

# The Tengu's Game of Go: The Tale of Shikanoko, Book 4

by Lian Hearn



## About the Book

In *THE TENGU'S GAME OF GO*, the final book of Lian Hearn's epic *Tale of Shikanoko* --- all of which will be published in 2016 --- the rightful emperor is lost; illness and murder give rise to suspicions and make enemies of allies. Unrest rules the country. Only Shika can end the madness by returning the Lotus Throne to its rightful ruler.

As destiny weaves its rich tapestry, a compelling drama plays out against a background of wild forests, elegant castles, hidden temples and savage battlefields. This is the medieval Japan of Lian Hearn's imagination, where animal spirits clash with warriors and children navigate a landscape as serene as it is deadly.

## Discussion Guide

1. What does Tadashii teach Take about becoming a man and becoming a warrior? What is the role of teachers (tengus or not) throughout the series? How does Tadashii's slow-paced game of Go (in which Take recognizes himself as one of the pieces) reflect the power struggle between the clans?
2. How does the magical Kudzu Vine Treasure Store reflect your own experience of a particularly powerful book that unlocked special wisdom for you?
3. In chapter 14, Yoshi observes that "all living beings fear death. That's why we should not inflict it on any of them." What do the experiences of Masachika and Chika say about destiny and "inflicted" deaths?

4. Ascending to the Lotus Throne, the Emperor decrees that the domain of Maruyama will always be inherited through the female line, unraveling his predecessor's increasingly harsh oppression of women. How did the suppression of women contribute to the suffering of men and women alike?

5. What does the closing chapter demonstrate about authentic power versus the love of power, and the power of love itself? What does Shika teach his son about the traits of a successful warrior?

6. From the origin stories of the tribe to the formative years of Takeyoshi (who is briefly mentioned in *Heaven's Net Is Wide*), how does *The Tale of Shikanoko* enrich your enjoyment of other books by Lian Hearn?

## Author Bio

Lian Hearn is the pseudonym of a writer --- born in England, educated at Oxford, currently living in Australia --- who has had a lifelong interest in Japan, has lived there, and studies Japanese. She is the author of the bestselling series *Tales of the Otori*.

For an interview with the author, suggestions for further reading, and more, visit [www.lianhearn.com](http://www.lianhearn.com).

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