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Peking too. We like to talk with Englishmen.»

Russell thought it over. «O. K., I'll come,» he said.

Han Kee helped him dress. Russell gave him a handful of Hong Kong dollars to pay for the bath and tips to the bath-boy and the others, and they left the bath-house together. Maybe he was doing a crazy thing in going to an unknown Chinese house with two unknown Chinese refugees, but what the hell? He had taken chances before, and in any case he had nothing much of material value on him except a few dollars, which Han Kee and his friend were welcome to if the going was tough. Besides, it might be fun to see what developed.

Outside the bath-house Han Kee whistled softly twice. A rickshaw boy came running towards them.

«This my friend, Hop Wah,» Han Kee said with a grin. «He from Peking too. He take us home. Not far from here.»

Hop Wah bowed low and smiled.

Russell laughed out loud. Hop Wah was the rickshaw boy who had taken him to the bath-house.

Nocturne

Over the cold hill the half-sun burning
Dull in its embers, and one leaf turning
Slowly down air; the white winter nearing
Through black frozen hours, long hours before morning;
The dead dark coming, the cold heart yearning
For home, for that room safe walled from the warning
Of the death beyond dying, the fear beyond fearing —
But look! You are loved, you were missed from the room,
And someone with a lantern is coming through the clearing,
Someone with a lantern on the path toward home.

Robert Hillyer in «The Relic and Other Poems» (Knopf).