

# The YELLOW BOOK



OR THE STORY OF  
THE YELLOW JAR

WILLIAMSON



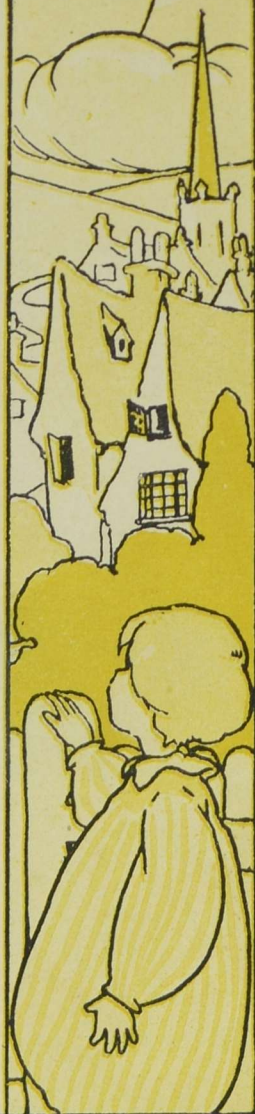


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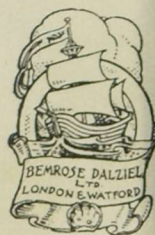
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# THE YELLOW BOOK

## OR THE STORY OF THE YELLOW JAR

LONG ago, in the land of Japan, where the paper umbrellas are made, ♪ lived Nikotuchi, a fisherman. He went out each day to his trade, ♪ from his little white and yellow house beside a laburnum tree, ♪ on the river that flowed through iris beds, down to the sparkling sea.

One day he saw a curious thing on the water. He watched it float, ♪ and he followed it, and managed to bring it safely into his boat. ♪ It was an enormous Yellow Jar, immensely heavy. "How funny!" ♪ said Nikotuchi in great surprise, "no doubt it is full of money." ♪ And he got it home, and put in his hand to take out the treasure—but, O no! ♪ he saw instead a beautiful lady in a yellow silken kimono. ♪ She seemed asleep. He lifted her out, and laid her down on a mat. ♪ But as for the Yellow Jar, he lost no time in hiding that. ♪ Soon the lady opened her eyes, and was terrified





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when she found ♪ she was there in the fisherman's cottage. She cried with a pitiful sound, ♪ and said, "O, shut up my jar again! O, put me back in the water." ♪ "Who may you be?" he asked her then. She told him "I am the daughter ♪ of the Deep Sea King, a fairy King, and I have been travelling far, ♪ and I just was going home again in my beautiful Yellow Jar. ♪ Where is my jar? How did I get here?" exclaimed O Haru San—♪ for that was her name. "You are far from home: you are in the land of Japan," ♪ said Nikotuchi, "and as it seems you have lost your jar at sea, ♪ hadn't you better be my bride, and live here along with me? ♪ I will make you very happy." The lady, with tearful voice, ♪ said, "Very well, I will then"—for indeed she had got no choice. ♪ "But," she added, "I will only stay if you'll promise me that you'll never ♪ speak crossly to me. For if you do, I shall leave you at once for ever." ♪ They were married then, but O Haru San never one moment thought ♪ he had taken her out of the jar—she supposed she must have been brought ♪ to the fisherman's house by







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magic. Nor did she guess that he ♪ had buried the precious Yellow Jar beneath the laburnum tree.

One day she went to set lily roots there, when Nikotuchi came, ♪ and when he saw what she was doing, he was cross, and began to blame. ♪ "Haven't I told you," he said, "that tree was a thing you were never to touch?" ♪ and he pushed her away with angry words.

This grieved her very much. ♪ He had broken his word, and spoken crossly—so now she would have to go. ♪ "But there's something beneath the laburnum tree, or why does he guard it so?" ♪ she said to herself. And when he was gone, she watched him ever so far, ♪ and then she dug beneath the tree, and there was the Yellow Jar. ♪ And she saw how she had been tricked, and this distressed her sadly, ♪ for she really was fond of Nikotuchi, though he had behaved so badly. ♪ She lugged out the Yellow Jar, and she rolled it down to the shore, ♪ got in, and said some magic words; and the lid shut down as before. ♪ And the jar went floating off, and she thought it was going to bring ♪ her





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safely home to the palace of her father, the Deep Sea King. § But a fearful storm came on, and the jar was nearly sunk. § After beating about for several hours, it was caught by a Chinese junk.

