

Lee memorized every detail about his paper family: The village temple faced southeast. Their clock sits to the right of the family portrait on the altar.

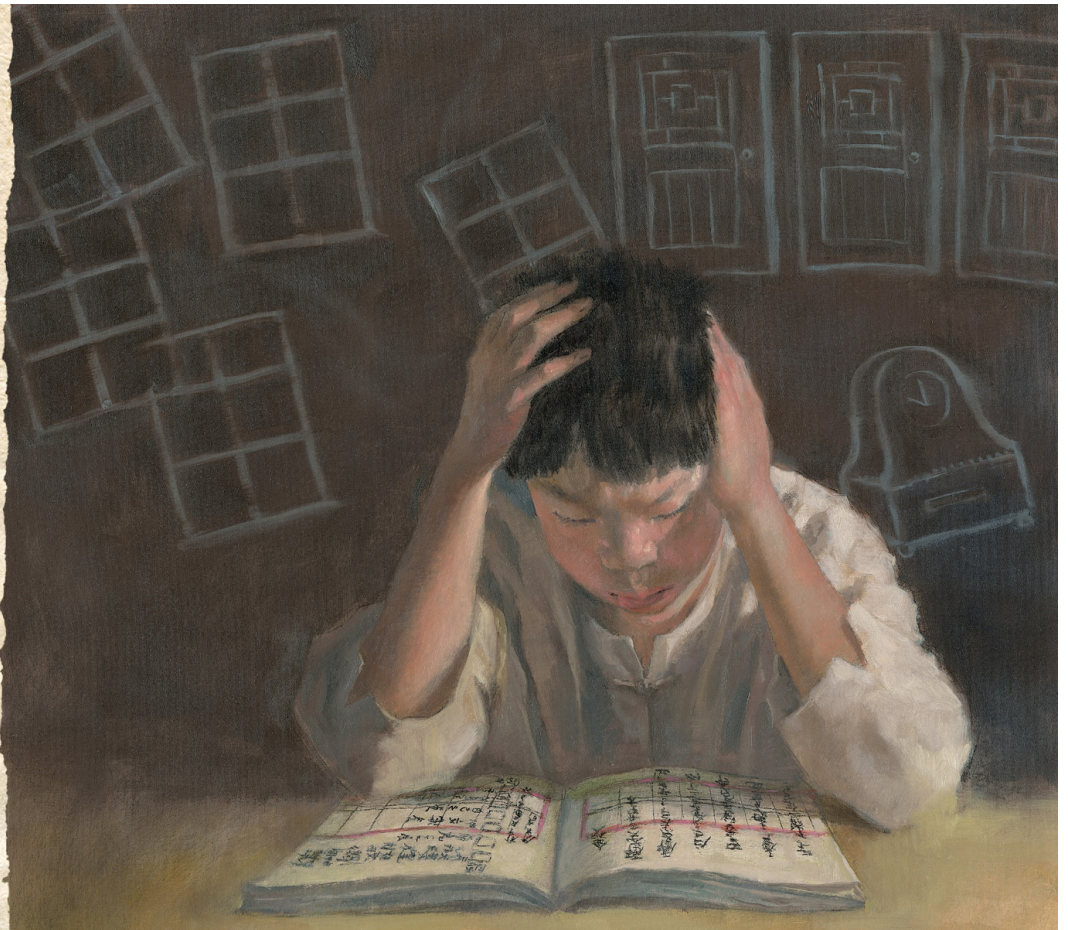
Every night PoPo quizzed Lee. "How many windows are in the Fu house?"

"Three."

"No, there are three doors and five windows. Study more," PoPo scolded. "Gum Saan men ask your paper father the same questions. They compare answers. You must convince them you're Fu's real son. Otherwise..."

"... We'll lose the money and I'll be deported."

PoPo continued stitching. "No need to think about that. You'll make us proud."



Lee joined Tai on the bench and pointed to a newspaper. "Are you going to read that?" "Practice. Read it to me."

Lee read to Tai.

Tai asked, "Can I trust you?"

Lee remembered PoPo's words: *Don't trust anyone.*

But Tai had helped him with those two mean boys. Lee nodded.

Tai handed Lee an orange. Inside the orange peel was a note.

"Where did you get this?"

Tai said, "My father paid kitchen help to pass this to me. Can you read it?"

Lee nodded and read the tiny Chinese characters, "Baby niece born two months ago. Name is Mui."

Tai bowed his head, repeating the words.

Lee whispered, "You're a paper son."

Tai's face changed. "Don't say that."

"It's okay," Lee whispered. "So am I."

"Be careful who you talk to. Don't trust anyone."



The men and boys formed a line for medical exams. They took off their shirts. Lee felt ashamed. A man put a cold, metal circle on his chest. He poked and prodded.

Lee noticed two men and a boy were sent to one side of the room. They were coughing. He heard whispering. "They'll be returned to China. Such shame." Lee stood tall and looked strong.

The examiner nodded at Lee and pointed to the side of the room with healthy people. Lee's heartbeat calmed.