

## Author's Notes

Debate rages about who is qualified to write about people of other cultures. It is my hope that authors today as in the past can use study and imagination to create fictional characters across the boundaries of age, sex, time, race and cultural patterns. Otherwise, young could not create elderly characters, or females include males in their plots. The test is always whether the writing brings imagined persons and places to life and sparks ideas and understanding for the readers.

Leili Teng is an imagined person, not one of the more than four million citizens in the United States with Chinese heritage (2010 census). Leili, her father and grandparents cannot represent all the Chinese in the United States. The broad experiences and histories of those with Chinese heritage are far too diverse for any simple fiction about a few personalities. China's more than 4,000 years of written history created many patterns of influence in immigrants' lives.

### Further Information for Young Readers and Researchers:

Editors of Time-Life Books. *In the land of the Dragon: What Life Was Like: Imperial China AD 960 - 1368*. Alexandria, VA. Time-Life, 1998.

Freedman, Russell. *Confucius: the Golden Rule*. New York: Scholastic Press, 2002.

Moyers, Bill. *Becoming American: The Chinese Experience*. Princeton, N.J.: Films Media Group, 2003.

*Chinese Fairy Tales: Tales and Fantasies*. (Moss Roberts, Trans and Ed.) New York: Pantheon Books, 1979.

Yep, Laurence. *The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung: A Chinese Miner*. New York: Scholastic, 2000; *Dragon's Gate*, New York: HarperCollins, 1993; *Dragonwings*, New York: HarperCollins, 1975. (His novels tell a great deal about the Chinese immigrants in 19th century America. They are good historic fiction and good reads.)

### Additional Sources for a Historical Review

Chang, Iris. *The Chinese in America*. New York: Viking, 2003.

Chen, Shehong. *Being Chinese, Becoming Chinese American*. Urbana, Il.: University of Illinois, 2002.

Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior: Memoir of a Child Among Ghosts*. New York: Vintage, 1989, 1975.

Kwong, Peter & Dusanka Miscevic. *Chinese America*. New York: New Press, 2005.

See, Lisa. *On Gold Mountain: The One Hundred Year Odyssey of a Chinese American Family*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995.

Spence, Jonathan. *The Search for Modern China*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1990.

Zhao, Xiaojian. *Remaking Chinese America: Immigration, Family and Community, 1940 - 1965*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers, 2002.

## **On the Matter of Codes**

This book was first written in the year 2000. While the novel's characters are fictitious, the issues arose from news stories, research and personal observations. Since that time, hardly a day goes by without new and disturbing revelations of additional material and concern.

The Sun-Sentinel, a news organization in South Florida, reported on February 5, 2005, that \$90,000 was removed from a Miami businessman's Bank of America on-line account and deposited in a bank in Latvia. The businessman has not yet been able to recover his funds. Headlines abound on the thefts of credit card and Social Security numbers, including the breach of credit card numbers in Target transactions in 2013.

Computer analysts and groups working for civil liberties complained over a period of years to Congress and the media about a multi-national government program called ECHELON. ECHELON indiscriminately monitored vast amounts of information searching for the use of special words, such as "bomb" and "assassin."

From the 1990s on, Congress has debated restrictions on the development of systems, such as longer code keys, the use of prime numbers (not discussed in this novel) and the international sale of "privacy" technology. The government wanted to limit cryptographic development as a protection against criminals and terrorists while corporations and individuals want unbreakable codes for protection of trade secrets and to curtail government interference.

As an example, in February, 1993, the FBI brought Phil Zimmerman before a grand jury for giving away PGP (Pretty Good Privacy), his program of 'private' encryption. The case was finally dropped in 1996.

Time and technological advancements have eased some restrictions. Events have changed the debate as well. After September 11, 2001, the Patriot Act called for government powers to oversee communication systems. By 2004, pressures mounted again for safeguards of citizens' privacy from government surveillance.

The expansion of the technology for the Internet and Cloud storage have heightened the ability to intercept communications. The government ECHELON program has evolved into various information gathering programs like PRISM, a greater use of "backdoors," the acquisition of code formulas that open government and private surveillance of communications and other tools of the NSA, CIA and the FBI.

With former National Security Agency contractor, Edward Snowden's release of certain NSA documents, the public debate about government surveillance practices has expanded exponentially. I recommend Simon Singh's book, *The Evolution of Secrecy from Mary, Queen of Scots to Quantum Cryptography*, New York, Doubleday, 1999, for an overview of cryptography, including the Beale story. Bruce Schneier's *Secrets and Lies Indianapolis*, IN: Wiley, 2000, interprets difficult

mathematical ideas. Cliff Stoll's, *The Cuckoo's Egg*, New York: Doubleday, 1989, tells an alarming true story about holes in computer operating systems. David Brin's, *The Transparent Society*, New York: Perseus Books, 1998, suggests that maintaining privacy in this highly technological age may be impossible. He advises that we develop public systems of checks and balances as safeguards against all spying, whether by criminals, sales forces, governments or nosey neighbors.

Study groups like that of Leili and her school friends have developed across the nation for all ages. It is my hope that Leili's story will encourage further interest in the issues of public privacy and security in increasingly computer savvy generations.

### **Sources for Capitol Code**

Schneir, Bruce. *Secrets and Lies: Digital History in a Networked World*. Indianapolis, IN: Wiley, 2000.

Singh, Simon. *The Code Book: How to Make It, Break It, Hack It Crack It*. New York:

Delacorte, 2001.

—. *The Code Book: The Evolution of Secrecy from Mary, Queen of Scots, to Quantum Cryptography*. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

Thomas, Jane Resh. *Behind the Mask: The Life of Elizabeth I*. New York: Houghton Mifflan, 1998.

Van Slyke, Lyman P. *Yangtze: Nature, History and the River*. Reading, MA.: Addison-Wesley, 1988.

Xianzu, Tang. *The Peony Pavilion*. Trans. Cyril Birch. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1980, 5. (A Ming Dynasty play written in 1598.)