

The Golden Bantam

By
Eva Morse Henricks

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"And then you pulled his pigtail!"

"Yes, dear, and then all three scampered."

"And the cute, little yellow man?"

"Wang Fo! He dropped to his knees and kissed my hand, and said I was his preserver, and gave me the golden bantam."

Little Flora Ward sat in the lap of her great friend, Alvin Prescott, immensely interested in quite a tragic recital. He was telling her of an encounter in a dark side street the evening before with three sinister Chinamen. They had backed another yellow-headed countryman against a brick wall. One of the assailants held his throat in a talon-like clutch. A second had imprisoned his arms. A third was advancing to dispatch him with a glittering steel knife, when Prescott intervened.

"And what was the golden bantam, Mr. Prescott?" inquired the interested little one.

Prescott fumbled in his pocket. Eager eyes scanned the odd-looking pin he drew forth. It represented a bantam rampant, with curious script characters on its outspread wings.

"I think the three wicked men were highlanders, my dear," explained Prescott—"that is, men belonging to a cruel society who make a business of killing people they don't like. Poor

"I have found her."

Wang Fo, as he called himself, must belong to some other secret society. I suppose the golden bantam is its emblem, for he kept saying that the bantam pin would make me friends with all his people."

"What a sweet, cute little pin it is!" said Flora enthusiastically.

"Well, you shall have the trinket," replied Prescott, and pinned it on a band of ribbon at her neck.

"Oh, how good you are!" cried Flora ecstatically, and jumped to the floor and ran over to where a charming young lady was busy at some fancy work. "See, Aunt Lydia—the beautiful pin Mr. Prescott has given me!"

"You are spoiling the child, Mr. Prescott," spoke Miss Ward, but with an indulgent smile.

He did not reply, but his eyes met her own with a rapt, longing expression. She read its meaning—love—not only for the little one, but for herself as well. He seemed about to speak. The memory of what had followed an offer of marriage caused Prescott to control his deep emotion. Soon he left the house.

It was hard to be about daily in the company of the woman he so devotedly loved and refrain from urging her to reconsider her decision. It had been announced in a kindly way, so considerably, in fact, that Prescott half believed that but for circumstances Lydia might have favored his plea. An orphan herself, her life was wrapped up in little Flora, who, having lost both father and mother, was cherished by Lydia as a responsibility to whom she had devoted her life. This much she had told Prescott in answer to his offer of marriage.

There was another suitor—Leslie Shaw. Prescott had never liked him. He was persistent in his attention to Lydia. He was a man about town, with unknown antecedents. Prescott had experienced relief and satisfaction when a servant of the house, with whom he was a favorite, told him of the summary dismissal of his rival.

It seemed that Shaw had impudently Lydia to accept him as her husband. She had given him the same answer that Prescott had received: Her life was bound up in little Flora. The enraged Shaw had fiercely wished the little one was dead, had let loose his wicked temper in a way that shocked and disgusted Lydia. Then Shaw had sworn that he would yet win her as his wife, if it took him ten years to accomplish his purpose, and had gone away in a tempest of wrath.

Lydia never gave any token of that stormy interview, but Prescott was well satisfied that she had a contempt for Shaw. She feared him, too, Prescott believed, and, while he was glad that a persistent rival was out of the way, he kept himself on the alert to guard against any attempt to annoy Lydia on the part of Shaw.

One evening the telephone bell in his room rang sharply. His name was spoken breathlessly, and he thrilled and tingled as he recognized the tones of the woman he loved.

"Is it Mr. Prescott?" she asked in a tone that trembled.

"Yes, Miss Ward."

"Will you please come to the house

at once—oh, at once, please!" and Prescott dashed from the room, tracing anxiety and urgency in the well-known summons that might mean some thing helpful for Lydia.

He found her distractedly pacing the floor when he arrived at her home. She was white to the lips and her eyes bore the traces of a poorly suppressed anguish.

"Flora!" she gasped. "She is gone!"

"Gone? You mean—" began Prescott in alarm.

"Stolen, kidnaped, spirited away! She was alone in the garden for an hour playing with her dolls," narrated Lydia. "When I went to call her in she had disappeared."

"But—kidnaped? Impossible!" cried Prescott. "She must have wandered away."

