

The Chinese Princess - By Eve

Chapter One

Long ago in Ancient China there lived a Chinese Princess named Xing Xing. Having everything a child could ever ask for, Xing Xing was supposedly a very content child. Living in the vast Weiyang palace life was a joyous game for her brothers and sisters. Always getting lost, playing mammoth games of hide and seek, but Xing always had her head stuck in a book or played a calm game of checkers. She was just different.

As the sun seeped through her velvet curtains, Xing Xing stirred tossing and turning in her highly decorated bed, unable to find a comfortable position. Usually she slept late, her soft silk duvet wrapped around her, as if it was hugging her. Rubbing her eyes, Xing Xing gradually clambered out of bed onto the patterned floor. Sitting down onto her cushioned mattress, she gazed dreamily at her almost flawless bedroom. Across the walls delicate paintings of luscious lily pads on a translucent stream filled the once empty space. She was also fully equipped with a beautiful jewellery stand showered with fragile beads of crystal and ruby. Although she never did so much as to touch her precious bracelets, a cloud of dust never gathered to settle. Beside her stand stood a large bookcase covering a great portion of wall. Even though her bookcase was almost bursting with books, unruly piles of novels were scattered around making just walking to the door a challenging obstacle course.

Just as she was about to clamber back into bed, Xing Xing heard a demanding knock at the door. Swiftly leaping, she made her way to the gold handled door. Before she could put her hand to the well cared door handle, a voice roared from outside, " Where are you, you should have been outside here dressed and ready at 6:00, What time is it now? You are deliberately ruining the best day of the whole year for everybody. Now get out here now! " Xing Xing quickly fumbled to the door as she did not want to get into more trouble. It was time to face her father.

Unfortunately, Xing Xing had forgotten all about the big day of Chinese New Year. She didn't see the point of worshipping ancestors who she hardly knew and praying for good harvest that depended on the weather. Despite the fact Xing Xing didn't want to celebrate, She changed into her best silk gown, tied her hair and scampered to the dining room where breakfast would be served.

Chapter two

Chao and Fang, her two elder siblings, were already seated at the table obviously waiting for their younger sister to arrive. As usual, Fang was looking stunning sprinkled with various expensive necklaces and bangles. Her black silky hair twisted into a perfect bun kept in place with two gold chopsticks. Equally as handsome, Chao took after his father with wavy hair moving at just the right angle and an impeccable body shape to look strong and tough. Regardless being closely related, Xing Xing looked nothing like her siblings.

Undoubtedly putting in an act for guest, her father pleadingly lead her to sit with Chao and Fang where she didn't have to be social with the guests. Instantly her sister glared at Xing Xing in the corner of her eye. Stumbling on the unexpected stairs, Xing Xing hurriedly shuffled to her seat at the lengthy dining table. Just as she was about to put her head down and eat, she noticed the glorious food she was taking for granted. Elaborate pyramids of dumplings placed on fragile china plates illustrated to the highest cuisine, bowlfuls of fried rice bursting with flavour. In the middle surrounded by steamed green beans, a vast translucent water chestnut cake was adored by everybody, including the emperor. Even though the savoury dishes looked outstanding, Xing Xing wanted to eat the cake first. Almost admitting this fact, she galloped down the meal not even pausing to swallow and immediately asked the servant ,Ping, to cut her a large slice of the cake. Each bite was savoured with a pleasant mix of moistness and sweet chestnut.

As she finished her last bite Xing Xing pleadingly asked " May I please be excused ?" She had to repeat herself but finally her father answered " No wait Xing Xing, me and your mother have something for you, come with us." Surely this wasn't a present, how could she receive one after the mistake this morning? Either way she still had to obey her father so she tucked her chair in and ambled along behind the Emperor.

Living there since she was born, Xing Xing thought she knew the palace like the back of her hand, but Emperor Han Gaozu was leading her through a twisty, difficult path she had never been in before. Xing Xing was escorted up a marble hallway, completely furnished with comfortable, velvet armchairs and an enormous wood door painted red, careful not to miss a spot. More slaves pushed the door open and Xing Xing was instantly enchanted. Delighted, she gazed dreamily at the moon garden as if she would never look away.

