

Bolo Shadows in Shanghai

By
R. MARTINI

It all began in a brawl in a honky-tonk down one of Shanghai's dark alleys of mystery. Jack Farrell had put his foot into a secret national intrigue in which he was to be pitted against powerful and sinister forces.

A GRAY-NOSED Fokker cut through the darkened skies of Shanghai. It was only another blot in that mass of darkness. Silently it moved on toward the distant hills—silently like some evil messenger of the night. It flew at a terrific pace as if it were being pursued; as if it were a grim messenger of death. The mournful drone echoed eerily above that mysterious city. In a few minutes another dark speck cut through the heavens. It had appeared as if by magic—as if some god had sent it to pursue and destroy that other ship.

The new plane was fleeter than the other, and soon overtook it. Like two angry buzzards these two ships of night circled each other. First one zoomed and banked, then the other followed. A game of death above the silent city of Shanghai!

The first plane belonged to bandits, the second to the watchful, slant-eyed peelots of the Orient. The bandits were wily and sly creatures. They spun their plane about in weird gyrations; they zoomed and looped; they flew at a terrific speed, then dipped in breathtaking dives. Yet the faithful guardians of China hung on grimly.

The wily ones had succeeded in leading the pursuers out over the hills of Shanghai, out there where no mortal eyes could possibly see. Then, above the treacherous hills they sang the final song with spurts of orange death. Twin Vickers spewed steel-jacketed hell at the fleeter plane and sent it hurtling down five thousand feet to its fiery end.

Two men in the victorious plane laughed, and headed the ship for Shanghai. Laughed at death—at future power. How easy it was to send the law to a

quick end! Now for a rush to the city and to one of its dives to collect more rebel news of the day, and to jest behind guarded doors about the future.

They found the main room of "The House of a Thousand Delights" steeped in a gray fog of smoke which curled from long-stemmed, bamboo pipes and cheap Chinese cigarettes. The snap of stringed instruments intermingled with the mellow sound of brass cymbals, while sandaled feet beat in measured tempo to the weird dance music of the Orient. An almond-eyed beauty danced in the center of the floor, twisting about in fantastic motions that made the motley audience of whites and yellows pop-eyed with delight.

Suddenly, as the dancer whirled around madly in the last part of her dance, a shower of coins fell on the sawdust-covered floor by her bare feet. As the din from the drunkards increased, imploring her to keep on, a black-tuniced coolie made a dive for some of the coins.

The dancer's face turned into a snarling mass of flesh as her brown foot kicked viciously at the coolie's head. Unmindful, he went on grasping sawdust and coins and stuffing both in the deep pockets of his long, silken, black coat. The girl screamed as her foot kept up its unmerciful battering on the coolie's bowed head.

The Chinaman had got to his feet and, with a thrust of his arm, smacked the dancer across the mouth, saying something that was lost in the noise of the place. Immediately he was set upon by a swarm of sailors and yellow dandies.

The center of the room became a place of flying fists and loud growls. The fighting soon grew, and

the American sailors who had pitched in to help the oriental dancer were soon very busy taking care of their own buddies. The fight turned out to be one of color and creed, the original argument being forgotten temporarily, as is always the case in honky-tonk scraps.

Long-nailed hands had clutched the shoulders of the black-tuniced coolie, and several Chinamen of the House of a Thousand Delights were dragging him away from the swirling mass toward the rear of the joint. As they approached a red-lacquered door that was dimly visible in the smoke-filled place, two arms stretched out of that hazy air and pulled the young coolie away from the Chinamen. A few well-directed kicks from the rescuer sent the slant-eyed custodians sprawling to the dirty floor, and without wasting any more time, the two rushed out of the building into the crowded street, and were soon lost in the strolling throng.

The rescuer still held on to the young coolie, and together they wound their way through the Chinese bazaar, putting a considerable distance between them and the honky-tonk. When they had come to a deserted spot in the winding, narrow, ill-smelling street they paused.

A LANTERN hung from a nearby door threw its orange light on the tattered figure of an American. His face was covered with a dirty beard, and his Palm Beach suit was dirty, wrinkled, and ill-fitting.