"I found this note on a garden seat," proceeded Lydia. "Read it."

The crumpled scrap was signed with one name—Shaw—and it ran: "You will hear from me shortly. Unless you agree to marry me you will never see little Flora again."

"The scoundrel!" cried Prescott. "I will set the police on his track at once."

"No! no!" implored Lydia. "You do not know this man Shaw. If any such attempt is made, he will disappear, and Flora with him. Oh, try and find her! Try and bring me back my lost darling!"

Alvin Prescott had a difficult task before him. Shaw was not to be found at any of his occasional haunts. No trace was discovered of the missing child. The grief of Lydia was pitiable. Prescott devoted all his time to the mission in hand, but it was of no avail.

It was the fifth morning after the disappearance of Flora, that, walking along the street, he observed a squat oriental figure speed across the thoroughfare to his side. It was Wang Fo. "I find you!" he cried in extravagant joy. "The pin—the golden bantam. You lose?"

"No, I gave it to a child—"

"Have found her. You come—come, quick!"

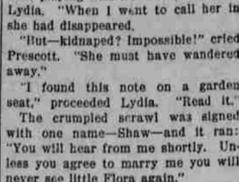
With faint heart of hope Prescott accompanied the half-coherent, but intensely excited Wang Fo. He led him to the Chinese quarter of the city, and through sinuous and mysterious passages into what seemed to be a secret lodge room.

There, on a dais, surrounded by Chinese women, was Flora. She was supremely contented, for they had given her all kinds of quaint toys and seemed only bent on entertaining her.

Wang Fo told his story. The child had been brought to some avaricious friends of his to hide or ship to some other city as the order might come. He, Wang Fo, had discovered the golden bantam pin. He had removed the child into the charge of more trusty friends. He had guessed much. It led to seeking out Prescott.

They never heard of Shaw again—"they," for what could come of it, but that the rescuer of the dear little one should prevail upon sweet, loving Lydia to give her a protector for life?

TWO BULGARIAN PORTS



VIEW OF VARNA

VARNA, Bulgaria's Black Sea port, which was bombarded by the Russians just after Bulgaria entered the war, is situated in the North, near the present boundary of Roumania, on the Bay of Varna, a capacious, sheltered inlet of the Black sea, says the National Geographical society bulletin. It is connected by rail with all of the important regions of the country which it has long served as principal outlet. It possesses an incomparably finer harbor than Dedegatch, the Aegean port of Bulgaria, from whose development so much future advantage is expected. It lies within easy steaming distance of Russia's naval port, Sebastopol, being about 300 miles distant.

The port is the third city of the kingdom, ranking after Sofia and Philippopolis, and it has been strongly fortified. It has played an important part in Bulgaria's military history, as the chief point in the so-called "Varna quadrilateral," which formed the basis of Bulgaria's defense toward the north and east before the loss of Dobrudja to Roumania after the treaty of Bucharest. The quadrilateral was composed of Varna, Shumlia, Ruzhuk and Silistria. Silistria is now well within the Roumanian frontier, close upon the Danube. Ruzhuk, Shumlia and Varna now form a triangle of fortresses, stretched along the northeastern Bulgarian frontier.

Varna is 325 miles by rail east-northeast of Sofia, the capital. It is connected with Ruzhuk, in the north-west, and with Sofia, in the west, by trunkline railways, while branches connect it with central and southern parts of the kingdom. The railway from Ruzhuk was opened in 1867, and with its coming began the city's prosperity. Bugas, south of Varna, has given it strenuous competition during recent years.

Built on a Hill Side.

The city is built on the hilly northern shore of the bay, which, besides offering peculiar facilities for defense, makes it very picturesque. At its foot the River Devna cuts through the mountains to the sea, and all around the hills shut in the valley and the port. Despite considerable modern efforts at improvement, the city plainly shows its age, and its irregular, ill-paved streets, lined with outworn buildings, breathe the peace of a forgotten valley. Several industries, however, have penetrated to the city, and modern restlessness and modern smartness stand just before, as the prosperity of the kingdom and of its first port grows. Varna has a population of about 38,000.

HEALTH BENEFIT OF YAWNING

Expert Advises Regular Exercises as a Measure for Doing Away With Throat and Ear Troubles.

