

Little Miss Joy-Sing

By

John Luther Long

WITH SIXTY ILLUSTRATIONS

How she became the Beautiful Pine Tree in the
Garden of Prince of Don't-Care-What

"A Unique and Unexpected Relation"

JOHN LUTHER LONG



LETTER MISS JOHNSON

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1st EDITION
1904

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"SHE WOULD STICK A POPPY BEHIND HER EAR AND GO OUT
INTO THE SUNSHINE."

See p. 15.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

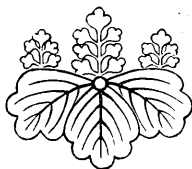
How she became the Beautiful Pine-Tree in the Garden of
Prince of Don't-Care-What

By

John Luther Long

Photographs by

W. R. S. Miller



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WHAT
THE PEOPLE SAID





LITTLE MISS JOY-SING

CHAPTER I

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAID

LITTLE Miss Joy-Sing had contracted the habit of envy. Now, nothing is so certain to make even a Japanese girl unhappy as envy. For, with that, she is sure to be different from all other Japanese girls—who are diligently taught content and how to get and keep it—and to be unlike everybody else is to go the way of loneliness. Indeed, there is a proverb in Japan about interring envy—as if

Little Miss Joy-Sing

it were dead and buried—or ought to be!

And it was Miss Joy-Sing's own beauty that made her envious—which you may think curious until you know the way of it. The people who knew her called her honorably beautiful, and those who did not know her called her augustly beautiful. It is true that Joy-Sing would protest—always—that she was excellently ugly. But that is only the way of Japanese politeness, and she would look into the small, round metal mirror, before which she made her toilet, and know that she was at least very pretty—if not augustly or honorably beautiful. But then—always—entered envy—discontent. For what was the use of it all? It was only on the street that people called her beautiful. In her own home no one did so. For no one

Little Miss Joy-Sing

came there but very old men and women—bent and seamed, and bald and bearded—and they did not care much about beautiful things—being constantly anxious about the taxes, the prices of food, and their funerals.

And all these things were dull and sad to Joy-Sing, so she would flutter away from them, stick a poppy behind her ear and go out into the sunshine.

Thus she was nearly always quite happy—for she dressed her own hair, made her own kimono, and helped at the housework—until she looked up the hill. Then, as they say over there, the demons came and sat upon her brow.

And this, too, must be explained.

Her father was a humble potter, and lived at the bottom of the hill, in an ordinary Japanese house, with thin

Little Miss Joy-Sing

paper walls, and heavy wooden shutters for the night, which made it look like a packing box. And all he did from morning to night was to turn his wheel, put water on the clay, fashion it into vases and teapots, and sing a little. You can fancy how tiresome this became by the time Joy-Sing was a considerable girl, especially the singing. For Joy-Sing's father, like many another person who cannot sing, *would* sing.

But—at the top of the hill lived the Prince of Don't-Care-What. His splendid old yashiki had windows in it. And, every morning, from the opened shoji of her little up-stairs room, Joy-Sing could see the sun on the glass, and then the Prince come forth, in his glittering brocades and swords, at the head of his retinue, to worship the pine-tree. This would



"SHE WOULD PROTEST THAT SHE WAS
EXCELLENTLY UGLY."

Little Miss Joy-Sing

set our Miss Joy-Sing to thinking of all the fine stories she had ever heard about princes and pretty little girls. And then she would dream about *this* Prince and herself—splendid dreams—all in broad daylight!

Now all this happened long ago.

Alas! more explanations are necessary here.

Every one knows that what the men of the East think beautiful we often think ugly—and *vice versa*. Sometimes it seems as if it were merely a matter of having been told very often and for a very long time that a thing is beautiful to make it so. At any rate, so it is in the matter of pine-trees in Japan. Long ago some one made a pine-tree very ugly, and called it beautiful, and kept on insisting that it was beautiful—and so it is to-day—a thing to be revered. And it

Little Miss Joy-Sing

is the more beautiful the more it is gnarled and twisted and aged. Moreover, if the gardener can make of its foliage waves and birds and beasts and clouds—ad infinitum—then it is *very* beautiful.

Now, this pine-tree of the Prince of Don't-Care What was so old that no one living remembered its age. But it was at least three hundred years. Indeed, some of the wise ones—the sort of people who tell the age of a horse by looking at his teeth—looked unspeakably at the pine-tree and said it was at least a thousand years old! What do you think of that? Anyhow, one could see all sorts of queer things in its limbs and leaves. The gardeners who cared for it descended from one another, so that it had always been in the care of one family. And they were taught when

Little Miss Joy-Sing

quite young to know and to understand the habits of the precious tree exactly as if it lived and breathed.

But, most important of all, *things*, in Japan, have souls as well as people. The spirits of one's ancestors who have died, are believed, often, to return and live in some object near those they have loved on earth. And a pine-tree is held to be a fine place for a soul to reside. So that the Lord Buddha sometimes permits the ghost of the ancestor one has loved most to come and reside in one's pine-tree.

Thus it was with the Prince's tree. It had been the home of the soul of one of his ancestors from time immemorial.

And this was the sort of Honorable Mister Pine-tree—to speak in Japanese—which Joy-Sing saw from her

Little Miss Joy-Sing

little up-stairs room every morning when she opened her shoji.

It was so very beautiful—in the Japanese fashion, understand—and so very renowned—also in the Japanese fashion—that the ancestors of the young prince had kept it behind the high walls of the yashiki, so that no one might touch it, or even see it, without a permit, and in charge of the gardener, who carried a sword on such occasions.

However, only a little while before this story begins, when the old prince died, and the young one came from the Imperial University, in Tokyo, where he had got a great deal of modern learning, the corner of the old wall where the tree stood had been torn down so that any one who wished might see it.

But—a strong iron grating had

Little Miss Joy-Sing

been put up so that no one might touch it. Of course, no Japanese would have done this. They were all as proud of the tree as the prince. But, once a foreigner had secretly cut off a "slip," thinking that another such a funny tree would grow from it. For, he only thought it funny—not sacred or beautiful or the habitation of a soul.

The prince was warned by the older men against another such occurrence, but, he was the most headstrong prince of the whole line, and he wrinkled his forehead into vertical folds between the eyes and said:

"The gardener who permitted that lost his head."

And the gardener who stood by shivered and meant not to lose *his* head.

WHAT
SHE WISHED





CHAPTER II

WHAT SHE WISHED

SUDDENLY, one day, before she knew what she was doing, Miss Joy-Sing sighed and said:

“ Oh-h-h! I wish I were the august prince’s honorable Mister Pine-tree— ”

Then she clapped her hand on her mouth. But it was too late. Her father had heard her.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ Miserable, my daughter,” said he, sadly, “ unless you cleanse your heart of envy you will be most unhappy. And you will lose the other life with the Lord Buddha. The gods hear you, and may give you your intemperate wish, and it may be the last wish you are to have. Speak to them softly, so that the envy depart away.”

“ Yes,” said Miss Joy-Sing, going out into the sunshine, and forgetting all about the wooden gods she was to petition.

And she could n't *help* wishing—which is itself a huge Japanese sin. For in Japan one must wish what one's uncles and aunts and other people like one to wish—and nothing else.

