At the other side, it reached up and prised the great pearl from its forehead. ‘This is the only precious thing I possess,’ it said to Tchang. ‘I’d like you to take it, but when you get home, you must throw it into the lake.’

As the dragon handed the pearl to Tchang, its wings grew and grew until it rose slowly into the air. ‘Look!’ it shouted joyfully, ‘I can fly!’

It was winter, now, and snow lay thick upon the land. Tchang struggled on towards the East until he reached the old man’s hut.

The old man was delighted to see him. ‘So? What did the Wizard say?’

Tchang opened the scroll marked ‘Old Man’. ‘He says you must look beneath the lemon tree.’ Together they dug at the frozen earth around the tree until they came upon nine golden jars. Water poured from them, as clear as crystal. As it sank into the ground, all the trees in the orchard burst into flower.

The old man was so grateful he gave Tchang one of the golden jars.