

Dragon Lady

by Jack Swenson

Mickey and Ted had a wonderful time with the young ladies at the tea room. Soong May-ling was simply charming. She eclipsed her demure companion who drank her tea in silence.

Soong spoke English with a southern accent. When Mickey remarked upon this, she told the young man that she had gone to school in America. She was a graduate of Wellesley.

Young Mickey didn't know much about women, and the beautiful and sophisticated Soong May-ling soon had him eating out of the palm of her hand.

What happened later that evening is unclear. When Mickey got back to his quarters, he was in good spirits. Buoyant even. He was as cocky as a young college student after a successful night with a girl. One of the other flyers, a grizzled veteran, grilled Mickey about his afternoon and evening. Mickey gave him a play by play account. He was in love, Mickey said. He had invited the lady to come back to the U.S. with him when he went on leave.

When Mickey finished his story, his friend, a womanizer of some note himself, told the young man that it was unlikely that the young woman would be accompanying him to the United States. Then he told him who she was. When he revealed her identity, Mickey turned white. The next day Mickey asked his friend to tell the Madame that she could not travel to the States with him after all.

Mickey's friend, Pappy, returned from his errand with fingernail scratches on his face so deep that you could see the marks for a week.

