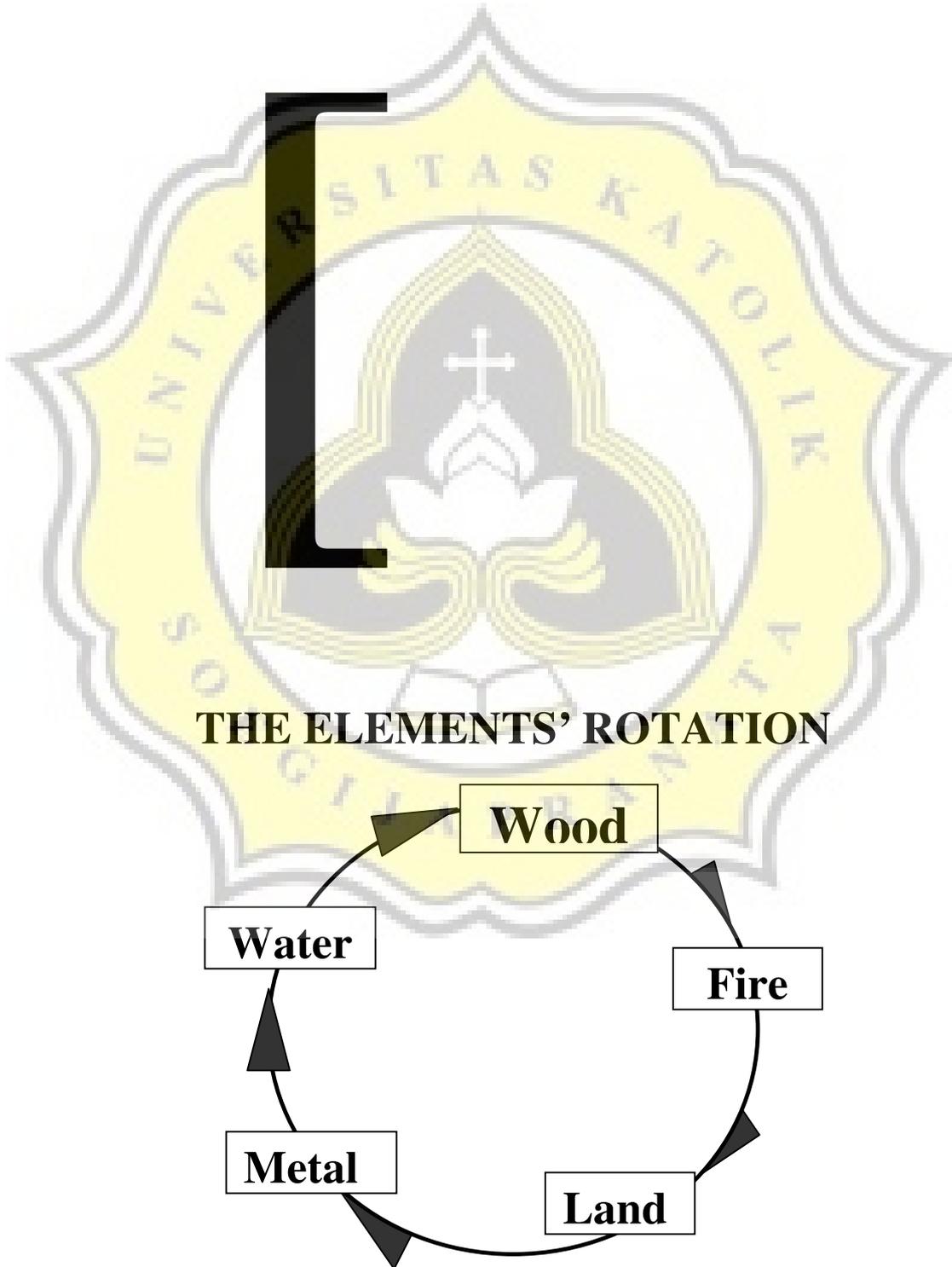


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# *Yin and Yang*



## SUMMARY

*The Joy Luck Club* is divided into four sections, two sections are devoted to the mothers and two other sections are devoted to the daughters.

The first section entitled *Feathers From a Thousand Li Away*. This section is about the mothers' childhoods in China. This was the period in which the mothers' personalities were shaped.

The second section is named *The Twenty Six Malignant Gates* because it is emphasized the communication problems and lack of understanding between the mothers and their daughters.

The third section is named as *American Translation* to draw the mothers and daughters relationship. The conflicts reached the top when the mothers tried to give advices for their daughters, but the daughters ignore them.

The last section entitled *Queen Mother of the Western Skies*. It signifies that the mother were the Queen Mothers of the daughters. Each of them realized their mistakes and tried to make a bridge in their relationship.

