

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2011
THE YEAR OF THE IRON RABBIT
“THE RABBIT IN THE BURROW”

3 Feb 2011
© Malvin Artley

Kung Hei Fat Choy, Everyone!

Time once again for the Chinese New Year. Of course, it hardly seems appropriate to send salutations given what is about to befall Queensland, but I can tell you there are better times ahead. What a year the Iron Tiger brought us! It has been a year of extremes in many ways and of many things done on a big scale, both human and natural, beneficent and disastrous. One would expect no less from the Iron Tiger - or any Tiger for that matter. We might be wooed into thinking, then, that the year to come would just have to be better, right? Rabbits are so cute and gentle, soft and unassuming, are they not? Doesn't that mean that this will be a gentler year? Alas, 'tis not to be! Rabbits on the whole are a gentler expression than Tigers to be sure, but Iron Rabbits? - well, just don't back one into a corner. You might just get the shock of your life, much like the knights in Monty Python and the Holy Grail did at the Cave of Caerbannog. That was a white (Iron) rabbit – and we all know what happened there!



Rabbits are so cute and gentle, soft and unassuming, are they not? Doesn't that mean that this will be a gentler year? Alas, 'tis not to be! Rabbits on the whole are a gentler expression than Tigers to be sure, but Iron Rabbits? - well, just don't back one into a corner. You might just get the shock of your life, much like the knights in Monty Python and the Holy Grail did at the Cave of Caerbannog. That was a white (Iron) rabbit – and we all know what happened there!

In all seriousness, though, as for the year ahead, lest one really believes the Rabbit to be meek and retiring, a look at past Iron Rabbit years reveals a different story. Rabbits are fighters for the underdog and are very brave in the face of danger. Typically, one sees uprisings against social injustice in such years (1951, 1891, 1831, 1771) and with the state of the world at the moment we can see that may well be the case this time around, too. Just look at what is taking place in Egypt at the moment, as a point of reference. We will look more fully at the characteristics of Rabbits and at the year ahead a bit later. Without further ado, however, what follows is the tale of the Iron Rabbit (I wrote this story a while back, before I knew about Yasi):

THE RABBIT IN THE BURROW

There are times when one just simply has to sit and rethink one's life. Life on the plain had been a mixed blessing in the past year, with times of plenty and periods of great difficulty. There was more grass and food there than had been the case in years due to good falls of rain, yet at times there had been too much rain and the animals who lived below ground had really suffered as a result of the wild swings in weather and resultant floods. A storm was approaching from the west on this particular day and the slate-colored clouds and the winds that bore them made the air heavy with moisture. As the pressure dropped at the face of the approaching storm front the animals of the plain began to seek shelter from the weather to come. In the distance the sky lit up with dazzling displays of lightning and the low rumble of thunder in the distance bade an ominous welcome to all who ventured out in the darkening afternoon. The White Rabbit sat at the entrance to her burrow, her body composed like a statue as she concentrated on the events unfolding around her, her nostrils flaring as she sniffed the air, shivers of anxious excitement occasionally undermining her otherwise focused mien.

The White Rabbit was especially vigilant as she watched the storm approach, as some members of her litter were still out foraging and she grew increasingly worried. Fortunately they did not have to venture far from the burrow, as there was plenty of good growth to go around. Still, a mother worries about her charges, and she had a larger than usual litter this year due to good food supplies. As a result, though, the predators of the region had been more active as well because there was

more for them to choose from, too. Fortunately, today the White Rabbit did not have to worry about dangers from overhead. The winds had become too strong and the birds had sought the safety of their roosts an hour before. There were still weasels and foxes to deal with, however, and the storm was getting too close. Weasels had been a particular problem that year, as they liked to invade the warrens in search of their prey, and the White Rabbit had seen a couple of them in the area earlier in the day. She wanted her kits at home. Enough was enough – the White Rabbit began to thump out her alarm, and one by one her one young ones raced into the burrow.

