

LONGLISTED FOR THE 2022
EPIGRAM BOOKS FICTION PRIZE

Claiming Susan Chin



THAM CHENG-E



Claiming
Susan
Chin



Claiming Susan Chin

THAM CHENG-E



EPIGRAM

Copyright © 2023 by Tham Cheng-E
Author photo by Sandra Lee. Used with permission.
Cover design by Priscilla Wong

Published in Singapore by Epigram Books
www.epigram.sg

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published with the support of



National Library Board, Singapore Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Name(s): Tham, Cheng-E, 1979–
Title: Claiming Susan Chin / Tham Cheng-E.
Description: Singapore : Epigram Books, 2023.
Identifier(s): ISBN 978-981-5105-00-1 (paperback) | 978-981-5105-01-8 (ebook)
Subject(s): LCSH: Aircraft accidents—Fiction. | Conspiracy—Fiction.
Classification: DDC S823—dc23

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

First edition, May 2023.

For Amos

“But...if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things...about Holland.”

–Emily Perl Kingsley



Part 1

Chapter

I



The boutique called, congratulating Jean Wan on securing the coveted wedding sedan after being on a year-long waitlist. It was a vintage Morgan in accents of chrome and cream, splendidly restored—the kind of stuff to fill magazine spreads. For years, Jean had seen herself in it wearing a white fascinator, driving off in a shower of rose petals with her white shawl trailing. The caller from the boutique sounded like an overzealous show host announcing the lottery, so when Jean turned it down, it probably felt like hitting a wall. The silence that followed was so complete that Jean had to end the call. She couldn't bring herself to explain. She had already dropped the appointment with the solemniser, and cancelled the reservations for everything else but the boutique. How could she have forgotten about the boutique?

She stayed on the couch with her mobile phone warming in her hands, decanted of emotions and incapable of rational thought, her mind drifting instead to the trifles: the wine and champagne in their pinewood cases; slabs of raclette cheese with their fancy warmers, wild truffles and a whole leg of Iberian ham; her dream Balinese banquet setup; the garden pavilion by the beach with flowing muslin curtains and the sunset behind them.

They had planned to wear white—she and Zayn.

She wasn't supposed to feel like this. She got the condo. It was hers. A suite of two bedrooms and a study, designer interiors with solid oak flooring, and panoramic views of a nature reserve. The kitchen was furnished in the way Zayn wanted: open, contemporary with plenty of steel and wood, and a splendid travertine countertop. The bedroom had silk drapes and a walk-in wardrobe with sections that ran on rails.

They had it going on soon after they got together in the firm where Jean held a burgeoning career in aviation insurance. Just weeks before the wedding, Zayn had confessed the sordid truth between him and a licentious, long-legged executive who modelled for policy pamphlets and claimed a paycheque so paltry she'd be better off being a hooker. When Jean first noticed the frost in him, she was resolved not to overthink it, and was particularly revolted at the revelation that these things had been going on as they went about the fittings and choosing that lovely pair of rose-platinum wedding bands. Despite all that, she had psyched herself into forgiving the reprobate if he was sorry about the whole thing.

He wasn't.

The shock of it had given way to a fierce reckoning. On the day they called it off, Jean made a list, and at the top of it was to take the condo. The case was straightforward, since she had taken out a majority of the loan and settled the deposit. She worked it out through a lawyer so she wouldn't have to talk to Zayn, then gave him a deadline to purchase her share of the property. Zayn and his whore—even with their dough combined—wouldn't have come close to financing it. Naturally it lapsed, and the deal went to her.

Now, turning down the sedan reservation had ripped open the wound before it'd had time to heal. She returned to her trifles list, and picked a haircut, trading the luscious long locks she had faithfully kept for the photoshoot for a choppy lob. When that failed to shroud the wretch in

the mirror, she went for a shorter pixie cut; a little tousled and windswept with flaxen and bronze streaks. Then she roamed the malls for members' exclusives, the dusky, earthen tones of the Fall Collections even though the island was all summer. She spent lavishly at the jewelled flagships at Orchard Road and Marina Bay, and was careful to shun the promenade where she and Zayn had sat holding each other and watching the waters. But the longings worked like a slow-acting poison. The sight of couples in bliss, the insufferable timbre of their laughter, brought her to despair and got her wondering if any of it would've happened if she were worth her salt. But it was during the late, lonely nights in her lovely condo, in the excruciating wait for sleep, when it all fell apart for her.

