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TIGER HONOR



DRAGON PEARL



A THOUSAND WORLDS NOVEL
by *New York Times* Best-Selling Author
YOON HA LEE

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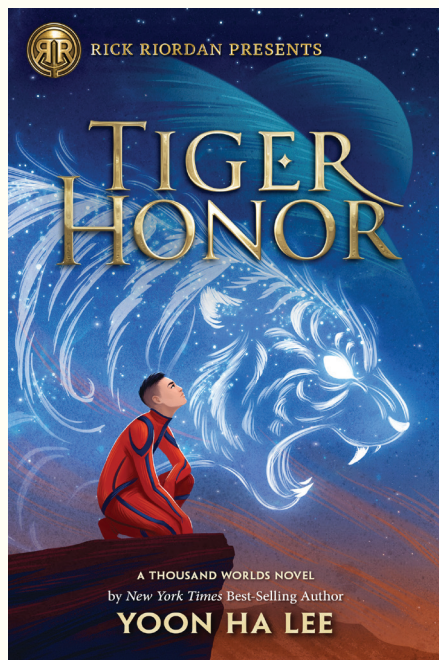
EDUCATOR'S GUIDE
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ABOUT THE BOOKS

Thirteen-year-old Min comes from a long line of fox spirits, but you'd never know it by looking at her. To keep the family safe, Min's mother insists that none of them use any fox magic, such as Charm or shape-shifting. They must appear human at all times. Min feels hemmed in by the household rules and resents the endless chores, the cousins who crowd her, and the aunties who judge her. She would like nothing more than to escape Jinju, her neglected, dust-ridden, and impoverished planet. She's counting the days until she can follow her older brother, Jun, into the Space Forces and see more of the Thousand Worlds.

When word arrives that Jun is suspected of leaving his post to go in search of the Dragon Pearl, Min knows that something is wrong. Jun would never desert his battle cruiser, even for a mystical object rumored to have tremendous power. She decides to run away to find him and clear his name. Min's quest will have her meeting gamblers, pirates, and vengeful ghosts. It will involve deception, lies, and sabotage. She will be forced to use more fox magic than ever before, and to rely on all of her cleverness and bravery. The outcome may not be what she had imagined, but it has the potential to exceed her wildest dreams.



Sebin, a young tiger spirit from the Juhwang Clan, wants nothing more than to join the Thousand Worlds Space Forces and, like their uncle Hwan, captain a battle cruiser someday. But when Sebin's acceptance letter finally arrives, it's accompanied by the shocking news that Hwan has been declared a traitor. Apparently the captain abandoned his duty to steal a magical artifact, the Dragon Pearl, and his whereabouts are still unknown. Sebin hopes to help clear their hero's name and restore honor to the clan.

Nothing goes according to plan, however. As soon as Sebin arrives for orientation, they are met by a special investigator named Yi and Yi's assistant, a girl named Min. Yi informs Sebin that they must immediately report to the ship *Haetae* and await further instructions. Sebin finds this highly unusual, but soon all protocol is forgotten when there's an explosion on the ship, the crew is knocked out, and the communication system goes down. It's up to Sebin, three other cadets, and Yi and Min to determine who is sabotaging the battle cruiser. When Sebin is suddenly accused of collaborating with the enemy, the cadet realizes that Min is the most dangerous foe of all. . . .

WHILE READING

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CHART

Directions: Author Yoon Ha Lee uses many examples of figurative language throughout *Dragon Pearl* and *Tiger Honor* to paint vivid and memorable scenes from Min's and Sebin's adventures. As you read each book, complete the chart and include 3 to 4 examples for each type of figurative language that you encounter. Include the page numbers where you find the information. As an extension activity, work with a partner or group to discuss how the examples aided your comprehension.

Simile A comparison that uses "like" or "as"	Metaphor A direct comparison that doesn't use "like" or "as"	Personification Giving human characteristics to nonhumans	Idiom An expression that means something other than what the words say	Symbolism A picture or object that stands for something else such as an idea or quality	Theme The moral message or meaning. Stories may have multiple themes.

DRAGON PEARL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

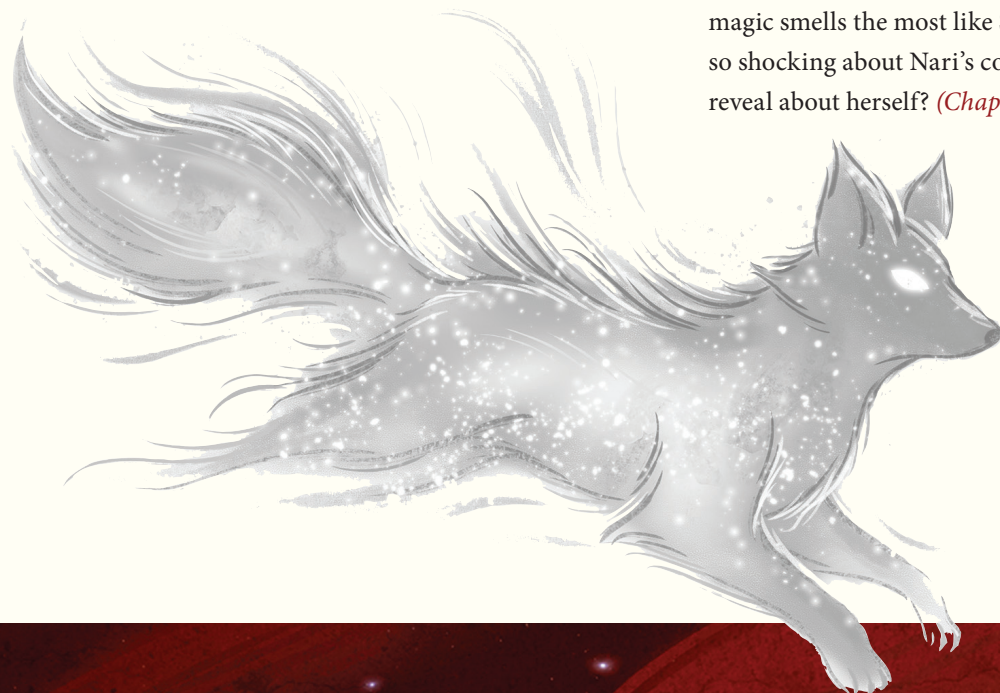
- "I had a pretty dismal life on Jinju. I was counting the days until I turned fifteen. Just two more years left before I could take the entrance exams for the Thousand Worlds Space Forces and follow my brother, Jun, into the service. That was all that kept me going" (p. 1). Min's greatest hope at the beginning of the book is to leave Jinju. What is her daily life like? What does she expect to find so far away from home? (*Chapter 1*)
- Who were Min's ancestors? What had happened to the family's fortunes? (*Chapter 1*)
- Describe the legend of the Dragon Pearl. (*Chapter 1*)
- "Foxes can smell each other's magic" (p. 6). What did Min detect about her mother? Why was this hypocritical? (*Chapter 1*)
- Mom defends Jun automatically when the investigator states that he is under suspicion of deserting. He says, "People change, especially when they are presented with certain . . . opportunities" (p. 7). What was the investigator implying? When he explained more bluntly, what was Min's reaction? What does this tell you about Min? In what other ways do you see a duality in Min? (*Chapter 1*)

