

The Shadow of Quong Lung

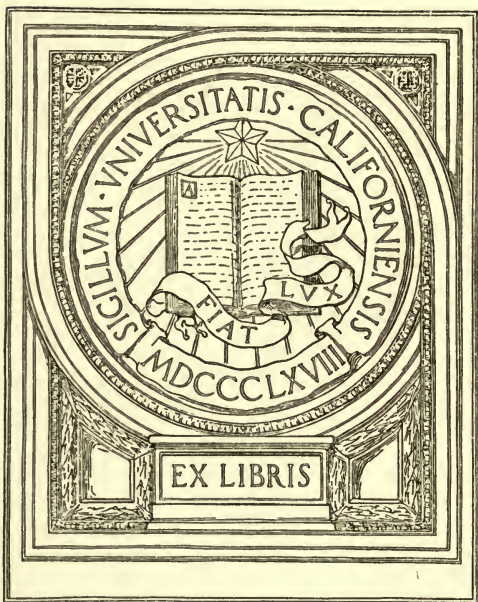


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THE SHADOW
OF
QUONG LUNG

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THE SHADOW
OF
QUONG LUNG

BY

DR. C. W. DOYLE

AUTHOR OF "THE TAMING OF THE JUNGLE"



PHILADELPHIA & LONDON
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1900

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By Dr. C. W. Doyle

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TO
AMBROSE BIERCE,
THE GENTLEST, THE BRAVEST, AND
THE KINDEST OF MEN, THIS
LITTLE BOOK
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED BY
HIS GRATEFUL PUPIL.

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PREFACE

THIS does not set forth to be that detestable thing, a "book with a purpose"; but if it should incidentally draw attention to the terrible conditions of life of the slave girls in Chinatown, and if any amelioration of those conditions should ensue, I shall feel that I have not written in vain. The kidnapping of Moy Yen, as told in the chapters entitled "The Shadow of Quong Lung," can be matched by many cases that have actually occurred in Chinatown.

Of course, the best thing to do with Chinatown would be to burn it down; but the scheme is too Utopian to be discussed in a mere preface.

By the courtesy of the San Francisco *Examiner*, I have been enabled to incorporate the last three chapters of "The Wings of

Preface

✓ Lee Toy" with Part IV. The said chapters constituted a short story that appeared in the *Examiner* December 19, 1897, and was awarded the prize that had been offered by that paper for a short Christmas story.

"The Seats of Judgment" won the prize offered by the *Argonaut* for a short story in 1898; and it is by the kindness of that best of weekly journals that I am enabled to reproduce the story in this volume.

C. W. DOYLE.

SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA,

October, 1899.

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PART I

The Illumination of Lee Moy





I

THAT THERE ARE WORSE THINGS THAN CHINESE GIN

A FEW months ago the passengers on the lower end of Kearney Street, near Clay Street, San Francisco, were startled by the shrill cries of a pretty, well-dressed young Chinese woman in hot pursuit of a sturdy little 'Oriental about four years old with a budding pig-tail. The little man had a good start, but he ran in a curious fashion, with outstretched arms and feet planted far apart, and with a rolling, unsteady gait.

“My bibi, my bibi!” shrilled the woman in pidgin English; “slop him, my lil Lee Moy, slop him!—he dlunk! he dlunk!”

He was too young to have acquired a taste for *sam shu* (Chinese gin), and yet he

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ran strangely, and if he were not stopped he would certainly run into the car that was even then crossing Clay Street.

As he stepped off the curb he swerved and ran into the hind wheel of a carriage that was drawn up at the corner. The young lady who was in the carriage got out instantly and lifted the little man up. He was bleeding from a cut on the forehead,—and he was in a gorgeous rage, striking wildly about him and saying, “Dam you! lemme go! lemme go!” and his breath reeked of ardent waters. His knowledge of English was almost limited to expletives, such as befitted his breath, and such as go hand in hand with the march of civilization and help to establish it amongst the heathen.

The young lady carried him into the carriage, whilst he fought and swore furiously.

“It mine—the bibi mine; glim to me; he only dlunk,” said the Chinese woman as

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she scrambled into the carriage. But the Fair Samaritan held a blood-dabbled handkerchief to the little one's head with the resolve of—a Samaritan. Some one in the crowd round the carriage, guessing the situation, shut the door and instructed the coachman to drive to the Receiving Hospital.

The cool young gentleman who dressed the child's wound at the hospital might have been embarrassed by the mother's hysterical manifestations and utterances of distrust, had not her sister of the West taken her hand and quieted her by the magical touch of sympathy.

“It is not much?” asked the Fair Samaritan.

“No; but the little beggar's awfully drunk—pardon me for telling the truth—and he ought to be spanked,” answered the youthful leech, regarding his interlocutor with a look of admiration, now that he had time for other things than mere dressings and bandages.

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“Drunk?” she queried in a tone of horror. “Oh, yes, I remember now,” she went on; “his mother said he was in that condition. How dreadful!—and the child is so young!”

The mother took her little one into her arms after the last pin had been adjusted. She regarded those about her—especially the young surgeon—with a curious suspicion. (“Devils they be, without doubt. White Devils!” she thought to herself. “And I fear even their gifts; and perchance they look with the Evil Eye.”) On the same principle she rejected the ten-dollar gold-piece that the young lady had put into the palm of Lee Moy. But the kindness and the consideration that had been shown to her and her little one had their due effect, so that she relented to the extent of giving her address. She was Suey Yep, of the household of Lee Chung, who was a merchant on Jackson Street. She would even accept

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conveyance to her home in the white woman's carriage. For the lady with the fair hair had a countenance that begat confidence, as one found on further reflection.

Yes; she would certainly bring Lee Moy to-morrow and have his wound dressed; and she would not give him any more *sam shu* to-night,—if the Heaven Born wished it.

The Heaven Born *did* wish it.

Then, turning to the doctor, Suey Yep went on: “But, always, you will know that Lee Moy is dlunk. Is it not so, Light of Mine Eyes?” she queried, caressing the little one. And Lee Moy nodded his head solemnly and stared vacantly before him.

“You see,” she resumed, “you see, he no play when he no dlunk, but sit and sit and say nulling. So I give him *sam shu*,—one, two, tlee dlinks; and then he clap his hands, and say he see birds and flowers; and he laugh and dance, and then my heart laugh and dance. But to sit and sit and no play,

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—that is bad for Lee Moy. Eh, Light in Darkness?” And Lee Moy again nodded slowly, and said in his own tongue: “Home, mother; take me home. It is night, and the light sleepeth, so that I cannot see to play any more.”

“Hush, Sun at Noon. Thou art but tired.” She glanced suspiciously at the young medico whilst she whispered to the little one, as though she feared the White Devil might have understood her.

“Yes, I am tired, tired;—and ’tis very dark. And I would sleep, for ’tis night, and very dark.”

Now, the sun was at high noon.

“This is a very interesting case,” said the young diagnostician, adjusting his pince-nez preparatory to airing his learning—and his lack of tact. “Our patient is drunk, to begin with——”

“Velly, velly dlunk!—tha’s all,” interrupted Lee Moy’s mother.

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“Yes; he’s drunk, and he’s——” The man of science hesitated, looking at the slant-eyed woman, who regarded him suspiciously.

“Yes?” queried the Fair Samaritan.

“And he’s blind,—stone-blind.”

“Blind!—Lee Moy blind?” shrieked the mother. “No, no; oh, no! See, he only dlunk—velly dlunk—*velly* dlunk! I make him dlunk myself—with *sam shu*.”

As she ran out of the door with her son in her arms, she lapsed into her native tongue: “Lee Moy, Lee Moy!” she moaned, hugging the little one to her bosom; “thou art not blind, son of mine; not blind, not blind! See, I made thee drunk, and the waters were too strong, and thou couldst not see therefor.”

They watched her as she ran across the street, attracting the attention of the passengers by her frantic haste and her passionate utterances.

“A very pretty case,” said the young

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medico in a half soliloquy ; “ a very pretty case. But I’ve frightened the woman out of her senses,—and she’ll never come back,—and I *should* like to have seen the little beggar again.”

“ To find out the cause of his blindness, and whether it is remediable ? ” asked the young woman with an earnestness that puckered her brow for an instant.

“ Yes.”

“ Will ten o’clock to-morrow morning suit you ? ”

“ Admirably ;—but you won’t succeed.”

“ Good-evening, sir,” and she smiled gravely as she stepped into her carriage.

II

WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK

THE next morning, at nine o'clock, there came to the store of Lee Chung a well-appointed carriage with two men in livery on the box. One of them opened the door of the carriage, from which the Fair Samaritan alighted with an armful of parcels.

“This is Lee Chung’s store?—you are Lee Chung?” she asked of the well-to-do Chinaman who sat smoking behind the counter.

“Whall you want?” was the tentative reply.

“I want ten pounds of the best tea you have for sale.”

“Ten pounds?” asked the Chinaman with

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some astonishment. "Ten pound cos' two hundud dolla. You no wan' ee so much."

For answer, she put ten double-eagles on the counter. "And whilst you are making up the parcel I would like to see Lee Moy."

"Lee Moy! Who Lee Moy?"

"Oh, well, if you don't know, I don't think I want the tea," replied the young lady with the serious face.

Now Lee Chung had obligations to meet; and the New Year was at hand, when all Chinamen in good standing pay their debts; and two hundred dollars would make him an Honorable Man. Besides, the white woman appeared to be honest,—and she certainly had a carriage with two horses champing silver bits! and two men-servants who waited on her! She would, doubtless, come again if the tea suited her. And Quong Lung, his creditor (smooth, fat hog!) sat on his very soul, and flouted him openly when they met.

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“ We drink fifty pounds of tea every year at my house,” said the fair White Devil; “ and Quong Lung, whose name I see on these packages (pointing to the tea), doubtless sells *you* better tea than he sells *us*. I have been told you are an honest man, and to be trusted; but you don’t know where Lee Moy is; and Quong Lung is not an honest man.”

Were ever such arguments!—and was ever such luck before! Here was a chance of paying Quong Lung in full, and of answering his jeers with hard cash; and of establishing a retail trade at fifty per cent. profit of not less than one thousand dollars a year! Besides, the trade of those who drink tea at the houses of people who keep horses and carriages and men-servants was not to be despised.

Then, too, the woman was young; and of a beautiful countenance that could not harbor lies,—although her eyes were set a

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little too straight in her head; but to meet Quong Lung to-morrow, and look him in the face!

“Well; Lee Moy up 'tairs. You wan' see him? Come; I show you.”

III

THAT FLOWERS MAY GROW IN A DARK ROOM

THIS is what the Fair Samaritan saw after she had climbed the dark stairs behind the store and peeped into a room that was in semi-darkness, whilst she repressed Lee Chung with a warning finger that enforced silence. It was a room of considerable dimensions, with a low ceiling. The windows were so ill-placed, besides being barricaded, that the room was in a twilight gloom, although the day was bright without. Its furniture was curiously disposed close against the walls, thus leaving a wide space in its midst. And in the room the woman Suey Yep was taking part with the little Lee Moy in what was evidently a daily occurrence.

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With palms folded suppliantly before her, she regarded Lee Moy with a look of inexpressible love tinged with sadness. He was hitting wildly about him with a toy whip, and shouting angrily, his language being punctuated by strong Anglo-Saxon expletives.

“Dam you, mother! Why cometh not the sun?”

She submitted with the patience of an Oriental to the imperious language of my Lord, her Man-Child.

“Oh, son of mine,” she replied with infinite tenderness; “the sun is still at Peking, drying his hair,—for he hath but now risen from his ocean bed. When he hath had his morning meal, and washed his face with dew, and decked himself with marigolds, he will mount clouds of purple and gold and amber, and come to San Francisco.”

“Do they of Peking see more of him than we do?”

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“Yes, son. Oh, would we were there!” she sobbed; “for the sun always shines there, but here it is mostly dark.”

“We will go there, mother; at once!” He held up his hand for his mother to take.

“But it is a long and stony road from here to Pekin, and we must eat and drink before we start.”

She led him to a little table, and set cakes before him and a cup of tea,—which she fortified with a generous draught of *sam shu*.

When he had satisfied his appetite, she prepared him another cup similarly sophisticated, and set it before him.

“Drink once more,” she said; “for when we have left San Francisco we shall have no more *tchah* (tea) till we reach Pekin.”

And the little man drank as he was directed, and prepared for his daily flight across—the world.

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“Mother,” he said, “I would have thee remember that the white *yee-sung* (physician) will expect us soon. Hasten, therefore.”

Round and round the room she led him in tortuous fashion.

“A great wind cometh,” she said once; “and we are on the sea. Beware!” She fanned him vigorously, simulating a gale, whilst he drew a boatswain’s whistle from his blouse, and blew it loudly.

“The passage is serious, my Lord,” said Suey Yep; “and we shall scarce weather the storm—unless we order it safe.”

“Order it safe; and proceed.”

“How shall that be, my Lord Captain?”

“Throw Jonah overboard,—he that the White Devils tell of at the Mission, where I go sometimes for the sweetmeats.”

“It is done, my Captain,” said Suey Yep, overturning a chair; “and the great fish hath swallowed him.”

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They resumed their journey about and about the room, she prattling to him the while.

“The sea that was black and reflected the stars is paler, my Lord; and the moon hath fled.”

“The morn cometh, mother.”

“Canst see the light in the east, my little Lee Moy?”

“Yea, mother.”

As she drew him past the household shrine, she took therefrom a burning punk and waved it before his face.

“I perceive, too, the smoke of Pekin,” said Lee Moy.

“’Tis time, then, to drink more *tchah* ere we set foot in the Flowery Land.”

Once more she plied him with the tea that deceived.

“The sun cometh, mother,” he said soon after.

“Is he alone this morning?”

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“No, mother; his attendants be with him in shining robes.”

“Canst see the land ahead?”

“Yes, Suey Yep. Oh, make haste!”

“We are there, Great Traveller,” she said presently, as she called a halt.

“Oh, son of mine,” she went on, “it was a great journey!—and full of perils!—and the way was dark! But we are now in our own country, and the young light is abroad. Is it not so?”

The child let her hand go, and ran forward a step or two tentatively, with outstretched arms and with unsteady gait.

“Is this my meadow, mother?” he asked.

“Assuredly, Lee Moy; and see it is carpeted with flowers all spangled with dew. Red are the flowers, and gold, and pink, and saffron; and the dew thereon is of many tints. See, my son, here is a bunch of violets and cherry blossoms,—how fragrant they be!”—and she held a bunch of green

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leaves that had been dipped in a tincture of musk to his face.

“And the steed, Billy, is he here? and my chariot?” he asked thickly.

“They await my Lord.”

After placing him in a wheeled chair, she donned a set of toy harness with jingling bells; and yoking herself to the chair, she put the reins in his hands.

“Glup! glup, Billy!” he shouted, cracking his whip, and swearing like a Saxon for the encouragement of his steed. “Glup, damme!”

It was at this juncture that the Fair Samaritan made herself known to those in the room. She tapped on the toy drum that she had in her hand, thus arresting the progress of the scene she had witnessed.

“Good-morning, Lee Moy. See what I have brought for you;” and she slipped the drum-strap over his head. “And here is a trumpet, to tell of your coming to the people of Pekin.”

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He did not understand the Fair Samaritan's words, but her voice was pleasant and friendly,—and the drum and trumpet were certainly very real. He stretched his hand towards her, and Lee Chung said, "Lee Moy like feel face."

She bent her face to the little one, who lightly passed his hand over it, saying aloud, "Good, good!" After a pause, he went on gravely, "I like you. I go see *yee-sung* with you."

He made no demur as she carried him down to her carriage, Suey Yep following in their wake and explaining, "He heap dlunk, you see. He no blind. *Yee-sung* no telle he blind."

"Perhaps the *yee-sung* can make him see flowers and dance all the time, Suey Yep,—without making him drunk."

"'Melican *yee-sung* can do that?"

"Sometimes; and we will see what can be done to-day."

IV

AN INSTANCE OF "HEAVEN'S PECULIAR FAVORS"

"GOOD-MORNING, madam ; I see you have succeeded," said the man of science as the Fair Samaritan carried Lee Moy into the surgery of the Receiving Hospital.

She smiled gravely and said, " Please don't express any opinion as to the nature of this case in the mother's presence."

There was present, too, a brisk little man with a cheerful countenance and a kindly manner, who soon ingratiated himself with Lee Moy,—for he argued with candy. Cheerfulness and kindness and candy are means not to be excluded from the armamentarium even of specialists ; and *this*

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specialist had become famous through his use of them. Even Suey Yep thawed in his favor.

The blinds were drawn, and the dressing of Lee Moy's wound was done by the light of an Argand burner, the little child sitting on the Fair Samaritan's lap.

As soon as it was finished the Man Who Knew took the young medico's place, and switched the light behind Lee Moy's head. Chirruping like a bird, to attract Lee Moy's attention, he focussed a pencil of light reflected from his ophthalmoscope on Lee Moy's widely dilated pupils.

They remained dilated, and Lee Moy did not even wince under the brilliant light!

"It is the Evil Eye, perchance," thought Suey Yep; but a glance at the Fair Samaritan's face reassured her.

"He only heap dlunk," she vouchsafed pitifully to those present, looking helplessly at them.

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When the examination was over Suey Yep and Lee Moy were conducted to the carriage, the Fair Samaritan remaining behind with the Man Who Knew.

“Well, doctor?” she asked.

“He is hopelessly blind, and——” He paused, looking at her with kindly compassion.

“Proceed, sir.”

“And in a few weeks Lee Moy’s place will be vacant.”

“But, except for his blindness, he appears to be perfectly well,” she remonstrated.

“And yet he will die in a very few weeks. The retina,” he explained,—“the expansion of the optic nerve in the eyeball,—is the seat of malignant degeneration; the child’s total blindness proves that the optic nerves, which convey visual impressions to the brain, are similarly affected, and the growth will soon extend to the brain.”

There were traces of tears on the Fair Samaritan’s face when she entered the car-

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riage,—traces which did not escape Suey Yep's vigilant scrutiny.

“Oh, Lee Moy, Lee Moy!” sobbed the latter, pressing the little one, who was now fast asleep, to her bosom. “Thou art not blind, thou art not blind, Light in Darkness! I will yet complete thy illumination.”

When he was lifted out of the carriage, he awoke and complained that his head ached. “I am aweary, mother, and I would sleep, for the sun hath left the sky.”

When the Fair Samaritan drove to Lee Chung's store the next morning, she was denied admission to the upper apartments.

“Lee Moy ill—velly ill,” said Lee Chung with considerable heat. “Go 'way! Small man with bad eye make him heap sick. Go 'way!” And he swore a round of torrid oaths, and spat on the ground.

In spite of her reception, the Fair Samaritan called every day, for ten days, and was curtly dismissed every time.

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The next day a funeral procession left Lee Chung's store: Suey Yep's method of "illumination" had hastened the opening of Lee Moy's eyes on the other side of the Great Darkness.

Two months after, the Fair Samaritan,—who was greatly moved by the practice of a Providence that confers special favors on little children,—went once more to the store of Lee Chung. She would see Suey Yep and comfort her if it were possible. The sign over the door was changed, and referred to one "Quong Lung, Merchant."

"This is Lee Chung's store?" she asked.

"This *was* Lee Chung's store," replied the stout, arrogant, bespectacled Chinaman behind the counter, speaking with a refined English accent. (He was Quong Lung, a graduate of Yale, and a barrister of the Inner Temple, London,—and a man who knew, and ordered, many things in Chinatown.)

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“And where is Lee Chung?” she continued.

“In far Cathay; he sold out to me. He also told me about you.”

“And Suey Yep?”

“Lee Chung sold her, also, to me for three thousand five hundred dollars before he took passage to China. She is a very pretty girl, as you know,—and she is a very paying investment.” He puffed his cigar insolently for a while, watching the effect of his news with evident satisfaction.

After a pause, he said sententiously :

“ ‘ God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.’ ”

Then, with a well-bred sneer, “And it is always a mistake for you, and your kind, to interfere with the ways of the Heathen.” Noticing her rising color, and that her breath came more quickly, he spoke once more in a tone full of menace :

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“Suey Yep is one of my chattels; never forget that fact! Any interference with my property by you, or by any one else, would result in the sudden and irreparable depreciation in value of that property. Whatever my shadow falls on withers—and, besides being a Master of Arts, I am a Master of Accidents!”

PART II

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I

A TENDER RHETORICIAN

“**T**HOU art Chin Lee, scrivener?” asked a handsome young Chinaman of the professional letter-writer whose table, with his implements of writing, was set close to the wall at one of the crossings on Clay Street, San Francisco.

“Chin Lee, scrivener, am I; and thou art in good hap this fair morning to have come my way, instead of stopping at the station of Ah Moy (may the sea have his corpse!), who catcheth the unwary lower down the street.”

“I am Ho Chung, and I am late come from Peking, leaving behind me Moy Yen, my wife, who hath gone back to her kin, who are of the northern hills and speak not

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as we do. I am fain to send her a letter that can be read of her people, whereby they shall know that I am an honorable man, and that I am making preparation for her journey to this land. Thou art learned in the tongue of the hill people?"

"All the tongues of our great country have yielded me their secrets," said Chin Lee with the gravity becoming the lie that he uttered daily. (He had an agent in Chinatown who spoke the Manchu dialect, and translated the communications brought to him by Chin Lee.) "Thou art in great luck this propitious morning," he went on, "for Ah Moy is descended from striped swine."

"They say he hath a more tender pen, but that thou art more honest."