So, now and then, her father saw her peeping through the shoji, and always in the direction of the pine-tree—wherefore he said again one day :

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“Alas! still you wish, miserable my daughter. I see you in the morning when the sun is on the windows, and in the evening when the lights are in them. Be admonished. Wishing makes things happen. The gods read the heart. Do you not remember how Honorable Little Miss Green Bamboo wished and became a rock in the garden of the Prince of Wait-for-Something? A rock with water, which is her tears, flowing out of it always? Well, then!”

But this was not the sort of thing to frighten romantic Miss Joy-Sing. To be a rock in the garden of the Prince of Wait-for-Something—even in tears—was not a thing to regret—no!

For he would come every morning in his glittering brocades and swords, with his retinue, and, putting his head

Little Miss Joy-Sing

on his hands before the rock, would probably say:

“ O august one, who has miserably come to reside in the garden of me—in the rock of me—once more the sun shines, and it is morning. Once more I salute you. Once more I beg happiness, beauty, joy, long life of you—permitted of the gods you are to give it unto me. Miserably I trust you have slept well, most august. Again I drink your tears—again I bathe in them—my face, my hands, my body. Once more I bow to you very humbly.”

And she kept on thinking how it would be sweet to have people come to the grating and admire her—and speak of her in her hearing—worship her!

Now, you perceive how her mind had drifted from the rock in the gar-

Little Miss Joy-Sing

den of the Prince of Wait-for-Something to the pine-tree in the yashiki of the Prince of Don't-Care-What.

So that she was quite incorrigible—and everything finally turned into that one wish—no matter where it began, there it ended.



WHEN SHE SLEPT
AND WHEN SHE WOKE





"SHE DRESSED HER OWN HAIR."



CHAPTER III

WHEN SHE SLEPT AND WHEN SHE WOKE

WELL, she was wishing this when she went to bed one night—a little more unconsciously than she did sometimes—and woke with a strange feeling in her limbs. She tried to rub her eyes, but could not. And, presently, when she looked dimly down, there was nothing to be seen but a confusion of gnarled limbs and some patches of queer foliage.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

They were like upturned hands at the ends of crippled arms.

And she could presently make out the shapes of beasts and birds, and waves and fishes she had heard about, but had never been quite able to see before, and she laughed to think how differently a pine-tree looks from above—

Then, very suddenly and shockingly, she understood. She *was* the prince's pine-tree, and wishing had made it happen.

At first she was decidedly sorry. But in a moment she was not quite sure that she was sorry. It was something to know that she had done it. And presently the prince would come. No! She was *not* sorry! She *would* not be. And then the sun burst gloriously forth and dried the dampness which had been just a little disagree-

Little Miss Joy-Sing

ble and warmed her to her very heart, and she was glad—yes, she would have shouted if she could. But here a little chill overtook her. She could not shout, or sing, or gossip—she had to behave precisely as a pine-tree—and SUCH a pine-tree—would.

However, she hadn't a moment to indulge anything like regret. A glittering little procession started from the palace, and she knew that the prince was coming to worship her—*her!* This always happened at sunrise, precisely.

She tried to put her hands to her hair, and was pleased to remember that she was a pine-tree, and that at any rate the gardener would attend to that hereafter. Her hair-dressing had always been an operation of three or four hours, and she was glad

Little Miss Joy-Sing

that instead of hair there was to be only green leaves.

On came the Prince of Don't-Care-What and his retinue. They looked splendid in the morning sun. And she had never seen any one quite so beautiful and manly as this young daimyo, she thought.

"O, august soul," said the prince, "I come at the rising of the sun to bow to you."

And then he bowed to the very earth a dozen times.

"With the sleep still in my eyes—I bow to you."

And he repeated the bowing.

"Yet have I washed and am very clean—that I may bow to you."

For a moment he looked up at the pine-tree.

"I wish that you may have slept well; that you may have all joy and

Little Miss Joy-Sing

no sorrow; that I may be enabled to do what will please you always—for ever—and this day especially. Thus I miserably wish—thus I pray, O august soul of an august ancestor! Heavenly root of an earthly tree!”

And Miss Joy-Sing would have shouted again—if she had not been a pine-tree.

She had not been able to look at the prince carefully. But now, as he gazed solicitously up at her, she saw that he was even more beautiful than she had fancied—with a pale aristocratic face, beautiful vertical lines in his forehead, and splendid long eyes. She really could not help expressing her joy in some fashion, so she shook her limbs at him.

Now, this was a distinct breach of pine-tree decorum. No soul had ever been known to do such a forward thing.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

And the Prince of Don't-Care-What was renowned all over the world for his knowledge of Japanese etiquette.

He stared a little, and then his face plainly said that he was sorry for this gaucherie of the soul in the pine-tree. But, of course, he would not let this appear. So he said to the gardener:

“Perhaps a bug disturbs the honorable serenity of my august ancestor!”

Miss Joy-Sing shuddered. Bugs! Caterpillars! She imagined herself covered with them.

But, after the prince was gone, she looked at herself, and saw neither bug nor caterpillar, and was once more very happy. For, would he not come again in the morning? She would have sung—there was a very pretty song she knew about pine-trees—only, as I have said, pine-trees have

Little Miss Joy-Sing

no voice for singing. This made her reflect for a moment. Was she never to sing again? Or laugh? Such a fate seemed rather dreadful. Yet, it was quite certain that pine-trees did none of these things! But she was comforted by the thought that if wishing made things happen so easily she would simply wish herself back at home if she should ever tire of this—which seemed quite impossible now.



WHAT MISS BUTTERCUP
THOUGHT—AND MISS
PEONY, TOO





CHAPTER IV

WHAT MISS BUTTERCUP THOUGHT—AND
MISS PEONY, TOO

THE next day her father came, weeping, to the tree, and begged piteously to know if she were there. But, of course, she could not make him understand, though she felt very sorry for him. Somehow, she liked him better with the tears for her in his eyes. Everybody likes other people better with tears in their eyes

Little Miss Joy-Sing

for them! And, for a moment, she thought of ending it all with another wish and of going homewith him. But then she would not be there when the prince came in the morning. So, no!

And Miss Peony and Miss Buttercup, her best two friends, came and begged her, if it were she, to wish to come home.

“ Because your honorable and very old father wished us to say that to you,” said Miss Buttercup. “ But, if there is really a prince behind those walls, and you can see him every morning—oh, I don’t know what I *would* do! I think I would *not* come home—never!”

“ And if the prince really worships you! ” sighed Peony-San—“ *I* would stay in a pine-tree forever and ever to have a splendid prince come in the morning and worship me.”

Little Miss Joy-Sing

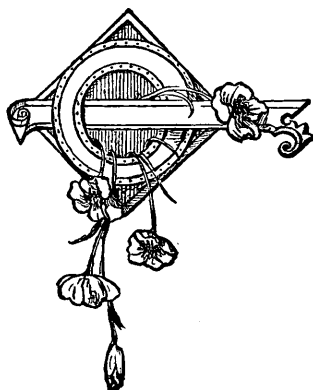
And Miss Buttercup asked, further:

“Does he really bow, and bow, and *bow* to you? And *is* there a poem—which he writes and recites every morning—a fresh one? Think of a poem—a *fresh* one—every morning! Some girls never have a poem written to them in their whole lives. And, perhaps, you have one written and read to you every morning. Oh! I would stay!”

“And does he wear his swords and his daimyo head-dress when he comes? Only think of a prince bowing, bowing, bowing, to *you*! If I were your father I would not wish you back. For, perhaps, if he does that you will *have* to come back. And, oh, dear, you would *never* be contented now—*never*! I wish I were you—if it is you? Is it?”