When the girlfriends got wind of the tragedy, Jean allowed herself to be taken out for tea at a Tudor cottage off Holland Road that served truffle slices on crispbread, and saw what a mistake it was. There was Wen Lee, who made art out of walls in MRT stations; Shelly Peh, who had founded a successful online fashion business; Andrea Denise Ong, who ran a family business and owned racehorses; Deborah Ng, who married the executive director of a shipping conglomerate, and recently ran a successful campaign to get herself into parliament as a Nominated Member of Parliament while pregnant with her fourth child. And then there was Jean, whose misery served only to magnify their abundant lives.

They had last met to devise gatecrashing pranks for the stags. Now it was not all that different. Verbally scourging Zayn brought them pleasure, and offering Jean their customary pep talk made them feel generous and wise. When all was said and done, they turned their attention to hobbies, acquisitions and children, and the tittle-tattling quickly deteriorated into another covert and insalubrious appraisal of one another's progress at life. The fresh topics had them tittering wide-eyed, drowning Jean in their fashionable elegance; their fragrances, their stilettos, their fuchsia spear-tipped fingers. And Jean obliged them to the point that the mere curling

of lips began to exhaust her. By a glitch of consciousness, they had all become manifestations of Zayn's whore.

Then her saviour arrived.

Macy Wong was a frizzy-haired geek girl who worked shifts at the data centre of a bank, played video games and recently acquired a penchant for speaking in haikus. She breezed into the restaurant as if on cue, clutching a bulging tote bag to her side containing her hulking laptop, and unknowingly bumping it into the back of Deborah's head on the way to her seat. Slow and breezy, thick-lipped and droopy-eyed, Macy had a way of looking sanguine all the time. It didn't matter that her arrival failed to elicit the enthusiastic welcome amongst the ladies. Like a sovereign, she opened her arms and eased herself into her throne, declaring, "Macy's late but isn't sorry. Macy works weekends."

It sparked a round of polite, contrived laughter.

"Glad you could make it," Jean said, hiding from them the relief she felt.

She and Macy had been chums at polytechnic; first met at the climbing club, then again at the electives, and sat in tandem for the exams in alphabetical order of their surnames: Wan and Wong. At the command to flip the paper over, Macy had the ritual of tapping Jean from behind and flashing her fingers in a silent signal: V for victory. Making up trash haikus was a fad she picked up after reading an article in *Scientific Today* that made a positive connection between mental health and haiku. Jean figured that this probably explained why on her bad days she'd defile the foulest prose.

When Macy got Jean's call about the bad news, she had cared enough to ditch her work and go over to the condo, just in time to stop Jean from swallowing the remaining heap of pills in her hand. She offered her poetic presence while Jean retched over the toilet, rubbing Jean's back and laying her head on it as if to detect what might be broken inside, reciting in the hushed tones of a lullaby:

*Do not grieve in vain—
break wind and see what remains—
a stinker called Zayn.*

In closing, she broke wind—right there on the bathroom mat. Jean, raw and spent, succumbed to bitter laughter that liberated her emotions, and wept afresh on Macy's shoulder.

The ladies conveniently left Macy out of their conversations and Jean wasn't in the state to do anything about it. So Macy went on sitting at the end of the table, her eyes narrowed like an old sheep waiting for the day's fodder, until she found interest in the sponge fingers and toothpicks, which she gainfully employed in constructing a doll.

Jean looked over at it. "I like the semblance, Macy."

Macy gave wink, playful and conspiratorial, while etching a "Z" on the torso of the sponge-finger-man, and proceeded to initiate upon it a ludicrous voodoo ceremony.

*From the woes you sow—
nothing ever shall you reap—
but constipation.*

Clasping a breadknife, she cleaved the creature across the belly. A second blow took off its head, startling a passing waiter and turning heads. This was the second time Macy drew laughter out of Jean when no one else could, and it came to be the most liberating stream of wild, cathartic laughter she'd had for a long time.