The young coolie looked up at him, and trembled as he said, "Lu Sang velly, velly glad Amelican man help him. Lu Sang allee samee thank Amelican man a thousand times. Ah Wong no glood lady. She tlake all Lu Sang money and love then she thlow him away for flat Chu Mung who she wolk floh. Lu Sang feel like kill her slom dlay pletty damn quick." The young coolie's eyes burned with an insane hate.

The American who towered over the Chinaman lit a cigarette then said, "I thought that was the trouble myself; that's why I helped you out. Now, g'wan home and keep away from honky-tonks and women like Ah Wong, and thank your Buddha that you got off as easy as you did."

"But," answered the Chinaman, "Lu Sang no leave you, mastel. Allee samee Lu Sang your slewant now. Allee samee, alright?"

The American laughed. "Allee samee, no all right," he answered. "You run along. What the hell

would I do with a servant?" And he pointed to his dirty clothes and bearded face. "Allee samee I'm a bum."

"No, no," quickly replied the coolie. "No blum. Gentleman!" The slant-eyed one paused a minute as he thought, then continued. "Alight, I go, but slometime I help you. Allee samee you no go to House of Tlousand Delights no mloh. Flat Chu Mung kill you." And with many bows he disappeared up the dark, winding street, leaving the American standing alone in the dull glimmer of a Chinese lantern.

For a long while the American, a desolate and alien figure in his tattered clothes, leaned against the front of the low-roofed building, and was lost in thought. Jack Farrell had a lot to think about. America was a long way off, and he had begun to crave the lights of Broadway and the rumble of L's. He had been playing the part of a bum so long in Shanghai that he was actually beginning to think he was one.

Washington had sent him on some delicate business. Chinese bandits had been holding American tourists for ransom. American missions were being raided and destroyed and the inhabitants killed or assaulted. Peking was in the grip of a political turmoil and little help came from the authorities in the matter of protection. It was common knowledge that Su Li Chow, the outlaw bandit, was at the head of all these outbursts of Mongolian barbarism, and it was suspected that the mastermind behind all this intrigue and bloodshed was that international Red, Saronoff.

Farrell and Saronoff had met before. They had exchanged lead in the war, when the Russian had deserted his native army and joined the Jerry war birds. As captain of his flight, Farrell had shot it out with this wily Russian above torn French sectors. The armistice had put an end to the feud that existed between these two, but it loomed brightly again when Farrell was informed that his old enemy was at the bottom of these outrages in China. Quickly he had accepted the daring and dangerous mission, and now sought out Saronoff in the mysterious city of Shanghai where it was known that the Red made his headquarters.

But Saronoff was no fool. He knew that America would send special agents to ferret him out, so that an end could be put to this business without causing international complications. He would not be caught napping, nor would he have

his plans broken up. China was a rich land. Saronoff had a yen for gold and power. In the excitement of turmoil he could see himself slipping into a ruler's seat, exercising his Bolo form of government. No, Saronoff was no fool. And so he worked carefully, secretly, and in the background. The American agents would never get him.

Farrell knew this. He was facing the toughest proposition in his life. It was to be the biggest battle of wits that he ever was in, and perhaps, the biggest battle of muscle, for Saronoff was no weakling.

As he stood in the lonely street his brow was furrowed in deep thought. He had forgotten Lu Sang and the brawl at the honky-tonk; but he had not forgotten the naked dancer, Ah Wong. Desperately he was trying to place her in his mind. Somewhere, sometime, he had seen that face. He was just lighting his third cigarette when it came to him—the entire significance of that almond-eyed dancer.

“Holy jumpin’ cripes!” he exclaimed. “R220—spy in the service of his majesty, the kaiser.”

He remembered too well. During the war, “Chubby” Loomis, one of the buzzards in his flight who had been transferred to the I.D., had shown him the official announcement from H.Q. to be on the lookout for that woman, purported to be one of the cleverest spies in the war.

A smile flickered on his bearded face as he mentally swore and praised Lu Sang. If it hadn't been for the Chinaman, he probably wouldn't have noticed Ah Wong. But now that he had butted in to save the yellow coolie, he was a marked man. If he went back to the House of a Thousand Delights, they'd get him. Still, he argued, perhaps in that swirling mob of people they hadn't noticed him and he might take a chance.

