

"Then dinner must wait," replied Jim. "Alice, I have bad news for you."

"Why, what is the matter now? she enquired.

Jim thereupon proceeded to furnish her with an abstract of his interview with Helen. She heard him without a word, but it was to be easily seen how distressed she was for her friend.

"My dear Jim," she remarked, when he had finished, "this is indeed serious. What do you propose doing?"

"I scarcely know what to do," Jim answered. "The case is an extremely delicate one. The old man has taken a decided dislike to me, and if I interfere between Helen and himself it will have the effect of adding to his wrath and do more harm than good. And yet I cannot allow her to remain there, and perhaps run a daily risk of her life."

"What does she think about it herself?"

"She has an absurd notion that her duty lies in standing by Bursfield in his trouble. That of course is all very well in its way, but no one could possibly expect her to turn herself into a keeper for a lunatic."

Alice, seeing the tired look on his face, crossed the room to him, and placed her arm round his neck.

"Dear old Jim," she said, "you must not worry yourself too much about it. All will come right in the end. Helen is a girl of very marked character, and it is very probable that, under her influence, Mr Bursfield's condition may improve. Were I in your place I should trust matters to her for a while. You know that she loves you, and you may be quite sure that she will keep her promise, and let you know directly anything is very wrong. But there: what am I thinking about! I should have told you when you first came in that there is a telegram waiting for you. Here it is."

As she spoke she took an envelope from the mantelpiece, and handed it to him.

"Who can it be from?" he asked, as he tore it open.

Having withdrawn the contents, he read as follows:—

"Standerton, Childerbridge Manor, Childerbridge.

Murbridge found. Come at once, 13, Upper Bellington-street, Robins."

(To be Continued.)



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Complete Story.

## An Idyll of a Japanese Garden.

In the cool shade of her father's garden sat O-Hana, the flower of Yokohama. By her side was a ponderous book, opened at the legend of the Forty-seven Ronin. It lay on the turf where it had fallen—unheeded, forgotten. Her chamicen was in her hand, but the dainty fingers rested idly on the strings, and the instrument was as silent as the harp of Tara. O-Hana's eyes stared vacantly into the air; her thoughts, which, in young ladies of her interesting age, so often run riot, were in a whirling labyrinth of tender day-dreams.

Nothing could have been prettier, with a diminutive, fragile prettiness; or grander, with a lofty, imposing grandeur than this garden in the suburbs of Yokohama. The sheltered bowers, the little sparkling fountains of carved stone, the weeping bamboo nodding to the breeze, the joyous sun dancing on the gilded roof of a distant pagoda, looked like a scene from a heathen paradise; but far above them all, sweeter than the sweetest pastoral poem that has ever been written or thought of, was the little sad-eyed mous'me squatting in the shade.

O-Hana was a triumph of Oriental loveliness. Her complexion was as clear and rosy as any European's, without a tinge of that dry yell which is supposed to be characteristic of the Japanese beauty. Her features were small and well formed, and did not by any means give one the impression of having been sat upon in childhood. Her hair, although black as night, was extremely soft, and fell almost to her heels in a shower of glossy glory. And here the description must stop, for nothing could convey an adequate impression of O-Hana's eyes. Dark and soft, with an expression of wonderful tenderness and love, they flashed and fired, melted and implored, changed with every variation of her mood.

Away in the distance, the deep blue waves laughed at the golden sun, and hundreds of gaudy junks and fishermen's boats were plying in the harbour—but O-Hana saw them not. Around the garden the picturesque town of Yokohama spread itself like a panorama, the white temples and the pretty tea-houses standing out against the misty expanse of ocean-like fairy palaces in a wondrousland—but O-Hana dreamed and saw them not. In the background rose her father's yasiki, and behind that, melting in the clouds, old Fousiyama heaved his volcanic summit at the heavens—but still O-Hana stared in space, and saw not these things.

The pretty head that drooped over the chamicen was in a strange medley. The story of the Forty-seven Ronin, the brave princes of Japanese chivalry, was still vaguely holding possession of her mind. The little mous'me had a great capacity for love, and felt very deeply the want of someone to lavish her affection upon. Oh! could the divine Kouransouke, the noblest of the Ronin, have returned to life how gladly would she have flung herself at his feet! What felicity to be the handmaid, the slave of such a hero! How different her must have been from the petty men with whom she had been nurtured.

O-Hana loved not her own people. There was O-Sada-san, the son of the richest merchant in Yokohama; how complacently would he have drunk the sake with her. But O-Sada-san's attentions were received coldly; his devotion was not even rewarded with a smile. Then there was Danna-san, who was employed in an English firm. He certainly dressed better, but was quite a fool. Then there was Tama-

ya; he was—  
A sudden interruption scattered O-Hana's meditations to the four winds. Far down the street she heard a quick pitter-patter of feet, and the shrill cry of the running ricksha-man. This in itself was quite an event in O-

Hana's quiet existence, for, being in one of the most remote suburbs of the town, visitors were few and far between. The sound came rapidly nearer; the whoop of the runner grew momentarily more distinct, and, in a few minutes, an elaborate ricksha whirled into the gate and up the pathway.

Before the vehicle had stopped a young athletic Englishman, in the dress of a naval officer, sprang from it, and gave the ricksha-man a hearty smack on the back, which made him cough for five minutes.

"Well done, my boy, well done," he cried in English. "I like to see a man who doesn't mind getting hot. I used to do a bit of sprinting myself when I was at Oxford, but dash me if I'd care to toe the mark with you for a trifles, although you run with a most abominable style."

He looked at the yasiki and round the garden with obvious delight. After the madding crowd of the town the place seemed peculiarly quiet and peaceful. He walked up to one of the little fountains, and examined it carefully; then he looked at the giant bamboo, and of course, immediately caught sight of O'Hana, staring at him with unaffected admiration. He was somewhat staggered

for a moment, but quickly recovered his national self-possession, and advancing towards her, raised his hat, and executed a most elaborate bow.

"Good morning, mous-mee-san." The Englishman's pronunciation was so nice, and yet so different from her own, that O'Hana's adoration increased. Her eyes instinctively turned to the ground as she answered:

"Good morning, Idjin-san" (foreign gentleman).

"Is this the dwelling-place of Yotembo-san, whose name is famous in Yokohama for his knowledge of antiquities and rarities?"

"This is the yasiki of Yotembo-san," replied the mous'me.

"And you, if I may be so bold?"

"I am O-Hana, the daughter of Yotembo."

"Would it be possible for me to see your father?"

"Yotembo-san is out. He has been called to the yasiki of the prince, to tell the age of two swords, which once belonged to a great Daimo of the prince's family. He will be returning in a short time, and if the foreign gentleman will sit and take a cup of tea, it will be an honour to Yotembo and his daughter."

The mous'me bowed to the ground in the Japanese fashion, and Ronald Carforth, the young officer, overcome by the little lady's attractions, was quite willing to avail himself of the opportunity of a tete-a-tete with her.

O-Hana clasped her hands, and in a few minutes the ne-san (servant) brought the tea, in the tiniest of

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