

DRAGON GIRLS

Quinn the Jade Treasure Dragon

by Maddy Mara

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Quinn hummed to herself as she put her shiny golden trumpet back into its velvet-lined case. Around her, the other band kids chatted loudly as they packed up after practice. Everyone was excited. The big concert was tomorrow night!

Quinn was extra pleased because she had a

new tune in her head. Quinn loved writing her own songs. She looked around. She was too shy to play her own music in front of anyone else. But no one was paying attention. Maybe she could try it now?

Quickly, she pulled her trumpet back out of its case. She loved the smooth metal in her hands. It sometimes felt like her trumpet was a part of her. The loud part! Quinn began to play. The tune in her head flowed through the trumpet and out into the air. She repeated it, building on the melody as she went along. Quinn felt warm inside. It sounded even better than she'd hoped.



“That’s beautiful, Quinn! What is it?”

Quinn spun around. Her band leader, Ms. Tran, smiled at her.

“It’s not a real s-s-song,” stammered Quinn.
“I just made it up.”

“Oh, it’s definitely real,” Ms. Tran said. “And it’s great. Quinn, I’d like you to play it tomorrow,

to kick off our concert. Would you do that for me?”

Quinn’s hands went all sweaty. She loved playing in the school band. The way the different instruments all worked together felt like magic. They created something bigger and better than any of the musicians could create on their own. But playing a solo in front of everybody? She really didn’t think she could do it.

But Ms. Tran looked so excited, it was hard to say no!

“Maybe,” she said, fiddling with the jade-green bead in her friendship bracelet. She had made it with her jewelry-class friends, Mei and Aisha. They were both very brave. They

wouldn't be scared about playing a solo.

Ms. Tran looked at her kindly. "You don't have to, Quinn. But it would be lovely to let others hear your music. Think about it and let me know tomorrow?"

"Okay." Quinn nodded as Ms. Tran strolled off, whistling Quinn's new song.

Quinn was about to return her trumpet to its case when she heard singing. It was familiar but very faint. Where was it coming from? She glanced around the room, which was now empty apart from Ms. Tran, who was stacking music stands.

Outside the window, Quinn saw the forest trees swaying. They seemed to be calling her. Quinn's

heart began to beat faster. She was pretty sure she knew what was happening. Recently, she, Mei, and Aisha had discovered that they shared more than a love of making jewelry. They were also Treasure Dragon Girls! It was their job to protect the treasure in the Magic Forest. When they were needed, the ruler of the forest—the Tree Queen—called for them.

Quinn had a feeling this was happening right now! The words of the song grew clearer.

Magic Forest, Magic Forest, come explore . . .

Excitement swirled inside Quinn. She was definitely being called to the forest! She

glanced down at her friendship bracelet. The jade bead at its center glowed bright green. As she watched, a warm, green light beamed out. The light whooshed around her and then shot into the mouthpiece of her trumpet.

Instantly, the trumpet turned an enchanting shade of green. Then the light beam flowed from the trumpet's bell, wider and brighter than before. The words of the song filled Quinn's ears.

Magic Forest, Magic Forest, come explore . . .

Quinn glanced over at Ms. Tran. Even though the music was getting louder, her teacher didn't

seem to hear it. She was now busy arranging chairs.

Quinn gave her trumpet an affectionate pat. "I'll be back soon," she whispered. "But right now, the Magic Forest needs me."

Quinn looked at the beam of light. She could see trees inside it now! But these were not the bare, wintry trees like those outside the rehearsal room. These trees had the fresh, green look of spring. Quinn closed her eyes and breathed deeply as a warm breeze wafted past, heavy with the scent of mangoes, coconuts, and vanilla.

When she opened her eyes again, the beam



of light was big enough to step into. The song filled her ears and she opened her mouth and sang loud and true.

Magic Forest, Magic Forest, come explore.

Magic Forest, Magic Forest, hear my roar!