He had decided to trust to blind luck, and had begun to retrace his steps to the honky-tonk, walking as much as possible like an inveterate inebriate, when two shadows slithered out of a darkened doorway and pounced on him.

IN a moment Farrell lost all traces of an inebriate and began to fight desperately for his life. Both his arms were free and he struck out with all his strength at the two bobbing shadows. But they were like phantoms. He could not connect one blow, and his temper made him more erratic. Quickly his hand went for his pocket where reposed the Colt,

but it never reached it. One of the shadows had swung a long, iron pipe and it caught Farrell on the wrist, paralyzing his right hand with pain.

Frantically he hurled himself at the assassin, but some clever Chinese footwork sent him sprawling on his face. In a flash, the two attackers dove on him, and were quickly binding him with a rope.

Farrell, maddened by the pain and by the suddenness of the attack, kicked and writhed furiously. But it was useless. These two slinking shadows had the power of steel bands, and all effort to throw them off was useless.

Deftly his hands were tied behind his back, and a wad of cloth wrapped around his mouth so that he could barely breathe. Then with quick, tricky movements he was hoisted to his feet and rushed through the doorway from where the shadows had appeared.

Farrell struggled weakly, but to no avail. His mind was beset by a rush of thoughts. Had Saronoff, hiding perhaps in some secret part of that honky-tonk, seen him? If so, then his suspicions about Ah Wong were true, and she was linked up in some manner with the Russian and the bandit, Su Li Chow. He shuddered as he thought of the bloody fate that probably awaited him if these two shadows were the henchmen of the wily Red. Saronoff would waste no time. He would question him, get all the information, and then put him to a quick end. Farrell knew damn well that Saronoff wouldn't stand for any monkey business.

The dark, smelly passageway leading from the door exited on a narrow alley that was cluttered with boxes and garbage. Farrell could vaguely make out the surroundings in the heavy darkness, but his captors were surefooted, and pushed him along without hesitation. They were headed for a low-thatched house to the left of the alley.

Suddenly Farrell felt the firm grip on his right arm loosen, and he turned to see the Chinese shadow slump to the ground. With the same speed, the other hand on him let go, and Farrell stood rooted to the spot, dumfounded.

His hair stood on end. What manner of hell was this? In the bat of an eyelash, the two Chinamen had hit the littered ground and lay there motionless. Not one slight cry had escaped them. Then he heard a familiar voice. “Allee samee, Lu Sang no floget.” The coolie's voice was a cautious whisper. “Allee samee no mlake no noise. Lu Sang cut lope, and mastel be flee.”

Farrell felt the snip of a knife releasing his cut wrists from the tightly bound rope. In the darkness he could just distinguish a dark blot which was the form of Lu Sang. Farrell ripped the cloth from his face, grabbed Lu, and made for the passageway that led to the street. As they hurried along, he whispered to the coolie, "How the hell did you get here?"

"No time talk now. We go like hell to my humble house pretty damn quick, then we talk."

They had reached the end of the passageway now, and Lu motioned Farrell to wait while he peered up and down the winding street to see if all was well. Assuring himself that everything was as it should be, he beckoned to Farrell, and together they made their way through a maze of narrow streets and crowded bazaars to the house of Lu Sang.

A smile played over Lu's yellow face as he watched the questioning look on his master's bearded countenance. "What's mattel, mastel?" he naively inquired.

"Lu, how the hell did you get into that alley? What the hell were you doing there? How the hell did you kaput those lice?"

"Allee samee," replied Lu, "mastel swear like hell." He laughed again. "Lu Sang no trust anyone in House of Thousand Delights. Lu Sang know when Melican man help, Melican man get in trouble, so Lu Sang watch out for Melican man. I hide in dark and when I see them tie you, I wait till they take you into alley—then I use this." And before Farrell's astonished eyes he dangled a wire garrote. "This kill quick, and no makee no noisee," he hastened to explain.

