old vietnamese boy. She must be with him. But what happens when her brother doesn't remember, and doesn't want to? Thanhà Lại's *Butterfly Yellow* is a story of a journey, and even though Hâng isn't too fond of journeys because of her past, the journey of this story is incredibly moving.

*Did the plot keep you interested?*

The novel was certainly a page-turner. I devoured it in one day, because I could not put the book down.

*Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?*

The pacing of the book was perfectly done, for it led you along to the end smoothly and orderly in correspondence to every storyline.

*What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?*

I would suggest this book to grade levels 7+ because of the serious topic, and there are some points that are frightening or a little mature for younger eyes.

*What type of reader would you recommend this book to?*

This book is for someone who loves culture. This story exposes the reader to Vietnamese culture and history (from a fictional standpoint, of course). I think teens should know that each person has a story to tell, and this book can teach them that.

I would most definitely give this book a *five-star rating*. It's an enriching read that makes you laugh and cry. The characters seem so real, as if you could touch them. As if I could meet up with one in a coffee shop and converse. When I completed the final page, I was sad this journey had ended. *Butterfly Yellow* is a book to remember. It has now become my new favorite, because of how gorgeously written it was. Thanh Hà Lại painted a picture in your mind so well, every word will feel as if you are watching a movie. I would absolutely read this book again, even more so recommend it to a friend.