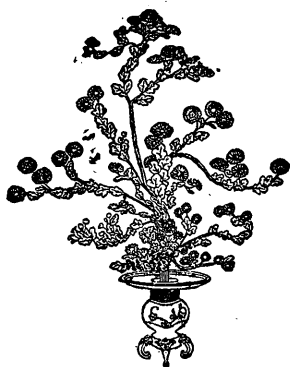
Little Miss Joy-Sing

But, of course, Miss Joy-Sing could not tell them it was she—though their beautiful words made her both very proud and very determined to remain a pine-tree—and, anyhow, just then she *did* feel a bug cutting her limb—which took all the attention away from them.



BUGS!





CHAPTER V

BUGS!

PRESENTLY the gardener came with some sharp tools. Miss Joy-Sing shuddered. He put some boards up against the gratings so that people could not see—she remembered that she had wondered, before she became a pine-tree, what they were put there for—and then he said, ferociously:

“Bugs!”

Little Miss Joy-Sing

He went all over her with his sharp tools, and cut and hurt her dreadfully. She would have cried if a pine-tree could. And she would have wished herself at home if she had not been too much disturbed to even wish. Besides, just then the prince came down. He would make the gardener be kind to her, she knew. And, anyhow, it was a prince in her vicinity.

But the prince was in negligee, and had a foreign cigarette in his mouth. And he had no idea of worshipping her now. That was over for the day; and he showed that he was glad of it! She did not like him so much that way.

“Found the bug?” he asked, roughly.

“There is no bug, augustness,” said the man.

“Find the bug,” said the prince,

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ or I will have you whipped and confined.”

His tone was so shocking for a prince of Don't-Care-What that Miss Joy-Sing could not help a little flutter. He saw this.

“ Something still disturbs the spirit of my ancestor—or else it is the spirit of a fool.”

And that was most shocking. It was distinctly calling *her* horrid names!

Suddenly the gardener, to save himself, pretended to have found a bug.

“Ah!” he cried, thrusting the knife into Miss Joy-Sing.

Now, though she was a tree, it hurt just as much as if she were a girl. She wanted to shriek, but, of course, could not. And this made her situation all the more heartrending.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Just try and fancy it! Some one putting a knife into you and you not able to say a word or move a limb!

“ I knew it,” said the prince, striking a match upon the back of the gardener and lighting a fresh cigarette. “ I always know. Trim that ragged branch away.”

“ Augustness,” protested the gardener, “ it has been that way for, lo, these three hundred years. It was there the foreigner cut off the slip— ”

“ Off with it!” thundered the prince.

Before she could catch her breath the gardener had snipped it off. Now fancy *that*, if you please! Again she suffered all the pangs of dismemberment. She looked down, expecting to see the blood flow, but there was only a ragged white end, wet with sap. And even then the gardener put

Little Miss Joy-Sing

something on it which burned and hurt for days. Fancy that, too! Putting caustic in a fresh wound on a tender limb.

“Now let it alone,” said the prince.

So she was left alone all the rest of the day, with the grating shut, and no one to see or to pity, and she *could* not cry!

But a dove, noticing her sadness, came from a torii near by and sat on her tallest limb, and spoke softly to her.

At first she did not understand, but the dove spoke very slowly, and soon she comprehended every word.

“It is very beautiful to be the prince’s pine-tree,” said the dove.

“No, it is not! They have hurt me, and I’d like to cry,” said Joy-Sing, “and cannot.”

“Ah, often I am hurt and would

Little Miss Joy-Sing

like to cry," answered the dove, "and cannot. It is so all over the world, and with all the creatures. Only men and women cry."

"But I don't like the prince as much as I did before I ever was near him. And I hate to stand still all the time. Yet—I have wished to change back to a nice little girl and nothing has happened. It is perfectly terrible to think that, perhaps, I shall not have another wish. You know, in life, we each have a certain number of wishes—no one knows how many. As long as there are any of our wishes left we get everything we wish for. But it must be with all the heart. Then, when the last wish is granted, we can have no more. I suppose all that is the matter is that I have not wished with all my heart yet. I cannot have exhausted all my wishes

Little Miss Joy-Sing

so soon. Why, I have scarcely wished for anything yet."

"No, you cannot have exhausted all your wishes," smiled the dove, "and, perhaps, you would not like to soar away off to the sky, as I do. You would probably be afraid. So, it is better that you wished to be a pine-tree rather than—an eagle, for instance."

"Yes," admitted Joy-Sing, "I always get dizzy when I go up high. If the prince were anything like I thought him I should not mind."

"Ah, dear, no prince is what we think him."

"But, I am lonely. And I will *not* be lonely. I never was until I became a pine-tree."

"You shall not be lonely, dear," said the dove. "I will call every day. And there are bugs—"

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Joy-Sing shivered audibly.

“Ah, you do not like bugs! Neither do I. But some of the creatures find them great fun. Some eat them.”

“There is one in that limb just below, and he bores dreadfully. And he buzzes, buzzes night and day. He spoils my rest. I—I—I wish you’d eat him!” ended Joy-Sing, desperately.

The dove was distinctly embarrassed.

“I—I’d like to oblige you, dear,” he said; “no one is more obliging than I am. But I do not care greatly for bugs. Er—has the owl called yet?”

“No; no one but you has called.”

“Well, I am going now—and I’ll ask the owl to call at once. Only he never calls before six. He is *so* correct in everything! I think he is fond

Little Miss Joy-Sing

of bugs, and he is *so* wise. Just mention the matter to him. Good-bye, dear. I am not going because you asked me to eat the bug. Keep up your spirits. You will like the owl."

"Yes, if he likes bugs," said Joy-Sing, crossly.



THAT NIGHT THE OWL
CALLED—AND THE BAT





CHAPTER VI

THAT NIGHT THE OWL CALLED—AND THE BAT

THAT night, considerably after six, the owl came and sat on her upper limb and stared at her a long time. Then he said:

“Who?”

“Miss Joy-Sing,” said the tree,
“my father—”

“Who?” said the owl, again.

“I was just going to tell you. My

Little Miss Joy-Sing

father is a potter, and lives at the bottom of this—”

“ Who ? ” said the owl.

“ Why, I have just told you! I don’t think you wise at all. I think you stupid. And I don’t care how soon you go away. The bat likes bugs, too. Maybe he will call!”

“ Who ? ” said the owl once more.

“ The bat. Is that the only word you know? Well, then, every time you say ‘ who ’ I ’ll say ‘ bugs ’—so, there! That is all you ’re good for—bugs, bugs, bugs!”

The owl seemed to understand that. He silently felt his way straight to the place where the bug was boring. There was a little struggle, the crackling of some bones, and then the owl went back to his limb and again looked solemnly down.

“ Oh, thank you!” said Joy-Sing.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ But that *is* a relief! I ’m sorry I called you names. You ’re not stupid—not so very stupid. You ’re better than nobody. But won’t you please ask some of the other creatures to call? It is so horribly lonely.”

“ Who?” asked the owl.

“ Oh, any one who is nice. It is so lonely without—”

The sun began to threaten, and the owl flew away.

“ Without so much as good-night,” said Joy-Sing, bitterly. “ I wish they were all as polite as the dove.”

No other creature came, and after a while Joy-Sing said:

“ Oh, how lonely it *is*! I would be glad to talk to—anything!”