Farrell let out a sigh of relief. "Lu, you don't know what you've really done. I won't ever forget this." He paused a moment and the young coolie watched him with expectant and admiring eyes. Then Farrell continued. "Lu Sang, if those fellows had kaput me, there would have been hell to pay, and China would be in a mess. Listen carefully now, I'm going to take you in confidence because I think you're one yellow face I can trust. I'm not a bum, see?"

The coolie interrupted. "No, mastel not a blum. Mastel, gentleman. Lu Sang know."

Farrell laughed. "I'm a secret service man, Lu, and my government has sent me here on important business, and you're going to help me. I'm making you my assistant."

Lu Sang was getting excited. "Allee samee, mastel, you make me detective?" Anxiously he waited for Farrell's answer.

"That's right. And I think you'll make a good one. But remember this is dangerous work, and silent work. To everyone else you are still Lu Sang, the same rickshaw driver that you've always been. Understand?"

"Velly well, mastel, velly well."

FARRELL then described at great length the situation existing in China, stressing the international difficulties that might ensue from a mistake. He told him all about Saronoff and the bandit, Su Li Chow. After he had worked his story up to a hair-raising climax, Farrell played his trump card. He mentioned Ah Wong's name! Immediately Lu Sang's face changed to a hateful sneer. His eyes became two pinpoints of fire, and his long, bony hands balled up tightly so that the nails dug deeply into his yellow flesh. Farrell watched him closely. His cue had come.

"You want to get even with Ah Wong, don't you?" asked Farrell.

The coolie's answer was a venomous hiss through his lips.

"Then listen," went on Farrell. "Ah Wong is mixed up with Saronoff in some way. I don't know what her game is, but if I can get her, I'll get the solution of Saronoff's hiding place, and maybe get a line on Su Li Chow. Now, I want you to bring Ah Wong here."

"But mastel, she no come here. She know I kill her."

"Listen to me, Lu, and we'll get her here. Ah Wong likes gold, doesn't she?" The coolie nodded. "Well, you go to the honky-tonk and tell her that you need her help to roll a rich American man. Tell her that I hired your rickshaw and got drunk, and that I am at your house now, and I crave entertainment. Tell her that you saw a fat roll of American dollars that I had in my hand, and that I showed you a handful of diamonds. She won't be able to resist that lure."

"I tell you, mastel, Ah Wong no come. She no believe Lu Sang. She think Lu Sang kill her."

On Farrell's left hand, turned upside down, was a ring. He studied it for a moment, then he slipped it off. He watched the diamond stone sparkle, then he gave it to Lu. The Chinaman gasped as he glimpsed the stone. Farrell said, "Show her this."

Tell her I gave it to you. I guess that's bait enough, and she'll believe you. Make her think this is a business proposition, and tell her to forget all the ruckus about your love affair. Understand?"

Once more a smile played over Lu's face. He knew pretty well that Ah Wong would fall for this gag. Diamonds were her weakness. He looked at Farrell, then said, "Alight, mastel. Lu Sang be black pletty soon with no damn good lady." And with several bows he disappeared through the doorway, chuckling bitterly.

Left alone in the smelly house, Farrell had time to review what had happened. Things had taken a quick turn just as he had begun to despair. He was confident now that Ah Wong would be the key to the entire situation. His hands were itching to get at Saronoff. He had enough to settle with this treacherous Russian. Whether the Red was in Shanghai was questionable. Farrell suspected that his real hiding place was in the hills where it was known that Su Li Chow had his headquarters. But to get to these hills was no easy task. They reached out for miles and miles in all directions, and it was impossible to ever find out the bandits without a definite clue.

A search through the hills would have been like trying to find a needle in a haystack. Farrell did not doubt for one second that Saronoff had a plane hidden somewhere in Shanghai, for purposes of communication with his henchmen. He had searched in vain for a possible hiding place for it, but had met with little success. Now, at last, things had begun to warm up, and quietly he waited as he puffed on a Chinese cigarette, stretching himself on Lu's bunk.

Lu Sang traveled along at a fast pace through the empty streets toward the House of a Thousand Delights. His almond eyes beamed with a new light. Revenge! Soon he would have Ah Wong in his grasp—soon he would wring her pretty neck to the death tune of her wild screeching. Lu Sang was happy; the gods above, the Chinese pagan gods, would not forget those who had been touched by evil persons. And to Lu Sang, Ah Wong was the devil's sister.