"They—mine enemies, doubtless!—tell the truth concerning my honesty, but they lie when they depreciate my qualities as a tender writer. Tenderness and Affection

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are of my household, and sup with me nightly. But how didst thou talk with Moy Yen, seeing that thy speech differs from hers?"

"I taught her a few words of my tongue, and she taught me a few of hers; and so——"

"Ay, ay!" interrupted Chin Lee; "love hath its own language, and is not in much need of mere words in any tongue. But what is your wish?"

"I would have you tell the young woman,—Moy Yen, my wife,—that when the man-child Ho Sung,—or Moy Yep, if it be a girl (which the Gods forbid!),—hath arrived, I will send her moneys to bring her and the little one to San Francisco. And, Chin Lee," he hesitated a moment, "didst ever love a woman?"

"I have loved them in every province of our Flowery Land,—and in many tongues, Ho Chung."

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“But hast thou knowledge of a *sam-yen* played under a balcony in a Lane of Death, where nothing is asked?”

“Behold the proof!” replied Chin Lee, rolling up his sleeve and displaying a scar on his arm.

“And did a little child come to thee thereafter?”

“Yea; and the songs I wrote to it are sung in the streets of Shanghai to this day,—for I was overpowered with the marvel of its littleness. See, I will add one of those songs to the letter I shall write for thee for the consideration of a *ping-long* (betel leaf).”

They crossed the street to the reduced gentleman who sold the toothsome delicacy, which the Hindoos understand so much better. And as they discussed the spicy morsels they walked to and fro on the sunny side of Union Square, which is a sequestered retreat, as it were, in the teeming traffic of Chinatown.

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“I will write thee two letters,” began Chin Lee; “one to fit the case of a man-child, and the other if thy babe should be a girl. The price for two letters shall be the same as for one,—and, my friend, where didst thou say Moy Yen, thy wife, lived?”

“In the lane Pin-yang, of the city Moukden, which is in the Manchu province Shingking in the hill country. But, belike, thy letter will not reach her, for the lane is one of many small ones in a great city.”

“His stubborn apprehension is clearly due to his much affection,” thought Chin Lee; then he said aloud, “Never fear! Moy Yen, with a smiling babe at her breast, shall receive a letter that shall delight her greatly: my aged father, who looks after my affairs in China (Heaven soften his taking off!), hath an agent in Moukden, and will see to it that the letter doth not miscarry.”

“But Moy Yen is——”

“She is very beautiful?” interrupted Chin

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Lee, guessing his thought with the aid of much practice.

“She is more beautiful than I can tell, and——”

“So it was in my case,” again interrupted Chin Lee. “The woman that caused me the hurt I showed you—it was a dangerous hurt (he was talking in a confidential and friendly strain by this time—an old trick of his),—but the woman was worthy, by reason of her beauty and her tenderness, of the sudden taking off of even Chin Lee, who is the slave of a wakeful conscience, and the possessor of much experience in affairs of the heart; and it as an ointment to the hurt, which still twingeth shrewdly when the air nips, to clothe my so great experiences in the garments of my rhetoric for the benefit of my honorable patrons.”

“Would it help thy rhetoric to see a presentment of Moy Yen?” asked Ho Chung, drawing an enamelled case from his pocket,

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and displaying a miniature of a young Chinese woman painted by a Chinese artist.

“The sight of Youth and Beauty are as spurs to the halting poet, or as the sun that waketh a sleeping valley whose charms are enhanced by his ardent rays;” and Chin Lee held the miniature at various distances from his bespectacled eyes, and examined it critically.

“To have looked on this once,” he went on unctuously, “were sufficient inspiration to lay the foundation of a letter that should serve as a model for all lovers from Pekin to Yun-nan;—but to look at it in favored intervals till this hour to-morrow would result in the erection of such turrets and pinnacles of rhetoric as were never before built in our language.”

He paused awhile in meditation, regarding the miniature with head aslant. “Wilt thou leave this with me till to-morrow at this hour, so that I may write that which be-

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fits thy affection, and is due to Moy Yen's beauty and worth?" Then, noticing Ho Chung's hesitation, he went on: "The picture hath no value to any one save thee—but who may appraise what is dear to the heart? Nevertheless, I will give thee twenty dollars to hold until the picture is restored to thee."

"It is my comfort in a strange land," said Ho Chung, eyeing it hungrily.

"And it is worthy of the rhetoric of Chin Lee," responded the other, loftily.

That settled it. The exchange of money and picture having been made, Ho Chung gave the scrivener many and full particulars to be transmitted to Moy Yen:—details of his own life and work in San Francisco; and hopes for her own welfare and that of the babe that had, doubtless, arrived.

"Write my heart into the letter, Chin Lee," he ended.

"I will enclose it in the amber of my

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rhetoric, and transmute the youth, and hope, and the wonders of this land of sunshine into words that shall ripple as pleasantly as the wavelets on the beach at Santa Cruz when the full moon lays its benediction on the sleeping sea and the winds are hushed !”

II

THE ENTERTAINMENT OF A MOUSE BY A CAT

“**T**HOU hast come, doubtless, to discharge thy debt to me, Chin Lee,” said the stout, arrogant man behind the counter who had Destiny in his looks.

“Ay, Quong Lung,” replied Chin Lee, with a newly acquired confidence. “I have that with me that shall not only free me from my indebtedness to thee, but which will put money in thy purse. But my words are privy, and to be spoken only in thy inner chamber.”

Quong Lung bolted and locked his front door from within, and further fortified the passage with a fatefully contrived barricade; —for the wars of the *tongs* never cease, and

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there had been a standing reward for his life for many days. But the contending hatchet-men and highbinders agreed that Quong Lung had a charmed life, and that his enemies were short-lived.

And Chin Lee, professional letter-writer and past-master in the art of lying,—and owing Quong Lung money, and a bitter debt of service!—stretched himself with easy negligence on the smoking mat in Quong Lung's inner apartment, whilst the latter took his place on the other side of the mat.

After they had smoked three or four pipes in silence, Chin Lee drew Moy Yen's miniature from his blouse and handed it to Quong Lung.

"Would she be worth while," he asked simply, for rhetoric was out of the question with *this* man.

"She would, if she were available."

"All things are available to the mighty. But the price I ask is a great one, Quong Lung, and the strong are ever merciful and

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generous, and it will not strain thy mercy and generosity to pay my dues."

"Name them."

"The remittance in full—to be given in writing—of the money I owe thee; and ——" He paused a moment, and then went on in a trembling voice: "See, Quong Lung, the knowledge thou hast of that little happening in Ross Alley ten years ago, when a man was found dead with a certain writing in his hand, hath sat like lead on my soul, and frozen—time and again—the flow of words whereby I live."

"Yes?"

"Return the writing to me, and I will do thy bidding at all times."

"Thou *shalt* do my bidding at all times, in any case," said Quong Lung, carelessly. "See to it that the young woman is made 'available' without loss of time."

"Death hath no such bitterness as thy supremacy, Quong Lung!"

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“Only fools kill themselves, Chin Lee; and ’twere pity,” he went on, with a sneer, “’twere pity to put an end to the flow of thy ‘rhetoric.’”

He turned his head slowly and looked insolently at the trembling Chin Lee, who had ceased smoking and was kneeling suppliantly before him with clasped hands. As a cat plays with a mouse only to enliven the little game of catching it again, he appeared to relent as he said, “Thy debt in money shall be remitted when the young woman is ‘available’—to use thy phrase. But thy debt in service shall continue with growing interest: I have need of thy ‘rhetoric.’ Now, tell me about the young woman.”

“Her name, Inexorable, is Moy Yen, and she is the wife of Ho Chung, who is a skilled goldsmith, and earneth high wage in the service of Quen Loy of Dupont Street.”

“She is here?”

“Nay, Far Reacher; she is in Moukden,

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of the province of Shing-king, where the people use other speech than ours, as thou knowest. And Ho Chung, her husband, is saving money for her journey to this land with her babe, after it is born."

"Her babe?" asked Quong Lung, with a frown.

"Yes, Most Merciful."

"And what should *I* do with a babe? My shadow hath fallen on it. See to it that it withers."

"The lightning shall strike it, Most Worshipful!"

"Have a photograph made of this portrait: it will be needful to Moy Yen's admission to this land as a 'Native Daughter.'"

"And if she should be as beautiful as her picture shows her to be, wilt thou remit the greater debt?"

"Perhaps," said Quong Lung, eyeing him for a moment with disdain. "Now go!"

III

HOW RHETORIC MAY SERVE LOVE

“**H**ERE is thy picture, Ho Chung,” said Chin Lee when they met at the appointed hour.

“I could not sleep last night for thinking of it,” responded Ho Chung, returning his money to the letter-writer, and concealing the precious miniature in his blouse.

“Sweetly shalt thou sleep to-night, young man, lulled by the consciousness that never fair woman received letter like this that thou shalt send to Moy Yen. But it is not fitting that such rhetoric as mine should be wasted in a roaring street. Come with me to the square below where, at least, there is grass with pleasant shadows thereon.”

When they had reached Union Square,

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Chin Lee unrolled the papers in his hand, and read the following letter which he had indited :

“ Moy Yen,—Cherry Blossom !—to think that these my silly words shall take thine eyes !”

“ Excellent !” interrupted Ho Chung ; “ I perceive thou hast suffered as I do.”

Chin Lee acknowledged the compliment with a smile, and went on with his reading :

“ —But to begin rightly : It hath been my good hap to meet with a Master of Rhetoric, one Chin Lee, who is not too old to have forgotten the thrill of the tender passion, and who hath suffered grievously in the cultivation of the affections. He hath much skill in the lofty art of the scrivener, for he hath labored all his life, and at all hours of the day and night, in the stony fields of poesy and expression. His skill is only less than my devotion, which he has herein transmuted into tender phrase and loving passage befitting thy surpassing excellence. What manner of man he is is hereunder told : His learning is only equalled by his benevolence, which is the talk

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of all people in this great and wondrous city of San Francisco, so that when any one hath good luck all men say, 'Herein is the hand of Chin Lee!'

"But this is naught to Moy Yen, who would fain hear of me," broke in Ho Chung.

"The young are ever impatient," said Chin Lee, looking reprovingly over the top of his spectacles. "Patience is always rewarded." He then proceeded with his letter:

"What I would, first and last, impress upon thee, Dew of the Morning, is the superexcellence of my Honorable Friend, Chin Lee, who hath toiled in the tea-gardens of learning, where only the 'Orange Pekoe' of speech, so to speak, is cultivated."

"'Tis a fair sentence," said Chin Lee, looking up at Ho Chung; "'the Orange Pekoe of speech' is a fair phrase, and smacks rightly."

"Proceed," replied Ho Chung, kicking aside a pebble on the path.

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Chin Lee, adjusting his spectacles, went on:

“But, whatsoever happens, always remember that Chin Lee is an Honorable Man,—and my best friend.”

“But this doth not touch me,” said Ho Chung, with some irritation.

“Shall I, an uncredited man, act as a go-between for my honorable patrons and their correspondents who live where our speech is not spoken?” asked Chin Lee, with some heat.

“Perhaps thou art right,—but I would dictate the rest of the letter. See, I will propitiate thee with favorable mention of thee to Moy Yen.”

“Now nay, Ho Chung; bethink thee: shall one who is acquainted with the ‘Four Books’ and the ‘Five Classics’ yield to a mere goldsmith in matters pertaining to rhetoric? Shall I permit my perfect knowledge of the Confucian Analects to be trampled under foot even by a lover? Thy lack of

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learning should stand suppliantly in the presence of an understanding that comprehends the encyclopedia '*Wan heen tung kaou*,' compiled by the learned Ma Twan-lin." He finished with a lofty emphasis.

"Nevertheless, Chin Lee," replied Ho Chung, with a look of impatience on his face, "if I may not speak from my heart to Moy Yen's, I shall be compelled to employ the pen of Ah Moy who, they say, writeth as he is bidden."

"Ah Moy is a pig, and his father is a stray dog! He knoweth naught of the 'Ta-heo' (the Book of Great Learning), and he inditeth letters for coolies only to their filthy trulls,—but thou art a *sing-song* (a gentleman), and hast done wisely to come to the only *sing-song* in my profession in San Francisco."

"Thy time is precious, Chin Lee; and I, too, must be about my day's work," said Ho Chung, turning his back on the letter-writer.

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“Tchch, tchch!” clucked the latter, impatiently. “Pronounce, then, the words I must write, without regard to the lofty art of rhetoric, from thy untutored heart to Moy Yen’s. I am but thy pen. Proceed. But fail not to speak favorably of me, as thou didst promise.”

“The words thou hast written so far shall stand, Chin Lee,” said the other, to conciliate the Master of Rhetoric, with whom rested the ultimate writing of the letter to Moy Yen—a letter not to be misconstrued for obvious reasons.

IV

CONCERNING A VULGAR PASSION

WHEN the scrivener was ready, Ho Chung dictated his message to the distant Moy Yen in the following terms:

“Beloved!—Soul of my Soul!—Bearing two hearts within thee! thou art blessed and decorated beyond the power of mere speech! But, ere I reach forth into the realms of words to dress thee with the praises that belong to thee, I am fain, first, to extol the good qualities of my Honorable Friend, Chin Lee——”

“Of 7793 Clay Street,” interrupted the scrivener; “and I would add: ‘He can speak thy language, and is famed for his modesty and benevolence.’”

“So be it set forth, but interrupt not again,” said Ho Chung, with evident irrita-

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tion, as he once more resumed his dictation. "Write now only what I shall say," and Chin Lee, reading Ho Chung's face aright, was henceforth silent, and wrote as follows:

"Our child?—hath it come, Cherry Blossom? Oh, the weary days until I see it, and hold it in my arms! But the thought that it is part thine and part mine, and that it rests on thy tender bosom, lies on my heart like the dew-pearls on the petals of a new-blown rose. Is it well—oh, it *must* be well with thee, and Ours! Tell me all that my heart is hungry for, Dawn of Love.

"As for me, I am still in the service of Quen Loy, and my work is in much demand, and holdeth me from early morn till early night;—Quen Loy will not suffer me to work longer lest harm befall mine eyes. My wage is more than passing fair,—and even the lottery hath befriended me, so that I am able to send thee, herewith, twenty *taels*. Two months hence, if my fortune change not, I shall send thee sufficient money to bring thee, and little Thine-and-Mine, to this fair country, where the sun shines more days in the year than elsewhere.

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“As for the people of this country, they are not the White Devils as set forth by the ignorant of our kind. The worst that can be said of them is that they obtrude themselves into the houses of our people, and have no reverence for our Gods or our shrines. I am told, too, that their women bare their bosoms and shoulders for the lewd to gaze upon, and that they dance in unseemly fashion in the embrace of men other than their husbands. This I have not seen, for mine eyes are for *thy* beauty alone, thou Spray of Jessamine!

“But, ah! the thought of thee, and of thy beauty, and of the Blossom—the babe, Thine-and-Mine!—are ever with me. It sustains me in my hours of work,—and then I have thy picture to look at! But it is at night, when the stimulus of work is over, that I feel most keenly that I am a stranger in a far country. Beloved, I awoke trembling last night: methought I was in Pekin with thee, and that I could hear thy gentle breathing; and then I stretched forth my hand; but, alas! thy place beside me was vacant, and I wept amain till the dawn came. Oh, cruel, cruel is the distance between us! and so is the vast wandering sea that separates us, and knows naught of our love, and careth less, and is indifferent to us. But if money can bring thee to me, I will faithfully work for it.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Farewell, Orange Blossom. I breathe my benediction into the space in which this world spins, knowing that thou art somewhere in it, and that it will find thee.

“These from thy Husband,

“HO CHUNG.”

V

THE VOICE OF TRAVAIL

“**T**O Ho Chung, two months after the despatch of the above letter, came the following reply from Moy Yen, which was thus translated to Ho Chung the next day, after the crafty Chin Lee had conferred with his Manchu agent :

“ Best Beloved : Thy babe hath come !—and it is a Man-Child !

“ Oh ! my Lord, I have walked on a path that is hedged with death on both sides. Pain held my right hand, and Fear my left. The night was dark and clouded, and full of whisperings of mischance. And oft I should have failed and died, but the thought of Ours, and of my husband in a far and strange land toiling for me, sustained me. And then the babe Ho Sung was born, and the light returned.

“ But the ever-fresh wonder of thy Man-Child !

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How may I tell it! Oh! Ho Chung, his hands are like the petals of a rose, and a cunning woman from Hindostan hath taught me how to stain his nails with *benna*.

“But the greater wonder of his feet, my Might! He kicked himself naked with them last night,—and I can hold them both in one palm!

“He is so beautiful that I do not even fear to put him to the breast that is stabbed with a thousand knives when he suckles.

“He hath speech, also, and it is in terms of two simple cries that convey impressions of pleasure and pain: his laughter is like a tiny, happy waterfall; and his wailings are melodious, too, save that they pierce my heart. And he groweth amain—I can scarce sustain him, though my breasts are never empty.

“Beloved, the twenty *taels* thou didst send me have arrived. It is a thousand years till I get the rest of the moneys that shall take me to thee, and enable me to put Thine-and-Mine, as thou callest him, in thy arms.

“From thine own,

“MOY YEN.”

VI

THE WITHERING OF A BUD

“**H**O CHUNG was overcome to the point of death when I read this to him,” said Chin Lee, extending a letter to Quong Lung. “You see, he had knowledge through a previous letter that a notable babe had been born to him ; and then came this letter, which, in his grief, he left with me.”

Quong Lung took the paper, and read as follows :

“ Best Beloved ! Sharer of my joys and sorrows !—
A great sorrow hath befallen us.

“ But the babe—our babe, Thine-and-Mine !—was
ever such a babe !

“ How may I tell it !

“ Yesterday some miscreant stole it from us. At
first my heart filled with hope, because of the milk

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that flowed into my breasts, for, methought, that was a sign that our little one was still alive, and that I should, surely, suckle it again. But now my heart is full of pain, and my breasts are empty of milk!

“Strength of my Strength! call thy utmost strength to thy aid: thy man-child Ho Sung was stolen from my side as I slept, and to-day his body was found in the canal, and my milk, oh! my Lord, lay on his frozen lips.”

“Thy honorable and aged parent in the Flowery Land is an ‘artist,’” said Quong Lung, extending a cigar to Chin Lee.

“But *we* are ever more favored than our sires, for we reap the harvests sown by them. In fact, Chin Sen, my father, but followed out my directions,” answered Chin Lee, eagerly.

Quong Lung proceeded to read as follows:

“Oh, my Lord, my babe being dead, and thou in a far land, my life droops. Oh, let me come to thee soon, soon, soon!

“From thy grief-stricken wife,

“MOY YEN.”

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“See to it that she comes soon,” said Quong Lung, putting five double eagles on the table. “Her beauty will fade if she sorrow too long. Ah! I have it,” he exclaimed. “My agent at Shanghai, Fan Wong, will despatch his next consignment of slave girls to me two months hence under charge of my wife, Suey See, who doth such errands for me. Moy Yen shall return as thy Californian daughter, Chin Lee, in fulfilment of the requirements of the Chinese Exclusion Act. Thy daughter shall have honorable escort.”

“Thou art in merry mood this morning, Compeller. But greater honor would accrue to Moy Yen if she were to come as *thy* daughter,—and no questions would be asked by the authorities on this side.”

“No questions shall be asked in any case,” said Quong Lung.

“Even the White Devils fear thee, Far Reacher! But the man Ho Chung is young

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and strong,—and he might get knowledge of this matter,—and my life is still precious to me. 'Twould place me on a dangerous path bordered by death, Most Merciful.”

“Therefore do I order it,” said Quong Lung, slowly, regarding Chin Lee with half-closed eyes. “But thou hast done well so far, Chin Lee; passing well. How much dost thou owe me?”

“One hundred and thirty-eight dollars, Fair Dealer;—and the rack of a scrap of paper that fell into thy hands. Consider: I have caused thy shadow to fall on a flower that hindered—and the flower hath withered. Thou wilt let that weigh with thee, Most Merciful.”

“'Twas well done; very well done! 'Twas worth not less than the fifty dollars I herewith remit of thy debt to me in money,” and Quong Lung wrote, and gave Chin Lee a receipt for that amount.

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“But thou art not appraising the removal of the babe at fair value, Quong Lung.”

“Fair enough, fair enough, when one considers that which was found ten years ago in Ross Alley in the hand of a dead man.”

“Quong Lung, 'twere easier to confess all, than to live under the stress of thy shadow. Yes; to confess all—all!—some of thy misdeeds, too.”

There was a battery connected with the chair on which Chin Lee sat, and, as he clasped its arms in the act of rising, Quong Lung switched on the current by an unperceived movement of his foot.

“The raising of thy voice, Chin Lee, would summon instant death. No man may threaten me, and live.”

He held up a menacing finger, as his victim writhed in the toils of the Demon that Bestows Cramps.

“Call off thy Devil, Quong Lung; call

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him off! I am forever thy slave," whined Chin Lee.

"No man may threaten me, and live," repeated Quong Lung, impressively. "Yet see, I will be magnanimous to thee, for only the hem of my shadow hath fallen on thee this time,—and I am mindful, too, of the bud that withered."

He shut off the current, whilst Chin Lee, almost dead with fear, sank into his chair and wiped the great drops from his forehead.

"Great is Quong Lung, and great are his spells!" he gasped. "I am his slave henceforth."

"Well spoken, Chin Lee. Now drink, for thou hast received the lesser discipline that I mete out to ingrates, and art in need of the assistance of *sam shu*," and Quong Lung set cups and a teapot filled with Chinese gin on the table that was between them.

