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The Scholar Born of *Leaked Wind*

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前言



中国有很多古老美丽的故事和传说，这些故事都充满了纯真的思想和深邃的人文气息，因此便构成了中华民族的精神象征之一，这些故事更巩固了中国人的同源意识。

在这套“幼学启蒙丛书”中，内容涵盖了大家所熟悉的民俗故事、神话故事、节日故事、名胜传说与古代名医、贤哲、名相、名将、帝王、智童、科学家、智谋、诗书故事等，总计八十册。为了让孩子们了解祖先们活动的广阔天地和历代的政治变迁、科学发展与文学艺术上的成就，我们运用最精练的文字与生动的插画，将其一一呈现给中国儿童，并使得这些久远的历史人物，轻松地进入儿童的思想领域，与他们的血脉相连接。

身为中国人，对中华民族的认知，就好像一个做儿女的，应该了解他的大家庭一样，如此他才会对这个家庭有感情、有责任。我们希望这套书的出版，能够引导孩子在人生记忆力最好的时候，去了解祖国历史的脉络、认同中华民族的生活轨迹与精神内涵，从而拥有高瞻远瞩的智慧，成为一个心胸开阔、人格健全的人。

“幼学启蒙丛书”，是为中国儿童编辑的，为这一套丛书撰稿和绘图的儿童文学工作者，都以传统文学和艺术观点来诠释中国古老的神话、传说和历史，我们希望这套丛书能为每一个中国家庭、每一个中国儿童所喜爱。

赵镇琬

Preface

China is a beautiful treasure-house of ancient tales and folklore. Here are stories filled with sincere reflection echoing the vast and deep spirit of our culture and civilization. These represent the best of Chinese culture—tales that uphold a people's sense of their common origin.

This collection of *First Books for Early Learning* offers stories familiar to all of us. Drawn from folklore and mythology, along with the origins of special days in the traditional calendar and of famous places, these eighty books also recall ancient physicians, philosophers and thinkers, figures famed for statecraft, generals, royalty, prodigies and scientists, remembered through tales of wisdom and great poetry.

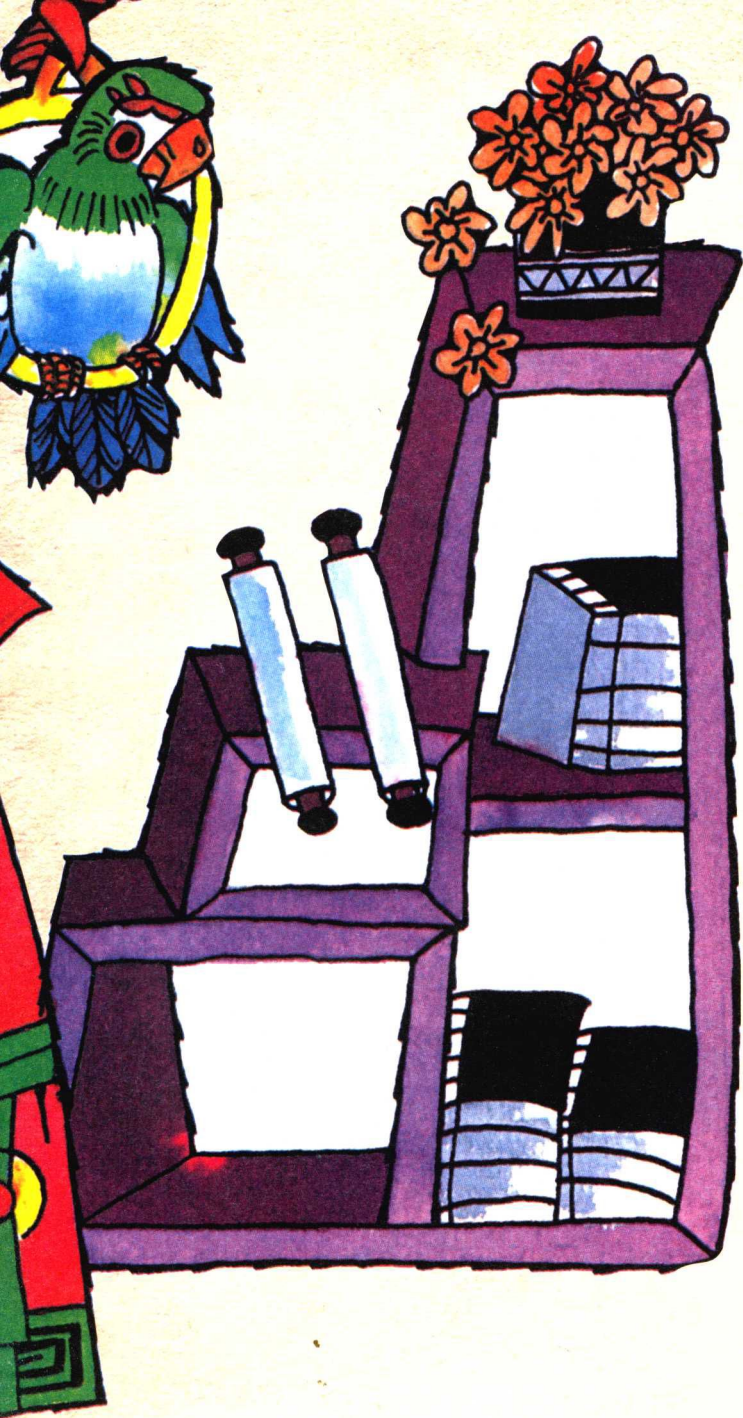
To give Chinese children all over the world an understanding of their ancestors' lives, and the changes through the different ages of China's history, scientific development and achievements in arts and literature, we have brought together concise language with most vivid illustrations. These ancient historical figures also give inspiration and ideas to children to connect with their own roots.