A bat was circling above her, and she thought:

“ I hope he *won’t* call. I never

Little Miss Joy-Sing

liked bats. They get into one's hair.
And I can't dodge! "

But even then the bat alighted.

" Good-morning," he said, gayly.

" I don't know you," said Joy-Sing.

" Oh, yes, you do. You used to know me before you became a pine-tree. And then you used to hate me. You would drive me out with the broom the moment I showed my nose at your house. But now you are a pine-tree, I feel that we shall become the best of friends. And you do not need to be afraid, for you have no hair for me to get into. And I do not get into hair, anyhow. That 's an unworthy superstition. Besides, there are bugs—which is not pleasant for you—and I can relieve you of them."

" There was one, but the owl has been here and eaten him. And if you



"SHE HELPED AT THE HOUSEWORK."

Little Miss Joy-Sing

do not take care I will get him to eat you."

"You are as cross and impolite as ever," said the bat, soaring away; "I am afraid of you!"



SHE WOULD N'T MARRY
THE PRINCE IF HE
SHOULD ASK HER





CHAPTER VII

SHE WOULD N'T MARRY THE PRINCE
IF HE SHOULD ASK HER

SHE was alone all the rest of the night. And it was more terrible than she had even fancied. And so cold! Again she tried to wish, but could not, and nothing happened.

But then the sun rose, and there was that splendid and worshipful ceremony, and there was no bug to trouble her, and presently she was

Little Miss Joy-Sing

glad once more that she had not succeeded in wishing herself back. Then, again, after the prince was gone, it was quite as lonely as the day before. The boards went up once more, and the gardener hunted for the bug. And she could n't even tell him that it was no longer there! And he cut off more limbs. Fancy all that!

She began to wish with all her might to be back at her own little room in her own futons (which is the same as bed in English, though it is not an English bed at all, but only a sort of a wadded overcoat put on backward), and nothing happened—nothing whatever. She was still a pine-tree. And she resolved that she would not marry the prince, nor live happy ever after, if he should ask her. In fact, in that case, she should tell him that she hated him!

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Now, from that day on, the pine-tree began to droop in a way that was unaccountable to the prince. They put upon her the most nauseous things possible, as tonics. They pruned her, and braced and "encouraged" her till she was ready to die of weariness. Then came winter, and she shivered all the time. And her limbs were frozen, and when it snowed, the little upturned hands she had once thought so pretty were only places for keeping the cold snow a little longer upon her.

And, one day, while she was piled high with snow, the prince came and worshipped. She almost hated him now. And, as his shaven crown was bowed beneath her, she shook her limbs violently and covered his naked head with snow.

He leaped up, furiously.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

There was no one in sight who might have shaken the tree, and there was only one conclusion to be drawn.

He whipped out his sword.

“You ingrate!” he cried; “you soul of a fool! Here, now, will I cut you down!”

Joy-Sing shuddered with fear, and he would have certainly done it if he had not at the moment remembered that the sword was his best one—the one decorated with diamonds and rubies, and worn only on state occasions. To cut down the pine-tree would be to ruin it. Besides, no one kept a perfect edge on his holiday sword.

“I will get my every-day sword, and then I will hew you down—yea, though you were the habitation of a thousand souls, all of whom must be homeless. I am the Prince of Don’t-

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Care-What!" threatened the Prince terribly.

He went to the house in an awful rage, and did not return. The truth is, that it had been so long since he had worn his every-day sword that it had been mislaid. And he was quite determined, notwithstanding his wrath, not to ruin the ruby sword. So, only because of this happy chance, the tree lived on.

But Joy-Sing had received her lesson. What if he *should* cut her down? What would become of her? And would n't it hurt horribly?

She asked the owl. But she could make nothing of his answer.

"Who?" said the owl.

"Me! me! me! That is what I asked you," shouted Joy-Sing. "Who will I be then? What? Where? Will it hurt?"

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“Who?” said the owl.

Then she begged the dove to ask him.

“That is the only way, says the owl, to secure your release and become a girl again,” said the dove. “The owl is strange and eccentric, but he is very wise—there is no doubt about that. I understand his language better than you do. So the owl says you must *make* him cut you down. That is a fine suggestion. It is a pity, and it is a shame, for all the creatures know you now, and love you, and it will be quite like losing an old friend. But, perhaps, when you are a girl again you will not forget us who were kind to you when you were a pine-tree.”

“Oh, I will never, never, forget you, nor anything I have learned here, if you will help me to get away,” said Joy-Sing.

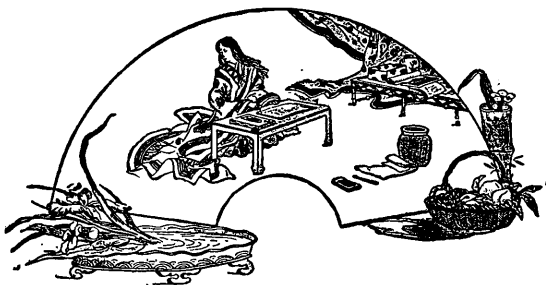
Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ Well, then, you must provoke the prince to cut you down. It *will* be painful, he says, but after that you will be quite as you were again.

“ But how can I make him cut me down?” wailed Joy-Sing.

This neither the dove nor the owl nor the bat knew, though they cudgelled their wits ceaselessly.

“ You see, dear,” explained the dove, “ they are wise but not cunning. I am afraid you will have to ask the fox.”



NOW
THE FOX





CHAPTER VIII

NOW THE FOX

NOW, among the acquaintances Joy-Sing made after she became a pine-tree was the fox, of course. Everybody and everything in Japan is acquainted with the fox. I know this seems a very ordinary announcement to you. But you are to be made still more wise by being told about foxes. There are many wild animals in Japan which trouble the

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Japanese very little, indeed. But the domestic fox is terrible. For he can infest one and make one do the most strange and awful things. It is something like being bewitched—only a thousand times worse.

I have heard of a rice farmer who saw a railroad train on one of Japan's new railroads rushing down upon him in a cut from which he could not escape. He dropped on his knees to pray a moment before being killed, and he must have said just the right words (there ARE right words, but no one except certain priests know them, and they charge so much for repeating them that poor people cannot buy them)—yes, the farmer must have happened upon just the right words to exorcise the fox, for, lo! the train stopped snorting and roaring and disappeared—and a fox ran by,



"HER LITTLE UPSTAIRS ROOM."

Little Miss Joy-Sing

so that the rice farmer knew that it had all been done by the fox!

This is only a small sample of what he can do.

But, then, just as in witchcraft there are a few good witches, so, in Japan, there are a few good foxes. And the one Joy-Sing found scratching at her roots one night claimed to be this sort. At first, of course, she was frightened, and mistrusted him—as it is always wise to mistrust a fox till one *knows* that he is good. But the fox said:

“Now, don’t you be frightened. I have a bad reputation, I know. But, did you ever hear that I hurt a pretty girl? Or that I even play tricks on them? No! I am much too fond of pretty girls!”

“Can you say kon-kon?” whispered Joy-Sing.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

For this, *you* must know, as every Japanese girl does, is the way to tell a bad fox from a good one. A bad fox cannot say kon-kon, but will say, in spite of himself, kwai-kwai.

But this fox immediately repeated, after Joy-Sing, the words kon-kon.