- 6 According to legend, what did the Dragon Pearl have the power to do? Why would this be beneficial for a planet like Jinju? (*Chapter 2*)
- 7 The investigator says, “That’s why they needed the cadet” (p. 16). What was he insinuating? Why was this not a “normal distrust” of foxes? (*Chapter 2*)
- 8 Min feels justified, even heroic, in what she did to the investigator. However, Mom sends her straight to kitchen duty to clean up the mess she’s created. What does this tell you about Mom’s thoughts on family roles—specifically, for children? (*Chapter 2*)
- 9 What is unique about Min’s cousin Manshik? What did most foxes choose to be? Why did Manshik choose differently? (*Chapter 3*)
- 10 “If it weren’t for this portrait, which Jun had left with me, I wouldn’t remember Dad’s face at all” (p. 27). We don’t hear much about Min’s dad. What was he like and why do you think Mom looks sad when she sees Min working with his tools? (*Chapter 3*)
- 11 “The enormity of the task before me was overwhelming. But I refused to allow myself to get discouraged. I’d just have to take it one step at a time” (p. 31). How does this show a surprising amount of preparedness and maturity for a thirteen-year-old? (*Chapter 4*)

- 12 Min imagines Jinju—which means “pearl”—transformed by the Dragon Pearl. What does that image look like? The city of Hongok means “ruby,” but Min sees that it’s very different at the street level. Jinju and Hongok are places with underdeveloped or overexaggerated, potentials. How do these places mirror the characters in the story? (*Chapter 4*)
- 13 Does Min feel any regret for the way she left home? Why does she dismiss these feelings? (*Chapter 4*)
- 14 When Min cannot escape the guards at the Market District, what plan does she hatch? How does she use Charm to enact the plan? (*Chapter 5*)
- 15 Min escapes the guards, but what does she accidentally leave behind? How will this impact her? (*Chapter 5*)
- 16 Min thinks back to Jun’s message, which said: “Together we’ve been exploring a new world, just like Dad.” What clue did this give Min regarding her brother’s disappearance? (*Chapter 6*)
- 17 What did the fox lore say about tails and their link to power? (*Chapter 6*)
- 18 What were some clues about Nari’s true identity that Min picked up on right away? (*Chapter 6*)
- 19 “You have the look of Areum and her sisters. But your magic smells the most like Seonmi’s” (p. 50). What was so shocking about Nari’s comment? What did Nari reveal about herself? (*Chapter 6*)

- 20 What additional information does Min learn about the family? What is she angered by? (*Chapter 6*)
- 21 Why did Min feel happier working at Nari’s? (*Chapter 7*)
- 22 “I was starting to get an idea of why Mom had chosen to leave the gambling parlor behind” (p. 57). Why was Min beginning to feel uneasy about using her Charm? (*Chapter 7*)
- 23 Jumping Gates caused travelers to see visions. Min saw a vision of her father: “He opened his mouth as if to say something, and I leaned forward, eager to hear it” (p. 72). What came next? What did this foreshadow? (*Chapter 8*)
- 24 At the end of Chapter 7, Min dreams a tumultuous dream of her brother. What does this portend about her journey? (*Chapter 8*)
- 25 Why was Min grateful for her experience in having to fix things around the house? How did her skills prove to be helpful? (*Chapter 9*)
- 26 How did Min take advantage of the fact that she had woken up on the *Pale Lightning*? What was the deal that Jang and Min made? (*Chapter 10*)
- 27 Min meets two other central characters: Sujin and Haneul. Describe them and their supernatural strengths. How are they similar and different from each other? (*Chapter 11*)
- 28 Min takes on the form of a boy, Jang, and Sujin has a gender-neutral status. What do these characters reveal about the author’s position on gender roles and identity? Discuss some of the societal prejudices and pressures that young people face regarding their gender identity. (*Chapter 11*)
- 29 Describe gi and its importance for the *Pale Lightning*. (*Chapter 11*)
- 30 Give examples of how Min is relying on Charm more and more. Are there any inherent dangers? (*Chapter 12*)

- 31 What is the significance of having female authority figures like Lieutenant Hyosu in the Space Forces? How do they contrast with some of the male authority figures, especially Captain Hwan, whom we meet later? (*Chapter 12*)
- 32 Min finally meets Captain Hwan. Describe him and their first encounter. How does Min know that he is a supernatural? (*Chapter 13*)
- 33 “What do you think serving in the Space Forces is about?” What answer was Hwan looking for? Why did Captain Hwan ask this of Min? (*Chapter 13*)
- 34 Give some examples of how Min is becoming attached to Sujin and Haneul. (*Chapter 14*)
- 35 Lieutenant Hyosu says, “The Dragon Pearl might not be as powerful as the legends claim, but we can’t risk it falling into the wrong hands” (p. 122). What is Hyosu referring to? (*Chapter 14*)
- 36 Sujin and Haneul have a discussion about Jun’s disappearance. Where do they differ in their theories? (*Chapter 15*)
- 37 Why did Min say that she “felt almost like I wasn’t pretending anymore” (p. 135)? (*Chapter 16*)
- 38 How did the flow of bad luck affect Min? (*Chapter 17*)
- 39 What does Captain Hwan know about what is causing damage to the ship? (*Chapter 17*)
- 40 How did Min hear the conversation between Captain Hwan and Lieutenant Commander Ji-Eun? Was Min discovered, and if so, by whom? (*Chapter 18*)
- 41 Who does Hwan think the mercs were working for? Why? (*Chapter 18*)
- 42 What does Hwan confess to doing? How do you think Jang feels about it? (*Chapter 18*)



