

to see Fook Chew's wife start back to China. Fook's rich. She's a little-foot, and dey say he had to give up a big wad for her, 'cause she didn't want to marry him in the first place. Mary Kelly, the 'White Rose,' says it'd 'a' been all right if he'd kept her in China where the women don't have much to say, but he goes and brings her to Ne' York and she gets onto the ways of the white goils. Fook takes to runnin' after the 'Rose,' and Mrs. Fook bin' put wise by one of her relations, she and Fook don't do a thing but have a run in. Now she's leavin' him and startin' for China. Maybe she wouldn't be let, though, if her re-lations wasn't in it. Say, we'll go back into the yard."

Most of this was lost on Gon, who was more interested in the long red streamers which waved uneasily under the eaves of the temple of Joss. They brought to his mind the reflections of the steamer lights, but before the comparison was quite complete he was compelled, perforce, to stop and ejaculate the words "Ta Tsing Kwo."

"Great pure kingdom," translated Joe, who knew this as a legend on one of the lottery tickets. To him it was evidence that the man was feigning ignorance of Chinese, but he did not mention it. "Yes," he went on, "it's a good gig, that. We'll see Lee Wong inside and maybe he'll let you have it."

The Bah-ka-pu lottery has, for obvious municipal reasons, no settled habitation, and the yellow tickets are sold literally from under the hats of the four or five men who run it. But Gon's mind was far from lotteries.

They turned into a dark hallway in one of the tenements. It was a narrow passage and ended suddenly on the brink of a flight of stairs leading to a cellar. At the bottom of the stairs they had to step over a drunken man or woman—they could not tell which—who had fallen there in the dark. They passed into a damp cellar, Joe leading Gon by the hand among the broken ginseng crates and through a jagged hole in a foundation wall where a gas flame burned dimly. Then they climbed up again into a rear tenement

and passed down a hallway that opened out on a court.

It was a square-paved place, hemmed in on all sides by the tenements. It was the common area of communication between the buildings, and many passages opened out of it. A fugitive having gained this court would become lost to his pursuers, since he might choose any one of twenty exits. Lanterns hung on lines at various altitudes. An old Chinese stone bed stood at one side. A strip of carpet reached across the stones between two opposite doors. Chinamen sat on benches, stood in groups or lay about in careless attitudes. Many of them smoked cigarettes, and all were in that picturesque undress which the average American never sees. Coloured lights streaked from a hundred windows in the court walls, and over the sills leaned women in silk-figured wrappers. Some of the women were yellow and some were white; some still had the dope stick in their hands. The subdued singing of the dialects rose up from the pavement and mingled with the hum from the windows. Above all could be heard the plaintive squeal of a Chinese fiddle.

"That's Fook Chew smoking over there on the stone bed by the wall," said Joe to Gon, as they stood in the shadow of their doorway. Gon had been looking up at the criss-cross of the window gleams, but at the word he brought his head down suddenly, and it was not good for his wound.

"Fook Chew!" He said it in a whisper that leaped sibilantly from wall to wall. And then, before the startled lobbygag could stop him, he had walked out into the half light of the court. At the sound of the voice Fook Chew's cigarette stopped halfway to his mouth, and when he saw Gon it dropped to the flagging, but his hand remained up. The humming of the hive increased at sight of the newcomer. He stopped in the centre of the court with the bewildered air of one who, having found what he long sought, has as suddenly lost it. When the tension was greatest Fook Chew's wife stepped out of a doorway.

There was a straining of necks from the windows as the woman came forth, and a half-suppressed murmur of approbation, for her going would establish a precedent of value to every other woman in the quarter. She was gorgeously dressed, as befitted the occasion. Her cheeks were tinted with bismuth, but her head was bare. In her coil and on her wrists were ornaments worn only by Chinese women of high caste, and she hobbled across the strip of carpet with the air of one who knows that the way will be cleared, who in China might have the obstructing populace beaten aside with thongs. But Gon out at that moment was not a Chinaman, and at sight of her he stood in her way like one transfixed. She paused and stamped her foot angrily in front of this red-hooded apparition. He, far from recoiling, leaned forward and peered with great yearning into her eyes. He even touched her gently on the breast.

Instantly her people rose up from the flagging and the benches. The drone of the voices died out. The fiddle stopped its wailing. One brawny Mongol reached for Gon's neck. Probably he meant to get his queue, but he got the bandanna instead and it came away with a sucking sound that made the man who pulled it recoil from his work. But the crowd that pressed to the undoing of the man on the carpet strip never reached him. The instant the handkerchief went from his face the fire died from the eyes of Fook Chew's wife. She uttered an indescribable choking cry and fell senseless. Fook Chew rolled off the bed and grovelled on the stones. A near relative of Mrs. Fook retowed violently and uttered an invocation to the god of the dead, and the others, taking their cue from these, fell away slowly and gazed with superstitious awe at the strange being that had taken the place of Gon Out.

For with the wrenching away of the blood clot, Gon Out, the characterless, religionless nonentity of Blackwell's Island, had disappeared, and in his place stood a dignified, high-caste Chinaman, who to his knowledge had not spent one

moment of life outside the Flowery Kingdom. And they listened—the men on the flags and the women above—while in fancy modulated tones this high-born Celestial poured forth a Chinese rendering of the dictum ofocrates:

... for neither in this nor in any other world can lasting harm befall a good man.

His countenance bore a nobleness of expression, even of outline, that had never existed on the face of Gon Out. But what impressed his listeners most was the feeling, instinctive to all, that the words he uttered were the completion of a sentence begun in China long years before.

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