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The Emerald Eye

It Proves Too Much of a Temptation

By CLARISSA MACKIE

In the Shanghai club the electric fans were humming drowsily, and Chinese boys stepped silently to and fro with trays of cooling drinks.

Frank Oakley moved indolently in his long wicker chair as another man sank into the seat beside him.

"Hello, Oakley," said the newcomer pleasantly, at the same time lifting a beckoning finger to a passing servant.

"Ah, Langham! How are you? Thought you were in Hongkong?"

Frank sat up in his chair and scanned the other's dark, blunt featured face.

"Was," said the other tersely.

"What's the trouble now? Must be something up or you wouldn't be here. You seem to camp on the trail of old man trouble," grinned Frank, pushing his cigar case across the table.

"Something is up. Can you spare time to be in on it? I've got to have an assistant."

"It happens to be my dull time. Count on me. What is it this time?"

"Oh, these rascally natives can't keep their hands off the temple treasures."



"Certainly; now or tomorrow morning?"

"Suppose we go now. We might want to go south tomorrow."

They arose and left the club, taking jinkishas to the gate of the old walled city crouching on the outskirts of the newer modern city.

"Your clew?" asked Oakley as they went down the narrow, crooked, ill-paved streets.

"A Chinese named Sun Yat said that Lin Wah, the missing servant, was seen to offer the emerald eye to a dealer in the gold beaters' street."

"I know three goldsmiths in that street. It is this turn to the right," said Oakley, leading the way.

The first goldsmith professed ignorance of the emerald eye; the second one had seen it, but disparaged its value, and the third said it had been offered him by a Cantonese two days before and that the man had been seen running out of the city.

"I said to the south," was Oakley's comment.

"My impression is that it's nearer," said Langham, doggedly, and something in his tone told the truth of the situation to Frank Oakley.

"Out with the whole thing, Langham," he said shortly. "What is it? Are you trailing me, or what?"

"Well, you were there, you know."

"Did Mrs. Desbrow"—Oakley choked on the words.

Langham shrugged his perfectly fitted shoulders. "No, indeed, old chap. She wouldn't listen to a word against you. But the house boy?"

Oakley laughed scornfully. "The house boy! Do you mean to say that you are holding the word of a Chinaman against mine, Langham?"

"He said he saw you," retorted the other shortly.

"Saw his grandmother!" was Oakley's cheerful reply. "You take my advice, Langham. If Mr. Desbrow got that emerald from one of the temples in south China it stands to reason that the worshippers will try to get it back."

"Those old things mean more to the native Chinese than they do to the decadent mandarins. They will fight for the emerald, and they will steal it again and again until it finally remains where it originally belonged—only they will leave a trail of blood in its wake."

"Very well," said the other sharply. "Go ahead and I will follow."

"Find out for me where the temple is located and the name of the mandarin. Tomorrow morning we start."

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awhile.

"It is my impression," he said at last, "that if you were advised to come to Shanghai the emerald has gone in the opposite direction."

"Why?" asked the other skeptically.

"Oh, just knowledge of the Asiatic character," returned Oakley vaguely, and Langham was the more convinced that the American was concerned in the gem robbery. He determined to permit the younger man to lead in the search for the stolen gem, but he determined to control the situation himself.

"Then you won't come into the old city with me?" he asked after a painful silence.

"Certainly; now or tomorrow morning?"

"Suppose we go now. We might want to go south tomorrow."

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for Canton, and from there we will travel cross country to the temple. Once there we can scout around and see if the emerald is there."

"Good. Let us go back."

The next morning they were on their way to Canton via Hongkong.

As the journey progressed there grew up between the two men a vague inexpressible feeling of distrust.

At last they came into the province of the mandarin who had sold the emerald eye to Mr. Desbrow and here received permission to inspect the temple.

"This man will direct you to the temple of the green idol," he said suavely, and the two young men made their adieus.

In the wake of the wooden faced servant they crossed the grass grown courtyard and entered the dark arch of the temple. Here their footsteps waked the sleeping echoes, and the guide grumbled because the lantern sputtered in sudden drafts of air.

"We will look at the Buddha first, for if the stone has been returned it should be resting in the left eye socket. Odd that they should make the eyes of such precious gems and then cover them with lids of bronze or gold."

Frank Oakley made this remark as he walked close behind Desbrow, now his openly avowed enemy.

"I'll have to see it there to believe it," said the other man obstinately.

By standing beneath the massive face one could look up and see that one half closed eye contained a sparkling emerald, while the other one was quite empty.

"Well," questioned Langham, with a nasty smile.

"Well," retorted Frank, suddenly drawing a revolver and pressing it against the other's breast. "I'll give you just five minutes to restore the emerald eye to the Buddha," he said grimly.

"Me! What do you mean?" shouted Langham.

"What I say. I may as well tell you that I know where it is, and I congratulate you on having distracted attention from yourself."

"Where is it?" demanded Langham.

"Up with your hands!" ordered Frank sharply. And when the other's hands were out of the way Oakley's fingers passed deftly over the other's form. There were a bundle of letters and a cigarette case. A gold match safe disgorged the missing jewel, and Langham did not smile when Frank drew it from his hiding place and slipped it in his own pocket, for he had determined to restore it to Mrs. Desbrow.

They separated that afternoon, Frank Oakley traveling on ahead to claim his reward and Langham to make other plans for the uncertain future.

Frank Oakley took the emerald eye back to its rightful owner, and when she mentioned a reward he talked again about love and marriage until he persuaded her to name the wedding day.

"The emerald eye is our talisman of luck," he said to her on their wedding night.

"It was the means of poor Langham's temptation and fall," murmured the lovely bride. "It is like all talismans—the good or evil in the wearer have to do with its influence."

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As Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Parkinson of Thedford, were driving along the road at the foot of the sand hills east of Lake Burwell Cut, two deer crossed the road close to them. It is believed they are two deer that escaped from Grand Bend Park on Good Friday.

At "Fairview Farm," near Bothwell, the spacious barns of Mr. S. H. Reynolds fell victim to the "fire king" on Sunday morning about seven o'clock. The origin of the fire is supposed to be caused by a spark from a stove in the cook house used to heat the water. Two employees had started to milk the 49 cows by the milking machine process recently installed, and smelling smoke looked for the cause, and found the place on fire, which had gained such headway that nothing could be done to save the buildings. Every effort was then put forth to save the stock, and succeeded in saving 34 cows out of the 49, 15 being consumed, together with 20 large hogs, 2 large barns, pig pens, separator room, feed room, ice house, 2 horse stables, root house, 2 silos, drive shed, stabling for 155 cattle, hay and grain, 5 calves, engine, 3 sets scales (one five tons), power separator, grinder and buzz saw, with a complete milking machine, 2 buggies, water works, cream cans and pails, etc. By twenty minutes after the alarm was given 200 people were present, and through their efforts the three dwellings were saved. This is a great loss to Mr. Reynolds. The damage is estimated at \$15,000, partly covered by insurance.

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