



THE FATAL STAR.

A Fourth of July Story.



sort, but if I had, you would not buy them, Min Toko."

They are speaking in Chinese, for Min Toko, though not a child of Chinese parents, has been brought up by them. You can believe the story that his father was a Russian and his mother a Tartar when you look at him.

A little Chinese boatwoman took him from his dying mother's arms and nursed him with her own, somewhere near those quarters where there are English warehouses and the barbarian comes to traffic in tea and porcelain, and he starved and played and swam about with her own, and early in his boyhood came to San Francisco. There he dwelt in Chinatown, and became renowned amongst the showmen of San Francisco for his acrobatic feats. Tonight he is engaged to assist in a performance on the lawn before the mansion of Benson Blashfield, Esq. Mr. Blashfield will have fireworks and a great supper, the crowning feature of which will be the feats of Min Toko, who, amongst other things,

make in ten minutes would wipe your rival out of existence. But of what avail would it be? Rich American ladies do not marry such as you. Her relatives would kill you if you touched her hand."

"I have kissed it thrice when we were alone," says Min Toko. "Yes, I have kissed her hands three times. The next time it should have been her mouth. Let me kiss this bridegroom so that she cannot suspect me, and it shall be yet. Look!" He thrusts his hand into the bosom of his tunic and draws forth a pouch. "See!" he whispers, piling bank notes before Lin Ham. "How much for that toy?"

The eyes of the old man glaze. He gathers up the heap in his claw-like hands, and says, slowly:

"This sum makes me have enough with which to return to China and live there happy for the rest of my life. After all, what does one more dead barbarian matter? But I will tell you this: Unless you can make your rival take the toy in his own hands, it is useless."

"I can manage that," Min Toko replies.

The old Chinese goes to a little recess in the room, before which hangs a beaded screen, and comes back, holding in his hand a curious kite.

"You fly it like any other kite," he explains. "When at its full length, you begin to call: 'Come down, butterfly!' A butterfly descends the cord and flies away. 'Follow rose!' you say. A rose glides down the string and drops to ashes. 'Come down, pretty mouse!' you call next. The mouse descends and runs up your shoulder and is gone. Then you call for a blue bird, for a white bird, for a red bird, for a yellow bird, a green bird. Thus it might end with the applause of the people. But let me work upon this kite ten minutes longer and add one trifle more, and then there will be something else to see. Then you may call aloud: 'Come to me out of the sky, bright star.' And far above you may see a star shine, bright as any in the heavens. At this moment, he whom you wish to kill must hold the cord, for that star brings death. As it touches the man's breast life departs from him. Mark me well, the other things that come down the cord are innocent as drops of dew. The star is fatal."

"I understand," replies Min Toko. "Hasten with your work, Lin Ham."

A little later the old Chinese puts into the hands of the younger man a paper box covered with shining roses, butterflies and birds, and says to him:

"Min Toko, the great performer, you have bought of me a pretty kite, which brings down from heaven the birds of the air, and the flowers, the spirits pluck. For all I know, you may coax the stars down its cord also. It is well

is he a Chinaman?" asks Lin Ham. "He is an American," said Min Toko. "He has taken the woman I love from me. This rich man, to whose house I go to-night, has a daughter. I love her you grin! Why not? I am handsome; I am no Chinaman; I am famous; I am a favorite with the ladies, and she smiled on me. You grin again! Of course, the rich man would say no. I did not mean to ask the rich man. If she loved me, that was enough. I could spirit her away where they would never find us. That is what I mean to do."

"You are mad!" says Lin Ham. "No," says the acrobat. "She could be won. She can be still, if I can kill this man."

"Do you mean her father?" cries Lin Ham.

"No. To-night they celebrate her marriage," said the acrobat. "To-morrow the bridegroom will take her away. To-night I must kill him. She will be a widow for awhile; afterward, none."

"It is the dream of a madman," says Lin Ham.

"Does it matter to you?" asks the acrobat. "I know that it was you who made the toy the rich tea merchant gave to his wife when he found she was false to him. The little bird that perched on her wrist and sang and bit her fingers like a real bird, and of the bite she died. I know it was you who—"

"No more reminiscences!" cries Lin Ham. "I admit that I have another toy that, with a slight addition, I could

and windows of private patriots. All the flags are big. Everything is on a large scale in California, the fruit that is exposed for sale, the great roses that enamored youths are buying for their adored ones. The children are playing in the streets with mighty torpedoes, that make an explosion calculated to deafen one. Large men, with ample ladies on their arms, may be seen in every direction. Immense baskets are being borne to the doors of their customers by grocers, butchers and confectioners. Immense suppers are to be given tonight, and many happy returns of the glorious Fourth will be drunk in rivers of champagne. Everything is on a large scale but the Chinese, whose small figures and alert movements are in marked contrast to the bulk and size of everything else on which the eye falls.