"Nay, fear not, Chin Lee; the liquor is

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not poisoned. See," and Quong Lung filled a cup for himself, and drank its contents. Then, as his guest drank with a shaking hand, Quong Lung went on:

"Thou wert nearer a heavier discipline than that, Chin Lee. Stand a pace to the right of thy chair, and thou shalt see."

Chin Lee had scarcely complied with his command, when an arrow whizzed past him, and transfixing the chair from which he had just risen.

"Other means have I for subduing the recalcitrant. Never forget that thou art in my hands. And now some more *sam shu*; and resume thy seat," said Quong Lung, withdrawing the arrow from the chair.

"Thou wilt write to Moy Yen, in the name of Ho Chung, and direct her to the keeping of my wife Suey See who, also, will seek her with credentials purporting to come from Ho Chung."

"Thy wishes shall be obeyed, Subduer,"

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returned the other, meekly. Then, with an air of sycophancy, he went on: "And when Moy Yen sends word of her coming, I will alter the date of her arrival here in the translation of the letter to Ho Chung, so that we may not be interrupted in any way in the taking of our pretty partridge to her cage. Ho, ho!"

"Thou art a worthy son of that worthy artist, thy honorable and aged father; and thy rhetoric shall yet advance thee. Drink once more."

VII

A BURIAL BY FIRE

“**T**HE brightness of the day is reflected in thy looks, my young friend,” said Chin Lee with his best professional smile as he unfolded the letter Ho Chung had given him the day before,—the third he was to translate and embellish with the flowers of his rhetoric for the young goldsmith.

“Ah, ha !” he went on, as he smoothed out the letter on his table ; “I am, indeed, thy Luck. See what it is to have employed a man versed in languages, and who can summon happy words at his will. It is well known that I can pack more meaning into a sentence than Ah Moy, the hungry, can convey in a column. Not for nothing have I culled the flowers that abound in the *She king*

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of Confucius," and he shook his head with a nod of self-approval.

"Great, indeed, O Chin Lee, is the wonder of thy learning——"

"It is spoken of even among the barbarians who live on the borders of Thibet," interrupted the scrivener. "Even the Mandarins who sway the destinies of our great empire are fain to ease their so great and important functions with recitation of the odes I used to throw off in my idle moments. And when it was told to the Emperor that one Chin Lee, scrivener, prosodian, and rhetorician——"

"But this is barren talk," interrupted Ho Chung, looking hungrily at the letter in Chin Lee's hand.

"How headlong is youth!" exclaimed Chin Lee, in a tone of deprecation. "What a glowing sentence didst thou cool with the breath of thy impatience! The beauty of the young day, the expectant love beam-

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ing in thy youthful countenance, the news herein contained——”

“Oh, man of many words, is it good news?” once more interrupted Ho Chung, eagerly.

But the other held up his hand in remonstrance, and went on: “And the thought of the great task that the mightiest of Emperors had it in mind once to impose upon me, the task of compiling an encyclopædia that should rival that of Ma Twan-lin—all these had roused me to a height of poetic fervor that would have ended in a climax of rhetoric that should have thundered down the ages! Hast no love for literature? and do not the claims of posterity appeal to thee?”

“I have a passing strong love for Moy Yen, Chin Lee, and my heart knocketh for news of her. Give me the letter and I will go to Ah Moy, and leave thee to nourish thy ‘poetic fervor,’” and Ho Chung extended an impatient hand.

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“The heedlessness of youth passeth the comprehension of the wise! Well, if thou must obstruct the flow of rhythmic prose of which I feel capable even now, in spite of thy interruptions, I will translate the letter of thy Moy Yen. Sit down beside me, my headlong friend, while I improve the crude sentences wherewith the letter-writer of Moukden hath expressed the love of the beautiful Moy Yen for thee.”

He wiped his spectacles deliberately, and proceeded to read as follows, interpolating and altering as suited the exigencies of the plot in which he was concerned:

“Ho Chung, Deliverer! oh, my hope is fulfilled! Yesterday came twenty other *taels* from thee! And a kinsman, but lately found,—who is an opium merchant, and hath been bereft of children, too,—gave me other twenty for the journey, and yet another twenty to put into thy hand. See: before the moon is full again, they tell me I shall look once more upon my Beautiful Lord. The great vessel of iron moved

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by fire and steam, in which I shall cross the seas that separate us, will leave a month hence (Chin Lee substituted a 'month' for 'two weeks'), and I shall be with my sweet Lord ere the cherry blossoms show. I herewith send thee a paper that tells the name and date of departure of the vessel that shall bring me to thee.

"But, oh, my Lord! how may I leave Thine-and-Mine behind me! Oh, the tender lips that I made, and the miracles of hands and feet; and the soft mouth that clung to me! Oh, Ho Chung, Ho Chung, how may I leave Thine-and-Mine behind me! Thou canst not understand it, my Lord, but the love of a woman for her babe—dead or alive—is beyond the comprehension of men. . . . And, too, a thousand deaths beset me in giving him birth,—and then to lose him!

"Hasten, days and nights! Be propitious, seas and stars!—so shall I soon clasp my beloved Lord once more.

"Oh, Ho Chung, I love thee, I love thee!

"From thy wife,

"MOY YEN."

As Ho Chung sat in rapt meditation over his impending happiness, Chin Lee spoke. "Never speaks heart to heart so sweetly," he

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began, "as in a first tender passion; and no one is so fit to interpret its soft utterances as a man of feeling and experience,—and that am I. The bald sentences herein contained had bereft the day of sunlight for thee, but they glowed when they had been passed through the crucible of my fancy, my young goldsmith. Hadst thou followed thy foolish impulse to take the letter to Ah Moy—but why should I defile my mouth by further mention of him: he is a mere peddler of common speech; a coolie in literature! And see, my fond lover, it were better that the memory of my glowing translation should abide with thee than that somebody should expose to thee, in all its naked hideousness, the crude work of the scrivener who wrote this letter for Moy Yen. Let it have burial by fire;" and, before Ho Chung could guess his intention, Chin Lee had thrust the letter, that had to be destroyed, into the brazier at his feet.

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“What hast thou done?” said Ho Chung, angrily. “Chin Lee, thou hast exceeded thy functions, and for small excuse I would chastise thee. Moy Yen’s letters are my only comfort in a strange land.”

“Stay thy hand, and repress thy wrath,” said a stout Chinese merchant, regarding Ho Chung over the top of his spectacles. He had arrived in time to witness the burning of the letter by Chin Lee, and to hear Ho Chung’s outbreak. It was Quong Lung, who maintained his evil supremacy by venturing abroad even when the Wars of the *Tongs* were at their height, although there was a reward on his head. But the See Yups are numerous, and he was practically surrounded by a body-guard of desperate hatchetmen sworn to his service. In the crowd of softly-shod Orientals who surrounded him, and who appeared to be but a part of the shifting crowd that ebbed and flowed along the street, were men ready to

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slay any one who made a movement that menaced Quong Lung. The house whence came a bullet that passed through his sleeve the preceding week was burnt the same night; and Chinatown laughed at the temerity of the *tong* whose hired assassin had fired the shot.

“Chin Lee,” he went on, “thy rhetoric must be at fault to have roused the wrath of this worthy *sing-song*.”

“Dominador,” replied Chin Lee, “I had it in mind to favor my young friend, Ho Chung, with the memories of a perfervid translation of a certain letter that lacked rhetorical merit. But Ho Chung hath no love for literature and rounded periods, and resented the destruction of the crude message translated by me.”

“Young man,” said Quong Lung, as he made a vivid mental note of Ho Chung, “it will comfort thee to know that Chin Lee, master of many words, doeth *me* much

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favor in the translation of certain letters that come from districts where they use speech unlike ours.”

“And who art thou?” asked Ho Chung, with some heat.

“I am *that* Quong Lung known of all men in Chinatown.”

“I have heard of thee,—heard much ill of thee; and I like thee not,” returned Ho Chung with warmth.

“Did they tell, too, that Chin Lee is my friend?” asked Quong Lung, apparently ignoring Ho Chung’s exhibition of temper. “Nay? Well, hear it then from my lips; and, further, let me tell thee that those who honor him honor me. Of course, thou hast excuse for thy temper,—and I will not notice it.” Then, turning to the scrivener, he went on: “But, Chin Lee, see to it that whilst the letter thou hast destroyed is fresh in thy mind thou dost set it forth in thy loftiest terms in writing that shall serve as an oint-

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ment to this worthy *sing-song's* hurt." And Quong Lung proceeded slowly along the street, apparently unaware of the fact that all men looked at him.

"Thou art, indeed, in luck this day, my rash young friend," said Chin Lee, getting his writing implements ready. "It is not given to many men to express dislike of Quong Lung to his face, and be excused thereafter for so doing. But beware lest his Shadow fall upon thee: it is the Mantle of Death."

VIII

LE ROI EST MORT, VIVE LE ROI

SUEY SEE had so schooled Moy Yen during the long voyage concerning the difficulty of landing in San Francisco except as Chin Lee's daughter, born in California, that the young woman made no demur when she was told that Ho Chung's absence from the wharf was absolutely necessary.

“Thy love for the beautiful goldsmith, thy husband, will betray thee in the presence of the officers of the law, and then they will send thee back across the cruel sea.”

“Heaven be praised for having sent me such kind friends in my need; for consider, Suey See, I have been bereft of my babe, and I could not lose my lord, too.”

Then, too, Quong Lung's influence with

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those who are concerned with the administration of the Chinese Exclusion Act had made Moy Yen's landing an easy matter.

In the hack in which she was taken to one of Quong Lung's "establishments" she was plied with *sam shu* so cunningly sophisticated that she was scarcely conscious as they thrust her into the padded room in which Suey See had said Ho Chung awaited her.

That same evening Chin Lee, partaking of "black smoke" on the mat in Quong Lung's inner chamber, addressed the latter thus: "Quong Lung, the destruction of an important writing witnessed by thee merits some reward, Fair Dealer. Its capture would have made trouble."

"Trouble for thee, doubtless, thou mere son of a great artist."

"Nay, Quong Lung, the aged and infirm Chin Sen, my honorable parent, had failed in his part had I not instructed him so carefully that he could not make a mistake.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

And, surely, he had nothing to do with the burning of Moy Yen's letter."

"'Twas a worthy burning, Chin Lee," said Quong Lung, somewhat thickly. He had been partaking unusually freely of whiskey since he had assisted at the formalities connected with the landing of his "covey of partridges," as he styled them; and the beauty of Moy Yen (who was now his property by process of the law that winks at such transactions) appealed strongly to him. "'Twas a worthy burning. What dost thou owe me now in money?"

"Eighty-eight dollars, O Soul of Generosity," answered Chin Lee.

"Write me a receipt for the amount, my Plotter, and I will sign it."

When Chin Lee had bestowed the receipt in his pocket-book, he said with all the nonchalance he could summon to his aid: "And Moy Yen, my daughter,—she is comely?"

"She is most beautiful, Chin Lee. It is

The Shadow of Quong Lung

beyond the power of even thy rhetoric to compass her praises," returned Quong Lung with swelling nostrils, as he licked his lips.

"Doubtless, she is worth the scrap of paper that was found untowardly in Ross Alley ten years ago," said Chin Lee, tentatively, trying to repress any evidence of the anxiety that racked him.

Quong Lung laid down his pipe, and sat up on the mat. After looking among the papers in his pocket-book, he drew forth and handed one that was yellow with age to Chin Lee.

"Moy Yen is so beautiful, Chin Lee, and thou hast managed so well and faithfully in this matter, that I herewith release thee from all further service for placing her in my cage;" and he lay down on the mat once more, and prepared some more opium for smoking.

As Chin Lee set fire to the fateful writing at the oil lamp on the tray beside him, and

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as he watched it burning till it was completely consumed, it seemed to him that the shadow of Quong Lung had fallen from his soul, and that he had at last laid the grim ghost that had haunted him for ten years at the bidding of the tyrant beside him. He should at last walk with greater confidence among his fellows, and the day should be brighter for him, he thought. If, under the stress of the paper that he had just destroyed, he had striven in the service of rhetoric, his fancy—now released from Bondage—should soar on freer pinions and in loftier flight. He should at last accomplish something that all men should talk about, and that should become a classic even in the few years that remained to him.

He had reached thus far in the pleasant reverie that was reflected in his face, when Quong Lung, noticing his rapt air and intuitively getting at the thought in his mind, spoke once more after he had finished his pipe:

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“But always thou wilt remember, Chin Lee,” he began, in deeper and more deliberate tones than he had yet used; “always thou wilt remember,—whatever may happen,—that thou art the father of Moy Yen, and will not fail in such paternal services as she may require from thee.”

And the Shadow of Quong Lung, that had been lifted from the soul of Chin Lee for a moment, fell once more upon him with its gloomy oppression.

IX

THE SHARPENING OF A HATCHET

CHIN LEE slept but little that night. The waning fear of detection that was connected with the crime of ten years ago had been replaced by a greater dread of the very possible finding of Moy Yen by Ho Chung. And Ho Chung was young and strong. He was brave, too; for he had looked, without flinching, into the eyes of the mighty Quong Lung, and even spoken scornfully to him. And he was very much in love.

Better death than the tyranny of the fateful Quong Lung, who only lifted a lesser fear to impose a greater.

Was Quong Lung then invincible? Was he, indeed, Supreme Master in the art of plotting? Had not Chin Lee himself shown

The Shadow of Quong Lung

Quong Lung that he could plan and carry out a deep-laid scheme to the Master's satisfaction? Had not Quong Lung complimented him with the title of "plotter"?

When the dim morning light straggled into Chin Lee's room through the chinks between the shutters and barricades, it showed him gray and haggard, but with an unmistakable look of fixed resolve on his face; for he had thrown the die, although his life might be the forfeit of the game he was about to play.

One thing was in his favor: he would have the advantage of striking the first blow, and at a time of his own choosing. And, further, he would strike with a hatchet of his own sharpening!

When the day dawned that should bring the ship which carried Moy Yen to San Francisco, as Ho Chung fondly imagined, the young goldsmith sought Chin Lee.

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“Come with me,” he began with a beaming countenance; “come with me, Chin Lee, and help me to welcome my wife, Moy Yen. I shall need the aid of thy rhetoric.”

“That would necessitate the closing of my scrivener’s stall for the day, thou worthy goldsmith;—and the scrivener’s art is falling into decay by reason of the upspringing of coolie letter-writers who know naught of the encyclopædias which even the White Devils read and admire.”

“And what is the price for the closing of thy stall for a day, Chin Lee?”

“The price, my affluent young friend, is hard to be appraised in terms of mere money: *posterity* will have to suffer if I accompany thee, for I am laboring and urgent this morning to bring forth sentences of exceeding merit, and one may not weigh pearls that perish against winged words possessing immortal youth and that shall enrich generations to come.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Will five dollars suffice thee?” asked Ho Chung.

“Five dollars would scarcely recompense my conscience for withdrawing my accomplishments from the realm of letters for an entire day,—the Gods expect service for the gifts they bestow. But in thy case,—and seeing that thou hast discriminated between an artist and a coolie,—I will waive the dues that are properly mine, and go with thee to meet thy Moy Yen.”

After he had pocketed his fee, and placed his writing-table in the store of a friend, Chin Lee accompanied Ho Chung to the wharf, which they reached whilst the day was at noon.

There was hardly any one on the wharf, for the signallers at Point Lobos had seen no signs of the approach of the City of Peking.

To and fro walked Ho Chung and the scrivener, the latter trying to enliven the dragging hours with flowing sentences that

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fell on unheeding ears, for Ho Chung was more occupied in watching the point round which the steamer would come than in attending to Chin Lee.

“My stomach knocketh shrewdly,” said Chin Lee in the middle of the afternoon. “’Twere well, my patron, to assist nature to bear up against the strain of this our waiting. Besides, thou, too, art worn; and it were no compliment to Moy Yen to greet her with a face of famine. How should I produce pearls of rhetoric when Hunger lays his hand on my mouth?” So Ho Chung unwillingly accompanied the famished and weary scrivener to a place of refreshment on Market Street, where even a Chinaman’s money will procure food and drink.

Seeing that Ho Chung scarcely touched the food placed in front of him, Chin Lee pressed him: “Eat, my young friend. Thou mayst need all thy strength before the day is out.”

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“What dost thou mean?” asked Ho Chung, eyeing the other askance for a moment.

“We who have studied philosophy have gained mental strength and quietude which even disappointment may not disturb. But thou art young, and headlong, and impatient, and must brace thyself with food and drink lest disappointment come to thee and thy strength fail.”

“Disappointment? What Disappointment?” asked Ho Chung.

“Nay; how should I know? I spoke of disappointment in general terms. Thou wast disappointed this morning, for instance, because the ship did not arrive at the time set for it, and thy disappointment hath worn thee. Eat, therefore.”

After they had finished their meal they returned to the wharf, and in deference to Chin Lee's weary feet they sat on an empty box at the end of the wharf and waited.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

Presently the scene on the wharf became livelier, and, as the steamer hove into sight, the officials, who look after the landing of Chinese, came to the wharf, and Ho Chung joined them as he had been instructed to, Chin Lee accompanying him.

And now the happy moment had come when Ho Chung should once more have sight of his wife, Moy Yen. He was taken into the cabin set apart for Chinese women. "Moy Yen, Beloved," he called softly, with outstretched hands, as he entered the cabin. But no one responded. He eagerly scanned the dull, impassive faces of the women before him.

"She is, doubtless, in some other apartment," he said, addressing the interpreter. "Send for her."

"Moy Yen's name does not appear on the list of passengers. You must have made some mistake. Am I not right, sir?" asked the interpreter of the ship's officer who accompanied them.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“We did not carry any one of that name,” was the answer.

A great fear came upon Ho Chung, and he trembled so that he was forced to clutch Chin Lee's arm as they left the vessel.

“Courage, my dear young friend! Call philosophy to thy aid,” urged Chin Lee. But the only response he got was, “Oh! Moy Yen, Moy Yen! Where art thou, Beloved?”

Chin Lee led him to the seat they had occupied that morning at the end of the wharf. Here all was quiet and dark, save for the twinkling of the stars overhead.



X

THAT LAUGHTER IS NOT ALWAYS PLEASANT

“**C**OURAGE, my poor young Friend! Thou shalt yet find Moy Yen,” began Chin Lee.

Orion’s glittering belt, and glorious Sirius shining in the wonderful blue-black of the sky of a Californian night swept by a north wind, made no impression on Ho Chung, who moaned at intervals: “Oh, Moy Yen, Moy Yen! Where art thou?”

“Listen, Ho Chung; I will tell thee.”

“What! thou canst tell me where Moy Yen is, and thou didst not tell me before!” said Ho Chung, clutching the other’s arm. “Explain thyself, scrivener,—and in few words; otherwise thou art treading the path that leads to death.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“I will tell thee a plain tale,” replied Chin Lee, who had prepared himself for the occasion. “And if I appear to lie to thee, let this be the instrument of my destruction,” and he drew a formidable knife from his mysterious blouse and handed it to Ho Chung.

“Ten years ago,” he resumed, “I, too, had a mistress——”

“But Moy Yen is my *wife*!” interrupted Ho Chung.

“But a mistress is ever dearer than a wife, my inexperienced friend! Yes, Yu Moy was fairer even than my words can tell; and Shan Toy stole her from me. And, thereafter, he was found dead in Ross Alley, with a writing in his hand that would have given me to the rope of the white hangman; and the writing fell into the hands of Quong Lung—who hath done thee much wrong. For ten years Quong Lung hath——”

“But this relateth not to Moy Yen,” said Ho Chung, impatiently.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“It lies closer to her than her garments,” said Chin Lee. “Listen: With proof in his hand that would hang me, Quong Lung (than whom a more cruel and cunning fiend does not exist in hell!) has made me the slave of his iniquities. He hath stricken me dumb with the terror of his ever present shadow.” He ceased for a moment while Ho Chung, never relaxing his grasp on Chin Lee’s arm, took a deep breath with distended nostrils.

“Proceed.”

“Oh, my Brother in Affliction!” resumed Chin Lee; “he hath wrought thee much wrong. But why waste words: thou didst flout him openly the first time thou sawest him, and it was told in Chinatown; and, so, the shadow of Quong Lung hath fallen upon thee, too.”

“But Moy Yen—tell me of Moy Yen!”

“Quong Lung hath stricken thee through her.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Is she dead?” demanded Ho Chung fiercely, increasing the pressure on the other’s arm.

“No; there are things worse than death, and Moy Yen, by the laws of the White Devils, is now slave to Quong Lung, and penned up in his house of ill-fame on Waverley Place,—nay, friend, the clutch of thy hand is too shrewd,—and I am an old man,—and my flesh is tender.”

“And thou hadst knowledge of all this, and didst not tell me!” said Ho Chung, without heeding Chin Lee’s last remark.

“It would not have availed thee, Ho Chung: Quong Lung hath many tools; and, besides, to have told thee would have involved thy taking off.”

“That would have been merciful, at any rate. Proceed.”

“See, Ho Chung, I am old enough to be thy father, and, therefore, wiser and more experienced. If thou wilt let me guide thee

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in this matter we will rid the world of a monster, and thou shalt have thy Moy Yen again."

"Have Moy Yen again!—Moy Yen dishonored! Ha, ha, ha!" and Ho Chung, who was ordinarily undemonstrative, after the manner of his race, went off into a shriek of hysterical laughter. "I loved Moy Yen—ho, ho, ho, ho!—and she was abducted from me—with thy knowledge—ha, ha, ha!—and I am to rid the world of Quong Lung to serve thy ends, and, as reward, receive Moy Yen, whose honor hath been soiled—oh, ye Gods! this is just cause for exceeding mirth—ha, ha, ha, ha——!"

