



JANET S. WONG

"Poetry is like shouting. You can't shout at the top of your lungs for a very long time, so you have to figure out what you really need to say, and keep it short and clear."

Janet S. Wong was born in Los Angeles, and grew up in Southern and Northern California. As part of her undergraduate program at UCLA, she spent her junior year in France, studying art history at the Université de Bordeaux. When she returned from France, Janet founded the UCLA Immigrant Children's Art Project, a program focused on teaching refugee children to express themselves through art.

After graduating from UCLA, *summa cum laude*, with a B.A. in History and College Honors, Janet then obtained her J.D. from Yale Law School, where she was a director of the Yale Law and Technology Association and worked for New Haven Legal Aid. After practicing corporate and labor law for a few years for GTE and Universal Studios Hollywood, she made a dramatic career change—choosing to write for young people instead. Her successful switch from law to children's literature has been the subject of several articles and television programs, most notably an *O Magazine* article, a "Remembering Your Spirit" segment on "The Oprah Winfrey Show," and the Fine Living Channel's "Radical Sabbatical."

Janet's poems and stories have been featured in many textbooks and anthologies, and also in some more unusual venues. Poems from *Behind the Wheel* have been performed on a car-talk radio show. "Albert J. Bell" from *A Suitcase of Seaweed* was selected to appear on 5,000 subway and bus posters as part of the New York City Metropolitan Transit Authority's "Poetry in Motion" program, and was later highlighted on the Hallmark Channel's "New Morning" show. And, in April 2003, Janet was one of five children's authors invited to read at The White House Easter Egg Roll.

Janet and her books have received numerous awards and honors, such as the International Reading Association's "Celebrate Literacy Award" for exemplary service in the promotion of literacy, and the prestigious Stone Center Recognition of Merit, given by the Claremont Graduate School. Janet also has been appointed to two terms on the Commission on Literature of the National Council of Teachers of English.

Janet currently resides in Medina, Washington, a suburb of Seattle, with her husband Glenn and her son Andrew.



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