

# Fortune Cookie Friends

by RV Staff Writer J.C.

Mei Mei frowned as she helped her mother and father set out the cooking supplies in the shiny steel kitchen. Her family had just moved here from San Francisco, having bought a small restaurant, which was set to open in the next few days.

“Moving here was a dumb idea,” Mei Mei grumbled, mostly to herself.

“What’s that?” Her mother asked, opening a box and lifting out several pots and a wok.

“Nothing,” Mei Mei mumbled. The girl had been grouchy about the move, but her parents had made the decision and were now too busy getting ready for the grand opening to listen to her complaints.

The first few days at her new school hadn’t been easy, either. She found it hard to talk to people she didn’t know, and it seemed like the students hadn’t even noticed her. Mei Mei sighed and got back to washing dishes.

On the day of the grand opening, Mei Mei’s parents were all smiles, welcoming customers into the restaurant, brightly decorated in gold and red. Even Mei Mei was in a good mood as she rushed around, seating guests, handing out menus, and pouring tall glasses of water. This was a big day for her family.

At one of the tables sat a family with two daughters who were about Mei Mei’s age. As she filled their glasses, Mei Mei realized the twins were in her class. Mei Mei ducked her head down so her long hair covered her face, and she turned away from the table.

Mei Mei’s mother found her soon after, in the kitchen loading the dishwasher.

“Honey, what are you doing back here? We need you out front with the customers.”

“Mom, I don’t want to be out there. There are kids from school!”

“So?” her mother asked. “That’s good! Go take them some fortune cookies and say hello!” She clucked her tongue disapprovingly at Mei Mei and disappeared out of the kitchen.

Mei Mei frowned. She grabbed a handful of fortune cookies that they gave out after every meal, but first she tore open a wrapper and cracked a cookie open for herself. She popped a sweet, crunchy piece in her mouth, and absently read the paper fortune it held.

“Many friends are found with a single smile,” it read.

Mei Mei sighed. She put a handful of cookies into a small tray and left the kitchen.

Mustering up her courage, Mei Mei approached the table where the twins and their parents were finishing their meal. She placed the cookies down, and bravely looked the girls in the eyes. She smiled.

“Thanks so much for coming to our restaurant! I hope you liked everything,” Mei Mei said.

“Ooh, fortune cookies, I love these!” One of the girls exclaimed, reaching for the tray.

The other sister looked closely at Mei Mei. Then her eyes lit up with recognition.

“Hey! You’re that new girl in our class, right? Isn’t your name Mei Mei?”

Mei Mei blushed and nodded. This girl knew her name?

“Yeah, that’s me,” she answered.

“I thought I recognized you! I’m Emily and that’s my sister, Sophia.”

“Hey,” mumbled Sophia, her mouth quite full of cookie.

“So, this is your restaurant?” Emily looked impressed.

“Yes, it’s my family’s. We had a smaller restaurant back in San Francisco, before we moved.”

“Wow, San Fran is so great! You need to tell me the best stores for vintage clothes there. I noticed you had some cool outfits in class.” Emily said, her twin nodding in agreement.

Mei Mei’s head was spinning. The twins had noticed her clothes? And liked them?

Emily continued. “But why didn’t you talk to us at school?”

“Uh ... I don’t know? I guess I’m just shy.”

“Well, there’s no need for that.” Emily said, in a matter-of-fact tone that reminded Mei Mei of her own mother.

“Nope,” added Sophia, shaking her head. “You can hang out with us and we’ll introduce you to our friends on Monday, okay?”

“That would be awesome.” Mei Mei tried to downplay the swell of happiness she felt, but she wasn’t succeeding. She beamed.

“Okay, we’ll see you Monday,” the twins said in unison.

“See you Monday,” Mei Mei grinned.

**Questions**

1. Why do you think Mei Mei is unhappy about her new home?
2. Describe her job responsibilities at the restaurant.
3. Do you think the fortune in her cookie helped Mei Mei? How?
4. How did the twins respond when they recognized Mei Mei?

---

**Vocabulary List**

Each of the vocabulary words below are used in the reading passage. As you read the passage, pay attention to context clues that suggest the word's meaning.

1. unison
2. muster
3. introduce
4. approach
5. realize
6. mood
7. several

---

**Context Clues**

Using context clues from the sentences in the passage, underline the correct meaning of the word in boldface.

1) “Okay, we’ll see you Monday,” the twins said in **unison**.”

- a. one after another    b. at the same time    c. the same voice    d. a silly voice

2) “**Mustering** up her courage, Mei Mei approached the table where the twins and their parents were finishing their meal.”

- a. gathering    b. hiding    c. decorating    d. admiring

3) “You can hang out with us and we’ll **introduce** you to our friends on Monday, okay?”

- a. hide    b. show    c. tease    d. give

4) “Mei Mei **approached** the table where the twins and their parents were finishing their meal.”

- a. came toward    b. went away from    c. opened up    d. knocked over

5) “As she filled their glasses, Mei Mei **realized** the twins were in her class.”

- a. became confused that    b. became happy that    c. became aware that    d. became upset that

6) “Even Mei Mei was in a good **mood** as she rushed around, seating guests, handing out menus, and pouring tall glasses of water.”

---

a. state of feeling   b. state of mind   c. outfit   d. physical health

7) “What’s that?” Her mother asked, opening a box and lifting out **several** pots and a wok.

a. shiny   b. old   c. many   d. a few