

and made a wind shield between the rails. Under that he struck a match and held his watch. He bent his face down, but though the tiny flame licked smartingly at his fingers, he saw nothing—nothing. He felt the match go out and struck another. Still he saw no flame. He was blind.

With a pebble he broke the crystal of his watch. He felt the position of the hands and shivered; Seventeen was due. There would be no time to gather bits of wood—much less to start them burning.

He drew a stick of the dynamite from his shirt and put the end between his teeth. He got matches ready behind the wind break. Then he waited.

Suddenly, above the roar of the storm, like a wild thing passing overhead, the whistle blast of Seventeen shrieked by.

Bending his head again, he struck the match. He felt it burn in his fingers. He bent lower and lower, until the awful fagot gripped between his teeth touched his hands. He hoped that it might merely burn. Then he lifted his hands around it.

There was a hissing, and spluttering heat swept up around his mouth.

He caught the end from his teeth and waved it above his head.

He heard the clang of the bell and the grind of the brakes. He wondered if they had seen him—and braced himself for the impact.

He regained consciousness on a hospital cot next day. The surgeon, who was professionally gruff, ordered him to be

silent, declaring that his blindness and helplessness would continue for weeks and perhaps months. Later he questioned the nurse, but the nurse would not answer him.

For days thereafter he was patient. But as the suffering lessened and he thought upon it all, unutterable bitterness filled him. And his soul knew the desolation that comes of unselfish effort despised. And he would shrug his shoulders weakly and his face would darken and grow grim. Yet he uttered no complaint.

But on a day a month later, there came a strange footfall beside him; and an unprofessionally gentle hand rested on his head; and a big and hearty voice boomed into his ears.

"Burnam, I'm Superintendent of the Division. I know all about this business —got it from Quirk. I would have come sooner, but this ass of a surgeon wouldn't let me in. There's only time to tell you that—but there's no way of telling what we think of you, all the way through. When you get on your feet again, we'll show you what we think. A man like you don't want a pension. We're going to offer a chance as near worthy of you as there is. I wish there was more to offer—more to promise. Good-by now. I'll drop in again to-morrow."

And the doubt that had brought bitterness and desolation went out of Burnam's heart and a great peace came upon him.

The Marriage of Okiku-San

BY ONOTO WATANNA

"Author of "A Daughter of Two Lands," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY TAKA SPIRO

MISS KIKU TAGUCHI was not an ordinary young lady. Her father, a pompous, important individual, entertained a distinct contempt for her insignificant sex. His wife was a mere nonentity, a puppet, who vaguely repeated, parrot-like, the paradoxes voiced by her lord. Hence, when this same lord emphatically expressed his opinion con-

cerning the proper education for a female—this within twelve hours after the birth of Okiku-san, Lady Taguchi assented, and promised things. The result was a girl of naturally independent and original disposition, trammelled by the contracted rules common for women in Japan half a century before.

Kiku knew by heart the great rules

laid down by Confucius for her miserable sex. Aimlessly and dully, she would repeat them from day to day, while her vapid faced mother, herself a product of the new Japan, mechanically kept time on the small box desk by which she was wont to squat.

Okiku possessed an uncle who had been educated abroad, and through this medium she had come to know of many attractive things. His opinions were as emphatic as his brother's, but they were entirely different. The emancipation of Japanese women was his pet hobby, and so bitter was his denunciation of the old time method of repression and education of the weaker sex, that he and his brother met only to argue and oftentimes politely quarrel. Okiku's uncle, however, was a man of real power and great wealth, and while Okiku's father, who was in modest circumstances, might despise and disagree with his opinions, he respected the aforesaid power and also the considerable fortune to which his own daughter would certainly succeed. The uncle was old, had no children of his own, and would have none. A widower, he was devoted, so he claimed, to the memory of his wife, and growled contempt at the notion of marrying again merely in order to have a progeny to pray for his soul after death.