As Chinese, we know Chinese history well as a son or a daughter knows his or her family. Only with such knowledge can one possess a depth of passion and a sense of responsibility. It is our wish that this collection will guide children at an early age to learn from the history of our nation and to identify with the social progress and philosophical spirit of the Chinese people. We hope our children will develop wider horizons of wisdom to become open-minded yet with a rooted outlook on life.

First Books for Early Learning was originally compiled in Chinese for the children of China. The writers and artists who contributed to this collection have used the perspective of traditional literature and arts to interpret Chinese mythology, legends and history. We hope this collection will be enjoyed by Chinese people—and, now in translation, also by people all over the world—and all children who want to learn more about China.

Zhao Zhenwan





很早以前，陕西临潼有个读书人，名字叫夏器通。此人不学无术，他写的文章实在糟糕，叫人读后哭笑不得。

A long time ago, in the city of Lintong in Shaanxi Province there lived a scholar-to-be, whose name was Xia Qitong. This man never put much effort into his studies and was most incompetent and artless in anything scholarly. Whatever subject he chose, his writings were just dreadful. If anyone had to read them, he would end up wanting to laugh and cry at the same time at the absurdities in the writings.

这年，他到西安应试，能否考中，心中十分没数。

于是，他请算命先生占了一卦。所占卦辞是：“听之无声，视之无形。君子筮之，必得其名。”算命先生连连拱手相贺：“这回您必定高中无疑。”

One year, this scholar-to-be went to Xi'an to take part in the imperial examinations for scholars. He had no confidence he would pass.

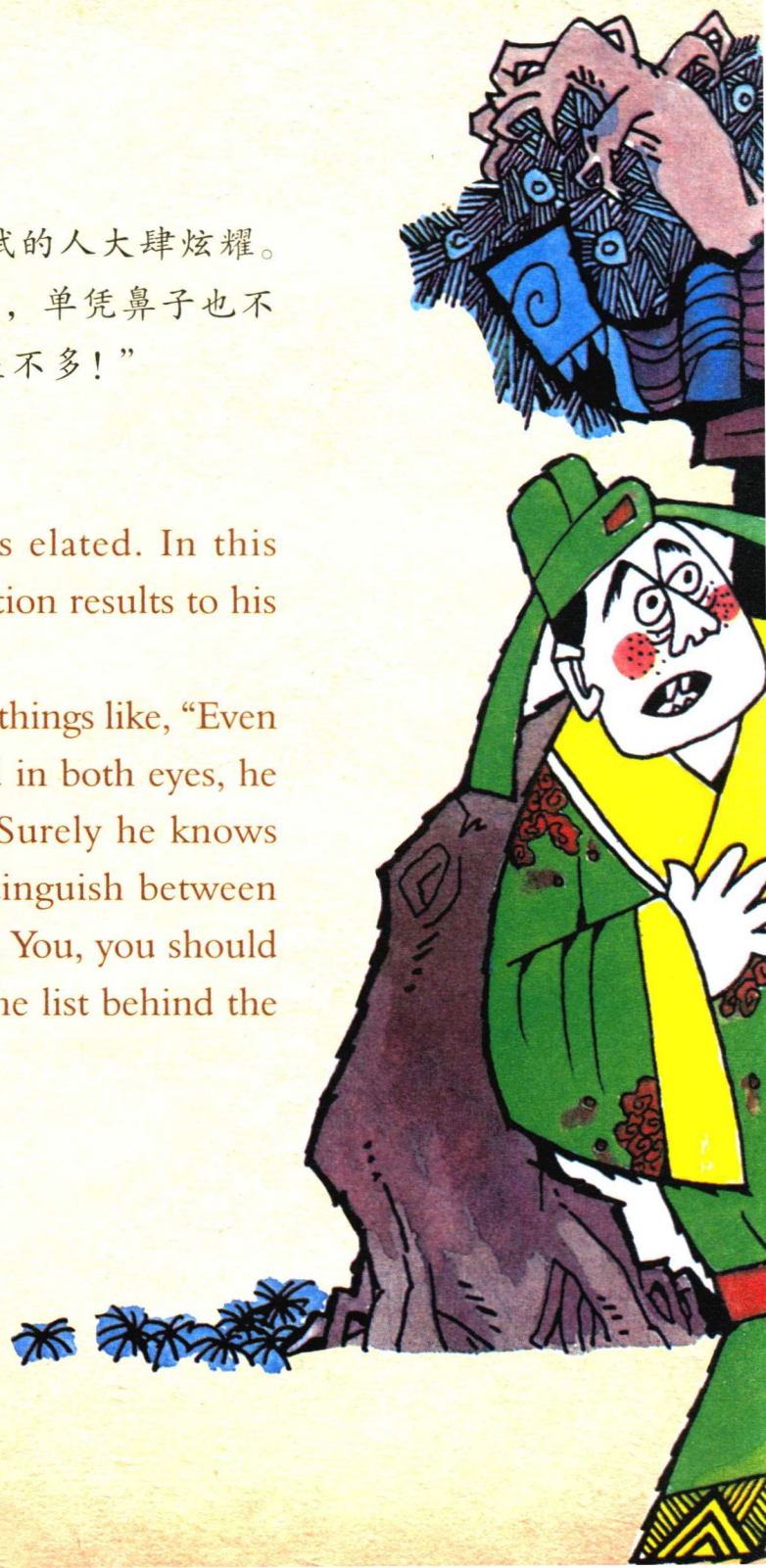
So he went to see a fortuneteller and asked him to divine his future using the Eight Trigrams. The result was told in these phrases: "It is not to be heard, not to be seen. A man of good character divined by a reed. And rank he will have." The fortuneteller took a bow and congratulated him, "This time for sure nothing will stop you from being selected to a top place on the list."



