

GETTING NEXT TO THE BANZAIS

BY **J. W. FORD**

AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT REPORTED IN THE PICTURESQUE LANGUAGE OF PROFESSOR SHORTY McCABE

Say, if the physical culture game ever makes me so rich that I feel disgraced except on do you know what I'm going to do? Open a free advice parlor for the sudden wealthy. They need it more than the poor needs bookless libraries or germless milk. There's all kinds of societies for keeping the poor contented with poverty, anyway; but all the rich-yesterday folks has handed them a knock in the family column.

What gives me a thought like this was the scum I've just been mixed up in with Mr. Todd Maddox. Hadn't heard of him yet? Well, you will. He's one of the apparatus brand of plutocrats, all right; but it's been comin' on him so swift he hardly knows it himself.

Why, a few years back he was carryin' a dinner pail and eatin' the surplus trolley to the foundry, out in Altona. But one day he figured out a patent doodle to a blast furnace, swaps it for a big block of preferred stock, works a combination frezout on the gang that was tryin' to put the Indian sign on him, and the first thing he knows he lands in a leather-covered deal with his name on the stock attached. Since then he's struck a gait that makes a sky-rocket look like it was being pulled up by a string.

You can judge how new he is by his habits' showed up at the studio for the first time less'n a month ago. He's been comin' regular ever since, though, and he's got a standing order to keep him down to a hundred and eighty-five even if I have to manure him with sand-paper. (Considerin' the size of the check I'm to get if I hold him to form, I reckon the game's worth stayin' with.)

That's what's been fetchin' me out to Soundmoor, where he's located the family for the Summer. He's one of them Sound front properties that he leases by the season for about a hundred dollars a day, and the Maddoxes is havin' the time of their lives rattlin' round in 26 rooms and five acres of front lawn. Todd, he does the Friday night to Monday mornin' act; not because he likes it, but just so's to keep in touch with mother and the kid.

That's one of his good points. Mrs. Maddox ain't what you'd call a little Bright Eye. She's about a 46 measure from shoulders to waist, with a wash-day complexion and a voice that could go against the tomtoms. But her Todd never lets her do a thing but work, and so far he don't act like he was thinkin' of changin' her for the kind you can pick out of a roof-garden chorus. Well, I was makin' my third trip out there, and everything was lovely, when this banzal proposition was sprung. Mr. Maddox he meets me at the station in the black and yellow touring car, with a worried look on his low cut brow.

"Shorty," says he, "you're mixed more or less with the old-light, havn't you?"

"Sure!" says I. "I ain't too proud for that."

"Never run across any real swell Japs?" says he.

"I've seen a few all-eyes down hired giv's work, and watched others rumblin' rollin' half-joints and agoutin houses; but I can't say I ever met any that

come in through the front door," says I. "Have you?"

"No," says he, "but there's one due here tomorrow night that I've got to treat like an equal. He's a baron—Baron Hoshi."

"You're comin' on," says I. "Next thing you'll be diggin' up a coat of arms and givin' tea parties to the King of Siam. Where'll you meet up with a Jap Baron?"

"Seems that this was somethin' that had been slid on to Todd unexpected. He'd got a cablegram from the trustees of the steel trust, who was somewhere in Europe, tellin' him how the Baron, who has a lot to do with givin' out the Jap armor plate contracts, was goin' to strike New York, and how he'd got to be taken care of and taken care of right.

"Course, if the big wheel was at home himself he'd been the one to do the job; but as he wa'n't, the arrow points to Mr. Maddox. Now if it was a case of productin' estimates on a thousand tons of air-bolts, rags or bolts, it's a middler's strike, or talkin' Dutch to an investigatin' committee. Todd would have been Ever Ready Roger; but when it comes to doin' the at home for a Par contract, was goin' to handle it, he don't know where to begin.

You couldn't stagger Todd Maddox for good, though, unless you dropped a safe load on his head. He's one of those bull-necked boys, with hair in his ears and a jaw like a stone crusher, and he's ready to tackle anything baited up to him.

Not that he's any of the real articles, like Pinckney, or Mr. Purdy Pell, but he has to fall back on a few Pittsburg friends that he can round up at the Broadway hotels, and he calls on them for help. The best they can do is to agree that allippin' the welcome hall to a Jap calls for a Jap programme. Then they makes a few notes on the baron, and remember of "The Mikado" and "Madam Butterfly," and there they leaves him.