At the first peal of wild laughter Chin Lee's heart beat fast, and a chill fear struck him. "Madness hath seized upon him," he thought. As Ho Chung proceeded, the scrivener's terror increased. With a sudden effort he wrenched himself free, and made a dash to escape.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“The shadow of Quong Lung hath covered thee to-night,” shouted Ho Chung, as he overtook Chin Lee, and buried the knife to the hilt between his shoulders.

He tossed the dying man into the bay, and, after cleansing his hands and his weapon at a faucet on the wharf from which he had drunk that afternoon, he turned his steps towards Waverley Place,—and Moy Yen.

7

XI

AS OVERHEARD IN A CROWD

THE house in which Moy Yen was at present confined consisted of a long passage, into which rooms but little larger than cells opened. Each room had a window with heavy iron bars, through which those who were in the passage could see the girls within.

Round each window, as Ho Chung entered, was a polyglot crowd, whose size was in proportion to the beauty of the occupant of the room. So thick was the press round one window that Ho Chung—though insistent and impatient, besides being heavier and taller than those present—could not force his way to the front, but had to wait his turn.

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One glance over the heads of those in front of him showed him Moy Yen sitting on the side of a bed. She was dressed in black velvet, and her head gear was loaded with jewellery. In the lobes of her ears were heavy rings that hung almost to her shoulders; and on her wrists were massive jade bracelets. Ready to her hand, on the bed, lay a wicked-looking knife which her father had given her when he bade her good-by at Hong Kong. ("Let it guard thy honor, Little One, if need be," he had said.)

7

She had an expression of intense sadness on her face; and she appeared to look through and beyond the crowd gazing upon her.

"They say that she hath been but two weeks in San Francisco," said a young Chinese "blood" in the crowd to his pampered friend. "If these coolies would but remove themselves, we might at least look upon her beauty, which is much spoken of."

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Ho Chung, who stood immediately behind the speaker, had it in mind to slay him there and then, but that would have interfered with far more important matters.

"She hath a sorrow that adds to her beauty, methinks," remarked the well-fed friend, who was in a better position to see Moy Yen. He put his head to one side critically, and smacked his lips as he regarded her.

"I overheard one say at the restaurant, last night, that Quong Lung gave Chin Lee the scrivener, whose daughter she is alleged to be, three thousand dollars for her," remarked the young Chinese man-about-town. (Ho Chung smiled grimly at this, and the thought of what had but just happened on the wharf shot one ray of comfort into the sorrow at his heart.)

"Quong Lung never made a better investment, Lee Yung, and he is no mean appraiser of flesh," returned the man who

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fulfilled the Psalmist's description of the ungodly, "whose eyes swell with fatness, and they do even what they lust."

"I am told, too, that she will admit no one into her room; not even a woman. Quey Lem, the old hag who looks after the girls here, told me last night that Quong had her put into this cell three days ago as a punishment, because she discouraged his advances with a knife——"

"It is on the bed beside her," interrupted the stout man, catching sight of the knife.

"It is a great telling, Nu Fong," went on the man of fashion, and the crowd, whom he elegantly ignored, listened to his "telling." "I am in favor with Quey Lem for very good reasons," began Lee Yung: "I give her a trifle occasionally for taking thought of me;" and he looked round arrogantly at Ho Chung, who had trodden on his heel as he advanced an inch in the forward movement to the window.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“She was like a wild-cat newly caged, Quey Lem told me,” resumed Lee Yung; “and she would have died of inanition—for she refused to eat or drink.”

“What made her give so much trouble, Lee Yung?”

“Oh, she hath a lover, or a husband,—some such obstacle,—whom she expected to meet in San Francisco; and Quong Lung diverted her from him.”

“Ho, ho, ho!” laughed Nu Fong. “‘Diverted’ is good! But why did she not die of starvation?”

“Thy academic career, Nu Fong, hath been sadly neglected. If you were a ‘Native Son,’ as I am, you would know that these White Devils can steal one’s senses by poisoning the air one breathes; and that when one is in that condition they can feed him through tubes let into the stomach through the mouth.”

“That is a joyless way of taking one’s

The Shadow of Quong Lung

sustenance, Lee Yung; and an insult to the palate that hath its inalienable rights."

By this time they had advanced close enough to the window to give Lee Yung a full view of Moy Yen, who now sat listlessly with downcast eyes.

"By the Grave of my Father!" exclaimed Lee Yung; "rumor hath not lied for once. From the crown of her head to her little feet she is formed for the uses and offices of love." More he was not permitted to say, for Ho Chung, taking firm hold of the young men's queues, knocked their heads together.

"Have ye no respect for beauty in distress, ye pampered dogs?" he asked, angrily. "Nay; make no motion, lest ye die suddenly."

He thrust them to one side, and stepped to the window. The sound of his angry voice had attracted the other crowds in the passage, and, as they surged towards him, he warned them back with an imperious gesture.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“The young woman within is Moy Yen, my wife, who hath been stolen from me. I would have speech with her, and I would not be overheard. Let this argument persuade ye to keep back,” and he drew a knife from his sleeve.

XII

THAT IRON BARS ARE INEFFECTUAL SOMETIMES

WHEN Moy Yen heard Ho Chung's voice she raised her head and ran to the window ; and when the crowd had fallen back at Ho Chung's bidding, he turned to Moy Yen, and clasped the hands she had extended through the bars.

“ Oh ! Moy Yen, Moy Yen, the Gods that were sworn to protect thee are false,— and there are no Gods, but only devils of greater or lesser degree. Oh ! Little One, how camest thou here ? ”

“ My Beautiful Lord,” she replied ; “ Suey See, the wife of one Quong Lung, showed me and my father letters in Hong Kong written for thee by Chin Lee, thy so great friend, and

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they said I was to put myself in charge of Suey See, who would give me honorable escort to San Francisco. And so I came.”

“But *this* was to be the day of thy arrival.”

“Thy letters, My Lord, said I was to start two weeks earlier than the time agreed upon, and I but obeyed thee. But now you will take me hence, my Lord and Master.”

“Yes; thou shalt certainly escape hence, my Best Beloved; but the time for thy escape is short, and I have much to ask thee. Where wast thou taken on the day of thy arrival?”

“To the house of Quong Lung. But why dost thou ask, Ho Chung?” and she raised pleading eyes to his face.

“Tell me all, my Heart; and make haste, oh, make haste!—the time is short.”

“Of anything that happened I am entirely innocent, my Husband; for they led me to a chamber where they said I should find thee,—but thou wast not there; and soon after,

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and whilst I wept, the drugged food and drink they had given me after I left the ship bereft me of my senses, and I fell into a deep sleep."

She stopped to weep awhile, until Ho Chung bade her proceed.

"When I woke, dear Master, a light burned in the room; and one, whom I now know to be Quong Lung, stood beside me with hungry eyes. And he spoke to me—such things as only lovers say to one another. But, when he laid a desecrating hand on my shoulder, I leapt from the bed and made at him with the knife that was concealed in my sleeve, and which I have so far managed to hide from my foes. So Quong Lung fled, and the door closed behind him with a snap; and I could not beat it down, nor wrench away the bars from the window. I was as a bird in a cage, and, therefore, I could but cry for help—but none came. Every night a strange heaviness comes upon me, and the air of my room becomes impregnated with

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a sweet heavy odor ; and thereafter, in a half-swoon, I either see or dream that strange men and an old woman are about me ; and when I wake I neither care to eat nor drink. And, because I persisted in repelling Quong Lung, I was brought here by means unknown to me ; and here men, with hideous passions and evil looks, come and stare at me in my helpless captivity, and say abominable things to me. And I am to stay here till I yield myself to Quong Lung,—but I would sooner die, Ho Chung, my Husband, as thou must know in thy heart. And now take me hence.”

“Thou Brave, and Beautiful, and Faithful!—but, oh, Moy Yen, thou art, indeed, like a bird in a cage, and I am powerless to free thee—except in one way. Yes, indeed, thou must escape hence, for this is the abode of Dishonor, and better death than dishonor! Courage! the road to freedom is not so hard to travel. See, Little One, come

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nearer, for fear any one in the crowd should hear our speech and report to Quong Lung. So ; press thy bosom to the bars, so that I may feel the beating of thy faithful heart. Now close thine eyes, for beautiful as they are thy face hath another beauty when thine eyes are closed—as I have often seen when thou hast slept.”

Therefore Moy Yen closed her eyes, and pressed her bosom against the bars of the window.

“My husband,” she murmured, “now thou art come, I am happy once more.”

Ho Chung placed his hand where he could feel the beating of her heart.

“’Twas here Thine-and-Mine used to repose, Cherry Blossom !” As he spoke, he steadied the point of the knife with the hand he had laid on her breast, and, before any one in the crowd could guess his intention, he drove it through her heart with a swift blow from the other hand.

XIII

AN ACCIDENT IN CHINATOWN

THE crowd broke and fled in wild disorder, as Ho Chung turned from the window. With Moy Yen's dying scream ringing in his ears, he strode rapidly towards Quong Lung's abode, whither he had been preceded—during his interview with Moy Yen—by Wau Shun, who acted as “bully” at the establishment on Waverley Place. He was one of the most dangerous high-binders in Chinatown, for he was backed by the full weight of Quong Lung's power; moreover, no man knew what he intended, or where he was looking, because of his atrocious squint. At present he was undergoing a severe castigation of words from Quong Lung, and writhing under the lash of his master's scorn.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“So; thou art not ashamed to take the wages of a man, and to run like a woman, Wau Shun! Doubtless, thy constant association with the women thou hast in keeping has turned thy blood to milk. Ho Chung is but a boy beside thee in years.”

“Nay, Compeller, I am here in thy best interests, for Ho Chung will arrive presently, and I am come to protect thee.”

“Protect me! Does the jackal protect the lion?”

“Nay, Most Powerful; but there is a killing forward, and thy honorable hands must not be soiled with blood.”

“Oh! And why didst thou not do thy office at thy post, my considerate jackal? Thou hadst thy fangs with thee.”

“I could not use powder and lead, Great Master, for fear of killing Moy Yen.”

“Were thy knife and hatchet blunt, then?”

“Ho Chung’s wrath was terrible to be-

The Shadow of Quong Lung

hold, Quong Lung; even the crowd fell back before it,—for he is tall and strong, and he appeared to be demented.”

“It is plainly to be seen that thy courage is no better than that of the women in thy charge. And to talk to me of blood!—and killing! As though a Master of Accidents hath any need to imbrue his hands in vulgar things! But stay in the room, and keep thy arguments of powder and lead in readiness lest they should be needed.”

He walked down the passage, and bolted the barricade across it; it was a flimsy affair of latticed slats, and would readily yield to the pressure of a man's shoulder,—but there was a thread stretched across the passage a foot in front of the barricade, which Quong Lung facetiously named “The Thread of Destiny.”

Returning to the room, which was brilliantly illuminated, he threw the door open, so that he should be plainly seen by any

The Shadow of Quong Lung

one entering the passage ; and leaning carelessly against the door-post, he smoked awhile in silence. Presently, he opened the door leading into the street by pressing on a spring, and calmly awaited events.

He had scarcely completed these details, when Ho Chung flung himself into the passage, brandishing a knife in his hands.

“Thou villain, Quong Lung !” he shouted, “thank the Gods, I have found thee !”

As Ho Chung put his weight against the barricade, he broke the thread in front of it, and a hundred-weight of iron descended on his head from a trap in the ceiling of the passage, and killed him instantly.

PART III



A Civil Death in Chinatown

I

COMPLIMENTS PASS WHEN GENTLEFOLK MEET

SOME of them sat about the room in various easy attitudes, smoking and talking at intervals of current events in Chinatown; whilst others wandered about in that aimless fashion that is so characteristic of the Chinaman when inside of a house. They were the head men of one of the most important *tongs* of the See Yup's, and they were awaiting the arrival of Quong Lung, without whom no business was ever transacted.

“Was ever pork so cheap?” exclaimed Lee Yup, the portly butcher of Dupont Street. “And feed for the beasts is extremely scarce by reason of the drought. Why, such fruit as one gathered from the dealers

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for the taking of it away last year is now being peddled at the doors of the White Devils south of Market Street *for two cents a pound!* An honest man may not live in these days."

"And yet it is to be seen of all men that Lee Yup continues to wax fat," said Ah Foon, who was the bitter wag of the assembly. A momentary smile flickered on the faces of those present, and as suddenly went out. "But," he went on, "Lee Yup knows by the help of his household Gods that many deaths will ensue this year by reason of drought, and that many hogs will be roasted for the souls of the dead to the benefit of his purse, and so he spareth not his diet. Famine is his friend."

Ah Foon managed a "bureau of information." He was one of Quong Lung's many trusted lieutenants, and his "information" often resulted in "serious accidents" to those informed against.

A Civil Death in Chinatown

So Lee Yup did not show any open resentment at his speech. His little slant eyes closed as he smiled. He did not care to be laughed at any more than a Christian, but he possessed the supreme tact of an Oriental . . . and he bethought himself that Ah Foon had a beautiful young wife—and owed money to Quong Lung—and that he alone of those present knew that Moy Yen, who had been their “property” for a brief fortnight, had just been killed by her husband by way of saving her from dishonor—and his knowledge comforted him !

“The ripple of thy mirth, Ah Foon,” he said, “is as pleasant as the tinkle of a laughing water-fall when the hot wind blows——”

“Or as the crackling of crisp hog’s skin under the teeth of a hungry man,” retorted Ah Foon.

“Ho, ho !” laughed those assembled in a subdued way ; and Lee Yup’s laughter was as sincere as that of the rest.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

At this juncture Quong Lung entered the room fresh from the "accident" to Ho Chung.

"Brothers," he said, taking the chair at the head of the table, "I have bad news for ye: Moy Yen, but an hour ago, was stabbed by a madman whose insanity deluded him into thinking that she was his wife."

"Was ever such ill luck?" exclaimed Ah Nam, who ran a swell gambling house.

"The loss is irreparable," joined in Ah Foon. "She was extremely beautiful, and worth many thousand dollars,—and got with so little money and much trouble."

"Ah Foon is a judge of beauty," said Lee Yup, suavely; "he hath a beautiful wife himself who is late come from China,—and he speaks with authority in matters pertaining to beauty."

"My wife may not be mentioned in the same breath with the woman who was killed," retorted Ah Foon with tense nostrils.

A Civil Death in Chinatown

“Moy Yen was not less beautiful than she,” returned the portly pork-butcher, “and not less innocent we know,—and God knows.”

Foreseeing what was coming, Quong Lung, who sat next to Ah Foon, caught the latter's arm in his powerful grip as Ah Foon reached for his revolver.

“How foolish is this warring between brethren!” he said, sententiously. “I declare this assembly dissolved. Go home to thy wife—thy so beautiful wife,—Ah Foon; I will discipline Lee Yup for flouting thee.”

After the others had gone, Quong Lung and Lee Yup took some slight comfort in a pipe of “black smoke”; after which they adjourned to a saloon at the end of Kearney Street. When they turned their faces homeward after much and earnest conversation in a quiet room over “hot arrack,” Quong Lung, regarding the silent stars, said: “So Luey See, wife to Ah Foon, is not less beautiful than our dead Moy Yen?”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“As that cluster of stars yonder is my witness,” answered Lee Yup dramatically, pointing to the completest miracle in the heavens—the wonder of Orion in California when the sky is clear and the north wind blows,—“Luey See is incomparable; and—and—Ah Foon is thy debtor.”

“Yes?”

“And yesterday I saw Luey See and Ah Foon entering a place where pictures are made by the aid of the sun.”

“So.”

“So I entered after they had left, and bought this her presentment for thee to see,” and Lee Yup handed Quong Lung a picture.

“By the Great Gods, she *is* most beautiful!” exclaimed Quong Lung, regarding the picture with head aslant in front of an illuminated window.

“And Ah Foon is hopelessly in thy debt?” suggested Lee Yup.

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“Y-e-s,” replied Quong Lung.

“And thou wilt need some one to take Moy Yen’s place at thy ‘establishment’?”

“Mayhap.”

“And, perchance, Ah Foon hath betrayed our *tong*.”

“Ah! proceed,” answered Quong Lung, somewhat impatiently flicking the ash off his cigar.

“And those who betray their *tongs* are liable to—death?” asked Lee Yup with a note of exultation in his voice.

“Yes,” was the firm reply.

“Quong Lung, thou art a Great Reformer and Thinker; tell me, are there worse things than death by bludgeon and hatchet and revolver?”

“The Trail of my Shadow involveth many things, Lee Yup.”

“Is the ‘Civil Death’ worse?”

“It might be made worse,—at the suggestion of thy ingenuity, Lee Yup.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“My ‘ingenuity’ hath already moved in the matter, my Chief: the laws of the *tongs* award the wives of traitors to the—the Strong.”

“The Strong will attend to the matter forthwith,” was Quong Lung’s quiet assurance.

II

DEBTOR AND CREDITOR

THE next day Ah Foon presented himself at Quong Lung's store, at the bidding of the latter;—for Quong Lung was accustomed to having his summons obeyed.

“Ah Foon,” began the great man, “what hast thou to say in the matter of that twelve hundred dollars thou owest me?”

“The terror of thy name has become so great, Quong Lung, that the wars of the *tongs* have come to an end; and law and order—thy law and order, to use thy phrase—are now established in Chinatown. But, doubtless, the wicked will again assault thy supremacy, and my bureau will be enabled to pay thee in service, by earning thy rewards for information.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Meantime, as thou hast said, the wars of the *tongs* are at an end, and my agent in Hong Kong is clamorous for one thousand dollars. Read for thyself,” and Quong Lung handed Ah Foon a letter and a bill of lading.

Having perused the papers, Ah Foon laid them on the table, and said, “The word of our people is better than the bond of the White Devils, Quong Lung; the writing calleth for payment any time within the next six months. Why this haste on thy part to anticipate thy dues?”

“Because it is the secret of my so great success, Ah Foon; and the payment of thy dues to me has become necessary to the course of my business,—and my so great success.”

“Thou hast other debtors, Quong Lung, with more available assets; why distress me who will pay thee ere the season of the New Year?”

“Nay, Ah Foon,” returned Quong Lung,

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carelessly ; “ thou hast assets far more available’—thine own phrase—than any of many debtors : assets far more available-^{er}, in more valuable !”

“ Thou art in merry mood this morning,” answered the other, smiling obsequiously. “ I am on the wrong side of my credit, and walk with the patience of the *other* man, as the White Devils say.”

“ And that is ended as far as I am concerned,” said Quong Lung, arrogantly. “ I demand a settlement,—a settlement this very day.”

“ A bold creditor can put up with much flouting, if his credit is established, Quong Lung ; but I am at thy mercy, for my bureau is idle, and my luck in the lottery and at *fantan* hath vanished. My lord spake but now of my assets ; will he enlighten me as to their nature ?”

“ They are worth not less than three thousand dollars, and are immediately available.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Me^rplain, Most Powerful.”

of the^{ong} Lung wrote on a piece of paper
Hon^r pushed it across the table to Ah Foon.
doll^r writing was in the form of a receipt, and
harⁿ thus :

“Received from Quong Lung the sum of Three
t^r Thousand Dollars, being twelve hundred dollars due
to him by me for moneys lent, and eighteen hundred
dollars for the consideration herewith set forth,—to
wit. . . .”

And there the document ended.

“But the ‘consideration,’ Most Worship-
ful; what is it?” asked Ah Foon.

“Before we come to that, I would first
discuss another matter which will make it
plain to thee that thou *must* sign this receipt
before thee.”

“Must, Far Reacher?”

“Ay, *must*, Ah Foon, or undergo the
‘Civil Death!’ *Thou hast betrayed thy tong,
and art already dead unless thou compliest with
my demands.*”

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“I have betrayed my *tong*!” exclaimed Ah Foon, in a tone of horror.

“Yes, thou,” answered Quong Lung, insolently. “My ears that hear unspoken whispers, and mine eyes that see things that have never been done, have assured me that thou hast betrayed thy *tong*.” After a brief but significant pause, he went on: “Then, too, there are always witnesses at my service.”

Ah Foon knew this but too well. He knew that the man before him had a crowd of witnesses in his pay whom he owned body and soul, and who were ready to commit perjury at any time in his behalf. . . . It was true, too, that his debt to Quong Lung was as a conscience that kept him awake in the night-watches and paralyzed his energies. It would be something to get rid of its galling. . . . And then that eighteen hundred dollars for a “consideration”; the money would enrich him beyond the bounds of his fondest hopes!

The Shadow of Quong Lung

It would enable him to leave this accursed land, and the dangerous presence of the masterful tyrant, Quong Lung. With his wife, Luey See, he could return to China, and they could lose themselves in its teeming millions till they reached the distant Yun-nan on the banks of the great Yang-tse-Kiang, where it is still a fair stream, and where his old father lived, and where the hand of this Far Reacher would never touch him. . . . But the "consideration,"—that must be at least compatible with his honor: his love for Luey See had purified his heart, and he would do nothing that would not be approved by her, for she was his other "Conscience!"

"The 'consideration' I am to assign to thee for thy eighteen hundred dollars, Quong Lung?" he asked, finally.

"Luey See, thy wife."

"My wife!" angrily shouted Ah Foon, drawing his revolver and springing to his feet.

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And on the instant he fell through the trap-door over which he had been sitting.

Before he regained consciousness in the cellar into which he fell, and where he was held a prisoner, Quong Lung had disarmed him,—and taken also his private seal.

III

THE MAN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR

LUEY SEE did not sleep that night, by reason of the absence of Ah Foon. She had rocked to and fro as she sat on the ground in front of the fireless ashes on the hearth.

“Gods of my Fathers, where is Ah Foon, where is Ah Foon?” she moaned through the dreary hours of the night.