夏器通听了，得意洋洋，向一起应试的人大肆炫耀。人们讥笑说：“即使主考大人是个双眼瞎，单凭鼻子也不会香臭不分。你当个三等以下的名第还差不多！”

Having heard this, Xia Qitong was elated. In this overjoyed mood he showed off the divination results to his fellow examination participants.

These men laughed in his face, saying things like, “Even if His Honor the Chief Examiner is blind in both eyes, he can still smell how your writing stinks. Surely he knows enough just by his sense of smell to distinguish between what stinks and what pleases by its aroma. You, you should be lucky if you end up at the bottom of the list behind the three chosen classes.”







说来也巧，有一位学使大人奉命到西安去任主考。临行前，这位主考官去向一位原籍西安的尚书辞行。主考官一心巴结尚书大人，便问他有没有需要照顾录取的人。

Sometimes life takes a funny turn.
The Imperial Academy official assigned
as the Chief Examiner to preside over
the imperial examinations, before he
started off toward Xi'an, decided to
bid farewell to an Imperial Court
Minister who came from Shaanxi
Province. The Chief Examiner,
aiming to flatter the Minister,
asked him if he had any particular
candidate in mind who might need
a little "special treatment."



说话间，尚书大人忽然觉得腹内不适，便起立泄气。这时，主考官以为尚书大人有什么人要托付他加以关照，便急急追问。尚书说：“无他，下气通耳！”主考官听了，以为“夏器通”是他的心腹，便牢记在心。

During this conversation the Minister all of a sudden felt a pang in his belly. He stood up to pass some gas. At this point, the Chief Examiner thought the Minister was trying to hint he did have someone in mind but felt uneasy about stating the name. The Chief Examiner lost no time in pursuing the matter and went after the Minister as to whom he had in mind. The Minister, trying to brush the matter off, simply said, “Oh, nothing, nothing... it’s just a case of ‘*xia qi tong*’” (meaning “passing wind”). But the Chief Examiner thought he had named a favorite subordinate. So he made a note of the “name” – Xia Qitong.

主考官到了西安上任后，仔细查问，得知果然有个叫“夏器通”的考生，阅卷时便格外留意。谁知却见“夏器通”的文章拙劣至极，四六不通。但因尚书有言在先，只好略加评点。这样夏器通居然中了第一名。

After he made it to Xi'an and took up the post of Chief Examiner, he went around trying to find out about this "Xia Qitong." After some asking around, he actually discovered there was indeed a candidate at the examination by the name of Xia Qitong! When he was going over the examination papers he found this name, Xia Qitong. It really disturbed him how atrociously bad the essays written by Xia Qitong were, not even making any sense. Yet, this was the very one the Minister had named for a little "special treatment." The Chief Examiner thought he had to oblige. So he made some vague comments on the papers and gave Xia Qitong a ranking at the top of the list of selected scholars.







后来，这事露了馅儿，于是，人们就给夏器通送了一个雅号：“泄气生员”。

Eventually, this case was exposed, and people nicknamed Xia Qitong “The Scholar Born of Leaked Wind”!