The honky-tonk was still crowded when he slithered into it, trying to make himself as inconspicuous as possible. His beady eyes glanced hurriedly over the smoke-filled place for a glimpse of the dancer. He espied her at a rear table, sitting with a fat American skipper. With his head bowed,

Lu Sang made his way through the crowded rows of tables to the rear.

Ah Wong did not notice him until he was bending beside her, and talking rapidly in his native tongue. In a few words he told her why he had come, and with a sly movement of his hand showed her the ring that Farrell had given him.

Ah Wong's expression of alarm immediately faded as she watched with greedy eyes the sparkle of the diamond in Lu's yellow hand. Without excusing herself from the table, she hurriedly rose and motioned Lu Sang to the stairway.

Once there she spoke in excited tones. "Lu Sang, I shall help you get the diamonds, and if all goes well, I shall be your lady of delight again. Wait until I change my clothes, and then we shall go." She started up the stairs, and had hardly ascended three steps when she came down again and said, "Lu Sang, let me see that ring again."

Lu Sang did not hesitate. He showed her the diamond. In the hazy lights of the honky-tonk the stone shimmered and glittered like a thing of life. Ah Wong's almond eyes opened wide with delight and a sort of sparkling ecstasy. Diamonds! They were her only passion. As if satiated with the sight of the stone, she raced up the stairway, while Lu Sang solemnly waited. Inwardly he was dancing with the insane joy of revenge, but outwardly he remained composed and complacent.

In a few minutes Ah Wong reappeared, and together they exited, and struck out for the house of Lu Sang. The dancer could barely control herself from chattering like a crazy monkey—the lure of diamonds had made her abnormal. And as they hurried through the dark, shadowed streets, the yellow face of Lu Sang smiled thankfully. His hour had come.

Farrell heard the soft pat-pat of footsteps, and immediately his entire lazy position changed. With a quick movement of his hand he ruffled his hair, and tore open his shirt, so that to a casual observer he gave the appearance of a very saturated drunkard.

The door opened slowly, and noiselessly, and the two entered. Ah Wong's eyes settled on the form of the American. She looked greedily at him. Lu Sang touched her on the arm, and beckoned her not to speak. Then he hobbled to the bunk. His voice as he spoke was soft and inviting. "Mastel, Lu Sang bling you pletty dancel girl, best dancel in all China, to enteltain you like plince that you be.

Pletty dancel name Ah Wong.”

Farrell groaned and turned wearily in the bunk toward the spot where Ah Wong stood. Lazily he rubbed his eyes, then he stared intently at Ah Wong. “Well, ishn’t thish nice. By cripes, yoush a gentleman, yellow face. Here,” Farrell threw him a roll of money. “Now get the hell out of here, sho me and thish lotus flower can have a good time.”

Lu Sang grabbed the money and, winking slyly at Ah Wong, he silently retreated to an adjoining room. No sooner had he gone than Ah Wong began her deadly work. Like a lithe cat she slid to the bunk and, putting her bare arms around Farrell, began to whisper sweet phrases to him. But Farrell had little time to waste. Immediately he jumped up and stared into Ah Wong’s bewildered face.

“Hullo, R220,” he said, all traces of his drunken talk gone. “It’s a long time after the war, but I haven’t forgotten you. How’s business?”

The dancer’s arms had dropped from around Farrell as if they were made of lead. She stared incredibly at him, but Ah Wong wasn’t giving in that easily. “Amelican man dlink too much,” she said.

Farrell butted in quickly. “Lay off the lingo, Ah Wong. You can speak as well as I can. I’m up to you. No monkeyshines now. Here is one time someone caught you napping. Now, what’s your game? What is Saronoff up to? Out with it and you get off easy, see?”

“Saronoff?” Ah Wong questioned hastily. “Ah Wong no undelstand! Amelican man much dlink tonight.” And with that she tried to get up from the bunk, but Farrell’s hand held her pinned down.

