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On Wings of Eagles

By Rubby Xu

ANCHOR:

the world, this just in.
The 1924 Paris Olympics are history.
Eric Liddell, the Brit who
snatched the gold in the 400 meter,
was offered a chance
at the American dream.
But the famous athlete, who,
despite multiple sponsorship offers
from dozens of American brands, has
respectfully said no to one and all.
He has joined the London
Missionary Society,
and after moving to China
married the love of his life,
nurse Florence Mackenzie.
There, they will raise a family.
He will teach and live
a productive life.
For Mr. Liddell, offering a
helping hand and some hope
provides all the riches he needs.

XU:

find someone in your life
to help make you a worthy person.
That luck came to me many years ago
when I met the Flying Scotsman.
His name was Eric Liddell.
The whole world came to know him
when he refused to
run the 400-meter race
scheduled on a Sunday,
which he reserved for the time he
spent rejoicing with his family
and giving thanks for the many
blessings bestowed upon them.
In the glory of winning,
he became famous for a man who
stood up for his principles.
But to him, it was not
such a grand gesture.

After he completed his education,
he returned to China where he taught
chemistry, English and athletics.
The many years of the Japanese
fighting the Chinese had worn away
our happiness and brought a
great misery to our people.

(INDISTINCT SHOUTING)

(DOGS BARKING)

Get the soldiers!

Hold it! Hold it!

(SOLDIER SPEAKING MANDARIN)

(SPEAKING MANDARIN)

XU:

I made it work
whenever and however
it became necessary.
Professor Liddell called
me by my name, Xu Niu,
and paid me to drive him to teach the
poor children in the schools there.

(CHILDREN SHOUTING)

(ERIC GREETING IN MANDARIN)

(CHILDREN SPEAKING MANDARIN)

ERIC:

Up, up. Up, up. Sit down.
Quiet, please. Sit down.
P for Peter, C for Cat.
Cat?

Er, Dong Nong? Dong Nang?

(SPEAKING MANDARIN)

(ENGINES ROARING)

(DISTANT EXPLOSION)

No!

Song, no!

Song! Song!

XU:

I would only run from
a nest of hornets
or escape a man who
would put me in jail.

But I would run with Mr. Li.
Running helped him find peace.
But on this day,
I was struck by his fearlessness
as he ran to find peace in
the face of an escalating war.
Florence is gonna kill you for this.
Me, too, most probably.
She'd do the same in my place.
We came here to help these people.
What will they think if we jump on
a ship at the first sign of trouble?
Your children are people, too, Eric.
They're young. Florence
will be there for them.
Let me finish what I started.
Please, give this to someone in need.
(DISTANT EXPLOSION)
(GASPS)
(WHIMPERING)
- Shh.
- Daddy, I'm scared.
It's all right. It's all right.
Now, listen, how does that...
How does that melody go
that Mommy loves so much?
Can you help me?
- Be still my soul
- (PLAYING XYLOPHONE)
The Lord is on your side
You have a go.
Bear patiently
The cross of
grief Or pain
Florence.
(GUNS FIRING IN DISTANCE)
Thank the Lord they're good sleepers.
I promised to help the
hospital in Xiaozhang.
They need medical supplies more than ever.
And now Robert's son is...
Sick. Yes, I know.
And he had to go back to
England to care for him.

But your brother is a doctor.
You're not.
We've made a family.
Not just God's family, our own.
I love you, Florence.
Absolutely and utterly.
I know what sort of man I married.
Now help me pack.
Come on, Heather. Xu looks
magnificent, doesn't he?
There you go.
Xu.
Please take good care
of him while we're away.
You can count on me, Ms. Li.
I will make sure Eric is safe.

XU:

Mr. Li had applied for a furlough
from the London Missionary Society,
allowing him to travel to
Canada with his family,
but permission had not yet arrived.
He felt he was duty bound
to serve those in need
in the good times and the bad.
(INDISTINCT CHATTERING)
(FOG HORN BLOWING)
Well, you know I'll be
there as soon as I can.
You have to let your
grandmother know we're all fine.
You have to show her how beautiful
your handwriting has become,
and I have to show the children here
how to write as beautifully as you do.
Please don't think this is a gold medal.
Oh, Florence.
I love you.
One last hug, darlings.
We'll be together again soon.
We'll all be together again soon.
(WHISTLE BLOWING)
Ladies and gentlemen.

Anybody who is not sailing
with us, please leave the boat.
I'll be home soon.

- PATRICIA:

- Bye.
I love you.

HEATHER:

I'll miss you, too.
I'll be home soon.
You look after the new
baby for me now, okay?
You promise?

HEATHER:

Promise?

