

**A  
UNITED STATES  
MIDSHIPMAN  
IN JAPAN**

*by*  
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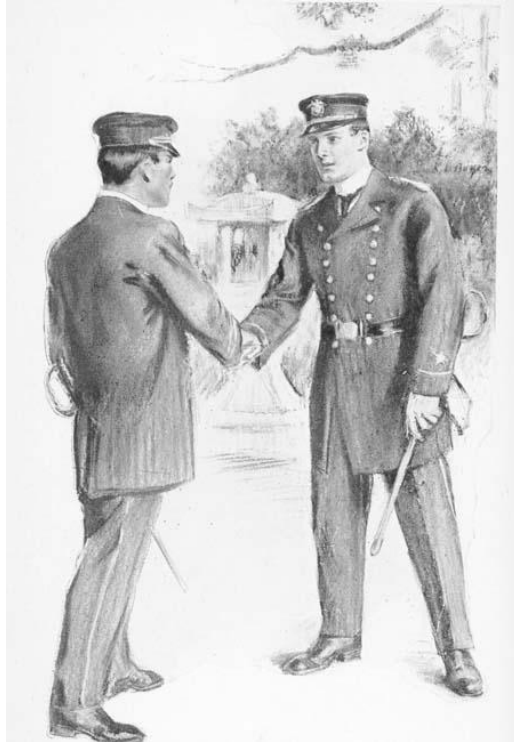
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*HE SEIZED THE  
OUTSTRETCHED HAND*

# Introduction

PHILIP PERRY and Sydney Monroe are young officers in the United States navy. Although they have been out of the Naval Academy less than two years, and are still ranked as midshipmen, they have seen active service, as related in "A United States Midshipman Afloat" and "A United States Midshipman in China." "A United States Midshipman in the Philippines" tells how Phil, with Sydney for executive officer, commanded a small gunboat in expeditions against the insurgents. Boatswain Jack O'Neil has been with the lads in many of their hazardous adventures, and the three are now on the "U. S. S. Alaska" in Japanese waters.

The story deals with a misunderstanding between the United States and the Island Kingdom. This complication causes a few days of anxiety to both nations, and gets some people into serious difficulties but, needless to say, it is purely fictitious.

# **A United States Midshipman in Japan**

# CHAPTER I

## THE MAN IN THE NEXT COMPARTMENT

It was one o'clock in the afternoon, and there was unusual activity in the railroad station at Yokohama. Uniformed officials were scurrying to and fro, bending every effort to dispose of the great crowd of stolid Japanese travelers and at the same time, with due formality and ceremony, provide a special train for their lately arrived American naval visitors.

So painstaking and anxious were these energetic and efficient little personages to please those whom their government had chosen to honor, that suddenly, at a signal, they stemmed the great influx of their own people, sidetracked the steady and ever-increasing flow of bright colored silks, and did it as easily as if they were but putting a freight train on a siding. Not one murmur was heard from the crowd delayed so abruptly; the travelers waited, talking and laughing joyfully. To them it was all pleasure. There was no necessity for haste. When the honorable railroad officials were ready, then there would be plenty of time for them to get on their trains. They had no thought of questioning the acts of their Emperor's officials, who wore the imperial badge of office—the sixteen petal chrysanthemum.

"Did you ever see such docility on the part of a traveling public?" Midshipman Philip Perry exclaimed, gazing wonderingly at the good-natured, smiling faces of the Japanese about him. "Imagine, if you can, a New York crowd waiting like

this at the Grand Central Station for a dozen Japanese officers to board a special train.”

The midshipman was one of a party of American naval officers, recently arrived in Japan, and journeying as the guests of the Japanese nation to their picturesque and historic capital—Tokyo.

Lieutenant Hugh Winston, one of the party, smiled knowingly as he read the wonder in the eyes of the two youngest of the party, Midshipmen Perry and Sydney Monroe. Winston was an officer of some years’ standing, and the character of the Japanese subject was one with which he considered himself on very intimate terms, after three cruises on the Asiatic Station in American war-ships.

“You can compare the Mikado’s loyal subjects to no others on earth,” Winston returned. “Every man you see in this crowd has served his country as a soldier or sailor. All recognize an order when they hear it, and I can tell you they obey, too.”

There was small doubt of their obedience. The good-humored crowd, increasing in numbers every minute, stood in orderly merriment watching the tall representatives of the United States of America, led by obsequious railroad officials, pass through their midst and into the coaches of a special train. Following the handful of naval officers in their severely plain civilian clothes came many score of American men-of-war’s men dressed in the picturesque sailor garb, while walking hand in hand with them the little Japanese sailors, the hosts of their giant visitors, appeared in striking contrast.



The congestion in the traffic of the Tokaido Railroad was soon relieved; a shrill whistle from one of the officials—and immediately the wheels were again in motion and the patient Japanese were once more on their way to their waiting trains.

