

The Barefoot Lawyer

The Remarkable Memoir of
China's Bravest Political Activist

Chen Guangcheng

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Maps by Gene Thorp

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Contents

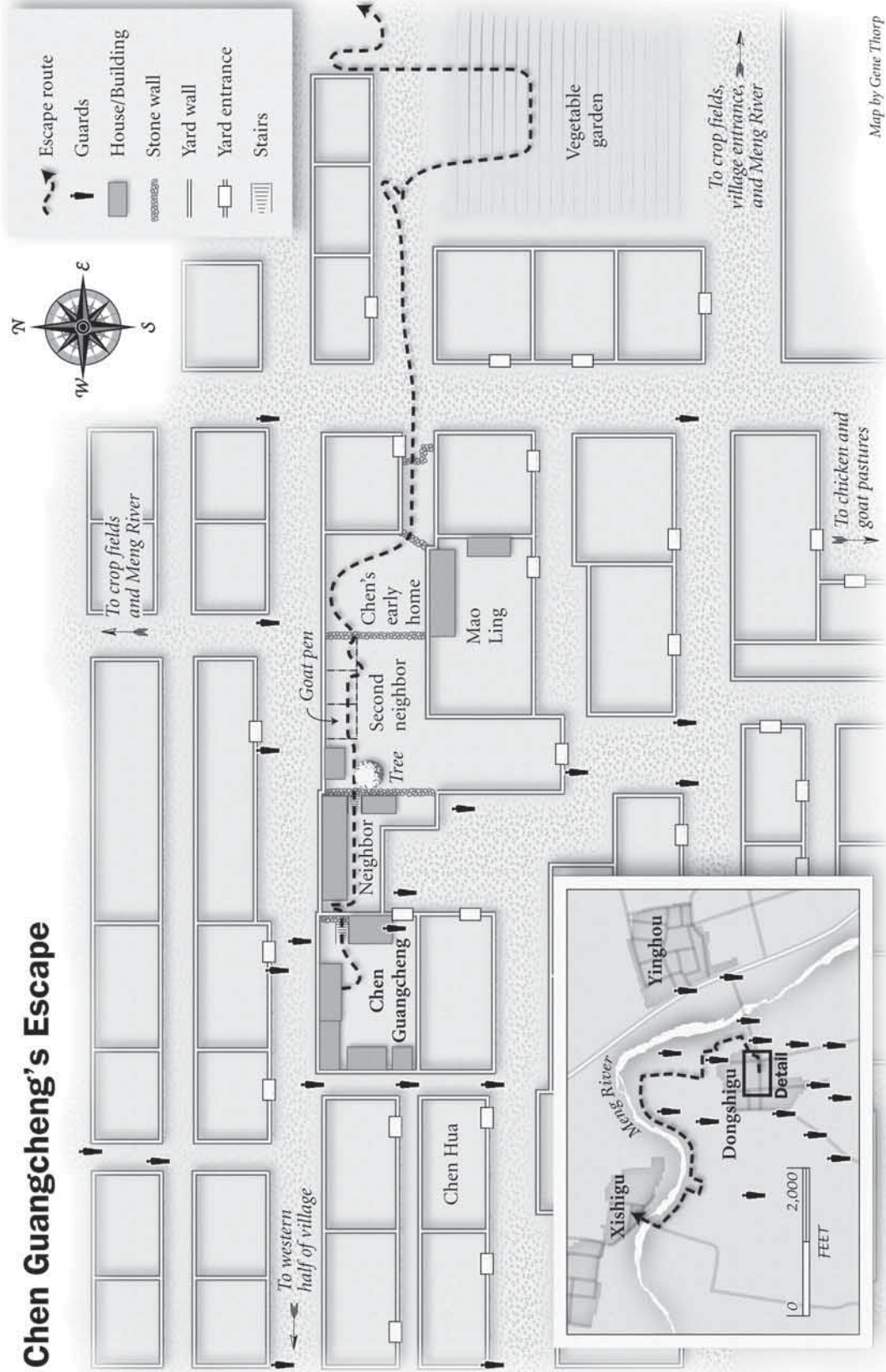
	Foreword by the Dalai Lama	xiii
PROLOGUE	Escape	1
ONE	A Child Apart	15
TWO	By Nature's Hand	36
THREE	An Uncommon Education	58
FOUR	No Turning Back	83
FIVE	Defending Our Rights	108
SIX	New Roots	133
SEVEN	Evil Unmasked	158
EIGHT	Kidnapped	184
NINE	Trial and Imprisonment	202
TEN	House Arrest	222
ELEVEN	Breaking Free	252
TWELVE	Eye of the Storm	275
THIRTEEN	To a Land of Promise	303
EPILOGUE	A New Life	319
	Acknowledgments	321
	Index	323

