

# Chinese Humorist Jimmy Qi's New Novel is a Charming Exploration of the Complexities of Cultural Belonging

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HONG KONG, November 13, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Moongate Books is proud to announce that December sees the release of [Return to the Besieged Fortress](#) by maverick Chinese novelist [Jimmy Qi](#). In the newly translated novel, Jimmy Qi takes readers on a captivating journey into his experiences during China's opening-up era in the 1990s.

At a time of populist backlash against globalism, Qi's novel, translated by British publisher Harvey Thomlinson fondly evokes a more positive moment in the evolving landscape of China's relations with the West.

“

The absurdist theatre of a Canadian trading company office sparked a Chinese humorist's writing career.”

*South China Morning Post*

"The optimistic frameworks that once underpinned bilateral ties are increasingly being overshadowed by a pervasive negativity", says Thomlinson. "As Jimmy's book eloquently illustrates, there remains a hopeful narrative for the future —one that transcends the prevailing skepticism."

Qi skillfully weaves humor and charm to paint a vivid picture of the challenges faced by a generation of pioneering overseas Chinese through the compelling story of his alter-ego, Jimmy.

From facing casual racism in Montreal to searching for his identity in Beijing, the book is a must-read for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the human experience in a globalizing world.



Return to the Besieged Fortress by Jimmy Qi

Qi's worldly wit and polished wordplay has drawn comparisons to 20th-century giants such as Qian Zhonghsu. The title of this new novel alludes to Qian's 1930s classic "Besieged Fortress," which explored the pretensions of overseas educated Chinese in an earlier era.

The first part of the book is set in Montreal, where Jimmy becomes a star salesman for a Canadian trading house, but is forced to suffer from the prejudice of his bosses. Seeking refuge, he later becomes a teacher at a Beijing university, embracing the ironies of being a 'sea turtle', slang for returned overseas Chinese.

Return to the Besieged Fortress by Jimmy Qi is published on December 10 through Moongate Books. It is available in paperback and ebook editions.

#### About the Author

Born in 1962 in Beijing, Jimmy Qi (Qi Yimin) has a diverse writer's portfolio that includes works on the philosophy of art, and linguistics, as well as several novels known for their humor.

He has published more than 40 books, including a popular English translation of his novella "Yu li: Confessions of an Elevator Operator" (2009). He holds a Doctorate in Comparative Literature from Peking University.

Time Out described Qi's writing as "laugh-out loud farce" but recognised that "beneath the humour serious issues simmer".



Jimmy Qi



Moongate Books

## About Moongate Books

Since 2010, Moongate Books has been promoting new independent writers from East Asia such as Murong, Chen Xiwo, Mark Kitto, and Rosmini Shaari.

Complimentary review copies of *Return to the Besieged Fortress*, in addition to interviews with author Jimmy Qi (who speaks excellent English), are available through Moongate Books.

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