## SUMMARY

### A.Su Yuan Woo

Su Yuan and her second husband, Canning Woo, leave China in 1949 to San Francisco. Before she marries to Canning, she has married to a Kuomintang officer and has twin daughters. Her first husband has to leave her to fight against the Japanese who are colonizing China. In the uncertainty of her fate and her husband's fate, she meets three other women who will be her new friends. They often make a party. The party is the way for them to forget the miseries of the war violence. Each week, one of them will be the host party and they will play *mahjong*, a kind of Chinese gambling that has to be played by four people together. In this game they can hope to be lucky, and that hope is their only joy in their sadness. That is why they call their party the Joy Luck Club.

When the situation in China is getting harder, Su Yuan gets news that Japanese is reaching Kweilin, so she has to leave Kweilin and go to Chungking to find her husband. She cannot take her babies because the situation is in danger, so she leaves them to a Moslem couple. She wishes they could take her babies to her family in Shanghai when the situation is better. When Su Yuan arrives in Chungking, she finds her husband has died two weeks before her coming. She is very disappointed and gets depressed.

When she is taken care in the hospital, she meets Canning Woo. Canning cares her, and finally they get married. After their marriage, they never stop to find the twin babies, but never find them. In 1949, they decide to leave China and

move to America. Since that time, Su Yuan never talks about the babies anymore, even though she still tries to find her babies without Canning's knowledge.

In America, she meets three other families, the Hsus, the Jongs, and the St. Clairs. The idea of the Joy Luck Club in the past rises up again. They feel they are a family in a strange community, so they make a new Joy Luck Club in America.

Later, Su Yuan has a problem in her relationship with her daughter, June. They have difficulties to understand each other. Su Yuan is so proud of her Chinese style, but her daughter considers that American style is better. Even though many people tell that they are alike, they never acknowledge their similarities.

**B. Jing Mei “June” Woo** (*Su Yuan's daughter*)

She is born in San Francisco in 1951, two years after her parents move to America. Since her mother died, she thinks much about her relationship with her mother, and she realizes that she knows only a little thing about her mother.

Then June resolves to discover who her mother really is by remembering and examining all the things about her mother. She remembers her mother's story about the babies that her mother has left in Kweilin. Every time her mother tell her this story, June never knows the real ending, because it is always changed, so she thinks it only a Chinese fairy tale. She never thinks that her mother has experienced a very bad time until she hears the real ending from her father. Not so long after her mother died, June and her father go to China to meet her twin sisters who have lost for a long time. June wants to tell them all about her mother.

In June's memory, her mother always demands June to be a prodigy girl and compares her to Waverly, the daughter of Lindo Jong. June has to play piano, dance like Shirley Temple and other things that can be obstinated. June doesn't understand that her mother only wants her to have a special talent to help her succeed, so she starts to fight her mother.

Besides her problem with her mother, June also has a problem with Waverly. June thinks that Waverly is her rival. She often feels unmatched to Waverly. According to June, Waverly always considers that herself is better than June.

In a crab dinner, June meets Waverly, and they get a conflict. Later in the kitchen, when June feels foolish and tired, her mother gives her a jade necklace. June knows that her mother like the necklace very much, so she refuses it, but her mother wants June to receive the necklace. It is her mother's way to tell June that June still has a worth.

### **C. *Lindo Jong***

Lindo's character is stubborn. She is very smart but devious. At that time in China, a matchmaker usually arranges a marriage, so is Lindo's first marriage. When she is two years old, a village matchmaker comes to her family and asks her to be married to the Huangs' son, Tyan Yu.

When she is twelve years old, the Fen River flood through her village, so her family decides to move to Wushi. Her parents think, it is the time for Lindo to be separated from her family and lives with the Huangs. The Huangs are very rich and honorable, and they spoil Tyan Yu much. Lindo sees Tyan Yu as an old baby

and she does not have any respect to him, but she can't reject the marriage. Lindo lives with the Huangs for some years. In this house, she is educated to be a good wife. Before she marries to Tyan Yu, she has to be able to serve her husband and his family well.

After Tyan Yu and Lindo gets married, Tyan Yu never wants to touch his wife, and he never stops to blame her. Lindo is very despised with Tyan Yu's behavior and depresses with her mother in law's demand, to get a son soon. She knows she couldn't divorce from Tyan Yu, so she devises a genius plan to force the Huangs and to escape from her marriage.

One day, she pretends that she gets a dream from the Huangs' ancestor. In her dream, the ancestor says that her marriage is doomed, and Tyan Yu will die if he stays in this marriage. Lindo does it because she knows that Huang Taitai believe of superstitions, and she is right. Finally, she can escape from her marriage and gets enough money to go to America.