XU:

Army had looted and taken over his home,
Mr. Li believed in
praying for his enemies.
I had other thoughts, but
I kept them to myself,
as I was learning to respect Mr. Li.
Much time would pass before I found
the value in thinking his way.
Mr. Li was forced to leave his home and
seek shelter with the other refugees
at the school where he was teaching.
(SPEAKING MANDARIN)
For me?
Let's go for a run. Come on, now!
(BOY SHOUTING IN MANDARIN)

XU:

It took me some time to realize
he was running not just for himself,
but for us.
(SPEAKING MANDARIN)
So, gather around.
Ferrous sulfide.
Acid.
You smell?

(ALL GROANING)

(SPEAKING MANDARIN)

(ALL LAUGHING)

Yeah. Oh, yeah. Good girl.

What have you got?

Oh!

Maureen.

(SPEAKING MANDARIN)

Come here.

Yes, that's me.

Before the hair slipped
off the back of my head.

Where on earth did you find this?

I have my way. Found it a long time ago.

It's for you.

Thanks.

You know, would you help me find an
orphanage that can look after him?

Well, listen, I was born here,
so surely that makes me Chinese, too, no?

You know, I've been living
here for half my life,
so I raise a cup to you,
my friends,
with a drink that comes from my first home.

Oof! (CLEARS THROAT)

You know my...

You know my brother Robert?

He ran the hospital in Xiaozhang.

He wrote to me before he left, asking
for supplies for the doctors there,
if we can buy them.

No. Your father give you this.

I'm afraid it's all I have now.

But he would have been
happy if it could help.

XU:

Please.

I hope it's worth enough.

It's quite a long list.

(ENGINE SHUTS OFF)

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)

Oh, no.

Let me handle this.
I'm so sorry.
Teaching. Teaching.
Thank you.
(EXHALES)

XU:

we encountered many close calls
with the Japanese soldiers.
Life was full of danger,
and we were often caught in
the crossfire of the armies
that fought each other.
With Eric's dedication
to help those in need
and my connections
to the underground,
we found ways to
accomplish our missions.
(WOMAN SPEAKING MANDARIN)
Well, that wasn't so bad.

NURSE:

There is a dying patient to pray over.

ERIC:

(BOY SPEAKING MANDARIN)
Go!
Come on! Come on!
You've got two hands, don't you?
Repeat after me.
"I, Hugh."
I, Hugh.
"Take thee, Catherine,
to be my wedded wife."
Take thee, Catherine, to be my wedded wife.
"To have and to hold
from this day forward."
To have and to hold from this day forward.
"For better, for worse."
For better, for worse.
"For richer, for poorer..."
Please, this is a house of God.
Could we have the weapons...

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)

Captain, you have no right
to be here. Could we just...

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)

Captain, you have no right to be here.
We are at war.

(BOY SPEAKING MANDARIN)

- (STEAM HISSING)

- (HORN BLOWING)

(MEN SHOUTING)

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)

No, no, we're, we're
married. We're... Go this way?

No, no, we're together.

We're married. We go together.

No, no. Hold on a second. Hold on.

You can't separate us. We're together!

Hold on!

Catherine is my wife.

Let us live together.

How could you prove?

You can! You were there!

You were at the wedding!

No.

Whom God hath joined together,
let no man put asunder.

My Emperor is the god here.

Huh?

We do not serve false gods.

Please.

You're a big guy. Come on, take my bunk.

We'll get through this, together.

Hey, doc.

David, hey.

I came across this.

I think it's more your style.

Thank you.

Yeah.

(GRUNTS)

Xiao, Xiao. (SPEAKS MANDARIN)

(YELLING)

(WHIMPERS)

(CRYING)

(CONTINUES CRYING)

See?

No!

GUARD:

Get up!

Who is Eric Liddell?

Who?

ERIC:

You go.

- What are you doing?

- Hey!

What? He wants to race?

And train.

I want a fair fight.

When you release us, I will race.

You have no choice.

We found these.

XU:

had searched for days.

When we found the camp,
it had been turned into a prison
and more intimidating than
I had ever encountered.

I knew then I would have to
employ the ways of my past
to be of any help to my friend.

(SPEAKS MANDARIN)

Shitou!

(ALL EXCLAIMING IN JOY)

Christmas has come early, Dr. Hubbard.

Good luck.

I missed you so much.

(SOBBING)

God, I missed you.

I missed you, too.

Look at you.

I'll try and shave next time.

(CHUCKLES)

You shouldn't have stayed here.

Hey, hey, hey.

No, no, no.

It's okay. Look.

I made it for you.
No diamonds this time.
You stay, I stay. Remember?
We're going. We're going.

