THE VERTICAL SCHOOL
美好少女的垂直社會

In an island nation on the verge of environmental catastrophe, two teenage girls are offered entry into an elite "green zone" boarding school after losing their homes in a typhoon. They'll have to get top marks to maintain their coveted slots, but for two "red zone" girls, maintaining their social status within the snobbish cliques of "green zone" classmates proves the far greater challenge.

An island nation locked in a losing battle with rising sea-levels has divided its territory into red, yellow, and green zones. The fertile highlands of the green zones are home to the elite of society, while in the lowland red zones, the lower classes live under constant threat of flooding and environmental catastrophe.

After their homes are destroyed in a typhoon, red-zoners Chiang Li-Ting and Lin Yuan are deemed worthy of entry into an elite green zone boarding school, but the adjustment is no cake walk. Learning to live away from their parents and maintaining their grades at school present significant challenges, but these turn out to be the least of the teenage girls' worries. Finding social acceptance at the prestigious Vertical School means negotiating a lion's den of backstabbing social climbers, gossips, false friends, and would-be queen-bees in a never-ending quest for top marks and the coveted title of most popular.

Imagine *Hunger Games* meets *Gossip Girl* against a backdrop of ecological disaster: even as the world burns, Chiang Li-Ting and Lin Yuan must compete for status within a ruling class living in denial of the existential threats to their society.

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A doctor by training and profession, Wu Chieh-Chu is the recipient of numerous domestic literary awards, including the King Car Fantasy

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Award. Her incisive real-world social observation contributes to convincing fantasy world-building that reflects the contradictions of our times.