



A Grain of Rice

By Helena Clare Pittman

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When a humble farmer named Pong Lo asks for the hand of the Emperor's beautiful daughter, the Emperor is enraged. Who ever heard of a peasant marrying a princess? But Pong Lo is wiser than the Emperor knows. And when he concocts a potion that saves the Princess's life, the Emperor gladly offers him any reward he chooses--except the Princess.

Pong Lo makes a surprising request. He asks for a single grain of rice, doubled every day for one hundred days. The baffled Emperor obliges--only to discover that if you're as clever as Pong Lo, you can turn a single grain of rice into all the wealth and happiness in the world!

Praise for *A Grain of Rice*:

"**Clever and quietly told** in simple, yet evocative language."-*Kirkus Reviews*

"Pittman invites readers into her story through her choice of concrete objects, sensory images, and universal messages. She borrows from the motifs of oral literature, and also weaves in information about arithmetical progression and 15th-Century Chinese people, patterns, and traditions. Pittman's well executed pencil drawings ooze with emotion, and there is a fusion of text and illustrations...[A] **book that is wise and humorous, and one to be perused and savored.**"-*School Library Journal*

"**Gracefully illustrated with finely shaded drawings**, this picture book tells of Pong Lo, a poor Chinese peasant who wins the hand of the emperor's daughter through his knowledge of mathematical principles."-*Booklist*

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In 15th-century China, a humble farmer outwits the Emperor--and wins his daughter's hand--with an ingenious request. Ages 7-11.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 3-8 An original story set on the grounds and in the palace of the Emperor of China during the 15th Century. Pong Lo, the son of a farmer, kneels in the Emperor's court to ask for his majesty's daughter's hand in marriage. Employed as a storeroom worker, Pong Lo sets about to prove that he is ``wise and quick and more than a little clever, and would make. . .as fine a prince as China has ever seen." Pittman invites readers into her story through her choice of concrete objects (e.g., the Imperial Storeroom), sensory images, and universal messages. She borrows from the motifs of oral literature, and also weaves in information about arithmetical progression and 15th-Century Chinese people, patterns, and traditions. Pittman's well executed pencil drawings ooze with emotion, and there is a fusion of text and illustrations. A picture book that is wise and humorous, and one to be perused and savored. Shelley G. McNamara, University of Maine, Farmington
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Review

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