Todd takes this for a cue and blazes ahead, but when he starts to work out the details he finds that he's ballasted light, and by the time I get on the scene he's a mile up in the air.

"I've only got 24 hours left before the baron shows up," says he, "and all I've done is to order a gross of paper lanterns to string around the lawn. But that's no more than the Ladies' Aid Society would do for an ice cream festival on the passage grounds. I've been scratchin' my head for hours, though, and can't think of another thing."

"Are you still stuck on turnin' Soundmoor into sort of a tea garden?" says I.

"It's my only play to jolly the Baron," says I.

"Then why not ring up a decorator and let him do the job?" says he.

"Blamed if I'd thought of that!" says Todd.

You see, he hadn't been travelin' with the money business long enough, he got his ideas on their ways of farnin' out such things to experts. Once he gets the idea, though, he pushes it hard. By 10 o'clock next mornin' the place was rarin' over with different games—a caterer, a costumer, a decorator, and an agent for an employment bureau—and the Maddoxes has worked up a programme of events that he says it had been copied off a tea chest.

"There," says Todd, stickin' his thumb under his suspender buckles and shiftn' his cigar to the other side of his face, "I figure that'll show him we know how to fix things up for his kind—three dozen Jap flags, flyin' and draped; paper lanterns and an East Side peddler, with a little strain of Freemason thrown in. We takes it for granted that he'll eat with

his fingers and wipe his mouth on his sleeve; but Maddox says he's prepared to overlook anything in reason.

And that was our state of mind when we sees the party rollin' up the drive in the two carriages Todd has sent for 'em. "Great Scott!" says I, viewin' the aggregation, "there ain't a rattin' bat or a cotton bathrobe in the bunch. You know them pictures on Jap fans? Well, we was goin' by them.

"They must have stopped at some ready-made clothing store on the way up," says Todd.

"But there wa'n't any aweshop tags on their frock coats or white vests, for they fitted as well as anything you'll see on

a look sideways? Nix! Not one of the bunch so much as bats an eyelid; but the Baron steps out, takes off his silk bowtie, and gives us a straight English come-back that was a little the smoothest and politest elater of language I ever listened to. English, mind you, and not a figger-load of struts at that! Say, there was words me and Maddox wouldn't have tried to unload if we'd been talkin' to the man in the middle of the box. He was goin' to give us a lesson in the box, 'em and lock me over."

"The Baron," he swallows hard a couple of times, and then he says he'll be charped to do it. We shook on that; but I was measurin' him up curious, and I guess he was doin' the same by me, though you can't judge what them kind of people are thinkin' about.

By five o'clock Todd has got his second wind and takes the bunch in tow, leadin' 'em around the grounds and pointin' out the decorations. Maybe if the bottom had'n't dropped out of his plans he'd have say for them banzal gents that they try to look interested. You couldn't much blame 'em, though, for they'd lived during much excitement over strings of paper lanterns.

I knew Maddox was hankin' on the dinner as his big card; but we hadn't got away with more'n three courses before the frost began to settle down hard. Even Mrs. Maddox, loomin' up at one end of the table in a kimono so stiff with long-legged birds worked in gold thread that it looked like she was draped in sheet iron, couldn't cheer us up. Without sayin' a word on either side, it was plain as day that the straight, he points to a round-faced, rolypoly duck who was dressed to the minute, and says, "Allow me to present Baron Hoshi."

"Here's where you do your speech of welcome," I whisper to Todd, nudgin' his elbow. "Jump in and turn on the hot air."

"Sure enough, Todd was there with the goods. "Say," says he to the pinhead, "I'd like to have you pass it on to the Baron that I'm mighty glad to see him, foreigner or not. Tell him that so long as him and his friends stay around the place I want him to remember that this is Liberty Hall, and if he don't see what he wants all he's got to do is ask for it. Now you dress that up in polite Jap conversation, and I'll make it right with you."

"Does anybody crack a smile or throw

thoughtful, "I must admit that these dishes are not entirely familiar; but I assure you that the compliment they were intended to convey is deeply appreciated."

It hit Maddox where he lived, that little speech did. "Now that's what I call good," says he. "Suppose we sidetrack the rest of this near-pood and call for a new deal."

