

# Maso To The Rescue

## EDNAH PROCTOR CLARKE

She stood on the land in front of the chili-pepper bush, making her three little bows, from the top of her hair to the toe of her two-inch-high lacquered sandals, she might have stepped off the Tokyo fan in my drawing-room cabinet.

There are Japanese women galore in Hawaii; but the civilization of Western civilization is upon most of them. They wear dirty blue cotton "Mother Hubbards" and shapeless straw hats; they are unclassified and hideous.

But Tia, in her silver-gray kimono, with her gold and blue obi folded about her tiny waist and looped over an absurd little horsehair pillow behind, with her two-toed stockings ending at the ankle and hooking up the sides; with her skin like old ivory, her pouted lips and long-fringed eyes, Tia was indeed the Orient. The flutter of cherry blossoms, the breath of almond boughs, came with her.

"What shall I do?" I demanded of the household. "She has just arrived in the Islands. She doesn't know a word of English. She has never seen a cooking stove, or a knife and fork, or a spring bed."

"Keep her!" chorused the household, with deep bass emphasis from the masculine portion.

"Maso," I called, opening the dining-room door with trepidation. Maso was our Japanese chef and fatotumum, a force always to be reckoned with and under no circumstances to be slighted. A lean, crabbed bachelor of forty was Maso, with superior views of his own importance, and a lot of glass in his petticoats, Western and, presumably, Japanese. He spoke the most precise English, wore long-tailed coats and a brown Fedora, and was one of the pillars of the local church. I held my breath as he sauntered in, a big, checked dish towel flung over his shoulders, and gazed beneath his half-closed lids at the vision under the chili-pepper bush.

Human nature is the same from the days of Helen. One eye—flash—and Maso, conquered, was leading her kitchenwards, his Japanese amenities mingling with her gurgling laugh.

It was worth Tia's wages just to hear that laugh! From the time she pattered in with her gay "Oha!" in the morning to the last "Sayonara" flung over her shoulders at night, life and work were one long jest to her. She pervaded the place like a butterfly. It was Tia in the drawing-room with a feather duster half as big as herself; Tia in the kitchen stirring her hostess from a tall wooden chair and eating radishes and shoyu; Tia among the ginger blossoms reaching high above her head to pluck the creamy stalk; and Tia at the gate, making three bows to O-Tsuki-San, the moon in the sky. It cannot be said that training her into a high class waitress and chambermaid did not have its drawbacks. There were times when the Japanese dictionary, Dumb Cranbo and Delacarte combined, failed to convey the slightest impression. I can not truthfully say we ever understood each other in those first days, but we often divined each other, and when divination failed, we sat down and laughed, which was a better way for the soul than such comprehension.

And to see her arranging flowers, with her glossy head slip-titled like a bird's, her red under lip sucked in, and her tiny hands poised over the blossoms till they caught that ineffable blend of Art and Nature which is the mystery of Japan; to see her toddling about the dining table with her funny short steps, her long sleeves thrown over her shoulder and a ginger bloom in her hair, were compensations.

As to the masculine portion of the household, it succumbed to her to a man, and if she triumphed in the parlor, she tyrannized in the kitchen! Maso the haughty, Maso the taciturn, who smiled pityingly over suggestions of desserts and scorned references in potatoes, became Maso the suppliant.

He hung out Tia's washing for her, he emptied her tubs for her, he washed the dinner dishes (which was obviously her duty). Her impudent little mouth cut up at his most kitchen, her ombre and hairpins littered his bachelor bedroom—for where else could O-Jo-san Tia smooth her satiny locks?—and for return she laughed at him and teased him all day long; called him "old man" and "good-for-nothing," and treated him generally as the dust beneath her feet.

There were also others: Yamashito, the painter, who took three days to do one day's work, flirting with Tia at my expense; and carpenters and butcher boys and itinerant turn-of-socket. O-Jo-san Tia laughed at them all.