To him went Okiku, fretting under the home chains, and feeling, rather than knowing, the electrical change of thought among her sex in Japan. She wanted an education—a real one, as she expressed it. To her bluff and sympathetic uncle, at least, she dared to breathe her little hidden secret hope—a desire to go abroad, to enter a foreign school and college. This her uncle promised her she should do, and the following day he paid a visit upon his brother. Once alone with him, he went straight to the object of his call, barely giving the more outwardly courteous one a chance to run through the long gamut of civilities, usually the rule—even with brothers.

"Tomi, your girl is stupid, lazy, sleepy!"

Tomis lips became a straight line. Perfectly well he knew that the foregoing statement was not true, but he be-

lieved in the old-fashioned method of polite conversation, the humble admission of the inferiority of one's self and one's family.

He said in a tone that fiercely denied the words he uttered:

"It is miserably true. She is a stupid worm!"

"Let us put our heads together then," suggested Gonji solemnly, "and see if we cannot devise some means to rectify her unhappy imbecile condition."

"I listen to your enlightened words of wisdom," said Tomi, grimly sarcastic and still fiercely polite.

"To the point then. What do you say to my niece going abroad—say, to America—for a term of years?"

In spite of himself, the father of Okiku leaped up in his seat.

"What!" he fairly shouted. "Have my daughter sent to the country of barbarians, where civilization is only in its infancy!"

"Quiet!" urged Gonji, pulling at a stubby little imperial he had carefully copied from a French diplomat. "Let us talk over the matter gently, reasonably."

"There is nothing to talk over," said Tomi, controlling himself. "The matter is quite settled."

Gonji arose, shrugging his shoulders slightly—a trick also caught from the aforesaid diplomat.

"I regret you value my humble opinion so poorly."

"Not at all, brother." Tomi's voice was anxious. "I have distinct ideas, as you know, in regard to the bringing up of females. I believe in their suppression—their being kept in their proper sphere. Nothing is more offensive to me than a woman of modern education, a creature thinking for herself like a man—without regard for the best rules laid down for her sex, talking, walking, acting independently. Pah! It is nauseating to think of even. Yet these women are the very product of this foreign education you suggest for my stupid but worthy daughter."

Gonji was drawing on his outer coat, a heavy tweed affair, which fitted somewhat grotesquely over his Japanese undress.

"Well, I'm off, then. Er—by the way, did I speak to you of my intention to adopt a son or daughter?"

His brother's face turned livid, withered. He could not reply.

"You see," went on Gonji seriously, "I am not as young as I was, and I feel the necessity of providing myself with a proper heir. I had looked upon Okiku in that light, but she has been a disappointment to me. I wish to leave my estate to one who has been raised according to some of my own ideas."

"She is only a female," said Tomi huskily, "yet believe me, though it is her father speaking, she is an admirable example of her despised sex. She is meek, submissive, filial, obedient—having all the qualities most admirable in a woman. What more could you possibly desire?"

"Well, I believe in a higher education for a woman. She will be at a disadvantage in society. Other members of her sex are being cultivated, their minds improved. I should not wish to be ashamed of her."

Tomi was silent, biting his underlip to repress his rage.

"Let us make a truce," he finally said. "Suggest some alternative to a foreign education for Okiku and I will readily assent."

"Good. What do you say to a year in Tokyo? There is an excellent school there. All the members of the faculty are graduates of American colleges, and one of them is herself an American lady."

Tomi flipped his fan open to conceal his enraged face. Then he closed it upon his palm, and pointed dumbly to the mats they had vacated.

"Condescend to sit."

Gonji smiled a bit, as he again removed his coat and reseated himself comfortably. After both had taken several whiffs from their pipes, Tomi began again:

"Brother, there is an excellent seminary in Kyoto—"

"I know all about it. Kept by an ancient dame of the old school. No. Excuse me."

"In Kumummotta—"

"Tokyo—or America. There—I have said it."