The World of Chen Guangcheng



Map by Gene Thorp

Chen Guangcheng's Escape



Foreword

BY THE DALAI LAMA

I welcome this publication of Chen Guangcheng's memoirs of his life so far. It's a story that should be told because it shows clearly that with determination, confidence in yourself, and a concern for others you can overcome adversity. Chen Guangcheng overcame the significant setback of blindness and social prejudice and gained an education. He put that education to use by helping and advising the poor people in rural areas who have no one else to turn to.

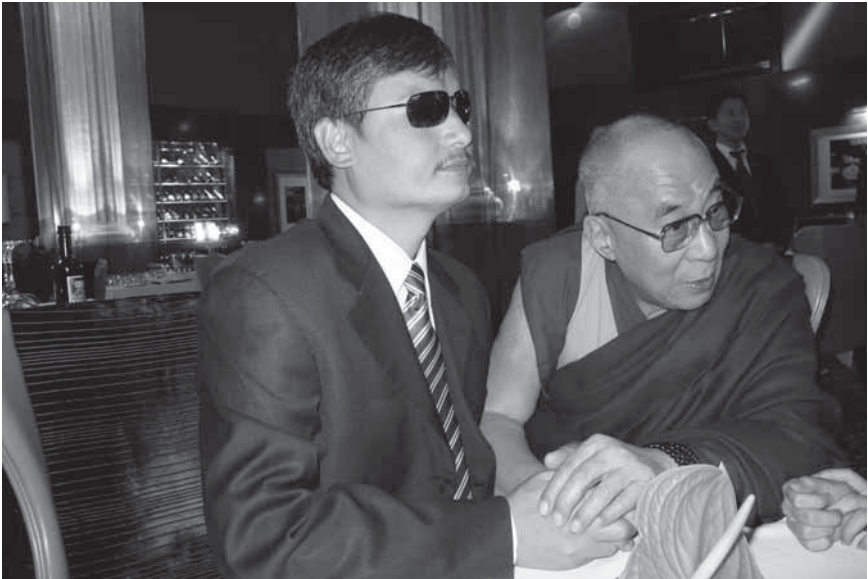
In the clarity of his motivation Chen Guangcheng reminds me of the first generation of communist leaders I met in China sixty years ago, who at the time impressed me with their genuine concern for the welfare of the mass of ordinary people. When his barefoot activism attracted the attention of vested interests he was tried and imprisoned on the contrived charge of disturbing the peace. When, on his release, he discovered that his own and his family's normal life activities were restricted by the authorities, he decided to escape. He succeeded, in as much as he and his family have been able to start a new life in the freedom of the United States; however, he continues to champion for the rights of his fellow brothers and sisters, especially the rights of the rural poor.

During my meetings with Chen Guangcheng I was impressed by his drive and warmheartedness. Helping people help themselves as he did is no threat to the peace and order of society, but can instead contribute to its harmony. I look forward to a time when China is able to

embrace and accommodate inspiring and well-motivated people like Chen Guangcheng and Liu Xiaobo; people like them have a positive role to play.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Henry Jones".

October 18, 2014



Escape

We watched them as they watched us. We studied their every move and every habit. We had been planning my escape for over a year, going over the details again and again in muted whispers. We assumed that the house was bugged, that our captors could hear every word we spoke.