She and her mate had made their present burrow and connecting warrens on higher ground to avoid the floods that had occasioned the plain that year, but that made them more vulnerable to detection from predators. The other Rabbits in her area had done the same, except for a few that were too afraid of detection. Some families that year had been completely wiped out by either weasels or floods, sometimes both, and there was a sense of something always about to befall the ground-dwelling inhabitants of the area, even though there was a great plenty there for all. “It is strange,” the White Rabbit thought to herself. “The more one has, the greater the stress.” Life seemed to her to be a lot easier when there was not so much to go around. There were fewer mouths to feed, fewer predators, fewer worries about what to do with what they had. In times of plenty there was always something to do and less time just to sit and think about things or to enjoy family life or the beauty of the plain when there was plenty for all, and the Rabbits seemed to be much more competitive with each other, probably because there was less space for everyone and competition among the young bucks for their own mates seemed particularly fierce in times like these.

The White Rabbit remembered the earlier part of her life when she started coming into the family way. She was different from the other rabbits. Being white, she stood out from the others and she had trials aplenty as she grew up as a result. The other youngsters in the area had constantly taunted her about her appearance, calling her strange and that her mother had obviously had relations with someone other than her ‘supposed’ father. What did the others know of genes, anyway? Apparently, there had been other White Rabbits in the family line, as her mother had related to her time and again, and they had a proud history, being known as some of the smartest and bravest in the area. That made no difference to the other rabbits and they were merciless in their taunting, probably because they had heard the truth and wanted keep the White Rabbit in her place, secretly hoping she would not outdo them later in life. Their taunts had toughened her and made her smart, though, making her think of ways to outdo her rivals and prove her mettle and heritage. Alas, their fears finally came to pass, as the White Rabbit’s main suitor in her early years was an alpha buck who had also heard the stories about her lineage and was intrigued by her, not wanting to settle for some run-of-the-mill doe from the crowd of young hopefuls. That alpha buck was her mate to that day, as they had bonded for life and had raised many litters together – some of them with White Rabbits, too.

Her mate was nowhere to be seen that afternoon. Where was he? Had he been taken by a hawk earlier in the day, or encountered a wild dog or fox? It wasn’t one of the weasels she had seen earlier, as weasels usually went after the young, and they would be no match for her big alpha buck in a one-on-one fight. She had once seen her mate go up against a weasel who was foolish enough to enter one of their burrows when he was close by. It was a sight to behold and her mate was a ferocious opponent, sending the seriously wounded weasel packing in no time. When he was courting her she had also seen him go up against other rabbits who were trying to woo her and he had trounced them all, inflicting serious injuries on a few. She had never worried about him being out on his own. He had always been close by, had been good with the kits and had consistently shown he could take care of himself. Perhaps it was the approaching storm that was affecting her and making her uneasy, but today she was worried about him. It was not like him not to answer an alarm.

The White Rabbit's fears were soon to be allayed, as before too long the remainder of her litter finally straggled in, followed immediately by her mate, who had been bringing up the rear and corralling all the strays. He had run off one of the weasels in the process, too, as it had been stalking one of the kits, hoping for a last-second meal before the storm hit and hoping as a bonus to have his repast in one of the burrows in the area. Her family all finally together, she could breathe a sigh of relief and make final preparations for the storm bearing down on the plain. There was much to be done. Entrances had to be sealed, the younger kits had to be put in the main chamber, the older kits had to organize food and calm the younger ones who did not really understand what was about to happen. They had prepared well, for they had seen the havoc wrought by previous floods and had stored food away for such times. Having a larger clan now it was easier to prepare for the hard times.

"Much can be accomplished at home with the aid of family," the White Rabbit thought to herself. "Success is not gauged by the number of possessions, but by cooperation." When they all pitched in the results were just amazing to all of them. They knew the number of possessions was not the measure of their success, as they had seen all that they had worked for washed away in previous floods. Possessions meant little when they could be taken away in an instant. What mattered most was that they were together and had made a success of things together. This time, though, they had learned the secret of surviving the flood and they had stored away not just food, but stones and straw to plug the entrances of the burrows and keep the water out. Valuable resources are put to good use, and they had learned valuable lessons from past hardship. Some of the other rabbits of the plain were not so diligent or smart, however, and the White Rabbit worried for their safety. They had been warned, though. Perhaps they would follow her and her family's example after this.

