



The Story of Liu Jo Wei

Jo Wei lived in the village of Wang Tung with his mother and his grandparents. It was a small village and the family had to work very hard to grow their own food, which was mainly rice. He did have a father, named Liu Xiang Wei, but he could not remember him at all because he had left the village when Jo Wei was only two years old. He had gone far away to another land across the sea called New Gold Mountain, where much gold had been found. Everyone in the family hoped that he would find a lot of gold and return to the village a rich man, so they would never be poor again.

The trouble was that they had been waiting many years and although Liu Xiang Wei sent them as much money as he could, he had not struck it rich enough to come back home. Jo Wei waited and waited until he was nearly eleven years old and had lost all hope

he would ever see his father again when a miracle happened!

Jo Wei's mother had a letter come all the way across the ocean from New Gold Mountain to tell her that his father was coming home on a ship. The journey would take a couple of months.

Jo Wei was very excited, but when he looked at his mother she had a worried look on her face. She told him, "Your father is coming to take us back with him to this New Gold Mountain." Jo Wei did not know whether he should be pleased or sorry. His mother did not seem happy, but he knew she would always do as she was expected to do as a good Chinese wife.

The weeks went by and Jo Wei realised that his grandparents were unhappy. He did not understand why he and his mother should leave the homeland for New Gold Mountain with his father upon his return. Most Chinese would never choose to leave the homeland where they were born. Every day he and his mother would do their share of the work



in the paddy fields, planting the rice. His mother worked very hard by his side, but one morning she was unwell and before Jo Wei could catch her, she fell face down in the water at his feet. He called to his grandfather and they carried her between them back to their small hut. His grandmother bathed his mother's face and said that she had a very bad fever. They could not afford to send for the Chinese doctor, so they took turns in sitting by the bed and doing what they could to help.

Unfortunately, hour by hour she gradually became worse and the following morning his grandmother told him, with tears running down her wrinkled, careworn face, that his mother's spirit had flown from this world. Jo Wei was heartbroken to lose his mother at only eleven years of age and saddened that he would soon be meeting a father he did not remember to break the news of her death.

His mother had waited so long for this time, and now her death has cheated them all.