"The Baron asks him not to bother. He was for stickin' the card and hopin' for the best; but Todd has got his jaw set. "Maria," says he, "suppose you step out to the kitchen, head that off, and see if you can't get some rattle up and see if you can't get some kind of a meal that will fit fer us to eat."

"Todd," he just gives her a look and jerks his thumb over his shoulder towards the kitchen. That settles it. With her face the color of a red flannel underdies, Maria gets up and trots out, with a couple of minutes she was back, whisperin' in his ear.

"Corned beef and cabbage!" says Todd. "Good! Tell the help they can have set the table for a Jap, and when they want, let the beef and cabbage come our way in a hurry."

And say, that was the kind of home-own, browned, mushy boiled in their skins, corned beef well streaked with fat, new cabbage, and plenty of bottled beer that came fresh right off the ice.

"Ed he shud be! Not so you could notice with the naked eye. Todd has the platters set right on the table, and by the time the ten of us has got through eatin' up for more'n the first washin' much use washin' the dishes. Three empty beer bottles stands before the Baron's plate, and the apple pie was brought in, and he's wearin' a look of brotherly love that he cheerin' to see. All the rest of his crowd had followed suit; but so far as destroyin' food went, Hoshi was high man.

"Mr. Maddox," says he, patten' his vest, "I have been promisin' myself for ten years that when I returned to the United States I would go back to the New Haven boarding-house where I lived during my college course, and indulge myself in just such a meal as this."

"College," says Maddox. "Say, you don't mean to tell us that you went to Yale? Then maybe while you were there you learned something about drawing three cards."

"If I had been more proficient in that extra, or not taken it up at all, my education might not have been such an expensive matter," says the Baron, givin' him the wink. "It was only in my senior year that I came to realize the folly of holdin' up a kicker when the luck was running against me."

"You'd do it," says Maddox joyfully. "Would you object to our making up five hands for this evening?"

It was the easiest thing in the world, for that was the most refined and accomplished of Japs, and he could ask to meet. Inside of half an hour Todd and the Baron and three others was sittin' comfortable and happy around the smokin' room table, and the Baron was makin' a dressy, had hung the others into a pool game and was spottin' five balls for the best of 'em. So what looks like a star game, had hung the others into a pool game and was spottin' five balls for the best of 'em. So what looks like a star game, had hung the others into a pool game and was spottin' five balls for the best of 'em. So what looks like a star game, had hung the others into a pool game and was spottin' five balls for the best of 'em.



"PERMIT ME TO PRESENT MY TRAVELING COMPANION AND MEMBER OF MY STAFF."

the kind he could slap on the back and lead out to where the dry Martin's was all built but droppin' in the olive. Then after dinner the regular programme was for all hands to step across the hall and range themselves around the green cloth while Todd counted out the stacks of red, white and blue. As long as the ladies stayed in it was nothin' but a mild little quarter-limit game; but Mrs. Maddox always made the breakaway about 11, and from then on until 2 A. M., or later if next day was Sunday, Americus club rules went—no limit but the roof.

Outside of distributin' pasteboards, and loadin' a crowd into the tourist car for a supper trip to some roadside, Todd had high ideas of how to make folks feel glad they'd come. He did eppin' the pianola on them once in a while, or feed some of May Irwin's gems into the phonograph, but that was just to fill in time. Burnin' gasoline and playin' draw was his long suit.

"But say, Shorty," says he, "do you think this Baron knows anything of the game?"

"Gee!" says I. "You can't look for a rice catin' foreigner like that to be as refined and cultivated as you, Mr. Maddox. Ten

jolly," says I. "Just fire it at him off-hand, and maybe he'll have a chance to pass a 20 to whoever does the translatin', and he'll polish it up as he passes the language on."

That helped some; but it was an hour before Maddox got over the nervous chill brought on by the thoughts of havin' to make a speech. He was game, though. He had his eye on them armorplate contracts that ought to be comin' his way, and he meant to do what was right and proper by the Baron, even if it went so far as sayin' grace at dinner.

"Honest," says I, "you wouldn't tackle the job of spelin' off a blessing?"

"Sure!" says Todd. "All the one I know is 'Now I lay me; but I guess I could struggle through that."

