

ing him, and yet to protect the woman against the implication of cruel unreasonableness. All things considered, he had done very well.

"A—a mutual agreement," he had called it. "I think you'd better not go back," he went on gently. "She's very much upset. Her sister and her mother are with her."

Silence fell between them. The orchestra was playing in a gallery behind them—a gay and delicate air. The rooms were filled with the sort of people Pem liked about her, with light, laughing voices, faint perfumes, and the smoke of cigarettes.

One of Blanchard's hands was extended on the table—a slender hand, beautifully tended. He was so fastidious in everything, so kind, so honorable, so appealing in his masculine assumption of her ignorance and helplessness. He wanted to take care of her and shelter her. He would have been horrified at the thought of her living in a little flat on a third mate's pay. He would have turned pale at the sight of that poor, poor little ring.

"You're very quiet," he said, a little anxiously. "I hope I haven't—"

Pem looked up with a smile.

"No!" she thought, as if defying a voice that had not spoken. "It's no use! I'm not like that. I couldn't stand it. I shall be happy with Everett. It's his kind of

life that I want." Aloud she said, in the ladylike, noncommittal tone he expected of her: "I'd better be going back to Nickie now."

Blanchard took her back in a taxi, and all the way he talked of impersonal matters—not a word of love. She knew he wouldn't mention that until he was free to do so honorably.

He left her at the door. She turned as she entered, and saw him standing bare-headed in the street—a handsome and distinguished man, yet somehow pitiful to her, with that touch of white at the temples.

The flat was empty when she got in. Nickie, of course, had gone to her case. Arthur Caswell—she couldn't imagine his destination.

On the kitchen table were the disorderly remains of a tea for two. The sitting room, too, was very untidy, as Nickie always left it. Pem turned on the electric light and began to set it in order. She emptied the ash tray, full of the stubs of those horrible cheap cigarettes she had seen Caswell smoking. She picked up the magazines that lay on the floor, and straightened the chairs.

The piano was open, with music on the rack. She went to close it. The lid slipped from her hand, and, falling, jarred the strings with a queer, trembling discord. She could have imagined it the faint, distant echo of a voice—a young voice.

### THE SORROW OF LOVE

ONCE more the old sorrow is upon me—  
The sorrow of love. The old friendly years  
Cannot save me, their counsel I do not heed;  
My eyes are eyes only for one face,  
My heart beats only for her footsteps—  
On the stairs, oh, beloved—on the stairs!

Once more I shall ascend into heaven,  
Once more I shall pace the floors of hell,  
There is no help, for so was I born.  
Wise in many things—  
Wise with the wisdom of many serpents—  
In this I shall never be wise!  
Fool of fair faces, till my eyes are closed,  
And behold no longer the sun and the stars—  
What are they to the face of my beloved?  
Yet would I not exchange my sorrow for king's treasures.

*Richard Leigh*

# The House of the Wicked

A STORY OF ADVENTURE AND INTRIGUE IN THE FAR EAST

By Eleanor Gates and Frederick Moore

## XIV

WHEN Weatherbee returned to his filing, Noakes joined him in the task, working from the corridor side of the wire screening. The girl, wearing a black, ankle-length dress, was keeping watch of the closed tray windows aft.

"Don't take time to file all the way through a wire," was Weatherbee's first suggestion to Noakes. "In one of the cabins we've got a bunch of golf sticks. Just start a break in each wire, and I'll do the rest with the business end of a brassy."

They made rapid progress. Presently they rested. Everywhere in the ship there was absolute quiet, as if not a living soul were aboard her. Weatherbee and Noakes exchanged a grin. The mate's grin was all satisfaction. The other man was amused at the picture that his companion made.

The latter resembled a faithful terrier. Over his eyes hung his dank, drab hair; but that thin, bony face of his, split from side to side, far from appearing homely to Weatherbee, seemed at that moment to wear a strange beauty.

Once more the files worked. When the wires were half cut through, for three feet on the perpendicular, Weatherbee went for the clubs, and used them on the weakened strands with good effect. No blows were struck, but the clubs were used to wrench the wires in two, until a straight opening was made all the way down to the deck.

Next, both on their feet, the men began to file horizontally at shoulder height in the direction of Stone. As fast as a wire was half severed, a golf club, with other wires for leverage, broke it through. Thus went on, feverishly, and with no unnecessary word, the alternate filing and breaking.

The horizontal cutting done, Weatherbee, using all his strength, pushed with his body

against the rectangle of heavy woven material. It gave, swinging outward stiffly, and he went through, fetching with him a folded deck chair, into which, still without speaking, the two placed Stone.

Then they began their filing on the screened wall on the opposite side of the corridor. By this time they had evolved a sort of technique in their labor. Ellice Loring brought them each a glass of water. They gulped it down, but refused the biscuits she offered. Their first consideration was her liberty.

Soon two sides of a rectangle were cut through, and the second mat of wire was pulled outward and tied back. However, they urged the newly freed prisoner not to leave her compartment.

"Keep out of the line of fire," Weatherbee warned. "The corridor is the risky place. We have nothing to do now but stand guard, so you won't be needed. Please keep back, and, if firing begins, lie down."

Then, standing shoulder to shoulder, but watching in opposite directions, the two men held a whispered conference. Noakes was for quick action, urging that they must not wait until the water supply was exhausted; nor was it desirable to let the present situation stand through another night.

"I agree absolutely," Weatherbee told him; "not only for the reasons you give, but for another—and it's a grave one. Have you noticed Mr. Houghton? His nerves are ready to snap. Right now he's jabbering to himself. Noakes, if he can't have relief from this strain, we're going to have a sick man on our hands."

"What's our first move, then?" the mate inquired.

"I think we ought to come to terms with Markin and Blodgett. They're sitting up