“A Japanese crowd has no terrors for the public officials,” Lieutenant Winston said by way of information, as he and the midshipmen settled themselves in one of the compartments of the tiny coaches of the train. “In Japan discipline begins at the mother’s knee. Filial obedience is part of their religion, and they are taught to obey their Emperor as the father of them all.”

“I have always heard that they are classed among the best fighters in the world,” Phil Perry said admiringly. “The fighting man with them is in a class by himself. Isn’t it so?” he asked the older officer at his side.

“The ‘Samurai,’ or fighting class, is the aristocracy of Japan,” Winston replied. “They symbolize the fighting barons of our middle ages; quick to resent an insult or avenge a wrong. Their code of honor is centuries old. These are the men you will meet in Tokyo. The naval and military officers are all recruited from the families of the ‘Samurai.’ You will see in them the most polite of a polite nation.”

“What is the object of the ‘Alaska’s’ visit to Japan?” Sydney Monroe suddenly asked as Winston ended his eulogy on the Japanese race. “Our relations are not over friendly, if we can believe some of our yellow journal newspapers.”

“That is not to be discussed except within an air-tight cell,” Winston returned gravely, a warning ring in his voice. “We are here on a friendly visit to be present at the garden fête of the Emperor of Japan.”

Meanwhile the train had glided out of the long, low station shed and picked its way over a score of tracks to the one leading straight to the metropolis and capital of the island empire. Stations, consisting of miniature structures with their long, narrow platforms came noisily out of the world ahead and were left behind with a waning moan as if in protest at being given but a fleeting glimpse of the big strangers.

The conversation had come to an abrupt stop after Lieutenant Winston’s words of caution and the three Americans sat silently gazing out of their open windows at the ever-changing landscape.

The sailors with their Japanese escorts were in the cars ahead where they were leaning far out of the windows, excitedly acknowledging the “banzais” from the groups of peasants who had collected on the station platforms to see the Americans pass.

Philip Perry restlessly left his seat and walked slowly along the narrow aisle of the car. He noticed casually in passing that the door of the compartment next their own was closed, and the blinds drawn. The other two compartments he saw were empty, for the railroad officials had provided more than sufficient accommodations for their party. He reached the car ahead, and stood gazing for a second at the sailors within. Retracing his steps, he stopped at the side of the car opposite

the compartment next his own. Suddenly he was conscious of a voice coming through the compartment door which from a closer inspection he now saw was only ajar. The train had slackened its speed, then noisily stopped. While he listened the voice died away, and he was on the point of going to the platform to ascertain the cause of the stoppage of the train when the voice that had attracted his attention began again, this time clear and distinct. Phil unconsciously listened, believing the speaker was one of his brother officers, but what he heard caused him to catch his breath in surprise. He held himself rigid, straining to hear every word, while his indignation showed plainly in his set features.

“Baron, every day you put off this inevitable war with America makes Japan’s chance for success in the Orient the less,” were the startling words that Phil heard spoken with a marked British accent. “Now the opportunity is given you. Her fleet is in Manila, all naval men will tell you that it must be at a great disadvantage. It lacks supply ships and torpedo-boat destroyers. Your fleet is here at your source of supply. Depend upon it, Baron,” the voice declared, in excited, eager tones, “this cruise has come to mislead you. America knows the danger surrounding her fleet. She has blundered in sending it so far from home, and now wishes to safely withdraw it, or strengthen it with the Chinese ships. It is one thing or the other. You must increase your efforts with the ministers if your dreams are to be realized.”

Phil’s heart beat wildly as he stood listening, hardly daring to breathe lest he should betray his presence before he had heard all. The same voice was again speaking.

“You must know that whatever America will say, it will be insincere. America covets the entire trade of China, and unless your nation halts it as you did Russia she will through her rapidly growing wealth accomplish her end. She is negotiating for the Chinese battle-ships while this cruiser here will endeavor to allay suspicion. Unless Japan acts promptly——”

With a succession of jolts the train was again noisily in motion, and the door of the compartment swung shut with a spiteful click. Phil was trembling with excitement. Here on the threshold of their visit he had surprised a plot to force his country into a war. What should he do? He could not go openly and accuse those in the compartment; that would be dramatic, but would be barren of results. His best course would be to discover the identity of the speaker and the man addressed as Baron, who Phil knew must be a Japanese nobleman, and then warn his captain of the conspiracy on foot. But how should he be able to discover their identity? Who could tell him their names?

He could pretend to enter their compartment by mistake, and impress their faces indelibly upon his memory, to be used at some future time. With this object in view Phil placed his hand on the door-knob trying to turn it, only to find the latch had fallen from within. Frustrated, he stood thinking excitedly as to what his next move should be. The door of his own compartment suddenly opened and Sydney Monroe, his companion and classmate at the Naval Academy at Annapolis, gazed in surprise at the stern set face of his friend.

“What’s the matter, Phil?” he exclaimed. “You look as if you’d just seen a ghost. Nothing’s wrong, is it?”