SOLDIER:

Come on! She's going, okay?

ERIC:

You see the little lamb when it's lost,
and we're singing a song
to bring the lamb back.
There were ninety and nine
That safely lay
In the shelter of the fold
But one was
lost On the hills away
Far off from
The gates of gold
Happy, happy, we're gonna get this.
There were ninety
and nine That safely lay
In the shelter of the fold
But one was
lost On the hills away
Far off from The
gates of gold

(WHISTLES)

(ALL GASP)

(ERIC WHISTLES)

(KIDS GASP)

(SHUSHES)

ERIC:

the carbon dioxide.
Carbon dioxide, CO₂ into oxygen.
The tree also uses the
process of photosynthesis,
which we talked about earlier.
Now, question, where does
the tree get its water from?
The roots. Yes, the roots.
Stop!
(EXCLAIMING)

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)
(CROWD CHEERING AND APPLAUDING)
You got this. Come on!
(CHEERING AND CLAPPING)
Eric! Eric! Eric!
Eric! Eric! Eric! Eric!
Eric! Eric! Eric! Eric!
(WHOOPING)
(EXCLAIMS)
(SHOT FIRES)
(LOUD CHEERING)
- Eric! Eric! Eric!
- (CLAPPING RHYTHMICALLY)
Eric! Eric!
(ALL GROANING)
Damn it.
No, it's not fair!
(EXCLAIMING)
I said it's not fair!
Nicely done.
Come on! Come on!
Look at him! He's starving!
Get off me!
You won today's race the
day Japan invaded China.
No...
Come on! He's down already!
(SPEAKING JAPANESE)
We all thank you.
(THUNDER RUMBLING)
(EXHALES IN PAIN)
Li.
Eric.
Here you go.
They'll kill you. They'll kill you.
How did you get here?
You know, I have my way.
Your ways...
(PANTING)
David. David needs water.
He needs water.
I have something for you.
Eric, you anger the Japanese.
They're going to kill you.

We need to get you out of here.
What good will that do the others?
Hope.
What do they have without you?
(SOLDIER YELLS)
(ALL CLAPPING)
(ALL CHEERING)
Welcome back, chaps.
Can you walk okay?
Sit down here, David.
Okay, Eric, right here.
How are you feeling?
You're back. You're here.
- I'm okay. I'm okay.
- Anything broken?
Eric. Anything I need to know about?
You're okay? You sure?
Get some water in you, and let's
have a look at this eye. Okay?
(SPEAKING JAPANESE)
I hear the Japanese keep on
losing battles at the front line.
This is their second time
food truck didn't come.
I made them a deal.
Ten o'clock Saturday night.
Two times a month.

XU:

taking its toll on everyone,
including the guards.
I made a bargain with
sources inside the prison.
However,
grave danger existed from the guards
who would never bargain away
the Emperor's imperial power.
"N-A." Big "N," small "A."
Sodium mixed with chloride gives
us... What do you sprinkle in the...
Salt.
Xiao Shitou!
Come here. What surprises
do you have for us, huh?

(ALL EXCLAIM HAPPILY)

Here we go.

That's yours.

Xiao Shitou, would you like
me to teach you some chemistry?

Would you like Daisy to
teach you some English?

(EXCLAIMS)

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)

...of the season.

And this time of year when...

When the light of the season...

And they fall!

Sit down, Daisy!

I'm trying to conduct a class!

Let's take a small break.

I'm sorry.

I'm sorry.

Is Eric okay?

(GIRL SPEAKING MANDARIN)

(SHUSHES)

(HUMMING TUNE)

(INHALES SHARPLY)

Hey!

Xu Niu!

(WHISPERS IN MANDARIN)

Please.

Please, you've got to get me out of here.

Look... Look at what they've done to me.

Please.

Xu Niu, please, you've got to save me.

They're gonna kill me.

(SPEAKING MANDARIN)

XU:

Xiao.

Get in.

(SOLDIER SHOUTING)

Who helped David Marshall escape?

No, no!

WOMAN:

I don't know anything, okay?

I don't know anything!

Stop punishing us.
You're supposed to be
protecting us, not punishing us!
If you have lost our friend,
then you must find him for us.
You will all be punished
until I get a name.

XU:

He decided to join the
underground resistance forces
to receive and translate news
about Japan's increasing struggles
to win the war.

(CATHERINE PROTESTING)

Catherine. Come on, no, no, no.
You can't help like this.

No!

(CATHERINE SOBBING)

No! No!

- (WHIP STRIKES)

- (GROANS)

Follow my finger.

Both eyes.

It's painful over here.

Right, it's this side, isn't it?

Is that sore?

Deep inside.

Migraines are just more frequent now.