Finally, the rain started to fall. It was to be a heavy downpour and the flood waters would lap at the entrances of the burrows, but they were safely plugged with the stones, straw and earth that had been stored just inside the burrow, just for such an emergency. The White Rabbit and her clan were safe and sound, now. Her cousins and friends in the connecting warrens were the same, as they had followed the White Rabbit's advice and example. Hopefully the weasel had been washed into the gullies below the plain, never to be seen again. Hopefully those less fortunate on the plain had made it through the flood without incident, but she feared the worst. In the end, though, her family was safe and prospering, as well as her friends and cousins. They had all learned valuable lessons in cooperation through their hardship on the plains and life was much better for them as a result. . Everyone on the plain had learned that a White Rabbit is nobody's fool, certainly no pushover, but always the best sort of friend to have around.

End



“ ‘The time has come,' the walrus said, 'to talk of many things: of shoes and ships - and sealing wax - of cabbages and kings.' ” Lewis Carroll, author, photographer, mathematician, Rabbit

There is something quite magical about our friend the Rabbit. They are social and great conversationalists. They are the alchemists and healers of the Chinese zodiac. The most unassuming of types, they are always very much aware of what goes on around them, especially when it comes to people's motives. The Rabbit's great sensitivity and easy-going nature often conceals a very clever and deft mind. You never really know what they are thinking. The Rabbit in the Four Pillars grants one the ability to divine the social scene and the prevailing consciousness of

the public. As such, Rabbits make brilliant actors and politicians, for the Rabbit can take on a role very well. Thus, they can appear as a sort of everyman, with whom the public easily identifies and empathizes. Examples of such, especially among Iron Rabbits, are St. Jeanne d'Arc, Lewis Carroll, Albrecht Durer (painter, printmaker and theorist), Richard Burton, L. Ron Hubbard, James Madison, Augustus Caesar, Marion Davies, Ulysses Grant, Grace Kelley and Lynn Redgrave, to name a few.

Dreams are especially important to them and their dreams can be quite prophetic, for the Rabbit is a prophet and a seer if their insights are given heed. Rabbits find the mysteries of love to be a great turn-on. Love can be a quest for them, the magical alchemical formula that will transform their life. The Rabbit is exemplary of yin Wood (their native Element). They like 'inner space' and can create huge mental vistas. They are very good at visualization and they are usually quite visionary. Perhaps one of the more notable Iron Rabbits, especially in terms of breadth of vision and the courage to put it across, can be found in the personage of Helena Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society – a true visionary, rebel, iconoclast, fighter against entrenched orthodoxy and just all-around great character. She was born and died in Iron Rabbit years, 60 years of age when she passed on to greater service.



Iron Rabbit years also produce great inventors and some very life-changing inventions – the first commercial computer, the first electric transformer, the microphone and the typewriter, the patenting of radio, the transistor, the kinoscope, the first thermonuclear (H-bomb) test, the first long-range AC power lines and the first LP record (remember those?). Some of the great inventors and scientists born in those years are the likes of E.I. Dupont (chemist), Alois Senefelder (lithography), Thomas Wedgwood (1st photographer), James Clerk Maxwell (physicist), David Edward Hughes (inventor), George Pullman (inventor and industrialist), John Northrup (biochemist), Walther Bothe (physicist) and James Chadwick (physicist).



Unfortunately, there tend to be great floods in such years, too, as well as rail (Metal) and sea disasters. We just saw a rail disaster in Germany, which is usually unheard of in a country renowned for its love of precision and scheduling. Metal feeds water in the Five Element system, so expect to see more extremes of weather, such as the Great US Blizzard of 1891, the Great Flood of '51 (US), the Po River floods in Italy and the Tyne Floods of 1771 (Britain). Thus, we see that we cannot think the worst is over in terms of weather. With weather patterns in mind, we need to have a look at what yin Metal actually rules and means in a Four Pillars chart.

Yin Metal rules the lungs in TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine). The Lung Official (the TCM name for Yin Metal) is called the 'Controller of Receiving Pure Chi from the Heavens'. Its associated Animal Sign is the Rooster, though in this case it is the 'master' of the Rabbit Year.