Fortuitous or not, a few weeks later, Macy whinged about her landlord raising her rent and Jean was quick to offer her a room. Retrospectively, Jean owed gratitude to the miserly landlord, because when the girlfriends stopped checking in, there was only Macy.



In celebration of Jean's return to celibacy, they went climbing at Perlis and

took to the limestone monolith that rose above paddy fields like a dragon's tooth. Jean never carried her phone on climbs but that day was a rare exception, and it rang, its timbre alien and hideous among the tranquillity of the heights. Could it be Zayn? She found anchor in a notch, then crimped her fingers over a hold while she reached for the phone with her free hand.

Multiple missed calls, one text message, all from Simon—the regional chief of operations of the insurance magnate that contracted her for the reinsurance market they covered for the airline industry. She signalled for Macy to put tension on the line before letting go and losing, in mere seconds, the good height she'd laboured for.

Macy stomped up to her. "You gave it all up for a stupid phone call?" she said. "Macy's not belying anymore. Macy's climbing next."

Jean shook off the rigging and returned the call with chalky fingers, her mind racing for an appropriate apology for having missed so many of Simon's calls. But before she could speak, his voice came through: "Ruling's out—an *accident*." He conveyed the word with profound distaste. "The Big Five want a concerted challenge."

This was old news. "Big Five," she said, attempting to sound impressed. "That's a big deal. They're all in it with us?"

"Yes, Big Five," Simon said to a measure of impatience. "They want some kind of joint investigation against the ruling and they want the industry to know that we're leading it—you know, investor confidence. Naturally, you came to mind."

For a moment, Jean was speechless, and she hoped for Simon to construe the pause as one of thoughtfulness, but really she was exceedingly flattered. A direct phone call from Simon was rare, and the multiple missed calls she'd received from him could only suggest the regard he had for her. Now she had to live up to it.

In the lull, Simon added, "Anyway, sorry to hear about your wedding."

"Don't be, I'm not."

"You know what they say: living life right to the top is your best revenge."

Doubtless, Jean thought. She might as well tell Simon how much she wanted it.

Allegedly Flight 228, a Boeing 777, had overshot Incheon by some fifty kilometres—mere minutes of additional flight time—and plummeted into the North Korean divide of the Demilitarised Zone, an orphaned tapestry of deciduous forests, rivers and streams; cratered with political pitfalls that any attempt to investigate it would be like playing catch in a quagmire. Just hours after the crash, the DPRK submitted a report to the UN claiming that their response teams had arrived at the crash site and found only mangled body parts and twisted steel. Out of 249 passengers on board, 230 were identified and nineteen declared missing. No survivors.

Then, twenty-six days later, the DPRK reported sighting a young girl in the DMZ as she emerged from an unexplored part of a forest thought to be peppered with landmines. Basking in shafts of winter sunlight like a deity and severely malnourished, she lumbered a good way across the meadow before falling into the arms of astonished rescuers. When the voice and flight data recorders were found irrevocably damaged, the girl became the sole witness to a sketchy account of a bird strike and aerodynamic forces that sheared off the left engine and doomed the flight. She turned out to be Singaporean, which would have made for a very good story if not for a catch: she was also intellectually challenged.

Special needs activists considered her survival and testimony a triumph. Admiration poured in from all over. Experts who expressed their misgivings were quickly dismissed for being disparaging and discriminatory. To compound matters, the Ministry of Transport was denied an active role in the crash investigation because Flight 228 was not a Singapore-registered aircraft, and aviation conventions dictated that the primary role of the investigation go to the country where the crash had occurred.

Mourners needed closure and inquests were bogged down by diplomatic restraints and outpourings of sympathy for the miracle girl. Her testimony became a paradox. The DPRK released news of her at a time when they were generously flying the victims' families and friends over for a tour of the DMZ. The guest list was confidential, but when a leak revealed that the girl's next of kin—an aunt—was among them, sceptics surmised that the girl, with her disability and all, had been hidden amongst the guests and flown over as a phony witness to conceal a cause far more insidious than a bird strike.

When the airlines refused to disclose the passenger list, palpably on account of high-profile passengers on board, the tabloids seized the opportunity to sensationalise the tragedy, naming it the Limbo Crash for the red herrings and post-truth politics plaguing it. The DPRK, having been credited for saving the girl's life, concluded the inquest with a scanty twelve-page report to the UN that read like unsubstantiated mush. No government challenged it, ostensibly for diplomatic reasons, and it became a perversion as far as insurance monies were concerned.

