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STORIES



The
SHAVER MYSTERY

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whispered:

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an hour...
I shall wait
for you!"



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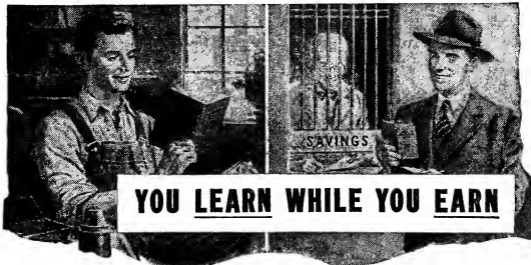
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All Stories Complete

.....

THE SHAVER MYSTERY.....By Richard S. Shaver

The complete story of the Mystery that rocked the science fiction world!

- No. 1. **FORMULA FROM THE UNDERWORLD** (13,000 words)..... 10
Illustrated by Enoch Sharp

There among the lost ones of the caves lie forgotten secrets, formulae that can mean health and happiness and peace to the races of the surface.

- No. 2. **ZIGOR MEPHISTO'S COLLECTION OF MENTALIA** (25,000 words)..... 30
Illustrated by Brady

Zigor came from an ancient family well known on the surface as well as in the caves; and he meant to gain back the power of his great ancestor.

- No. 3. **WITCH'S DAUGHTER** (22,000 words)..... 62
Illustrated by Malcolm Smith

Tom Kent couldn't dream what he would find when he followed this lovely girl into the back room of the little store and down the musty stairway.

- No. 4. **THE RED LEGION** (30,000 words)..... 90
Illustrated by Malcolm Smith, Julian S. Krupa and Robert Fuqua

Long ago tribes of Indians vanished into the bowels of the earth. Where did they go? Do they exist today, in their hideaway from the white man?

Front cover painting by Robert Gibson Jones
illustrating a scene in the caves

.....

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The

OBSERVATORY

..... by the Editor

HERE IT IS, readers, in spite of Hell and High Water! The special Shaver Mystery issue! And if you think that first sentence isn't sincere, you should have been in this editorial office to help put the June issue to bed! Never in our nine years of editing have such fantastic things happened to make an issue almost impossible. As a result, many small details, many planned features, do not appear; our plans are not complete; the issue is not what we wanted it to be. But the major portion is there, and with a little study, you will see all that we intended to convey, and understand it.

PERHAPS a brief recital of what happened may give you some idea of the impossibility of these things being entirely natural. First, in our nine years, a certain standard of progress has been set up between printer and publisher in the mechanics of getting out a magazine. This standard is religiously maintained. A "deadline" is the "hille" on which all actions are founded. To miss a deadline is the cardinal sin. Thus, to begin with, manuscripts, properly edited, go to the typesetter at least three weeks in advance of "press date." In this case, press date was March 13. Manuscripts went to the typesetter on February 19. They should have been delivered on February 26 in galley form, ready for page make-up. They were set up (as provable by the date at the head of each galley set in type by the typesetter) on February 20 and 21. Yet, they were not delivered to this office until March 5. Why? Because no one could locate them! They had apparently vanished into thin air. And yet, when they were finally found, they were *exactly* where they should have been, in the proper location, with all the proper identification to locate them instantly. When they were delivered, they were almost entirely *useless*, because, ranging from just a few dozen typographical errors, to as many as 92 in *four inches* of type, they required complete re-setting of *all* vital passages! Even more mysterious that otherwise almost letter-perfect typographers should set so atrociously, the proofreaders who received that copy for checking, *found no errors!* They could look at a page with 92 errors in it, and see *none*. Or, as is more likely, *somehow* those proofs were not proofread. When this was suggested to the department heads, the comment was: "Ridiculous!" On page 129 you will find reproduced a specific passage which you can check

for yourself against pages 156, 157 and 158 where the *correct* copy appears, exactly as it was in the manuscript. You explain those errors. The man who set it could not!

NEXT, there were numerous instances of duplicate galleys inserted, which, if included in the makeup, would necessitate complete remaking of the page forms if not discovered in the first make-up. Other galleys were incorrectly numbered. Certain galleys mysteriously disappeared, and yet the numbers were correct, and did not show a missing galley where one really was. The sense of particular passages was subtly changed by minor errors which were hard to catch by any proofreader not entirely familiar with the Mystery because they seemed to make proper sense and continuity. Thus, all proofreading had to be done by your editor himself, and by Mr. Hamling, the only other man in this office who could detect such a subtle change.

WE AREN'T going to mention the hundred other things that happened to delay everything possible—the dozens of almost maliciously planned (so it seemed) interruptions from every conceivable source, the case of nerves we developed which made it impossible to type a single line that wasn't full of typographical errors; the consequent retyping and "messy" editing we had to do, all of which made the typographer's job the more confusing; the errors in titles painted into illustrations by the art department (such as "Witche's Daughter" instead of "Witch's Daughter" as it should be); the critical paper shortage that developed on this issue and on no other; the misplacing of work already done, so that it had to be done over, only to have the original work turn up in plain view exactly where you had placed it and had looked for it. We could go on, but we have more important things to put in this space. We only mention what we have as just one more proof (?) that Shaver isn't the only one who has what he calls "tamper."

NOW for the stories in this issue, all by Shaver. First, "Formula From The Underworld." This story is completely fiction—except for its description of the caves. All that is completely true, says Shaver—and true because he says he has *seen* it many times over the ray, and some times in

(Continued on page 8)

ADVICE TO READERS:

who are suffering the miseries of

BAD SKIN

Stop Worrying Now About Pimples and Blackheads

and other externally caused skin troubles

JUST FOLLOW SKIN DOCTOR'S
SIMPLE DIRECTIONS



SQUEEZING pimples or blackheads to get rid of them is a nasty, messy business—but that isn't the worst of it. Because doing so may also be injurious and leave your skin with unsightly, embarrassing blemishes. There is, now, a much easier, safer, cleaner way to help you rid your face of ugly, offensive, externally caused skin troubles. You merely follow a doctor's simple directions.