For, though he was in reality a goblin-fox of the most distinguished type—that is, not the sort of fox who gets into one and makes him do strange things, but one that can change his shape, and who works by enchantments—though he was that sort of a fox, yet he could say kon-kon, because he watched Joy-Sing's lips, and did with his exactly what she had done with hers, knowing nothing of the sound. For these foxes cannot hear the sound of their voices when they say kon-kon or kwai-kwai. However, though he was a goblin-fox,

Little Miss Joy-Sing

he was very good-natured, as you will see, and much the best kind of a fox for Joy-Sing.

“ There,” said the fox, in an injured tone, “ I am sure that I have proved to you that I am Inari-Kitsune ”—which is the family name of good foxes—“ and that you can trust me.”

And Joy-Sing had to admit that this was true.

“ On the contrary,” went on the fox, “ you must have heard how I helped Miss Roly-Poly, of Rice-Field-Dyke, to get rid of an enchantment the badger of Netsukei had put upon her?”

“ No,” said Miss Joy-Sing, weakly, “ I never heard of it.”

“ Then, perhaps, you will not mind me telling it? ”

“ I should like it very much,” con-

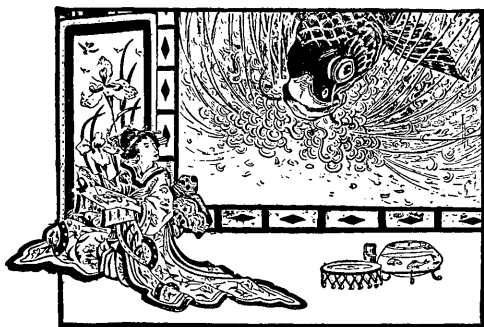
Little Miss Joy-Sing

fessed Joy-Sing, liking the fox more and more—which, indeed, was precisely what the fox meant her to do. For there is no animal in the world who knows so well how to fascinate a girl as Inari-Kitsune.



THE STORY OF
MISS ROLY-POLY





CHAPTER IX

THE STORY OF MISS ROLY-POLY

SO the fox sat on his haunches, and told the following story:

“Miss Roly-Poly was nearly as pretty as you were—you know I have often seen you when you did not see me, before you were a pine-tree (which was entirely untrue!)—but she was not as discriminating in her friendships as you are. So when the badger of Netsukei came by her

Little Miss Joy-Sing

father's rice-fields one night, with his coat shining and his whisk out, intending abominably to infatuate her, she fell at once into his snare. He asked her to walk with him as far as the bridge, where the moon was in the water, telling her how beautiful the sight was, and she did so, because, you know, nothing so appeals to a Japanese girl as the moon in the water, but much more because of Netsukei's very fascinating manners and conversation.

“ However, no sooner had they arrived where the moon lay on the water (and, indeed, he had told her the truth, so far, for it was more beautiful than Bunchosai has ever painted it!) than she was stricken almost dumb with admiration of it. Now, you know that the moon can be seen from under the water as well as from

Little Miss Joy-Sing

over it. And the wicked badger tempted Miss Roly-Poly by saying that it was more beautiful that way, so that she consented to go with him under the water to see it.

“ ‘ But,’ said the cunning badger, ‘ I must change you into a fish to do so, or you will drown.’ ”

“ ‘ And will you change me back again to a pretty girl?’ asked Miss Roly-Poly.

“ ‘ Certainly!’ said the badger, as if his feelings had been hurt by the girl’s mistrust. ‘ Do you suppose for an instant that I have such bad taste as to permit a pretty girl like you to remain a fish? Besides, there are badgers who are mean enough to *eat* fish! ’ ”

So she let him change her into a fish.

“ And so she remained, and narrow-

Little Miss Joy-Sing

ly escaped being eaten by odious Netsukei's, till I—”

“And did you change her back to a pretty little girl again?” asked Miss Joy-Sing, anxiously.

“I did,” said the fox, proudly.

“And—and you saved her life!”

“I did, indeed. I came just in time.”

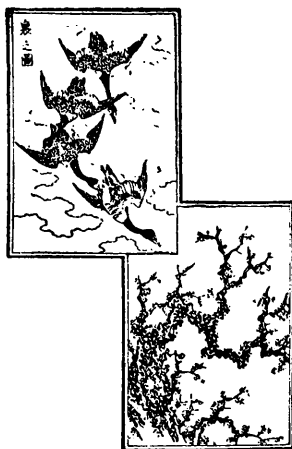
“Then, maybe you can help me?” cried Joy-Sing. “For, to tell you the truth, I am not a pine-tree, really, but a pretty little girl, just as Miss Roly-Poly was.”

And thereupon Miss Joy-Sing told the fox her whole story.

“I can help you,” said the fox, “and, what is more and better, I *will*! There! But it will be more difficult than the case of Miss Roly-Poly. You have let this go too long. Being a pine-tree has become chronic with you. Still—”

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Joy-Sing thought the fox had fallen asleep. But he explained that he was only thinking.



WHY DID
THE FOX LAUGH?





CHAPTER X

WHY DID THE FOX LAUGH?

“**I** SAW a dove talking to you to-day.”

“ Oh, yes!” cried Joy-Sing. “ She is my best friend.”

“ That is well,” said the fox, mysteriously. “ Ask her to-night when she calls if she can have a fresh dove here every night.”

“ But why?” asked the unsuspecting Joy-Sing.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ They will be of the greatest service to me. I am very fond of doves,” said the fox. “ And they usually agree with me. They will do what I ask readily—and Miss Roly-Poly did not ask troublesome questions.”

“ You won’t hurt the dove?”

“ Certainly not,” said the fox. “ I trust the doves will not hurt me. I do not think they will.”

“ A dove could not hurt you,” laughed Miss Joy-Sing. “ You are much larger.”

“ Ah, I don’t know,” said the fox. “ My digestion is not what it was.”

“ I do not understand that,” said Miss Joy-Sing. “ Anyhow, the dove has a beautiful plan for getting me back to being a girl again ”—and she told him of the dove’s plan—“ but the trouble is that neither she nor the owl can execute the plan.”



"SHE COULDN'T HELP WISHING."

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ It is often the case,” said the fox, oracularly, “ that clever people end with being clever. Then they have to call in some one who begins by being clever.”

“ Oh!” said Miss Joy-Sing, delightedly.

“ That is me,” said the fox, throwing out his chest.

“ Oh!” said Miss Joy-Sing again.

The fact is that the fox, notwithstanding his protests of modesty, had begun to fascinate Miss Joy-Sing quite as the badger had fascinated Miss Roly-Poly. Only, the case of Miss Joy-Sing did not look so hopeless, because the fox was likely to linger over a thing he liked until the fascination departed and one got one's senses quite back.

“ Now,” the fox went on, “ I think

Little Miss Joy-Sing

I can put this plan of the dove's into perfect execution."

"Oh!" said Miss Joy-Sing.

"I must have the assistance each night of a dove, or some other of the feathered creatures with a sharp bill—and—and—ahem!—a tender breast. Under my directions, they shall strip the tree of its verdure. Every night we shall accomplish something, and presently the tree will be as bare as when it was born—for, you know, trees are quite leafless when they are born. Then, after the night's labor, I will invite the tired dove or other feathered creature to repose in my burrow and—and—"

"What then?" asked curious little Joy-Sing.

But the fox only laughed and said:

"Never mind. I 'll do the rest."

"It is very strange that the dove,

Little Miss Joy-Sing

who first thought of the plan, could not think how to do it! It seems very simple and easy to you," mused Joy-Sing.