He emptied his pipe, tapping it upon the hibachi.

"Well—well—er—at least you will consent to my imposing one condition?"

"By all means—if it is reasonable."

"Now education for a woman *may* be very well, if it is immediately followed by a proper marriage. That is the only antidote for the ill effects."

Gonji appeared to be ruminating.

"So be it then. I'll grant that. Marriage is certainly a worthy fate—even for a modern woman. Then it is settled."

Okiku's progress at the American school was little short of remarkable. She became the favorite pupil of the aforementioned American teacher, a spinster of forty sweet summers. Here was a woman fit indeed to make all others of her sex pause and heed. As fearless and outspoken as a man—a superior man—she was a walking delegate for the suffrage of her sex. Her theories and opinions she had loudly voiced upon various small platforms in her own native land, and now in a country where the condition of her sex appealed to every indignant and outraged fiber within her, she fairly hurled her views at the amazed and in truth somewhat bewildered heads of her little oriental pupils. They watched, fascinated, her mouth shoot forth riotously its denunciation of all the laws which hitherto they had regarded as quite sacred and necessary for their sex. Used through centuries of oppression to yielding to a mind (or rather body) stronger than their own, they now readily yielded to the persuasive doctrine preached by this "extraordinary foreign devil." She sent forth from the school one pugnacious little disciple after another, each to establish a new order of things in various households.

No pupil had listened to her words with such eager ears as Okiku-san. Fresh from her life of subjection, she leaped thirstily into the new order of thought. Her adored uncle had previously pointed out to her the exceptional merits of the foreign teacher, and she now shared his views in regard to the strong-minded lady of the piercing blue eyes and high cheek bones.



"Who!" said he, "we are horrible women eaters!"

Okiku was to do wonders for the women of Japan! One year in Tokyo, indeed! She was to have a *career*—a profession! She should find this and that club for this and that purpose, with uncle's money to aid and abet. Her suffering sex would be so benefited that her name would be blessed in the land. Little Okiku dreamed such dreams as surely never before bewildered the head of any other little damsel of Japan. She saw herself an oriental Mrs. Catt. She gave not a thought—she would have scorned to—to that contemptible atom in human form known as "man," or "mere man," as the foreign teacher expressed it. If she did think of him at all, it was to recall with burning indignation ail the wrongs of the past put upon her sex. "But at last," said little Okiku-san, with fervor, echoing the words of Miss Simpson, "the proverbial worm is about to turn."

About this time, the year came to an end, and she was abruptly summoned home. Tearfully she flew to her uncle's

hitherto comforting arms. He was curiously constrained. At this time, he declared, he was occupied by a most absorbing matter. He could not spare the time to travel to her father's home. She had better obey the parental summons and herself plead her cause. Too bad, but really uncle was frightfully busy.

Okiku noted through her tears, that uncle was also frightfully attired, in a foreign suit, padded of shoulder and plaid of vest.

To the great Miss Simpson now went Okiku and poured out her cup of sorrows. The lady hugged her chin, wiped her glasses, and looked very thoughtful.

"My dear, by all means go home. What I have taught you can best be illustrated in the home. Believe me, the *Home* is a woman's real platform."

This remarkable statement served only further to bewilder the heart-broken Okiku. She retired to her precious room, a pathetic replica of some far-away Smith College room, and sobbed passionately.

with her head on the beautiful brass bed chosen by teacher for Okiku. It had been a source of great wonder and awe to both Okiku and her maid, but hardly of comfort, since the twain slept under, not on, the bed itself.

Dolefully she packed her fine modern clothes—the clothes meant to be worn on that certain trip to America. Lingerie in underwear, corsets, kid gloves, openwork stockings, skirts, and what-not. As she traveled homeward, a great lump choking her poor little throat, she said savagely, with a mind picture of her father's face when he should see the contents of her trunks:

"Anyhow man is inferior to woman. Certainly I shall let *all* males so understand."