If I could just get beyond the village—beyond what had once been a home and was now a private hell, beyond the seventy or more guards laying siege and blocking every possible exit. “Home will be no better than prison,” a warden had told me shortly before I was released from jail after being confined for over four years. And he was right: once back in Dongshigu, I had been kept under brutal house arrest, an epicenter within the vast prison that all of China had become.

By now I had already attempted to escape my home numerous times. My wife, Weijing, and I debated and discussed the hazards and benefits of each plan endlessly, and I went through each possible route in my mind, over and over. I was desperate to escape: my life, not just my spirit, depended on it. Gravely ill since prison, I was not allowed to see or even speak to a doctor. My isolation in my own house was almost total: no going out, no visitors, no news, no contact with the outside world. I had severe diarrhea, often with bleeding, and I constantly felt exhausted. Recently I’d been spending about two weeks out of every

month in bed, too sick to move. If I finally lost my battle to live, the authorities would say that I had died of such and such illness, at home in my own bed, and who would know the difference? Resolve was all I had.

On April 20, 2012, Weijing and I spent the morning resting in the main room of our house, which was one of four small buildings around a dirt courtyard that made up our family compound. A few days earlier we'd realized that the neighbor's dog was gone. I'd often said that one dog was more dangerous than a hundred guards, and now, with this one away, we focused our attention on the escape route that would take me past that neighbor's house, to the east.

That morning, as usual, I went through the route in my mind, dwelling on every detail—exactly where to turn, the distances between things, the walls, all the minutiae that Weijing had gathered during her daily routines over a period of months. Only she and I knew of our plan, though we agreed that when attempting to get past the guards, I should try to find help in the village, from either a close childhood friend or another good friend who was a carpenter. Both lived along my path of escape, but we had no way of communicating with anyone outside our house. It was too dangerous to tell even my mother about the plan; she strongly objected to the notion that I should try to escape.

Weijing and I had often talked about how I would get word to her once I was safe. We couldn't use written or spoken communication, so the only possibility was to send a sign, a signal. Eventually we decided that if I got out alive, I would have someone deliver six apples to Weijing; in Chinese, "six" can signify success, and the word for "apple" is the same sound as that for "safe." I imagined having someone bring her six big red apples once I got away from our village, and if there were none to be had, I figured I would find a way to get her six of something else so she would know that I was free.

All that morning, Weijing observed the guards from inside the house, watching for an opportunity. Earlier, up on the roof of our flat kitchen building, where we dried corn and aired out our clothes, she'd noticed that the car belonging to the head of the group of guards on duty was gone. There were usually six guards stationed in our yard, perched on tiny stools just outside the door to our house. The crew on duty today sat

near our main gate, and only two of them had a direct line of sight to our door. A little before eleven a.m., the moment suddenly came: the guard closest to us slowly stood up, a tea mug in his hand. He was off to fill it with boiled water from one of the thermoses the guards kept outside our yard, and he didn't seem to be in a hurry. On his way, for just a few seconds, he would block his partner's view of me. I would have to hurry out the door and dart across the courtyard to the eastern wall, a distance of about fifteen feet. After a moment, the guard would have his sight line back.

"Let's go!" Weijing whispered, squeezing my arm. I followed her out the door, walking quickly, carefully, across the yard, skipping ahead of her and passing the old millstones where we used to grind grain and other staple foods. I scurried to a stone staircase I knew was hidden from view, then stood at the bottom of those six rough-hewn steps, breathing hard and listening with all my might, straining for any sign of disturbance or recognition from the guards.

My heart raced. The snap of a twig could betray me, resulting in a fresh round of beatings, or worse. For some time, Weijing had been picking up any potential obstacles from the path of my escape, though she was careful not to clear away too much at once and risk arousing suspicion. Every rock, branch, leaf, water bucket, or pan in my way could make a sudden noise that would attract the attention of the guards.