Surviving kin would be looking to receive payouts, and accidents are the best because they carry a high ceiling and few exclusions. Insurance companies usually went along with an official ruling, though there could be rare cases that required closer scrutiny. Claimants dissatisfied with the ruling could raise an inquiry, but that also meant risking the payouts, so hardly anyone did. After all, payouts paid mortgages and covered debts. Most claimants would not deign to confess, but sometimes the cash took the grief away.

The catch? Insurance companies were contesting the ruling for Flight 228 and refusing to pick up the tab that the politicians rejected. No company paid out of guesswork, and for that reason, Jean knew how much of an asset she was. She could eliminate guesswork by faceting facts and presenting them under a new light, as a skilled lapidary to a nub of raw diamond. And

if there was something that could make Zayn see red, this had to be it.

“So?” Simon’s voice came through. “Game for it?”

“Yes.”

“Good. Let’s meet on Thursday. I’ll fill you in.”


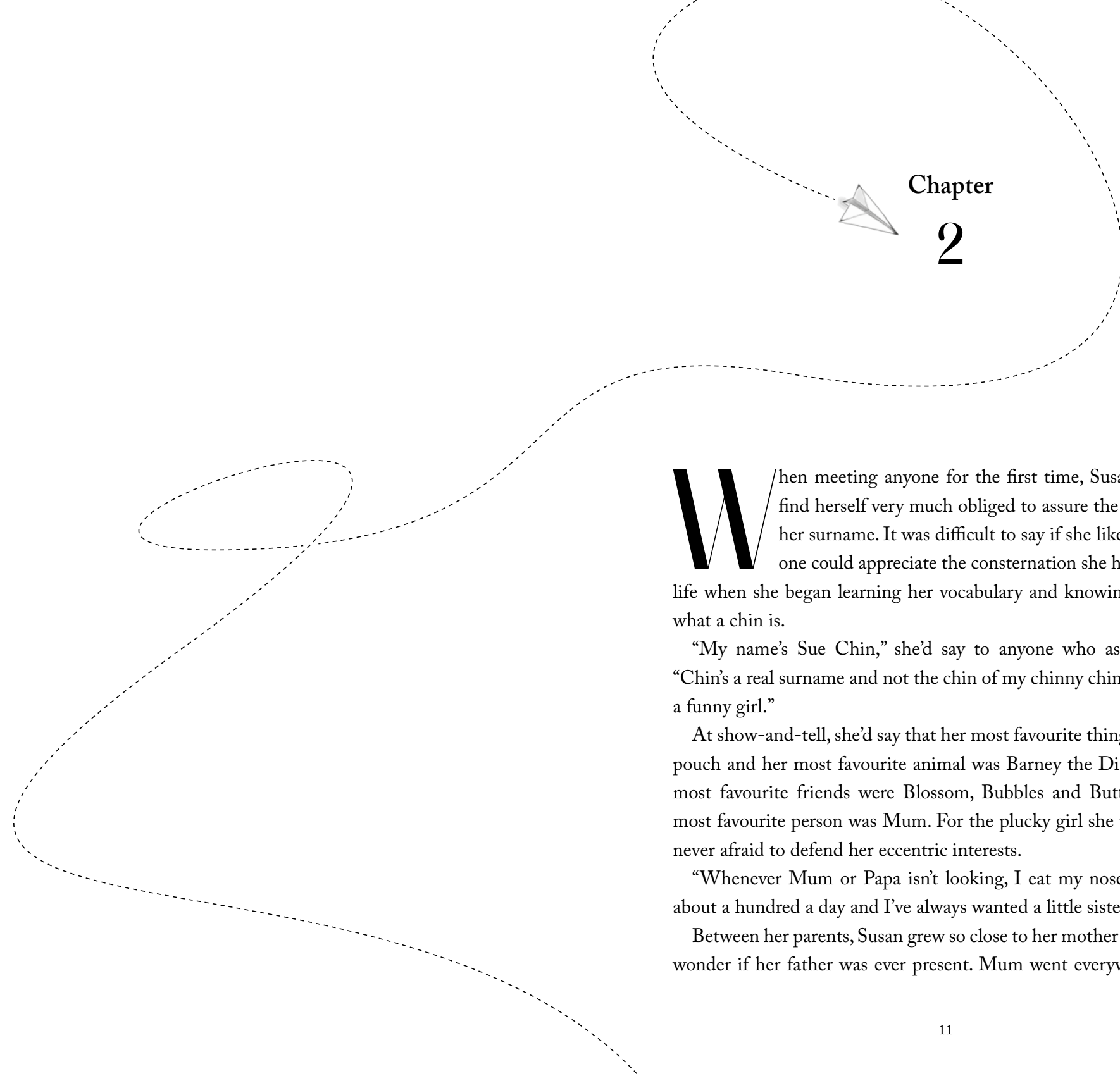
Thursday? Jean was supposed to be on her celibacy vacation until Sunday. The call ended before she could speak, and Macy—who had been eyeing her from the side like a ghost—seemed to have heard it all.