- 43 Min and Sujin are sent to a shift on the bridge. Min finds out how being stuck at the Gate can affect the ship. What wasn't adding up about the theories circulating about Jun and the deserters? (Chapter 19)
- 44 Min makes the decision to break into the captain's quarters. How does she plan for this? (Chapter 20)
- 45 What happens to Sujin? Why did Min say she was risking her life in taking up her friend's station? Why doesn't Min want to let anyone down? (Chapter 20)
- 46 "Whenever I wasn't sure what to do, I just trusted my instincts. Sure, it might have been dangerous, but it was producing good results. I could almost see the flows as a tapestry I was weaving" (p. 161). What was starting to happen to Min as she managed the flows of the ship? Even with her fears, why does Min agree to do this job? (Chapter 20)
- 47 "Somewhere in the Thousand Worlds there must be people who would be willing to help restore Jinju. If I have to, I'll visit every world to find them" (p. 166). What do Jun's words tell us about his determination to find the Dragon Pearl? (Chapter 21)
- 48 Why did Hwan write "The fox cadet is aware of the risks. Short of myself, no one has a better chance of helping the team survive" (p. 173)? (Chapter 21)
- 49 Why does Min tell Byung-Ho the truth about Bora? What made Min blush? Who was she thankful toward? (Chapter 22)
- 50 Why do you think Hwan made the *Pale Lightning's* crew endure a seventeen-hour battle that risked much damage and casualties? (Chapter 22)
- 51 Why does Min start to feel dubious about using so much Charm? Why does she keep using it anyway? Why was she beginning to forget her purpose in all of this? (Chapter 22)
- 52 One of the prisoners seems scholarly. What does he explain about the Fourth Colony's history that makes Min frightened? Why would one be scared of pox spirits? (Chapter 23)
- 53 Who hired the mercenaries? Why does Chae-Won want the Dragon Pearl? Why does this make Min's mission even more urgent? Why does this revelation make Min angry about the people in power? What is the author trying to say about world leaders and the responsibility they have toward their citizens? (Chapter 23)
- 54 Why are Sujin and Haneul softening toward Min? What does Sujin gift Min with? Despite all this, Min has a plan to leave the ship. What is it, and why does the plan itself make Min feel more sadness? (Chapter 23)
- 55 Why do you think Min felt physically ill when she sabotaged the *Pale Lightning*? (Chapter 24)
- 56 How did Min get the prisoners past the guards and back onto their ship? What does this tell you about Min and her confidence in herself? How does this differ from her feelings at the beginning of the book? (Chapter 24)
- 57 What caused Min to feel a "sense of pressure I hadn't even been conscious of eased from my bones. I couldn't relax, exactly, but I felt more comfortable" (p. 208)? (Chapter 25)
- 58 Why did Min feel disgusted by Chul and by her own actions? What did she remember about Nari's? (Chapter 25)
- 59 Who did Captain Hwan send in to accept Chul and Min's surrender? What did Min ultimately do? (Chapter 26)
- 60 Why did Jang leave Min? What did his departure do to Min? (Chapter 27)
- 61 What happened to Min once she met Hwan? (Chapter 27)
- 62 Describe Min's dream about Jun and why it disturbed her. (Chapter 27)
- 63 Why did Hwan come to talk to her privately? Why do you think he asked Min to take on her heritage form? How do you know that Min was proud to change shape? What does this tell you about how Min's pride in her heritage and self-image has evolved? (Chapter 27)
- 64 Sujin told Min that they betrayed Hwan because "some things are right and some things are wrong. We had to do what was right." Later on, what does Min realize about this statement? (Chapter 28)
- 65 What about the physical description of the Fourth Colony tells you that it's a dangerous planet? (Chapter 29)
- 66 Why were there forceful winds from the start? What do we know about ghosts, especially the ones who live on the Fourth Colony? Why would the ghosts not want the group to go toward a certain direction? (Chapter 29)
- 67 Why did the winds seem "less cruel" when Min stopped to admire the forest? (Chapter 30)
- 68 What did walking through the Fourth Colony make Min dream for Jinju? (Chapter 30)
- 69 Why did Min feel tremendous guilt when she saw Jun? What other thoughts raced through her mind? (Chapter 31)
- 70 Min thought, "All my dreams—his dreams, *our* dreams—were over." Why did she think this and was it true? (Chapter 31)
- 71 Why was it even more personal and urgent for Min to find the Dragon Pearl? How did it differ from her original reason for the quest? Why had Jun brought them here? What did it make Min realize she had to do? (Chapter 31)
- 72 Why had Jun betrayed Min to the other ghosts? How does Min know that Jun is truly on her side now? (Chapter 32)
- 73 Describe what the Dragon Pearl looked like to Min from her vantage point. What did its colors symbolize? What was surprising about its size? (Chapter 33)
- 74 Why did the ghosts sabotage Hae's plan to obtain the Pearl? (Chapter 34)
- 75 Min asks Jun to stay close and protect her, but he says she doesn't need him. Why? (Chapter 34)
- 76 What does Min pick up on about the ghosts? What does she infer that they want? How does Min try to appease them? How does Hwan respond? (Chapter 34)
- 77 Min decides against using Charm this time—why? What does she offer the ghosts? (Chapter 34)
- 78 What did Min whisper to the Pearl? What happened? (Chapter 35)
- 79 After the group swears to fulfill their promise to the ghosts, what does the Pearl begin to do? Is the orb an object or an entity, capable of thinking and feeling? What effect did the Pearl have on Haneul, Sujin, Hwan, and the ghosts? What began happening to the Fourth Colony? (Chapter 35)
- 80 Why was Jun's ghost still lingering? What did he want from Min? Why was Min quite all right with the arrangement? (Chapter 35)
- 81 "Nothing turned out as we expected, did it?" (p. 300). Why did Min not want to hear those words from Jun? Why was it important that they spent hours talking, some of it about mundane things? (Chapter 36)
- 82 "None of it had changed, and everything had changed. It wasn't just that Jun had died. We had traveled into a world of stars and magic and brought some of both back with us, just not in the way we'd hoped" (p. 301). In her journey, Min finds the legendary Dragon Pearl but loses her beloved brother. The sadness amid the joy begins to sink into her. Do you think Min would have gained as much from her journey if she had not experienced such loss? How does loss and tragedy shape our characters and our outlook on life? What do you think would have happened if Min had found her brother but not the Pearl? (Chapter 36)
- 83 How did Min get the orb to glow again? What does that tell you about the Pearl's "feelings" toward Min? (Chapter 37)

- 84 What is the “alternative” that Seek offers to Min? What does she add to the agreement? What would Min receive from the arrangement? What would Jun? (*Chapter 37*)
- 85 Even if the Dragon Council took Min’s request seriously, why would it be difficult to terraform Jinju? What did Min look forward to? The author describes in detail how difficult it is to live on such a barren world like Jinju. What sort of message is the author sending to readers about our