As I stood by the stairs, I heard Weijing gathering dried leaves and grass from our woodpile, only a few steps away; a moment later, she headed back into the kitchen building to light a fire. By then the guard was already back at his post, putting his tea mug on the ground and chatting with his fellow guards as he settled onto his stool again. Then Weijing came back out of the kitchen building to fill our kettle from the outdoor faucet—all pretext, of course—and soon enough I heard the kettle clanking on the stove. Again she came out, this time walking back to the woodpile for larger sticks and branches. Each time she passed me, she whispered a few words, telling me what she was seeing, saying that so far I was safe.

I didn't move. Weijing was extremely anxious, but now that I had made it past the innermost ring of guards, how could I give up? "We have to go forward," I whispered. "We can't fail."

The next time Weijing came out of the main house, she carried an armload of clothes. “I’m going up to take a look,” she whispered as she passed. I knew that meant she would climb up to the roof of the kitchen building, where she would have a panoramic view of all the activity around our yard. Over the past few months, she had spent countless hours up there on various pretexts, scouting my initial escape route. A few years back, these “square buildings” had become popular in our village. Now the flat roof gave Weijing an invaluable way to observe my escape route.

A few moments later, she came down and said it was safe for me to go up. By now my breathing had slowed and my nerves were calmer. I walked quietly up the steps, which I knew by heart, and soon I was crouching atop the east wall of our yard, just below the roof of the kitchen building. East was the direction of my freedom, beyond the adjoining courtyard compounds of my neighbors. Fortunately, I knew every inch of the neighbor’s yard below, each detail clear in my mind from experience and memory. Aware that the guards patrolling the perimeter just twenty feet away might spot me if I stood up on the wall, I kept low. Moving slowly, I found the bottle Weijing had mentioned, an obstacle placed on top of the wall by the guards. I picked it up, scuttled forward, and put the bottle to one side before straddling the wall. Careful to avoid the least suspicion, I then placed the bottle back in its original spot. Bracing myself between the wall and the side of my neighbor’s house, I slowly climbed down into a corner of her yard.

Moving as fast as I could, I scrambled past my neighbor’s main house, toward the concrete steps that led to the roof of her kitchen building, whose position in the yard was much like ours. I was conscious now of another set of guards—the ones just outside my neighbor’s yard, who might catch a glimpse of me through a crack in my neighbor’s main gate. After climbing up the steps to the roof of my neighbor’s kitchen and onto the eastern wall, I planned to descend into the next neighbor’s yard. Up and down the walls, one yard after another: this was the only way to make it beyond the cordon of guards to open space. I carried nothing, but every detail of the route was clear in my head.

I took my chances and started up my neighbor’s steps, feeling for

the objects Weijing had warned me about. Here, on the second step, were the two metal buckets, which I passed without a sound. A little farther up, I found the snarl of electrical cables, attached to the equipment that the guards had been using to jam our cell phone signal. Then, a couple steps beyond the cables, I came upon the pan full of bricks Weijing had described. Feeling my way with both hands, I discovered an unstable section of the wall; it was immediately obvious to me that if I tried to climb down the other side of it, the wall would not be able to support my weight and would crumble.

Just then, I heard my neighbor's main gate squeak open. I slipped up onto the roof of the kitchen building and lay flat on my back. If she saw me, she would almost certainly report me. I knew that the guards had been bribing her to keep an eye on me, sharing their extra food with her and maybe giving her money.

For a few minutes I lay there silently, forcing calm on my pounding heart. So far, so good: my deep familiarity with my home's immediate surroundings had served me well. Although blind since infancy, I knew every bit of the terrain around my village in a million ways besides sight: the patterns of sounds, the mix of smells, the organization of space. Memory would play an essential role in my attempt to escape—when you're blind, there's no taking things in at a glance—and I knew that this dependence on memory would only increase as I made my way toward Xishigu, the next village over, where I hoped to get help. The distance was short, but the obstacles were many. In the years before my arrest and imprisonment, I had come to know the walls, roads, and fields of my village in all their elaborate detail and almost infinite complexity. But that was long ago, and now, after seven years in bondage, memory would be my guide.