“Cutting short the trip?”

“We’ll make another one in six months. I promise.”

But Macy only shook her head. “A burden of life; excruciates—”

“Don’t start.”



Chapter

2

When meeting anyone for the first time, Susan Chin would find herself very much obliged to assure the authenticity of her surname. It was difficult to say if she liked it or not, but one could appreciate the consternation she had at a point in life when she began learning her vocabulary and knowing anatomically what a chin is.

“My name’s Sue Chin,” she’d say to anyone who asked her name. “Chin’s a real surname and not the chin of my chinny chin-chin. And I’m a funny girl.”

At show-and-tell, she’d say that her most favourite thing was her zippy pouch and her most favourite animal was Barney the Dinosaur and her most favourite friends were Blossom, Bubbles and Buttercup and her most favourite person was Mum. For the plucky girl she was, Susan was never afraid to defend her eccentric interests.

“Whenever Mum or Papa isn’t looking, I eat my nose boogies. I eat about a hundred a day and I’ve always wanted a little sister.”

Between her parents, Susan grew so close to her mother that one would wonder if her father was ever present. Mum went everywhere with her.

In the earlier years, Mum sat in Susan's kindergarten class and in speech therapy classes conducted by Auntie Selvi. On Saturdays Mum swam with her at swim school, and on Sundays she sat with her at Sunday school, uncomfortably perched on one of those undersized coloured chairs. Mum was on the heftier side, broad-shouldered and tall; quite a contrast to Susan who, even at fifteen years old, grew only to Mum's midriff. And for the times people wouldn't stop staring at her, Susan was taught to explain in a way she could, and the person would invariably turn away.

"Mum said I was small because I stopped growing at ten years old," she'd say. "And I stopped growing at ten years old because I was plenty special."

They made frequent trips to the University Hospital for the therapy sessions, and Susan took immense pride at knowing the names of all her doctors. She liked boasting about having been seen by five hundred doctors by the time she turned fifteen, or having been to five hundred different clinics for five hundred different ailments. She and Mum would take the train, and she loved waiting at the platform for the door-closing warning before hopping in. Mum would be on the other side, trying desperately to drag her in.

Once, an old man sat across from Susan and her mother. He had a little girl next to him; Susan found it pleasant imagining a little sister for herself and grew fond of the ribbons in the girl's hair. She made faces to get her attention, but it was the old man who looked at her instead. When their eyes met, Susan smiled at him but he didn't smile back. Instead he pointed at her. "See that girl there?" He told the little girl. "Her glasses so thick."

It was then the girl smiled at Susan, who was delighted in thinking that she might be fond of her spectacles—and she might be fonder still of them if she knew how they could be used to burn holes in leaves on a sunny day.

"Now you know why we tell you to take care of your eyes." The old man pulled the girl closer and pointed at Susan again. "See? Her eyes are spoilt already. So young wear glasses. You don't want to—"

"Say hello to uncle, Sue." Mum's voice was booming and unnaturally elevated.

"Hello, uncle!" Susan proclaimed obediently across the aisle.

The old man stopped talking and looked away.

