

The Good Earth

Wang Lung, the main character in the book *The Good Earth*, had a very successful life. As exclaimed by him near the end, the land was the rise of the family of Wang, and without the land, the family would fall. He led an excellent life, however, there were a few things that undermined the whole experience, and these are the things that went wrong.

The first major thing to go wrong was not long after the birth of his third child. This event was the lack of rain and the famine that ensued from that. He was forced to move to the north until the drought was over and he could accumulate enough wealth to return back to his house in the south. This however, could also be looked at in a good way. It gave him a bond with his land that could perhaps not have been accomplished in any other way. Also, when he was in the north, Olan, his wife, got enough jewels to buy more land, which caused the rise of the Wang family.

Another major thing to go wrong occurred after he had gotten rich. This was the return of his uncle. Wang Lung's uncle and his uncle's son caused him much grief by constantly pestering him for money, yet there was nothing that he could do because it would be considered disrespectful for one to be anything but considerate to an older generation. This was an unfortunate occurrence, but Wang Lung was able to hook his uncle on opium, thus making him a passive nuisance which could then be relatively easily ignored.

A third thing to go wrong was when he had moved into the house of Hwang. This was when his uncle's son returned to the city with his fellow troops who were fighting in the war. This caused a major disruption in Wang Lung's courts and many things got destroyed. This also caused a second very bad thing to happen. This was that his youngest son, after hearing the stories from all of the soldiers, then had an argument with Wang Lung, and ended up running away to join the war.

Probably, the worst thing to happen to Wang Lung was the purchase of Lotus. He thought at first that he would be able to satisfy his thirst for her after buying her, but this was not the case. Lotus also ruined Wang Lung's relationship with Olan, even though she had been the perfect wife and better in every aspect except her appearance. He practically ignored Olan until she was about to die, and then after that he nearly forgot her. Then, when he did think about her, his thoughts were accompanied by ones of great guilt. This, perhaps, undermined the whole experience of becoming rich.

Although his life was mostly a success, it still had a few problems. A few things went wrong that were completely out of his control, but a few of the problems could have been avoided by a little thinking before acting. The problems involving his son and Lotus could have been avoided, but the ones involving his uncle's son, his uncle, and the drought could not have been avoided because they were simply things that went wrong that could have occurred to anyone. Fortunately, Wang Lung's life was mostly good with just a few mostly minor things going wrong.