All right, okay.

Stand up.

Both feet.

Sit down.

Oh, my God.

My bunk. Put him on my bunk.

We need some warm water and a cloth.

Okay. Hugh, can you hear me?

Can you hear me, Hugh?

Do you know where you are?

Catherine.

Okay. Put this on your forehead.

(HUGH COUGHING)

(SHUSHES)

Okay, okay, okay.

It may be bronchitis,
but more likely an acute
bacterial pneumonia.

He needs medicine.

Soon.

Otherwise...

Any ideas?

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)

Major Kenji, you must provide medicine
for the American, Hugh Johnson.

We have no medicine.

We have no food.

Then I must ask that you
turn a blind eye again
and let these supplies be smuggled in.
There has been no smuggling in this camp.

Let me race you again.

If I win, you permit one
visitor to bring what we need.

We have raced, Mr. Liddell. And I beat you.

A proper race.

(SPEAKING JAPANESE)

Thank you, Major.

Sunday.

One, two, three, go!

(LAUGHING)

(GROANS)

Hope I'm not interrupting.

No, no, no.

The whole camp pitched in so
you could have a proper meal,
build up your strength for the race.

That's very kind of them,
but we all need our strength.

If the shepherd starves,
what becomes of his sheep?

You can't win this race, you know.

You shouldn't even try.

It'll kill you.

You know, I've often said
it was the prayers of others
that carried me to victory.

Let's give them something to pray for.

Hmm?

Let's give them something to pray for.
Come on, boys. Get back. Get back.
Open the door!
I've been here for two years.
I wanted to watch one race!
(GROANING IN PAIN)
No shoes?
A man runs with his feet, not his shoes.
Quiet!
Come on!
Quiet! This won't help!
Let's pray for him instead.
Amazing grace
How sweet the sound
That saves a
wretch Like me
Singing?
I once was lost
But now I'm found
- (EXCLAIMS)
- (SHOT FIRES)
Boys, it's starting!
The race!
(ALL CHEERING)
Yeah! Yeah!
(ALL CHEERING)
He is not here.
Check again.
It's nearly time.
He's gonna bring the medicine any minute.
Thank you.
You have a visitor.
Thank you. Thank you.
Catherine.
They're allowing medicine
to be brought in tonight.
I know.
You'll get well soon.
You'll get better.
Yes.
Be strong.
You're going to be a father.
(CHUCKLING)
What?

We thought you knew!

You're pregnant?

Congratulations, Hugh.

You old dog.

(BOTH LAUGHING)

(SHOUTING IN JAPANESE)

Xiao Shitou! Xiao Shitou!

Xiao Shitou! Get down! Get down!

Xiao! Don't! Xiao Shitou!

(GRUNTING)

(ALL YELLING)

No!

No!

XU:

all night at the fence,
silently praying and mourning
the loss of Xiao Shitou,
the gentle boy we had
adopted as our son.

It was difficult to pray
for those who were so cruel.

(SPEAKING FRENCH)

XU:

was placed in the hole.

Everyone was grateful for
his kindness and courage.

Hey. Would you let me do that?

- Thank you.

- Yeah.

- Yeah, thank you.

- You're welcome.

Okay.

Okay.

- So go up to the point where I say...

- Uh-huh.

I was carrying too much responsibility.

After months' rest...

Much better.

- Much better.

- Okay.

The Commandant Major Kenji

Kurata has told me that I could be

home around Christmas, according
to the repatriation request.
But Catherine, whose husband was lost
to her not long ago, is pregnant,
and for the sake of
her and the baby,
I asked the Commandant Major
to let her go instead.
I know you would have done the same.
Everlasting love to
yourself and the children.
Eric.

(TYPING STOPS)

Holy night
All is calm
All is bright
Round yon virgin
Mother and child
Holy infant
So tender and mild
Sleep in
heavenly peace
Just...

(PLAYS NOTES)

(CONTINUES PLAYING)

Be still, my soul
The Lord is on thy side
Bear patiently
The cross of grief or pain
Leave to thy God
To order and provide
In every change
He faithful will remain
Be still, my soul
From Uncle Eric for you.

XU:

I had received his message.
Eric Liddell's unwavering faith
in the essential goodness of mankind
had cracked the coldness
of my earthly soul.

(ANNOUNCEMENT IN JAPANESE)

The Secretary of State

on August 11th...

...unconditional surrender of Japan.

(ALL CHEERING)

We're going home!

It's over!

- It's over!

- What's over?

The war!

The war's over! The war's over!

(BELL TOLLS)

XU:

I had received many gifts
from Eric Liddell that helped
to make me a worthy person.
But the greatest gift of all
was his gift of hope.