Yawning is said to have an exceedingly healthful function besides having a salutary effect in complaints of the pharynx and the eustachian tubes.

According to investigations yawning is the most natural form of respiratory exercise, bringing into action all the respiratory muscles of the neck and chest. It is recommended that every person should have a good yawn with the stretching of the limbs morning and evening for the purpose of ventilating the lungs and tonifying the respiratory muscles.

An eminent authority asserts that this form of gymnastics has a remarkable effect in relieving throat and ear troubles, and says that patients suffering from disorders of the throat have derived great benefit from it. He says he makes his patients yawn, by suggestion or imitation, or by a series of deep breaths with the lips partly closed.

The yawning is repeated six or seven times, and should be followed by swallowing. By this process the air and mucus in the eustachian tubes are aspirated.

New Plants for America.

The bureau of plant industry reports that its agricultural explorer, F. N. Meyer, who already had many remarkable finds to his credit, has recently sent in an unusually interesting collection of new fruits from the Tibetan border of China. These include the Tangutian almond, the Potanin peach, and a notable series of wild forms of the ordinary cultivated peach.

Mr. Meyer's latest expedition succeeded in reaching Lanchowfu, when further progress was prevented by the desertion of the interpreter. Recent collections have largely augmented the agricultural department's stock of jujubes and persimmons from western China.

Opportunities in China.

There are great opportunities at the present time in China for the American, for it is reported that never in the history of China have the Chinese been better disposed to America and things American. It is said that there are numerous chances for Americans to establish industrial plants, "China offering the best field in the world for cotton manufacturing."

There are tens of thousands of miles of railroads to be built; there are tramways, telephone lines, electric plants, glass making establishments, oil mills and flour mills to be erected, while there are rich mineral deposits to be mined and native products to be exported.

True Diference.

"Why does Bliggins insist on telling us he was an expert baseball player when he was a boy? He wasn't anything of the kind."

"Well," replied Miss Cayenne, "I don't think we should criticize him. It's rather nice of him to be so desirous of our good opinion to be willing to tell whoppers in order to secure it."

HIS OTHER SISTER

By CLARISSA MACKIE.

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Jack Fenby came into the dining room waving a telegram at his assembled family. "Guess who is coming tonight," he challenged.

"Isabella Drew," hazarded Betty, with sisterly devotion.

"Oh, pshaw!" blushed Jack. "I didn't mean Isabella."

"Well, she is coming," went on Betty, smoothly. "Father and mother are going to town on the 8:42 to stay over night and I've telephoned Isabella to spend the night with me—there. I'm such a dear, you ought to tell me about your message, Jack!"

"It's from Lance Freeman," he replied.

"Lance Freeman from Panama?"

"Yes. He's up here on business. He has promised to stay with me," he added proudly. "I tell you, folks, Lance is a pretty big gun down there on the isthmus, and Betty"—addressing his sister in an offensively patronizing tone—"it's a good thing you're not, the paint-and-powder sort of girl—Lance detests the whole tribe."

"In-d-e-e-d!" drawled Betty, over her toast and tea.

"Yes, indeed! He's terribly fussy about women, you know."

"He must be a detestable paragon himself," murmured Betty.

"Don't quarrel, children," chided Mrs. Fenby. "You must do the honors Betty, and, Jack, try to persuade Lance to make our home his headquarters while he is North. I was very fond of his mother."

"Mr. Fenby and his wife departed for their train and Jack accompanied them, to spend the day at his office in town.

Left to herself, Betty held conference with the cook and then went up to her own room, where she sat down before her dressing table and stared thoughtfully at her charming reflection in the oval mirror.

What she saw there must have pleased her capricious fancy, for she smiled and nodded and sparkled at herself. At last, she changed to a steeled gown, and walked down to the drug store.

At six o'clock that evening Jack Fenby brought Lance Freeman home. Eliza, the trim parlor maid, wore a stunned look on her round face.

"Miss Betty is in the drawing room," she announced with a toss of her head.

Jack ushered his big, bronzed friend from the tropics into the soft lighted room where Betty and Isabella Drew were sitting before the fire.

Betty rose and came forward with outstretched hand. She saw a tall, broad-shouldered young man with keen gray eyes that seemed to probe the depths of her heart and soul and came away disappointed, finding evident relief in Isabella Drew's girlish simplicity. The newcomer's evident dismay and disapproval of her own charms—a dismay that his straightforward nature could not then conceal—struck a pang to Betty's heart.

