



Chinese Lessons: Five Classmates and the Story of the New China

John Pomfret

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A first-hand account of the remarkable transformation of China over the past forty years as seen through the life of an award-winning journalist and his four Chinese classmates

As a twenty-year-old exchange student from Stanford University, John Pomfret spent a year at Nanjing University in China. His fellow classmates were among those who survived the twin tragedies of Mao's rule—the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution—and whose success in government and private industry today are shaping China's future. Pomfret went on to a career in journalism, spending the bulk of his time in China. After attending the twentieth reunion of his class, he decided to reacquaint himself with some of his classmates. *Chinese Lessons* is their story and his own.

Beginning with Pomfret's first days in China, *Chinese Lessons* takes us back to the often torturous paths that brought together the Nanjing University History Class of 1982. One classmate's father was killed during the Cultural Revolution for the crime of being an intellectual; another classmate labored in the fields for years rather than agree to a Party-arranged marriage; a third was forced to publicly denounce and humiliate her father. As we watch Pomfret and his classmates begin to make their lives as adults, we see as never before the human cost and triumph of China's transition from near-feudal communism to first-world capitalism.

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