### Texto 6 (The Magic Paintbrush)

A long time ago in China there lived a poor boy called Liang. He had no family, so he made his living by doing odd jobs for other people in his village, such as cutting wood and tending cattle. His life was difficult, but Liang was a generous boy and always willing to help people who needed it. In his heart he had a dream. He wanted to paint pictures and become a great artist. He practised drawing all the time. When he was in the forest cutting wood, he drew birds and animals with a stick. If he was looking after a farmers’ cows he drew on the sides of the barn. Whatever he was doing he drew – plants, animals, birds and people. He thought of nothing else except drawing, and soon he became very good at it.

One night Liang dreamed that an old man gave him a paintbrush. The man said it was a magic paintbrush and Liang should use it to help people. When Liang woke up the next morning, he was surprised to see that he had a beautiful paintbrush in his hand. Liang was hungry, so he painted a bowl of rice. Suddenly the rice became real, and he ate it. Now he felt happy, so he drew a bird. The bird came to life and flew away.

When Liang went into the village he met an old farmer carrying water from the river to his field. It was a long walk and the man was very tired. Liang painted a river beside the field and the river came to life. Now the farmer could easily bring the water to his crops. Soon Liang met another villager who was crying because his cow had died in the night, and there was no milk for his children. Liang drew a cow, and it came to life. The villager was overjoyed and happily began to milk his cow.

From that day Liang used his paintbrush to help the people in his village. Whenever they needed something, Liang would paint it. Soon the villagers began to prosper, and word of Liang’s magic paintbrush began to travel beyond the village.

People asked him, “Why don’t you use your magic paintbrush to become rich?”

“What else do I need?” replied Liang. “I feel rich because I can help.”

It wasn’t long before a rich man who lived near the village heard about Liang’s magic paintbrush, and thought he would use it to make himself richer than the emperor. This man decided to steal Liang’s paintbrush. He sent some of his thugs to Liang’s home, where they captured Liang and put him in prison. The rich man took the paintbrush.

The rich man wanted to show off his power so he invited some friends to his house. He drew a lot of pictures, but not one picture became real. The rich man figured there must be some special secret that he didn’t know about, so he sent for Liang. When Liang stood before him he said, “If you draw some pictures for me and they become real, I will let you go free.”

Liang knew that this rich man was not a good man. He didn’t want to help, but he wanted to be free. He had an idea. He said, “I will help you, but you must let me go.”

“Paint me a golden mountain,” said the rich man. “I want to go there and get lots of gold.” What he didn’t say out loud was, “And then I will be the richest man in the kingdom, richer even than the emperor himself!”

Liang drew a picture of the sea.

“Why did you draw the sea?” said the rich man, “I told you to draw the mountain. I want gold, not fish!”

“The mountain is on the other side of the sea.” replied Liang. “I’ll show you.” Liang drew the golden mountain on the other side of the sea.

When the rich man saw the mountain shining in gold his eyes lit up like two yellow suns. “Yes!” he said, “That’s much better! But the mountain is far from here. How will I get there?”

“I’ll draw you a boat to get to the mountain,” said Liang. And he drew a golden dragon boat that was even bigger and more beautiful than the emperor’s boat. The rich man climbed aboard the boat and stood in the bow facing the golden mountain. He said to Liang,” Now draw me a wind to take the boat to the mountain.” Liang began to draw a wind, and the boat set sail. The rich man stretched his arms out to grab the golden mountain. “Make the wind stronger so I can get there faster,” he said to Liang. Liang kept drawing and the wind got stronger. Soon the wind became a terrible gale and the rich man’s beautiful boat sank beneath the sea and took him down with it.

People say that Liang married a beautiful girl from his village and had a big family, and they were happy all their days.

Preguntas del texto:

Why was Liang's life difficult?

What was Liang's dream?

Which statement shows that Liang was generous?

Why was Liang surprised when he woke up after his dream?

What was special about Liang's new paintbrush?

What does it mean when we say that someone "prospers?"

How did Liang help the villagers prosper?

What news began to travel beyond the village?

Why did the rich man want to get the magic paintbrush?

How did the rich man get the magic paintbrush?

Why did the rich man invite some friends to his house?

What happened when the rich man drew pictures for his friends?

How did the rich man try to make the magic paintbrush work for him?

What do you think was the rich man's dream?

Why did Liang paint the sea between the rich man's house and the golden mountain?

Who/What do you think really killed the rich man?

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