"It's *aahn—cle*, Susan. Not *aww—ger*." Mum said, pointing to her lips, where she made effort to articulate the shape needed to produce the sound. "Come, say *aaahnnn—*"

Susan refused. She thought Mum sounded impatient like ants on a pan. The girl was missing her front teeth, which amused Susan and got her giggling. The girl giggled back and Susan giggled some more. Then the old man stopped the exchange when he cupped his hand over the girl's mouth and whispered something into her ear. Mum reciprocated, leaning over and speaking right into Susan's hearing aids.

"STAND STRONG, SUE."

The loudness of it got Susan all edgy. When they got off the train, Mum sat her down on a bench and looked the sternest Susan had ever seen her, which was puzzling because she knew she had done nothing wrong.

"People can say anything about you," Mum said. "You stand strong and never let anyone bring you down. Okay?"

Susan never really knew what that meant but she nodded anyway.



Before the crash, Susan Chin never knew how much she liked being on camera. For her entertainment, the DPRK authorities put the thirty-minute sessions of her interviews on a loop so she could watch them for hours on end. And after each filming, she always made it a point to smile for the cameras so that Mum and Papa would see her from the hospital

TV. In time, even the reruns would bore her, and apart from taking naps, she'd try talking to anyone about anything that came to mind. She'd go to the enormous double-leaf doors of her massive apartment, open them a crack and speak to the guards standing there.

"Papa was soldier like you," she'd say and eye the stoic guards for a response. "Papa like camping. He like it so plenty much he'd be at a camp all day and come home only at night and he was always trying to teach us camping stuff, like burning holes in leaves using my spectacles."

The guards looked staunchly ahead.

"Mum like Korea. Papa don't like," she went on. "Papa said Mum like Korea because she watch too much auntie TV."

The guards stood still and silent like wax effigies, without as much as a shift of eyes. But Susan kept at it for several nights, for it was better to be talking to someone than to herself.

It wasn't clear to Susan where she was. But she certainly knew she was stuck in a place called Limbo Land and made to live in a palace that had pillars thick as tree trunks and was larger than the National Museum and Tiffany's bungalow put together. Despite her love for being on camera, she hated the interviews she was made to attend, regularly referring to them as "pressing conferences" because the only thing she liked about them was the button she had to press to speak, which made quite a neat and important click. She'd always start by saying, "I am sixteen years old," and then, "I am short because I stopped growing at ten years old." And unfailingly, her audience would laugh. Agent Vera said it was a good joke and made it a routine before Susan would go on to talk about the big white bird and the rattling and the smoke filling the cabin and the engine burning outside her window and the pieces of debris falling off it—all in a set sequence. Then she would talk about the drop in her belly, how tightly Mum held her, and waking up in her seat and finding herself alone. That was all, even though there was much she'd want to say about

Mum and Papa and Auntie Selvi and the soldiers and Dora. Agent Vera said it would help people better if she told them about a bird flying into the airliner or having woken up from the crash and being rescued.

She did, and was met with applause so fervent and thunderous that it almost drove her off the stage. Clawing at her ears, she struck her hearing aids to the ground by accident and dived under the table to retrieve them. Thankfully they were undamaged, for they were expensive and she couldn't risk breaking them again since Tiffany's birthday party.

"Mum cried like a tap—that party," she told Agent Vera and the audience over the hot microphone. "Ear-aids plenty expensive."

When she was introduced to Vera Won—her agent—it led her to realise how much a "celepretty" she had become and got her looking at herself in the enormous bathroom mirror for a full hour. She was told that all celepretties have agents and she ought to have one too for the fame she now possessed.

"Agent Vera was plenty pretty and she knew kung fu and protected me from people," Susan would explain to anyone who came to her at the reception. "Agent Vera is like agents protecting Taylor Swift when she went off stage because so many people wanted to shake her hand. Agent Vera said I was like Taylor Swift. Very loved."

But the language spoken at receptions always puzzled Susan, who loathed the hassle of having Agent Vera translate their conversations because she could never follow them. What she found particularly troubling was the way some of the guests kept shaking her hand and crying and saying how wonderful she was. Then she would depart in a limousine that had cupboards full of fizzy drinks and ice cubes and on the way back she always had something that tasted like a cocktail of Sprite and cotton candy. Agent Vera would seem less friendly whenever they got into the limo, and was very terse with her speech. Mostly she'd gaze out the window into the darkness, and Susan could only wonder why.