The lung as an organ is said to take in the quality of the heavens. Rooster types can produce the most sublime work – very polished and finished. Metal Rabbits do the same along their own line. The lungs bestow quality to the system – value, life, vitality, brilliance and self-esteem – inspiration. They revitalize the system by taking in pure chi from the surroundings. In refined Metal types there is always a quality of purity about to whatever they set their hand. Metal confers or is the seat of the animal soul, the anima mundi, which animates all material existence. The lungs also

confer the ability to receive and welcome, hence the association of Metal with 'front men'. Many great orators and those of 'vocal occupations' have Metal dominant in their makeup.

The skin and the body hair are the primary indicators of lung function. The lungs open into the nose and healthy Metal chi gives one the ability to 'take it on the nose' (chin) and keep on going in the face of any difficulty. Deficient lung chi weakens the entire system because the system is thus starved of air. So, in Yin Metal years people are after quality of life, and not quantity. The lungs govern the voice, and in Yin Metal years the populace can get very vocal. We are seeing that in Tunisia and Egypt at this moment in history. Therefore, with the fact that Metal governs the finer things in life and the ability of people to stand up and be heard, one would expect that a great many good things will come of this year, too, and one would expect that in the arena of social reforms and great inventions.

There have been many uprisings in Iron Rabbit years. In 1951 we saw the NZ waterfront strikes, the start of the Korean conflict, the dismissal of General McArthur, the ANZUS Treaty, to name a few; the Chilean Civil War, the Portuguese Revolution, the May Day Massacre in France, all of 1891; revolts in Italy, the Bosnian Uprising, Nat Turner's slave rebellion, the Merthyr Rising of coal miners, Polish revolutionaries and the Battle of Warsaw, and the banning of slave trading in Brazil, all in 1831, and last but not least nor inclusive, the War of the Regulation in my home state of North Carolina in 1771. This will be a year that ushers in a period of great change, and sets the scene for 2012. Metal years are times when the populace stands up, especially in yin years, as yin has a lot to do with inner strength and fortitude.

Who knows what this year will bring? If you want an idea of what, let your imagination roam free and remember the words of Lewis Carroll:

"Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast!"

So, to see what we might expect and what we have to deal with coming into this year, let us have a look at what last year brought us, and how that forecast panned out:

- economic unrest 100 Billion Euro bailout package for Greece, the French riots over the retirement age, British students rioting over university fees
- mid-year looks to be fairly unstable and volatile, especially politically and economically. Again, the Greek bailout, bloody military crackdown in Thailand, Israel and the Gaza blockade, ethnic riots in Kyrgyzstan, floods in Pakistan.
- elections, especially in the US and Australia, will be very hotly contested and the conservative elements in those countries will be out in force. The Tea Party in the US and the conservative backlash throughout the world, most notably in the US and Australia. Hung parliaments/congresses as a result.
- uprisings up against injustice, and this year will see that magnified. This is the last roar of the Iron Tiger, but built in strength all year, most notably in Tunisia and Egypt.
- strong alliances formed on both sides. We can expect the same sorts of things this year as well. The big difference between this year and past Iron Tiger years is the ubiquity of the internet, however. It is not so easy to keep things secret these days. We have seen this in the arena of politics especially.
- big challenges to privacy and legislation for privacy this year. Wikileaks
- expect new security measures to come out as well as increased attempts at hacking, inventions and new ways of doing things The shutdown of the Iranian nuclear sites' computers, we finally trapped antimatter at the CERN reactor, the Neanderthal genome findings (we interbred with them, most likely), the first functional synthetic genome

- There were also particularly deadly air crashes, natural and man-made disasters last year, most notably the Pakistan floods, Deepwater Horizon, mining disasters in Chile, New Zealand and China, the Iceland volcano, floods in Brazil and Queensland, and so forth.

With the preceding in mind, what does the Four Pillars chart for this year show us?

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 6 yin earth	Stem: 6 yin earth	Stem: 7 Yang Metal	Stem: 8 yin metal
Branch: VI Fire Snake <i>Snake of Happiness</i>	Branch: II Earth Ox <i>Ox in the Byre</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger Leaves the Mountain</i>	Branch: IV Wood Rabbit <i>Rabbit in the Burrow</i>
Combined Wood <i>Forest Wood</i>	Combined Fire <i>Lightning Fire</i>	Combined Wood <i>Hardwood</i>	Combined Wood <i>Hardwood</i>

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2011 Date/Time: 3 Feb 2011, 10:31 am (CCT -8:00)

Note: The above chart is based on the lunar calendar and is not a standard Four Pillars chart.