We had been talking about the escape from the very day Guangcheng came home from prison, and for over a year we had been working on a plan. I often consulted the lunar calendar, scouring its pages for an auspicious day, if only to ease my fears and make the endless days pass just a bit faster. The guards had previously seized almost everything we owned, fearing that we would turn even the smallest scrap of paper to our benefit; we now had only this small calendar for 2012, which Guangcheng's

mother had been allowed to purchase while under the watchful gaze of our captors.

I knew the guards might grow suspicious if I spent too much time looking at the calendar, so I would write the number of eggs we gathered from our chickens on the page for each day. Having planned for a protracted period in captivity, we encouraged our hens to sit on some of their eggs. Once the brood finally hatched, we had more than forty chickens to supplement our meager diet. If all else failed, we could kill and eat the chickens; we had to be completely self-reliant. When the guards finally asked me why I consulted the calendar so often, I described my habit of recording the day's harvest of eggs. They accepted the explanation and said nothing more.

Over time, I realized that spring would be the ideal season to attempt an escape. The new leaves on the trees would cover Guangcheng's movements; light winds moving through the trees would muffle the noises he would inevitably make. As I flipped through the calendar, I saw that April 20 would be a chengri, a day of success. The God of Wealth, who brings luck and opportunity, would be facing east, one of the possible directions of Guangcheng's escape. On that day, the pig would overcome the snake. This detail had a special significance: Guangcheng was born in the Year of the Pig, and the head of the crew on guard that day was born in the Year of the Snake. On a more mundane level, we had analyzed the different shifts of the guards, and we knew in advance that this group usually sat a little farther off than the others, giving Guangcheng a better angle for escape.

The calendar broke the day into two-hour blocks, auspicious or inauspicious. The block between eleven a.m. and one p.m. would be ideal, but I had no way of knowing exactly when an opportunity would present itself, if at all. Guangcheng himself did not know that I was consulting the calendar; nor was he aware that this day was of particular significance. But as it happened, the guard stood up and went for tea just before eleven o'clock.

I was lying flat on my neighbor's roof, wondering what to do and listening to the guards just outside her yard. I could hear their conversation, as well as the noises from the games they were playing on their phones. I considered the wall in front of me: the drop into the next yard

was a sheer twelve feet, and I would have to find a way to climb down. This would have been easy enough when I was younger, but years of captivity had weakened my body—it would be too dangerous and noisy to jump from the top of the wall to the ground. I knew that a tree grew close to the eastern side of the wall; it was only about six or seven inches in diameter, Weijing had told me, but if I could somehow determine its exact location, I could climb down its trunk instead of jumping.

As I lay there, trying to remember precisely where the tree was, I heard a hissing noise from the direction of our house. It was Weijing, up on our kitchen roof with a scoop, under the pretext of gathering some dried corn, which we stored in a sack there.

“Hurry,” she whispered frantically. “Get going before they spot you!”

I held my arm out straight, waving my fingers toward the next yard, mimicking an effort to locate the tree. She immediately knew what I was asking.

“It’s right near your feet,” she said, speaking as softly as she could. Though guards surrounded us on all sides and were never more than a few yards away, they didn’t hear her.

After crawling to the edge of the roof, I turned around and started easing my legs over the far side of the wall, feeling for the tree with my toes. Clutching the spaces between the stones in the wall, I had descended just a short way before my arms began to shake with fatigue. I reached back with my foot in hopes of finding the tree. For an instant I felt my toes graze the trunk, but I was too feeble to hold on. I lost my grip, missed the tree, and hit the ground hard. Fortunately, I wasn’t seriously hurt, though my dark glasses were broken.

