

# THE NAIL HOUSE

by Gregory Baines

## QUESTIONS

- The narrative is told through the perspective of two main characters. How has the author made their voices distinct? Was he successful?
- Throughout the book we see the two main characters in some scenes that could be described as romantic cliché. Can you identify any? What is the purpose of these scenes? Would you ever consider using clichés?
- What is the significance of the quotes at the beginning of the chapters? Would your perception of the book change without them?
- The novella introduces the reader to elements of Chinese culture. What are the dangers/advantages of writing about a culture that isn't your own?
- The narrative is written in present tense. What does this achieve and how would it differ if it was written in past tense?
- Discuss the character of Sun. Is he a well-rounded character or just the villain? How hard and important is it to portray characters that are three-dimensional?
- Does the novella have a happy ending? Would you choose to end the book in a different way?

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## WRITING EXERCISES

A) Write two 500-word passages about two characters interacting, each from the perspective of one of the characters.

OR

B) Write a passage of 1,000 words that centres around elements of a certain culture (either your own or a different one).

## NOTES

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