Phil held his hand up for silence and entered his own compartment.

“There are people in there,” he exclaimed excitedly, indicating with a nod, “whom we must recognize and remember. It’s the most barefaced case of conspiracy that I’ve ever known.” And then he detailed almost word for word what he had heard.

While he was yet talking and his two companions were listening eagerly, consternation growing in their excited minds, the train again came to a halt, but for just a moment, and then was off again.

A few minutes later it was plain that the country had been left behind and that the suburbs of Tokyo were at hand. The train passed through row after row of tiny wooden dwellings, built like card houses, appearing to be ready for some giant hand to smooth them flat. On sped the train across miniature stone bridges and through beautifully laid out parks, until a sudden screech of the whistle and the gripping of the brakes announced that the journey was over, and Tokyo had been reached.

Phil scarcely waited for the train to stop before he was in the passage, gazing about in the gloom (the passage being unlighted) for the occupants of the next compartment. Its door stood open, but they were not there. He rushed to the platform, but he saw no strange faces, only his brother officers and the sailors. What could it mean? Then he understood the meaning of the stop only a few miles before the train reached Tokyo. The occupants of the next compartment were men of

consequence, and even a special train ordered by the Emperor of Japan could be stopped at their will.

“Well, I shan’t forget that voice, anyway,” Phil exclaimed disappointedly to his companions while the three moved slowly toward the exit gate.

## CHAPTER II

### IN THE EMPEROR'S GARDENS

"If we could only have had a glimpse of the man's face," Phil Perry exclaimed dejectedly as the three naval men who had occupied the compartment together were driving rapidly from the railroad station. "Who can he be, and to whom was he talking?"

The streets fronting the depot were filled with a curious and enthusiastic crowd of Japanese, and as the Americans passed rapidly through in victorias, their mafoos wearing the royal liveries, the multitude gave voice to their welcome in repeated and prolonged shouts of "Banzai—Ten Thousand Years of Happiness!"

"Don't give yourself too much credit for discovering a plot," Lieutenant Winston returned sceptically, after their carriage had freed itself of the crowd and was moving along a quieter street. "What you heard is only the usual stereotyped opinion of our so-called friends here in the Far East. The European merchant and also the European resident in the Orient are trembling for fear the United States may get all the trade of China, which she might readily be doing now, if our merchant marine were equal to that of Germany or England."

"I don't see how that has any bearing on the subject," Phil exclaimed, somewhat nettled at Winston's tone of patronage.

“Simply that in order to put us out of the running they are doing their best to talk Japan and the United States into a war,” Winston replied. “To your face they are very friendly, but, behind your back! Well! it’s really best to refrain from hearing, if you can, for it’s never complimentary. They don’t love Japan any too well, but the grasping Yankee——” he ended with an expressive wave of his hand, for the crunching of gravel under the wheels of their carriage drowned his voice completely. They were entering the courtyard of the Imperial Hotel. A few minutes later all had alighted in the spacious lobby, and were being led ceremoniously to their rooms, engaged by the imperial government, whose guests they were as long as they remained in Tokyo.

“They are doing things lavishly,” Sydney exclaimed, after he had surveyed the street from his window. Great crowds of eager people had gathered about the hotel with small American flags in their hands to bid their guests welcome, while the avenue beyond as far as the eye could reach was festooned with the colors of the two nations.

“Here’s a program of our entertainment,” Winston called from his room adjoining. “They are certainly most hospitable.”

Phil and Sydney looked closely at the printed program which the servant had brought them. It was carefully and handsomely arranged, giving a sketch map of Tokyo with all the important buildings marked, and the locations of the numerous places of entertainment.



"You'd think we were foreign princes instead of only common every-day naval officers," Sydney said as he finished reading. Phil's face was thoughtful.

"I wonder if this welcome is really sincere," he questioned. "The newspapers say that the relations between the two countries are terribly strained. In America we could not display this mask of friendship if there was dislike in our hearts. But the Orientals, if one may believe the writers on the subject, are different. An order from their Emperor would be sufficient to freeze a smile on everyone's face;—a perpetual smile, made for the occasion."

The midshipmen and Winston were now fully dressed in their most official uniform, and were patiently waiting the summons to join their captain.

Captain Rodgers, in command of the United States cruiser "Alaska," had arrived with his ship in Japan at the time of the annual garden fête, given at the height of bloom of the chrysanthemum, the sacred flower of Japan. It had been rumored that this was not the reason of the "Alaska's" visit; but certain it was that His Majesty had immediately sent them out invitations for the royal fête, provided a special train, rooms at the Imperial Hotel, put carriages always at their disposal, and caused to be prepared an elaborate program of entertainment,—all for his unexpected American naval visitors.

All Tokyo was in gala dress. Everywhere the chrysanthemum was displayed, of all sizes and all colors. The holiday crowd was in good humor, and as the carriages of the naval men, in all

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