She had no sooner arrived home than they broached to her the subject of matrimony. A youth had been selected—or rather Okiku's father had carefully selected the boy's father as an excellent one to be allied to. There had been some quiet negotiations between relatives of the two families, the boy's uncle acting as a go-between.

When they told Okiku, she said nothing. She went up to her chamber and pulled the sliding doors behind her.

"I wish I were dead!" she said. "I could not endure to live with a man!"

Then she fell into a deep reverie, her chin pillowed on her folded hands. Presently she got up, opened a panel of her room and took out a lacquer box. Rummaging among its papers, she found what she sought, and, this spread before her, she studied it thoughtfully:

"A wife may be divorced for the following reasons," read the script.

1. If she be disobedient to her parents-in-law.

Okiku looked thoughtful.

"Suppose they should beat me! That would be hard to bear," she said.

2. If she be childless.

"Children will come, alas!" sighed little Okiku wisely.

3. If she be untrue.

Kiku frowned.

4. If she be jealous.

"Not I," said Okiku, scornfully.

5. If she steal.

"Impossible."

6. If she talk too much.

A dimple stole into either round cheek of little Kiku Taguchi.

"Well, I can *talk!*" said she.

A few days later she sat in a room in which were assembled the various members of the Taguchi and Hakemoto families. They sat in a semi-circle, drinking tea and eating. Great quantities of sake were also consumed, and of this beverage Kiku herself was permitted to drink for the first time. She ought to have felt quite a personage. The assemblage was in her honor, hers and the boy's she had not yet even condescended to look at.

The sake brightened up her eyes and cheeks. Her ears tingled. She wanted to talk. Also she had an inclination to cry. She wished ardently all the time that she were dead. Suddenly there flashed into her tangled mind the comforting words of the divorce authority: "If she talk too much!" Little Kiku's lips curled up. She astonished the assemblage by an unexpected, eerie little laugh. Next moment she sneezed.

Later she found herself sitting opposite to a person, who by his attire and manner she recognized as a tyrannical and odious man. She looked up and said quickly, so that she might not be interrupted by her officious father:

"It is better you should know the truth: I talk all the time!"

Now when a pair of newly affianced people are thus for the first time brought together, a somewhat gentle conversation is expected to ensue. Sometimes where the twain have met before, sentimental passages occur; but in any event it is seldom that hostile words are spoken. Therefore, it is not to be wondered at that the prospective bridegroom, when he heard the words of Okiku, so far forgot himself as to leap up like a rubber ball bouncing.

Kiku saw that his face was red, that his eyes were round, that his mouth fell agape. She inwardly described him as: "A beast! Stupid and ugly, too!"—which was not a fair or true description of the boy at all.

Before an open shoji in the Sakura Hotel, Okiku stood looking out at the scenery surrounding the place. She appeared to be waiting or listening, for her attitude was very alert, though she stood perfectly still, one little hand pressed against her lips. Suddenly her brows drew together. An expression, half frown, half smile, swept her lips and remained in her eyes, giving them a curiously defiant, almost aggressive aspect.

Just then the doors were pushed apart and a young man came into the room. Apparently he had been walking quickly, for his face was very rosy and he wiped the perspiration from his brow.

Kiku turned about.

"Oh, here you are at last," said she in a complaining voice. "Did you meet with an accident?"

Before the half reproachful, half puzzled expression of his eyes her own fell down. Without answering her question, her husband, kneeling, opened one of his packages. The wrappings were of fragrant tissue paper, and his clumsy fingers attempted to undo them with care. At the sharp voice of the girl, however, he stood up, looking at the package uncertainly; then went to her and put it, without speaking, into her hands.

But she only said:

"Most exalted lord, would the condescension be too great for you to answer my humble and servile question?"

Carelessly tearing away the paper covering, she revealed the single rose he had brought her—an American Beauty, a costly thing in Japan.