- own planet? What does the author hope we will take away from Min’s commitment to her planet? (*Chapter 38*)
- 86 Min and Jun finally arrive at their home. What kind of emotions and thoughts do you think were swirling within Min? How did Mom respond when Min showed her the Dragon Pearl? How did Mom respond when she saw the ghost of Jun? What did she do in “typical Mom fashion”? What was the most important thing to her? (*Chapter 38*)



TIGER HONOR DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe what clan Sebin belongs to. What is Sebin’s background? (*Prologue*)
- 2 “After all, if I don’t stop the people who have fallen under the evil spell of a monster we all thought extinct, everyone on this ship is doomed.” Describe what image comes to mind with Sebin’s description. (*Prologue*)
- 3 What are the two things that tigers are known for in the old stories? (*Prologue*)
- 4 Describe how long the Juhwang Clan of tiger spirits has inhabited their home. (*Chapter 1*)
- 5 How was Sebin allowed to apply for the Space Forces at an earlier age? What did the Matriarch think of Sebin joining the organization? (*Chapter 1*)
- 6 Why was Aunt Sooni of particular importance to Sebin? (*Chapter 1*)
- 7 Who has inspired Sebin to apply to the Space Forces? What is notable about this character’s appearance? (*Chapter 1*)
- 8 Why does the Juhwang Tiger Clan care about gardening?

- 9 What are the reasons Sebin enjoys transforming into a tiger? (*Chapter 1*)
- 10 Use three words to describe what life was like at the Juhwang Clan’s estate. Then explain why you chose those descriptors. (*Chapter 1*)
- 11 Describe Hwan’s sword and what Hwan said it represented. (*Chapter 1*)
- 12 What kind of folktales has Sebin heard while growing up, and how were they at odds with their family’s upbringing? (*Chapter 2*)
- 13 How do the rest of the clan members react to the grave news? What does the Matriarch decide to do and why? (*Chapter 2*)
- 14 Describe Admiral Hasun’s relationship with the Matriarch. (*Chapter 2*)
- 15 Hasun says that “[Hwan] abandoned his duty to his crew and his ship to steal a magical artifact” (p. 19) and is guilty of high treason. What is the Matriarch’s response, and why is Sebin shocked? (*Chapter 2*)
- 16 Who says “It wouldn’t be proper for an admiral to show favor to the clan” (p. 20)? Why is this significant? (*Chapter 2*)
- 17 What is the “suspicious ‘coincidence’” (p. 21)? (*Chapter 2*)
- 18 Why do you think Sebin feels dread instead of honor when the Matriarch says “You, too, may serve the clan” (p. 22)? Do you think this is how they expected to celebrate their acceptance into the Space Forces? (*Chapter 2*)
- 19 What was the real value of Aunt Sooni’s parting gift? (*Chapter 3*)
- 20 Describe Starbase Borasaekbam and how it was different from Yonggi. (*Chapter 3*)
- 21 Sebin is overwhelmed by the crowds and feels vulnerable, but they think: “I couldn’t show weakness in front of these strangers, so I stiffened my back and kept my face a

- mask” (p. 27). What does this reveal about Sebin’s family and how they taught them to act in front of non-family members? (*Chapter 3*)
- 22 “I wish to show that a tiger can serve with honor” (p. 32). Sebin answers that this is the reason they want to join the Space Forces. How has Hwan’s actions complicated Sebin’s goal? (*Chapter 3*)
- 23 Why does Jee’s slowness in answering questions remind Sebin of something Uncle Hwan said? How does that change Sebin’s perspective of Jee? (*Chapter 3*)
- 24 “Uncle Hwan served as my lodestar. . . . Now I would have to settle for having him as my secret guide” (p. 33–34). What does this reveal about how Sebin feels about their uncle? Has anything changed? (*Chapter 3*)
- 25 “It was one thing to follow orders from a known and trusted authority, another to do whatever a stranger said” (p. 36). What brings this family rule to mind for Sebin? (*Chapter 4*)
- 26 “I hated how much I was on edge for no good reason, even though my instincts were screaming at me that something wasn’t right” (p. 38). Describe the events that cause Sebin to think this. (*Chapter 4*)
- 27 “My unease crescendoed. I was sure that ship captains didn’t share every detail of their missions with their crews” (p. 41). What information has Investigator Yi shared with Jee and Sebin? (*Chapter 4*)
- 28 “I wondered if my family was unusual. . . . It had always been impressed on me that I would have to prove myself to the Space Forces, not the other way around” (p. 45). How does this influence the way Sebin acts? How has Sebin’s family prepared them to be ready for any emergency? (*Chapter 5*)
- 29 Describe how the *Haetae* ship lives up to its namesake. (*Chapter 5*)
- 30 Why do you think Ensign Hak shook her head at the officer who recognized Sebin? (*Chapter 5*)