Lance Freeman, eagerly anticipating this meeting with the adored sister of his classmate, saw a slender, golden-haired girl in a tight-fitting black satin frock, her feet incased in absurdly high-heeled slippers, her golden hair twisted into the latest mode atop her small head, her blue eyes wide and shallow looking in their baby stare, her face carefully powdered and rouged, eyebrows penciled, lips skillfully tinted, pearls in her ears and encircling her white throat.

A very much tinted and powdered, bearded, showy and altogether shoddy looking young woman—such was Lance Freeman's hasty estimate of his friend's sister.

Isabella Drew made a perfect foil for Betty. Jack wondered dazedly if the simplicity of Isabella's attire was studied and if she was in collusion with his mischievous sister to shock Lance Freeman.

"Betty!" he gasped indignantly.

"Jack!" she warned, giving Lance a limp hand. "I am so glad to see you at last, Mr. Freeman. Jack has talked a lot about you."

"Mother left word that you are to make the Oaks your headquarters while you are North."

"You are all most kind," murmured Lance, staring at the powdered little beauty, who smiled immodestly.

As the two young men dressed for dinner they talked of Lance's life in the Canal zone, of his brilliant prospects for the future, of Jack's first law case, which had been a triumph for the junior member of his father's firm, and when Lance observed that there was a strong family likeness between Jack and his sister, Jack hastily changed the subject.

Lance was ready first and he came into Jack's room and examined the photographs on the mantelpiece. One framed portrait he regarded with narrowed eyes.

It was Betty's latest photograph, the picture of a charming, merry-eyed girl in a soft, white gown, her simply dressed hair waving away from her forehead, low forehead. It was a sweet, thoughtful face, very unlike the painted, shallow countenance of the Betty he had met half an hour ago.

"Is this your other sister?" he asked curiously.

"You've met my only sister," muttered Jack glumly.

"Hum!" said Lance perplexedly.

Jack glowed resentfully. "And she takes a diabolical delight in turning the tables on a fellow."

A queer gleam came into Lance's eyes, but he made no response.

During the dinner that followed, Jack devoted himself to Isabella and left Lance to Betty's tender mercies. The man from Panama had to admit that Jack's sister was clever, even brilliant, in spite of her shallow appearance, and while they conversed, chiefly about life at the isthmus, to which he was soon to return, Lance was studying Betty closely, trying to trace some link with the unaffected girl of the portrait upstairs in Jack's room.

And Betty? Beneath her masquerade of paint and powder and her mother's pearl necklace, she was rag-

ing at herself. Never had she been so attracted to any man as to Lance Freeman, and she read only amused contempt in his steady glance. She had always been used to the unqualified admiration of her brother's friends, and Lance was his most particular chum. She was ready to cry with vexation when the meal was over.

Why, she asked herself, had she taken it into her silly head to flout a plain man who hated powder and paint on his woman folks? Why blame him because he wanted them to be as fresh and clean skinned as himself—as frank and unassuming as he was?

And naturally Betty was all these things herself. Therein lay the tragedy.

In the drawing room Isabella played and sang for them, and presently Lance asked Betty to show him Mr. Fenby's famous collection of orchids. Among the orchids in the conservatory, he told her about the beautiful black orchid which he had seen in one of the jungle swamps of the isthmus and how he could go to the very tree to which the parasitic blossom clung.

"Perhaps your father would like one—I will try to get some and send them up by a trusty messenger," he offered.

Betty agreed that her father would be delighted, and then followed a delightful half hour during which she animatedly told him how her father had acquired many of his specimens, and she displayed such a knowledge of the subject and so entirely forgot the part she was playing that Lance found his heart slipping from his keeping.

They were standing near the fountain and Betty was dipping her fingers in the water, where goldfish darted to and fro.

Lance regarded her thoughtfully. "I'm wondering why you took the trouble to disguise yourself under the paint and powder of a circus woman," he remarked curiously.

"Sir!" thrilled Betty, trying to wither him with a glance, but crumpling miserably beneath his scorn. She tried to hate him for his brutal frankness, his lack of polish. "Please take me back to my brother."