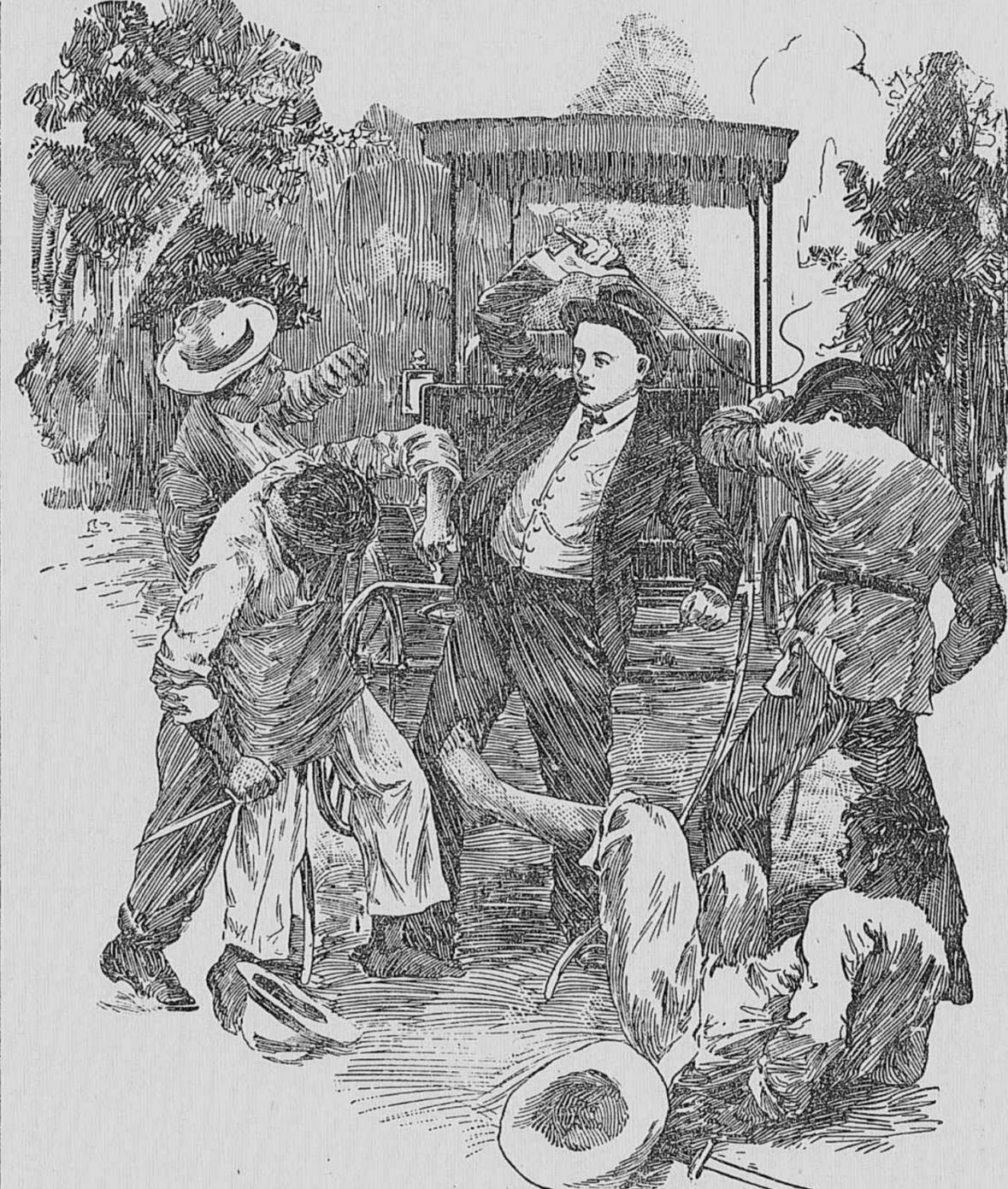
Then came Ishiwara, the barber. It might be said that Ishiwara was in the air from the beginning, but it was some time before he materialized.

If Tia was Japan incarnate, Ishiwara was Japan masculinized—a strapping lad, with square shoulders and lean flanks that would have done credit to a West Pointer. His blacking-brush hair, cropped close behind, grew longer on top and fell picturesque almost to his eyebrows, and he wore always a blue-and-white kimono, girl with a white silk obi. He had been a holdier (so he told us), and his swagger was worth crossing half the Pacific to see Maso, with his ill-fitting American clothes and sloping shoulders, was undistinguishable from the common herd, but Ishiwara might have been a Mikado incognito. One always expected him to stride into the garden with two swords thrust through his girdle, and a retinue of princeling.

In twilight he came to sit on his heels under the banana trees and tell Tia tales of his prowess—magnificent tales, interspersed with many cigarettes (his fingers were mahogany colored with nicotine) and acted out with all the superb anatomy of the Oriental. Now he ground li-chi nuts beneath his heel like Chinese skulls; now he reconnoitered among the papai trees; now he crouched in ambush behind a royal palm; and now he charged upon platoons of ti-piants and swept them from the face of the earth!