Absolutely enraptured, Xing Xing didn't notice her father stepping out side through the multicoloured moon gate and talking about her new gift of the garden. Only when he gently nudged her to reality did she really take in the garden. Filled in every inch of the floor was lush emerald green grass like a soft carpet ready to soothe aching toes; placed in each corner delicate vases the colours of blue and purple gave the garden a finishing edge. Within the fragile jars, beautiful chinese lilies were precisely placed in orderly forms looking immensely stunning. Towering over her, gorgeous willow trees swayed to the heavenly breeze as if they were dancing to the slow hum of the crickets. Standing proudly in the center, a glazed blue and green temple was a splendid reading hideout. Cushioned with rectangular pillows and elaborate benches, this present was unimaginably perfect. Positively exquisite.

Squealing with joy, Xing Xing ran up to her father repeating thank you many times the emperor finally ordered " You will stay here all of today so you don't embarrass the family name. You will have great access to all of you items you need to keep you occupied and you WILL stay here until I say. Now go get your things."

Unquestionably she ran up to her room and gathered her books, pen and scroll. Roaring rage inside her mind she thought "I can't believe he didn't even give me a present without a reason. I am never going to talk to him again, even if I have to I'll just hang my head low and mumble an answer." Beads of sweat dripping down her back, Xing Xing started to cry. Tiny rivers of brackish water fled from her soor eyes onto a aged, gold, lustrous mirror. As the tears splashed, the mirror soon became seeable and Xing Xing could look at her reflection clearly. She didn't enjoy seeing herself at her worst, crying and sobbing for all she was worth. Swiftly, she wiped her tears and made her way to the garden. Once again her heart filled with glee and she skipped over to the temple. Lying down onto the cushions, Xing Xing immediately felt comfortable and started reading her favourite novel for hours of bliss.

Chapter Three

Scratch. A faint rustling sound filled Xing Xing's ears as she finally woke up. As she got to the stage of squinting, an unfamiliar vision filled her eyes. An unusual silhouette of a rounded purple mass slowly moved closer, obviously trying to investigate the confused princess. Without a hesitation, Xing Xing

reached out her hand to stroke the creature; as quick as a flash, it disappeared.

As it darted into the rear end of the relaxing garden, the large critter calmly caught it's breath. Although Xing Xing didn't know it yet, she was now a full time keeper of a dragon. Her dragon was a graceful beast from head to toe. Starting from her upper body, the dragon had two jagged ears like mountain tops and a small oval head. Everything, including her head, share the same multicolored skin that gave her an exciting mythical look that almost everybody fell in love with. Her wise crescent moon eyes were always dashing over the place; when rage filled the atmosphere two dots of red arrive and deliberately widened, threatening to pop. Meanwhile, her toothy grin spread in a frown, ready to bite someone with her piercing white teeth.

Connecting her head and body, an extravagant neck reaches out and joins the different body parts like a bridge. Underneath, four steady limbs were cushioned with candyfloss hooves which made an irritating clatter. Above the creature's waist, two pink bat-like wings twitched uncertainly in the sweltering sun. Behind her wings, her heavy tail was a very bashful weapon which she often used to protect herself. Handy for numerous occasions, seven moonlit horns trailed up her slumbering tail, clinging to her glossy skin. Yue Liang was a moon dragon, and she needed a companion.

Regaining her courage, Xing Xing tiptoed across the temple, desperate to have another glance at the strange animal. She poked her head around the marble wall and sneaked a cunning glance at the creature. A few moments ago when she was still half asleep she stared at the beast, unable to identify it's species. But now, by just a peek, she saw that it was a beautiful moon dragon. Although she had her head in a book for half a lifetime and her parents thought nothing useful would come out of it, Xing Xing now knew a vast kingdom of mythical creatures including The fire phoenix, sea quilin and the water dragon. As she was finally about to pet the fascinating creature, the large doors burst open to Emperor Gaozu. For at least a minute, the emperor stopped everything. His face turned sour.

To be continued...