# Yellow Men Sleep

By JEREMY LANE

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CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

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The princess was startled, and her face seemed rather pale as she stared at him. It was apparent that she cherished the plan of the empire of the Yellow Sun, perhaps because she was born to be an American. Levington wondered if she knew what the Asiatic interpretation of this idea might require, from herself in particular. In caliphate and khanate, there can be no plan of priest, warrior or king that is not discussed behind the lattices of the female courts, and no girl is too young to know her place in the scheme. Indeed, the statecraft of the Orient often originates within these fragrant sanctuaries.

Tau Kuan imprisoned much of beauty. Helen had been broadly educated. Levington was tossed unhappily between the girlish purity of the princess and the probable depths of her sophistication. Something, perhaps a masculine pride, hinted to him that she was amusing herself with two credulous white men. Something reminded him that she had Irish blood, the spring of sublety and grave humor. The same faculty in Con reminded him also how nicely she had concealed a surprise that would have been natural upon meeting two Americans for the first time in her life, and particularly one of them her own father. Yet this might be nothing more than a result of Chinese training, the self-control that nothing can disturb.

"Yes," she said slowly, "I have heard of the Melting Pot, but Chee Ming says there is no fire under it."

"He knows better than that, for he has been scorched by it," said Con.

"But a race does not rise to greatness by fear and force," Andrew March was saying ardently. "A city cannot become perfect against its will. There is no love in Tau Kuan."

Helen was pensive. "That is what mother used to tell me," she said.

March sighed brokenly. Even Besur halted his self-inspection, and turned sad small eyes upon his mistress.

"Levington has told you the truth about our country," March continued. "The fire that Chee Ming has overlooked is freedom. It is not in his philosophy. Under his guidance Tau Kuan might one day be a unified nation, but it would be a vice of—Besurs."

"Does Besur trouble you?" she asked of Con, not hesitating to wreck her father's conversation.

"Not at all," said Levington, as he removed the spa from his neck for the fifth time. Nor did Con intend to grow serious, but he felt suddenly that this was the penalty for his wasted life—to come into her presence only in time to find that she was being drawn into an inevitable gray sacrifice. He did not observe the glance March gave him, a look of trust and appeal. Helen did not comprehend the new intensity in Levington's gray-blue eyes; she knew nothing of the pain she started in the heart of this wanderer. Then her father humbly asked:

Their Hairy Countenances Were a Fourfold Replica of Hate, Cruelty.

"Are you—are you fond of Prince Yekutol?"

She glanced at him quickly and smiled.

"You are like mother. She asked that question many times, when the prince and I were small, very young people."

"And what reply did you give your mother?"

"I do not remember. She counseled me, and made me promise—but I have forgotten. The prince can ride and shoot. He recites all the songs of Li Po. He is twenty-four years old, a pure Mongol."

If this were wanton torture, she delivered it with perfect calm. Levington caught his breath, and storm threatened within him. It was both a relief and an agony to know that she did not love the prince. Levington's personal state was sunk deeper when he recalled that he was himself a prisoner, and would doubtless be out of the way in a short while. And then he caught the sentence from her lips, a casual mention:

"Our nuptials begin at the new moon."

Andrew March leapt to the center of the rug, and his eyes were ablaze.

"Little girl, you do not know life! You speak of things unbearable. This is criminal. You are white, as your mother tried to impress upon you, and they have made you forget it. You cannot be handed about in the oriental fashion. They are crazy out here. Yes, they are devils!"

Now the withered and double-scarred Chinese servant entered the room, and at his heels came four of the huge soldiers, the same who had ridden down the white men in the ravine, and who also had appeared against them before the prince. Their swords dangled and chinked. Their boots were free from dust, and the cloaks upon their high shoulders were of heavy raw silk, a golden yellow. Their hairy countenances were a fourfold replica of hate and cruelty. They had come to remove the prisoners.

Con Levington had to be urged.

CHAPTER IX.

Below the Walls.

On his roof again, Con noted that an awning of green silk had been stretched over his doorway, and a couch placed beneath it in the open air, for his added comfort. A silver pitcher of wine stood on a taboret, and he found that the wine was acceptable, having been cooled in spring-water. But all was secondary, even the silent departure of the guards, for he was thinking in a whirl of Helen March.