Yet little Washy-Washy balances on his head a clothes-basket that would serve him for a cradle, or in his kitchen—for he is a favorite cook with California housewives—stirs a pot in which he might easily be boiled himself.

In the arms of San Francisco sleeps Chinatown, the curious offspring of old China, of which Americans think that they know all that is to be known because they can visit the shops and go into all the strange places, and, if they are in the humor, make themselves sick with an opium-pipe among opium smoking Chinamen.

Lin Ham is an ordinary dealer. He keeps no shop. He executes orders for the favored few. In each he puts a surprise—an invention for the day. His are the curious boats, all made of colored fire, moving on the water, apparently by means of a stream of fire at the stern, manned by little men in blue and gold and crimson, and all going off in a wonderful flash and whizz and sputter at last. His are those cylinders which, rising into the air, discharge wonderful sprays and stars and jewels skyward, while at the same time fiery little acrobats let themselves earthward by golden ropes and only vanish as they touch the ground. His was the great green dragon that coiled and darted moonward, and wrote "July"

BLINKS UP AT THE FACE OF A TALL MAN.

across the sky before it changed into the flag of our nation, which every one so admired last Independence Day.

At present something that smells very curiously is smoking and steaming in queer fashion, in what looks like a little furnace, and Lin Ham, while still busy with his hands, twists his head about and blinks up into the face of a tall man in a curious, theatrical costume, who stands with his bare arms folded on his chest, and looks down upon him. The man wants Lin Ham to invent a fatal trick.

"Such things are costly," he says. "I do not say that I have anything of the

There has been the usual reception, the usual display of gorgeous presents, a fine band has been playing, professional dancers have done their part; now they are ready for Min Toko and his performances.

The whole lawn is flooded with electric light, and, in mighty tents, all decorated with roses, they are setting forth a feast. The bride and bridegroom sit upon a sort of throne that seems made of orange blossoms. Tiers of seats, occupied by people in evening dress, surround the lawn, leaving an archway through which the performers enter. It is opposite the bridegroom; and, as Min Toko passes through, bowing and smiling, his eyes meet those of the bride, and he seems to give her special greeting.

Standing in the midst of the circle, he begins to gather, from heaven knows where, white roses, of which he makes a mighty ball, how, no one can guess. This he throws toward the throne. As it floats in the air it opens and forth flies a little pink Cupid, who flings kisses abroad and flies skyward and is gone. Thunders of applause follow this compliment to the bride, and then the little boy-in-waiting on Min Toko brings in the chairs, the tables, the fans, the wands, the boxes, and the show begins. It is sufficient to say that the man seems to be able to overcome the laws of gravitation, to stand upon nothing, to fold himself up like a foot-rule, to put himself away in spaces that seem impossible; and to do all this gracefully, with beautiful accessories.

The bride's eyes never leave him. Min Toko did not boast falsely. Though his position and residence in Chinatown seem to her to place him as far beneath her as though she were an empress and he a serf, she has always admired him intensely, and she knows that he is in love with her. She has often wished that he were of her race and kind. He has been made a sort of pet amongst the Californians before whom he has performed, and he has had opportunities to speak a few words to her and, as he said, to kiss her hand thrice. To-night she feels that she bids him adieu and to-night he fascinates her strangely.

When at last, as usual, he inquires if any two of the audience will assist him in some closing performance, she whispers to her bridegroom:

"Come, Arthur, let us go."

And the young man replies:

"Awfully bad form; but if you wish it, of course."

It is a look that Min Toko has given her that makes her do this thing, and the bridegroom hands her down into the center of the lawn, and they three stand together there.

"Will you be pleased to help me fly this kite, sir?" says Min Toko to the bridegroom, as he flings into the air the thing we know of. "See, this is how!"

The kite darts upward swiftly in a moment. Its brilliant breast is no longer visible. Only a long copper-colored cord shimmers in the air from Min Toko's hand moonward.