Lindo leaves China alone and arrives in San Francisco. She tries to get a job in a cookie factory. In this place, she meets An Mei Hsu, who introduces her to Tin Jong. Next Lindo and Tin Jong get married and they have three children, Winston, Vincent, and Waverly. Lindo is very critical, especially to her daughter, Waverly because she only wants the best for her children. Waverly does not understand her meaning; she thinks her mother talks too much to criticize her.

**D. Waverly Jong** (*Lindo's daughter*)

Waverly's character is like her mother, very devious. She learns her deviousness from her mother, and she calls it as 'the art of invisible strength'. She often uses her deviousness to win arguments and respects from others.

Waverly once becomes a national chess champion when she is nine years old. Her mother is very proud of her. Whenever they go shopping, her mother will say to others that her daughter is a chess champion. She cleans Waverly's trophies and prize every time. Waverly thinks that she just a tool for shows off, and she starts to protest her mother. It makes her mother very angry and considers that Waverly is a girl who does not appreciate her parents and she stops to speak to Waverly. At first, Waverly is happy because her mother does not ruin her life anymore, but then she feels worried if her mother does not want to forgive her. Finally, when Waverly gets sick, her mother starts to speak with her again, but a gap has developed in their relationship.

Waverly always see her mother as her enemy who is trying to ruin her life and destroy her hopes and happiness. Waverly is a single parent with a daughter, Shoshana. When Waverly fall in love with Rich, she is frightened if her mother's critics of Rich will poison her relationship with him. She thinks her mother hates Rich. Waverly does not understand that her mother only wants the best for her. Her mother does not want Waverly has a bad husband and fails in her marriage anymore.

Finally when they have time to talk from heart to heart, she can understand what her mother wants. It makes the gap between them is bridged.

### ***E. Ying-ying St. Clair***

Ying-ying is a daughter of a rich man's first wife. She receives all the best treatment, so she becomes spoiled. She has a nursemaid who is usually called Amah. Amah loves Ying-ying very much, but Ying-ying considers that Amah was only one of her happy things.

When she is four years old, she falls off the boat during the night when her family is celebrating the Moon Festival on the lake. The village fishermen find her and leave her on the shore. She is very afraid when she knows that nobody realizes she is lost. When she walks on the shore, she sees a shadow play of the Moon Lady. She remembers, Amah once says people can tell the Moon Lady their secret wishes, so she tells the Moon Lady her wishes. She wishes to be found. After this incident, as a child does, Ying-ying forgets many things which happens that night.

Ying-ying has a mysterious ability. She can see her future. She discovers this ability, for the first time, when she meets her uncle's friend. She knows that she will marry that man some day, and it happens. When she is pregnant, her husband leaves her, soon her love turns into hate, so she aborts her son (she has known her baby is a boy by her ability). After that, she feels that she has lost her life, her spirit, and her will. She does not care about anything anymore.

After ten years doing nothing, she decides to work as a shop assistant. Then, she meets Clifford St. Clair, a Caucasian. She has known this man will be her second husband. Even though she does not really love him, but she believes of her fate, what she has seen before.

After her marriage, she truly loses herself. She does not pay much attention to her daughter, but deep in her heart, she loves her daughter very much. She does not want her daughter is like her who has no spirit. She wants Lena has her *chi*, her spirit and her will.

**F. *Lena St. Clair ( Yin ying's daughter)***

Lena has a rather strange childhood. Her mother can speak only little English and her father understand very little Chinese, so they cannot hold a conversation. Her father always guesses what her mother says, or he asks Lena to translate. Their home is relatively quiet.

Lena feels that her mother is strange. She never pays much attention to her. She even once thinks that her mother is crazy, when her mother tells her a view that she has by her ability.

When Lena is a child, her mother often tells wild stories to prevent her from doing bad things, it makes Lena has crazy imaginations. One day she hears voices from next door, the Sorcis' room. They are screaming and shouting. Lena is very afraid; she thinks the mother is killing her daughters. She imagines how terrible the daughter's life. Not long after she hears that voice, the daughter of the next door, Teresa Sorci, comes to her apartment and borrows Lena's fire escape to

climb back into her own room to trick her mother. At first, Lena does not understand why Teresa wants to go back into her terrible life but then she understands those mother and daughter love each other. Their screaming and shouting are their spices of their love.

When Lena turns older, she marries to Harold Livotny. Since they start dating, they always share the cost for everything. They pay for their own needs. At first, Lena does not care about the condition, but then she realizes, love is giving freely. She knows that there is something wrong with their marriage. Every time she wants to say this to her husband, she becomes fear, but then after her mother tells a story about her mother's life in China, she realizes that she has to have her *chi*.

