

was no more than a distant. The morning was beautiful, the air soft and fragrant, and the birds melodious on the wayside. Yono was as a child on a holiday from school. She chased the great blue and gold butterflies, and when at last she caught one, tied it by its struggling wings to Jack's hat. He gathered blossoms and mosses and strung them into garlands which he wound about Yono-San's neck.

Presently Jack espied a gorgeous cluster of rarely beautiful flower hanging high from a moss-grown cryptomeria's projecting limb. Yono wanted it, of course, and of course, too, she must have it, although it was with no little difficulty that Jack climbed the great trunk to the depending blossoms. He was about to pluck the coveted flower when the slender bough upon which he stood, snapped short and he fell heavily to the ground below. The distance was not great, but the shock was sufficient to stun his senses. Yono screamed with true femininity as he fell, and seeing him lying upon the ground, his white face upturned, and his eyes closed, went at once into a spasm of wailing, believing him dead or at least fatally injured. Tenderly she drew his head upon her lap and fell to caressing his face with her hands, while tears fell from her pretty eyes. And thus it happened, when Jack's scattered senses presently returned, he found his head reposing softly and comfortably, and Yono's eyes looking into his with a mixture of tenderness and grief. And was he correct in the surmise that he had felt the warm pressure of a kiss upon his forehead? At all events he closed his eyes again, quite unnecessarily, and felt quite comfortable and contented, albeit he was aware of a sharp pain in his ankle. He almost forgot to rise until Yono inquired with affectionate solicitude whether he was hurt; then he discovered that he was unable to move without pain. Yono aided him to a reclining position against the offending tree, and presently Aunt Shorisha came along, and also soon a jirukisha that was empty. Into this latter Jack was carefully placed, with the help of its attendants, and they started homeward, Yono-San walking mournfully at the side of the jirukisha and constantly adjuring the carriers to select the smoothest part of the road.

It might have been a hardship for Jack to be laid up in his room thus disabled, but he found that there was a compensation in being the object of solicitude from the whole household, and particularly that Yono had constituted herself his almost sole nurse and attendant. A native physician felt of the injured member, and assured him that only rest, together with frequent applications of a magical lotion he himself prepared, were required for a speedy recovery. And it was Yono's fair hands that deftly applied the medicament and tenderly wound the bandages, and there seemed to be so much hypnotism about her soft hands that Jack was ever asking for repeated treatment! Then she attended his many other wants, filled his pipe and even lit it for him. She sang in her sweet way many songs, and wrote invocations in verse to the gods upon fragile bits of rice paper, asking for his speedy recovery. These she threw from the window from time to time, where they were taken up by the breeze and wafted far away on their missions of mercy. 'Twas thus the season wore on in happy abandonment. Aunt Shorisha came from time to time upon the scene, and seemed quite happy at the condition of affairs.

About three weeks after the accident, and when Jack had recovered sufficiently to walk about with the slight assistance of a cane, he sat one afternoon upon the little tiled piazza, looking in content and comfort upon the beautiful scene surrounding him and watching the graceful figure of Yono-San as she strolled about the garden, engaged in the pleasing pursuit of manufacturing a bouquet of japonicas and roses—for himself, as he well knew. He had almost forgotten the other world from whence he came, nor indeed did he desire to recall it. Why not take up his permanent abode here in this quiet paradise? The world would not miss him, neither cared he for it. This part of it was strange in its paradox—a kingdom of opposites—but a happy, don't-care life suited his temper now. And then with Yono-San he might be truly content and happy—who could say?

His meditations were interrupted by a footstep. It was the little bare-legged man who ran errands, did chores, and occasionally served as a carrier of let-

ters. This time he came trotting up to the piazza, where Jack sat, and suddenly dropped upon all fours before him, dipped so low that his forehead touched the ground, and the little bald spot upon the top of his head came prominently into view. Then he quickly arose, and, handing Jack a buff envelope, nimbly ran away. Jack knew it was a telegram, and hesitated to open it, for he knew its portent could hardly be less than an interruption to his pleasant summer. He looked at Yono coming up the path, waving a great bouquet over her head, then slowly opened the missive. As he feared, it was important, for it announced that a rich aunt in San Francisco was ill and besought his presence, as she feared her days were numbered. Poor Aunt Fanny! Jack had more than ordinary affection for his Aunt Fanny; besides he expected to be the chief heir to her great fortune.

He looked again at Yono-San, who was coming to him, her eyes bright and sparkling, her cherry lips parted with a smile that disclosed her pearly teeth. His heart grew tender, and he wondered what she would say when he told her. But it must be done, and at once. As Yono tripped lightly up the steps she noticed the little slip of paper in his hand, and glancing up at his sober face instantly divined trouble.

"What is it, Sir Jack?" she inquired anxiously.

"Bad news, Yono; bad news indeed. I must go home."

Yono grew white and let fall the bouquet.

"You go away? Home—to leave me—us? Oh, you cannot mean it, Jack!"

Leaning heavily upon him, poor Yono closed her eyes and sighed deeply, her bosom heaving convulsively in her pain.

Jack, hardly knowing what else to do, kissed her tenderly upon her cherry lips. Half opening her eyes, she endeavoured to stand unaided. "Don't go, Jack," she murmured, "don't leave me."