Maso took no part in those scenes. He retired to the tara patch on the other side of the kitchen and studied his catechism. Only once did he condescend to comment, when I ventured, in an ante-dinner interview, that Ishiwara was a mighty warrior. Maso, posing the Worcestershire sauce bottle over the soup kettle, lifted his languid eyelids: "He shave soldier," he said, and went calmly on stirring the soup.

But alas for Maso! Tia's heart, like that of many another maid, was smitten by the noise of adventure. She took



In the instant's cupping vantage that was his, Maso wheeled on his foes.

to wearing her most sumptuous kimono of the banana trees; how he was driving alone up the Hilo road when, from the guava bushes, there sprang to his horse's head four villainal devils who were, with gleaming knives—how they had unharassed and stoic like gods, how they had forced him to descend and deliver his money (the money destined for a new obi for Tia); how he, the hero of a hundred fights, had been powerless, because weaponless, against their whelming numbers and murderous blades!

Maso, studying his catechism in the tara patch, muttered one word, "Haka!" which, being interpreted, is "Food!" but no one heard him save a small, green lizard, stalking mosquitoes on the kitchen wall.

Tia, sitting on her little white-stockinged heels, with her arms clasped around her knees, drank the tale with the indrawn, hissing breaths that are the Japanese expressions of emotion. But the next day she was pensive and cross—signs of perturbation common to sex, not race.

The following day my husband, who owns a coffee ranch on the Olan road, decided to go up on his monthly tour of inspection and pay off his men. It was such a delectable opportunity for junketing in our small shanty among the tree-ferns, that I resolved to take the two servants, drink the tale with the indrawn, hissing breaths that are the Japanese expressions of emotion. But the next day she was pensive and cross—signs of perturbation common to sex, not race.

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So one dazzling mid-afternoon we started (Tia giggling beside Maso on the back seat), making a detour by Waikeke Bridge to inquire for a patient. Along the sea-front we went, where the low-roofed Oriental and Portuguese shops knock elbows and two donkeys laden with sugar-cane fill the width of the street; over the bridge, where high-peaked Japanese fishing boats are moored and babies of all races splash, frog-like, in the stream, and up to the Chinese banana merchant's whose little girl was ill.

One of the handsome khaki-clad native policemen, always on guard on the bridge, lounged over to us just as we started again.

"Going mauka, doctor?" he asked. (There are but two directions in Hawaii—"mauka," toward the mountain, and "mauka," toward the sea.) "Not afraid of a hold-up, eh?"

"No more than of an eruption," said my husband, nodding toward the tranquil slope of Mauna Loa. "This fear of Porto Ricans is all moonshine, Koloha."

Koloha shook his handsome head thoughtfully. "They bad lot," he said. "Bad lot. Pihika (trouble) at Nine

Miles this morning. We got up timely with patrol wagon. So, if you get hold-up, doctor," he called after us as we started, "we'll be behind you." We laughed back at him as we drove away. The breath of the sea was in our nostrils, the blue height beyond beckoned, and we were in holiday mood.

But, alas! the best laid plans of men and doctors—gang asked. At the town's end a galloping messenger summoned my husband back to a sick woman, and after a hasty consultation we decided that I should go on with the servants and he would follow later in the patrol wagon. So I changed to the rear seat with Tia, and Maso climbed in front, impressed with the importance of guarding not only us, but the canvas bag of coin beneath our feet.

Tia pointed to his thin arms, littering "Maso no good," she said to me, "Ishiwara, big man." She puffed out like a pouter pigeon. "Maso leenie man," she shrunk, voice and body, in the corner of the carriage, then caught the ends of her long sleeves up to their lips with a burst of laughter.

Maso gave no sign of having heard. He did not look a bead of champion, with his brown Fedora pushed to the nape of his neck, and his sloping shoulders.

But if a passing fear of brigands was upon us, it vanished with the wife

### TO GROW HAIR ON A BALD HEAD

BY A SPECIALIST.