We agreed, though, that the Baron bein' a heathen, it would be safe to leave this out; and that brings us to swappin' views about Japs in general. The Baron wouldn't have been much puffed up if he could have heard that argument; for we finally settles it that he must be a sort of a cross between a Chin' laundryman and an East Side peddler, with a little strain of Freemason thrown in. We takes it for granted that he'll eat with

Fifth avenue; and the silk lids was this season's block.

"Maybe this is only the advance guard," says I, "and the Baron is bein' lugged up by hand, in a sewing chair. A cute little brunette gent, wearin' gold-rimmed eye-glasses and carryin' a cane, hops out and asks which is Mr. Maddox. Havin' got that straight, he points to a round-faced, rolypoly duck who was dressed to the minute, and says, 'Allow me to present Baron Hoshi.'

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NANCY and I and the LITTLE GOD



A HALLOWE'EN STORY BY LOUISE LEXINGTON

HAD I not so solemnly promised Nancy, I doubt whether, after all, I should have kept my engagement to spend All-Hallowe'en at the Wilson's suburban home. Firstly, a committee meeting had defined me an unconscious able bodied man, and then, a slight break to my machine, when only half way there, managed to consume the better part of another precious hour in the repairing, so that I was, at last, uncertain whether true wisdom lay in going forward or back.

Remembering, however, that the mystic ceremonies peculiar to this holiday festival are mostly performed at midnight, or thereabouts, I proceeded upon my journey, reaching my destination only a little before that eerie hour.

Nancy herself let me in—dear little Nancy, who was tonight upon the eve of her twentieth birthday. She assured me of a welcome, laid her warm little hand in mine and, with a gasp, she exclaimed, "Oh, how could you ever come to the fire!" She drew me unceremoniously into the dining-room. She laughed at my surprised glance about the deserted rooms, and hastened to explain, "The men are smoking in Bob's den; mother and father are half asleep in the library, and the girls are in the kitchen—not 'falling head and heels' but making a magic cake with which to tempt the fates—a cake that must be mixed and baked with never a spoken word, and all undisturbed by the presence of a man."

I seated myself at Nancy's side, upon the couch near the open fire. "And you, little scoffer, why aren't you in the kitchen, too?" I asked her.

"She grimaced adorably. "I was in bed," she confessed, "and it's no fault of mine. I assure you, that I am not there. Alicia happened to remember I spoiled the mystic number, and so, arguing, I suppose, that as I was the least given to silence, or belief in their silly superstitions, as well as the least likely to wed, I should be properly banished. Oh, look look!"

Nancy suddenly leaned forward and, seizing the towel, knelt down before the stove and began fishing about in the ashes in such a desperate manner that I listened to her side anxiously.

There I espied the cause of her concern. Side by side, well forward among the coals, rested several large chestnuts, all beginning to emit those premonitory hisses and spitters which foretoken an early explosion.

"I can't have them, you know, until one bursts open," she explained, and her delightful earnestness thrilled me with a feeling I had never before experienced for Nancy. Of course I knew the old love test well, and the fact that I had discovered Nancy absorbed in it surprised and delighted me, as she had never before, to my knowledge, evinced the slightest interest in anything sentimental.

I looked at her again, in the guise of this newly discovered game, and found her transformed Nancy. It had been the one helpful element in her



NANCY SUDDENLY LEANED FORWARD AND SEIZED THE TONGS.

her frank pleasure, the anticipation of my own part in the affair most delightful, "are you quite, quite sure, dear? Look again!"

"It certainly is you, John," she answered, seriously enough. "I could never mistake that nice, big fellow." And then, in the next breath she exclaimed: "Oh, dear, I do wish those threesome girls would hurry!"

Nancy, Nancy! was ever mortal so capricious! That in one moment she should profess such joy in the lover fate had chosen for her, and in the next should voice such a ridiculous wish, was quite childish.

But I was not one to let the opportunity of speaking while the moment was propitious slip through my fingers with-out a desperate effort to improve it, and

I knew my chances of being interrupted were growing less each moment. Then I had an inspiration. "Wait just one moment, please," and vanishing above stairs she soon returned wearing a dark cloak with riding hood that completely enveloped her. We stole forth, and after leaving the glaring circle cast by a big electric arc near we found ourselves in a weird semi-darkness that seemed especially difficult in such an overwhelming profusion to decide upon any particu-

lar one and for no definable reason kept rejecting this one and that. As I was thus casting aimlessly about an enormous mastiff rushed from his kennel and with fearful leaps and bounds made directly for us, barking furiously.