- 31 When Ensign Hak says “Lieutenant Rhee! We’ve got that special guest we were holding for, sir!” (p. 51), why is it suspicious? (Chapter 5)
- 32 When does Sebin lose their dignity, and why? (Chapter 5)
- 33 What does Sebin feel when they see the iridescent glow of the stars? Why is that strange? (Chapter 5)
- 34 Describe Euna and Namkyu, the other cadets who will share the bunkroom with Jee and Sebin. (Chapter 6)
- 35 Why did Sebin long to sit down with Euna and talk to her one-on-one? (Chapter 6)
- 36 Have the Juhwang Tiger Clan’s close-knit dynamics helped or hurt Sebin in their ability to work with their comrades? (Chapter 6)
- 37 Why did Sebin stop dead in their tracks? What did their inner voice tell them? What does that tell us of their loyalties and what they might do if there were a conflict between their duties as a space cadet and a member of the Juhwang Tiger Clan? (Chapter 6)
- 38 How does Captain Chaewon’s office serve to amplify her presence and stature? (Chapter 6)
- 39 The captain explains that loyalty to family and home is important but that loyalty to the Thousand Worlds is most important. How does this change Sebin’s perspective? (Chapter 6)
- 40 “Honor may seem simple, but it always demands a price. You must be ready to pay that price, whatever it is” (p. 66). Where has Sebin heard something similar to the captain’s words? How do you predict these two influences will affect Sebin? (Chapter 6)
- 41 Have you noticed a pattern about Sebin’s scar and when it throbs? Please explain. (Chapter 6)
- 42 How did the four cadets try to bide their time? What did they converse about? Was it awkward or enjoyable for Sebin? Why? (Chapter 7)
- 43 If damage to a ship is rare during Gating, what other possibilities remain for the explosion? (Chapter 7)
- 44 What does Jee ask for that shows he is one step ahead of the other cadets? Why is this proactive on his part? (Chapter 7)
- 45 What was Sebin’s reasoning for notifying Lieutenant Han-gyeol and Ensign Hak? Who vouched for them and why? (Chapter 7)
- 46 What was the first ominous sign from the ship’s computer system? And the second? Was Euna right to be worried? (Chapter 7)
- 47 Why does Sebin lose the opportunity to bring up Hwan? (Chapter 8)
- 48 What do Sebin and Euna find suspicious about Min on page 85? (Chapter 8)
- 49 What kinds of clues has Jee given about his “lawless” family? (Chapter 8)
- 50 How do we know that Yi is changing their mind about Sebin? Why do you think this is? (Chapter 8)
- 51 “The air here was colder than I had expected, colder than in the rest of the ship. I wondered if it meant anything” (p. 89). What could the colder air mean? (Chapter 8)
- 52 How does Sebin take charge with their quick thinking on page 91? Do you think Min and Yi approve of Sebin’s leadership skills? What about the other cadets? Do they seem to trust their lead? (Chapter 8)
- 53 Why does Sebin’s scar begin to ache? Who is the enemy before them, and why was Sebin being drawn from their comrades? (Chapter 9)
- 54 Describe how Sebin saved Yi. Why wasn’t Yi thankful that Sebin did this? What did Sebin’s comrades accuse them of? (Chapter 9)
- 55 How does Sebin think everyone has misunderstood Hwan’s motives? (Chapter 9)
- 56 Are the ship’s misfortunes a result of sabotage, bad luck, or both? Explain the possibilities. (Chapter 9)
- 57 What is Sebin most worried about on page 98? How does this conflict with their belief in the integrity and character of their uncle? (Chapter 9)
- 58 “My head felt as though stars were swirling at the edge of my vision. . . . Obediently, as though in a trance, I drifted after her. I felt myself smiling, and I couldn’t say why, although that didn’t bother me, either” (p. 100–101). When did Sebin start to act and think differently? Is this the way they have always felt toward Min? (Chapter 9)
- 59 What did Min say was for Sebin’s protection? Why is this ironic? (Chapter 9)
- 60 Min and Sebin get into an argument about Hwan’s character: “You clearly don’t know your uncle as well as you think you do” (p. 104). Why is Sebin stung by those words? (Chapter 10)
- 61 Why would possessing the Dragon Pearl equate to having the ultimate power? (Chapter 10)
- 62 Sebin finally realizes that they have been tricked. Why are they angry? What kind of magic does Min possess? (Chapter 10)
- 63 Why do you think Sebin wasn’t afraid when they saw the ghost of Jun? (Chapter 10)
- 64 What does Jun encourage Min to let go of? Why would this be for her betterment? Why would this also be good for the ship? Why was Jun’s presence a threat to the *Haetae*? (Chapter 10)
- 65 “But wishing never made anything so. . . . The only path left to me was action” (p. 113). Why did Sebin think this? (Chapter 11)
- 66 Who does Sebin think is the greater danger: Uncle Hwan or Min? Why? What is Sebin planning to do? (Chapter 11)
- 67 “I see that Min and her compatriots didn’t waste any time making false accusations against you, when they are the ones endangering this ship” (p. 116). How does Hwan know this? What does he believe about himself and his own mission? (Chapter 11)
- 68 Why does Sebin feel taken aback with Hwan’s admission on page 117? Do you think Sebin regrets getting this information out of their uncle? (Chapter 11)
- 69 How does Hwan try to persuade Sebin to join him on page 118? What does Hwan tell Sebin to imagine? If Sebin is convinced, why do you think the scar on their hand “ached all the way down to bone” (p. 119)? (Chapter 11)
- 70 Even after Sebin joins forces with their uncle, they are worried for the *Haetae*’s crew. What does this reveal about Sebin? Have they made the right choice in joining Hwan? (Chapter 11)
- 71 What two desires are tearing Sebin apart? What does each motive reveal about Sebin’s beliefs and priorities? (Chapter 11)
- 72 “As much as I loved my family, from my parents to Aunt Sooni and the various elders, I’d always gotten the impression that the weak were to be pitied at best, scorned at worst” (p. 120). How does this instilled belief continue to influence Sebin, especially in their interactions with Hwan? (Chapter 11)
- 73 How are Sebin and Hwan fundamentally different? How, if at all possible, can their differences be reconciled? Even though Sebin is the junior and Hwan is the elder, is there anything that Hwan can learn from his nephew? (Chapter 11)
- 74 “I glowed at his praise, something I had rarely received at home” (p. 122). Do you think Hwan is purposefully appealing to Sebin’s ego because he knows how the Juhwang Tiger Clan raised them? (Chapter 11)
- 75 In Sebin’s mind, which was worse: hijacking a ship and conspiring with foreigners, or letting a fox spirit take over the *Haetae*? How did Sebin think Hwan could redeem himself? Do you think Hwan wants to be restored to the Space Forces? (Chapter 12)

