

**Title:** *Six Crimson Cranes*  
**Author:** Elizabeth Lim  
**Genre:** Fantasy, Young Adult

**Reviewer Name and Grade:** Michaila P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Date Reviewed:** April 1, 2022

Shiori, the youngest daughter of the king and the only princess of Kiata, a chinese-inspired fantasy world, is soon to be wed off to a Lord in the North for a political marriage. However, on the day of her betrothal ceremony, her bird, Kiki, flies away, leading Shiori to fall into a lake and be saved by a dragon, missing her ceremony. However, it is important to Shiori to make sure that no one sees Kiki, as Kiki is not an actual bird, but a paper crane that came alive from Shiori's forbidden magic. This mistake causes her to be reprimanded by her father, six older brothers and her stepmother, Raikama. Shiori is secretly glad she missed the ceremony, as she is a free-spirited young troublemaker who dreads the idea of moving up North and getting married. During the annual summer festival she sneaks away from her brothers and meets the dragon who saved her, Seryu, a proud, loudmouthed and arrogant young dragon who is the grandson on the King of the dragons. He offers to teach her how to control her magic and eventually becomes a close friend of hers. Once he leaves for the winter, disaster strikes as Raikama reveals that she also has forbidden magic and is a dark sorceress, and curses her six brothers to turn into Cranes and Shiori to not be able to speak or else one of her brothers will die. Trapped in a small fishing group village, Shiori finds herself a cook and is cast aside by the townspeople, who believe her to be a demon. Luckily, she is saved by a mysterious young man, who gives her the money to escape and his dagger to protect her. Now, aided by Kiki, Shiori must find her brothers, get back to the palace and defeat her step-mother or else be cursed forever.

*Did the plot (for fiction) or presentation of information (for nonfiction) keep you interested?*

The plot kept me engaged throughout the whole book as you follow Shiori as she goes from a princess to a cook in a poor town and her struggle to overcome her curse, defeat her stepmother and save her brothers. The plot twists were almost all unexpected and overall, it was a very engaging novel.

*Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?*

The pace of *Six Crimson Cranes* was good, but not great. The book starts off perfectly paced, slow, but it works for the story. The book continues this pacing all until the climax, where it speeds up immensely, giving the reader whiplash.

*What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?*

I would recommend this to 13+ year olds because although it does discuss some mature themes, it is a relatively simple read and very easy to comprehend.

*What type of reader would you recommend this book to?*

I would recommend this book to anyone who likes reading either young adult fiction, romance or fantasy. I would also recommend this book for anyone looking to read something new as the world is very refreshingly different.

*What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?*

The book is actually set in the same world as the author's previous series. However, you don't have to have read those books as this book takes place hundreds of years before that story.

*4 Stars, I enjoyed this book and found it worthwhile reading*

Overall, this book was pretty good. It had some very clear goals, and stuck with them throughout the novel. All the characters were fleshed out well, and none of them were annoying. Lim even managed to make all six brothers stand out well with their own personalities and relationships to the main character. And even though they do end up sidelined a little, the parts spent with them are enjoyable. The world building was extremely well done and everything was fleshed out nicely. However, the reason this isn't five stars is mainly because of the main antagonist. Although they were a frequently mentioned part of the novel, they felt shoe-horned in to have an honestly predictable plot-twist. Otherwise, *Six Crimson Cranes* is a fantastic fantasy novel that I would highly recommend reading.

**Reviewer Name and Grade: Joon-Gi K., 7<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Date Reviewed: July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

*Six Crimson Cranes* begins with Shiori, the only princess Kiata, drowning in a lake. Before she goes unconscious, Shiori sees a dragon and pearl that floats near her. Filled with worry, her brothers surrounded her and ambushed her with questions and demands. Her brothers are all princes of Kiata, Andahai and Benkai being the oldest, and Reiji being the third oldest. There was also Hasho and the youngest twin brothers Wandei and Yotan. However, none of the brothers believed Shiori's story, and believed it as imagination. However, Shiori discovered that Raikama, her stepmother, was not who she really said she was, and that she was a monster. As she rushed to tell her brothers, their stepmother intercepted them and turned the six brothers into Crowned-Cranes and cursed them so they could never meet someone and tell them who they really were. Shiori was cursed with a bowl on her head and so that every time she made a sound, one of her brothers would die. She blacked out, and reappeared on an island, completely stranded. Shiori tried to steal from a lady, but got caught, and was forced to work at the Mrs. Dainan's restaurant as a chef. She was ridiculed because of the bowl on top of her head, and the ability to not being able to "speak". Not before long, a sentinel traveled upon the restaurant, and caught Shiori trying to rob him during night. As she explained the cause, he understood, and offered a place at Iro, his hometown. Shiori, having to save her brothers, declined, not knowing fully of what might happen at Iro. The sentinel, as a final farewell gave her a coin, which Shiori gratefully accepted. The same day the man left the restaurant, Shiori left as well, using the coin as a passage on a boat. After travelling for very long, Shiori finally reached the mainland of Kiata, and found her brothers. Although they were in their crane forms, when it reached nightfall, they turned back into humans, and ambushed Shiori with questions and worry. With as much as Shiori could, she explained the problem and idea to her brothers, hatching a plan to return to their father safely. Throughout the book, Shiori and her brothers try to stop their stepmother and return to their father safely.