Her innocence was amazing, like her wisdom—an American personality with strange diagonals of the Orient. Con loved the tang of desert sunlight upon her face, her throat and arms. Her shoulders were neither wide nor narrow, and she was not tall. He remembered everything she had said, and was unable to evade her final utterance, which became more and more a sublimated poison to him. He turned back to yesterday, recalled how she had ridden, how her pony had galloped from the top of the ravine after her word had saved them, how her brown hair had streamed out from the soft gray cloak. No Chinese princess could ever have ridden at such a pace. But, again, there was the gentle, almost lifeless movement of her hands, and the low fullness of her voice when she talked of Tau Kuan.

She was a delightful sorrow to Levington, as if all his days, too, had foretold her. She did not know herself. She was eighteen. The ways of these outland people were familiar to her, and it was natural she should love their national interests, strangely like America's, bitterly different. The reddish palace was home. Her mother was gone. The grand vizir had brought her American gowns, street suits, and other articles the models had displayed at Sperman's in the city terribly far distant.

There was no estimating the pains the old Chinese had taken to secure such things for her. Con knew at least of his connection with the Wedger house, which must have been arranged by secret means, and it was clear that Chee Ming had taken many a point from Cecil Wedger's incipient queens of the cinema. The vizir had been content to cook for a young snob, merely to garner some information as to how a young American girl should be dressed, how she must talk and think, and what, if anything, might please her. Con appreciated the genius that had made the exclusive Wedgers a part of Chee Ming's plan for the completion of Tau Kuan, empire of the Yellow Sun.

The tangle of East and West troubled Levington more and more. Helen had almost lost her mother's counsel regarding Prince Yekubol. It was too easy to feel the dead Elthna's horror of the young Mongol, and of the plan she had foreseen, his marriage with her little white daughter. The mother must have striven to develop American instincts—the riding of ponies, love of oak trees, independence, and natural frankness.

Levington saw more vividly how March must have loved Elthna, how the loss of her had nearly broken down his sanity, and, at last, how he had kept secret his innermost intention for another journey into the perilous Gobi. It had meant too much for him to put his hope in words. He had planned to run down the international beast, koresh; all that side of the story was just as he had confided it to Levington. But then there had been much more. March's interests did not begin or end in a federal commission. Con realized now the deep and double joy of his friend when he had first found Chee Ming in Dory street, marketing the drug, only to find that the tracings led to the Gobi desert.

The affair of the present morning recurred to mind—the moonoul in his enchanted garden. Despite seeming leisure, events in the palace went too swiftly for a final valuation. Con was puzzled to find that the more closely he tried to recall the garden, the appearance of the fat lord, the singing bird, the dancer, and the magician, the less he knew about them. Had the juggler poured his wine into the fourth dimension, or was the watcher merely transported by a breath of the drug? Levington went now to the outer corners of his prison, enduring the hostile eyes of a double guard, to look for the vine-covered bower of royal entertainment, but could see nothing of it. He must have turned into a courtyard of the palace itself. One grim assurance clung to him—the sinister fragrance of koresh.

Through mid-afternoon, as often as his active mind abandoned some new and equally futile plan of escape, his thought circled around to Helen. He reclined under the green silken awning and repeated her name. He was awakened to the center of his being, and was scarcely aware that every new plan for escape included two others besides himself, and one a princess. Mentally she remained with him—in the throne room, her glance toward the prisoner she had spared, her boredom with the proceedings, her beautiful feet, a Western woman as he must have guessed had it not been for the slight tilt of her brows and this he had seen, more closely, to be but the cunning work of her maid-servants; in her own apartment, surrounded by things American, the transformation that was not complete because of her Chinese training, personal qualities that fantalized him, the first words that had thrilled him so unaccountably and the last bringing a clutch of terror; the clear young beauty of her face, her lips, the soft brown of her hair, the curve of girlish shoulders, the grave pleasure at meeting that stranger, her father, and the unemotional view she held of her own future as queen of this fantastic state. These fragmentary thoughts possessed Levington, brought him life as it had never come before, hurt him savagely, so that he sighed and tossed about on the green cushions.

