

LEVELED BOOK • N

# *Sparky's Mystery Fortune*



Written by Jan Goldberg  
Illustrated by David Cockcroft

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“Hurry up,” said Dad. “Mom is going to wonder where we are. And it’s her birthday. We should at least meet her at the restaurant on time.”

“Okay, I’ll be right there,” said seven-year-old Emma.

“Me, too,” said Jesse, her older brother. “Hey, Emma, lock the back gate so the puppy can’t get out. We’ll only be gone an hour or two. It’s nice outside. He’ll enjoy the fall air and sunshine.”

“Okay,” said Emma.





Every year for Mom's birthday, the Mason family headed for their favorite Chinese restaurant. It was called the Golden Pagoda. Emma loved the chow mein, and Jesse liked the chop suey. Mom and Dad always ordered egg foo young.

"Just in time," said Mom, as Dad and the children ran breathlessly into the restaurant.



In a jiffy, the family was seated, singing Happy Birthday to Mom. She opened her gifts, and everyone ordered their favorite dishes.



“Oh, that was delicious,” said Emma.  
“I’m stuffed. But I always have room for a fortune cookie. Besides, it’s fun to read the fortune.”

Mom, the birthday girl, opened her cookie first. It read:

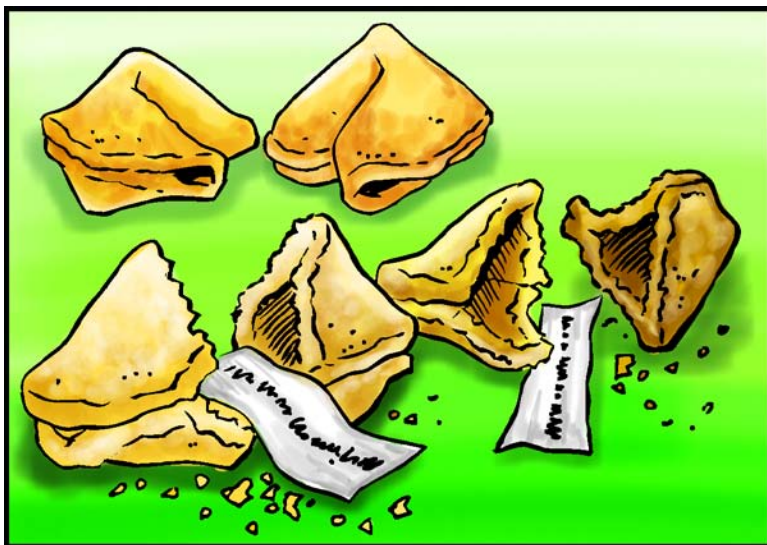
You will help solve a mystery.

“Well, how do they know that?”  
asked Mom, smiling.

Dad opened his cookie next. It read:

What looks like the right road  
may not be.

“I like to drive,” said Dad, laughing.



Jesse opened his fortune cookie next.

You will lose something you care about.

“I hope it’s not my skateboard,” he said.

Then Emma opened up her cookie. The message inside said:

Trees keep secrets under their leaves.

“Trees don’t have secrets,” Emma laughed.





“Let’s get one for Sparky so we can find out his fortune,” said Jesse.

“Sure,” said Dad. “After all, he’s a member of our family now.”

Jesse asked for another fortune cookie when he asked for a leftover container. Jesse mixed the leftovers together while Emma opened Sparky’s cookie. It read:

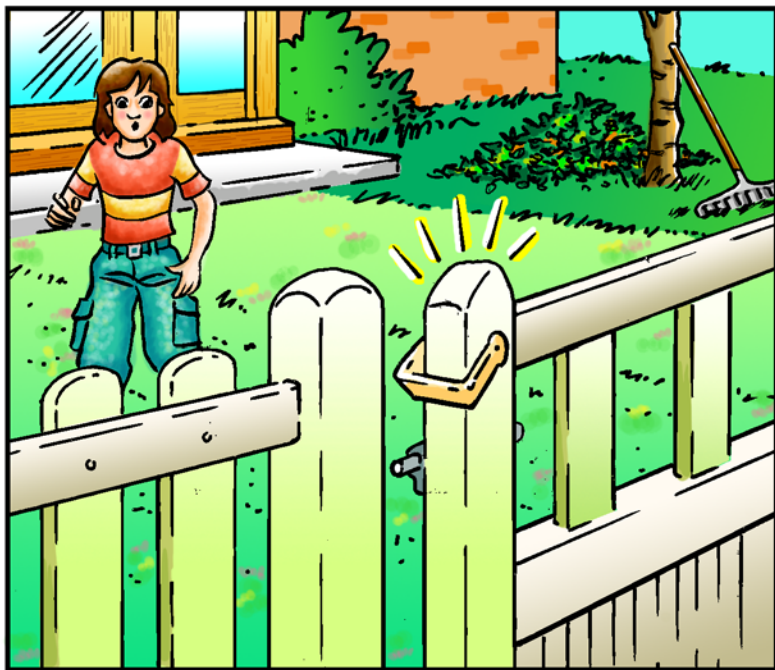
Those around you will be busy while you are at rest.

Huh? thought Emma. “I wonder what that means.” Emma stuffed all the fortunes in her pocket.



As soon as the family got home, they discovered Sparky was missing. Emma had a sick feeling in her stomach.

Emma knew it was her fault. She had forgotten to lock the back gate. The family began to search everywhere they thought the puppy might go.





Mom called all of the neighbors.  
Dad drove around in the family car.  
Jesse rode his skateboard to the  
park. But, after an hour, they hadn't  
found the puppy.

“Where is he?” said Emma, sadly.  
Then Emma remembered the  
fortunes in her pocket. She opened  
the papers and read them again.  
One fortune caught her attention:  
Trees keep secrets under their leaves.





“Wait a minute. I think I know where to find him!” Emma shouted. She ran around to the back of the house. Under a pile of leaves beneath the maple tree, Sparky was curled up, fast asleep.

“There you are,” said Emma, as she hugged the puppy. “I guess there are secrets under tree leaves. Well, it doesn’t really matter. Finding you is the very best fortune of all!”



## Who Made the First Fortune Cookie?

We don't know for sure who invented fortune cookies. Here are some theories, or guesses.

**Theory 1:** Some people think that fortune cookies are modern Chinese moon cakes. Centuries ago, moon cakes with messages inside were common in China.



**Theory 2:** Makoto Hagiwara invented the cookie around 1910. Hagiwara founded Golden Gate Park's Japanese Tea Garden in San Francisco, California. He handed out cookies as thank-you notes.



**Theory 3:** David Jung invented fortune cookies in Los Angeles in about 1920. Jung founded the Hong Kong Noodle Company. Many people say he handed the cookies out free to unemployed men.



However, we do know that today, fortune cookies are enjoyed all over the world.



## Glossary

- breathlessly** (*adv.*) in a way that makes breathing difficult (p. 5)
- container** (*n.*) an object used to hold something inside it (p. 9)
- discovered** (*v.*) to have found for the first time (p. 10)
- fortune cookie** (*n.*) cookies made from a thin layer of dough that is folded and baked around a slip of paper with a fortune or other saying (p. 6)
- mystery** (*n.*) a story or event that is secret or hidden (p. 7)
- restaurant** (*n.*) a place where people can buy and eat a meal (p. 3)
- theories** (*n.*) guesses or ideas (p. 14)

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