"Run!" I warned Nancy, and determined to use a kale stock for our defense in absence of a better weapon, I yanked up the nearest one and started after Nancy, who had by now, I was happy to see, tumbled gracefully over the fence in a little dark heap on the other side. As I reached the fence the big brute pursuing me made a final vicious lunge, and just missing my hand, buried his teeth in the cabbage I carried.

I heard his jaws grit together ominously. Before he could snap the second time I had landed beside Nancy minus my "kale stock" and too much out of breath to utter a syllable.

Nancy, mistaking my silence, I suppose, began to cry hysterically, and at that I got to my feet and helped her up.

"Oh, John," she said, tremblingly, exclaiming in turn each of my hands which held her own. "I was so sure he had bit you. I was so sure I—I was afraid to ask," she added, with a sobbing catch in her voice.

I laughed, purposely indifferent, and said: "Not a scratch, Nancy! I'm all here. Not even a piece gone from my Sunday coat-tail. But he everlastingly spotted that cabbage, Nancy, and it was a dandy!"

But Nancy refused to treat the mat-

ter lightly. "John," she whispered, tragically, "I heard his awful jaws crunch crunch together, and it might have been you! It might have been you, John—or me!" This last in a pitiful little way that went to my heart.

I crushed her hands between my own, and declared solemnly with my lips close to her ear: "No, Nancy, little girl, it could never have been you—not until he had first eaten me all up. Nancy—for I love you better than my life."

Nancy raised two luminous eyes to mine, and I felt the loose earth from her cabbage root trickle merrily down my back. "John," she asked, "I was just wondering what Dot Barbour would say to this?"

I had just been wondering what Nancy's mother would say to it, but her remark made me ask in astonishment: "What ever has Dot Barbour to do with it, darling?"

"Nothing, John, just nothing at all," Nancy assured me in a muffled voice, "only, you see, those were her chestnuts I was watching tonight, and she was quite anxious about the result, and, I thought the result would particularly please her."

"And was that why you seemed so glad, Nancy? Would you hand me over to Dot Barbour, I I I guess you'd both goody! goody!" I reproached her merrily.

"No, John, dear—not now," Nancy answered me, and I was content.

Lord Wolseley When in Power

Lord Wolseley, of England, is now finding out this fact, just as General Grant, in the United States, discovered it a generation ago.

The illustrious career of this noted British soldier, who at one time was spoken of as "England's only soldier," having the most pathetic of endings. He, like the noted campaigns in Canada, in India, in Egypt, and in the least civilized portions of Africa. Almost always success has been his, only one noted early failure being charged against him. He did not reach Khartoum in time to save "Chinese Gordon," who was beleaguered there. But even this one misfortune was shown to have been no fault of his, and was not permitted to put any emblems on his brilliant record.

His successes were the boast of the army. The soldier loved to recite his deeds in the Burmese war, now more than half a century ago, of how he had fought with distinction in the war of

the Crimea, aided in the suppression of the Indian mutiny, battled against the Chinese in 1860, helped in the Red River expedition of 1870, led the Ashanti campaign of 1874, fought in South Africa five years later and was commander-in-chief of the British forces in Egypt in 1882. Now in his 74th year of life, the old fighter finds his reputation gone, he is poor and feeble, and that nation which once worshipped him has turned against him.

The Boer war, which was a tragedy to so many reputations, put Lord Wolseley on the downward path.

When Wolseley was at the summit of his fame a grateful country had voted him liberal rewards, a large sum of money being placed at his command. But Wolseley, like many another soldier, understood little of the art of investing money. In his desire to so place his wealth that it would bring him the greatest possible return, he fell into the hands of a company of shippers, and they ended by completely stripping him.

Now as he is tottering to the grave, a broken and helpless old man, he finds himself compelled to sell everything he has, his home, furniture, his relics, almost everything, in order to raise the funds to go to the Continent, where he can live more cheaply than at home, and where perhaps he will not so often be reminded of the past glory that was once his, but which has now gone from him forever.