

100 Years in the Making, Remarkable Mother's Day Tribute Celebrates Four Generations of Women

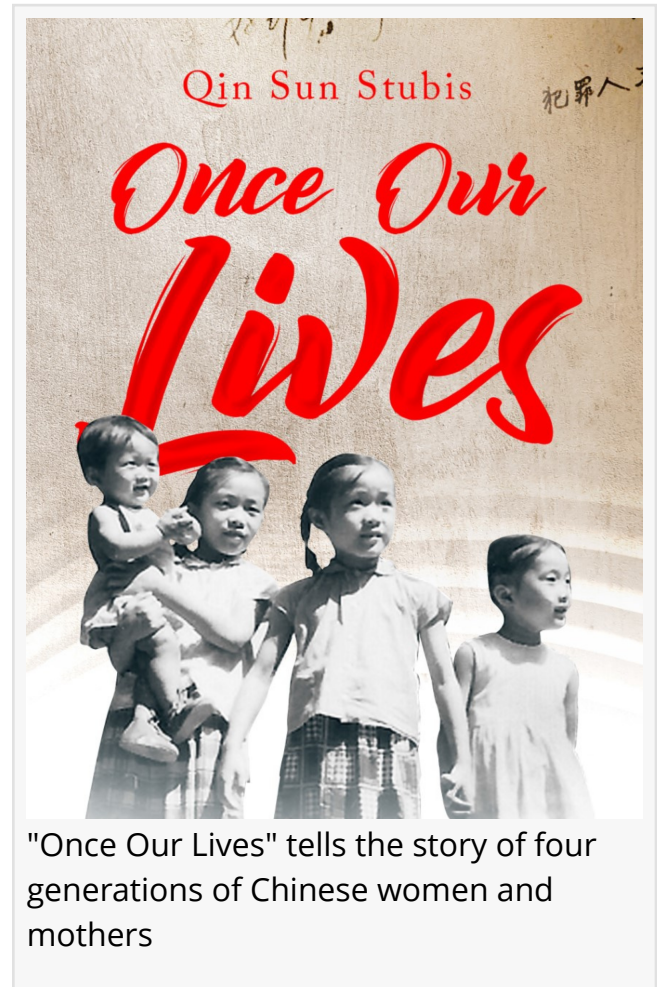
Homage to a Century of Caring, Nurturing, Hope & Heartbreak is Winning Hearts (and Literary Prizes)

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, May 7, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This Mother's Day, most moms will be happy to receive a simple card, flowers, or a night out at their favorite restaurant. But one Washington, D.C.-area newspaper columnist and author is giving her mother and their mothers before them a most extraordinary gift . . . one nearly 100 years in the making.

To pay tribute to those who came before her and tell their stories of love, hope and heartbreak, writer Qin Sun Stubis penned an award-winning historical epic, "Once Our Lives: Life, Death and Love in the Middle Kingdom," about four generations of Chinese mothers who survive war, revolution, and the seemingly unshakeable effects of an ancient superstition that seemed to haunt their families for nearly a century.

As the historical chaos of the 1900s swirls around them, it is the women in her story, who, despite their inferior status in Chinese society, use their ingenuity, skill, and sheer persistence to keep themselves and their families alive.

"Once Our Lives" takes readers on a dramatic adventure from cosmopolitan 1930s Shanghai to China's dusty and dangerous "Wild West." It is filled with fantastical but true tales of kidnappings by pirates, fatalistic prophecies, women and babies sold in opium dens, and a love story between a woman with three identities (the author's mother) and a man whose fate was said to be sealed before he was born. Throughout it all, Stubis tells the stories of women who risk everything to save the lives of their husbands and children and keep the two families depicted in the book going.



"Once Our Lives" was written by Chinese American author Qin Sun Stubis, who was born in the squalor of a Shanghai shantytown, lived through the Great Chinese Famine and Cultural Revolution, and is now a Washington, D.C.-area writer, poet, and newspaper columnist. The book follows the lives of two families over the course of nearly 100 years and chronicles the extraordinary lives of ordinary people living in the shadows of some of the greatest headlines of the 20th Century.

Debuting as an [Amazon](#) #1 New Release for 41 days, "Once Our Lives" has been named a Gold Winner of the international Nonfiction Book Awards, the #1 winner of the PenCraft Book Awards for literary excellence in culture/history, the 2023 Best Book Awards winner for cross-genre nonfiction, and a winner in the Readers' Favorite 2023 International Book Awards for cultural nonfiction. It also just won first place in the Chanticleer International Book Awards' "Nelly Bly Awards for Journalistic Nonfiction."

Kirkus Reviews calls the book "...a sweeping story, rich with detail" and "a wide-ranging story that keeps the reader engaged throughout."



"Once Our Lives" author Qin Sun Stubis

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Qin Sun Stubis

Ms. Magazine says it is "Engaging, endearing, heartbreaking and hopeful" and chose it as a top recommended read.

Glamour Magazine UK calls "Once Our Lives" a "Best New Book" and told its readers, "For some stunning non-fiction . . . this one is perfect for all fans of the multi-generational family saga."

Readers' Favorite gives the story five stars and says that it

is "A well-written, beautifully immersive book that while non-fiction reads even better than fiction. Very highly recommended."

"From the very beginning of time, mothers have not only given us the gift of life but have struggled against all odds to keep us well, build our futures, and nurture our dreams," says Qin. "I wrote 'Once Our Lives' to honor the extraordinary love and fierce devotion that over the course

of 100 years and four generations helped make me who I am and hope it can serve to help each of us remember and recognize the remarkable role of all mothers everywhere.”

About the Author

Qin (“Ching”) Sun Stubis was born in a Shanghai shantytown during the Great Chinese Famine, which killed some 50 million people. Growing up during the Cultural Revolution, Qin saw members of her family imprisoned for speaking out against the injustices around them. Shunned as political pariahs, Qin and her family sustained themselves with books and stories of adventure and past glory.

It was in bed late each night, after scouring local parks for enough firewood to cook the family’s meal of rice, that Qin and her three small sisters heard the dramatic stories that make up her book, “Once Our Lives.” The four girls listened to their mother, an aspiring actress in the early days of Asian cinema, recount colorful tales of pirates, prophecies, fortunes won and lost, women and babies sold in opium dens, glorious lives and gruesome deaths. Based on actual experiences and family lore from the Post-Imperial to Post-Cultural Revolution eras, these stories represent a wealth of colorful but largely overlooked Chinese history.

Thanks to a borrowed radio, an eccentric British teacher, and a lucky assignment working in a library, Qin learned English and won admission to the famed Shanghai Institute of Foreign Languages, graduating with a bachelor’s degree in English and English Literature. With the help of family, friends, and a powerful U.S. Senator, Qin was granted a visa to study abroad. She arrived in America with two suitcases and not much more. After winning several scholarships, she graduated with a master’s degree and a profound love for her new adoptive country.

For the past 15 years, Qin has been a newspaper columnist and writes poems, essays, short stories, and original Chinese tall tales inspired by traditional Asian themes. Her writing is inflected with both Eastern and Western flavors in ways that transcend geography to touch hearts and reveal universal truths. Learn more at: www.QinSunStubis.com/news and find the book cover photo and author headshot at: www.QinSunStubis.com/press-kit .

“Once Our Lives: Life, Death and Love in the Middle Kingdom” (Guernica Editions, ISBN # 978-1-77183-796-5, June 1, 2023, \$21.95, 366 pp) is available through Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and independent bookstores.

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