I sat up, bruised but all right. But now I confronted a new problem: the moment I’d fallen, my second neighbor’s dog, which was chained in the yard, had started barking. I needed to find a place to hide before the guards came to see what the noise was about. I kept low, crawling across the neighbor’s yard, trying to stay out of sight of Chen Guang-feng, my neighbor’s mentally ill son. This man, no longer young, lived in a prisonlike room in the yard with bars on an open window. He had been locked up that way for as long as I could remember, and he bayed from morning until night for his mother, who had no choice but to go about her daily routine, as though deaf to his cries. Sympathetic to his

plight, I had tried to help him in the past, but now I feared that if he saw me, he might shout my name and give me away.

Moving on all fours, I did my best to stay below the man's window. Just beyond his room, Weijing had told me, stood three animal pens in a row, each one six or seven feet wide. She had mentioned that a gate to the closest pen was on one side of the low wall surrounding the pens, only when I ran my hand along the wall I found nothing. But with the dog barking wildly, I needed to get out of view immediately. By now, I was shaking uncontrollably with fear. I quickly scaled the four-foot concrete wall and fell flat on my back in the pen, exhausted—my frail body was no longer accustomed to such exertion. The front of the pen was closed, as Weijing had described to me, so at least the guards wouldn't see me if they happened to glance into the yard.

Inside the pen were several goats, and I heard them retreat in unison, bleating and shoving one another at the far end of the stall, alarmed at my sudden appearance in their midst. As I lay in the pen trying to make no noise whatsoever, the goats slowly mustered their courage and moved toward me, and after a time two or three of them were chewing on my clothes. Since I'd grown up around goats, this didn't bother me at all. One of them put its front two feet on my chest and bent down to smell my face. When I shifted a little, the startled goats once again retreated to the rear of the pen.

For the moment, I was too anxious and tired to do anything but lie there trembling. I decided to rest for a while—once my nerves had calmed and my shaking subsided, I would look for the chance to make a move.

After trying to help Guangcheng locate the tree, I didn't dare stay up on our roof, and I couldn't risk going up to look for him anymore. A little later, when I heard the barking of the second neighbor's dog, my heart skipped a beat; I was terrified that the animal would give Guangcheng away. With a morsel of food I teased our own dog, chained in the yard, hoping to make it bark to cover the noise and draw attention to us instead. Then, trying to be as casual as possible, I went to have a chat with the guards. Like us, they were farmers and the sons of farmers, and we'd come to know them a little. We exchanged a few words, and I went back inside, my heart

racing. Luckily, our chickens chose just this moment to steal the dog's food, which caused such a commotion that the guards paid no attention to the racket two houses away.

For the rest of the day, I listened for the slightest sounds, hoping to hear something, anything that might tell me where Guangcheng was. I was crazed with fear, but I tried to behave as if it were just another day. Each time a guard entered our yard, I would anxiously study his face, looking for some sign that Guangcheng had been captured.

Early that afternoon, my mother-in-law returned from working in the fields. It was her habit to come in for a rest, have something to drink, and check in on Guangcheng. At first she didn't notice that he was gone. She drank some water and then walked to the bedroom and looked in, expecting to see Guangcheng.

"Is Guangcheng sleeping?" she asked me.

I couldn't lie to her. "Ma, Guangcheng has gone," I whispered.

She looked at me in surprise and anger. "How did he leave?"

I didn't answer.

"Isn't this just asking for the worst?" she said. "There's layer upon layer of guards out there. Do you really think he can get away?"

"What could I do, Ma? He's so sick—how long do you think he could go on like this?"

"They'll beat him to death for sure," she said, her voice full of reproach.

"He'll die if he stays here," I replied.

"Once he leaves this house," she said, "we have no way of knowing what will happen to him. They could beat him to death and dump him somewhere and we wouldn't even know it. If we're going to die, we should at least die together."

I covered her mouth and asked her not to speak of such unlucky things. "He'll be fine," I said, trying to reassure her. "There won't be a problem. But we should say some auspicious words and ask the gods to protect him."

My mother-in-law would not be appeased. She felt certain that the escape was doomed, and she held me responsible. "I go out for just a little while and you allow him to leave," she said bitterly. Then she picked up her stool and sat out in the courtyard, watching the chickens and refusing to eat or drink.

