

***Hungry Bones***

by Louise Hung

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BY LOUISE HUNG

The Story

Molly Teng sees things no one else can.

By touching the belongings of people who have died, she gets brief glimpses into the lives they lived. Sometimes the “zaps” are funny or random, but often they leave her feeling sad, drained, and lonely.

The last thing Jade remembers from life is dying. That was over one hundred years ago. Ever since then she’s been trapped in the same house watching people move in and out. She’s a “hungry ghost” reliant on the livings’ food scraps to survive. To most people she is only a shadow, a ghost story, a superstition.

Molly is not most people. When she moves into Jade’s house, nothing will ever be the same—for either of them. After over a century alone, Jade might finally have someone who can help her uncover the secrets of her past, and maybe even find a way out of the house—before her hunger destroys them both.

Reading Group Questions

1. What do you think happens to the characters after the novel ends?
2. Who was your favorite character and why?
3. What was the most memorable or surprising scene in the story and why?
4. What did you learn from the story about the time period Jade lived in?

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About the Author



Louise Hung is a writer living in Brooklyn, New York. She is the writer/producer of hundreds of videos for the YouTube channel Ask a Mortician and wrote the “Creepy Corner” column for xoJane (RIP). You can find more of Louise’s work at HuffPost, The Order of the Good Death, *Time*, and the podcast *Death in the Afternoon*. Louise spends her days with four black cats, her husband, and an immortal cactus.

Author Q&A

What made you want to write this story?

Ghost stories have always been a way for me to understand people—people who are like me, people who are different than me. Like Molly, I grew up far away from most of my family, and ghost stories were a way for me to connect with my culture and ancestors. My family ghost stories made me feel like I was a part of something bigger than just me. I wrote *Hungry Bones* with the hope that, as with the ghost stories from my childhood, people will connect with Molly and Jade, recognize a part of their own experience, and maybe feel a little less lonely. Plus, I just love a good haunted house story!

What was the hardest part of the book to write? What was the most fun part?

Writing about death is never easy. While I have been writing about death for most of my career, writing about how these young girls consider mortality and face the end of life was especially challenging. That being said, I am most proud of those sections. I hope Molly and Jade’s conversations about death make people feel less afraid. By far, the most fun parts to write were about the food sections. I could write a whole book about what the Loh sisters serve for breakfast!

What would you love for a reader to understand more after reading this book?

I would love it if a reader walked away with a little more understanding and curiosity about Chinese American history. I was an adult before I learned about the Chinese Exclusion Act, and much like Molly I was shocked. This isn’t just Chinese history—this is American history. I hope that readers of this book will be compelled to not only look into the difficulties that early Chinese Americans faced, but also their successes.