

Character Guide

Men

Wang Lung: A farmer about to start his own family

Wang Lung's father: Approximately 70 years old, retired from work as a farmer

Uncle: Wang Lung's father's sly, younger brother

Cousin: Uncle's son, close to Wang Lung's age

Old Lord Hwang: A rich landowner; keeps many slaves and concubines

Ching: A small, quiet man; Wang Lung's neighbor

Elder brother: Known as Nung En; "Nung" means one whose wealth is from the earth

Second son: Known as Nung Wen

Liu: A successful grain dealer in town

Women

O-lan: A kitchen slave in the House of Hwang

Lotus Flower: A "tea house" prostitute with bound feet

Pear Blossom: A young slave girl Wang Lung buys

Uncle's wife: Overweight, lazy and manipulative

Old Mistress Hwang: Addicted to opium

Cuckoo: Old Lord Hwang's clever chamber slave

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It is the early 1900s and the last emperor still reigns over China. Female foot binding is a sign of beauty, men may have multiple wives and concubines, and even peasant families may have slaves. The political and intellectual revolutions of 1911 and 1919 that will replace imperial rule with the Peoples Republic of China and transform the country are distant rumblings for ordinary people in the rural province of Anhwei (Anhui), where an honest farmer Wang Lung and his neighbors merely struggle to survive.



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We've divided the book into three parts so you can reach these milestones with Oprah!

Date	Milestone
September 24	Part one, Chapters 1–11
October 22	Part two, Chapters 12–22
November 19	Part three, Chapters 23-the end

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