



**Załącznik do Regulaminu
XIX edycji Konkursu Literackiego o Nagrodę FanFila**

Fragment utworu do przełożenia z języka angielskiego na polski
w ramach **kategorii translatorskiej**:

PEARL BUCK

HOME TO HEAVEN [excerpts]

[...]

“Marian, I’ve got the passports!”

Henry Allen burst into the kitchen of their small rented bungalow and whirled his wife’s slender figure away from the sink. Her arms were dripping dishwater and she wiped them on her apron.

“Henry!” she breathed.

“Take off that apron, Madame,” he ordered. “No more dishpan hands, if you please!”

She held up her narrow reddened hands, bare of everything except her wedding ring. “I can wear my jade again!” she cried.

“All your pretties,” he agreed.

They looked at one another and saw their future as bright as heaven before them. It was clear because it was exactly like their past. They knew what it was going to be. She glanced around the kitchen. Oh, if it could only begin now, this instant, without another day of the hateful present!

[...]

Henry watched her and smiled in sympathy. She was still pretty, this woman – the horrible housework hadn’t lasted quite long enough to ruin her blond beauty. There was nothing a couple of months of Shanghai life would not mend. Get her hands in shape, her skin, get her hair fixed up – anyway, she hadn’t taken on weight, thanks to the housework. She was no housekeeper – he’d be glad to get back to decent living again – his socks hadn’t been darned in weeks. The sew-amah had always kept his socks in perfect shape – always.

“Of course, Shanghai’s filthy after all those Japs,” he warned her.

[...]

The raw March winds which had blown them away from the shore of San Francisco were mild with April when they approached the low Bat shores of China. The sky line of Shanghai was untouched. They saw it from the ship's deck.

"It looks the same," Marian murmured.

"Exactly the same," Henry said.

[...]

In no time at all they were back in the compound. Ah Fong, the old houseboy, was not there. He had been shot as a spy, cook explained. The number two and number three amahs were also dead, number one amah explained. One had been caught in the bombing of Wing On's department store, and the other one – the young and pretty one – well, the Japanese! Number one amah looked fondly at Mollie and explained no further.

"Is Ah Fong really dead?" Mollie asked abruptly.

"Too bad, missy," Cook said, smirking.

[...]

They were going to a dinner at the British Consulate, and she was trying to decide between white and rose for her gown, between jade and Chinese pearls. Downstairs, Robert was practicing his violin. He had taken it up only recently and was doing rather well under a young Jewish refugee teacher, who was being saved thus from starvation.

"I do tell them," Henry snorted above his white tie. "They just say, 'More better no business' –"

"That's queer," Marian murmured and chose the rose taffeta and the pearls.

"Darn queer," Henry agreed.

But they weren't really worried about anything. Outside the walls of the compound the city was still filthy and partly ruined. That didn't worry them, either. In time it would be cleared up. Beggars roamed the streets, but then there had always been beggars, and they had two company cars, both chauffeured. The children were driven back and forth to school. The beggars tapped on the closed glass panes with their dirt-caked claws when the cars were held up by traffic, and pointed down their open mouths. But nobody paid any attention to them.

Inside the big quiet compound everything was just the same. They lived a perfectly happy life, isolated and safe. Of course it was safe? Yes, of course it was. Henry was number one. It was wonderful to be back – it was heaven.

Home to Heaven.

In: Far and Near: Stories of Japan, China, and America (1947)