“No, you don’t, pretty. You’re not going out of here till you tell me where Saronoff is, get me?” And to make his statement more effective, he twisted her wrist so that she screamed. Her face contorted into an ugly sneer as Farrell applied more pressure.

“Saronoff, understand,” continued Farrell. “You’re going to spill the beans right now, or they’ll be looking for a new dancer to take your place at that honky-tonk before this night is over.” There was a cruel and menacing ring in his voice, and Ah Wong suddenly realized that this was no man to fool around with.

For a moment she did not speak, and the room echoed with the sound of her fast breathing. Farrell watched her with eyes ablaze. This was his big moment—he must not let it slip through his fingers.

Spurred on by this thought, he had small pity for Ah Wong and again he applied that painful twisting to the dancer’s arms. Slowly he twisted until it seemed that the arm would snap off.

Ah Wong yelled with pain. “Please, please stop it! I’ll tell. I’ll tell you all!”

Bang!

The door to the room had been flung open and the orange flash of a pistol shot stabbed the dusky atmosphere. Ah Wong slumped to the floor—dead. An ugly hole in her forehead belched a stream of blood.

Automatically, Farrell reached for his back pocket. But a commanding voice stayed the motion, and the form in the doorway advanced toward him with the smoking pistol leveled menacingly.

“Saronoff!” Farrell gasped.

“Yes, it’s Saronoff. And see, my dear captain”—he pointed to the dead form of Ah Wong—“see what happens to those who know too much.” There was a hint in his tone that did not escape Farrell. “Now, captain, I think I’ve had enough of you. I’ve had you trailed since the first day you landed, but as long as you kept yourself harmless and out of my plans I did not disturb you. But you have put your nose in too far, and I fear that we shall have to—” He did not finish. His foot kicked the inert form of Ah Wong. Farrell understood the gesture.

“Well, Saronoff, I salute you. You are still the same clever man I fought in French skies. It seems that the gods smile upon you, don’t they? You must be one of their favorite sons.”

“Perhaps,” replied Saronoff, a sneering, oily smile smirching his face. “Whatever it is, the fact remains that I get what I want. And no sneaking coward who would try to get information out of a woman with crude methods such as yours—”

Farrell jumped to his feet, but the pistol in Saronoff’s hand was jabbed into his side with a vicious movement. Farrell was licked. There was nothing he could do. “All right, Saronoff. This is your trick. Come on, get it over with. What the hell are you going to do?”

“You’ll soon find out,” again Saronoff’s voice had a cruel, prophetic sound. “You’ll soon find out,” he repeated. “You’ve come in at the proper moment. What I’m going to do to you will be sufficient reason for Washington to send a warship of pretty marines over. You’re my ace card,

captain. The gods certainly did send me a delightful package.” Saronoff laughed as Farrell looked at him perplexedly.

What awaited him? What fiendish scheme had this Red cooked up now to instigate further the relations between the two countries?

The pistol pressing into the small of Farrell’s back brought him out of his stupor.

Saronoff pointed toward the door. “Out there we go to my car, where awaits another friend of yours.” And with that he shoved Farrell forward with the aid of the pistol.

Outside a huge car waited, its motor throttled down to a mere whisper. At the wheel stood a goggled figure. As Farrell stepped into the rear seat followed by Saronoff he heard the Russian announce, “Your friend, Su Li Chow, the very excellent bandit.”

Farrell made a slight noise through his teeth. “You fellows have a helluva lot of nerve.”

Saronoff’s harsh laugh cut through the air with a menacing sound. And then, still pressing the pistol in Farrell’s side, he ordered the Chinese bandit to drive off. Silently the car sped along the deserted streets toward the outskirts of Shanghai.

No one spoke. The driver kept his goggled eyes glued to the road; Saronoff pressed the pistol in Farrell’s side; Farrell cursed his ill luck. But none of the three saw or realized that a fourth member of the party hung on in the rear, on the spare tire!

Lu Sang!

Grimly his yellow hands dug themselves into the rubber tire, trying to keep his hold. Lu Sang’s face was a bunch of smiles. The gods had been kind. They had killed off that evil woman, Ah Wong. And now, the coolie paused in his thoughts, and now what? Death for him and his master, or death for Saronoff and the Chinese bandit?