"In a moment," he agreed gruffly.

"I—I was hoping you'd wash your face first!" he blurted out.

"Wash my face?" stammered Betty.

He nodded and gave her a snowy handkerchief. "Please, do," he urged, but it sounded like a command, and Betty, having met her master, meekly obeyed.

She held a corner of the handkerchief under the fountain spray and scrubbed the paint and powder from face and lips and brows. When she had emerged, her perfect skin, pink and blooming from the friction, she looked demurely at him.

"Well?" she smiled.

"And please puff out your hair the way it is in that lovely picture in Jack's room. There! You don't look so confoundingly sophisticated. Thank you, Miss Betty, you are a brick!" he ended enthusiastically, as she removed the earrings.

"A brick," dimpled Betty, as he tucked the damp and smeared handkerchief in his pocket.

When they returned to the drawing room Isabella was telling Jack a story that brought reluctant mirth in his train.

"Here comes the little imp now," he murmured, as she entered with Lance. "Well, Betty, I'm glad you've emerged from your war paint," he ended in a burst of brotherly frankness. "Where did you raise that black satin horror?"

"Cousin Daisy left it here last year; isn't it awful?" she confessed.

Hours later, in her own room, Betty dropped her newly-purchased rouge pots into the waste-paper basket. Then she relaxed into dreamy inactivity.

"Oh, most adorable of men," she sighed at last. "I'm so glad you don't like paint and powder combined with pearls—I detest 'em myself—and even if I did like it myself—but, no—I shall not tell even you—nodding at her adorably blushing reflection in the glass—"what I am thinking about now!"

ALL GO BACK TO THE GREEK

Every Modern European Alphabet Is Derived From or Founded on That of Greece.

The word alphabet is derived from the first two letters of the Greek alphabet, alpha and beta, corresponding to our a and b. The Greek alphabet is one of the oldest in the world and all modern European alphabets are derived from or founded on it. The English alphabet is practically the same as the Roman, which was derived from the Greek. All writing was in its origin pictorial, and while that lasted there was no need of an alphabet or of written words. The earliest Greek alphabet contained only 19 letters, having no f and ending with the letter t. The letter f and the six letters following t, viz: u, v, w, x, y, z, came by a process of evolution at long intervals. There was no u in the Greek alphabet until the ninth century B. C., and for more than one thousand years longer u and v were different forms of the same letter, one being used at the beginning and the other in the middle of a word. It was not until the tenth century A. D. that the two letters were differentiated into u as a vowel and v as a consonant. There was no separate letter v until the eleventh century A. D. Prior to that the sound was expressed by vu or uv, but finally the two u's were linked together, making double u. Some other letters have got into the alphabet by a curious process of evolution. The letter z, for example, comes from the Latin through the Greek. This letter was introduced into the English alphabet in the fifteenth century and from having been the sixth letter in the Greek alphabet it was made the last in the English alphabet. It used to be pronounced z or izard, and still is sometimes so written and printed in England. There are persons living who can remember when the alphabet was printed in schoolbooks with zed at the end, instead of z, and when the character z, abbreviation of the Latin et, also was printed as a letter.

High Prices for Cashmere Shawls.

Weavers of cashmere shawls take two or three years to finish a pair of the very finest. These shawls fetch upward of \$500 each in London.

government control of the slaughter houses, it need cost little or no more than ordinary bread. According to the Frankfurter Zeitung, rye bread containing hogs' blood has long been used in Oldenburg.

Would Use Blood as Food

German Professor Makes the Assertion That With a Mixture It is Highly Nutritious.

Professor Kober of Munich has published a little treatise on the utilization of blood as food, from which Die Umschau quotes the following statements concerning the use of blood in breadmaking: For centuries blood bread has been the staff of life of the Estonians of the Baltic provinces and their colonies in all parts of Russia. It is made of rye flour, with an admixture of at least 10 per cent of whipped hogs' blood. In the vicinity of Petrograd ox blood is also used. Blood bread is very nutritious and is highly praised by Estonian physicians because of the richness in organic compounds of phosphorus and nerve-restoring salts. Bread made with ox blood dries very quickly, but this defect can be remedied by the addition of potato flour, which is now a common practice in Germany. Blood bread is the most natural substitute for meat, and, with

Composer's Rebuke.