- 76 Why is it important that “[f]or the first time, [Sebin] wondered what life was like for the smaller and more vulnerable” (p. 127)? (Chapter 12)
- 77 While in the elevator with Hwan, Sena, and Shield, Sebin imagines an alternate universe where they are doing menial chores and actually enjoying it. What does this reveal about their state of mind? (Chapter 12)
- 78 Why can’t Sebin say why they jumped in front of Hwan to protect him from Min’s blaster? (Chapter 12)
- 79 Explain how Min was forced to assume her magical form. (Chapter 12)
- 80 What other power does the shaman display to Min that breaks her spirit? (Chapter 13)
- 81 What are the pros and cons of Jun finding his final rest? (Chapter 13)
- 82 How did Sena trick Jun? What effect did she have on everyone else? (Chapter 13)
- 83 Hwan says to Min, “You might ask yourself . . . why they’re ‘evil deeds’ when you use Charm on my behalf, but they’re purely innocent when you use your corrupt powers to control people for your own gain” (p. 136). How could Min or Sebin turn this question around to Hwan? When does his power and authority serve selfish gain, and when is it honorable? (Chapter 13)
- 84 Why was Sebin more afraid of Uncle Hwan than Min? How is this a complete 180 turn from Sebin’s previous opinion? (Chapter 13)
- 85 “After all, I told myself, blackmailing a fox wasn’t really wrong” (p. 137). How does Hwan’s influence begin to show in Sebin’s thoughts? (Chapter 13)
- 86 What was the deal that Shield had with Sena? What did this lead Min and Sebin to believe? (Chapter 13)
- 87 Describe Hwan’s powerful transformation on page 142. (Chapter 13)
- 88 How was Uncle Hwan’s simple plan much more complicated now that Sebin was rejoined with Jee, Euna, and Namkyu? (Chapter 14)
- 89 Even though Sebin was excited at the prospect of joining their uncle’s quest, what tugged at their conscience the most? When did Sebin decide to go against their uncle? What do you think was the tipping point for Sebin? (Chapter 14)
- 90 What smell has Sebin never associated with people? What does that make them feel? (Chapter 14)
- 91 What was the plan that Sebin hatched on page 148? How did that show their quick thinking and cleverness? (Chapter 14)
- 92 Why do you think Sebin thought they would be haunted by the image of Hwan, Sena, and Min together? (Chapter 14)
- 93 “I will fix this,” Sebin promises the world on page 149. How is this an audacious vow? (Chapter 14)
- 94 How will splitting up the group help Sebin achieve their plan? (Chapter 14)
- 95 How were Jee and Sebin tricked? (Chapter 14)
- 96 Why has Yi brought Min onto the *Haetae*? How did their plan backfire? (Chapter 15)
- 97 “My first duty is to the Thousand Worlds entire, not my family” (p. 157). Describe the significance of Sebin’s words. Why do you think the scar on their hand pulsed with pain? (Chapter 15)
- 98 Was Sebin’s acceptance into the Space Forces authentic, or was it all part of the investigator’s plan? (Chapter 15)
- 99 What about Sebin’s childhood makes them realize that their family was indeed corrupt? (Chapter 15)
- 100 What was the “interesting pickle” that Sebin found himself in? (Chapter 15)
- 101 “Always plan for the worst” (p. 162). Why was it ironic that Sebin was using their family’s advice at this time? (Chapter 15)
- 102 Describe the odd behavior that Euna displayed to Sebin at the bridge. (Chapter 15)
- 103 “Even if I couldn’t trust my family anymore, I missed [Aunt Sooni]. Giving [up the knife] felt like giving up one of the last things that tied me to my family” (p. 165). Why was the confiscation of Aunt Sooni’s knife appropriate and symbolic at this point in the story? (Chapter 15)
- 104 “Still, I couldn’t alter the past. I just had to make sure of a better future” (p. 166). Sebin displays remarkable maturity and logic while under duress. Do they use these traits for self-gain or to help others? How is this a mark of leadership and future potential? (Chapter 16)
- 105 What foils Sebin’s plans? How does Euna try to intervene? What was she trying to communicate to Sebin earlier? (Chapter 16)
- 106 Why does Sebin say that they can trust Rokuro? (Chapter 16)
- 107 How does Jee respond to all of this information? (Chapter 16)
- 108 “We all depended on each other. There was no other way we could succeed” (p. 173). How does this train of thought influence Sebin’s final plans? (Chapter 16)
- 109 “They have been ordered to block access to all the escape pods,” Rokuro tells Sebin on page 186. What is Sebin’s response? (Chapter 17)
- 110 The group agrees with Sebin’s plan, but Rokuro has one request. What is it, and why? (Chapter 18)
- 111 Describe what it was like for Sebin to take the brunt of stunner fire from the mercs. What does that say about Sebin’s character and fortitude? They also think, “I had to concentrate on what I could do” (p. 192). What does that say about Sebin’s attitude and perspective? (Chapter 18)
- 112 What does Sebin hear that makes their scar feel like a blade of ice has sliced into it? Does Sebin agree with what they hear? When Sebin hears “[D]o you think a mere cadet has any hope of success?” (p. 195), how does it provoke them to act? What does Sebin direct the others to do? (Chapter 18)
- 113 What does the engine room look like? How does it provide a stark contrast to the chaos of events? (Chapter 18)
- 114 Hwan says, “I will regret having to report your failure to your parents, but it’s not as if they would mourn losing such a clearly unworthy specimen. Better that you go to your rest than sully the clan rosters”. (p. 198) How does the group react? How do Hwan’s words affect Sebin? What does Sebin think of duty and honor now? (Chapter 18)
- 115 After hearing Hwan’s insults, Sebin thinks, “Yes, I knew that I was a disgrace to the Juhwang Tiger Clan. Yes, I knew that the Space Forces didn’t want me, either. If I stopped long enough to think about either of those things, I’d never start moving again. So I balled up the messy feelings . . . and even my uniform and shoved the wad into the back of my mind so I could refocus on the task at hand” (p. 202). How is this courageous and heroic on Sebin’s part? (Chapter 19)
- 116 What is the favor that Min asks of Sebin? What do they do? What is Sebin’s strategy with Shield? (Chapter 19)
- 117 Why is it ironic that Sebin eats the chocolate-marshmallow pie and declares that it’s “the best thing I’d ever tasted” (p. 209)? (Chapter 19)
- 118 What signaled that Hwan meant business? Why did Sebin consider this a monstrous act? What does Sebin ask Jee to do? (Chapter 20)
- 119 Describe Sebin’s showdown with Uncle Hwan. What was Sebin willing to do, and how was it the ultimate act of honor and duty? (Chapter 20)
- 120 Sebin tells Hwan, “You were my guiding star. The Matriarch told me once that ‘the compass that guides you must be the way of the clan.’ For me, that compass was you. . . . We’re family” (p. 219). How do you think

those words impacted their uncle? What do you think went through his mind? How does this lead them to their final act? What was the last image of Hwan that Sebin saw before they lost consciousness? (Chapter 20)

121 “It was funny how experience turned things inside out, and not always in comfortable ways” (p. 223). Why did Sebin think this? (Chapter 21)

122 Though Sebin assumes that their career is over, they tell themselves, “Even if I hadn’t sworn the oath to the Space Forces, though, I had a duty. And I was going to complete it” (p. 225). What has happened to make Sebin think this? (Chapter 21)

123 How did Sebin’s comrades fare? How long was Sebin unconscious? What happened to Rokuro? (Chapter 21)

124 Euna tries to encourage Sebin by saying, “You did a great job leading us, Sebin. She’s got to recognize that” (p. 228). Does Sebin believe her words? Why or why not? (Chapter 21)

125 Why does Investigator Yi apologize to Sebin, and what does Sebin say in response? What does Sebin’s response say about their self-esteem and self-certainty? (Chapter 21)