I usually don't believe in luck or God or any higher power, but on that day I believed in anything that might help us. As the afternoon went on, I returned to the kitchen several times to pray to the image of the Kitchen God on the wall, beseeching him to protect Guangcheng. I would glance through the door to see if any of the guards were watching, then quickly prostrate myself in front of the image. "Kitchen God, I beg you," I said. "Please ask all the other gods to watch over Guangcheng."

Leaning back against the wall of the goat pen, I listened hard for any indication that the guards had noticed my absence and were pursuing me. The dog was still barking; now, suddenly, Chen Guangfeng began to yell for his mother. The rhythm of his periodic cries had long since become a natural part of the village landscape, like the calls of birds and insects. I relaxed a little, hoping that his yelling might mix with the dog's bark and return a sense of normalcy to the late morning sounds.

After a while it went quiet again. As my nerves eased I began to collect my wits; wondering about the time, I realized that my talking watch, made especially for the blind, had broken in my fall. I sat up straighter and allowed my head to rise just to the top edge of the wall, but the dog began barking frantically again. Guangfeng immediately noticed me as well, and his cry changed from "*Niang! Niang!*" ("Mother! Mother!") to "*Li Hong! Li Hong!*" (he seemed to think I was his little brother). I quickly ducked back down.

An hour or so later, I heard the guards taking lunch. They shifted in their chairs, chopsticks clinked on metal bowls, and then came sounds of them getting up—they were going to wash their dishes. A post-meal quiet settled over them, and I could tell that the guards' attention was now elsewhere. More than a dozen of them were stationed on the other side of my neighbor's wall, in an unused space between this home and another.

Sensing an opportunity, I scrambled as quickly and quietly as possible over the wall between the first and second animal pens; except for a little stove, the second pen was empty. I explored the space, found a door on one side, and then listened for a while, trying to determine when to move and also what was in the third stall. I threw a handful of sand over the wall, and the sound the sand made revealed to me the

basic contents of the pen: scattered corn stalks and a collection of farm tools. I took my chances and scurried into the third pen.

Once there, I came up against another wall, this one much more challenging. On the eastern side of this wall was a whole other family compound, one I happened to know very well. For a couple of hours I bided my time, calculating, listening. I heard the guards going about their business only a few feet away, chatting aimlessly, flicking open lighters, smoking cigarettes. As far as I could tell, they'd seen nothing amiss.

My watch was broken, but I had grown up using nature to tell time and I could still guess it accurately down to the hour, sometimes the half hour, by being alive to temperature, sounds of the natural world, and, above all, the human routines around me. About three p.m., four hours after I'd left my house, I heard Guangfeng's mother come home and begin to work in the yard. He continued crying, "*Niang! Niang!*" and eventually she brought him food, which I knew she would pass to him through a space in the bars. Soon after he finished eating, he began to shout for water and cigarettes.

I crouched in the pen and felt up and down the contours of the old and crumbling wall with my hands, trying to determine the best place to cross over. There was a shed along the northern side of the pen; just beyond it sat a guard, and I knew he would see me if I climbed to the top of the wall. The stones on the eastern side of the pen were very loose; I was sure they would not support my weight, so I decided to move close to the southeast corner, where I would have better handholds. Testing the wall, I put my palms flat on the rough surface and slowly pulled myself up, using my toes to find the best crevices. I explored every inch of that part of the wall, memorizing the exact location of each hold—where the first step would be, then the second, then the third. Once I reached the top, I would be completely exposed, so I could make no mistakes while climbing. Any noise at all and the guards would spot me. It would be over.

As the afternoon wore on, I heard a neighbor who lived across the road from Chen Guangfeng and his family open the door to her yard and roll her motorcycle into the road; a moment later she drove off. I knew she was going to pick her daughter up at school, which meant

that it was now about four-thirty. Twenty minutes later, the motorbike came back down the road.

