

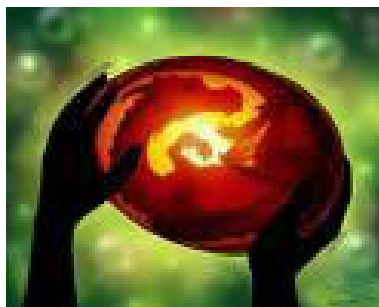
The Chinese Egg

It was a bright, bustling Sunday morning in Chinatown. Susie Chan's family were doing their weekly shopping. In the push and shove of the crowded market she found herself alone outside an unusual pet shop.

It had beautiful singing birds and a variety of strange animals. The owner was a kindly old man with a long beard twisted with fire crackers.



Susie was curious and looked all over the shop. In the back she found an enormous egg in a velvet box. It was sparkling green with red spots that seemed to glow and pulsate in her hand. She had to buy it.



She didn't tell her parents about the egg and when they got home, she hid it in an old doll's house in her room.

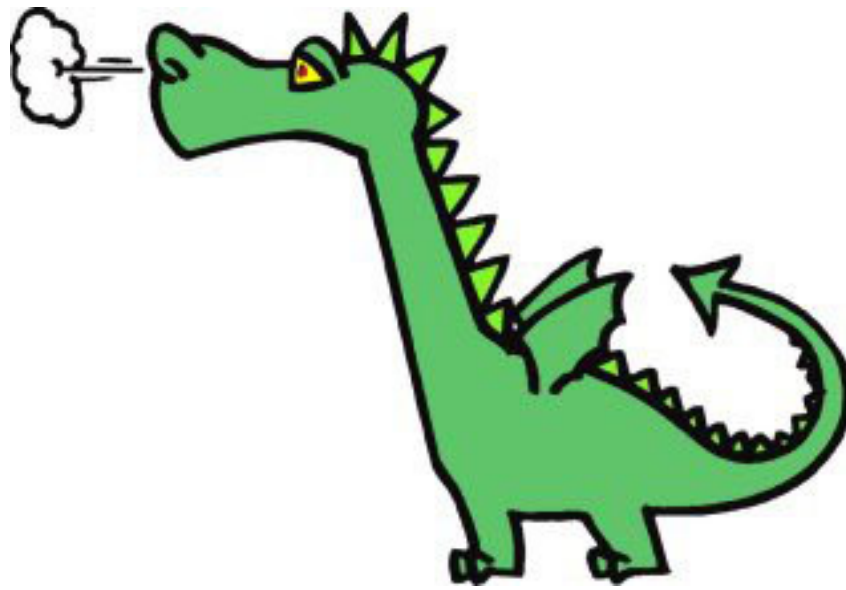
One day she found the egg had cracked open and the inside of the shell was empty. She looked around and noticed a curl of smoke. Staring at her with fiery red eyes was a baby dragon. He had a green scaly body, spiky wings and long curly tail. When he saw Susie he squealed and ran under the bed.



"Don't be frightened little dragon!" She called softly and tried to coax him out with some chocolate cookies. He liked them and held out a claw for more. The dragon was soon growling contentedly and blowing smoke rings from his nostrils.

Susie made a bed for him from an old dog basket and fed him on cornflakes and cookies. Everyday he grew bigger.

He liked to empty the coal bucket to eat the coal and run around the room roaring fire. He would burn holes in the carpet and catch the curtains alight.



One night as Susie was going to sleep she heard a loud flapping noise in the garden. She jumped up and looked out the window. Something very large was growling and hissing.



Suddenly! A great ball of red flame lit up the room. There standing thirty feet high was the glittering body of a huge

grown up dragon. The baby dragon grew very excited. He took a bound and flew through the open window.

Hesitantly Susie followed and saw the great dragon take the other in its claws. Then with a sudden leap, it spread its wings and flew into the night. To her surprise on the scorched earth was a pile of coins.

It was Gold! Dragon's Gold!



By Harvey Cazales