

Omnivoracious

Hungry for the next good book®

About this blog |  RSS feed | Shop Amazon Books

« 100 Mysteries & Thrillers to Read i | Main | Dee Williams's Essential "Big Tiny" »

Five Questions with Elaine Lui and the Squawking Chicken

by Robin A. Rothman on April 23, 2014

The Squawking Chicken's opinions are not for the thin skinned or weak willed. Canadian gossip blogger and TV talk show host Elaine Lui has spent her life getting to know the woman who raised her. She makes no apologies for her mother's aggressive personality; rather, she celebrates it with [Listen to the Squawking Chicken](#), one of our [Best of the Month](#) books in April and a [Mother's Day recommendation](#). In addition to acting as a personal memoir, Lui's book serves also as her mother's biography, detailing the life of a young girl growing up in Hong Kong to a young woman raising a child in a new country to a mature woman facing health issues. As such, we see her toughened by negotiating with members of the Chinese Triads, supporting her own parents in financial crisis, and other intense, personal experiences.

In the follow she said/she said, we asked Lui and her mother to answer five questions. The answers, like the book, say so much about the special relationship these two share.

How would you describe your mother/daughter relationship?

Elaine: My ma, the Squawking Chicken, was asked this question recently. Her answer: "I think we are more like sisters because I look so young". Everyone laughed. And while ma certainly doesn't lack for self-confidence about her appearance, she was definitely joking. Ma has always been my Mother. And our relationship as mother daughter is at once fulfilling, infuriating, and forever honest. Ma is my first and worst critic. She is also my most ardent supporter and my loudest cheerleader. In return, I would like to think that I am her fiercest soldier.

Squawking Chicken: I cannot do anything for Elaine anymore. She is mature. So I make her the soup. That's how I can help her to do her job. I worry if she don't drink the soup she will be sick. Healthy is important. I will always worry about her. Even though she is 40, she is still my baby. But she is 40, not 20. So she must take care of her skin.

What does "success" mean to you?

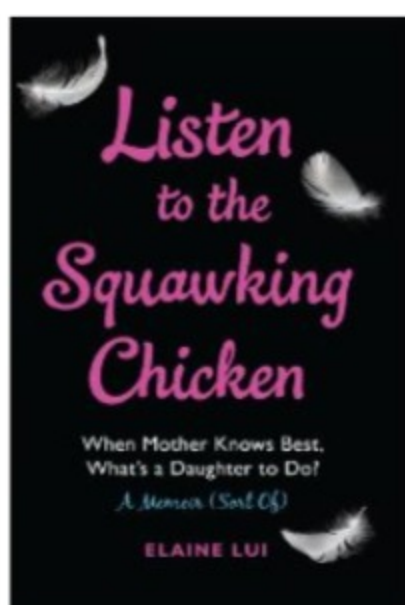
Elaine: Success to me means that I've been able to make my own choices and that I've worked hard in pursuit of the opportunities that those choices have made possible. Success is always having options. When you have options, when there are alternatives, you will never be stuck.

Squawking Chicken: I did not have success. I had nothing – no school, no business. We are immigrants. Our family did not have much. Elaine is successful now. I think I did a good job.

What is one thing you're scared of and why?

Elaine: I am afraid that my ma will stop squawking. I'm afraid that one day I won't be able to hear her. I'm afraid that if I ever stop being able to hear her, I won't know myself.

Squawking Chicken: I don't want to die! I say to my doctors, don't let me die! My daughter is on TV and an author, I want to show off!



What is the perfect Mother's Day gift and why?

Elaine: For my ma, the perfect Mother's Day gift is straight up cash money. So that she can take it to the casino, her happy place, and play slots for as long as she wants.

Squawking Chicken: Money, of course.

If readers take just one lesson away from "Listen to the Squawking Chicken", what do you hope it will be?

Elaine: That love isn't homogenous. It doesn't look the same from mother to mother, daughter to daughter. That my mother loved me as much as any mother loved a child, even if her way was unconventional.

Squawking Chicken: I want to help people. My family life was hard. But even if you have hard times, you can still be OK. Maybe this story will help the people to know that.

Photo of Elaine and her mother courtesy of Dexter Chew.

Abhinav Agarwal's bookshelf pictured above ([Share yours](#))

Subscribe to this Blog

► [Get daily posts by e-mail](#)

Explore Amazon Books

[Best Books of 2013](#)
[Best Books of the Month](#)
[Book Clubs](#)
[Children's Books](#)
[Cookbooks](#)
[From the Amazon Books Editors](#)
[Top 100 Bestsellers](#)
[eBooks on Kindle](#)
[Teen Books](#)

Follow us on



Omnivoracious™ Contributors

[Alex Carr](#)
[Anne Bartholomew](#)
[Brad Thomas Parsons](#)
[Caley Anderson](#)
[Chris Schluep](#)
[Daphne Durham](#)
[Darryl Campbell](#)
[Dave Callanan](#)
[Jeff VanderMeer](#)
[Jessica Schein](#)
[Jon Foro](#)
[Juliet Disparte](#)
[Kevin Nguyen](#)
[Lynette Mong](#)
[Mari Malcolm](#)
[Mia Lipman](#)
[Neal Thompson](#)
[Robin A. Rothman](#)
[Sara Nelson](#)
[Seira Wilson](#)

[E-mail Omnivoracious](#)

August 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Archives

[August 2014](#)
[July 2014](#)
[June 2014](#)