On and on sped the car. The silhouette of Shanghai was left in the distance, and now they careened over open roads toward a deserted part of the outskirts.

The Chinaman’s hands were beginning to ache and grow numb from the forced pressure he applied to keep his balance. He would not be able to hang on much longer, and a furtive prayer to his god escaped his lips for strength that he might be of help to his master.

In the rear seat another crucial battle was being waged. The ace of American secret service men was calling not to his God for help, but to his own

initiative—his own wealth of experience to deliver him from this predicament. Failure was not written in his makeup.

Then suddenly the car lurched into a narrow lane, and the huge spotlights shone like two giant eyes upon the shaded darkness. They traveled at a slower speed, and Farrell heard Saronoff chuckle ominously. The end was approaching.

The lane broke out on a large field, and the car came to a halt. Gruffly Saronoff commanded Farrell to get out. The driver had already run to a thicket, and Farrell could see him pulling away at the slim branches. He watched him eagerly, and in a few moments he gasped, as Saronoff said suavely, “See, my friend, how I do things.”

And there before the glare of the headlights stood a huge Fokker!

“I see,” replied Farrell. “Again I salute you, Saronoff! You are a clever man.”

“Thank you, captain. It is too bad you are in the employ of the wrong government. I could have done great things with you.”

Farrell was quick to answer, and he made a movement toward Saronoff, but the Russian’s pistol was businesslike.

“My government will get you yet, Saronoff. The end of me does not mean the end of their secret-service department.”

Saronoff’s answer was a sarcastic laugh.

Su Li Chow had come back and told Saronoff that all was ready for the takeoff. Saronoff handed the bandit his pistol and ordered Su to shoot the American on the first move he made to escape. Then he walked over to the plane, followed by the bandit who pushed Farrell onward with the aid of the pistol.

Farrell was stumped. He could do nothing. One move and they would shoot him like a dog. He had no doubt about that.

The Russian was warming up the plane, and satisfied with the rev of the motor, he ordered Su to pile in the rear seat with his charge.

Farrell felt a warm thrill as he stepped into the cockpit of the Fokker. His love for planes was seconded only by his love for secret-service work. But his thoughts were short-lived. The pistol seemed to be boring a hole in his side as the Chinese bandit pushed it deeper and deeper.

Saronoff looked back at them, and, assured that all was well, addressed Farrell. “Do you remember ten years ago, my friend? How the gods of fate are

fickle! Then you almost got me; today I have you, and now take you through the skies on your ride of death." And with that, he gave the ship the gun, and it roared down the field like a fleet, ominous animal, charging finally into the dark heavens of Shanghai.

The moan of the motor was like a dirge of death. On and on sped the plane, its gray nose pointed toward the hills. The sharp wind beating against Farrell's face brought many happy thoughts to him, but all these were shadowed by the pain that throbbed in his side, as the pistol of Su Li Chow seemed to probe for his vitals.

The three men were silent. And somehow that journey seemed, as Saronoff had said, "the ride of death through the skies."

But little did they know what the faithfulness of a real yellow-faced coolie meant. The promised vow of Lu Sang to protect his master! Who could have said that this was possible 5000 feet above the ground, in darkened skies? Unless Lu Sang were in truth one of the Chinese pagan gods.

And yet if any one of the three in the dual-seater Fokker had cast a backward glance, they would have seen a sight to make their eyes pop in amazement. Hugging to the fuselage like some slithering, menacing monster ready to spring on its prey was Lu Sang!

He lay flat on his belly, his hands and knees hugging the fuselage with all the strength of his lithe body. The slipstream from the whirring prop screeched madly as if in protest—as if in warning to the pilot of that gray-nosed Fokker. But the gods of Lu Sang were watching over him.

With slow, cautious movements, he slid himself closer and closer to the spot where two heads showed above the cockpit. Inch by inch he crawled. Slow, painful approaches that sapped his strength. On and on flew the plane, and Lu Sang began to despair. It seemed a million miles to the spot where those two heads were silhouetted against the background of night. Long, painful, heartbreaking miles. Yet some indomitable spirit goaded him onward. Lu Sang faithful to the end!