"Come to me all ye butterflies!" he cries. "Come! Come!" And down the cord sweep a myriad butterflies and cover the performer's bosom and vanish. "Little mouse!" he cries. "Come, little mouse!" and whistles exquisitely. And the little gray mouse creeps down, sits on his shoulder and is gone. "And now, sir," Min Toko says, with a bow to the groom and a smile to the bride, "if you like you may call a blue bird and a white bird, a red bird, a yellow bird, a green bird, and after that one of the stars from heaven." And he puts the cord into the bridegroom's hand, who calls loudly:

"Here, you blue bird, come if you can!" And there is a blue bird and amidst shouts of merriment, and while the bride claps her little palms and showers smiles about her, the birds of all colors come down.

The green bird has arrived and disappeared, when suddenly the bride puts forth her hand playfully and snatches the cord from the bridegroom's hand.

"You shan't have all the fun," she says, with a pretty pout. "I intend to call the star down myself. Ah, how the cord pulls! No, you shan't touch it. I will do it alone. What do you say, Min Toko? 'Brightest star of heaven come to me!' is that right?"

She beams on him and lifts her sweet, shrill voice and calls aloud, and far up in the sky appears a great diamond star, that shimmers and glews as it comes earthward. And, with one wild spring, Min Toko snatches the cord from the bride's hand, saying something that she only hears as he does so, and pushing her heavily from him so that she falls into her bridegroom's arms.

Then the star is upon Min Toko's breast and he lies upon the ground, and the gaudy kite flutters down and lies beside him; and those who gather about him see that he is dead, with the fearful burn of electricity upon his bosom.

The kite must have attracted it, they say. Plainly, when he snatched it from the bride's hand, he saw that there was danger. Poor fellow! How brave! How noble!

There are no more festivities that night, of course—no feast, no fireworks. All night the bride weeps bitterly, and when, in the morning, her bridegroom bears her away, she is still broken-hearted.

The words that Min Toko whispered as he snatched the fatal cord from her are still ringing in her ears. She will never repeat them to any one, but she can never forget them. They were: "Adieu, my love! I die for you!"

Look Out for Your Boys.

Giant freerackers this year are fourteen inches long, and contain powder enough to break a plate-glass window when exploded on the curb. Small boys will not only have to look for their fingers on the Fourth, but parents will have to look for their boys.—Kansas City Journal.

SILVER FAR AHEAD.

TWO-THIRDS OF THE DELEGATES FOR 16 TO 1.

Governor Stone Predicts Bland's Nomination on the First Ballot—Kansas Men Friendly to the Missouri—A Big Club of Bland "Rooters" in Missouri.

CHICAGO, June 27.—A canvass of the delegates of every state and territory on the currency shows that 278 delegates to the Democratic national convention are either by instruction or personal preference for the free and unlimited coinage of silver at 16 to 1 against 328 delegates instructed for or favoring the continuance of the present gold standard.

BLAND ON FIRST BALLOT.

Governor Stone's Prediction on the Chicago Convention.

KANSAS CITY, Mo., June 27.—Governor William J. Stone came to Kansas City this morning. He had a long conference with David Overmyer of Kansas in his rooms at the Midland, and a few minutes later said to a reporter:

"Bland will be nominated on the first ballot at Chicago. It will be a 16 to 1 platform, and then with Bland on it as our candidate we will have two 16 to 1 platforms. Bland himself is a free silver platform. It will be one silver platform on another, just like that," and the governor placed one of his hands across the other to illustrate his point.

David Overmyer of Topeka was asked what the Kansas delegation would do at the Chicago convention. "Most of our delegates," he said, "have a kindly feeling for Bland. They are not, however, instructed, and have not committed themselves."

Central Missouri Bland Shouters.

COLUMBIA, Mo., June 27.—A Bland club numbering 500 members was organized here last night and will attend the Chicago convention in uniform, accompanied by a band. It is estimated that over 1,000 men will go to Chicago from Central Missouri to "root" for Bland.