*Did the plot (for fiction) or presentation of information (for nonfiction) keep you interested?* Yes, it kept me interested because there was always a problem that Shiori had to solve, and with that came fun reading. It was very enjoyable and interesting, and kept me on the edge of my seat.

*Was the pace of the book too fast, too slow, or just right?* The pace of the book was just right, and the book kept flowing, with new problems and events happening every second during the book.

*What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for? What type of reader would you recommend this book to?* I would recommend this book to anyone in Grade 7 or above. The book has some word diction that it is complicated, though mostly everything is easy. I think anyone who likes to read fantasy and adventurous fiction would love this novel.

*What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?* The novel has the style of Eastern-Asia Literature and is part of a series.

*I would rate this book 5 stars.* The novel has lots of fun action in it and is enjoyable to read. It includes many twists and turns that catch the reader offhand, which many adventurous readers may enjoy. The main conflict was thoroughly visible, and the author showed the characters' clear actions throughout the novel. All in all, *Six Crimson Cranes* is a action-filled novel for readers who enjoy fantasy and adventure.

**Reviewer Name and Grade: Joyce L., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Date Reviewed: March 23, 2023**

The story starts off with a princess, Princess Shiori of Kiata, the only princess of Kaita. Her family, 6 brothers, a stepmother, and a father who is the King of Kiata. She is stubborn and hardheaded. Shiori's stepmother is her least favorite member of the family, named Raikama. Shiori has a secret, she has forbidden magic in her blood. No one else in the family has magic like her, or is she? She kept this as a secret because she knows, magic is forbidden in Kiata. She could even face harsh punishment from her father if she is caught. When she is alone, she folds a crane. She decorates her crane with a black beak, for crimson dot on the crane, she uses her blood. Shiori names her special crane Kiki, Kiki the paper crane slowly flaps her paper wings. Kiki is sassy and a little bossy at times but loves Shiori. Soon after a banquet starts but Shiori doesn't want to go because she will meet her future husband, Prince Takkan from the neighboring kingdoms. She instead goes to a secret garden and stays there. A pond in the middle of the garden, Shiori goes close to the pond and sees two ruby eyes staring right back at her. She falls into the pond and almost drowns but mysteriously is back on the land after she had blacked out. The ruby eyes were gone when she checked again, this dragon's name is Seryu the Dragon Prince of the Seven Seas. Time skip forward, Shiori finds out that her Raikama has a dragon's pearl. The dragon's pearl is a very source of magic from a dragon. The Raikama is furious and curses her and her brothers are cursed, her brothers were cursed and were turned into six crimson cranes. Shiori was cursed to have a bowl on her head so no one would be able to recognize her and forced into silenced. She was told not to speak of her brothers or her royalty to anyone or her brothers will die. The bowl Shiori has on her head hat covers her upper part of the face. She can see through it, but no one can see through it and recognize her as the missing

princess. Shiori goes on the adventure of finding a way to break her curse. She goes to weave a net to take away the dragon's pearl from Raikama. In the middle of the story, Shiori finds out that Prince Takkan is a nice, caring, and sweet person, not the cold blooded person she had heard from the rumors. In the end she gets the dragon's pearl and finds out Raikama's real name. Raikama sacrifices herself in the end but tells Shiori to promise her to give the dragon's pearl to its original owner, not the *King of the Dragons*.

- Questions -

*-Did the plot keep you interested?-*

The plot of story did keep me interested. At the end of each chapter, it would leave it off as a cliff hanger and the information of each of character would each flowing evenly. What was unique about the brothers or main side character was the fact that each one of them had different personalities. The fact that Raikama is such an engaging character! She is cold on the outside and in the beginning to someone who is caring and kind in the end is so sad but intriguing.

*-Was the pace of the book too fast or just, right?-*

The pace of the book was just right since every lore and story aspect was introduced evenly.

*-What grade level(s) is this book appropriate for?-*

The age appropriation for this book should be +10.

*-What type of readers would you recommend this book to?-*

The types of readers who would love this kind of book would be people who love fantasy, adventure, and fiction.

*-What other information do you think would be helpful for teens to know about this book?-*

Other information that would be helpful is that the sequel of "*Six Crimson Cranes*" is released named, "*The Dragon's Promise*" the third book is also expected to be a prequel of the first book.

*I give this rating 5 stars!* I adored it and loved every aspect about it. The aspect of the story was successful because I was able to understand each of the characters' personalities and emotions. The writing of this book is amazing! Each one of Shiori's brothers have unique personalities, traits, and gifts to them so it is easy to remember which one they are. Shiori and Kiki have a good friendship dynamic, and it was fun to read when they fight about small things. Prince Takkan was so nice, warm, and calm compared to Shiori who is stubborn and thick headed. Their relationship is like a sun and moon, one nice and one stubborn. Overall, I loved everything about this book and opened up a whole genre of magic for me.