SYNOPSIS. ---11---

In the New York home of James Brood, son, Frederic, tells Lydia Desmond his flancee, of a message announcing his father's marriage. Brood and his bride have melted the steel that was driven arrive. She wins Frederic's liking at first meeting. Brood shows dislike and veiled hostility to his son Lydia and Mrs. Brood met in the jade-room, where Lydia works as Brood's secretary. Mrs. Brood makes changes in the household and gains her husband's consent to send Mrs. Desmond and Lydia away. She fascinates Frederic. She begins to fear Ranjab, Brood's Hindu servant, in his uncanny appearances and disappearances, and Frederic, remembering his father's East Indian stories and firm belief in magic, fears unknown evil. Brood tells the story of Ranjab's life to his guests. "He killed a womwho was unfaithful to him. Yvonne plays with Brood. Frederic and Lydia as with figures on a chess board. Brood madly jealous, tells Lydia that Frederic is not his son, and that he has brought him up to kill his happiness at the proper time with this knowledge. Lydia goes to beg Brood not to tell Frederic of his unhappy parentage, but is turned from her purpose. Frederic, at dinner with Dawes and Riggs, is seized with an impulse of fillal duty, and under a queer impression that he is influenced by Ranjab's will, hunts up his father, who gives him the Frederic had her portrait up there to ect. Brood tells Frederic the story of his dead wife and the music master.

CHAPTER XVI-Continued.

"It was made in Vienna," interrupted Frederick, not without a strange thrill of satisfaction in his soul, "and before you were married, I'd say. On the back of it is written: "To my own sweetheart'-in Hungarian, Yvonne says. There! Look at her. She was like that when you married her. God, how adorable she must have been. "To my own sweetheart! Ho ho!"

A hoarse cry of rage and pain bust from Brood's lips. The world went red before his eyes.

sweetheart was!"

scended the stairs alone. He went loved anyone else but you. I knowstraight to the library where he knew God help me, I know! Don't come that he could find Yvonne. Ranjab, near me! Not now! I tell you that standing in the hall, peered into his Frederic is your son. I tell you that white, drawn face as he passed, and Matilde loved no one but you. You started forward as if to speak to him. drove her out. You drove Frederic But Brood did not see him. He did out. And you will drive me out." not lift his gaze from the floor. The | She stood over him like an accusing Hindu went swiftly up the stairs, a sagel, her arms extended. He shrank deep dread in his soul.

The abades were down. Brood stopped inside the door and looked me? You cannot know-you have no dully about the library. He was on right to say-" the point of retiring when Yvonne spoke to him out of the shadowy cor- she murmured, suddenly relaxing. Her ner beyond the fireplace.

Then she emerged slowly, almost like a specter, from the dark background formed by the huge mahogany bookcases that lined the walls, from floor to celling. "You were a long time up there," she went on.

Why is it so dark in here, Yvonne? he asked lifelessly.

"So that it would not be possible for me to see the shame in your eyes,

James." He leaned heavily against the long table. She came up and stood across the table from him, and he felt that her eyes were searching his very soul.

"I have hurt him Beyond all chance for recovery," he said hoarsely. "Oh, you coward!" she cried, leaning over the table, her eyes blazing. "I can understand it in you. You have no soul of your own. What have you

done to your son, James Brood?" He drew back as if from the impact of a blow. "Coward? If I have crushed his soul, it was done in time. Yvonne, to deprive you of the glory of doing it."

"What did he say to you about me?" "You have had your fears for nothing. He did not put you in jeopardy." he said scornfully.

"I know. He is not a coward," she

said calmiy. "In your heart you are reviling me. You judge me as one guilty soul judges another. Suppose that I were to confess to you that I left him up there with all the hope, all the life blasted out of his eyes-with a wound in his heart that will never stop bleeding-that I left him because I was sorry for what I had done and could not stand by and look upon the wreck

I had created. Suppose-" "I am still thinking of you as a coward. What is it to me that you are sorry now? What have you done to when you told him his mother wasthat wretched, unhappy boy?"

"He will tell you soon enough. Then you will despise me even more than I | that I was a cowardly liar." espise myself. God! He -- he them always scoffing at me! For a breaking before you can ever hope to ness to keep the secret I shall now But you do love him." cried Frederic. So you can see how far I f love yes, love, not pity, for himords I huried at him. It was as if I world that I love. Then it passed. He | going out?" was not meant for me to love. He was torture me as I have tortured him." "You poor fool!" she cried, her eyes

is I have doubted my own west on as if he had not

heard her scathing remark. "Some times I have felt a queer gripping of the heart when I was harshest toward him. Sometimes his eyes-her eyesinto my heart long ago, his voice and the touch of his hand gently have checked my bitterest thoughts. Are you listening?"