Solar Period (Fortnightly Festival Period): 24 Great Cold (N); Great Heat (S)

Lunar New Year: 3 Feb 2011 10:31 am (CCT -8:00) This is a Bright Year.

Li Ch'un (Start of the Chinese Solar Year): 4 Feb 2010 6:47 am (CCT -8:00)

Constellation of the Day: Unicorn. This is a good day for physical labor.

Day Indicator: A – Establish. This is a good day to start small and plan big.

9 STAR QI (CHINESE)

Year Number: 8 Yin Earth

Month Number: 9 Yang Fire

House Number: 4 Yang Wood

Trigram: Sun

Tetragram

10:

Distortion: Yang chi assists. All things cast off their obscuring wrappings.

To play with truth causes the course to alter. 3 Feb Nighttime (for the US, South America, Africa and Europe)

When the Heavens seem to alter their course, Great Ones are called to right it. 3Feb Daytime (For East Asia, Oceania and Australasia)

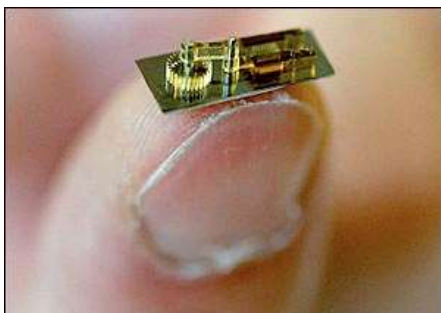
To start with, we see primarily that this will be a yin year. Three of the four Pillars are yin. One should never underestimate yin in terms of its power, especially in terms of sustained effort and inner strength. If one doubts the strength of all things yin, consider this: Without any one of the single or pairs of yin organs in the body (heart, spleen, lungs, kidneys or liver) death occurs fairly quickly. True, one can live without a spleen, but without any one the others, one would pass away within a matter of minutes or hours. On the other hand, one could live for days without intestines, a stomach, a bladder or gall bladder. Of course they are all essential for quality of life, but the yin organs are the ones that sustain us primarily. In the yin/yang system yin is the foundation from which all things arise. Yang gives structure and protects yin, whereas yin fills yang and gives it

sustenance. So, in yin years we are looking at what sustains us, whereas in yang years, such as last year, we are looking at the structure of things and our protective mechanisms. Our structures were shaken in a big way last year.

From some of my previous writings on the matter, Yang Metal concerns the following: It is said to carry away the impurities..., leaving us clean and brilliant. Brilliance is a term often associated with Metal. Yang Metal gives one the ability to let go and to move on. It is said to be the beginning of change and it allows energy to flow and move. ...is said to be like the officials who propagate the right way of living (the Tao), thus generating change and evolution. This quality of 'propagating the right way of living' is what makes Metal types such good technicians and technical people because they restore order to systems that are otherwise either not working or are totally broken down. A good technician can also take a system that is deficient or already good and completely transform it into something even better. Last year initiated sweeping changes and purged us of impurities in a way, clearing the way for bigger changes this year. This year we will finesse the changes started last year and find our strengths. Being a Rabbit year, we will do so in the way of alchemical process in a way. How will that happen? I hear a song arising: To dream the impossible dream....

What do I expect to see this year? Not so much polarization. That has already happened. Dictators are on notice. Old regimes know their days are numbered. Regimes that lived by the sword or the iron fist (yang Metal) will either have to greatly moderate their approach or give way completely. There is no way the old guard in Egypt will stay in power, for instance. The opposition is motivated by young, energetic, highly intelligent, yet dispossessed youth who simply want a fair shake of the sauce bottle, as we have recently heard the turn of phrase used here. It is not a fundamentalist uprising, and we see great encouragement in that. In democracies regimes are not so pronounced, as the populace votes very few years and politicians are constantly on notice and in the public eye. I see sweeping change being instigated throughout the Middle East this year. Egypt and Tunisia will set the tone. If it goes well in those countries, then the regimes in places such as Pakistan and Iran and the old monarchies in places like Saudi Arabia will have to take a close look and should consider themselves to be on notice. A hungry or disaffected populace is a powerful force for change. China has already put changes in place, but it has massive problems within its own borders and that will take many years to sort out. China is not the world's problem, at least at the moment. Russia will be an interesting one to watch, as its government has taken a step toward the old ways in recent years and is seeing the results of some of its policies in bombings and the like. I see change coming there, too, as its people have suffered a long time and are ready for a better quality of life.