"Not at all," said the fox. "That is the way with many people. They must be taught how to use their own hands and feet. That is why the gods made foxes so wise. You never saw a fox *work*, did you?"

"Why, no!" said Miss Joy-Sing.

"Well, so it was intended. I suppose I **COULD** strip the green off of the tree if I would. But what would you think of me if you saw me working? Like a beaver, for instance. You would lose all respect for me!"

Miss Joy-Sing had to admit that she would not consider him so cunning and powerful.

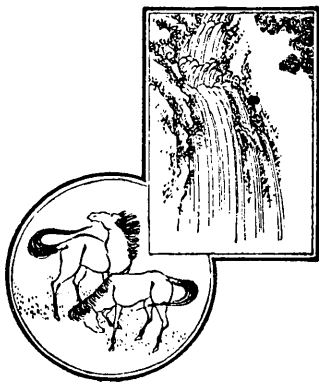
"The mind that boldly conceives is

Little Miss Joy-Sing

always above the plodding hand that executes the conception."

"Yes!" said Joy-sing, breathlessly. She had heard of the fox's great words.

"Well, then, persuade the dove to come here to-night and begin."



INTO
A HOLE





CHAPTER XI

INTO A HOLE

SO, when the soft-voiced dove called that night, Joy-Sing told her of the fox's plan, and she was so rejoiced at it that she at once took up the work of stripping the tree, and by the time the light began to show in the east there was quite a patch of bare limbs.

"Why did n't I think of that myself?" said the delighted dove.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ The fox says your mind does not go that far,” said Miss Joy-Sing.

Then the fox came from his hole and said:

“ Sh! It is now light, and you are very tired, dear ”—which was true. “ Come, here is a hole for you where you cannot be seen. It is my habitation. Use it as your own. Rest. Sleep! ”

The dove flew away to the hole, and Joy-Sing never saw her again, and the fox slept all the next day.

But the next night there was another—the first one had arranged it.

And the next night another, and so on and on and on—the supply of doves never failed!

After this had proceeded for a long while, and the tree had become very bare, Joy-Sing began to wonder what had become of all the doves that went

Little Miss Joy-Sing

into the fox's burrow. One day she asked him.

“Because,” she went on, “there are no more doves! If the tree is not done we will have to get other creatures.”

“What!” cried the fox. “I cannot have eat—No more doves in the whole world?”

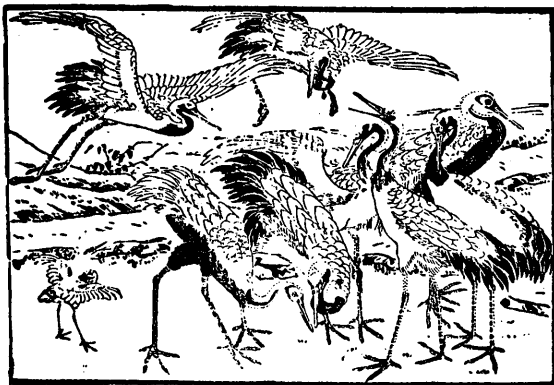
“I do not think there are any more doves in the world! I do *not* understand it!”

And Joy-Sing cried a little, for, of all the creatures, she loved the doves best.



A PICTURE
OF JOY-SING





CHAPTER XII

A PICTURE OF JOY-SING

NOW the fox had slept so much and had grown so fat and lazy that he did not seem like a cunning fox any more.

And the prince came that very day and stormed and swore so furiously at the tree that the fox in his burrow became alarmed.

“If I keep up this life of inglori-

Little Miss Joy-Sing

ous inactivity any longer I shall not be fit for business, and shall fall an easy prey to dogs when I endeavor to change my residence. I must be heroic and stop it, though it is very hard to do," sighed the fox. " Besides, there are no more doves, anyhow. Miss Joy-Sing, you have been very kind to me, and have earned your freedom. Now, just to show you that I have not lost my disposition to help you, in what shape would you like me to appear before the prince?"

"Appear before the prince!" gasped Joy-Sing.

" Certainly," said the fox. " He would be more frightened of me than I of him if he knew who I was. I am not afraid of any man or any machine. And it is now time to announce that the pine-tree is dead, and that it must be cut down. The work

Little Miss Joy-Sing

is far enough advanced, even if there are no more doves—" and the fox ended with a sigh for the beautiful life which was ending for him.

"Can you take any shape?" asked the girl.

"Anything—from a locomotive to a gnat!" laughed the fox. "But I hate to do it. It is like work after these months of eating and sleeping."

"Eating?" questioned Joy-Sing. "Alas! it is true! I have been most inhospitable! I have never thought of your food! How hungry you must be!"

"It has been a regular feast!"

Joy-Sing did not understand this. And she had no time now to think it out. She had thought of something better.

"Can you change to a pretty girl?"

"Certainly," said the fox.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“ Can you make yourself look like *me?* ”

“ Yes. if I could see a picture of you. ”

“ There is one in my little room in the house at the foot of the hill! Asami, the photographer, in Honchi-Dori, made it! ” She was all excitement now. “ You go up one flight, turn to the right, then to the left, open the shoji with the pink carp upon it, enter, and there, in my red-lacquered cabinet— ”

She was quite choked with her own words.

But the fox was already gone.

How she looked and waited for him to appear! Just fancy!



"I WILL KEEP BUT ONE FOOT TO GET BACK WITH."

‘ HE COULD N’T
CHANGE BOTH FEET



8—*Little Miss Joy-Sing*



CHAPTER XIII

HE COULD N'T CHANGE BOTH FEET

PRESENTLY she saw coming up the hill her very self! It was not her best kimono—the green one. She had that on—though it had been, somehow, lost in the foliage of the pine-tree—but it was certainly a very pretty one, of a shaded pink crape, with a gold-brocaded obi and a very good length of sleeve, and that was

Little Miss Joy-Sing

her own walk and her own smile, and everything was herself except—horror upon horror!—as the kimono parted in walking her feet showed, and they were the feet of a fox!

“How do I look?” asked the fox.

Oh, lovely! You are quite me! But—”

“But?”

“But, can’t you change your feet, too?” wailed Miss Joy-Sing.

“No,” said the fox, “or else I could never change back again. I must have something to start with.”

“I should never want to change back,” pouted Joy-Sing, “if I were such a pretty girl.”

“That is because you have never been a fox. It is ten times the fun it is to be a girl. Besides, you know, you *were* such a pretty girl—this very one!—and you were not satisfied with

Little Miss Joy-Sing

yourself—you *did* prefer to be a pine-tree.”

“Yes,” sighed Joy-Sing, irrelevantly. “Please change your feet!”

“Then I shall be in precisely the fix you are. And I could n’t help you. Hereafter when you change to something else always keep a foot or a hand to start back with.”

“Would n’t one foot do?”

“Well, yes,” said the fox, “but it is the very last atom I dare let go. Still, to show you how much I like you, I will run the risk and change the other foot, and keep but one to get back with.”

He did this, and they both laughed to see one of Joy-Sing’s dainty little feet beside one of his hairy claws.

