

Legend has always revered the name of Liu. She was known as a warrior throughout the land. Her strength never outmatched. Her wisdom bringing tyrant kings to their knees. And most of all her courage, to stand in the face of adversity and to never falter, has carried her name on the wind for many ages since.

Together with her mystic sword of legend there was no challenge she could not face. That was until one fateful day. She had been returning home from another glorious victory when she was given a dark missive. Her lover Nguyet had fallen ill and was not expected to recover. And so, she raced home as fast as she could.

Liu remained by Nguyet's bedside the next few nights, the two reminiscing on old adventures. But on the evening of the 7th day Nguyet took a turn for the worse. The hour grew late. And a cold chill filled the air. And as she held Nguyet's hand, Liu began to feel her grip grow weaker and weaker. And it was in that moment that the great Liu realized that she would lose this battle.

As Nguyet's final moments crept ever closer, tears streamed down Liu's face. In this bed lay the greatest treasure she had come to know in all the world. And she knew their time together was coming to an end. It was there, by that bedside, that Liu watched the light leave her lover's eyes... It is said that Liu cried for weeks upon the passing of her lover. Neighbors came to pay their respect, but none could comfort the hero. And every night was filled with more tears.

Then one day the tears just ceased. And Liu emerged from her home, clad in her battle armor. And off towards the horizon she rode towards a new journey.

Liu had faced many challenges before and now ventured forth on a new quest to meet death itself and to bring back her love from across the veil.

But it would be many years before she ever returned home. Her hair greyed and her face became twisted by time. Her quest took her to the edges of the known world

and back. But no matter how far she traveled, she never felt she was any closer to her goal.

That was until she chanced upon a long-forgotten cave. This cave was the home of a grand silver dragon and he watched very intensely as Liu approached. The time worn warrior slowly stepped forward, her head bowed, and she spoke reverently to the grand dragon.

“Please hear my plea. I come to you begging for your aid great ancestor to my people. I come without much left to give beside this.”

She placed her mystic sword on the dragon’s hoard. Her eyes held low and her old, frail frame slightly trembling before the majesty of the silver dragon that watch her.

“I have traveled the world. Done many great deeds... But my greatest regret is not having enough time with the woman I love...”as she said this her knees gave way beneath her, and she fell to the ground. And in that moment the great dragon raised its head from its resting spot and stared at Liu.

And in that moment, he felt great pity for this mortal creature. His voice boomed throughout the cavern “I shall aid you but there isn’t much time. You must do exactly as I order. Then, and only then will you once more see your lost love. “

Liu listened intently to the dragons every words. But what she was tasked with made no sense to her. Instead of traveling further she was told to return to her home. To light a few lanterns and to give an offering to her ancestors. “How will this help?” she wondered, but she had come this far and knew she could not stop until the dragons’ wishes were seen through.

That night as she said her prayers to the ancestors and spoke, she looked up to the moon and for a brief moment there she saw Nguyet. But she was not alone. No, she was surrounded by the spirits of many of Liu’s ancestors. Her grandparents and the ones who came before. And as she

looked towards the sky a familiar silvery shape flew across her vision.

“I thought you said we would be reunited again. I see her there in the moon, but she is still so far.” Liu said tears beginning to well in her eyes.

The dragon then spoke. “You have mistaken the moons magic on this evening. She is not out there...but rather the moon is like a silvery mirror. Showing you what is already around you. Our ancestors, both yours and mine, walk with us before they return to land and all living things around us. They guide our steps, but on this evening when the veil between the worlds is thinnest. Then and only then are they allowed to take shape and to join us in our revels. Be not sad, mortal, for she is not gone, not truly. she is watching down on you and on this day, instead of sorrow pay our ancestors with gratitude for the aid they give us through our journeys... “

Liu looked up at the moon once more, slowly beginning to understand the dragon’s words. And for briefest of moments, she could have sworn she felt Nguyet’s embrace one more time.

Since that day many ages ago we Mandalans have continued to give thanks to our ancestors on this night. For this night is, as the dragon said, when the veil is at its thinnest and the ancestors can hear our words of thanks clearly. This is not a day for sorrow and pity, instead it is a day of joy to remember that we are watched over by those we choose to call our family.

Thank you for listening to this tale of Chukimi... And good night