

THE NAIL HOUSE

by Gregory Baines

- What cultural differences do the main characters have to overcome in their relationship?
- What can you learn about Chinese culture from the novella? (For example, wedding customs)
- Before reading the book, were you familiar with the term 'nail house', or how did you understand the title without knowing its meaning? How was your perception of the term altered upon reading the book?
- The story has some elements that are closely associated with the romance genre. Can you find any example of these in the text?
- It could be argued that Chapter 3 represents a turning point in the novella. Would you agree? Present some examples to support your idea.
- It could be argued that there are multiple villains in the story. Who is, in your opinion the main villain and why? Find examples to support your argument.
- Would you say the ending of the novella is happy, tragic or bittersweet? Why?
- The narrative is divided so that the reader can see the story both from Zhen's and Lindon's points of view. How do you think your perception of the story would have differed if there were only one narrator throughout?