“But, the deuce of it is,” lamented the fox, “that it makes me limp”—he showed her that he did—“and if

Little Miss Joy-Sing

I should have to run I could not run half as fast as I ought to get away from dogs and men—and it will take me longer to change myself back. Besides, I *might* put the wrong foot forward. But you are certainly a very pretty girl, and you have certainly been kind to me,” sighed the sentimental fox. “You must know that the one creature who can see—through all this drapery—that I am nothing more nor less than a fox, is sleeping yonder, and happens to be my deadliest enemy”—he pointed to the dog—“and, inside, there—the palace—is a yambushi, who can, in a moment, if he makes his fingers this way, and blows toward me through the diamond-shaped holes, and says the proper words, exorcise me so that I will be nothing but a very fat fox, running for my life. Moreover, all this,

Little Miss Joy-Sing

this place is surrounded by water. And, you know, that no fox can cross water without his shadow being thrown upon it. When that happens all is up with the fox! For, whatever his form, he can't throw any but the shadow of a fox, and he is drowned by that quite as if the shadow were he. Foxes always cross streams at night and in the dark of the moon, when he can throw no shadow. Now, do you see all the danger I am going into for you?"

"Yes, O-Kitsune-San," said Joy-Sing, coaxingly; "but if I could run as fast as you—"

"Oh, well," said the fox, "I'll do it because it is you. I'm not afraid—only fat."

"Please don't let the prince see the fox-foot! Keep mine out all the time, and it will be all right."

Little Miss Joy-Sing

“The prince!” said the fox.
“Pooh! It ’s the dog!”

“Yes,” answered Joy-Sing. “I thought, maybe, you would not mind telling the prince that you are *me*?”

“No!” laughed the fox. “Not at all! If I get past the dog I ’ll leave your card!”



IF SHE HAD ONLY
REMAINED A LITTLE GIRL





CHAPTER XIV

IF SHE HAD ONLY REMAINED A LITTLE
GIRL

THEREUPON up to the door of the yashiki he stalked. And there he clapped his hands—or Joy-Sing's hands—which, you must know, is the way they “knock” in Japan, and carefully hiding his fox-foot, called out:

“The Honorable Miss Joy-Sing to

Little Miss Joy-Sing

the Prince of Don't-Care-What!
Honorable pardon deign! ”

In fact, he should have let his tail appear, and have knocked with that. For all foxes knock at doors with their tails. And, for this purpose, they are furnished at the end with a handsome jewel. Indeed, some of them have golden fur on their tails besides—so very important to a fox is his tail. But, if he had shown his tail, the dog, which was quite near, might have seen it, and then it would have been all up with O-Kitsune-San. As it was the dog did not even growl. Besides, he remembered at once that he was not himself, but Joy-Sing.

“ Who disturbs my slumber? ”

Joy-Sing could hear the prince roar this, and she was terrified. But not the fox. He turned and changed his face to that of a fox for a moment

Little Miss Joy-Sing

and winked. Then he repeated his salutation, and the moment the prince saw it was a pretty girl he bowed low and spoke softly. The fox drew him, with the most cunning conversation, to the tree, so that Joy-Sing might hear what he was saying and know what he was doing. And his language was the finest and most courtly the girl had ever heard. So that she sighed and said: (Of course, the prince could not understand the language of a pine-tree.)

“Oh, if I had *only* remained a pretty girl, and gone straight to his door and knocked! If I ever get over this I shall know better. And I shall tell all the other girls. Perhaps write a book about it! If they want a prince it is much better to go straight to his door and ask for him. And that the very last thing a girl ought

Little Miss Joy-Sing

to be is a motionless, speechless, timid pine-tree! Oh, yes! A prince may admire a pine-tree—as a pine-tree! But what a proper girl wants is to be admired as a girl! ”

Still the prince talked on.

And, in grandiloquence of language, the fox could not be outdone. Indeed, wherever the prince had one adjective the fox had ten.

“ Beautiful maiden,” said the prince, presently, “ most augustly lovely one, I can no longer restrain my lips—most miserable—”

And then and there the prince offered Miss Joy-Sing, in the person of the fox, his beautiful palace, himself, a chest full of splendid kimono, jeweled kanzashi for her hair, a mirror to see her face in, paint to paint her cheeks, and almost everything she had ever wished for in all her life!

Little Miss Joy-Sing

And the fox, quite as if he had been truly her, accepted them all with profound thanks, then turned and winked at Joy-Sing.

“ Tell me, then,” begged the prince, “ the place of your abode, so that I may at once ask your hand of your father— ”

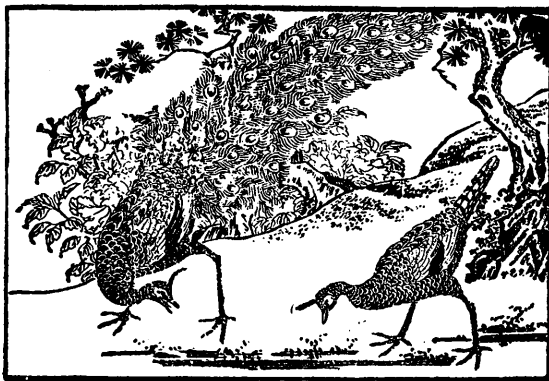
Ah, but she *did* wish that she had remained a pretty little girl, and had gone straight to the prince’s door. No lesson her father had ever taught her was so powerful as this!

Remember that the fox winked to Joy-Sing.



DOGS!





CHAPTER XV

DOGS!

“**B**UT, alas, Honorable Master Prince of a Thousand Courtesies, I have a disgusting duty to perform,” now spoke the fox. “Behold how your honorable and ancient tree dies! It is possessed not by the august spirits of your renowned ancestors, but by foxes, and I cannot accept your august hand until you

Little Miss Joy-Sing

purge yourself of foxes, and there is but one way to dispossess yourself and your tree of them, and that is to cut it down—”

The fox had got so far, when he thought it well to stop and think and to wink to Joy-Sing again. For, as you will perceive, he was doing very well indeed.

Alas! that was a fatal wink! No wink had ever been more fatal! Miss Joy-Sing saw a look of the utmost horror come over the features of the prince. He was looking at something on the ground. He was on his knees, you know. She looked, too. The fox had exposed his claw-foot as he turned!

“The other foot!” gasped Joy-Sing.

But it was too late. It is true that the fox at once withdrew his own foot

Little Miss Joy-Sing

and put forth the very pretty one of Joy-Sing, trusting for a moment in its fascination. But the prince had seen that ominous sign before.

“A fox!” he cried. And then, in a loud voice: “I am possessed by foxes! Binzujo!”

Now Binzujo was the priest, or the yambushi, who could cast out foxes and disenchant their enchantments, and he happened to be in the doorway. He at once uttered the words of exorcism, locked his fingers in a diamond-shaped pattern, and blew through them toward the poor fox. The fox, in mortal terror, forgot—abandoned—Joy-Sing, and started to run. But the skirts of Joy-Sing impeded him. He raised them. Now there could be no doubt that he was a fox. There was the claw-foot and the girl’s foot—the one going twice

Little Miss Joy-Sing

as fast as the other—the one constantly impeding the other.

And, worse and worse, at the tumult the dog woke up and at once knew the pretty girl for nothing but a fox. He bayed terribly that thing all dogs bay when they pursue a goblin-fox:

“Kitsune-bi! Kitsune-bi!”

And, almost at once, this awful signal travelled to every dog for miles around, so that all the world seemed alive with the baying of that terrible

“Kitsune-bi! Kitsune-bi!”

And from far and near they gathered upon the trail of the poor fox.