WHAT MARK HANNA SAYS

Declares Workingmen Care Not for Free Silver—They Want High Tariff.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, June 27.—Mark Hanna, the Republican manager, does not think the silver question is a matter of great consequence to the workingmen, saying: "The thousands of workingmen, who are employed in the manufacturing of this country, do not care an iota about this question of free silver. They say they do not, and it is apparent that what the industrial classes of America want is better times, a dawn of prosperity, and some assurance that they will ere long receive better wages, or at least a stipend equal to that which they were getting before the financial depression which followed the Democratic victory of 1892. I am convinced of the correctness of what I am saying, because I have talked with my men on this subject. I have 5,000 to 6,000 men in my employ and I know by personal investigation that the men who are working in the shops and in the mines care little or nothing about the whole financial question. They recognize the fact that it is one of the issues of the campaign, but that is about as far as their interest goes. It is the farmers and the debtor classes of the country who argue the free silver matter. The working men want prosperity and they realize the fact that this much desired condition can only come as the result of the remedial measures of the protective tariff. However, the nomination of McKinley on a gold platform is going to stimulate industry. It will bring to this country much of the capital which was withdrawn by foreign investors and its effects will be felt in an equal degree among local capitalists. Why, I myself know of enterprises involving an investment of millions of dollars whose consummation was purposely delayed until the protectors could ascertain the character of the declarations in the St. Louis platform."

Churches in a Quarrel at St. Joseph.

ST. JOSEPH, Mo., June 27.—The church investigation of the Rev. Thomas Cooper, until recently the pastor of the Hundley Methodist Episcopal church, for conduct unbecoming a minister, resulted in his suspension. A second investigation was made by a committee of ministers of the other churches and Dr. Cooper has stated that its verdict was favorable to him, although it was not made public. Now the pastors of the seven Methodist churches here have declared that the other ministers have been trying to attend to the business of the Methodists, and the committee has been called upon to publish the result of the second investigation.

Missouri Teachers' Officers.

WARRENSBURG, Mo., June 27.—The nominations committee of the State Teachers' association, in session at Fertile Springs, has reported the following officers: Superintendent W. H. Martin of Lamar, president; J. A. Whitford of Moberly, secretary; J. A. Merrill of Warrensburg, treasurer; J. D. Wilson of Sedalia, railroad secretary; J. S. McElhee of Cape Girardeau, first vice president; B. E. Duncan of Maryville, second vice president; J. T. Vaughn of Shelbyville, third vice president; J. Fairbanks of Springfield, fourth vice president.

Matthews Nominated for Senator.

NEWTON, Kan., June 27.—Royal Matthews of McPherson was nominated by the Republican Senatorial convention of the Thirtieth Senatorial district. S. T. Danner, the present incumbent, was the candidate from Harvey county. One hundred and seventy-seven ballots were taken before a choice was made.

C. H. Vandiver Nominated.

PLEASANT HILL, Mo., June 27.—C. H. Vandiver of Higginsville was nominated by the Democrats of the Seventeenth senatorial district for state senator at a convention held in this city yesterday.

CORBETT-SHARKEY FIGHT

A Finished Battle for a Purse of \$10,000 Agreed Upon.

SAN FRANCISCO, Cal., June 27.—James J. Corbett and E. J. Lynch, Sharkey's banker, met yesterday and negotiated for a finish fight for \$10,000 and the largest purse offered by any club. Sharkey was not present, and the agreement was not signed, but when the arrangements will be completed. One of the stipulations already agreed on is that the fight must take place within six months.

Paul Herman, ship flag signal quartermaster of the United States man-of-war Philadelphia, who taught Sharkey how to read and write and who gave Corbett's late adversary his first lessons in boxing, says that he is ready to back his protégé for \$10,000 against any man in the world.

Sharkey is the idol of the sporting world to-day, and the most extravagant predictions as to his future abound. Sharkey bears his honors modestly, but reiterates his desire to meet Corbett in a longer battle. He received a challenge from Maher for a contest for \$5,000 a side. Sharkey says, however, that he will make no other plans until his meeting with Corbett has been arranged. The only mark of punishment which Sharkey bears is a black eye, acquired during a breakaway. In regard to an agreement with Corbett Sharkey says: "Of course, Corbett would fight differently in a fight to a finish. He would not do any ineffectual, but neither would I. I would not take so many chances as I did last night, and I would be sure when I went to hit, I believe I can put Corbett out in ten rounds. Anyway, I want him to fight me for \$10,000."

