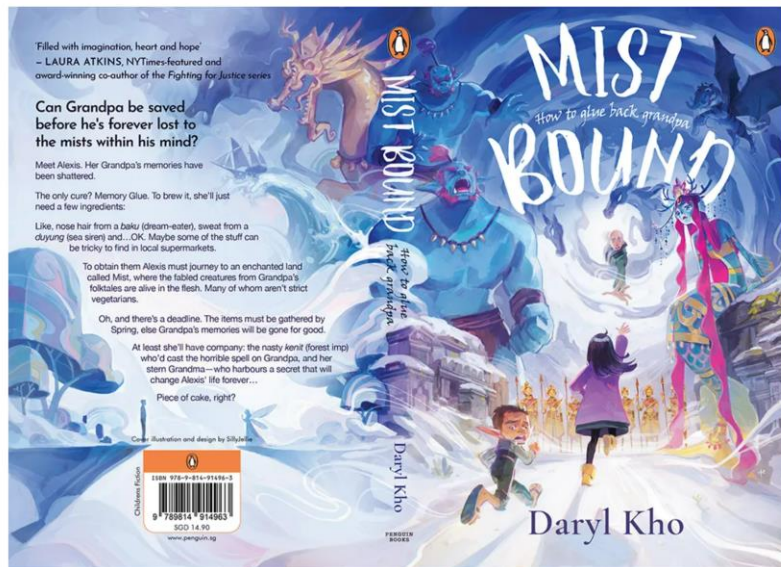




Written by Penguin Random House

# Malaysian-Born Writer Releases Rare Children's Fiction On Dementia

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The lovely illustration for the book cover was designed by Malaysian artist, *SillyJellie*. Image by *Daryl Kho*.

Penguin Random House SEA is proud to present a rare work of fiction by Malaysia-born and Singapore-based author, Daryl Kho.

Titled *Mist-bound: How to Glue Back Grandpa*, Daryl's debut novel for young readers tells a story of a family threatened to be torn apart by a grandparent's shattered memories (an allegory for dementia). The only cure lies in a concoction called Memory Glue, many of its various enchanted ingredients only found in a parallel world called Mist. But ultimately the heroine defies the odds and succeeds in her quest thanks to the bonds of love and family.

The book's underlying message is that these bonds are ultimately the most critical ingredients of Memory Glue.

Dementia is a growing issue for many families today. It is often difficult to talk to young children about dementia in an insightful and thoughtful way. Through its premise, the book aims to raise greater awareness of dementia (and dementia care) amongst the younger generation, to be a starting point for family conversations about the topic.

The book is also a celebration of stories and storytelling, featuring folktales, fables, and magical creatures predominantly from Asia. And hopefully, this novel will help spark curiosity amongst kids to learn more about the myths from their own backyard.

Daryl's book has received praise and support from TOUCH Community Services, Singapore's preeminent social services charity, and Dementia Singapore, which is a part of the global Alzheimer's Disease International network, for creating a safe space for young readers to understand these old-age ailments.

These organizations have generously contributed forewords to the book, talking about the necessity to connect generations and enable the young to embrace the elders as they are.



Daryl Kho and his daughter.

Malaysia-born and Singapore-based, Daryl Kho works in the regional TV industry, where he basically sells other people's stories and ideas for a living. He was a prolific creator during his student days: composing songs, poems, plays, and even a kung-fu musical!

However, after Daryl joined the rat race, corporate emails became his sole literary output. Gradually, his creative tank dried up.

Then in 2009 — shortly before the birth of Daryl's only child, Alexis — Daryl's father was felled by two strokes, which also caused vascular dementia. The strokes took away his dad's mobility and independence, whilst dementia robbed him of many of his memories and much of his personality. Both Daryl and his sister live abroad. So, Daryl's mum — a finance professional — had to assume the additional burden of being her husband's primary (and often only) caregiver.

Deeply affected by his dad's illness, Daryl was equally moved by his mother's otherworldly love, superhuman strength, and unwavering devotion to her husband. All this, combined with guilt and an immense regret that Alexis and her Grandpa never got to truly "meet" each other before the mists moved into his mind, rekindled

Daryl's long-buried itch to put pen to paper. This was how his debut "family novel", *Mist-Bound: How to Glue Back Grandpa*, was born. The story was also a chance for Alexis to have an adventure with her Grandma since they live in different countries and rarely see each other. Sadly, Daryl's father's condition continued to decline. He passed away before the book could be completed and read to him.

Subsequently, Daryl nearly abandoned the project, but finally decided to see it through. For Daryl, each time that a child reads the story is a chance for Grandpa to be "saved", over and over, and over again.

In terms of past works, one of Daryl's short stories that were written as a high school student in Ontario, Canada, was published in INCITE, an annual anthology featuring the best student works from the province. That same year, Daryl was also awarded the Reginald A. Finney Award for Proficiency in Senior English. At his alma mater, the University of Chicago, his plays and kung-fu performances (all co-written, co-directed, and co-acted with his landlord, no less!) were the highlight and backbone of the annual Chinese New Year Shows that were performed to paying audiences of close to a thousand.

*Mist-bound: How to Glue Back Grandpa* is available in all bookstores nationwide and can be purchased directly from MPH [here](#).

All images supplied by Daryl Kho.