### **G. An Mei Hsu**

In 1923, when An Mei is nine years old girl, she and her brother live with her grandmother, uncle, and aunt in Ningpo, China. Her father has died and her mother is considered as a ghost, which is not proper to be remembered. According to the Chinese think at that time, anything about ghost is forbidden to talk. Her grandmother wants An Mei to forget her mother, because her mother is considered as a bad woman who leaves her children to be a concubine of a rich man. At that time, a widow can't marry again.

When An Mei is four years old, she gets an accident. Her neck is stricken off by a piece of bowl. She is dying, but her memory about her mother makes her recover. Even though she ever feels unlucky to have a mother like that, she knows

that she loves her mother. She understands why her mother has no choice to marry and becomes a concubine of Wu Tsing.

In her story, An Mei also tells about her mother *shou*, respect for ancestors or family. Even though her grand mother has chased her away, her mother is still disposed to do anything to recover her grandmother when she is dying. An Mei sees her mother is practicing an old Chinese traditional receipt, her mother cuts a piece of her arm meat and puts it into the soup. This is the way a daughter shows her *shou* to her mother.

The education that little An Mei receives in traditional Chinese society make her personalities as an ordinary traditional woman in China at that time. She is taught to be a fearless woman in the weak position. Her mother once tells her a story about an old turtle, which is living in the pond and magpies that feeds on her mother's tears. By this story, her mother tries to tell her that it is useless to cry about anything, so a woman has to swallow her tears, to hide her feelings and pain and to become passive and never protest like herself.

Ironically, her mother kills herself to strike back against Wu Tsing and the second wife who has trapped her. She kills herself two days before the lunar New Year to make Wu Tsing fearful of her ghost. Wu Tsing promises to revere her spirit as if she has been first wife and raises An Mei as his honored daughter. An Mei realizes that she must be strong as her mother does in her last time.

An Mei admits to having listened to many people when she is young. She is almost succumbs to her family's urgings to her mother, and later she is nearly seduced by the pearl necklace that is offered to her by her mother's rival, Wu

Tsing's second wife. This experience has shown her that people try to influence others for selfish reasons. To protect her daughter from opportunist, An Mei tries to teach her daughter, Rose, to listen her mother if she wants to grow straight and strong. She wants Rose has *Nengkan*, the ability to do anything she puts in her mind. However, Rose does not listen to her at first, but finally she knows her mother is right, and she can get her spirit to become strong.

#### **H. *Rose Hsu Jordan* (An Mei's daughter)**

Rose is the third child in her family. She has two sisters, Janice and Ruth, and four brothers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and Bing. She marries to a Caucasian dermatologist, Ted Jordan, but they will get a divorce. Rose once asks for her mother's opinion, but her mother only tells her to try. She thinks her mother wants her to try in saving her marriage, and she is very surprised of it, because seventeen years ago, when she is starting to date with Ted, her mother forbids her because Ted is not Chinese.

Rose also gets a contradiction from Ted's mother. Ted's mother considers non-white person is a stranger too and does not fit to marry a white man. If Rose marries to Ted, Ted's career as a dermatologist will get a problem, because Rose is not a Caucasian, but finally, Rose and Ted get married.

Rose is a very indecisive person. After she marries to Ted, she gives all the decisions on Ted's hand. At first, Ted does not really mind, but when he is sued by his patient because of a malpractice suit; he don't want to take any decision which full of responsibilities anymore. He tries to push Rose to make more

decisions, but Rose can't be changed. It makes Ted feel that there must be something wrong with their marriage, and he wants to get a divorce.

Rose's attitude is caused by her past experience. When she is fourteen years old, her little brother, Bing, who is four years old, died because of the decision that she makes. The tragedy begins when the Hsus are at the beach. Rose has a responsibility to watch Bing. Bing wants to see his father who is fishing on the slippery reef and Rose lets him go. But when Rose moves her attention from Bing to stop Luke and Mark's fight, Bing falls into the sea. Every one blames themselves that Bing has drowned, but Rose realizes it is truly her own fault. She has a responsibility to watch Bing and she is the one who makes a decision to let Bing walk on the reef. Because of this accident, Rose does not want to make any decisions anymore.

Her mother has a comment about Rose's personalities. She says that Rose is a girl "without wood", a girl who does not have a strong spirit.

Her mother does not want Rose to be like herself in the past, so weak and never speak up. She wants her daughter to try to speak up. If Rose cannot save her marriage, she has to decide her life and ask for her right. At first Rose does not hear about her mother's advice. She chooses to talk with her psychiatrist and her friends about her divorce, but it makes her more confused. Finally she wants to listen to her mother. She tries to speak up and make a decision. When Ted comes to ask for the divorce papers, she can tell him what she wants. She shows that she can make a decision and take control of her own life. Finally Rose realizes that her mother is right.