

# Lily's Hong Kong Honey Cake

By Erica Lyons | Illustrated by Bonnie Pang

## READING GUIDE

### About the Book

Based on the history of Jewish refugees in Asia and spanning multiple years during World War II, this picture book shows how some creativity, adaptability, and a lot of love can make the new year sweet no matter where you are.

Lily's family ran a pastry shop in Vienna. Every Rosh Hashanah, they baked honey cakes for their customers. But when war comes, they must leave everything behind. They first travel to Shanghai, where they open a new bakery. Each year, Lily learns more about baking. She helps to mix and pour the batter, measure the ingredients, and pass out the wrapped treats. But each year, there are changes. When the flour runs out, they have to use rice instead. There are fewer customers, and the newspaper wrappings are showing bad news.

Soon, Lily's family has to move again, to Hong Kong. With rations there was even less than usual. There would be no honey cake this year. But Lily had been watching how her parents made do in the years before, and she had some ideas of her own. Because despite all the changes, everyone deserves to have a sweet new year.



**Erica Lyons** is the chair of the Hong Kong Jewish Historical Society, the Hong Kong Delegate to World Jewish Congress, and the founder of Hong Kong's PJ Library program. Her first picture book, *Alone Together on Dan Street*, was a National Jewish Book Award finalist. Along with her family, she has called Hong Kong home for nearly two decades.

**Bonnie Pang** has a bachelor's degree in Geography and Resource Management from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and a master's degree in Illustration from The Academy of Art University. As an illustrator, she has worked on concept art for animation studios, children's book illustration, commercial illustration and public art projects. She lives in Hong Kong.

### Key Themes:

Adapting and Accommodating, Optimism, Rosh Hashanah Traditions, Jewish Community

ISBN 978-1-68115-676-7

Ages 4–8 years

Use these questions to preface and conclude a reading of this book with children. Encourage them to share their observations as you read the book together, and take time to linger on pages or spreads that generate more discussion.

### Before Reading

- Read the title aloud. Look at the illustration and describe what you see. Then guess where you think the story takes place? Do you think it takes place in one place or several places? Why do you think so?
- The two people on the cover have suitcases with them. What does that tell you about the story? What do you think will happen?
- Look closely at the girl's jacket. Can you find something unusual on her arm? What do you think that tells you about the girl?

### After Reading

- In the story, the first people who line up for honey cake are described as wearing fine suits and dresses. Then later in the story, the people lined up for honey cake are described as wearing silk dresses and rags. What does the different type of clothing tell you about what's happening in the story?
- The illustrator chose to include a Rosh Hashanah object in several of the illustrations. Can you find it? What other Jewish symbols did the illustrator include in the pictures? What do they tell you about what's happening in each scene?
- Lily and her family lived in many different cities and countries. Say the name of each place out loud. How many are there? Then talk with your family about how many countries have you have lived in. (you might have been a baby, and don't remember!) What about your parents? Grandparents? Have they lived in different places? Why? What led them to each place?

### Optional: Extension Activity

At the end of the book, there is a map showing Lily's journey. Discover your own family's journey. Ask your parents where their ancestors lived and, working together, find it on a map or globe. Trace the journey from where they lived to where you and your family live today.







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# Character Cut Outs

