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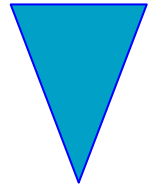
Below is a text-only excerpt:

FOUR DRAGONS

(A Chinese Myth Retold)

Way back in the mists of time — when there were no lakes or

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rivers on Earth and Jade Emperor ruled over all creatures from his Heavenly Palace — four dragons lived in the Eastern Sea.

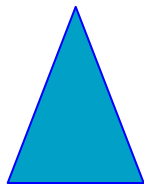
Black Dragon, the bravest of the four, called out playfully, “Catch me if you can ...” as he heaved his huge form from the water and soared into the sky.

Pearl Dragon’s face lit up. “Whooooee, I love playing hide and seek in the clouds.”

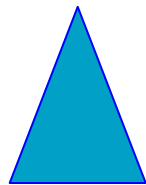
“ ... ninety-seven, ninety-eight,” Long Dragon counted, as he prepared for the chase and then shouted, “Coming, ready or not.”

Gathering speed and breaking through the water’s surface, he darted skyward with Yellow Dragon following close behind.

Soaring high and darting from cloud to cloud, the dragons flew, high and free above the earth.



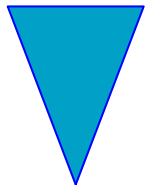
“You can’t escape,” Pearl Dragon laughed, as hard on Black Dragon’s heels, she extended her claws and reached out for the tag — and stopped dead in the air. Hovering and mouthing words under her breath, she pointed towards earth.



“Look.”

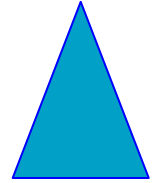
“What?” the other dragons shouted, calling off the chase and gathering around.

Far below, people were placing food on a flat rock and burning incense sticks. A white-haired woman, wizened and wrinkled with age, and stooping under the weight of a skinny youth she carried on her back, chanted, “God of Heaven, please hear my call. Our crops have withered and the earth has cracked because we have had no rain. Please, O Mighty One, send rain.”



Yellow Dragon's eyes welled with tears. "Poor things. They will die if it doesn't rain soon." The dragons nodded in agreement and fell silent.

"Let's help them," said Long Dragon. "We'll go to Jade Emperor and ask him for"



This has been a text-only excerpt.

The full publication is available from the author at
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