Clutched in his hand was the deadly garrote. Like a hangman's noose it swayed in the rush of wind. He was coming closer now—a few more slides—a few more painful movements—on and on to the tune of that death ride.

He had reached the two heads. He could almost touch them. He had a wild desire to laugh. What

sweet revenge this night had stored for him! Then he dug his knees deeper in the fuselage with all his might. His right hand was poised with the garrote. A quick slide forward, a thrust of his right arm, and the fine wire was around Su Li Chow's neck!

Lu Sang pulled mightily, and the wire tightened. Farrell felt the pistol's pressure relieved; saw it drop to the floor of the cockpit; saw the bandit writhe upward in a death whirl. Then he looked around and saw the coolie. Lu Sang smiled wildly and spoke something that was carried away by the wind. He pulled hard on the garrote, and the bandit lurched upward and bent over the side of the cockpit. Then suddenly the plane banked, and the form of the bandit and that of Lu Sang went careening down to earth!

Farrell closed his eyes, and he had a sickening sensation in the pit of his stomach. He ached for the gallant coolie who had given his life for him. Then his pity turned to hate. Hate to be lavished on the pilot of the Fokker. Saronoff would have to pay for this. A snarl smudged the face of the American, and with the fury of a tiger he hurled himself at Saronoff's back. Immediately the wily Russian swung his left arm around so that it caught Farrell smack on the face, and sent him careening to the floor of the cockpit. Saronoff's hasty glance found his henchman gone and he cursed the stupidity of all the Chinese.

A bit dazed from the blow, Farrell got up and flung himself at Saronoff again. This time he held on while the Russian struggled to get free. In the mad fight, the plane turned its nose toward the earth, and began to dive at a tremendous speed for the ground.

The two men, fighting desperately, forgot all about the plane. Like crazed tigers they tore at each other in a death fight in the dark heavens. Then Farrell's air sense came to his rescue and he realized that he was going to his doom in that diving plane.

With an agile movement, he reached for the stick and pulled it all the way back. The plane seemed to stop, then there followed a crackling sound as the wires strained on the wings. With the weight of his bended body holding the squirming Saronoff down, Farrell continued to pull on the stick, but the plane had lost too much altitude, and the sudden zoom had wrenched one of the wings. Then before he realized that they were so close to the ground, the Fokker cracked!

With a tremendous thud it hit the ground and turned over on its nose, throwing the two occupants free from the tangled mass. In a moment red stabs of flame were cutting angry slits in the darkness and Farrell, dazed as he was, made out the writhing form of Saronoff.

Summoning all his strength, he crawled to where the Russian lay, and grabbing him by the collar of his jacket, pulled him away from the roaring flames.

With considerable effort, he managed to retreat far enough to be safe from a possible explosion. Saronoff had revived sufficiently to realize that he was a prisoner.

Luckily Farrell still had his automatic and Saronoff saw its blue-black muzzle pointing straight at him. The men did not speak. Silently they watched the flames lick the black night. After a few minutes Saronoff spoke. "What became of Su Li Chow? How the devil did you get rid of him?" He kept his gaze on the American.

Farrell seemed choked with emotion. Then

slowly he replied, "I did not kaput him—Lu Sang did."

Saronoff yelled, "Lu Sang? Man, you're crazy!"

The flames were dying, and a Chinese dawn was fast breaking through the darkness. Farrell pondered a bit more. He looked at Saronoff sadly, "No, not crazy. That young coolie had the guts of the bravest of the brave. He hung on to that fuselage for God knows how long, then he slid up to Su Li Chow and used the garrote. That's all."

Saronoff did not say a thing. Perhaps he, too, was marveling at the courage of the yellow-faced man. Then Farrell, waving his automatic, said, "Come on, we go to the American Legation. They want you." He paused and his mouth was a grim line. "I'd shoot you like the dog that you are, Saronoff, but there happens to be a healthy reward if you're brought in alive. And I want that reward. I want it to build an everlasting monument to Lu Sang—a man with a yellow skin, but with a heart of gold."