“Oh,” the fox anathematized Joy-Sing and all pretty girls and their skirts.

“If I ever get out of this no silly girl shall get me into such a scrape again! Oh! Oh! Oh!”

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Now he could *hear* the words of exorcism, and even the priest was gaining on him. The moment a fox hears the words he ceases to be a fox. The dogs gained prodigiously, of course. No fox had ever been caught. Was he to be the first?

“Niru nishu—’Mida Butsu.”

Well, the exorcism was too powerful for Kitsune-San, and the dogs were now very close.

There before him was the stream he had crossed in the night when he came to tempt Joy-Sing so that he would cast no shadow. But it was broad daylight, the sun shone, and he could not evade his shadow. He plunged on—and then he came to the stream.

And there Joy-Sing saw her own presentment vanish in the form of a fat fox. At the same time the dogs

Little Miss Joy-Sing

closed in upon him, and the words of the priest were distinctly audible. And no one knows to this day just what happened—whether the dogs finished the fox, or whether the fox changed himself into a fish and dived under that water, or whether he was drowned by his own shadow, or— But what is the use of guessing? No one knows!

The priest returned, still repeating the words of the exorcism.

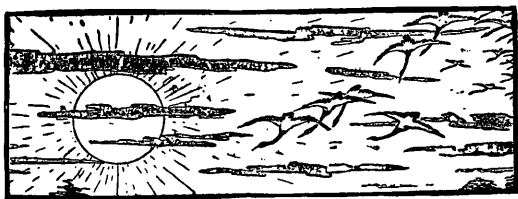
The dogs stopped baying, and went to their homes, and that is the last that Joy-Sing ever saw of the fox, who deceived her, yet was kind to her at the last, and, perhaps, lost his life because he ignobly fattened upon doves.

Now the prince hated the tree—notwithstanding the priest assured him of complete exorcism. He accused

Little Miss Joy-Sing

the soul abiding there of having be-foxed him. And then, too, he accused the tree of being dead, since it was as bare as if it had never been green. He remembered the suggestion of the fox, and, that he might be be-foxed no more, he resolved to cut it down.

And so it came to pass that the very thing Joy-Sing had wished and could not bring about—even with the help of Kitsune-San—had been brought about by the wicked fox in his own selfishness—which has a very good moral—if you please, sir, and madame.



BUT—WAS THERE
NO TREE—NO PRINCE?





CHAPTER XVI

BUT—WAS THERE NO TREE—NO PRINCE?

SO came the prince one morning to anathematize the tree before cutting it down, quite in the Japanese way.

“Miserable pine-tree,” he said, “now I know. You have not the soul of any ancestor of mine. First, some vast demon cast out the soul of my blessed ancestor and possessed you. Then he gave you over to the foxes.

Little Miss Joy-Sing

Then you be-foxed me! You revile me. I hate you. You have not given me long life. My beard is white. *I am sad and ugly. Yet I am not so very old. You are a lie. You have not given me happiness. The reason is evident. You do not have it yourself. One cannot give what one does not one's self possess. You are only full of foxes. I am. I do not believe the priest. You yourself wither, are naked, dying—a horrible skeleton. Can a thing which is itself dying give life? Can a thing which is unhappy give happiness? Can a thing which is be-foxed do else than be-fox? And the multitude jeer at me as I go by. They say, 'Behold the Prince of Don't-Care-What! His beard is white. He withers. He dies! It is the pine-tree. He does not deserve long life and happiness. It has lived four hundred

Little Miss Joy-Sing

—a thousand—years. It has given long life and happiness to all his ancestors. That was because they lived so as to deserve it. But this prince does not.’ But they do not know that you are be-foxed. Nor that I am, thank Shaka! They never shall! Tomorrow morning you shall be cut off—yes, early in the morning, when there is no one to see! And after that you shall be without a habitation forever. Foxes! Foxes of the air! I shall see you run!—run to new habitations! ”

And all that night Joy-Sing shivered and waited.

In the morning came the prince and his retinue once more. There was sadness in his face, and now she saw that it had been a long time, and he had grown very old and ill-looking. His beard was long and thin

Little Miss Joy-Sing

and quite white—just like the old prince's had been. And he stooped, and held to the arm of the gardener as he walked. For now the gardener had a stalwart son. And it was he who carried the shining axe. So she knew that many years had passed. She did not remember when nor how they had happened—all those years—but, then, it was all a matter of enchantment!

For a moment the prince stood and looked sadly upon the tree, and for a moment Joy-Sing was sorry. For she remembered that he had accused her of his ruin. And if she had not taken the place of the habitation of the soul of his kindly ancestor, who can say that his life would not have been better and longer and happier? Had she, little Joy-Sing, because of a foolish wish, spoiled the life of a



" 'WHY—WHY—WHY! I AM *not* SO OLD! "

Little Miss Joy-Sing

prince and destroyed the most renowned pine-tree in the world? She was very sorry for him, but that did not bring back his youth, or his happiness, or save the tree, or remove the spell of the foxes. Such is the curse of envy.

The prince bowed his head, and all his retinue did the same. Then he prayed once more—not the angry prayer, but one of pity and mercy. He begged all the Japanese gods to pardon and be merciful to the evil soul which had dispossessed that of his ancestor, then yielded to the foxes, which had destroyed his tree, his life, taken all his joy, and to the soul itself he wished a longer and better life than his, a better habitation, and forgave it entirely—for he said that with the tree he, too, must die—(there had always been a prophecy to the

Little Miss Joy-Sing

effect that with the death of the tree his line should perish) —but he had no mercy for the foxes—and—he was ready. So—sayonara— All while Joy-Sing was possessed with horror for the ruin she had wrought.

At the last word of the prince the stalwart young gardener sunk his axe into the trunk, and Joy-Sing shrieked—and found herself in the arms of her father.

“ I must be old, old, old; and have missed so much. Let me have my mirror.”

“ Sh-sh-sh! Miserable my daughter—why have you been so troubled?”

“ Troubled!” sobbed Joy-Sing. “ Oh, I will never wish again to leave you.”

“ Leave me—?”

“ Oh—I have been gone for years

Little Miss Joy-Sing

and years! and I have ruined, destroyed everything. There is not a dove in the whole world! The prince was quite young when I went. Yesterday he was so old—so old—so old—and sad—hopeless— Such is the curse of envy! ”

She shivered.

“ Let me have my little mirror.”

Her father brought it.

“ Why—why—why, *I* am *not* old! I am not *much* older than when I went away.”

“ You have not been away,” said her father.

“ What—was there no pine-tree—no bug—no owl—no dove—no creatures—no gardener—no axe—no fox—no prince? ”

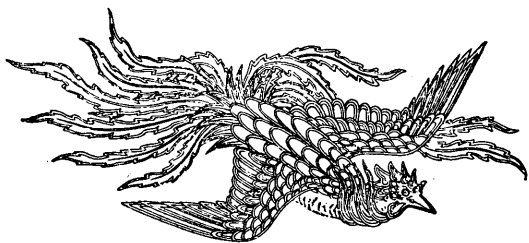
“ Nothing—You have just awakened,” said her father, “ and your breakfast rice is hot.”

Little Miss Joy-Sing

(If you do not understand precisely what had happened to Joy-Sing, you will have to return and read the beginning of *Chapter Third* as a penalty for careless reading.)

And she put her arms around her father's neck, and cried upon him.

And after that envy departed from Joy-Sing forever.



THE END



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