Kiku colored, turned away.

"Oh, Kiku!" said her husband, seizing her by the sleeve. "Just turn around here. Was ever such a sunset before? Why, what—?"

She was looking at him, and something in her face held his tongue tied for a moment. Then he stammered:

"How lovely you look to-night, Kiku-no!"

She smiled brilliantly.

"Oh," said she, "but I talk all the time. You'd much better divorce me."

"Well, sit down here for the present anyhow," he urged, pulling her down beside him. A bit timidly his arm stole

out, then settled confidently about her shoulders. She held back, but his arm was strong and presently her head rested under his chin. Reaching down, his lips found their way to hers. At least he knew a few of the modern tricks.

"I suppose," said Okiku, intent on talking, "that that is a—kiss?"

"Yes," said he.

Then said little Okiku, who had determined upon a divorce:

"It is good!"

They had been married exactly one day. A sentimental uncle had managed to separate them from the too closely pressed relations. They were enjoying a modern novelty—a honeymoon alone together and in the mountains.

"Oh!" said Jihei, laughing loudly, "how perfectly enchanting you appear when you blush, O-Kiku-no!"

"But I thought," said Kiku, pouting and drawing away a bit, "that men despised a mere female. Men are all tyrants—beasts. We are merely their prey—their playthings. I won't be a plaything! No, indeed!"

Jihei growled fiercely.

"Whoo!" said he savagely. "We are horrible women-eaters. Look out, mere female creature, I intend to gobble you up."

Whereupon he kissed her violently.

After she had extricated herself, and breathlessly at that:

"Well but—you have got to find out about me. I t-talk-all—"'

"And so do I. Keep still—just for a moment. I am going to whisper something in your ear. Don't tell anybody, because these are terrible words for a Japanese to say, but Oho! I'm something of a modern myself too, you know. Now pay heed!"

He whispered into her little ear.

"Did you hear?"

She had turned actually pale.

"That is an improper word!" said she in a faint, very frightened voice.

Jihei threw back his head. He laughed joyfully, like a mischievous boy, rejoicing in his tricks.

"Is it? 'Love' an improper word! Oh, well, I'll explain to you some day what I mean."



He knew a few of the modern tricks

"Explain to me now."

"Oh, no, because you are way behind the times, Okiku-san. Fancy a modern woman of Japan calling 'love' an improper word! Fie!"

She was much offended, and forced herself free, sitting poutingly apart from him to the extent of three or four inches of distance.

Jihei promptly reduced this considerably:

"Very well, I will tell you then. Now the foreigners—the westerners, you know—think they have a patent upon the word. They say, to us, it has no meaning, or if one, an improper one. But we

know better, don't we, Kiku-san? It's the feeling—the greatest impulse in us. I adore you, reverently, ideally. That's what I wanted to tell you, Kikuno."

"When did you first?" she stammered breathlessly.

"At once—at the look-at meeting. I had been preparing for it, you see—preparing for you. I intended to love you, and I did. It was just as it should be."

"It was all quite wrong," she sobbed. "Such a—a marriage is—against nature." The words of Miss Simpson came to her awkwardly.

Jihei was silent a moment; but regarded her, smiling confidently.

"By and by we shall know," he said, softly.

The following day, seated by the self-same shoji where she had waited for her husband, Okiku sat reading a letter:

MY POOR LITTLE KIKU-SAN:

By all means be firm. Bear in mind all I have taught you. That you, my most hopeful and best beloved pupil, should be absolutely forced into an odious union, at the very height of your mental development, seems horrible to me. I can only strenuously urge you not to succumb. If you do so, believe me, you will sink into that helpless, hopeless crushed condition so pathetically common to your countrywomen. If you, who have been made to see the glorious possibilities of our sex, should succumb and go back to that obsolete position of Japanese women, slaves, not wives or true mates of their lords—not husbands—then, indeed, I will say my work has failed.

