

# THE EMPEROR!

BY: MARIA G

It was a dark and stormy night, in China, my brother and I were playing upstairs in our game room. "Yan, Li, come downstairs and eat your dinner!" "Coming mom!" We said. After being halfway done with the delicious Fettuccini Alfredo, my mom asks, "So, how was your day at school, Li?" "Fine." I said. "Did you have any tests today?" My mom said. "Yeah...why?" "Because, I just want to know if you got a good grade." "Um...I uh, oh Su just texted me, she said I had to go to the movie theater right now!" I said, as I got up from the table and put the dish in the sink. "Actually Li, you're not going anywhere." She said loudly. "But mom!" "I will let you go once you tell me what you got." I hesitated and lied. "I don't know what I got. Mrs.Palau didn't tell me." My mom gave me a long stare, but she finally let me go. I could tell she was mad.

I love my mom, and I always want to do my best for her to be proud of me; but seventh grade is hard, and I already failed one of the most important tests in the school year.

The next day I went to the emperor. The reason why is because every time you fail a grade in school you would have to do whatever the emperor said. My mom still didn't know though, so I decided to go during school break. It was my first time here. I was amazed by the huge building. It has 128 floors, so it's the tallest building here, in China. As I stepped on the red welcome mat one of the emperor's servants opened the door and in a firm voice said, "Good afternoon, child. What do you need?" "I need to see the emperor because I failed a test in school." "Okay, he is on the last floor, third door to the left." "Thank you." "You're welcome." When I pressed the up button on the elevator a girl stood right next to me. "Hi, my name is Vienna. Nice to meet you." She said, in a super happy voice. I was going to respond back, but the elevator opened. Once I got there, I knocked on the door. "Hello." The emperor said as he opened. "Hi, I'm here to..." "I already know! Have a seat. So, what did you get on your grade?" "I got a...20." I said shyly. "Okay, since you got a 20 you must go to the orphanage tomorrow and stay there for a whole month." He said in a voice that was scary. "But, what about my mom?" I exclaimed. "Don't worry about her, she'll be fine." He had a weird expression on his face when he said that. And with that I went back to school.

When I got back, in social studies we started learning about the emperor. "In 1021- 1,000 years ago- the Chinese government made a law that anyone who failed a grade in fifth and up would have to do anything the emperor said." Mrs.Palau said. That afternoon I walked home heavy hearted. I wasn't ready for my mom to know about today. I walked upstairs to my mom's office and told her what had happened. When I finished, she had a shocked expression on her face. She kissed me and said, "I hope you don't stay there longer than that." And then she ran downstairs, slammed her bedroom door and called my dad. I felt scared.

The next morning, I woke up early to pack my stuff and take the train to the orphanage. When I got there, the building was white with black x's on it. It looked like a place I wasn't ready to go to. Suddenly a woman came up to me and said, "Your room is on the right." I ran to the room and began to cry. I need to escape soon.

The next day during breakfast time, a girl sat next to me. I realized it was Vienna. "Vienna!" I said happily. "How did you know?" "We met at the emperor, remember?" "Oh yeah." She said. "What's your name?" "Li." We talked until it came up to me. "Vienna, have you ever thought of escaping?" "No, but now that you mention it, I really want to leave this place." "Want to escape with me tomorrow morning?" "Yes." "Then wake up at two o'clock am." "Got it."

The next day, we met and got past the guards with some excuses that we made up. Once we got out, we took the left way, so that led us to the woods. We began trying to find a way out, until we saw a guy sitting near a river, fishing. "Hello, can you please help us find a way out of here?" I said, as we got near him. "Just follow the river." "Thank's!" Vienna said. And off we went. As we were walking, we saw a man that looked lost. "Want to walk with us?" We asked. "Yes please." He said. We walked in silence until Vienna asked, "How did you get lost?" "A random man just showed up, where I live, which is the emperor's building..." "Wait, you're the emperor?" Vienna and I said. "Yes, I'm the REAL emperor. Anyways, he wrapped my eyes with a bandana, so I couldn't see. He took me here and left me. He also took my place, and I've never been to the woods before." When we finally got to the end of the woods, we went straight to the government and told them the story. When we finished telling them, they put the fake emperor in jail, and all the kids that were in the orphanage were free. I felt like I did something very important in my life, and I bet that my mom will be the happiest and proudest person in the world.