The storm was abroad that night, and every drop of the sullen rain that drummed on her barred windows sounded to her like the fateful tap of a demon that would tell her some dread news of Ah Foon.

Soon after the clocks of San Francisco had tolled the hour of four in the morning the

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new life within her stirred uneasily, moved to resentment by "reflex action." And Luey See, knowing blindly what should be done, rose from the hearth and relit the fire.

"Lie still, Babe to Come," she murmured, as she blew the kindling into a blaze. "As is this spark, so art thou; and thy mother's love will yet kindle thee into the blaze called 'Life.'"

After she had warmed herself thoroughly, she boiled some water and prepared *tchah* (tea) against Ah Foon's home coming. "It is a bitter night," she soliloquized; "and my Beautiful Lord will be wet and cold, and nothing reviveth like *tchah*. Dear Ah Foon, the Gods guide thy feet aright to our home!"

The hour of five was announced by the clocks of San Francisco, and a faint glimmer showed through the dun wrack fleeing overhead and dropping rain on the silent streets of Chinatown.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Thou art not dead, Ah Foon! Oh, I feel thou art not dead,” moaned Luey See, as the light grew stronger in the east.

She pulled back the Venetian blinds, and as she watched the light which showed momentarily in the rents between the clouds the bell of her outer door clanged loudly.

“The Joy of my Joys hath come!” she exclaimed, as she ran to the window that faced Dupont Street and flung it open.

“My Life, thou art come at last?” she queried, as she peered into the dim street below.

“It is I, Quong Lung,” answered a deep voice from the semi-darkness; “and I have a letter for thee from thy man Ah Foon.”

She could faintly discern something white that the man in the street held above his head. It was, doubtless, from Ah Foon . . . he was not dead, therefore, the Gods be praised! . . . and he that brought tidings from Ah Foon on a windy, rainy morning

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must be a friend. Such were her thoughts as she hastened down the stairs.

When she reached the front door that was strongly bolted and barred, the habitual suspicion of her race called a pause, and she said, "The man, my husband? It is well with him?"

"It is well with *him*; but it is not well with *thee*. The letter I bring with me hath tidings. The matter is urgent, and I am fain to put Ah Foon's letter into thy hands. Open the door, therefore." Quong Lung's speech was made in well-bred tones, and in the modulated sing-song that is indicative amongst Chinamen of breeding—and sympathy.

"Thy voice soundeth fair, Gentle Sir," replied Luey See, "but I am a lone woman in this great house, and I may not admit a stranger at this hour. Put, therefore, the letter under the door."

"A careful and chaste wife is a shining crown to an honorable man! Here is thy

The Shadow of Quong Lung

letter ;” and the speaker with the deep voice passed the letter over the threshold. “I will wait here until thou hast read the letter. Mayhap thou mayest need help,—and, perchance, I may be able to convey thy reply to Ah Foon.”

“Mayhap thou mayest be able to convey my reply to Ah Foon! What dost thou mean? My lord liveth?”

“Yes.”

“And he is free?”

“Thy letter will inform thee on that point.”

“Then he is not free?”

“No.”

“Oh, ye Gods of my Ancestors!” exclaimed Luey See, as she staggered against the wall. “Ah Foon, Ah Foon, where art thou?”

And the man with the deep, sympathetic voice on the other side of the door said, “He hath gone—and with another woman! . . . And he is not worthy of thy love.”

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After the frenzy of weeping on Luey See's side of the door had abated somewhat, the fatherly voice on the street asked: "But the letter; what of the letter?"

"I will read it to thee," was the reply. Then, after a pause, Luey See went on: "The writing hath the seal of Ah Foon, and is, doubtless, his. Perchance there may be some comfort in it."

And this is what Luey See read aloud to the Man on the Other Side of the Door:

"Luey See, the man who will deliver this to thee is to be trusted in all things, even as is thy father. Were it not for the aid he is willing to give thee out of the so well-known goodness of his heart thou wert in poor case, and would but receive thy deserts and just punishment. For it is now known to me that the Babe to Come is no child of mine. Farewell, and may the Gods remove thy feet from the paths of shame and dishonor."

"Oh, Ah Foon, Ah Foon! some villain hath lied to thee in this matter. Oh, Babe

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to Come, thy father is the dupe of some devil from the pit, or else he hath been overcome by a sudden madness.”

“My poor child,” said the deep voice, interrupting Luey See’s sobs, “Ah Foon hath, indeed, been overcome by a madness,—the madness of love for a woman other than his wife. Oh, the inconstancy of man! He went away last night with the wife of Ah Lee, who should have been sacred to him, seeing that Ah Lee belongs to the same *tong*. Worse hath he done: he hath shamefully betrayed the secrets of his *tong*. Let us hope he may reach the south land safely and conceal himself successfully, else were he subject to——”

“To what, thou with the friendly voice?” asked Luey See, eagerly.

“Never mind, Little One; never mind: I have said too much.”

“But I must know, I must know! Ah Foon is still my husband, and will return to

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me when his madness leaveth him, and I am fain to know what he is to expect, so that I may warn him. Will they slay him?"

"Nay, my poor child. But see, the city waketh, and here is my good wife, Suey See, to comfort thee in thy sorrow. A good woman who is also a mother is like a rare unguent to a burn."

There was a rattle of wheels, and a hack stopped in front of the door whereat Quong Lung stood. A middle-aged Chinese woman emerged from the hack and approached the door.

"Speak to the poor stricken child, Suey See; she is just within the door. Tell her that she shall make her home with us till Ah Foon's madness hath left him. She shall have honorable refuge in my house; and no man may molest any one who crosses my threshold." And with these words Quong Lung departed, leaving his wife to plead with Luey See.

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It ended in Luey See getting into the hack and going to the house of Quong Lung.

Before they departed, Luey See left a writing on the table upstairs for Ah Foon. "He will find it when his madness hath left him," she pleaded.

That night, so deftly was she plied with "sympathy" by Suey See, and so great was the shock produced by Ah Foon's abandonment of her, that the feeble flame of the Babe to Come was extinguished.

. . . And Luey See lost her reason at the same time.

IV

A COUNCIL OF THE MIGHTY

“**B**E seated !” commanded Quong Lung.

The council was concerned with the affairs of one of the largest *tongs* in San Francisco. It had been convened to deal with the recalcitrant Ah Foon, who was alleged to have betrayed the affairs of the *tong*,—a crime punishable by death.

“My brothers,” began the fateful Quong Lung, “the affairs of our countrymen in this land have made it necessary that they should band themselves together for their mutual protection and advancement. Would that I could say that the Companies that have thus come into existence were bound together by the bonds of amity and good-will ; but, as ye all know, their jealousies have brought

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about the relentless wars of the *tongs*, which never cease. It has become absolutely necessary under such circumstances to conserve the interests of this our *tong* by secret signs and tokens known only to the brethren. Further, it was settled in open session, as ye know, that the betrayal of the secrets of our *tong* should entail death on the traitor.

“It is with deep sorrow, therefore,” he went on, “that I have to announce that our brother, Ah Foon, is accused of having turned traitor; and we are here for the purpose of inquiring into the matter, and of adjusting the verdict to the finding of the brethren assembled. Bring in the prisoner, Wau Shun.”

Two weeks' confinement in Quong Lung's underground dungeon had wrought a considerable change in Ah Foon's appearance and *morale*. In the cringing, blinking creature that entered the room between Wau Shun and Sam Lee one could scarcely recog-

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nize the former jaunty wag whose saucy tongue used to set the *tong* into a roar. A thin beard straggled on his lips and chin, and he looked helplessly about him as he took the seat assigned to him.

“Quong Lung’s tender care for our brother,” whispered Lee Yung to Nu Fong, “hath greatly spiritualized Ah Foon; he looks like one whom discipline—the discipline of Quong Lung—had deprived of his grosser parts, including much of his protecting fat.”

“Who accuses our brother Ah Foon?” demanded Quong Lung.

“I do,” answered Lee Yup, rising to his feet.

“Proceed in thy accusation, brother,” said Quong Lung.

“Nay, Thou Strong and Merciful,” interrupted Ah Foon, “it were hardly fair in a matter involving life and death that I should be brought to trial of my brethren while

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Famine still hath me in her clutch. Brethren, I am faint for want of food and drink ; my inanition is equalled only by my innocence, and when the body is feeble the mind likewise is lacking in vigor. Our *tong* hath ever been famous for its fairness in matters of this sort."

At a signal from Quong Lung food and *sam shu* were set before Ah Foon, the while the *tong* observed a silence in keeping with the solemn function they were assembled to observe.

When Ah Foon's wants had been satisfied, Lee Yup once more rose to his feet. "My brothers," he began, "I can add nothing to the significant utterances of Quong Lung concerning the obligation imposed upon each one of us to safeguard the secrets and interests of this our *tong*. Beset as we are by warring and hostile *tongs*, an injury to our society is an injury to every member of it. But I will not waste the time of my brothers in speaking thus generally. Know,

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then, that in this writing,"—and Lee Yup laid a roll of paper upon the table,—“there is ample proof that Ah Foon hath sold the passwords and secrets of this our *tong* to one Ah Kee, of the *Ong Ding Tong*, who has thus been enabled to attend many of our meetings. The late insolence of the *Ong Ding Tong*s is now easily explained.”

“Ah Kee, of the *Ong Ding Tong*, my brothers,” remonstrated Ah Foon, “is unknown to me. The writing on the table is a forgery, and I demand its reading, so that I may refute it.”

Lee Yup unrolled the document, and read as follows :

“I, Ah Kee, being a member in good standing of the *Ong Ding Tong*, make statement that by the assistance of Ah Foon, for a certain consideration, I have attended many meetings of the *tong* whereof he is a member.”

“A lie giveth edge to any weapon,” interrupted Ah Foon. “Proceed.”

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“Appended to the above writing,” went on Lee Yup, not noticing the interruption, “is the following document,—and consider the artfulness of it!—the wicked are ever cunning:

“I, Ah Foon, hereby make acknowledgment to one Ah Kee of certain papers, for which he hath received an equivalent.”

“Ye Gods!” exclaimed Ah Foon, exultantly, “is this a rehearsal of the comedy to be enacted in the theatre to-night? Lee Yup is evidently drunk with the swill of which he hath robbed his swine.”

A month ago the sarcasm would have won applause from the assembled *tong*, but they now regarded Ah Foon impassively.

“Laughter and Tears are of the same family,” said Quong Lung, sententiously. “Perchance, *this* happening hath relation to tears.”

Ah Foon had long since seen what was coming. He thought quickly, and immediately delivered a bold counterstroke.

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“Brothers,” he began, passionately, “I have been trapped and starved in a private dungeon ; I have been as a fly in the web of the Great Spider, Quong Lung.”

He knew he was talking for his life ; he would, therefore, talk boldly, for fear would not avail at such a time. Whilst he once more filled his cup with *sam shu* and drained it, the Man With A Shadow quietly puffed his cigar, and gave no indication of the thoughts veiled by his calm exterior. But he had been likened to a Great Spider, and the *tong* watched for the consequences of such a bold utterance.

“Brothers,” resumed Ah Foon, pointing to Quong Lung with outstretched hand, “hath this man a lien on the complacence of our *tong*? Our records show that he hath planned and executed through our agency nameless deeds of blood and horror for his own advancement. No relation of life is sacred from his desecrating hand and his

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polluting touch. Babes have been strangled to remove them from his path, and wives torn from their husbands to serve his foul purposes. So sure is he of his power and of his influence over the *tong* that he doth not even waste his time in disguising his demands with decent excuse. Are we never to free ourselves from the tyranny of his baneful 'Shadow'? Are we, indeed, dogs and swine, as he is pleased to call us?"

The *tong* listened coldly, and Ah Foon's heart misgave him. He would make one more effort to rouse the sympathy of his brethren.

"See," he went on, "this is my case, and is like to be the case of any one else in this *tong*: The Gods in their mercy, considering the stony path of my life, bestowed upon me the love of a fair woman, my wife Luey See. She hath but late come from our distant land, and after being blessed with the benediction of her beauty and enriched

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by the dower of her caresses, Quong Lung purposeth to widow me of such benediction and dowry for his own nefarious ends, and his dog Lee Yup hath forged these documents, so that I may fall under the displeasure of the *tong* and be removed judicially from his path."

"Nevertheless, these writings bear the impress of thy private seal, Ah Foon," said Lee Yup, with a sneer.

"A shallow device," retorted Ah Foon; "my seal was stolen from me whilst I lay in prison and affixed to these forgeries."

"And yet it is to be seen of all our brethren that thy seal still dangles at thy waist. Ho, ho!" laughed Lee Yup.

As the wretched Ah Foon looked down with consternation at the incriminating seal, Nu Fong said, "There can be no doubt in any one's mind as to the guilt of our brother. Let the *tong* proceed to pass upon him."

Quong Lung alone did not vote in the

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matter. When the *tong* with one voice had found the accused man guilty, Quong Lung spoke: "The finding of the *tong* carries the death sentence with it, Ah Foon. Nevertheless, though thy life is forfeit, the *tong*, in its mercy, will exact only a 'civil death' from thee. Wau Shun and Sam Lee, prepare the prisoner for the fulfilment of the decree of the *tong*."

They bound his hands behind his back and forced him to his knees; and Quong Lung, drawing the sword of execution from its sheath, smote him lightly with the flat of it on the back of his neck.

"So dies a traitor, my brethren," he said, in his deepest tones. "Remove the corpse from the presence of the *tong*."

Sam Lee and Wau Shun raised the Living that was Dead, and carrying him forth they laid him on the sidewalk and unbound his hands.

V

VOX ET PRÆTEREA NIL

“**H**OW good is the sun, after all,” thought Ah Foon, as he rose from the ground and glanced gratefully up to the o’erarching sky.

“So, the dread ordeal of the ‘civil death’ is over,” he soliloquized, pacing the street slowly. “But it is mere folly to try and frighten grown men with bogies and fairy tales.”

What a delight there was in washing his lungs with large draughts of the free, pure air, and so removing the pollution of Quong Lung’s underground and fetid dungeon! How thankful he was for the benediction of the gracious space overhead, and of the blue sky, and of the blessed sun that warmed him once more.

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And the greatest blessing of all: Luey See would gladden his eyes once more! Poor little one! how she must have suffered during his incarceration of the past two weeks. He could almost have forgiven all his enemies in the fulness of his joy and freedom as he turned his face homewards,—all save the lying Lee Yup and the tyrant Quong Lung.

As he thus meditated, Wau Shun passed him, and in passing dropped a poster written in Chinese in front of Ah Foon.

“This is thy property, Wau Shun,” called Ah Foon, picking up the paper. But the other sped on his way and took no notice.

The first thing that attracted Ah Foon’s attention as he glanced at the poster was his own name. He was referred to as “Ah Foon, The Corpse That Walks.” Clearly, he had been adjudged and found guilty and condemned before he had been tried,—for the papers were dry, and there had not been time

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wherein to set the type and strike off the copies ; he had but just come from the scene of his trial !

Whilst he stared in a bewildered manner at the paper, Sam Lee passed him, and from his hand, too, a paper fluttered to the ground. Ah Foon picked it up, and, behold ! it was a fac-simile of the writing that had been dropped by Wau Shun. The fearsome description of himself sent a shudder through him, and his present horror prevented for the moment any movement of curiosity as to the contents of the paper.

Presently he came up with a crowd of his countrymen standing round a placard which Nu Fong—who had established himself in the front circle—was reading aloud for the benefit of those in the rear. And, as he read, Ah Foon, looking at the paper in his hand, saw and heard that which concerned him most intimately. And this is what Nu Fong announced to the crowd :

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“Know all men, that in full session of the Ok Gong Tong to-day, Ah Foon, a member of that tong, was tried and found guilty of betraying his brethren. He was sentenced to civil death and duly executed as provided for by the laws of the various tongs, so that he is dead even to the enemies of his tong. For a while he will appear to men as The Corpse That Walks, and then he shall join the army of the damned on the further side of the Great Darkness. Whosoever notices The Corpse That Walks, or offers speech thereto, is by way of becoming a companion to the late Ah Foon of the Ok Gong Tong.

“BY ORDER OF THOSE WHO ORDER.”

“’Tis a righteous sentence, my brothers,” went on Nu Fong, after he had finished reading the placard. And each man glanced significantly at his neighbor. Lee Yung, who had seen Ah Foon out of the tail of his eye, then took up the chain of comment:

“His wife—and she is most beautiful!—shall be cared for by some worthier member of the *tong* he hath betrayed. ’Tis said that she hath already repudiated him.”

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“Thou art a liar, Lee Yung,” shouted Ah Foon. As he set his shoulders against the crowd in his effort to get at Lee Yung, some one behind him felled him to the ground with a blow on his head.

When he came to himself he was wet and cold, for it had been raining. It was in Spofford Alley that he regained consciousness. Something warm trickled down his neck; he wiped it off, and the electric light on Clay Street showed his hand to be covered with blood.

By the time he reached the corner of Dupont Street he had recovered sufficiently to recollect his place of abode. He turned his face in that direction; when he came to the corner of Commercial Street the electric light showed him two of his countrymen reading the fateful poster on the wall. Dazed as he was, the wounded man stopped and peered at the writing.

“I am faint, brothers,” he said; “will ye not read aloud the placard for me?”

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“Heard ye the voice, Wan Lee?” asked one of the midnight wayfarers who knew Ah Foon. “It came from The Beyond, and is the voice, doubtless, of the Corpse That Walks;” and they went on their way talking in undertones.

The next corner Ah Foon came to, and the next, and the next, were similarly placarded.

Ah, well, if the world *did* repudiate him, he had the love of his wife, Luey See! And then the tender thought of the Babe to Come filled his mind with joy, and he hastened his footsteps homewards.

When he reached his home the morn was abroad; and he was now sufficiently recovered to observe that a spider had spun its web across his threshold.

“Thou, *too*, wouldst lie to me,” he exclaimed, as he stamped on the web and unlocked the door.

“Luey See, Luey See!” he called softly;

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“thy husband,—and thy lover!—hath returned.”

For answer, he was greeted by the scuttling of rats across the floor of the story above.

“Babe to Come,” he said softly; “wilt thou not wake thy mother?” Then, as no answer came, he went on: “Sweet wife, thou canst hear thy man late loosed from a dungeon of hell?”

When no response came to his tender and passionate inquiry, he lit the light in the passage, and climbed up the stairs to his dwelling-rooms. Throwing up the shutters, the growing light showed that the rooms had been untenanted for a considerable time,—and the dust lay thick upon all things.

VI

THE MAN WITHOUT A SHADOW

A GREAT fear fell upon Ah Foon as he staggered to the table and opened the letter that Luey See had left for him. It ran thus:

“ Ah Foon, my dear Lord, in accordance with thy instructions I am going to the house of thy so great friend, Quong Lung. His wife Suey See is second mother to me. Since I laid my head on my mother’s breast never received I such tenderness as she showed me to-day. Heaven reward her !

“ It is said that thou hast abandoned me for love of the wife of Ah Lee, and art gone into the south land with her. If thou hast done so, it is proof of thy madness, my fair Lord.

“ May the Gods restore thee to thy reason,—and to my love, my husband !”

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“ Ah ! Luey See, Luey See ! ” moaned Ah Foon, after he had read the letter, “ thou art indeed fallen into an evil case. And thou, my ‘ so great friend ’ Quong Lung, for five minutes’ grip of thy throat I would sell my soul to the Devil, thou demon and cruel ! And the ‘ tenderness ’ of Suey See !—Ye Gods that ordain things, protect my dear one from the ‘ tenderness ’ of Suey See. Oh ! with what a lie have they taken my beloved from me. And to what shame they have, doubtless, subjected her ! ” He clenched his hands and went on : “ Oh ! ye Demons in Hell, the High Gods are useless and cruel to permit such things as have befallen me ; see, I repudiate them, and am henceforth your slave. ” He walked to the household shrine and swept it to the floor ; and then proceeded to stamp and spit upon it.

There was but one thing for him to do now, —and he needed all his strength for the deed. But he was sore bestead with hunger, and

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faint from loss of blood. A search of the cupboard where Luey See used to keep their food was rewarded with the discovery of a loaf of bread that had been nibbled at by the rats. He soaked what was left of it in a bowl of water, and after he had eaten he sharpened a knife that he found in the cupboard, and, concealing it in his sleeve, he descended the stairs and sallied forth into the dim street below.

He kept close to the walls of the houses as he proceeded,—for his head was light from loss of blood and the inanition and confinement attending his recent imprisonment.

As he turned into Jackson Street, where was Quong Lung's abode, he saw a countryman of his on the other side of the street turning over the muck-heaps in search of refuse such as even the dogs of Chinatown had passed by. Here at last was a creature who was in worse case than himself!—and who would not refuse to speak to him!

A Civil Death in Chinatown

Ah Foon crossed the street, and addressed the scavenger: "Thine is a hard life, brother. Would I had the means to bestow a decent meal upon thee." The man with the rake looked up and down the street, and seeing no one in sight he stretched out a fingerless hand towards Ah Foon, and Ah Foon saw that it was the hand of a leper!

"Dog!" exclaimed the scavenger; "what I am thou seest; but I would rather have a leprosy of the body than a leprosy of the mind!" And he struck Ah Foon savagely over the head with his rake.

The blow reopened Ah Foon's raw wound, and, with a hand on his knife, he staggered off feebly in the direction of Quong Lung's house, keeping the middle of the street and taking the rain that was now falling in sheets.

When he reached Quong Lung's abode the flutter of a white garment at an upper storey window that was barred caught his eye. Looking up, he saw Luey See his wife.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Beloved! it is I, Ah Foon,” he said.
“Thank the Gods I have found thee!”

