

Remarks for Dorothy's Memorial Service

Good afternoon. My name is Zoe Kwok and I am Dorothy's goddaughter. I want to thank the organizers of this event for inviting me to participate and say a few words in celebration of Dorothy.

Godmother Dorothy was quite simply, a wonderful godmother. She wasn't the fairy godmother type – occasionally flittering in to grant extraordinary wishes then disappearing. Nor was she the kind appointed in a church ceremony. She was a woman my parents were great friends with and wanted to play in a role in my life. And what a role she played. Somebody asked me recently when I first met Dorothy and I had to pause and think about it; I've always known Dorothy. I've been lucky enough to always have her be part of my life.

For many, many years we lived half way across the globe from each other. But the birthday and Christmas presents were a constant. They were books. Books wrapped in remarkably unique wrapping paper each with an inscription. There was *Blueberries for Sal*, for my 4th birthday with love from Godmother Dorothy and Godfather James. Then there was *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*, Christmas 2000 and *The Donkey-Vous: A Mamur-Zapt Mystery* (set in colonial Cairo – an excellent series), Christmas 2007. The books were always, without exception well loved, but I also have numerous memories of our annual summer meetings in New York City throughout my childhood.

Our visits to the Natural History Museum to see the whales, the Metropolitan Museum to see the mummies, the teddy bear shop on Amsterdam in the 80s where she purchased William Shakesbear and I came home with Anna Bearlova. And the Haagen Dazs on Broadway and 114th, where we would rendezvous as soon as my parents and I got off the plane from Hong

Kong. I would order a scoop of cassis sorbet or lemon sorbet while she would clearly instruct the person helping me to use a different and very clean spoon so as not to get any milk products or nuts near my sorbet (my food allergies were numerous then). More recently, we sat on a bench in the middle of Broadway in the summer of 2007 eating sorbet and ice cream from that same Haagen Dazs and talking about my parents, her late husband James, and the state of my dissertation on Chinese painting.

She always said that my parents picked her to be my godmother so that she could firstly, influence me to go to Smith College and secondly to encourage me to develop an inquisitive mind. She clearly felt that my years at Wellesley amply discharged her of her first task. And she took the second seriously; she encouraged all my various interests throughout my life. As I grew older she nurtured my interests in English country houses, Asian gardens, Chinese ceramics, textiles, and adventurous travels (for all of which she would view each and every photograph).

When I finally managed to move within an easy distance of New York, she rejoiced, although pointed out that Princeton, was merely a stepping stone to my inevitable move to Manhattan. In the last few years we saw each other often, visiting museums, going to concerts, or just getting together for a cup of tea. When I was away doing research in Beijing we talked on the phone about my trips to see cave paintings in Western China, my sprained ankle, how we didn't think she could manage a trip out to see me because the air was so bad, so I really had to come back to Princeton soon.

I feel extraordinarily lucky to have so many memories of Dorothy. I miss her greatly, although I'm somewhat comforted to know that thoughts of her will always drift in and out of my consciousness. In fact, as I was reworking these comments this morning I suddenly paused and had to add *The Conversation Piece: Scenes of a Fashionable Life* to my amazon.com

shopping basket as the 19th century English conversation piece painting genre and it's relation to 10th century Chinese court painting (the details of which I won't go into here) will be the topic of Appendix A in my dissertation – conceived of by Godmother Dorothy and dedicated especially to her, with the deepest affection and love from me.

Thank you.