Dear child, keep up a brave spirit. Though I smiled at the thought of your pathetic ruse to obtain your freedom, I also applaud it. By all means, if it will serve your purpose (Remember the end justifies the means)—Talk!

The sound of a splash was heard.

"Okiku!" called a cheery voice. "More towels, please!"

She crushed the letter in her hand, then drew herself up stiffly.

"Call a servant, please!"

"A servant! I want my wife to wait upon me! Hi!, there, wifey! Get me a towel—and hurry, please!"

Her answer was to clap her hands loudly. To her summons swiftly came a serving-maid who brought the desired towels and took them to the commanding one within.

A few moments later Jihei appeared. His shining round face bore evidence of his recent bath. He was in excellent humor. Pinching his wife's ear, he threw his arms carelessly about her shoulders and drew her up against him, cheek to cheek.

"What do you think, O-Kiku-san, we've got to cut our beautiful honeymoon in two."

She turned about uneasily.

"You see," he went on, "my mother needs us at home. She's getting pretty

old, and really some one ought to look after her. What a godsend you will be to her!"

Okiku's form had stiffened to a rigidity so repelling that even the arm of the affectionate Jihei loosened. Now one of the chief things against which Miss Simpson had preached was the domination of the Japanese mother-in-law.

As all the world knows, a daughter-in-law in Japan, is a very inferior person in the household of her husband's mother. She can even be divorced by that lady, in the absence of the husband. Her chief ambition is to please and propitiate the dread lady; and to become later herself a mother, when she will have her own household.

In what glowing terms had not Miss Simpson painted the position of the daughter-in-law in America. There things were reversed. At the wish of the wife, the woman who has borne the husband may be peremptorily ejected from his house—so said Miss Simpson. If she remained, her position was far below that



"That is a very improper word," said she in a frightened voice

of the wife in authority. In fact, her authority was quite nil after the advent of the wife. She must take a "back seat," be careful of her speech, be meek, conciliating—often serve the wife.

"Why, what is the matter, Okiku? Did something bite you? Let me—"

He was quite ready to scratch her, declaring that the mosquitoes were becoming unbearable.

Okiku pushed his hand aside.

"I want my own home!" she cried.

"Your own home! Well, but where do you think I am taking you to, then? Certainly you are to be one of us. My little brothers and sisters will adore you, I am sure, and as for my mother—"

"You expect me to be her servant!"

"Why, no, we keep servants—several."

"Oh, yes, I know quite all about it. A daughter-in-law is just another servant. I won't bear it, indeed."

"O—Kiku! You must love my mother, and wish to do services for her."

"You mean I am to wait upon her wishes?"

"Why, certainly. That is a daughter's duty. It is proper. She is an old woman."

"Don't touch me!" said Okiku in a suffocating voice. "Let me pass, please," and she rushed into her room, snapping the doors tightly behind her.

He did not follow her.

So this was what she had come to! She, who was to be an example to all her sex—she was to do the humble daughter-in-law's service in the ancient way.

"Never! Never! Never!" she cried, pacing up and down, and spasmodically clapping her little hands together.

By and by her anger passed away. She stood, as if listening for some sound from the adjoining room. Up to the present he had met all her rebellious outbursts with embraces, rude, but also to the unconscious Kiku, desirable. Now all was silence. What was he doing? Okuki hesitated a minute, then silently she stepped over to the shoji. Moistening her finger, she made a considerable hole in the fusuma. To this she applied her eye. Whatever she saw within apparently was not what she expected, for with a little petulant sound she opened the sliding doors and went into the other room. No-

body at all was there. She looked about her. The frown left her face. An anxious look came into her eyes. Suddenly she ran across the room, and opened wide the shoji on to the veranda.