“Thou art a liar,—or a ghost!” she answered, regarding him with the indifferent eyes of a mad woman; “thou hast not even a shadow!”

At this fateful pronouncement, Ah Foon, The Corpse That Walked, fell prone on his face, and did not move.

At the Morgue, the Coroner of San Francisco labelled Ah Foon's corpse as follows: “No. 829. An unknown Chinaman. Unclaimed.”

PART IV

The Wings of Lee Toy

I

THE JUSTICE AND BENEVOLENCE OF QUONG LUNG

IN Duncombe Alley, the tortuous little covered cul-de-sac which runs off Jackson Street, a Chinaman reclined against a bundle which represented his entire possessions. He was fast asleep. The dim light which straggled into the alley from the distant street-lamp was hardly sufficient to enable the wayfarer to avoid the filth that littered the pavement,—for the sub-alley was used for foul purposes by a foul people when the night fell.

The man who had chosen this reeking spot for his night's lodging was of the better class, as the red *mow-yung* (top-knot) in his hat showed. He was young, too, and hand-

The Shadow of Quong Lung

some, and there could be no gainsaying his recklessness and courage: a man who would choose such a spot for a night's lodging must, indeed, be reckless and brave.

So thought Quong Lung as he regarded the sleeper. "The man who would sleep here hath not much to lose," he soliloquized. "Sam Lee and Wau Shun, my hatchets and knives, are getting blunt; and, besides, they are mere coolies, and witless. But here is a weapon I would heft."

Laying a hand on the sleeper's shoulder, he shook him gently. "It is not meet," he began, not noticing the ready revolver which the young man drew from his blouse as he sprang to his feet. "It is not meet that a *sing-song* should sleep like an outcast dog. I have heard of thee, and would have thee for a guest to-night. I am Quong Lung. Come with me, young brother. Thy baggage will be looked after by my fellows."

"And I am Lee Toy," said the other,

The Wings of Lee Toy

clasping his hands together, and saluting the portly merchant after the seemly fashion of the Chinaman.

So this affable, well-bred *sing-song*, who could recognize a brother *sing-song* even in a dark and shameful sub-alley, was Quong Lung! "He hath been much maligned," thought Lee Toy.

As they stepped into Jackson Street together, Sam Lee and Wau Shun, who were Quong Lung's trusted body-guard, picked up Lee Toy's belongings, and followed their master at a respectful distance.

"Now the Gods be praised for this finding of the young *sing-song*!" exclaimed Wau Shun.

"Wherefore?" asked Sam Lee.

"If thou hadst two eyes, Blindworm, thy question had not been asked," was the insolent answer.

"Two eyes that look in different directions, my courteous friend, are a frequent source of headache."

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Thou art the wonder of the day, Sam Lee: thou hast but one eye, and that is afflicted with a squint! But, see, I will take pity on thy half-sight, and point out the advantage to thee and to me of the finding of Lee Toy. Quong Lung hath been much put to it of late to maintain his kingship in Chinatown, as thou knowest, by reason of the new police-officer, Captain Loomis, who looketh after the affairs of this district. They say his eyes cannot be diverted from his duties by the glitter of gold, and his hatchet hath no respect for the shrines of our Gods. Why, it is getting so that a gentleman may not even see to the removal of an enemy! It is an insupportable tyranny, and galls Quong Lung, who meditates a bold counter-stroke. He is fain to throw his shadow across the path of the bold young White Devil, and he would make *me* a tool in the matter.”

“Thou *must* serve him, of course, Wau Shun.”

The Wings of Lee Toy

“Serve him in the matter he proposes? Dost know the police-officer I speak of?”

“Nay; but there are few things more dangerous than refusing service to Quong Lung, especially when he hath you in pawn.”

“Thou art in pawn, too, Sam Lee.”

“But not for a killing;” and Sam Lee chuckled softly.

“Thy blood is white, Sam Lee,” retorted the other. “It takes a man to do a killing, whereas even a child may steal.”

According to the code of the highbinder, Wau Shun had attained to high rank as compared with Sam Lee, who acknowledged his inferiority by maintaining a discreet silence.

Nothing was said for a minute or two, when Sam Lee drew a cigar from his pocket and handed it to Wau Shun. “What manner of man, my brother, is this police-officer you speak of?” he asked.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“He is but a small man,” replied Wau Shun, biting off the end of his cigar, “but strong withal; and what he lacks in height he makes up in swiftness, so that no man may abide the flash of his onset. His eyes are of the blue of steel, and he seeth and knoweth all things that happen in Chinatown; wherefore he is obnoxious to Quong Lung, whose plans he hath already thwarted more than once. Further, he put Quong Lung to open shame last week whilst you were away at San José.” He ceased a moment to light his cigar, and between puffs went on with his narrative.

“This was the way of it: Quong Lung, with a cigar in his mouth, was making his daily progress through the streets, by way of flouting the opposing *tongs*. In reply to the jeers of certain men of the Ong Ding Tong who were on the other side of the street, Quong Lung spat on the sidewalk, thereby infringing an ordinance of the city. The little

The Wings of Lee Toy

man of the law standing in a doorway hard by saw the act, and stepping up to Quong Lung he took the cigar from his lips and threw it into the street, and before Quong Lung could say aught, the silk handkerchief he carried in his hand was snatched from him and thrown on to the spot he had polluted, and the small man then cleansed the pavement with a movement of his foot."

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed Sam Lee. "This is as a choice ointment. Proceed in thy telling."

"To add to the sting of the insult, there came a chorus of mocking laughter from the other side of the street; but their merriment cost them a life the following day——"

"Wast thou the artist?" interrupted Sam Lee.

"Ask no questions, brother. The dead man, Ah Goon, was a vain fellow and a fool, who wore red trousers, and drank American whiskey,—and died therefore of a broken

The Shadow of Quong Lung

neck. 'Tis ill to roll down a flight of steps."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Sam Lee; "have another cigar."

"But to proceed with the discomfiture of Quong Lung," went on Wau Shun: "He paused with that dignity for which he is famous, and said: 'I am Quong Lung, merchant of Jackson Street, and——'

"'Oh, I know who you are,' interrupted the small man; 'and the next time you spit on the street I'll wipe up the mess with your flat nose;' and this was said in the vernacular of Canton, where the man of authority had been reared."

"Wau Shun, thy zest showeth that thou dost not love Quong Lung. Come in here, my Brother in Bondage, and let us drink to the confusion of the tyrant whose yoke galls us."

After they had drunk a "Hot-Scotch"—
(there are a few things pertaining to the

The Wings of Lee Toy

White Devils that our Yellow Brothers are not averse to using),—Sam Lee asked, “And what said Quong Lung to the police-officer who had flouted him?”

“It was great to see and hear Quong Lung! He never showed that he felt the insult put upon him. Drawing a gold piece from his purse, he thus addressed the man of authority: ‘Thou wast right in what thou didst. If Quong Lung offended against the ordinances of this city it is but right that the law should be vindicated, and he herewith inflicts on himself the penalty required by the law in such cases. Bestow this, thou Worthy Officer, where it belongs, and know that no one is a stouter upholder of the law than Quong Lung, as is well known to all men in Chinatown.’

“Then, because the officer refused the money and turned on his heel, Quong Lung handed the coin to the needy vendor of *ping-long* whose stall was thereby, saying,

The Shadow of Quong Lung

‘And be it known, too, that Quong Lung hath a ready hand and an open purse for his poorer brethren, and that Charity attendeth on him, like a beneficent shadow that blesses all on whom it falls.’ ”

“The Gods forbid that his ‘charity’ should fall on me!” exclaimed Sam Lee. “And what was the outcome of the meeting, Wau Shun?”

“I had to make inquiry concerning the domestic ties of the police-officer; and from Ah Woon, who works in his house, I learnt that he hath a wife and a small son, four years in age, who is the pride of his father’s eye. ‘My shadow hath fallen on the Spawn of the White Devil, Wau Shun!’ said Quong Lung, when I reported these matters to him. ‘Abduct him! A cage awaiteth him.’ ”

“Hast thou angered him that he should put such dangerous service on thee, Wau Shun?”

“No one would willingly affront Quong

The Wings of Lee Toy

Lung. But I asked that *you* should be associated with me in this quest."

"I!" exclaimed Sam Lee, with evident consternation. "But this may involve bloodshed, and a killing,—and my hands are not yet stained with blood."

"Therefore did he order it, so as to kindle the flame of thy courage, the fire of which smoulders, Sam Lee. Ho, ho, ho!"

"Thou hast done me much wrong, Wau Shun; much wrong! 'Twere easier to confess my shortcomings to the officers of the law and take my punishment than to put my head into the White Man's noose."

"But thy head is in a noose already, my white-livered friend: Quong Lung hath it that *thou* wast concerned in the taking off of Ah Goon,—he of the broken neck,—and Quong Lung was never known to be mistaken in putting his hand on the right man. What sayest thou?"

"Quong Lung is the father of lies and

The Shadow of Quong Lung

mischievous, and I will till his bowels with my knife ere I will do this deed," said Sam Lee with considerable heat.

"Knowing that thou wouldst be averse to the adventure, I thanked the Gods when we left Duncombe Alley for the finding of Lee Toy."

"Wherefore?"

"In that he is broken in fortune, having spent his money like a young Blood about Town. He hath fallen from affluence to the lodgings where we found him to-night. When I told Quong Lung concerning Lee Toy, I added that he was of fine temper and would take a fine edge as a hatchet of our *tong*."

"Thou wast ever a man of resource, Wau Shun; and thy foresight deserveth another drink in this Abode of Thirst."

II

AS BETWEEN GENTLEMEN

QUONG LUNG'S abode on Jackson Street belied its dingy exterior, for it was fitted up with "modern appliances," as the auctioneers say. The room that had been assigned to Lee Toy had a porcelain bath in it, with hot and cold water.

With his own hand Quong Lung had turned on and tempered the water. He added a generous dash of Eau de Cologne as Lee Toy entered the bath.

"Take thy time, Young Brother," he said as he drew the curtains that surrounded the bath. "And when thou art ready press this button, and my rubber, Quen Foy, shall attend to thee."

The Shadow of Quong Lung

How fresh and fragrant was everything about him! was Lee Toy's thought, as he dismissed Quen Foy. He had, indeed, rid himself of the pollution of Duncombe Alley. The clothes that lay to his hand were new,—his own had been removed. The new hat that awaited him had a handsome pearl in its *mow-yung*, and he could hear the throbbing of a distant *sam-yen*.

As he tossed off the cup of *sam shu* that had been provided as a final fillip to his senses, he walked the floor with a feeling of restored self-respect.

"I am yet a *sing-song*," he said, exultantly. He was, indeed, a gentleman: he had insisted on paying away nearly all he possessed in a matter in which his late partner had also been involved, although he knew he had been egregiously swindled.

In the midst of his pleasant meditations the door of the room opened, and Quong Lung entered.

The Wings of Lee Toy

“Come, my young brother,” said the latter, taking Lee Toy’s hand; “come; the evening meal awaits us. Thy bath?”

“’Twas a foretaste of the heaven beyond the Great Darkness. . . . But these clothes—and the pearl in my *mow-yung*—and the money in my pocket—how shall I thank thee for them, Quong Lung?”

“By using them, my excellent young friend.”

They entered an apartment which was divided in two by a beautifully carved and gilded wooden screen, on which was portrayed an episode in the life of the God, Pwan Ku. In the further compartment the incandescent lights were dimmed by the smoke of many burning punk-sticks. The table in the centre of the room was set for two, after the fashion of the white man; and on a dais at the end of the room Ah Moy and Suey Sen—damsels much in demand by reason of their accomplishments—twanged

The Shadow of Quong Lung

their *sam-yens* and sang songs famous in the Flowery Land.

The dinner was served by a soft-footed Chinaman, and consisted of dishes well known in the cuisines of America and China. Lee Toy ate and drank whatever was set before him with the *nil admirari* of a man of breeding.

After the meal was over and the girls had been dismissed, Lee Toy spoke :

“I would know, Quong Lung, to what I owe thy munificence towards me.”

The young man's eyes met the great merchant's frankly, and Quong Lung knew men too well to beat about the bush with a man of this sort.

“Thou dost interest me, Lee Toy, to begin with. I have heard something about thee, and would know more. It may be that I can put thee in the way of redeeming thy fortunes. See, I would associate thee with me in the great game I play, in which men

The Wings of Lee Toy

are the pieces. Whatever thou mayest have heard,—and I have many enemies pledged to distort the truth concerning me,—my affairs require the maintenance of law and order—*my* law and order—in Chinatown. My interests here are so varied and great that they can be advanced only by the maintenance of law and order—*my* law and order—in the way that seems best to me. Unfortunately, my subordinates have so far been coolies,—men of the lower orders, with brute instincts, and witless; but were my lieutenants *singsongs*, men of breeding and education like thyself, I should not come into conflict with the representatives of the laws of this country. Whence comest thou, and wherefore art thou here? Do not answer if the question appear to thee to be unfair.”

“There is nothing to conceal, Quong Lung: I am an actor and conjurer, and I am but three days from Los Angeles, whence my partner decamped, leaving me to settle

The Shadow of Quong Lung

with the poorer brethren who played with us. He hath forestalled me with the brethren of our craft here, hence the roughness of the lodging where you found me this night. You see, some of the poor players had wives and children, and I cannot abide the wail of a hungry child; and so I did what you would have done, and came here, therefore, with an empty purse."

"But the lane where I found thee this night is a Lane of Death."

"So they said, and therefore I sought it,—for I have nothing to lose;" and Lee Toy smiled most ingenuously.

"Thy life?"

"But who should kill me? I have no enemies here who desire my death."

"An excellent reason for thy killing, Lee Toy, because of the conditions of the wars between the various *tongs*. See, it came to my notice to-night through my henchman, Wau Shun, that one of the hatchet-men of

The Wings of Lee Toy

the Ong Ding Tong was to slay thee to-night; and witnesses were prepared to say that Wau Shun was thy slayer, so as to implicate me in a deed of hell. The plot was known to, and fostered by Captain Loomis of the police force of this district, who is jealous of my influence for the maintenance of peace and order in Chinatown. Behold the proof of it," and Quong Lung put a paper into Lee Toy's hands.

"Herein I discern, too, the hand of my late astute partner and fellow-actor, Ah Sam," said Lee Toy seriously, returning the paper to Quong Lung.

After he had flicked off the ash from his cigar and considered the end of it attentively a while, Lee Toy said, "And thou dost intend a counter-stroke?—and through me?"

"Precisely, brother. See what it is to be a man of education with swift intuitions! My coolies, Wau Shun and Sam Lee, would not have guessed my purpose in a month."

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“And on whom would thy stroke fall?”

“Captain Loomis.”

“Ah! precisely. But it must not involve blood.”

“Of course not, of course not, Lee Toy: a man of breeding may not imbrue his hands in blood. Pah!”

“What wouldst thou, Quong Lung?”

“See, Lee Toy,” returned the other, carelessly, “there is that in thy countenance and air that begetteth confidence. I will not subject thee to the mummery of the oaths that are administered to our hatchet-men. I will put my life in thy hands,” finished Quong Lung, with an air of entire frankness, as he replenished the glasses on the table. “I shall not ask thee,” he went on, “to do that which is cruel. I shall but ask thee to find a bird for my cage. The care of the bird shall be thy special task, and its restoration to liberty shall greatly enhance thy fortune. To-morrow thou shalt see the cage ere I propound the liming of the bird to thee.”

III

THE MUCH MALIGNED QUONG LUNG

“**B**Y the Gods!” exclaimed Lee Yung, the young “man about town,” to his pampered friend, Nu Fong; “by the Gods! Lee Toy hath risen from the forgotten, and his garments are as gorgeous as a morning sky. See where he comes.”

They stopped and stared as Lee Toy walked down Dupont Street with the poise and dignity that belong to affluence and good-breeding. Recognizing his quondam friends across the street, he gave them an easy greeting and would have passed on; but they would not be denied, and crossed over to him.

“The brightness of the morning hath an added lustre from thy shining countenance,

The Shadow of Quong Lung

Lee Toy," said Lee Yung. "The sun of thy fortune hath evidently newly risen."

"I have won the favor of the Gods, Lee Yung."

"But they always require service of the favored," cut in Nu Fong; "service apportioned to the favors they bestow."

"Very justly," returned Lee Toy.

"And thou hast evidently accomplished thy service, for in the splendor of thy crimson silken nether-garments we recognize one effect of thy reward."

"Now, nay, Nu Fong: these are but a foretaste of my awards and of the greatness that awaits me for the things that I shall do;" and Lee Toy smiled.

"The Gods do not often anticipate good deeds with awards. But who may be their emissary in this matter?"

"The much maligned Quong Lung, whose beneficence is equalled only by his sense of justice."

The Wings of Lee Toy

“The ‘beneficence’ of Quong Lung!” laughed Lee Yung. “’Tis easily seen that thou hast but late come to San Francisco. I would sooner suffer a fever than fall under the shadow of the ‘beneficence’ of Quong Lung.”

“And his ‘sense of justice,’” said Nu Fong, with a sneer, “is tempered by many unexpected happenings.”

Then, noticing signs of resentment in Lee Toy’s face, the friends recrossed the street, their scurrilous laughter increasing his irritation.

When Lee Toy had reached Jackson Street he turned to the right, and soon arrived at the store of his newly-found friend, Quong Lung.

“Thou art in luck this morning, Lee Toy,” was Quong Lung’s greeting to the young actor. Then, in answer to Lee Toy’s inquiring looks, he went on: “Thy dishonest partner, Ah Sam, was found dead in

The Shadow of Quong Lung

his lodging this morning; and his landlord, who is one of my tenants, discovered this well-filled purse in it, and a writing therein showing it was plainly stolen from thee."

Lee Toy hesitated for a moment as he thought of the late saying of Nu Fong. But Quong Lung's countenance expressed much benevolence as he held out the purse to Lee Toy.

"And now I may repay thee a portion of what I owe thee, Quong Lung," said Lee Toy, opening the purse.

"Thou shalt pay me in gentle service, young brother: money goeth not between us. Come now, and see my cage."

He took Lee Toy by the hand, and led him through many a tortuous passage and devious bye-way till they came out on the roof of a building that was leased by a Chinese "Literary Society for the Study of English,"—a euphuistic description for the most ferocious *tong* in Chinatown. The

The Wings of Lee Toy

leaders of this "highbindery" had even signified their "literary" intentions to one of the many Christian missions interested in the moral welfare of Chinatown; and when Quong Lung and Lee Toy reached their destination, a lady in the room below, to an organ accompaniment, was singing "The Voice that Breathed o'er Eden," to the entire amusement of the assembled cut-throats, who smiled blandly whilst they swore untranslatable oaths.

The roof was higher than any building in sight, and could not, therefore, be overlooked by any of them. It was surrounded, moreover, by a walled parapet about four feet in height. At one end was a tiny house of two rooms, one furnished as a sleeping-room, and the other with a dais on which were a couple of smoking mats and the implements for "black smoke."

The other end of the roof was furnished with pot-plants and carpetted with soft mat-

The Shadow of Quong Lung

ting, and a gayly striped awning made a charming retreat of it, the cosiness of which was enhanced by the contrast presented by the roaring traffic of the street below.

“What think you of my cage?” asked Quong Lung, after he had shown Lee Toy round and seated him on one of the smoking mats.

“’Tis fit for a royal bird,” replied Lee Toy, answering Quong Lung in his own humor.

“Or for dalliance with sweet thoughts. Here do I often meditate beneath the stars, alone with my fancy; here do I plan that order—*my* order—shall flow from the disorders of the warring *tongs*. Ah, my young brother, the people—whose welfare alone I have at heart—little know of my solicitude for them. The stars, and the winds that lay their cooling benedictions on my anxious head, have no speech, else were I honored as a saint.”

The Wings of Lee Toy

“The utterance of thy lofty sentiments is a compliment to me, my elder brother. But tell me how I may serve thee ”

“It is but gentle service,—and for the benefit of our people, Lee Toy. See, they are not a match for the White Devils, who harass them by day and night ; their troubles have been increased lately by the iron hand of the iniquitous law as administered by the police-officer newly appointed to Chinatown, one Captain Loomis. He must be disciplined. But, before we have further speech in this matter, I must make amends for my lack of courtesy.”

He touched a hidden spring, and a panel in the wall flew open, disclosing a tiny cupboard, in which were *sam shu* and cups,—and a formidable revolver. Noticing Lee Toy’s look of surprise at seeing the latter, he said, “You see, young brother, even my benevolence hath to guard against the machinations of the White Devils. Nay, look here.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

He touched another spring, and a drawer was disclosed in which was a very efficient rope-ladder with grappling-hooks.

“It is even possible that I may be put to it some day to use this means of flight, whilst I am meditating benevolence and justice under the quiet and soothing influence of the stars, owing to the suspicions and ill-will of Captain Loomis.”

“The good are ever misunderstood and ill-used, Quong Lung. But how may I serve thee?”

“Drink first, and smoke awhile, ere I propound to thee in what way thou mayst ease the burdens that my benevolence and solicitude for others have imposed on me.”

IV

LIMING THE TWIG

AFTER Quong Lung and Lee Toy had smoked three or four pipes, and disposed of a like number of cups of *sam shu*, the former broke the silence with a sigh of resignation, and said, "Lee Toy, my heart was moved with a great pity when it was told to me that a *sing-song* of gentle breeding had sought shelter in Duncombe Alley. As thou didst lie asleep there, the night I found thee, I was minded of my own son, Quong Ching, who died of the plague last year at Hong Kong, whither I had sent him on business pertaining to my firm. And it seemed, as I looked upon thee in thy sleep, that Quong Ching had, indeed, come back to me. For he was of thy age and linea-

The Shadow of Quong Lung

ments ; and when thou didst wake and stand before me, the likeness was heightened by thy carriage and speech. He was brave, too, and a son after my own heart ; and he gave me much advice concerning the maintenance of order in this turbulent town, and thus ministered to an amiable weakness of mine,—and there is much to be done.” He paused a while, as though in sorrowful meditation.

