

"I cannot sell it," replied the Jap.

"Then why can't you?" inquired the hunter with some impatience. "There must be something besides monetary value attached to it."

"There is," replied the Jap, "and since you have shown such an interest in it, I will tell you. That is the dagger which I found buried deep in the body of my brother, when we lay encamped on the shores of the Yula," and forthwith he proceeded to pour into the ear of the curio hunter a tale which had the dagger for its central subject, so weird, so fantastic and so filled with oriental superstition that at its close the hunter sat bound in silence.

Presently he said, "Your tale has added to my desire for the dagger. I'll give you twenty five dollars for it."

"I cannot sell it," replied the Jap.

"I'll give you fifty."

The Jap shook his head.

"I'll give you one hundred dollars, but not one cent more."

The Jap's narrow eyes grew even narrower than before, and he said, "Sir, you have been my patron, take it, the dagger of my fathers is yours."

As the door of the shop closed behind the curio hunter, the Jap called to his assistant, "John, order another dozen of those pearl handled daggers when the agent calls again. I just sold the last one for one hundred dollars."

LOST A GAME

I thought one day
To while away
The hours, I'd play
The game of love.

My partner rare
I chose with care;
Ah, she was fair
As turtle dove.

With diamond ring
Her heart I'd bring;
I'd be her king,
My queen so fair.

But, alack a day
She turns away,
I find I play
At solitaire.