Then he remembered once again that they would not permit him to live. This fact had a totally new aspect, and the novelty of it now brought him to his feet. His gray slave started up in surprise, and the pair of big-sworded soldiers made themselves felt at the stair-head. For the first time in his career Con rebelled against death. It seemed no longer a part of the game. Instant or slow, death did not interest him now; it was a stupid rule of the play. He wanted mightily to live. There was something both sweet and very bitter in dwelling in the same desert city with Helen March. There were so many things he had to tell her, so much he longed to ask; also an additional urgency for a talk with her father.

Late in the afternoon, he retreated to his inner chamber, hot and impatient. In the smaller of two rooms, which were barely furnished, the walls a creamy white, he flung himself upon the soft couch, but its touch was oddly unpleasant, like a caress from the wrong person. He arose in disgust, and stared at the brass lamp with its fragrant green oil. The gray boy also had come in out of the sun, and was now a squint beside the divan. Slowly he pulled the cord that set the long curtains swaying overhead. From time to time he sprinkled water upon these curtains, then resumed the fanning. But physical comfort only heightened Con's uneasiness. He felt the power of the fact that they were bestowing these elaborate attentions upon him only to make him a better white sire in the history of Tau Kuan.

No one came. The sun laid a golden path across the rug of the outer room. Levington's repeated requests, invitations and demands for Chee Ming resulted in nothing. The day seemed interminable.

At the hour of sunset his two warriors appeared at the door, with two others. They were always the same sort of tall, muscular riders, and seemed to represent a certain blend of large-boned races, especially designed for war. They led Con to the baths, and March was already there, prone upon the mat, suffering the barber. The familiar key-shaped blade was poised and darting about his face.

"They brought me a Kurdish woman," said March, with a tinge of disgust.

"What is our move?" asked Levington, as they unwound his costume, and the masseur appeared at his side.

"I can't hear it," said March.

"We've got to find a way. Have you figured out anything?"

"I haven't forgotten that we are at least five weeks' journey from anywhere, and every hour of those weeks an impossibility to us."

The irony hurt the younger man, who saw that his friend was broken. The odds dismayed March. His beloved was dead. His quest had ended in this weird defeat. "And it is too late to stop their marriage," he concluded. His despair was very hard for Con.

The baths were accomplished without another opportunity for words, and Con was taken under guard to his two rooms and the roof. He had seen no more of the palace than before—the same dim scented corridors, the spray of three fountains, the broad shadow crescents that its roofs cast down upon the houses clustered under the eastern wall. He could not guess how many human beings were contained here. He saw nothing of the stunted and crooked men of the mines, for they did not dwell within the city. The soldiery was in evidence, mostly upon steeds that were more sturdy than symmetrical. On the return across the palace lawn Con had noted a small party of women, closely veiled, moving toward the fountains. Their robes were of figured stuffs, the ends of their head-veils drifting white. Two coffee-colored giants had walked behind them.

Food was served as before. Attendance was servile and silent. The dinner was worth eating, for it included

The Maid Faced Again the Man Who Puzzled and Terrified Her.

roast lamb, a salad of small orange-colored leaves, spicy and each as round as a penny, and vegetables which were in favor like potato crossed with celery. The wine was an evening breath from fruitful places.

Again he sent for the vizir and no one came. The mists of day's end lifted from the western fields, and once again the flocks were herded away for the night. Just over the western fortification four camels were unhitched from their plows and driven to the rushy spring near the sheds. The little monkey visited the white man again in June to share cumquats and green teas. Levington began all over, pacing the roof, searching mentally for escape. He wanted to talk with March.

Final rays of sunlight touched the high apartments of the princess in her own in blue twilight. The victorian tiles jutted down closely over every window, like clinging, watchful shadows. The walls felt cruel to the white man. He began to imagine the marriages and matings in those upper chambers, the deaths and births and sullen hearts, cold lust, endless lassitude.

With the darkness came the Arabian girl. One of her guards remained with the two at the stairway. The maid faced again the man who puzzled and terrified her. Con could not read the warm depths of her eyes, but fancied many things. She attempted a few words in her own language, then smiled faintly as he failed to comprehend. He would never know what she had wished to tell him. Again he gave her the inner chamber and drew the curtains after her, again he went circuiting about his inclosure. The monkey whimpered, then climbed over the wall the way he had come, quite distressed that his new friend should not notice him.