“ If it would ease thy smart, Quong Lung, I would fain take up the thread of Quong Ching’s service to thee, for I owe thee much.”

“ May the sun shine propitiously on thee, my young brother, for thy kind words ! They are as a soothing salve to an old sore. But, nay ; it were asking too much of thee,—the carrying out of that which is on my mind for the good of our down-trodden people.”

“ Try me, Quong Lung,—for the sake of thy dead son !”

The Wings of Lee Toy

“It is a gentle service, too, as I said before; and one befitting a man of gentle birth. Wau Shun and Sam Lee are witless and coolies, and not to be trusted in this matter which concerns the ensnaring of a— a little bird, and its care in this my gentle cage.”

“Why doubt me, my elder brother. I am thine, if an oath of blood may satisfy thee, Quong Lung.”

“I will test thee, Lee Toy,” said Quong Long; and turning over on his side he whistled down a speaking-tube.

In response to his orders, an attendant appeared with a fowl and a brazier of burning charcoal.

When they were once more by themselves, Quong Lung severed the fowl's head from its body, and Lee Toy repeated a blood oath after him: “If I fail to keep this my oath, may my head be shorn from my shoulders; and may my body be con-

The Shadow of Quong Lung

sumed with fire, even as is this fowl's;" and hereupon Quong Lung thrust the fowl into the brazier.

"And now, Lee Toy," said Quong Lung, after he had put the brazier outside of the room, "drink once more, and I will propound my plans to thee."

"Proceed," returned Lee Toy, after he had emptied his cup.

"The service I ask of thee really concerns the disciplining of Captain Loomis." Quong Lung stopped abruptly and looked at the young man, to see the effect of his opening statement upon him.

"Thou saidst so before; and thou art great enough—and good enough—to undertake a harder task than that, Quong Lung; and I am thy servant in all things. But what of the bird?"

"It is his little son, four years in age." Again Quong Lung paused and watched Lee Toy critically.

The Wings of Lee Toy

“Yes?”

“And the child is the life of his life,—as dear to him as Quong Ching was to me.”

“And I have taken Quong Ching’s place. Prove me.”

“If my son were alive, and if he were told that his father was being harassed by a White Devil, he would assuredly slay him;—but *that* one could only ask of one’s blood-kin. All I ask of thee is the abduction of the Spawn of the White Devil.”

“It shall be done—if it can be done;” and Lee Toy looked four-square into the eyes of the great plotter. “But there must be no harm done to the little one, Quong Lung.”

“There is ever a movement of tender solicitude in my heart towards little children, Lee Toy. Thou hast pained me by the mere suspicion of harm to a tenderling.”

“Thou art gentle, as thou art great, and I wronged thee unwittingly. Forgive me, Quong Lung.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“My gentle young brother, the man of tender feelings is continually enduring a thousand pricks: it is the price of tenderness. But listen: the service is one of danger. Thou canst protect thyself with this?” And Quong Lung pointed to the revolver in the cupboard.

“Being a juggler by profession, my eye is twinned to my hand, and my aim hath never failed me. I am well versed in the use of such weapons.”

“’Tis well!” exclaimed Quong Lung; “thou mayst need all thy skill.” After a minute of thought, he asked, “Thou hast some knowledge of the speech of the White Devils?”

“Yes; such as our people acquire in the service of the white man, for whom I, too, have worked at times.”

“’Tis still better! I have it: Thou shalt take the place of Ah Woon, who works in the house of Captain Loomis. And now,

The Wings of Lee Toy

thou dear to me as my lost Quong Ching, I will show thee the secret of the passages thou must traverse with thy pretty bird."

"But he will make outcry, Quong Lung."

"Nay, for he shall eat sweetmeats of my making; and he shall sleep in thy arms, as doth a bird with its head under its wing upon its native bough. Thyself shall tend him in this pretty cage."

"Belike, Quong Lung, it will be sore hurt to his mother, and——"

"And we will salve her hurt by returning her child to her tender bosom after his father hath been disciplined; and thou shalt have the moiety of the reward offered for his restoration to his parents. Have I not felt the pangs of bereavement myself?" And Quong Lung, holding Lee Toy by the hand, went forth to show his "young brother" the secrets of his underground road.

V

A CHANGE OF HEART

“**O**H! mother, Lee Toy is just lovely,” said Captain Loomis’s four-year-old son, Harry. He was sitting at the dinner-table with a napkin tucked under his chin, and with ready spoon was waiting for Lee Toy’s culinary creations.

The removal of Ah Woon from the Captain’s service was a small matter that Quong Lung had easily arranged, and his succession by Lee Toy had as easily followed.

Lee Toy had been in the Captain’s house only a few days. In that short time, in pursuance of the plans outlined by Quong Lung, he had ingratiated himself with little Harry, who was an out-and-out “home-ruler.”

So, when Harry pronounced Lee Toy

The Wings of Lee Toy

to be "lovely," his dictum was implicitly accepted.

"He's just as nice as pie, mother."

"Ah Woon's pie, sonny?" asked the Captain.

"No, dad; his own. He gave me a taste of it just now. And he swallowed three marbles—plumpers!—and then he pulled one of them out of my nose, and he says the other two are in your pockets. Oh! here he comes—dear, funny Lee Toy!" and the little boy waved his spoon as the Chinaman put a soup-tureen in front of the Captain.

"It smells awful good, daddy;—but won't you just feel in your pockets for the plumpers? Do,—please, dad."

And Captain Loomis felt in his pockets, and drew forth the marbles, much to his own and the little one's amazement.

"Didn't I say he was lovely!—dear Lee Toy! And he can talk in his stomach, and

The Shadow of Quong Lung

make paper butterflies that mind him. Oh! I'm so glad Ah Woon has gone."

"Well, *I'm* not so glad: I'm afraid Lee Toy is going to feed us on 'plumper pies.'"

"Oh, dad, you make me tired!"

And so the merry dinner proceeded. The deft young Chinaman had favorably impressed his employers in many other ways. And when Harry asked to be allowed to take a walk with Lee Toy, and look at the stores decorated for the Christmas trade, he was given ready leave.

"But you must be back by eight o'clock, Harry," said Mrs. Loomis, with a warning shake of her finger.

"And in this simple way hath the bird been trapped!" soliloquized Lee Toy, as he led little Harry Loomis into Chinatown. "There is no use for these," and he threw Quong Lung's sophisticated candies into the gutter.

As they crossed Clay Street, a cable-car

The Wings of Lee Toy

came roaring down the crowded thoroughfare. The little boy started to run across the street, but his foot slipped on some filth, and he fell in front of the car.

Lee Toy saved the little man, but he was sorely hurt himself in his solicitude for "the Spawn of the White Devil."

One of the Chinatown squad had witnessed the episode, and telephoned to Captain Loomis for instructions. "Tell the ambulance people to take Lee Toy to my house," was the Captain's reply.

And thus it came about that the blindness of the heathen, Lee Toy, was illuminated by the rays of the sweet charity that knows no difference of race or color, and that accounts all men brothers.

When Lee Toy regained consciousness, he found himself in bed in the guest-chamber of the Captain's house,—a room set apart for notables. A professional nurse—and the professional nurses of San Francisco are the

The Shadow of Quong Lung

best in the world!—waited upon him. There was an odor in the room of the clean sweet flowers and plants that shed benedictions: roses and lavender, myrrh and rosemary, thyme and mint. A spray of smilax was set in a tall crystal vase. And, always, there was a silent woman quaintly capped and aproned who ruled him with a warning finger, and laid due pressure on his shoulder when he tried to raise his bandaged head.

“How Missa Hally?” he asked, feebly, the morning after the accident.

“Oh! dear Lee Toy, I am quite well. Oh! please get well soon,” and the little freckled boy made a dash at the bed.

“Hush! Harry,” said the nurse, interrupting the child. “Hush! If you love Lee Toy you will not make a noise.”

“Oh! Miss Wilson,” said the little chap, “I must tell him that Ah Woon has come back, and dad says Ah Woon is a ‘ass,’ and that Lee Toy is a ‘yellow angel.’”

The Wings of Lee Toy

A compromise was effected, and the nurse allowed the little one to leave his favorite plumpers under Lee Toy's pillow.

"He is a 'white angel'!" said Lee Toy, one day, in the course of his convalescence, referring to Harry, after the significance of the term had been explained to him.

Such services as sick men require were duly bestowed upon Lee Toy, much to his amaze. And every day Harry's intrusions became more frequent as Lee Toy's convalescence progressed.

On a day, two Chinese coolies—one with an atrocious squint—claimed admission to Lee Toy's chamber as his next of kin.

Their interview was thus reported to Quong Lung: "Far Reacher, the man Lee Toy is demented,—madness hath seized upon him by reason of the hurt to his head. The Spawn of the Great White Devil nightly invadeth his chamber, and kneeleth with folded hands before the white woman his mother ;

The Shadow of Quong Lung

and together they pray to an unknown God for Lee Toy's welfare, Lee Toy repeating the words with the child !”

“Yea, All Seeing,” said Sam Lee, taking up the telling, “and he will not answer us, but follows the child with his eyes.”

“And this day,” went on Wau Shun, “the white woman who is hired to tend him fed him in our presence, and laid his head on her shoulder as she raised him from the pillow.”

Quong Lung frowned : his emissary was by way of undergoing a change of heart if these doings continued.

“Next week,” he said, “ye will once more tell Lee Toy that I *must* have the bird for my cage.”

“Well ; what said Lee Toy in answer to my command ?” asked Quong Lung of his henchmen after they had returned from Captain Loomis's house the following week.

The Wings of Lee Toy

“We met a policeman in the passage of the White Tormentor’s house, Most Worshipful,” answered Wau Shun. “And when we pronounced thy message to Lee Toy,—who sat on a chair, and is now nearly restored to health,—he bade the white-capped woman who tends him leave the room. As soon as the door was closed, Lee Toy drew a revolver from his blouse and covered us,—and thou knowest he cannot miss his mark! Throwing a purse of money at our feet, he bade us begone, saying: ‘Deliver this money to Quong Lung, and tell him I owe him nothing. The bird is in my safe keeping henceforth. Begone, coolies!’”

“And so we went, Great Master,” added Sam Lee, “for there was menace in the eyes of Lee Toy.”

“Dogs and swine!” exclaimed Quong Lung wrathfully; “speak with him once more a week hence, and compel him!”

VI

THE RAGE OF THE HEATHEN

“**S**O, Lee Toy cometh no more to our councils. Spake ye with him?” demanded Quong Lung of the two coolies at their next meeting.

“Speech we had with him, Most Honorable, and that but two nights ago, when he spake with us from a second-storey window, in the house of the White Devil who hunteth us; and he bade us begone,—and spat at us!”

“And ye went?”

“Perforce, Compeller; for he had five arguments of powder and lead in each hand, and, as thou art aware, Lee Toy was never known to miss his aim.”

The Wings of Lee Toy

“Spawn of Canton! must I tell the *tong* ye serve that their teeth are drawn, and their knives blunt, and that Lee Toy hath left them without being punished? What said he?”

“Most Worshipful,” began the highbinder with one eye, “the speech is Lee Toy’s, and not mine, as Wau Shun here will witness;” and Wau Shun, whose eyes looked in different directions, shook his head deprecatingly, and said, “’Twas shameful speech, Thou Honorable.”

“Say on, nevertheless.”

“He called thee ‘smooth fat pig,’” said Sam Lee, the one-eyed highbinder; “and bade us tell thee that he would *not* abduct the white child, his master’s son, for all the *tongs* in or out of hell; and that if a hair of the babe’s fell he would dig with his knife in thy honorable bowels till he found it again.”

Sam Lee ceased, and out of the tail of his one eye he watched the effect of his speech

The Shadow of Quong Lung

on Quong Lung, for he felt that Quong Lung knew he had embellished the epithets bestowed on him by Lee Toy in return for Quong Lung's "Spawn of Canton."

"There are other knives beside thee, Sam Lee," said Quong Lung, slowly biting off the end of a cigar; "I fear thy edge is dulled; and now thou art coward—and liar, too."

"Nay, Quong Lung!" exclaimed Wau Shun, "had he lied to thee I had slain him in thy presence. Look!" And the man whose eyes were hard to meet unfolded his arms, and showed the gleaming barrel of a revolver peeping out of each of his long sleeves; and Quong Lung reflected that one of the revolvers had covered him throughout the interview,—and he calmly proceeded to light his cigar with the careless intrepidity that had raised him to his bad pre-eminence.

"What else was said?" asked Quong Lung, stolidly regarding the last speaker.

The Wings of Lee Toy

“Most Honorable—and Most Brave!” returned the highbinder, “he said, further, that he had made a list of the names of our brethren who be knives and hatchets,—and of the various loppings done by each,—and who instigated thereto! And that he had bestowed the writing where his master, the White Devil, would find it if anything happened to him—Lee Toy—or to the White Devilkin.”

“Ah!”

“And last night we went again,” said Sam Lee, reasserting himself; “and climbing the pillars at the back of the house by means of grappling-hooks, we looked in and saw shameful sights.”

“Proceed.”

“Lee Toy, O Provider of Bounties, was playing ass to the White Babe who sat astride of him and pulled his queue; and the White Devil, his father, applauded; so we were put to shame, and felt hot.”

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Further,” interrupted Wau Shun, taking up the narrative, “she, the mother of the White Babe, came in, crowned with beauty—and disgrace! She wore red flowers in her hair; and her arms and her neck were bare, so that the lewd might look upon her bosom, and I cursed her—for that I once had a mother!”

“Phthoo!” interrupted Quong Lung, spitting on the ground.

“She encouraged the twain in their play; and presently, perceiving that her shoe was unfastened, she called to Lee Toy, who went on his knees before her, and did slave’s service,—and all for the love of the babe that pulled his queue! And then she and her lord departed in a carriage that awaited them, as is their nightly custom; and Lee Toy came forth upon an upper porch, and called softly in the darkness, saying: ‘Sam Lee! Wau Shun! Sons of Unknown Fathers! Go and tell the smooth, fat hog, Quong

The Wings of Lee Toy

Lung, that his life and yours are in my hands; but tell him, too, that ye are safe because of the love I bear the White Babe.' ”

“ Ah ! ” exclaimed Quong Lung. Then, after a pause, he went on, “ So ye are content to leave your lives in the hands of Lee Toy, highbinder, who hath broken his covenant with ye ? ”

“ What wouldst thou ? ” inquired Sam Lee.

“ Nothing, nothing ! ” he exclaimed, disdainfully, “ nothing of such as fight with teeth and talons, and horns and hoofs, like beasts,—but—men of reason have other weapons ! Behold ! ” and taking the implements of writing from his girdle, he wrote in bold Chinese characters, across a notice of reward for the detection of the perpetrators of a recent notorious murder in Chinatown, that which is here translated : *Sam Lee and Wau Shun, highbinders and murderers. Inquire of Quong Lung, merchant, Jackson Street.*

The Shadow of Quong Lung

He tossed the paper to Wau Shun, who read it with stupid fear, and gave it back to him, saying: "Great is Quong Lung!—and his servants would know his will."

Taking the paper, Quong Lung twisted it into a spill, and proceeded to light his cigar with it; after which he thrust what remained of it into the brazier of burning charcoal in front of him, wherein it was soon consumed.

"Are ye yet safe, think ye, from deportation and beheading, or a shameful death at the hands of the white hangman?" asked Quong Lung, as the flames died down in the brazier.

"What I have done, Lee Toy hath done, too—and yet, fire hath properties!"

A look of intelligence came into the dull flat faces of the coolies as they rose to depart. When they neared the door, Quong Lung called after them oracularly: "What will remove the writing will remove also the writer!—and even the Spawn of the

The Wings of Lee Toy

White Devil. Further, nothing concealeth like fire !”

And Sam Lee and Wau Shun went silently forth into the quiet streets now under the sway of the night and the stars that see so many things without telling.

VII

SPREADING THE GOSPEL

WHAT Wau Shun and Sam Lee saw that Christmas Eve, after they had left Quong Lung, and as they dangled like great spiders from the pillars on the back porch of Captain Loomis, the famous police-officer whose name was a terror to the wicked of Chinatown, is here set forth, together with that which was spoken, but which they could neither hear nor understand.

Lee Toy, on his hands and knees, was doing his best to imitate "Danby," the Shetland pony of the sturdy four-year-old with the freckled face who bestrode him, and held his queue with one hand whilst he flogged him with the other, shouting from time to time, "Whoa, Danby! gee-up,

The Wings of Lee Toy

Danby !” for the encouragement of his steed. Whilst he was thus engaged the door opened, and a lady and gentlemen in evening dress entered.

“How is Danby behaving to-night, Harry ?” inquired the lady.

“He won’t buck worth a cent, mother,” replied the little man, pulling sturdily at the queue till the tears came into Lee Toy’s eyes.

“Whoa, Harry !” exclaimed the Captain, picking the boy off the Chinaman’s back ; “you are too rough, my son. Remember whose birthday it will be to-morrow, and that He was always gentle. Good-night, sonny ; and don’t forget to hang up your stockings, for Santa Claus comes to-night.”

“Shall I hang up a stocking for Lee Toy, too, father ?”

“Certainly, my son. And now, good-night ; and let Lee Toy put you to bed ;” and with that the Captain and his wife kissed

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their little son, and left the house to spend the night at a Christmas-Eve party.

“Come here, Lee Toy,” said the little boy, after the Chinaman had undressed him and put him to bed. Lee Toy obeyed, kneeling beside the bed, and holding the little man’s hands between his own.

“Lee Toy, I forgot to play Samson and the Philistines with you to-night.”

“Thank you, Missa Hally,” replied Lee Toy, meekly, for, as the representative of the Philistines, Lee Toy did not enjoy the game as much as Harry, who was fond of slaying him with the jaw-bone of an ass,—that is, with anything that was handy.

“Are you sure nobody will take the stockings off the mantelpiece to-night, Lee Toy?”

“Sure, Missa Hally.”

“And did you hang up a pair for yourself?”

“Yes, Hally; and one fo’ Dammy.”

The Wings of Lee Toy

Then, after a pause and a yawn, the little boy said, "D'you think, Lee Toy, if I wish very much for something that Santa Claus will give it to me?"

"Of cawse, Hally; he heap good."

"D'you think, Lee Toy, he could get a pair of wings into my stockings?"

"Why, yes, Missa Hally, if they have spots on um,—blue and gleen and led spots, with white stipes."

"Oh, thank you, dear Lee Toy. Now, you may say my prayers for me." And in the curious, breathless fashion in which little boys say their prayers, Lee Toy rushed through the Lord's Prayer as he had often heard the child say it, finally winding up with the usual "and make me a goolil boy. Amen."

After a few minutes' silence, the little voice asked, sleepily, "Did you say the wings must have blue and green and red spots, Lee Toy?"

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Yes, Missa Hally,—and white stipes.”

“Thank you, Lee Toy; I had forgotten the stripes. Good-night.”

When the little boy was fast asleep, Lee Toy went out on to the dark porch, and said, softly, “Sam Lee and Wau Shun, Sons of Shameless Mothers! go home and ponder the strength and wisdom of a little child.”

And then returning to the little boy's room, he stretched himself in front of the fire, and took comfort in a pipe of opium, after the manner of his kind.

VIII

HOW ONE MAY FLY WITHOUT WINGS

“I’M sorry for your domestic troubles,” said Mrs. Loomis to the gentleman with whom she was dancing at one of the great houses on Jackson Street; “you ought to get rid of your Bidy and employ a Chinaman. We have one, and he’s simply splendid:—devoted to my little chap,—can cook a salmi to perfection,—and my little son is teaching him the rudiments of Christianity, and so we are spreading the Gospel under our own roof-tree.”

“Yes; and the heathen in his blindness probably steals your loose cash for himself, and your husband’s letters for the benefit of his brother highbinders.”

“What! Lee Toy? Never!”

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The gay young woman's chatter and laughter were stopped by the sudden pealing of the bells throughout the city, announcing once more "glad tidings of great joy." The ball-room was hushed, whilst a carillon in a neighboring belfry trolled out the joyous strains of *Adeste Fideles*.

"O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!" sang Mrs. Loomis, softly, accompanying the music of the bells. She had scarcely finished, when there boomed forth the signal that told of a fire in the district in which she lived. Captain Loomis had counted the signal also, and in less than five minutes they were driving rapidly to the scene of the fire. As they turned into their street they saw that it was, indeed, their house that was ablaze; and on the roof of the doomed building and against the sky-line was Lee Toy walking to and fro with a little child in his arms.

The crowd made way in hushed awe for

The Wings of Lee Toy

the carriage, as word went down the line that it contained Captain Loomis and his wife. And when they could go no nearer to the burning house, the Captain, supporting his wife, waited for the impending catastrophe with dry eyes and an aching heart.

So fierce was the heat that the men with the scaling-ladders had been driven away from the house, and the doom of the man and the child seemed to be sealed.