"Yes." "You ask what I have done to him. It is nothing in comparison to what he would have done to me. It isn't necessary to explain. You know the thing he has had in his heart to do. have known it from the beginning. It is the treacherous heart of his mother that propels that boy's blood along its craven way. She was an evil thingas evil as God ever put life into."

"Go on." "I loved her as no woman ever was flash in my face. She was beautifulshe was as lovely as- But no more! I was not the man. She loved another. Her lover was that boy's father."

Dead silence reigned in the room, save for the heavy breathing of the man. Yvonne was as still as death itself. Her hands were clenched against her breast.

"That was years ago," resumed the man, hoarsely.

"You-you told him this?" she cried. aghast. "He said she must have loathed me

as no man was ever loathed before. Then I told him."

"You told him because you knew she "To my own sweetheart!" he cried did not loathe you! And you loved out. He sprang forward and struck | Matilde-God pity your poor soul! For the photograph from Frederic's hand. no more than I have done you drove It fell to the floor at his feet. Before her out of your house. You accuse me the young man could recover from his in your heart when you vent your rage surprise, Brood's foot was upon the on that poor boy. Oh, I know! You bit of cardboard. "Don't raise your suspect me! And you suspected the hand to me! Don't you dare to strike other one. Before God, I swear to me! Now I shall tell you who that you that you have more cause to suspect me than Matilde. She was not Half an hour later James Brood de- untrue to you. She could not have

> back, glaring. "Why do you say these things to

> "I am sorry for you, James Brood,

body swayed against the table, and "Close the door," she said huskily. then she sank limply into the chair



He Sprang Forward and Struck the Photograph From Frederic's Hand.

alongside. "You will never forget that you struck a man who was asleep. absolutely asleep. That's why I am sorry for you."

hand to his eyes. "Yes, yes-he was asleep! Yvonne, I-I have never been so near to loving him as I am now.

to stop me. But first let me ask you a question. What did Frederic say was what you claim?"

looked at me with his mother's eyes to feel that you loved him. Ah, I see He doubts his senses. And when he sible. Today he makes it easy for me. came his wife—I deliberately took that when I kept on striking blows at his You are a great, strong man-a won- comes to you, my friend, and whines He has hurt you beyond all reason, not step in order to make complete my very soul. Her eyes eyes that were derful man in spite of all this. You his secret doubts into your excellent because he hates you but because he triumph over him. I became the wife always pleading with me! But, curse have a heart—a heart that still needs and trustworthy ear, do me the kind- loved your mother."

He gasped. "As if my heart hasn't you amiable fraud." Standing on tip- the snap of your finger for me. What saw him go down before the already been broken," he groaned. toe, she put her lips to the idol's ear is all this you are saying, Yvonne? "Your head has been hurt, that's all. and whispered. Frederic, across the You must be mad. Think! Think a single thought of the cost to myself. had hurt the only thing in all the There is a vast difference. Are you room, roused from his lethargy by the what you are saying."

He looked at her in dull amazement, tion, rose to his feet and took several ing. I know my own mind well enough.

-- I gave him an hour to--to--" "To get out?"

She passed swiftly by him as he manded Frederic, unsteadily. started toward the door. In the hall, from the upper windows, she turned back. to face him. To his astonishment, her cheeks were aglow and her eyes bright with eagerness. She seemed almost radiant.

"Yes; it needs breaking, James," she said, and went up the stairs, leaving him standing there dumfounded. Near the top she began to hum a blithe tune. It came down to him distinctlythe weird little air that had haunted him for years—Feverelli's!

CHAPTER XVIL

Foul Weather.

To Brood's surprise, she came half way down the steps again, and, leaning over the railing, spoke to him with a voice full of irony.

"Will you be good enough to call off your spy, James?" "What do you mean?" He had start-

ed to put on his light overcoat. "I think you know," she said, briefly. "Do you consider me so mean, so

infamous as-" he began hotly. "Nevertheless, I feel happier when I know he is out of the house. Call off your dog, James."

He smothered an execration and then called out harshly to Jones. "Ask Ranjab to attend me here, Jones. He loved before-or since. I thought she is to go out with me," he said to the loved me-God, I believe she did. He- butler a moment later. Yvonne was still leaning over the banister, a scornful smile on her lips.

"I shall wait until you are gone. intend to see Frederic alone," he said. with marked emphasis on the final

"As you like," said he, coldly.