Once, while Hans Richter was rehearsing Tschakowsky's "Romeo and Juliet" music the violoncellos had a very passionate melody to play. Richter was by no means satisfied that the necessary warmth of expression had been obtained. "Gentlemen, gentlemen," said he, "like all play like married men, not like lovers."

The Place for Lovers.

Ian MacLaren wrote that Gaelic is the best of all languages for terms of endearment, that it has fifty ways of saying "darling." The old tongue of the Isle of Man, a picturesque island almost equally near to Ireland, Scotland and England, is said to be even better furnished with terms for the use of lovers, that it has—or had—sixty-seven ways of saying "my dear."

NOTHING COMING TO JOHNNY

Small Boy Would Get No Change From Groceryman If He Gave Him Dollar—Old Bill in Way.

The topic having turned to mathematical problems, Congressman Jacob A. Canter of New York told of an incident that happened in a public school.

The teacher was instructing a junior class in arithmetic, when she started to give the youngsters some mental exercises, says Philadelphia Telegraph.

"Johnny," said she, turning to a youngster of ten, "if you went to the grocery store and bought 10 cents' worth of sugar, 5 cents' worth of soap, 25 cents' worth of coffee and 10 cents' worth of crackers and gave the proprietor a dollar bill in payment for these articles, how much change would you get?"

"I wouldn't get any change, Miss Mary," was the rather surprising response of the boy.

"You wouldn't get any change!" exclaimed the teacher. "How do you figure that out?"

"Storekeeper wouldn't give up," answered Johnny. "He would freeze on it for the old bill."

Then the Clerk Collapsed.

"I don't suppose this business could run very long without me," said the important young man.

"Perhaps not," answered the visitor. "Is the boss in?"

"Oh, yes. But I can tell you anything you want to know."

"No, you can't, either. I'm the silent partner and financial backer of this firm, and I want to know how long a nincompoop like you is going to be kept on the pay roll."

CONSOLING.



Everbroke—If I can't raise enough to pay that alimony I'm afraid I'll be arrested.

Offenbroke—"That's nothing. I'm often pinched for money."

Sheer Loss.

"You can't afford to miss this offer," said the agent, persuasively. "All you have to pay is a dollar down and a dollar a month, and you can be reading the books while you are paying for them."

"That's just the trouble," replied Jobson. "I'd finish reading them long before I finished paying for them and then it would be just like throwing money away."

In Politics.

"Is it true that all successful politicians keep one ear to the ground so that they may learn what their constituents are thinking?"

"Oh, no. The men who subscribe the largest amounts to campaign funds keep the politicians informed of what they are thinking and it doesn't matter particularly what other people think."

Forceful Character.

"You seem to have had a great many places lately," said the housewife to the prospective cook. "Yet I notice that all your employers give you good references."

"Yes, mum," replied the candidate, as she rolled up her sleeves and showed a brawny arm. "I nearly always leaves wid a good reference."

A Modern Version.

"Here's a pretty romance. A millionaire fell in love with a country maid while making an automobile tour, and now they are to be married."

"I suppose she gave the thirsty motorist a drink of water, standing by his car in rustic grace?"

"No. She sold him a little gasoline for his auto."

Significance.

"I don't believe some of our friends have a very high opinion of you," remarked the bride's mother.

"Why, look at all the beautiful presents."

"Yes. But there are eighteen silver card trays. They must think you aren't going to do a thing but sit around and talk to company."

On the Rialto.

"I know you were married twenty years ago, yet you have the nerve to tell me that this is your seventh wedding anniversary."

"I said my seventh wedding, Yorick, not anniversary."

Explaining the Delay.

She (reading newspaper)—Divorced 10:30 a. m., wedd again 5 p. m. What do you think of that?

He—It would take that long to get the license.—Judge.

Framing a Tight One.

"I wish you'd tell Jinx that I have sworn off drinking."

"But you haven't!"

"I know it, but if he thinks I have he'll ask me to have a drink."

The Only Drawback.

"The De Forces would be ideally married if it were not for one thing."

"What's that?"

"The fact that they are married to each other."—Judge.

The Way of It.

"Does your suburban neighbor raise his own vegetables?"

"No; he comes in the night and lifts mine."