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Ned Kraft
U.S. Department of State, kraftno@state.gov

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Adventures in Librarianship — Misfortune

by Ned Kraft (Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State) <kraftno@state.gov>

ATG investigative reporters have discovered that the ALA Executive Directorate proposed but later abandoned an idea to distribute promotional fortune cookies at the recent summer convention. Sammy Feng, of Feng's Fortunes Limited, leaked the story to ATG. Mr. Feng is understandably angry about being left with tens-of-thousands of fortune cookies designed for a very specialized market. He had spent many hours coming up with gems such as:

- Be quiet in the library
- Your lucky number is 54782, in the library
- Go to the library now, or you'll be sorry
- You are a special person, and a librarian

Mr. Feng's fourteen-year-old son, Ray-Ray, assisted with the project and delivered a higher degree of creativity nurtured by seven years in Montessori school and two years in a military academy. "Dad keeps telling me I write well," says Ray-Ray, "but I think he really means that I write legibly." Ray-Ray's oeuvre includes:

- The stars are aligned to bring missing books back home... in one crushing wave
- Present a pleasant face to the world and you will be rewarded with sneering mockery
- All information can be found on the Internet... time to look for a new job
- You have no lucky number

You will meet new people and never learn their names

Fortunately for Mr. Feng, his wife, Maria Contralto Feng, works part-time in Eastwood Public Library and added a level of expertise and insight to the project that he and Ray-Ray could not. Maria contributed:

- Serial titles change but you are not afraid
- The Friends of the Library are your friends too
- Your lucky call number is PR6053.O425
- MARC tags are inadequate to describe your many qualities
- The stars will align for love and for increased circulation statistics

Mr. Feng has advised ATG that these "limited edition" fortune cookies are available for a very low price and, he guarantees a shelf life of five years. "I don't like ALA," says Feng, "because who is going to buy so many library cookies?" We thought for a moment, but could not come up with an answer.