Thousands of people suffer from baldness and falling hair who, having tried nearly every advertised hair tonic and hair-grower without results, have resigned themselves to baldness and its attendant discomfort. Yet their case is not hopeless; the following simple home prescription has made hair grow after years of baldness, and is also unequalled for restoring gray hair to its original color, stopping hair from falling out, and destroying the germ. It will not make the hair greasy, and can be put up by any druggist. Buy Run's ointment. Lavana de Composita, 2 ounces; Menthol Crystals, one-half drachm. If you wish it perfumed, add half to one teaspoonful of Fu-Kalon Perfume, which unites perfectly with the other ingredients. This preparation is highly recommended by physicians and specialists, and is absolutely harmless, as it contains none of the poisonous wood alcohol so frequently found in hair tonics. Do not apply to the face or where hair is not desired.

in our faces as we went upward. Flocks of tiny rice birds, no bigger than one's thumb, fluttered from the guava bushes, and saucy, yellow-legged mynahs, spreading both wing and tail until every white feather showed in the brown, ran audaciously across the horse's heels. Wood doves cooed in the mango trees; and cane fields rustled their green ribbons; the land began to slope more steeply; the shadows lay across the road; below us the town curved like an arm about the blue sea line, and across the valley, Mauna Kea, capped with snow, lifted itself aloft against the sunset.

"All same Fuji-san!" cried Tia, clapping her hands in delight, as we glanced backward. And at that instant, even as it had happened to Ishiwara, four men sprang from the shadows of the roadside and clutched at the reins.

There was a sharp cry of command from Maso, and Tia fell on her knees in the bottom of the carriage, dragging me and the lion carriage robe down with her.

I am not a person of much courage, and the little I did went from me as I peered through the loose mesh of the robe at those swarthy, ferocious faces and the gleaming cane knives. They were pouring out a torrent of profanity and threats, from which came only the English word "Money! Money!" and the man who screamed it shook his knif almost in Maso's eyes—"Money, quick!"

Maso stared back at him stolidly, squaring his shoulders to shield the back of the carriage.

"No got," he said dully. "No got!" He leaned forward pointing with his whip to the two men chained in front, and the traces. "You want horse?"

He climbed slowly down from the carriage, and my last hope died within me as I saw him tying up the reins, unhooking the straps, leading Brown Meg free of the shafts and turning her in the road.

The Porto Ricans stood over him grinning—all but one, who still glowered and muttered.

Then suddenly, like lightning from a clear sky, the full length of the heavy carriage whip, backed by Maso's tense sinews, descended on Brown Meg's flank. Never, in all her pampered, petted life, had such indignity been hers. She reared, with an almost human shriek, and then, again heavily smitten from behind, shot off, a very catapult of wrath and terror, down the road to Hilo.

In the instant's gaping vantage that was his, Maso wheeled on his foes, like a scorpion's lash the swinging whip cord struck and struck and struck.

A whirling dervish, Maso spun in the dust of the road, and every blow brought blood. With screams of rage the men sprang at him, striking so close upon him, that get beneath, above, around, that awful scourge. They could have as well withstood the sword play of a Cretian!

Five screams—ten—and the robbers had fled, howling, into the cane, and Maso seated calmly on a fern stump, was rolling a cigarette.

I was laughing and sobbing, both at once—the absurdity of it, and the absolute blind, audacious courage of it. And Tia was saying under her breath, "Saigo! Saigo! Saigo!" Saigo is the hero of Japan.

It had all so flashed upon us that but for the empty shafts and that cruel cartilage and terror-stricken animal, I pulled myself to the seat, gasping, but Maso put up a warning hand, and I crouched again. The danger had not passed. At any moment they might return, and when they did it would mean—murder. Already the brief twilight was upon us—in a little it would be night.

But Maso the brave, was also Maso the wise. He knew the doctor's horse, cartilage and terror-stricken animal, would be harbinger of ill. In less than three minutes possible there came the pounding of hoofs, the roll of wheels, the gleam of lamps, and my husband, with three burly policemen, had sprung from the patrol wagon to the carriage side.

Tia and I clambered to earth then, and the story was told, Maso puffing

calmly as his cigarette the while. Only once did he speak, when Koloha, hitting him on the shoulder, cried, "They no get the money, old boy, eh?" His thin lips relaxed into complacency.

"Not one dam-cent," he said, and that is the only remark I ever heard from him since the affair.

There was a council of war; then my husband, Tia, and I went down the road a bit in the patrol wagon, and Maso (with the big policemen safely ambushed) stayed by the empty carriage to bait a trap—so successfully, that four wretched Porto Ricans meditated their sins that night behind the pink walls of the Hilo jail.