Speaking of technology, the uprising in Egypt is an interesting case in point. Sixty years ago there were no computers – no Facebook or Twitter, no blogs or discussion pages. The youth there have rallied themselves and others through the internet. It has happened quickly and it is relatively well organized. The same thing happened with Obama during his campaign. Technology will have a big role to play in social change this time around. It will be fascinating to watch. We already see this sort of thing in the likes of Wikileaks and other whistle-blowers using the internet. So, yes – social



unrest, even revolutions or civil wars, driven or organized through the internet or phone networks will become increasingly evident as the year goes on. Worker's rights and financial overhaul will be high on the agenda this year. It has been so in on the last four Iron Rabbit years I looked at. Simple human decency and the will toward a better quality of life will be the driving forces behind these changes. After all, the Rabbit is a gentle creature and wants to live free, but it will fight ferociously if it has to. Perhaps we may even see an end to hostilities on the Korean peninsula.

We will see further natural purges this year, unfortunately for those who have to live through them. The land and seas are trying to right themselves and the elements are seeking a better balance. If one thinks this to be fanciful thinking, then just try to live for a while with one's own elements out of kilter. Try living without water for a day, for instance, or in dirty air. The Earth is an organism and esoterically its functioning is governed by great devic/angelic lives that work with the elemental forces of the world. So, we will see further flooding, powerful storms, as well as rail and shipping (Metal) disasters this year. Some of those will be caused by nature, and some by human activity.

There will be advances in surgery this year. Rabbits are the healers of the Chinese zodiac and Iron Rabbit years bring advances in the surgical arts. We should also see fundamental advances in technology, such as the nano-petrol engine (pictured left) – I am talking society-changing stuff here. The transistor and the transformer, both Iron Rabbit creations, forever changed the way we lived and related. The visionary aspects of the Rabbit come through technology in Iron Rabbit years, and the children born this year carry the seeds of visionary change within them. Some great actors and politicians, scientists and inventors will be born in the next twelve months, people who will heal us, make us think, give us the keys to wider living and show us that there is something more than material life in this world. We will be shaken and forever changed for the better this year, in ways that we cannot even fathom at the moment. Oh, and don't be at all surprised if you start hearing official announcements about UFOs this year (no, I'm not kidding).

We have a lot to look forward to in the coming year. We also have a lot of healing to do. Our neighbors need us now as never before. As I write this Cyclone Yasi is about to reach landfall in Queensland. Some people have dubbed the storm 'Australia's Katrina'. I hope that is not the case. I also hope that our friends and readers there have gotten themselves safely out of harm's way. It is a year in which we stand to gain much by communal and collective effort, and in ways not seen before. Queensland has seen the brunt of some harsh natural forces in the past month and there is a lot of rebuilding to do, as well as a national communal effort to rebuild the place. Whatever happens this year in whatever part of the world, may it be a catalyst for a better way of living in the years to come, and may we learn our lessons well. Most of all, there should be a more concerted effort toward social conscience, rather than people just practicing random acts of kindness. After all, the Rabbit is a compassionate soul and wants only to live in harmony with others and their surroundings. They all go by the slogan, "Make love, not war", but they will go to war if it means your betterment. And if the world just seems a bit mad to you these days, just remember the words of Alice to the Cheshire Cat:

"'But I don't want to go among mad people,' said Alice.
'Oh, you can't help that,' said the cat. 'We're all mad here.' "

There is a thin line between madness and brilliance. Let us pray we see peaceful change this year and a bright future at the end of it. Heaven knows we can use it!

Happy New Year, Everyone!
Malvin
2 Feb 2011



Notes:

The chart and associated text in this letter are derived from The Imperial Astrologer, software developed by Esoteric Technologies (producers of Solar Fire astrological software) in collaboration with the author. For further information regarding the software, see:

<http://www.esotech.com.au/products/TheImperialAstrologer.html>