What had happened in the house and what was now taking place on the roof was this: Lee Toy awoke at midnight to find the room full of smoke. He instantly realized that the house was on fire, and darted out of the room to look for an avenue of escape. Then, finding that the basement and the lower story were ablaze, and that his only escape was by way of the roof, he hastily tied a handkerchief round the little boy's eyes; and wrapping him up in a blanket snatched

The Shadow of Quong Lung

from the bed, he ran up the stairs with him and stepped out of a window on to the roof,—only to find that the fire-escape ladder had been removed! He could hear the booming of the fire-alarm and the clatter of the approaching engines; and whilst the Fire Department was rapidly getting into action, he sought the front portion of the roof. The spectators cheered him as he came into view, whilst the ladder-escape was pushed near to the burning house and unlimbered.

“What is the matter, Lee Toy?” asked Harry, who was now awake and trying to remove the handkerchief from his eyes.

“Hush, Missa Hally! Santa Claus he come, an’ he put yo’ wings on yo’,—on’y he fly way, an’ give yo’ wings to the lil boy acloss the load. Shut yo’ eyes now.”

“And do they blow the fire-alarm when Santa Claus comes, Lee Toy?”

“Of cawse, Missa Hally; eibly time.”

The hook-and-ladder men had almost

The Wings of Lee Toy

reached the top storey of the building when a fierce gust of flame, belching through the windows, drove them to the ground again; and a wail of despair rose from the spectators, Lee Toy took the blanket off the little boy and tossed it into the street; instantly four strong men, standing as close to the burning house as they dared, held it taut; and the crowd yelled to Lee Toy to jump.

“Missa Hally, Santa Claus want you fly now. Don’ you be flightened!”

“Have the wings got the right spots, Lee Toy,—red, and green, and blue?”

“Yes, yes!—and white stipes. Now; one—two—tlee—an’ way you go!”

The men with the blanket were fully twenty feet from the burning building, so—to add impetus to the child’s flight—Lee Toy leapt as he threw him.

The crowd cheered as the men with the blanket caught the little one,—but Lee Toy did not hear them.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

*... & men does die
child (white hair)*

“He may possibly rouse and speak before he dies,” said the young surgeon at the Receiving Hospital to Captain Loomis who sat beside the dying Chinaman. Another Chinaman, whose eyes were hard to meet and who had been admitted as Lee Toy’s nearest of kin, watched at the foot of the bed with folded arms.

Presently a woman, on an errand of mercy, began to sing “Hark! the herald angels sing,” somewhere in the ward. Lee Toy opened his eyes slowly, and, recognizing the Captain, he smiled.

“How Missa Hally?” he inquired, feebly.

“Safe, and quite well, dear Lee Toy.”

Then after a pause the dying Chinaman said, “You send me back to China?”

“Surely, Lee Toy.”

Presently Lee Toy fumbled painfully in one of his pockets, from which he drew a package, and holding it out to the Chinaman who stood at the foot of the bed, he said in

The Wings of Lee Toy

his own tongue: "Wau Shun, consider the strength and pity of an innocent babe, who would, doubtless, have me give thee this package,—and thy life!"

Then, as his eyes began to glaze and his breath to come in short gasps, Lee Toy whispered: "Tell Missa Hally I got my wings, too,—with led, and blue, and gleen spots,—and white stipes——"

And thus, on a Christmas morning, did Lee Toy, highbinder, pass into the presence of Him who had also loved little ones,—and who forgives much to those who love much.

PART V



The Seats of Judgment

I

THAT TWO EYES ARE BETTER THAN ONE IN THE DARK

“**T**HOU hast the writings of Lee Toy, Wau Shun!” asked Sam Lee of his brother highbinder, as the latter issued from the Receiving Hospital of San Francisco.

“Verily, or thou hadst heard my dogs bark within,” replied Wau Shun.

“And Lee Toy?”

“Lee Toy died babbling of wings, and of the White Babe whose life he saved from fire this day at the price of his own, and whose father stood beside him weeping like a woman.”

“Was ever the like seen before!” exclaimed Sam Lee. “That Lee Toy, the bravest of the brave, and who promised to be the

The Shadow of Quong Lung

keenest hatchet of our *tong*, should fail his brethren, and break his oaths, and worship the White Babe whose abduction he had undertaken—and that the babe's father should weep for one of our people!"

"Ay, and, what is of more importance, that Lee Toy should have given me the writings that would have hanged us who compassed his passing! Eh, Sam Lee?"

"Yea, Wau Shun; and compassed also the hanging of Quong Lung,—nay, turn not so suddenly in a narrow lane, my brother, for I have but one eye, as thou knowest, and that cannot abide swift movement in the dark on the part of a man whose life is forfeit;" and Sam Lee drew a darkling revolver from his blouse.

With a deft movement, Wau Shun, who had the advantage of two eyes—though they looked in different directions, and were hard to meet—threw Sam Lee's hand up, and snatched the pistol from him.

The Seats of Judgment

“ ’Twere easy to slay thee now, Sam Lee ; and ’twere profitable, too—if only Quong Lung were out of the way.”

“ Ay, if Quong Lung were only out of the way ; but Quong Lung lives, and waxes fat, —and Wau Shun is his slave !”

No more was said. They turned into a narrow alley near the top of Jackson Street, Wau Shun walking in the rear. As soon as they had entered the shadow produced by the narrowness of the lane and by its angle to the lighted main street, there was a sharp report, and Sam Lee fell on his face, and coughed like one who is stricken through the lungs.

The swarms that inhabit Chinatown began to buzz. In a few minutes the alley was crowded with curious coolies jabbering excitedly, and in the fifth or sixth row of those who stood round Sam Lee was Wau Shun, watching the blood that welled from the mouth of the dying man and prevented speech.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

After Wau Shun had seen the corpse of his brother highbinder laid out on a slab at the morgue, he treated himself to a couple of jorums of "hot-Scotch," and sought his den in Cum Cook Alley.

Lighting a dim candle, he proceeded to barricade himself, and to conceal his light, by means of a coverlet that was held in its place, on his side of the door, by iron bars that crossed and recrossed each other.

When all was snug, he drew from an inner pocket the roll of papers given to him by Lee Toy, which set forth the names of the several highbinders who belonged to his *tong*, the various loppings accomplished by their "hatchets," and, in a special supplement, the instigations to certain notorious crimes by their master-mind, Quong Lung.

Lighting a brazier, he tore out his own record from the writing, and committed it to the flames. But that which related to Quong Lung he placed in a receptacle cun-

The Seats of Judgment

ningly concealed in the threshold of the door.

Then, extinguishing his light, he sallied forth with the rest of Lee Toy's confessions in his pocket, to speak with Quong Lung, who had awaited him these many hours with patience—and wrath.

II

THE LESSER DISCIPLINE

THE dawn of Christmas Day was rosy when Wau Shun reached Quong Lung's store. The bells throughout the city of San Francisco were once more frantically announcing the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem, as Wau Shun gave the signal of "The Brethren" on Quong Lung's electric bell. It was answered by a deep voice that came through a speaking-tube, the end of which was so cleverly hidden that none but the initiated could find it:

"Peace attend thy feet! What brother needs succor?"

"Thy servant, Wau Shun."

"Enter, Wau Shun," and the door was

The Seats of Judgment

opened by some mechanical contrivance, and closed, as soon as Wau Shun had crossed the threshold, with a snap suggestive of a steel trap. Pressing a concealed button, Wau Shun lit an incandescent lamp that showed him how to avoid the thread, the breaking of which would have precipitated a hundred-weight of iron on the head of an intruder. At the end of the passage thus illuminated was a door, to which he applied his pass-key, and entered an apartment that was a reflex of its occupant, in whom East and West were met. The room was decorated and furnished in accordance with the tastes of a Chinese gentleman of high culture; but the illumination was supplied by electricity, and a long-distance telephone, of the latest pattern, stood at the elbow of the stout, spectacled Chinese merchant, who sat on a great ebony chair, gravely smoking a cigar.

He was Quong Lung.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Thou hast done well, Wau Shun,” he began, “and deservest well—but dry tongues cannot speak.”

Pouring out some whiskey for himself, he pushed the bottle across to Wau Shun, who had now seated himself on the other side of the table.

“Thy servant is enriched by thy approbation, Most Powerful,” replied Wau Shun, draining his glass after Quong Lung had drunk.

“The passing of Lee Toy by way of fire was excellently done, Wau Shun—most excellently done. And where is Sam Lee?”

“He is aweary and sleepeth, Great Master,” answered Wau Shun, whose squinting was suddenly accentuated.

“May his sleep refresh him! But the end of Lee Toy, as I have already said, was surpassingly excellent, Wau Shun. I learnt by this”—and Quong Lung pointed

The Seats of Judgment

with his cigar to the telephone—"I learnt by this of the firing of the house of the White Devil whose babe Lee Toy guarded, and how Lee Toy died to save the devilkin."

"Ho, ho, ho!" interrupted Wau Shun, chuckling softly, and helping himself again from the bottle.

"And the writings of Lee Toy?" asked Quong Lung, after a while.

Without a word Wau Shun laid a packet on the table.

"But these pertain to Sam Lee only," exclaimed Quong Lung, after he had examined the roll of papers; and his nostrils dilated slightly. "Thou hast, doubtless, others that relate to thee and to me."

"Now, nay, All-Seeing; the packet is as Lee Toy gave it to me—so Sam Lee will tell thee."

"If the dead may speak," said Quong Lung, deliberately.

The Shadow of Quong Lung

The other turned towards him with amazement and horror in his looks. It was admirably done, but it did not even attract the attention of Quong Lung, who quietly flicked the ash from his cigar, and went on: "And thou wast seen by two of our brethren in the crowd that witnessed the end of Sam Lee; and 'twere easy, too, to find witnesses who saw thee slay Sam Lee." Then, after a pause, he went on: "Moreover, only fools tell lies to such as me. None may sit on that chair and lie to me—only lift not thy voice at the proof of it, lest death come to thee suddenly!"

The next moment the horror-stricken highbinder was writhing under the spell of an electric current, strong enough to prevent him from relaxing his hold on the arms of his chair, which he had grasped as he tried to spring to his feet.

After Quong Lung had disarmed his victim, he said: "Thou wilt be here two

The Seats of Judgment

days hence, and at the same hour, with the other writings of Lee Toy! Two of thy brethren await thee on the street, and will see to thy punctuality. Drink once more, Wau Shun; thou hast need. Ho, ho!"

III

SWEET COUNSEL AND "BLACK SMOKE"

"**R**OAST turkey, cranberry sauce, mince pies, plum pudding, cheese straws, a choice between beer and champagne! Well, Quong Lung, and what do you want of me, you prince of plotters?"

The speaker had all the outward and visible signs of one who was a slave to opium; but under the influence of Quong Lung's Christmas dinner his eyes sparkled and his spirits rose to a high pitch.

"Nothing, nothing, Jim—at least nothing to speak of; and we won't speak of it until we have had a small black coffee, and—a small black pipe. By the way," he went on, "Ah Moy and Shu Sen will come in presently with the coffee and pipes."

The Seats of Judgment

Quong Lung's guest, James Ray, was lank and sallow, and of uncertain age, because of his terrible vice, and his hair was prematurely gray. He had been an electrical engineer of high promise until he became an opium-fiend. Even his clothes betrayed his failing, no less than his scanty and feeble beard and mustache and his leaden complexion. He had attended the same Eastern college as Quong Lung, and had imbued the latter with a taste for Shakespeare and Byron and the Psalms of David; together they had graduated from Yale; and then Quong Lung, recognizing the ability of his friend and the possibilities of electricity in the career of a highbinder, had introduced Ray to the fascination of opium-smoking; and so—through the uses of adversity—he held the latter in pawn for his own nefarious ends.

“Why all this magnificence, Quong Lung?” inquired Ray after Ah Moy and her colleague had brought in the coffee and the

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## The Shadow of Quong Lung

implements pertaining to "black smoke."  
"You have but to say the word, old man, and, like Ariel, 'I'll put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes.'"

Now the hiring of Ah Moy and Shu Sen to twang their *sam-yens* for the delectation of white devils, and hand them coffee, and sing to them, "came high," for the damsels were famous in their way and in great demand.

"This is too small a thing for you to notice, Jim," replied Quong Lung; "nothing is too good for my friend."

"Why didn't you add, 'the earth is my lord's and the fulness thereof,' and crush me with your compliments? As though I were a damned coolie!"

There was some petulance in Ray's voice, as he gave way to the feeble irritability that attends the constant use of narcotics and stimulants by all except Orientals. He rose to his elbow from the mat on which he was smoking, and threw the pipe on its tray, like

## The Seats of Judgment

a spoiled child. But Quong Lung took no notice of the little outbreak, and Ah Moy put the pipe to his lips with her own fair hands, and soon coaxed him into complacency. When a look of contentment had once more settled on his face, Ray said, deprecatingly, "It was the 'dope' that spoke, Quong Lung, and not I; forgive me, old man! And now, what do you want?"

Quong Lung motioned to the girls to withdraw, and when he was alone with Ray, he said, "Jim, I shall hang unless you help me."

"You must be in a bad fix, indeed, Quong Lung, if you depend on my small arts to help you. Explain."

"Certain papers implicating me are in the possession of one of my blood-hounds, who has shown himself recalcitrant and ungrateful—the damned dog! By means of the battery yonder, which you rigged up for me, I frightened the brute considerably this

## The Shadow of Quong Lung

morning, and he will be here again two nights hence with such of the papers as his fears may compel him to part with; but if his courage should revive, as it may, and if he should come without the documents, I want to put him under the stress telling me where they are to be found; and then I desire that he should never speak again!"

Quong Lung darted a look full of dangerous meaning at Ray.

"Why don't you employ your regular bull-dogs to attend to this unpleasant affair, Quong Lung?"

"Because their methods are coarse and their weapons clumsy."

"But it is deuced risky to be an accessory before the fact in a murder case, my friend."

"No, no, Jim, not murder! Call it, rather, 'the sudden death of an unknown coolie, from unknown causes.'"

## The Seats of Judgment

“And the consideration for me?”

“Two hundred dollars now,” said Quong Lung, laying a pile of notes on the platform on which they were smoking, “and two hundred more after the thing is over.”

“And if I refuse?”

Quong Lung shrugged his shoulders, and said, in an indifferent tone of voice, “Life without opium, and without means of obtaining it, were hell, as you know. Besides, so many accidents are constantly happening in Chinatown.”

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“Very well,” replied the other, rising languidly to his feet and thrusting the notes into his pocket,—“very well. You must let me have entire possession of this room for the next two days, and provide such assistance and implements as I may require.”

As he was leaving the room he stopped to smell a tuberoses that stood on a bamboo flower-stand. The passing act seemed to give him an idea, for he turned suddenly to

## The Shadow of Quong Lung

Quong Lung, saying, "See to it, Quong Lung, that you provide plenty of punk-sticks for the eventful night. You will need them, I am thinking. And be good to this green brother," pointing to the tuberose.

## IV

### CONCERNING CHERRIES AND TUBE-ROSES

**A**N hour before the time set for the arrival of Wau Shun, Ray called Quong Lung into the room wherein he had labored almost incessantly during the past two days.

“All’s done,” he said, “save only the payment of my dues.”

“Proceed,” returned Quong Lung, laying ten double eagles on the table and seating himself on his favorite ebony chair.

Ray eyed him curiously while he pocketed the money, and the Chinaman, who seemed to notice everything, rose quickly from the chair, and said, with a smile :

“ ‘How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds,  
Makes ill deeds done !’

Eh, Jim ? Now show me your trick.”

## The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Should somebody you dislike sit on the chair you have just left, Quong Lung, pressure on this button”—pointing to an innocent-looking cherry painted on a panel that hung on the wall—“would connect the chair with the electric-light wires that pass over your house, and make your objectionable guest the recipient of—say, three thousand volts.”

“And then?”

“And then—slightly altering the words of your favorite poet, to describe the result—‘his heart would once heave, and forever stand still’; and nobody would know how your highbinder died.”

As Ray left the room, he was again attracted to the tuberose. After smelling it, he turned round and called to Quong Lung, saying, “But you will not leave this innocent in the room, Quong Lung; its odor would be ruined by the punks you will burn, and by other savors.”



## The Seats of Judgment

Then gravely saluting Quong Lung, James Ray left the Chinaman's house, and made his way to the office of the chief of police of San Francisco, for even a dope-fiend has a fragmentary conscience. } ✓

## V

### THE GREATER DISCIPLINE

**W**HILE Ray told his story to the chief of police, with all the circumstance and detail that would exonerate him and implicate Quong Lung, the latter met Wau Shun at his outer door, and, holding him by the hand, escorted him to his chamber, which was dim with the smoke of many burning punks the odor of which filled the air.

“Those who are true to me, Wau Shun, will always find that my ‘ways are ways of pleasantness, and all my paths are peace,’” said Quong Lung, softly misquoting the Psalmist.

“Thy house, Far Reacher, is the well-known dwelling of pleasantness and peace.”

## The Seats of Judgment

When Quong Lung would have seated Wau Shun on the chair of which the high-binder had such a lively recollection, the coolie shook his head, saying, "Nay, who is thy slave that he should sit in the presence of the Most Powerful. The ground thou treadest is good enough for him." And Wau Shun squatted on the floor before his chief.

"There is no harm in the chair, Wau Shun," said Quong Lung, seating himself on it carelessly; "no harm unless, indeed, the sitter tell lies or have deceit in his heart." Then, after a pause, he went on: "The writings of Lee Toy—thou hast brought them?"

"Of a surety," replied Wau Shun, producing a packet of papers from his blouse.

After Quong Lung had looked through them, and satisfied himself that they were authentic and complete, he said: "Wau Shun, the white devils say that virtue is its

## The Shadow of Quong Lung

own reward ; but that would be poor reward for such virtuous actions as thine. Thou shalt drink with me first, and then expound to me how I may lighten the burden of obligations thou hast laid on me.”

He went to the table, and pouring out two glasses of spirits, he advanced with them on a tray to the squatting coolie.

After they had drunk, Quong Lung resumed his seat, and lighting a cigar, he said : “ It is not meet that he who hath saved my life this day should crouch on the ground like a dog. Let Wau Shun take my own particular chair, whereon none have sat save those I would honor—nay, I insist ;” and Quong Lung pointed to the great chair of ebony, broad enough to accommodate two men such as himself. It was adorned with a shield of bronze, richly carved and inlaid, that formed its back ; and it stood on a dais of burnished copper, and might have been the throne of an Oriental potentate ; and

## The Seats of Judgment

behind it was a mirror which reflected the exquisite carving on its back.

When Wau Shun, after much protestation, had ensconced himself in a corner of the great chair, Quong Lung once more filled the glasses and again they drank in silence.

“And now, Wau Shun, though I cannot weigh my gold against thy services to me, yet, I pray thee, name some reward that will not put me to shame to bestow on thee.”

“Will the payment of fifty dollars afflict thee, my lord?”

“Nay, Wau Shun, that is the due of but a part of thy merits,—the slaying of Sam Lee, for instance. Here is more for thy other many good deeds,” and Quong Lung tossed on the table a heavy bag that chinked opulently. “Moreover,” he continued, “now that Lee Toy, our keenest hatchet, is dead, some worthy successor to him must be found, and who so worthy as Wau Shun, the slayer of the uncommon slain, Lee Toy?”

## The Shadow of Quong Lung

“Further, Instigator,” interrupted Wau Shun, squinting atrociously, for the liquor had begun to mount to his head; “further, it seems to me that if anything happened to thee—which God forbid!—*I* might be found worthy to sit in this thy chair by reason of thy recommendation, and—my worthiness.”

“Of course, of course,” said Quong Lung, looking at the point of his cigar and crossing his knees. “The See Yups have need of strong men, and who so strong as Wau Shun! Drink once more to thy worthiness.”

After they had disposed of the liquor and smoked a while, Wau Shun said familiarly and half-insolently, “Quong Lung, thou owest me reparation for thy insults of two nights ago; and seeing thou art seated on the chair of humiliation” (here Wau Shun lapsed into impudent vernacular), “you must needs do as I say or be twisted out of shape.”

“What!” exclaimed Quong Lung, putting one hand carelessly behind his head and

## The Seats of Judgment

resting the other against the adjacent wall, whereon was a painted panel that glowed with cherries—"what, wouldst thou plague me?"

"Nay, but I would discipline you," said Wau Shun, thickly; "I would discipline you with cramps, if need were."

"And cramps only?" asked Quong Lung, toying with the flower-painted panel. "'Twere dangerous to play with me so lightly. Cramps cannot touch me and are for fools alone."

"Then I would kill you otherwise, smooth, fat hog!"

"Have at thee, Wau Shun!" exclaimed Quong Lung fiercely, pressing the fatal cherry: and Wau Shun, sitting in the corner of the gorgeous chair, stiffened into a frightful attitude, and then began writhing dreadfully. To the heavy punk-laden atmosphere of the room was added an odor of burning flesh.

## The Shadow of Quong Lung

Quong Lung rose from his seat and crossed the room to where his victim was being electrocuted. "Ho, ho, ho!" he laughed softly: "excellent Jim, most excellent Jim!"

As he watched the grim murder enacting before him, he saw, reflected in the mirror behind the chair of doom, the door that led into the room slowly open, and James Ray and a detective well known to Quong Lung entered swiftly.

"Throw up your hands, Quong Lung!" commanded the officer, as he covered the Chinaman with his pistol.

Taken in the midst of his crime, Quong Lung started and, backing against the fatal chair, he fell on the seat beside his victim with a yell, as the tremendous current shot through him, killing him instantly.

"Turn off the current, Ray. For God's sake, be quick!" shouted the officer, as the bodies writhed and twisted on the chair of death.



## The Seats of Judgment

“Yes, yes,” came the leisurely reply, as Ray took the tuberose from the flower-stand; “there will be plenty of time after I have removed this sweet tenderling from this horrible atmosphere.”

THE END.



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