I do not know the Japanese equivalent for "None but the brave deserves the fair," but Ishiwara learned it the next time he swagged into my garden a week later. Tia appeared with her hair in a new fashion. Instead of a flat butterfly at the back of her head, it was piled in a marvelous fan-shaped roll on top. She expressed great surprise at my ignorance in not perceiving at once that she was no longer "O-Jo-san," but "O-kami-san," and informed me, incidentally, that she and Maso had set up housekeeping in his erstwhile bachelor bedroom.

That was a year ago, and if you doubt this story, come to my garden at twilight and you will find Tia scrubbing a wee, ivory-tinted godling under the kitchen pump, and soothing his procreations with the tale of how his honorable father whipped the robbers on the Olan road.

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## Fashions in Furs and Feathers Which Should Be Forbidden

LA REINE HELEN BAKER

We are all cranks nowadays. The man who is not a vegetarian or a Seventh Day Adventist, or probably a flat-earthist or at least convinced that Bacon wrote Shakespeare. Even the humanitarian has come to stay in the contemporaries of Artemus Ward (or Hawthornville and the moral works) would be respectful to the mode of "Fossil Fitter."

Frankly I am a humanitarian of the most objectionable type. I even preach. When I am accused of taking people in hand, even before they have absorbed prevalent fashions, I try to suggest artistic "deals" to them. They grow up with a prejudice against the things I hate. The logical ones find arguments, facts and figures whose wish to support their preconceived inclinations. The stupid ones, the easy-going ones and the dreamy ones simply do the things I love, and tell people they "like it."

The artistic folk have never really liked their ancestors' personal attire. Probably the colors, originating in blood, presented no primary objection to the more artist who loves rich hues. The skins of slaughtered animals which are not lacking in picturesque qualities when representing the noble savage, are used decidedly looking at a bird's nest when regarded as the finish of a civilized lady's toilet. One looks almost indignantly for the tale of scraps to accompany the bear's skin.

So long as this instinctive dislike exists, at least, alone the public effect of the artistic, dignified, and extremely small, humanitarian objections weigh precious little in the scale of the fashion designer's calculations. The new fact is that dry good firms are beginning to advertise silk, imitation furs and artificial skins in order to entice the customer for those who would rather be fashionable than otherwise, but cannot overcome an artistic aversion towards apparel which speaks too audibly of the slaughter house or the dissecting chamber.

Artisanry is a gory product, but the parer skins, such as Persian lamb, are unmentionably vile in their origin. Caracul is a product of fetal skins, and as such could hardly be worn without a shudder by the most common of human mothers.

It will astonish American readers to know that sealskin is still worn in abundance by European educated and otherwise refined women. English humanitarian writers agree that the method of killing seals adopted by the American companies is characterized by a comparative humaneness unequalled elsewhere. It is quite incredible that an artistic woman would appear in public clad in the clothing of an animal killed solely to be robbed of its skin. But at least Americans have not to answer for the infamous and totally unnecessary barbarities of British seal spears. The Americans kill seals on land by simply clubbing, the Canadians and others spear the seals at sea. The former kill male seals only and do not disturb the clem and their baby seals. The United States authorities at Washington have repeatedly endeavored to stop the British brutalities of the latter kind, chiefly, of course, on humanitarian grounds, for there is serious risk of speedy extermination by destruction of female and puppy seals.

Professors Elliott, Lloyd-Morgan and Jules and Dr. William Gavitt among American writers, and famous naturalists like Frank Buckland, have recorded their impressions of the ghastly nature of the most humane methods of killing seals. It is not a pretty story. "The seal heads are stricken so hard sometimes that the crystalline lenses of the eyes fly out like hot stones. The crush of the skull, the flow of blood, the soles of the dying and the brutality of heartless men!" These normal events are not pleasant reading, and I prefer not to detail the more appalling ghastlinesses of British sealing expeditions which "horror's" ever, along heaven for vengeance, and ruder chastisement. Far from civilized port, rough men, hardened by their profession, eager for immediate procreants, skins, aware of the higher value of the softer skins of baby seals and the still greater worth of the fetal seal, who can wonder at well authenticated stories of worse than infernal inhumanities from such a source? Seals are often alive on the deck, half skinned seals which slip from their captor's hands are kicked back into the sea with the half-dead, divided victims, pregnant seals (unless themselves) are ripped open for the desirable down covering of unborn baby-seals. . . . Was over outrage viler than this?

"O art! Come to the aid of humanity! Break the new seal! Lay the seal to rest on life. Bid us lose the lust of dabbling in blood for our warmth. Open our eyes to the fact that these things are ugly. Religion has failed to defy life as a principle we cannot seal without blasphemy."

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