Corbett, in an interview, claimed he was not badly punished, saying that his only marks were acquired when he fell on the floor after a clinch. Corbett said: "I made a mistake in grappling with Sharkey. If I were to fight another four rounds go with him I would not clinch. I would stay away and do only open fighting. It was his wrestling that tired me, and was his wrestling that I fought in the fourth round. I was quite exhausted. In throwing my science away and fighting Sharkey at his own game, I weakened myself. I should have stayed away and outlined my own work. I would not have put him out, but on the other hand I would not have given him a chance to weaken me, thereby giving the impression that he is a great fighter, when he is ignorant of the rudiments of boxing." Corbett says he does not believe Fitzsimmons will notice his challenge, as he believes Fitzsimmons is afraid to meet him, so Sharkey will be the first man to be served with a fight for championship honors.

BRITISH CLOTH TRADE.

Exports of Worsteds, Dress Materials and Cottons Decrease Remarkably.

WASHINGTON, June 27.—Consul Meeker of Bradford, England, reports that the decrease in the cloth trade of that place with the United States as compared with last year has been from \$47,779 in February to \$1,705,602 in May. The principal items affected were worsted coatings for men's wear, closely followed by stuffs comprising linings, dress goods, etc., while cotton goods are credited with a decrease of twenty-eight per cent. The machinery exports increased fifty-two per cent. All of the mills in the American trade have consequently either been put on short time or have a large portion of their looms idle and numbers of workmen have been thrown out of employment, while there has also been a falling off in the price of finished goods.

To counteract the depression the fashionable world of England has been appealed to use the products of the Bradford mills in place of the goods now imported in quantities from France and Germany. Samples have been sent to the Marlborough house to have the Princess of Wales select materials for the tressour of one of the young princesses, who is soon to be married, while the queen herself has given an order to some persons in the district who will turn out goods in their hand looms in their cottages in the ancient way.

DARING ROBBERS FOILED.

A Long Tunnel to a Los Angeles Bank Vault Dug in Vain.

LOS ANGELES, Cal., June 27.—In trying to reach the heavy steel vault of the First National bank, one of the largest financial institutions in Southern California, robbers dug a tunnel 102 feet in length extending from a street adjoining under the cellars of three other banks. This tunnel had progressed to a point directly beneath the vault when the police authorities were apprised of its existence. The burglars had begun to remove the brick masonry supporting the steel vault. The work is believed to have been done by a gang of at least five or six persons, but only one—James K. Stephens—has thus far been arrested.

Siox Indians Celebrate.

OMAHA, Neb., June 27.—Six thousand Siox, the remnant of the most powerful fighters of the American Indians, are celebrating the great event in their war history—the 20th anniversary of the destruction of Custer's command on the Little Big Horn, June 25, 1876. They are gathered at the scene of the terrible massacre and although peaceable are indulging in all the fantastic dances and ceremonies incident to their traditions. There will be another big celebration July 4.

To Shout for Bland.

TOPEKA, Kan., June 27.—The Kansas Democratic Flambeau club of this city held a rousing meeting last night and decided by a unanimous vote to attend the Democratic national convention at Chicago and furnish a pyrotechnic display there in the Bland demonstration on the evening of July 6.

Another Correspondent Expelled.

HAVANA, June 27.—W. W. Gay, a correspondent of the New York World, was notified last night that he had been expelled from the island and must leave Cuba by the first steamer.

"I DIE FOR YOU."

made. If any accident happens, that is the fault of hers, not mine. I am not responsible."

"I absolve you from all responsibility," Lin Ham, replies Min Toko.

He throws about him a cloak that covers his theatrical costume, and carries the box downstairs, where a carriage containing the paraphernalia used in his exhibition awaits him, and is driven to Mr. Blashfield's residence. There they celebrate not only the glorious Fourth but a wedding.

Early in the evening, the rich man's daughter, Rosabel Blashfield, had been married to Mr. Arthur Ware, the son of another California magnate.



"I die for you," said the acrobat, "she could be won. She can be still, if I can kill this man."

"Do you mean her father?" cries Lin Ham.

"No. To-night they celebrate her marriage," said the acrobat. "To-morrow the bridegroom will take her away. To-night I must kill him. She will be a widow for awhile; afterward, none."

"It is the dream of a madman," says Lin Ham.

"Does it matter to you?" asks the acrobat. "I know that it was you who made the toy the rich tea merchant gave to his wife when he found she was false to him. The little bird that perched on her wrist and sang and bit her fingers like a real bird, and of the bite she died. I know it was you who—"

"No more reminiscences!" cries Lin Ham. "I admit that I have another toy that, with a slight addition, I could



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