It was growing dark outside. She leaned forward, peering about her. Then she sat still, waiting, growing steadily more uneasy and agitated. When it was quite dark, she still remained by the opened doors, and only when a maid came to the rooms bearing lighted andons, did she move from her position. Too proud to question the servants, she could not forbear speaking of what engaged her so utterly:

"My husband—took letters to the village. It is quite a walk, is it not? I trust a very good and safe road?"

"Yes, mistress. But the young master has dropped one of his letters, I fear. I picked it up on the threshold of your room."

"Indeed. Well, give it to me."

When the servant was gone, she turned the letter over in her hand and looked at the address. It was to his mother. Okiku's hands began to tremble. Slowly her little finger slipped under the flap of the envelope. It was very carelessly closed and yielded at once to her pressure. She took the note out. A moment she hesitated, and then:

"No—no—I can't do it!"

She was putting it back hastily, when her eye fell upon these words—they were written very clearly and in exceptionally large type:

SHE TALKS ALL THE TIME!

Her heart suddenly ceased beating. She felt as if about to faint. Her hand sought her throat.

Her ruse then had succeeded after all! He was writing home to his parents. "She talks all the time!" So she was to be divorced!

Slowly, her fingers shaking, she straightened out the crumpled letter. Her eyes widened. She stared—a stifled sound, half laugh, half sob, escaped her. The entire sheet was covered with the one sentence: "She talks all the time!"

Gods! How he wished to make his case clear to his parents! Oh—!

She was about to tear the letter across, when a new terror assailed her. Perhaps he had already divorced her—left her here alone in the mountains!

She tried to comfort herself with the thought of her "dear teacher," to whom she would go at once; but Miss Simpson's face became fainter with every moment, until it seemed extinguished altogether from her mind. In its place appeared instead the round, boyish, cheerful countenance of Jihei!

Suddenly she thought: "I have driven him away!"

There was nothing particularly handsome or attractive about her husband's face except its natural good humor and affectionate expression, but to the mind-eyes of little Okiku now it appeared surrounded with a pale, golden halo.

She flew across the room, blindly calling him by name:

"Jihei! Jihei!"

A number of maids came running in at her summons.

"My husband?" she cried shrilly.

She appeared distraught.

Just then some one came from out the shadow on the veranda.

"Why, hello!" said he. "What is the trouble?"

"Madame was anxious," said a smiling maid. "She feared harm had come to you on your trip to the village."

"But I have not been to the village," said he.

They withdrew discreetly, leaving the pair alone.

Okiku had picked up her sleeve, and pressing it to her eyes, she stood in the attitude of a child crying.

"What is it, Okiku?"

He was smiling as he stood behind her.

"D-don't speak to me," she said, "I—
I know—know you wish to divorce me,
and—"

"What made you think that?"

"I s-saw your letter to your mother."
"You did! Well! Let me see it, please."

He undid the little fingers curled about it, smoothed out, and read through the epistle.

"Why look, Okiku, did you notice what is written on the flap of the envelope? Here, take your sleeve down."

She turned a little tear-stained face around, and, as his arm closed about her, she read the writing on the envelope, as he held it before her eyes:

"This letter is for my little foolish wife only."

She turned bodily about in his arms.

"Oh, Jihei!"

"Let me hug you now, and then we'll both forget all about it."

A few moments later:

"And now tell me, where did you get all your curious notions about men and marriage?"

"You see, uncle and teacher do not believe in marriages such as we have in Japan, and they think an intellectual woman should not marry, but have a career. I—I—really I did hope to emancipate my sex in Japan."

"By divorcing me?"

"But I didn't know—"

"Well?"

"That I loved you, and you see my life had been so cramped at home I simply thought marriage would prove another cage into which I would be shut."

"It will not be," said he fervently, "for you see we are starting right—with just one thing all unions ought to have—love!"

"Miss Simpson thought that unnecessary."

"Did she? Now look here. This came a little while ago."

It was a telegram from Tokyō. Okiku's eyes were wide as she read:

"Married to-day at five P. M."

It was signed by both "teacher" and "uncle."