Soon the guards would be eating dinner, and my original plan had been to try climbing over the wall while they ate. Then I remembered that earlier in the morning I had heard a tractor coming from the north, the noise of its engine getting louder as it rumbled along the narrow road. The tractor had turned east, and the guards posted just outside the wall of the shed had scooped up their stools and made way as it passed. The tractor would almost certainly come back the same way, probably this very evening.

No distraction could be better for my attempt to climb this dangerous wall; the guards would inevitably turn their attention to the tractor. My chance would come, I reckoned, just as darkness was falling.

Our daughter Kesi, almost seven years old at the time, came home from school that afternoon a little before five. (At the time, our nine-year-old son, Kerui, was living with my mother in another village and going to a different school.) I worried that Kesi would be shocked and upset by her father's sudden disappearance—every day after returning home, her habit was to call out, "Baba! I'm back!" and go looking for him.

As she entered the house and dropped her school bag, I pulled her close to me and whispered in her ear: "Kesi, don't call for Baba or ask why he's not here. Your baba has left."

"Where did he go?" she asked, her voice loud with alarm.

"Quiet," I whispered urgently. "Your father has escaped."

I asked her to behave as if nothing had happened. Understanding, she nodded her head. Kesi knew about our previous attempts to escape, and sometimes she would even give us ideas. She talked to us about the tunnel we had dug the previous year, imagining which route it should follow and how we should run quickly once we all emerged from the other end. And she had watched the guards beat both of us, so she knew how serious the situation was.

Around five-thirty, I made noodles for dinner. Kesi nibbled at the food in her bowl, but neither Ma nor I could eat a thing. I continued to go through all the usual motions, at times talking out loud as if Guangcheng were there. "Let's wash your feet," I said, having filled a basin with water

from outside. I took out the chamber pots and emptied them in the out-house. Later, we turned in for the night, but none of us could fall asleep. By now Kesi was terrified of what might happen to her father; she sobbed in her grandma's bed and covered her head with a quilt to muffle the sound. "I miss Baba," she whimpered quietly. I tried to comfort her, saying, "We'll see Baba very soon." Eventually she cried herself to sleep.

The hours seemed endless, but finally, just before dark, I discerned the sound of the tractor off in the distance. As it approached the intersection, the guards began to move their stools, just as I'd hoped. This was my chance. I had only a few seconds to climb the wall while the tractor, my unknowing accomplice, distracted the guards and masked any noises I might make.

As quickly and quietly as possible, I climbed the wall's cobbled surface, picking my way up the rough footholds. At the top, I turned my body and hung my feet over the other side. I knew that the drop to the ground was around six feet, a manageable distance. And once I got beyond this wall—as soon as I landed—I would find myself in a familiar courtyard.

Long ago, my own family's home had stood in this spot. I had been born here, and for years I had lived in this compound with my parents and four older brothers. The house and courtyard now lay in ruins, but every detail, every memory I had of the spaces around me would be vital once I landed on the other side of the wall.

I let go and dropped. Instantly a stabbing pain exploded in my right foot. The tractor's noise had drowned out the sound of my fall, and somehow I managed to stifle the wail that rose up inside me. Sprawled out on the ground, I discovered that a pile of large rocks lay at the base of the wall, precisely where I had just landed. The pain was overwhelming, but I knew I had to move beyond the opening between the walls, so I rolled along the ground until I came to yet another wall, this one on the north side of the courtyard. Again I tried to rise to test my foot, but the pain was too intense. In agony, I fell back to the ground.

If my escape had seemed risky before, now it could only be utter madness. Lying there, I sized up my situation: I was blind, alone, and beyond the help of my family or friends. In the hours since I had left

home, I had traveled only a hundred feet or so, and my foot was almost certainly broken. Though it was nearly dark, there were still more guards at the edge of the village, and they would be patrolling all night.

The world was too rough, too full of hazards. How could I make my way to the next village, still almost a mile away? And why had fate made my escape yet more difficult? But I was determined not to yield to the pain or my fears; no matter what, I would not give up. Instead, I concentrated on the way forward, thinking only of how to overcome the obstacles that lay ahead. Somehow, I would find a way to send those six luscious apples to Weijing.