126 Why does Sebin believe losing Aunt Sooni’s knife was an omen? (Chapter 21)

127 Min tells Sebin, “There’s nothing about it . . . in the lore of—of my people. . . . It gives me hope that maybe I can help others . . . and I won’t always have to hide what I am” (p. 231). What is Min referencing, and how has Sebin given her hope? (Chapter 21)

128 “I didn’t want to give up entirely on my dream of serving on a ship. There were independent traders and miners. It wouldn’t be the same as being in the Space Forces, but I tried to convince myself that I could be content with life aboard a ship, any ship” (p. 232). At this point, what does Sebin believe about their future? Why do you think they hold this perspective? (Chapter 21)

129 Does Sebin want to see their uncle? Why or why not? (Chapter 22)

130 Who was in the chamber? Why was Sebin surprised and worried? Were these feelings founded? (Chapter 22)

131 Does Sebin ever find out what Hwan’s motivation was? Do you think Hwan truly felt justified in what he did? Please explain. (Chapter 22)

132 How does Sebin evaluate their conduct to Admiral An? Why is this surprising? What does the admiral say in response? (Chapter 22)

133 What are the shocking contents of Admiral Hasun’s letter? What has happened to the estate? And to Aunt Sooni? What does this make Sebin conclude? (Chapter 22)

134 After Sebin recites the Space Forces oath, they think, “The words stung me on the way out of my mouth, but they tasted sweet. Perhaps that was the way it had always been, if I had but realized it earlier” (p. 242). Explain what Sebin means by this. (Chapter 22)

135 “The sword flashed as she brought it down. Whether by coincidence or intent, she slashed the old scar open. There would be a new one in its place after the cut healed” (p. 242). How is the new scar replacing the old scar symbolic to Sebin? Sebin had to wait a very long time to take the Space Forces oath. How do you think they feel? How is it fitting that Sebin was sworn in after everything they went through? (Chapter 22)

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

STORY ELEMENTS CHART

Directions: *Dragon Pearl* and *Tiger Honor* are stories that take us through different timelines and planets, Korean history and culture, and space travel. Consider how the author Yoon Ha Lee weaves a seamless tale through such a variety of settings in each book. With a partner or small group, choose one book and complete the story elements chart, then discuss how each element added to the overall story.

Characters Names and descriptions	Setting/Mood Time, place, tone, and feeling	Rising Action Conflicts and complications leading up to the climax	Conflict The major problem in the story
Climax The major event and turning point of the story	Falling Action Events that are a result of the climax	Resolution Final outcome of the story	Plot The major events in the story

CHARACTER ANALYSIS CHART

Directions: *Dragon Pearl* and *Tiger Honor* books are bildungsromans, or coming-of-age stories, for the main characters, Min and Sebin. Throughout their journeys, the two protagonists surprise themselves and those around them with displays of bravery and strength. Min, Sebin, and their young friends find themselves being tested by their circumstances, and they experience setbacks as well as victories. Choose five characters from the books to analyze. Complete the chart and include the page numbers where you find information about each of the characters.

Character Are they primary or secondary, static or dynamic, protagonist or antagonist?	Internal Traits What can you infer about their character?	External Traits What is their physical appearance?	Actions What do they do that portrays their traits?	Speech & Thoughts What do they say and think that support their traits?	Dialogue What do others say and think about the character?

DRAGON PEARL WRITING PROMPTS

- Dragons can be found in both Western and Eastern folklore and mythology. Asian myths describe dragons as benevolent beings who bring rain for crops and are connected with bodies of water, like rivers and lakes. This was especially important in an agrarian society like Korea. Historically, what does this reflect about the Asian people's attitude toward dragons? Is the depiction of dragons as a water creature different from European images and tales?
- Part of Korean dragon mythology states that lesser dragons, or Imugis, could become true dragons upon obtaining an orb called the Yeouiju, which had the power to create life. Is Min an Imugi who evolves only when she finds the Dragon Pearl? Or does she find purpose and strength hidden within herself?
- Dragon Pearl* is a story about a young girl who longs to find her true identity after having to deny her heritage for so long. Why did Min's mom discourage her from using Charm or assuming her heritage form? What does Min discover about her own mother's past, and why is it so surprising? How does Min feel when she is finally able to develop her Charm and take on her heritage form? In the end, what does she discover about Charm that deters her from using it?
- "All my life I'd been cautioned not to show off the fox magic that was our heritage" (p. 4). What was the bad reputation that foxes couldn't seem to overcome in the Thousand Worlds? How did Min feel about the prejudice that she and her kind faced? How is her family's heritage inextricably tied to realizing her own identity? Min's own family would probably describe her flaunting her heritage as foolishness, but why would others describe this as pride? How should we respond when we are faced with prejudices about our background?
- Min and her family believe fiercely in upholding the family honor. How do Min and the adults (her mother and aunts) differ in the way they choose to guard the family honor? Is there only one way?
- Describe the traits of the supernaturals: dragons, goblins, tigers, and foxes. If you could be a supernatural, which one would you be and why? What good could you accomplish with your powers? On the other hand, what possible temptations and dangers could there be?
- Min and Jun feel a strong connection to the land and to their planet Jinju, which is the Korean word for pearl. Why is the name both ironic and prophetic? Describe their home, the planet, and the residents. How did Jinju end up the way it did? Why did both Min and Jun feel so strongly about bringing the Dragon Pearl to Jinju?
- In Korea, age establishes one's position in the family and society. Most of Min's young life has been about following orders from her mother and aunts. Even her dream of exploring the Thousand Worlds and joining the Space Forces has been shaped by her older brother, Jun. At what point did Min begin making decisions and forging her own destiny? How did her thoughts and emotions change as she did so? When did she feel fully confident to make her own decisions, and what gave her the courage to do so?
- In *Dragon Pearl*, Min shape-shifts multiple times, from her female cousin Bora, to male cadet Jang, to her true heritage form, and then to a soaring hawk. How do these transformations enable Min to succeed in her quest for the Dragon Pearl? What role does the shape-shifting play in her personal journey of discovering her identity and place in the Thousand Worlds?

TIGER HONOR ESSAY QUESTION

When Admiral An asks Sebin to evaluate their own conduct, they hold back tears and reply:

I did the best I knew at the time . . . and it wasn't enough. The Haetae was endangered because I failed to warn Captain Chaewon when I had the opportunity. And I fell under Uncle Hwan's sway because of my reaction to being Charmed by Min. (p. 238)

Sebin only sees their weaknesses and failures. The admiral, however, praises Sebin and tells them that they acted with bravery and merit to save the *Haetae* and its crew.