Back at the palace, Susan threw off her shoes and socks and loved the way her bare feet sank into the lusciously thick carpet. The bathrooms had ceilings so high she thought of flying a balloon in them, and counted twelve long strides from the potty to the bathtub. There was a blue-scarfed old lady who cleaned her room twice a day. And while she cleaned, she might as well wash Susan too. However Susan tried talking to her, the old lady wouldn't answer or meet her eyes. She'd go on washing Susan quietly, lifting her arms and turning her about as she saw fit, which made Susan feel very much like a pot.

Whenever Susan finished talking to the guards on night watch, she found company in the TV. An attendant would arrive bearing a silver tray with a silver cup with a single scoop of chocolate ice cream. She'd ask for an ice cream sandwich with the colourful bread from the man with the colourful umbrella, but never once did the attendant look her way. She only had to wait a little longer, she told herself. Mum and Papa were at the hospital and they would pick her up after they had rested enough. Her eyes were fixed on the song and dance, the elaborate silk costumes and heavily made-up faces and the ruby red lips of the soprano. But she had no interest in it. She was thinking of the time she spent with Papa at Limbo Land, and of missing Mum the most.



Day 2

Limbo Land was a cold place.

Susan told Papa she had decided to put on like *four thousand* layers of clothes and went on to don a sweater and a shirt and another until she became too plump to put on anything else. And for that Papa told her she was an onion. "Yes," she agreed—so seriously that one might think she was giving the order for a rocket launch.

It was sunrise, and they were on one side of a hill. On a rocky outcrop

that jutted from the slopes, she extended her arms, remembering what Papa had taught her about the right-hand slope being due east of another slope on her left. This was important because the left-hand slope was Luggage Land, where she'd explore once a day for treasures. Large swathes of meadow extended all around and on a slight incline, covered in grass so tall that a passing breeze would ripple the blades like waves in the sea. Yesterday, Susan had used a charred branch (in the way Papa had taught her) and scratched out a list on an inner wall of what used to be the cargo hold of the aircraft.

1. Morning. Wake up. Pee away from my nest.
2. Drink water.
3. Eat breakfast.
4. Explore Luggage Land.

Luggage Land contained treasures as far as Susan could see. Some of the suitcases had rolled down to the bottom and lay there in a heap. Grass sprang up long and thick around them, and whenever she went there, she'd stomp and clap to scare the snakes away like Papa told her to. She rummaged through the bags and took whatever she needed to build her nest, since Papa said it wasn't stealing if no one was there to say it's theirs. Everywhere she looked there was something. She had found toys wrapped up as presents, like Nerf guns and softies and a nice swimsuit once—pink with little ice cream cones and cherries. She collected sunglasses, phones, cameras and a computer, and put them all in a suitcase and dragged it up the slope to where Papa was. She was proud of herself, until Papa flew into a rage and called her stupid. Papa always had stuff to rage about. Mum said it was his hobby.

One morning, Susan found a cart with trays of food in it—rice and chicken and fish in tomato sauce. She didn't think the food, being hard and stale, could be eaten at all and decided that Papa had to be crazy for lavishing praises on her for finding them. Certainly Mum would throw

About the Author



Tham Cheng-E is the author of two previous novels, *Surrogate Protocol* (2017) and *Band Eight* (2018), the former shortlisted for the 2016 Epigram Books Fiction Prize. He is a father to two boys, the younger of whom has Down syndrome. He also writes about Down syndrome and parenting on his family blog *Thumbprints*.

A passenger airliner plummets into the Korean DMZ, killing every person on board but one: Susan Chin, a sixteen-year-old Singaporean girl with Down syndrome.

The authorities are quick to dismiss the crash as an accident, but the insurers aren't convinced, not over the girl's questionable account.

Claims investigator Jean Wan is called upon to challenge the ruling. She befriends Susan and uncovers an eccentric version of her story laced with magic mushrooms, a dead girl and the unusual bond between Susan and her father. Confronted by the stench of conspiracy, Jean realises she must strike at the heart of it all—the innocence of Susan Chin.



FICTION

ISBN 978-981-51-0500-1



9 789815 110500 1

www.epigram.sg