She crossed the upper hall and disappeared from view down the corridor leading to her own room. Her lips were set with decision; a wild, reckless light filled her eyes, and the smile of scorn had given way to one of exaltation. Her breath came fast and tremulously through quivering nostrils as she closed her door and hurried across to the little vine-covered balcony.

"The time has come—the time has as straight and fearless as a soldier, come, thank God," she was saying to and the light of victory was in her herself, over and over again.

She turned her attention to the window across the court and two floors above her-the heavily curtained window in Brood's "retreat." There was power of speech. His brain was filled no sign of life there, so she hurried to with a thousand clattering noises. the front of the house to wait for the departure of James Brood and his man. on rapidly. "He disowns you. Very The two were going down the front well; the time has come for me to steps. At the bottom Brood spoke to exact payment from him for that and able as a rock, bowed low and moved go away with you. I-" off in an opposite direction to that taken by his master. She watched tongue and drawing still farther away until both were out of sight. Then she from her. rapidly mounted the stairs to the top

Frederic was lying on the couch near the jade-room door. She was able to distinguish his long, dark figure after peering intently about the shadowy interior in what seemed at first to be a vain search for him. She shrank back, her eyes fixed in horror he stirred and then half raised himself | has killed every-" on one elbow to stare at the figure in the doorway.

"Is it you?" he whispered, hoarsely, and dropped back with a great sigh on

"He has gone out. We are quite prize beast, that he might make me alone," she said, stopping to lean pay for the wrong that my poor against the table, suddenly faint with mother did a quarter of a century

marling laugh. "Get up Frederic. Be a man! I want to talk it over with you. We years in ignorance of-" must plan. We must decide now-at once-before he returns." The words broke from her lips with sharp, staccatolike emphasis.

wonder in his heavy eyes.

"Pull yourself together," she cried, hurriedly. "We cannot talk here. am afraid in this room. It has ears, know. That awful Hindu is always

his hands. With his elbows on his knees he watched her movements in a | don't-" state of increasing interest and bewil-"Asleep!" he murmured, putting his derment. She turned abruptly to the Buddha, whose placid, smirking countenance seemed to be alive to the situ- still loves the poor girl who went out ation in all of its aspects. Standing of this house with his curses ringing this you are saying? What have you close, her hands behind her back, her "I am going up to him. Don't try figure very erect and theatric, she pro- who died still hearing them. And I

full of mockery. strange words and still stranger acknow everything. You know more am going with you."

him, if you will. I shall not oppose | closed, smoldering eyes. "But he will Find out what he expects to know before long-before long." "What are you doing, Yvonne?" de-

She whirled about and came toward which was bright with the sunlight him, her hands still clasped behind her

his question.

you," said he, shaking his head. "And are you not in love with me?" He was startled. "Good Lord, Yvonne!"

could feel the warmth that traveled from her body across the short space that separated them. The intoxicating perfume filled his nostrils; cumb to the delicious spell that came over him. When he opened them an instant later, she was still facing him,



She Watched Until Both Were Out of Sight. -

dark, compelling eyes.

"Well," she said, deliberately, "I am ready to go away with you."

He fell back stunned beyond the

"He has turned you out," she went Ranjab and the latter, as imperturb- for all that has gone before. I shall

"Impossible!" he cried, finding his

"Are you not in love with me?" she whispered softly. He put his hands to his eyes to shut

out the alluring vision. "For God's sake, Yvonne-leave me. Let me go my way. Let me-"

"He cursed your mother! He curses you! He damns you—as he damned her. You can pay him up for everyupon the prostrate shadow. Suddenly thing. You owe nothing to him. He

> and with a loud cry of exultation raised his clenched hands above his

"By heaven, I will break him! Her heart leaped. The blood rushed | will make him pay! Do you know back to her face. Quickly closing the | what he has done to me? Listen to door, she advanced into the room, her this: he boasts of having reared me tread as swift and as soft as a cat's. to manhood, as one might bring up a ago. All these years he has had in He laughed, a bitter, mirthless, mind this thing that he has done today. All my life has been spent in preparation for the sacrifice that came know what has happened. Get up! an hour ago. I have suffered all these

"Not so loud!" she whispered, alarmed by the vehemence of his re-

awakened fury. He came to a sitting posture slowly, agely. "Can you imagine anything such that you resisted only because all the while staring at her with a dull more diabolical than the scheme he has had in mind all these years? To pay out my mother-whom he loved and still loves-yes, by heaven, he still but one purpose in mind. I came here loves her!-he works to this beastly to take you away from the man who end. He made her suffer the agonies here, even though he may seem to be of the damned up to the day of her elsewhere. We will go down to my death by refusing her the right to have the child that he swears is no He slowly shook his head and then child of his. Oh, you don't know the lieving myself to be justified. I would allowed his chin to sink dejectedly into story-you don't know the kind of man you have for a husband-you He would have gone to his grave be-

