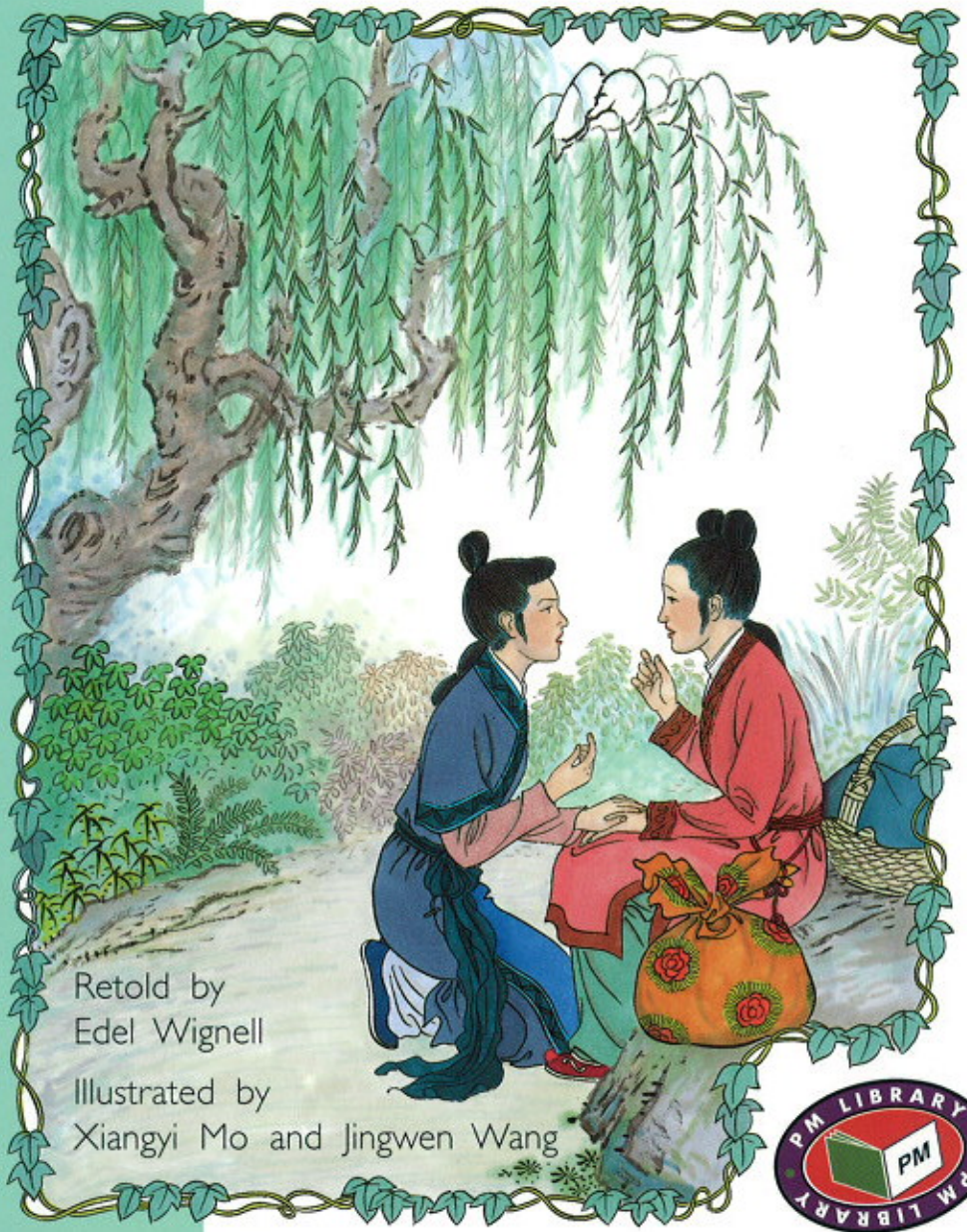
Fire and Wind



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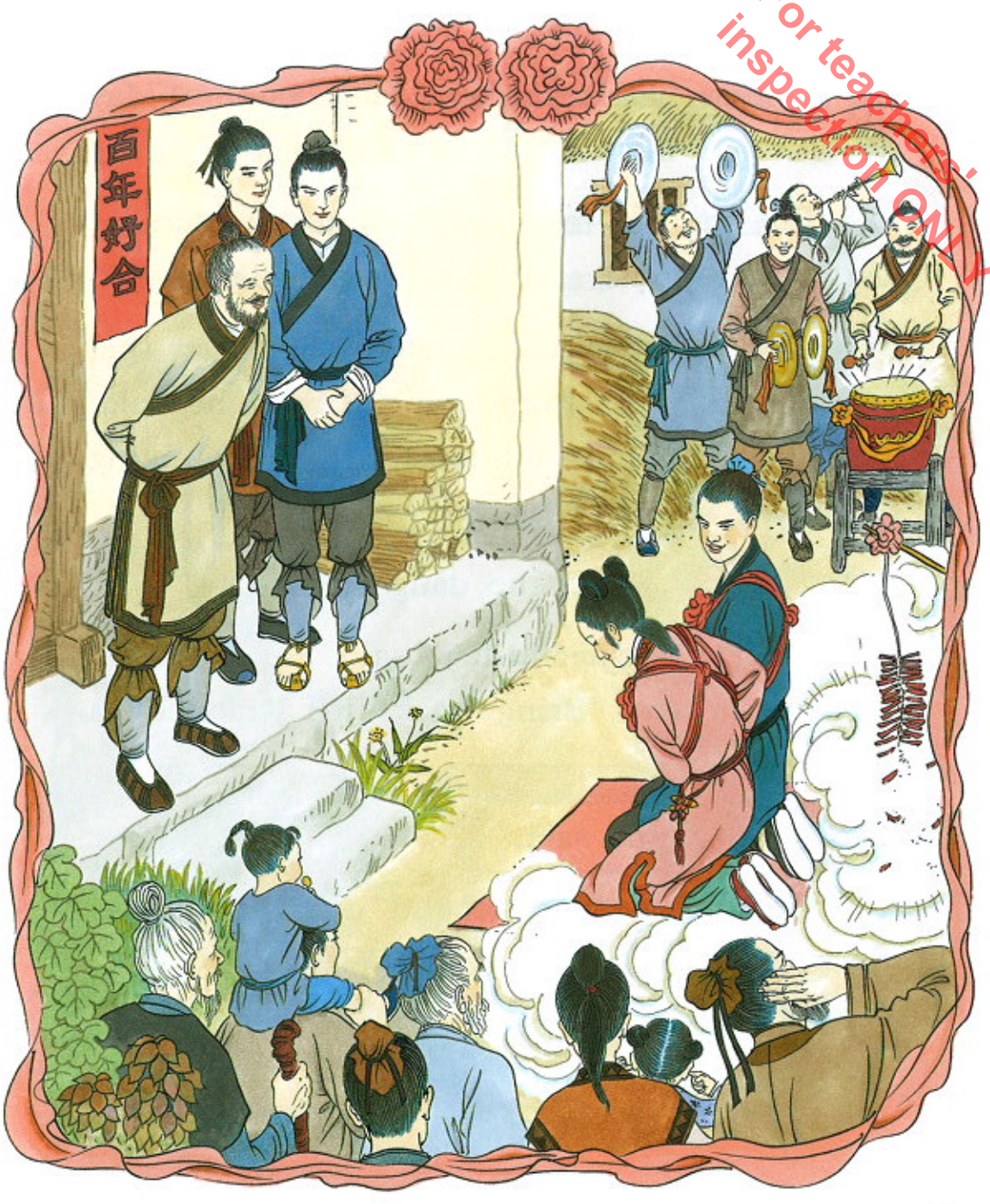
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Once upon a time, in China, there was an old man who had three grown-up sons. They all lived in the same farmhouse because that was the Chinese way.

The old man's wife was dead, and he wanted his sons to get married.

Soon the eldest son met and married a young woman from the next village. Then the second son met and married another woman. She was from the next village, too.

As the two young women missed their mothers, they wished to go and visit them. They had to ask their father-in-law if they could go, because he was master of the house. If his wife had been alive, they could have asked her to let them go, because she would have been head of the house.



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"Please, Father-in-law," they said. "May we visit our mothers?"

But the old man wanted his daughters-in-law to stay home and work in the house.

The father-in-law thought of a way that might stop them from going. "Yes," he said. "You may go, but you must promise to bring something special back."

"We will," said the daughters-in-law.

So the father-in-law said to the first daughter-in-law, "Bring back fire wrapped in paper."

"I will," she said.

He said to the second daughter-in-law, "Bring back wind wrapped in paper."

"I will," she said.

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"You must promise, or I will never let you go away again," he said.

"We promise," said the daughters-in-law. "Thank you for letting us go."



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They walked along the road towards the next village, talking happily. But soon the first daughter-in-law fell, and her shoe came off.

"The heel of my shoe is broken," she said.

"I'll fix it," said the second daughter-in-law. She took the shoe and began to tap the heel into place. While she was tapping, she began to worry. "We made promises," she said. "How will you bring back fire wrapped in paper?"

The first daughter-in-law began to cry. "I can't do it! And how will **you** bring back wind wrapped in paper?"

The second daughter-in-law was crying, too. "I can't do it."