Why do you think Sebin cannot see their own strengths? What are the ways in which Sebin showed leadership, honor, courage, and sacrifice? How do you define leadership? In your opinion, has Sebin proved to be a leader? Please use specific examples and quotes from the book to support your answer.



TIGER HONOR EXTERNAL VS. INTERNAL TRAITS

A character's external traits are what we see on the outside, or how they appear. Their internal or personality traits are deeper within: their thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. Sometimes the external and internal traits can be at odds with one another. For example, everyone else can see that Sebin is a caring and capable leader but Sebin only sees their own failures. Choose another character from the book to examine, and use details and examples to support your answers.

CHARACTER'S NAME

EXTERNAL TRAITS

What do you see? Describe their physical traits and what you can see on the outside.
Include their age and magic or special abilities.

INTERNAL TRAITS

What do they think, feel, say, or do that reveals more about themselves? Include any contradictions to their external traits.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yoon Ha Lee (www.yoonhalee.com) is the *New York Times* best-selling author of *Dragon Pearl*, winner of a Locus Award and the Mythopoeic Award, and the companion novel *Tiger Honor*. He has also written several critically acclaimed short stories and the *Machineries of Empire* trilogy for adults: *Ninefox Gambit*, *Raven Stratagem*, and *Revenant Gun*. Yoon draws inspiration from a variety of sources, including Korean history and mythology, fairy tales, higher mathematics, classic moral dilemmas, and genre fiction. His Twitter handle is @deuceofgears.



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Q&A WITH YOON HA LEE ABOUT *DRAGON PEARL*

Q: *Dragon Pearl* centers on Korean culture and mythology. Was there a particular tradition, myth, or legend that inspired you? What was the research process like?

A: Mostly I was inspired by folktales centering on creatures and animals. There's a long tradition of animals that either take human shape to interact with humans (tigers, foxes), or talk with humans (dragon, swallows, others). While there are some gods, there isn't really a pantheon as with Greek or Norse mythology.

My research mainly consisted of rereading Zong In-Sob's quirky collection of Korean folktales and skimming through a book on the Korean feng shui tradition (called pungsu jiri) by Hong-Key Yoon, plus badgering my mom to find out more about pungsu jiri and funeral customs since I had ghost characters. My mom's used to fielding weird research questions from me; she'll tell you all about the time she helped me research the Battle of Hamsan-do for a history class I took at Cornell years ago!

Q: How did you find the experience of weaving together Korean folklore and mythology with futuristic space adventures?

A: The world building was a ton of fun! I wanted to depict a meld of technology and magical traditions. So while Min has access to levitating scooters and starships, she also has to contend with ghosts that can bring bad luck as well as ley lines—lines of mystic power inspired by feng shui—that affect the starship's functioning.

Q: Min's actions can be considered brave or reckless depending on your viewpoint. Is there a fine line between the two? How do we achieve the right balance?

A: Well, keep in mind that Min is young and impetuous. So she very definitely skirts over that line several times, and it gets her into trouble each time! I think in real life it's often helpful, where circumstances permit, to do some cost-benefit thinking (I am much more risk-averse than Min is), but Min doesn't yet have the life experience to consider the consequences realistically.

Q: The main character disobeys her mother and other authority figures, putting herself in danger time and time again, but by doing so, Min discovers she is much stronger and braver than she thinks. When do you think it is okay for someone to disobey and break the rules?

A: In my opinion, there is a distinction between what is legal/lawful and what is morally correct. A lot of laws or rules exist as a sort of social contract and are not necessarily good or evil in themselves, so at that point you have to decide for yourself whether you value social convention or pursuing what you see as a higher benefit. And of course there are laws that are actively evil; just because an authority figure says to do something a certain way doesn't make it morally correct.

At the same time, rule breaking isn't inherently good either. You have to consider for yourself what your ethical compass is . . . I feel that a more complete answer to this would be in the form of a philosophers' debate taking up volumes and volumes of books!

Q: Min doesn't feel bound by location, age, gender, or status in pursuing the *Dragon Pearl*. What message do you want to send to young people about fulfilling their hopes and dreams?

A: While most of us aren't literal shape-shifters (I wish!), I hope folks come away with the idea that it's possible to go after your dreams no matter who or where you are. There are many variables in life you can't control, like where you're born or to what kind of family, but I have learned that you can get a lot of mileage out of concentrating on the things you *can* control and working on those.

Q: Is Min or any of her adventures based on yourself or your own experiences? If so, please share some stories from childhood!

A: Heh, Min is braver than I ever was! I used to dream of running away from home, not because I was unhappy but because I wanted to go on an adventure! After reading the Narnia books in elementary school, I spent years looking into closets at home and at my grandmother's hoping that one of them would take me there. No such luck, alas!

Q: You were raised in both Texas and South Korea. What was your bicultural experience like? What were some of the challenges that you faced? How do you think biculturalism shaped your character and outlook on life? How would you encourage those who are struggling to maintain a balance in their identity?

A: It was very disorienting! My parents ping-ponged back and forth for reasons that still aren't entirely clear to me (Texas to Missouri to Korea to Texas to Korea, and then I left for college), and as a result, I was constantly off-balance. Korean and American cultures are very different in their expectations, and of course the USA is diverse in a way that Korea isn't. I spent a lot of my childhood accidentally offending people because I was using the wrong rules for the culture I was living in. For example, in fifth grade I really insulted a teacher who asked us to ask her a question about herself by asking her age. In Korea that would have been perfectly reasonable, since it's very Confucian and knowing your place in the hierarchy means you need to know people's ages. She responded that you never ask a lady her age, which no one had bothered to tell me before! Whoops.

On the other hand, now that I've survived, I'm glad I got to experience life in two very different cultures. It really broadens your view of the world and how much variety there is in how human beings organize their societies. For folks who have more than one culture in their life, I would say that finding that balance is a lifelong process, and it's okay not to figure it out all at once. I certainly still wrestle with it myself.

Q: There are some unique and endearing characters in the story, especially in the form of Min's friends. Were they inspired by any real-life characters?

A: I try to avoid basing story characters off real-life people—that can be a whole can of worms—except for maybe one or two small quirks or traits, so not really, no!

Q: How do you hope young readers all over the world will respond to this space story about a shape-shifting fox based on Korean mythology?

A: I hope they'll enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it! And if anyone's inspired to find out more about Korean culture or mythology or science fiction or astronomy, even better!