That evening, when Nikotuchi came home, the house was empty and grey. § There wasn't a trace of O Haru San, but a little letter that lay § tied to her fan upon the floor, a little letter to say

“Seek me near or seek me far,  
Seek me under sun or star,  
You shall never find me, never,  
Till you find the Yellow Jar.”

So he set out at once to find her. He wandered all over Japan § for a year and a day; but he couldn't see a sign of O Haru San. § And he wandered all over India for a year and a day: no good. He never heard a word of her. And he wandered all over China: and at last he came to a stop § by a Yellow Jar in the window of an old curiosity shop. § But it wasn't a bit the same as his when he had looked at it twice. § The shopman said, “I'd a Yellow Jar five times as big







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and as nice, ♪ but the Yellow Mandarin has bought it, who lives in the castle there ; ♪ and I hear that he is treating it with the very greatest care. ♪ It is sealed with wax, and wrapped in silk, and set among flowers, they say, ♪ on a table of gold and ivory, and he talks to it every day."

"Where does he live ?" asked Nikotuchi. The shopman told him ; and soon ♪ he was standing outside the castle, by the light of the yellow moon, ♪ and climbing up a yellow rose-tree to a window, where he looked in. ♪ And there, at a gold and ivory table, the Yellow Mandarin ♪ had taken off the seal of the jar, and the silk that wrapped it about, ♪ and there was the beautiful little head of O Haru San looking out. ♪ He said to her "Lovely lady, say, will you be my bride ?" ♪ "No, no, no," said O Haru San. The Mandarin replied, ♪ "Then I shall shut you up again till you answer yes." And he did. ♪ And this had happened every night for a twelvemonth. Then the lid ♪ was sealed fast on with yellow wax, and the Mandarin went to sleep ♪ on some yellow silken cushions all piled up





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in a heap. ∅ But he hid beneath the cushions a candle he always kept, ∅ with which he had melted the yellow wax.

And while he soundly slept, ∅ a sad little singing came from the jar—O Haru San, in despair, ∅ calling on Nikotuchi, though she didn't know he was there.

“ Seek me near or seek me far,  
Seek me under sun or star,  
You shall never find me, never,  
Till you find the Yellow Jar.”

Then Nikotuchi got through the window, and whispered, “ Listen to me ; ∅ here I am, O Haru San, how shall I set you free ? ” ∅ She said, “ You can't unless you melt the wax on the seal before and behind— ∅ it needs a magic candle-flame, and that you will have to find.” ∅ So he searched all over the room, while the Mandarin snored like two, ∅ but he couldn't find the candle, and he said, “ What shall I do ? ”

Then three little mice came out of a hole. “ When we used to live in your house, ∅ O Haru San was good to us,” said the biggest and eldest mouse. ∅ “ She fed us well with bits of





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cheese, and we've followed her, as you see, ◊ and now we're going to help her." So they crept about, all three, ◊ under the Mandarin's cushions, and presently, soft and still, ◊ they brought the yellow candle. "Say, 'Show a light,' and it will," ◊ they said to Nikotuchi. So he told it "Show a light," ◊ and it lighted up with a yellow flame, exceedingly clear and bright. ◊ And he held it to the seal, and the wax ran down in a stream, ◊ and O Haru San came out of the jar, as beautiful as a dream.

Then they walked right out of the castle, and the doors flew open wide, ◊ and they took the yellow candle, and the three little mice beside. ◊ And the candle lighted them all the way home, and they didn't mind how far ◊ it was, now they had found each other.

But as for the Yellow Jar, ◊ it was left behind on the table. And when the Mandarin woke, it ◊ made him so angry to find it empty, that in his fury he broke it.