"Yes, yes, I do know," she cried, violently, beating her breast with clinched | degraded, by the boy he had reared hands. "I do know! I know that he in her ears a score of years ago, and ceeded to address the image in a voice had almost come to the point of pity- did not stop to consider all that I ing him-I was failing-I was weaken- should have to overcome. First, there "Well, my chatterbox friend, I have ing. He is a wonderful man. I-I pierced his armor, haven't I? He will was losing myself. But that is all tegrity to consider. I could see noth-Brood lowered his head. "He said creep up here and ask you, his won- over. Three months ago I could have ing else but triumph over James derful god, to tell him what to do left him without a pang-yesterday I Brood. To gain my end it was neces-"And it was then that you began about it, ai-e? His wits are tangled. was afraid that it would never be pos-

whisper to you, for I trust you, too, eric, in stark wonder. "You don't care was willing to go to—ah, it was a hard one and peering out through the other.

or me to despise. He was born Slowly he began to pull himself to steps toward her. "There! Now you It is settled; I am going away and I go away with me? Will you take me?" I have played. I knew that you would

"Yes. I think you should go to him. than James Brood knows, for you . "I cannot listen to you, Yvonne," know what his charming wife is about cried Frederic, aghast. His heart was It. means the end. I have done all See if anyone is there? I feel-I feel to do next." She drew back and pounding so flercely that the blood that could be done and I have falled. that someone is near us. Look I say." tee regarded the image, through haif- surged to his head in great waves, at Thank God, I have failed!" She came

most stunning him with its velocity, swiftly to him and, before he we in an ecstasy of triumph. She was hand and pressed it to her lips He Provence!"

"Good God in heaven!" he gasped, dropping suddenly into a chair and "Come with me," she said, ignoring burying his face in his shaking hands. "What will this mean to Lydia-what "He—he thinks I am in love with will she do—what will become of her?"

A quiver of pain crossed the woman's face, her eyelids fell as if to shut out something that shamed her in spite of all her vainglorious protesta-She came quite close to him. He tions. Then the spirit of exaltation resumed its sway.

"You cannot marry Lydia now," she said, affecting a sharpness of tone that he caused him to shrink involuntarily. "It drew a deep breath, his eyes closing is your duty to write her a letter toslowly as his senses prepared to suc- night, explaining all that has happened today. She would sacrifice herself for you today, but there is-tomorrow! A thousand tomorrows, Frederic. Don't forget them, my dear. They would be ugly after all, and she is too good, too fine to be dragged

> nto---' "You are right!" he exclaimed, leaping to his feet. "It would be the vilest act that a man could perpetrate. Why-why it would be proof of what he says of me-it would stamp me forever the bastard he-No, no, I could never lift my head again if I were to do this utterly vile thing to Lydia. He said to me here-not an hour agothat he expected me to go ahead and blight that loyal girl's life, that would consider it a noble means of self-justification! What do you think of that? He- But wait! What is this that we are proposing to do? against my-against him? What does Give me time to think! Why-why, it all mean? How you must have hated can't take you away from him, Yvonne! God in heaven, what am I thinking of? Have I no sense of honor? Am 1-"

significantly.

stoop to a foul trick like this. Dodo you know what you are suggesting?" He drew back from her with a look of disgust in his eyes. "No! I'm not that vile! I-"

"Frederic, you must let me-"

loves you, he trusts you-oh, yes, he through which she should know great this? You would-"

great agitation.

more. Although I can never marry It was the most cruel but the most the end of my life. I will not betray think of it. As I stand here before that love. To the end of time she shall you now, Frederic, I am shorn of all know that my love for her is real and my power. I could not strike him as I true and-"

Hear what I have to say before you begged you to take your revenge, I condemn me. I am not the vile creature you think, Frederic. Wait! Let me think!"

