

# Welcome The Year of the Rooster!

*The Year of the Rooster:  
Tales from the Chinese Zodiac*  
By Oliver Chin  
Illustrations by Juan Calle  
Immedium, 2017  
Hardcover, 36 pages, \$15.95

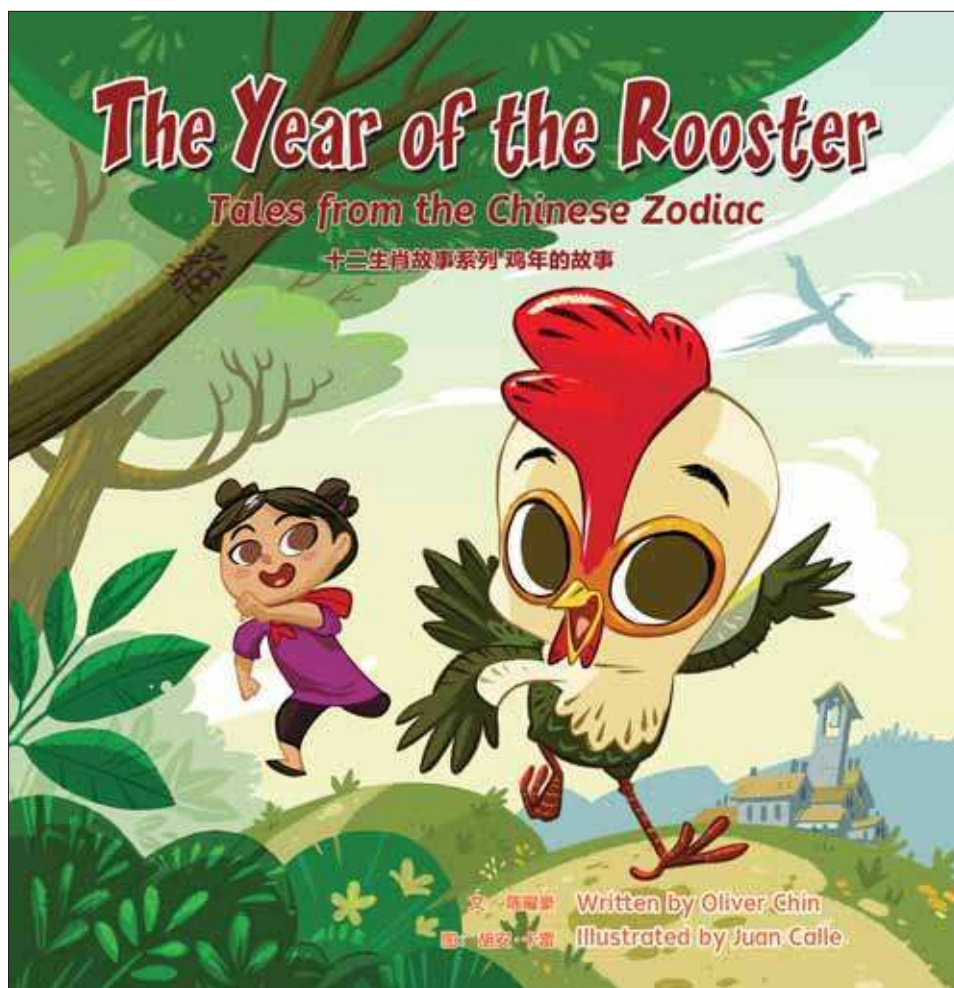
By Julie Stegeman  
The Asian Reporter

Wondering how to involve your children in the spirit of the Lunar New Year? Try spending some family time cuddled on a cozy couch with a copy of *The Year of the Rooster: Tales from the Chinese Zodiac*.

The twelfth and final story in a series of children's picture books about the charismatic animals of the lunar zodiac, Oliver Chin's story introduces readers to Ray, a loveable chick who embodies the characteristics of those born in the Year of the Rooster: confidence, practicality, and diligence.

The story opens with Ray hatching from his shell. As the bold and inquisitive little bird grows up, he hears from the pig that she has caught a glimpse of a phoenix, though the other animals don't believe her until she shows proof — a red feather. Ray decides to undertake a quest to find the mythical creature, much to his parent's consternation. He doesn't have to journey alone, however, as he is accompanied by his friend and neighbor Ying, a human girl.

One by one, as they follow clues that lead to the incredible bird, the pair encounters the other eleven zodiac creatures, who lend their assistance in their adventure. I read the book to my six-year-old daughter,



and she had fun spotting each of the animals and comparing them to the first page of the book, which shows all of them in a circle around an explanation of the lunar calendar.

The book was enjoyable to read and fun to talk about. Not only do we find out more about the animals of the lunar zodiac, but we learn, along with Ray and Ying, the

value of persistence, hard work, and following your dreams — a plus for parents!

After the story wraps up, the book concludes with a more detailed description of those born during the Year of the Rooster. If you or a family member is a Rooster (born in the years 1909, 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, and

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2005, in addition to the current year), you can check if your personality matches the characteristics of your sign.

My one beef with the book was that in the story we are told by the sheep that "the phoenix embodies five great virtues." We learn that one of these is knowledge, but the other four are not mentioned. (If you too are curious, the other four are benevolence, honesty, integrity, and correct behavior, according to a quick internet search.)

My daughter had me read the book twice in a row, which indicates her approval. Her review is as follows: "I loved it because I like the phoenix and I like when they go on an adventure." She was happy to spot her zodiac animal: The Tiger.

The book's engaging story, which is written in English with a bilingual translation into simplified Chinese on the lower half of each page, is accompanied by colorful and detailed pictures by Juan Calle. The illustrations add a great deal of charm to the story.

And if you enjoy reading *The Year of the Rooster: Tales from the Chinese Zodiac*, there are eleven others in the series to explore. Children will especially love to read about the animal of their particular birth year.

Have a happy and healthy Year of the Rooster!

## LUNAR NEW YEAR

**YEAR OF THE ROOSTER**  
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