"But, Yono, said Jack, and there was self-reproach within him—"Yono, I will come back. Yes, in the spring, when the cherry trees bloom again, I'll be here." And he meant it, too.

This revived Yono-San, and she tried to look happy. Then Jack went on to explain his connection with Aunt Fanny, financially and otherwise.

What Jack meant to do when he "came back" he could just then have hardly explained to himself. He tried to define his future relationship to Yono late that night, as he sat outside his room smoking, as was his habit when a problem was to be solved. The garden below was in obscurity, the remittent lighting of June bugs appearing in that dark space like a rapidly moving constellation. The soft perfume floated dreamily about him with its semi-intoxicating influence, and as he gazed pensively upon the thin crescent moon that hung like a silver scimitar above Fuji-San, he thought that nowhere else could he live so contentedly. Yes, he would return.

Next day Jack was ready to go. As a keepsake at parting he gave Yono a fine diamond brooch, and fastened it himself at her pretty throat. Then he jumped into the waiting jirukisha, and with a last kiss and word of promise, was off. Yono stood a long time at the wicket, watching the disappearing vehicle as it sped down the road among the low-boughed plum trees. At the bend of the road, leaning far out of the conveyance, he threw her a farewell kiss, to which she responded by a sad waving of her hand, and, as he was lost to view, she burst into tears, and going within the house consecrated gifts to Jizo, the travellers' deity.

Jack was petulant and cheerless during the whole journey. Ere he reached his destination his Aunt Fanny had died, leaving him a handsome legacy, together with an unfinished lawsuit that seemed hopeless in its harassing tardiness. Worse than all, it demanded his personal attendance, and what with this and other business necessary in the final adjustment of Aunt Fanny's estate, the whole winter was consumed.

The glitter and blaze of the city, the artificiality of the drawing-room, as he designated it, pulled upon him. The smirking young men and the frivolous young women made him sigh for the gardens and freedom of Omiya again. And then Milly Benson was married, and although he was glad of it, he felt grieved and injured because she seemed happy and almost forgetful of their past nuptial tenderness. At last, there seemed a prospect of getting through with it all, and just when he was congratulating

himself upon this prospect, he fell ill of fever, and lay for many long weeks unable to think consecutively upon any subject.

When convalescence came at last, the summer had almost passed. Many hours he had spent dreaming of the flower land across the Pacific. His thoughts dwelt with pleasure upon the green fields, the water-falls, the gardens of Omiya, and upon Yono-San. "Poor Yono," thought he, "what would she think of him and his promise now!" More than a year had passed since that day he left her, and he had promised to return in the spring. But at last he was able to travel. The swift speeding steamer was none too fast for his thoughts, that dwelt in the gardens at the foot of Fuji-San.

One afternoon he found himself ascending the road amid the rows of plum trees that ended at Yono-San's dwelling. He had come for a purpose, and Yono-San was a part of that—the whole of it—for he would remain here always. That he had decided at last. He knocked impatiently upon the door, once, twice, ere his knock was answered by a picturesque looking kato, a stranger to him, who with abject prostrations desired to know what the stranger wanted. Jack, who expected to be met by old Naka-San, or perhaps by Yono herself, was displaced. The strange servant knew no English, but he understood that Jack was inquiring for Yono. But Jack, in his impatience making no progress with that name (for his inquiries were met with a blank stare) asked for Naka-San. A look of happy intelligence overspread the kato's face, who made a low obeisance and hastily departed. Presently the panel slid back and old Naka dropped upon her knees before him, and tapped the polished floor with her head.

"Rise, Naka," said Jack, "I've come back to see Yono-San—to stay here forever! Where is Yono-San, Naka?"

A troubled look overspread old Nako's face.

"Alas, poor Naka, Angel of light," Naka moaned sadly, "Yono gone—Yono dead! Ah these many moons! The words came to Jack with a rude shock. Dead! he never had dreamed of anything like that! She might have gone away; she might even have been given in marriage—but to die! Instead of the shy, smiling face of Yono, the old beldame stood there, telling him that Yono was dead, and beating her shrunken breast as if that would appease him. The sun seemed clouded, the sweetly perfumed air grew rank and unpleasant to him as he sat there desolate and shocked at the sudden termination to his dreams of the past months. At last, the exuberance of his grief being exhausted, Naka-San was induced to tell the story.

Long after his excellency had gone, Yono had pined like a wilted flower. Daily she had picked the choicest of Jack's favourite flowers and decorated his old room. In the spring she had brightened much, she sang gaily, and stood often at the wicket by the road looking in the distance. Summer came, and her eyes became more wistful; she grew pale and thin, but she

still watched down the road. Then at the end of the summer some dreadful fever came, and she lay very ill for a long while, pining slowly, uncomplainingly away. At last she died, clasping in her thin little hands the precious brooch she had worn constantly since Jack had given it to her—she even begged that it might be buried with her; and her wish was granted.

That was all. It was enough for poor Jack. After a time old Naka sorrowfully led him out through the garden where he had spent so many happy, careless days. Through a long lane running therefrom, and over a little mountain path, within an enclosure of bamboo bushes where the shadow of Fuji-San fell at twilight, they came to a little mound on which loving hands had planted lotus flowers in abundance. Here Jack found the grave of Yono-San.

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