Night hours crept about the palace. Some time toward midnight a mumble of words reached the prisoner from a place below. This was unusual, for the voices of the city were too far distant to carry to the roof and the shelving palace was mute. The sound continued, indistinctly. Levington waited at the edge of the wall, but could not hear clearly. Evidently it was a prayer, very earnestly presented. More and more it sounded like the voice of Andrew March.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The state of Michigan contains 5,144 inland lakes, covering an area of 1,114 square miles, besides a water-front on the Great Lakes of 1,850 miles.

# PUBLIC HIGHWAYS

## AID NATIONAL FOREST ROADS

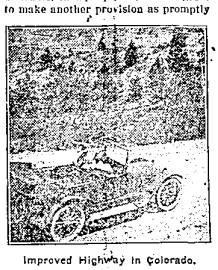
Secretary Meredith Favors More Liberal Financial Co-operation in Western States.

Speaking before a hwy. representatives for western states, Edwin T. Meredith, secretary of agriculture, stated his belief that in the western states, where large areas of government lands are located, the federal government should adopt a system of financial co-operation more liberal to the states than is the case in the rest of the country.

"I think we must recognize the fact that the existence of these large areas of government lands places these states in a somewhat different situation from the remainder of the country," said Mr. Meredith, "and that it would be only equitable for the federal government to increase its percentage of co-operation over the present basis. I also heartily in favor of continuing the appropriations for the building of national forest roads. These forests constitute a great natural resource, and their preservation and development is a national responsibility which ought to be met in full measure.

Mr. Meredith advocated active continuation of present federal and state co-operation in connection with state road systems with the systems of adjoining states in order that the working out of an adequate highway program for the whole United States may proceed in an orderly manner. He also advocated the continuance of work now going forward under the federal aid road act.

"As 1921 is the last year covered by the act," he said, "it would be highly desirable, in my opinion, for congress to make another provision as promptly



Improved Highway in Colorado.

as possible for the continuation of the work under the present system by an appropriation of at least $100,000,000 for each of the four fiscal years beginning with 1922."

## MAINTENANCE COST OF ROADS

Ultimate Economy of Concrete Road Depends on the Small Amount Needed to Keep It Up.

The cost of a road involves not only first cost but the cost of keeping it in continuously usable condition. If this were not so, the cleanly built gravel road would be entirely suitable for our main traveled thoroughfares. The ultimate economy of the concrete road depends upon the extremely small amount of money required to keep it in excellent condition. The only maintenance needed on a well built concrete road is that necessary to keep filled with tar the joints and the cracks that may develop. The 1919 report of the state commissioner of highways of New York gives the average cost of maintenance for the three years 1915, 1916, and 1917 as follows: Macadam, $976.00 per mile per year for the maintenance of 2,403 miles; gravel, $24.00 per mile per year for the maintenance of 178 miles; first-class concrete, $124.00 per mile per year for the maintenance of 264 miles.

## ROADS AS COMMUNITY ASSET

The Better They Are the More Likely They Are to Prove an Investment to Residents.

The better the roads are, the more likely they are to prove an investment and consequently valuable as a community asset. Without roads that can be used, regardless of weather and season, we might as well be living along the trails that our forefathers used when hensts of burden were literally such and mark the meaning almost nothing.

## BULLETIN IS OF IMPORTANCE

Useful Contribution From United States Department of Agriculture on Weather.

The highway weather bulletin is an important and useful contribution from the United States department of agriculture, made doubly so by recognition of the fact that the state of the roads is more important than the weather, and that you needn't worry about the weather if the roads are paved.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Casco, Wis.—"After the birth of each of my children I had displacement and was so weak I couldn't do anything. I found a book about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound so thought I would try it and after taking it I soon felt better. That was fifteen years ago and I have felt well ever since except that I had a slight attack of the trouble some time ago and took some more of your Compound and soon all right again. I always recommend your medicine and you may publish my testimonial for the benefit of other women."—Mrs. JULES BEAU, R. 1, Box 99, Casco, Wis.

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, made from native roots and herbs, contains no narcotic or harmful drug and today holds the record of being the most successful remedy for female ills in this country, and thousands of voluntary testimonials prove this fact.

If you have the slightest doubt that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help you, write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential), Lynn, Mass., for advice. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman, and held in strict confidence.

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