Clarion Review

Biography

Tien Oung Liu: A 20th Century Chinese Profile
Margaret Liu Wen Tsai
AuthorHouse
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Five Stars (out of Five)

Tien Oung Liu: A 20th Century Chinese Profile, by Margaret Liu Wen Tsai, is a warm and inspiring bilingual account of one Chinese businessman's life. Written by Liu's daughter, this biography traces Liu's family background before his birth, provides insight into his early childhood and youth, follows his footsteps to his grave, and traces the touches of his influence beyond his lifetime.

The word choice is simple and clear. For instance, Tsai writes, "At the Heavenly Temple, they marveled at the talents and craftsmanship of the ancient masters of art and architecture." The formatting is clear and approachable, incorporating generous spacing that draws in the reader, and the content is presented in a well-organized manner in which the English version and photographic illustrations precede the Chinese version.

The author consistently makes the story of Liu come alive for his reader by showing the interactions of readers through dialogue and word choice. For instance, as Liu's father lies on his deathbed, he says heart-wrenching words to his wife: "I am sorry I cannot live to see our children grow up. You will have to raise the children without me, I am sorry. Give them the best education you can. I love you. I love every one of our five children." Through this tender speech, Tsai conveys the love and devotion that characterized the house in which Liu was raised.

Tsai also draws the reader in with her marvelous storytelling. For instance, her story of Liu and his wife, Lucy's, gloomy stay on the side of a mountain draw the reader in with abrupt incomplete sentences that create high drama. She writes, "A lone candle burning in a broken bowl. The shed shrouded in near-darkness. A high wind howling in the wilderness outside."

Tsai creates a good balance of dialogue and narrative. For instance, as Liu struggles to decide whether to pursue college, the dialogue and narrated thought process together draw the reader into his decision-making.. The photos provide an additional aspect that adds personality

and warmth to this work. Good editing and few grammatical errors add to the book's worth. The Chinese version of the story adds depth and richness to the work and provides a visual sense of the intercultural and international richness of Liu's life.

Tien Oung Liu is a lovely, memorable work whose style and content will provide readers with unique and rewarding read.

Emily Adams