He stared at her for a moment in deep perplexity, and then slowly drew near. "I do not believe you mean to do wrong-I do not believe it of you. You have been carried away by some

horrible..." "Listen to me," she broke in, flerce ly. "I would have sacrificed you-ay sacrificed you, poor boy-for the joy Frederic straightened up suddenly, it would give me to see James Brood grovel in misery for the rest of his life. Oh!" She uttered a groan of despair and self-loathing so deep and full of pain that his heart was chilled. "Good Lord, Yvonne!" he gasped,

dumfounded. "Do not come near me," she cried out, covering her face with her hands. For a full minute she stood before him. straight and rigid as a statue, a tragic figure he was never to forget. Suddenly she lowered her hands. To his surprise, a smile was on her lips. "You would never have gone away with me. know it now. All these months I have been counting on you for this very hour-this culminating hour-and now I realize how little hope I have really had, even from the beginning You are honorable. There have been "Oh, I'm not afraid!" he cried, sav- times when my influence over you was you were loyal to yourself-not to Lydia, not to my husband-but to yourself. I came to this house with has always stood as your father.

would not have become your mistress -pah! how loathsome it sounds! But I would have enticed you away, behave struck James Brood that blow. lieving himself to have been paid in full by the son of the woman he had for the slaughter, by the blood-"

"In God's name, Yvonne, what is against my-against him?"

"What! I shall comfe to that. was your soul, your honor, your inthing to do! But I did not shrink. I went into it without faltering, without He was to pay for all that, too, in the "I have thought-I am always think- end. Look into my eyes, Frederic. I

"We go tomorrow," she cried out, aware of her intention, clutched his convinced that he would go! "La was shocked to find that a sudden gush of tears was wetting his hand.

"Oh, Yvonne!" he cried miserably. She was sobbing convulsively. He looked down upon her dark, bowed head and again felt the mastering desire to crush her slender, beautiful body in his arms. The spell of her was upon him again, but now he realized that the appeal was to his spirit and not to his flesh-as it had been all along, he was beginning to suspect.

"Don't pity me," she choked out. "This will pass, as everything else has passed. I am proud of you now, Frederic. You are splendid. Not many men could have resisted in this hour of despair. You have been cast off, despised, degraded, humiliated. You were offered the means to retaliate. You-"

"And I was tempted!" he cried bitterly. "For the moment I was-"

"And now what is to become of me?" she wailed.

His heart went cold. "You-you will leave him? You will go back to Paris? Good Lord, Yvonne, it will be a blow to him. He has had one fearful slash in the back. This will break

"At least, I may have that consolation," she cried, straightening up in an effort to revive her waning purpose. "Yes, I shall go. -I cannot stay here now. I-" She paused and shud-

"What, in heaven's name, have you him to-"

Hated him? Oh, how feeble the word is! Hate! There should be a word that strikes more terror to the soul "You are not his son," she said, than that one. But wait! You shall know everything. You shall have the "But that is no reason why I should story from the beginning. There is much to tell and there will be consolation-ay, triumph for you in the story I shall tell. First, let me say this to you: When I came here I did not know that there was a Lydia Desmond. I would have hurt that poor girl, but it "I don't want to hear anything would not have been a lasting pain. more, Yvonne. What manner of wom- In my plans, after I came to know her, an are you? He is your husband, he there grew a beautiful alternative does! And you would leave him like happiness. Oh, I have planned well and carefully, but I was ruthless. I "Hush! Not so loud!" she cried, in | would have crushed her with him rather than to have failed. But it is all a "And let me tell you something dream that has passed and I am awake. Lydia, by heaven, I shall love her to magnificent dream-ab, but I dare not might have done a month ago. Even "Wait! Give me time to think," she as I was cursing him but a moment pleaded. He shook his head reso ago I realized that I could not have lutely. "Do not judge me too harshly. gone on with the game. Even as I knew that it was not myself who urged, but the thing that was having

its death struggle within me." "Go on. Tell me. Why do you

She was glancing fearfully toward the Hindu's door. "There is one man in this house who knows. He reads my every thought. He does not know all, but he knows me. He has known from the beginning that I was not to be trusted. That man is never out of my thoughts. I fear him, Frederic-I fear him as I fear death. If he had not

been here I-I believe I should have



"Ah, It Was a Hard Thing to Do!"

dared anything. I could have taken you away with me, months ago. But he worked his spell and I was afraid. faltered. He knew that I was afraid, for he spoke to me one day of the beautiful serpents in his land that were cowards in spite of the death they could deal with one flash of their fangs. You were intoxicated. I am a thing of beauty. I can charm as

"God knows that is true," he said

"But enough of that! I was stricken with my own poison. Go to the door! See if he is there. I fear-"

"No one is near." said he, after strid-

ing swiftly to both doors, listening at "You will have to go away, Frederic I shall have to go. But we shall not go together. In my room I have kept hidden the sum of ten thousand dollars, waiting for the day to come when He returned her look stendily. "No!" have no money of your own. I was "That is all I want to hear you day prepared even for that. Look again!

CTO BE CONTINUED.