Good-Looking Skin Is Not for Women Only

You—yes, you—can have the same healthy, normal complexion free from externally caused skin troubles simply by giving your skin the special care that handsome screen stars give theirs. There's almost nothing to it—it is just about as easy as washing your face. *The whole secret consists of washing your face in a way that thoroughly cleanses the pores of every last speck of dirt and grime—something that ordinary cleansing may not do.* In fact, examination after examination shows that, usually, it is not a case of "bad skin" so much as a case of incomplete or faulty cleansing. What you should use is a highly concentrated soap like Viderm Skin Cleanser which penetrates the pores and acts as an antiseptic. When followed by a quick application of Viderm Medicated Skin Cream, specks of irritating dirt and grime are quickly washed out; they dissolve and disappear, leaving your skin clean, clear and free of the specks that often bring out pimples, blackheads and other externally-caused skin troubles.

It's Foolish to Take Bad Skin for Granted

It doesn't pay to risk marred skin, blotches, blemishes. Your very success in business, love and social life may depend upon your looks. *Handsome and a good appearance usually start with the condition of your skin.* Nobody likes a skin that looks unhealthy, unclean, abused, and marked with blackheads or pimples. **WOMEN ARE ATTRACTED TO MEN WHO HAVE SMOOTH,**

CLEAR, ROBUST-LOOKING SKIN. Business executives don't choose men who have a poor-looking complexion. Don't take chances with your success in life when this inexpensive Viderm formula may help you.

Don't murder your skin! Here's all you have to do to keep it smooth and clear. Use Viderm Skin Cleanser when you wash your face. Rub the rich lather of this highly-concentrated soap on your face for just a few seconds and then rinse it off. Then apply a little Viderm Medicated Skin Cream and that's all there is to it. Viderm Medicated Skin Cream quickly disappears, leaving your skin nice and smooth. This simple treatment, used after shaving, helps heal tiny nicks and cuts, relieves razor-burn and smarting, besides conditioning your skin.

Give Your Face This Treat for 7 Days

Stop worrying and being embarrassed over what may happen to your skin. Just send for your Viderm Double Treatment this minute, and be confident that you will keep a smooth and clear complexion. Follow the simple directions, written by a doctor, that you will get with your Viderm Double Treatment; then look in your mirror and listen to your friends admire your smooth, clear skin—the kind that women go for.

Just mail your name and address to The New York Skin Laboratory, 206 Division Street, Dept. 464 New York City 2, New York. By return mail you will receive both

of the Viderm formulas, complete with full directions, and packed in a safety-sealed carton. On delivery, pay two dollars plus postage. If you wish, you can save the postage fee by mailing the two dollars with your letter. Then, if you aren't thrilled with results, your money will be cheerfully refunded. Remember that both of the formulas you use have been fully tested and proven, and are reliable for you. If they don't help you, your treatments cost you nothing. After you have received your Viderm, if you have any questions to ask concerning abused skin, just send them in.

DON'T DO THIS!



Don't murder your skin by squeezing it. Skin is delicate. When you break it, you leave yourself wide open to miseries. It's far easier, far safer, to let the Double Viderm treatment help you enjoy a handsome, clear and blemish-free complexion.

The
OBSERVATORY

by the Editor

(Continued from page 6)

person—although he himself cannot say *how*, unless his theories of teleportation, mind control, etc., are true. Next is "Zigor Mephisto's Collection Of Mentalia" which is, in Shaver's own words, "a tale of Nydia of the cavern people, myself, and one Zigor Mephisto, descendant of an ancient and renowned family, one of which you may have heard before." Nydia is real, not fiction, Zigor Mephisto is real, and the story is true (insofar as any thought record can be determined to be true). "Witch's Daughter" is next, and the story is completely fiction, but what happens is very similar to what *really* happens many times, says Shaver. There are openings to the caves, and such persons as he describes do come to the surface, and for similar reasons. They also do similar things, and this is the real explanation for the many mysterious crimes, accidents and disappearances that happen all the time on the surface. The last story is "The Red Legion" which is fiction, but based on the true existence of an organization of Indians in this country, who do know of such things as the caves, and who do believe that many missing tribes of redmen did go down to live there many years ago, and are still there, although in decimated numbers. Many Indians will know that much of the story is based on fact, but few of them will corroborate it, and for very good reason. Yet, if they care to, we will publish any statement they make, either in support or in refutation.

THE articles in this issue speak for themselves. We had planned others. They will appear in future issues instead. The reason is the incredible mishaps that prevented their inclusion. Also missing is one story, "Mer-Witch Of Ether 18" which will appear in a future issue, and which is a tale that Shaver considers to be quite true of the weird races of beings who do inhabit places in what we call "empty space." His concept of what we should really mean, when we say the word "spirit."

AND now, for the information of those of you who "came in late" we give a "history" of the Shaver Mystery:

IN SEPTEMBER, 1943, your editors received a letter from Richard S. Shaver, who lived in Barto, Pennsylvania, giving us the key to an ancient alphabet which he claimed was the alphabet of the mother tongue of all languages, and which he did not want to die with him. We published this key in January 1944.

Almost immediately we began to receive letters

from readers who had dabbled around with the alphabet and discovered that it worked amazingly well in many languages, and especially so in languages more ancient.

Also, apparently encouraged by our publication of the alphabet, Mr. Shaver (then a welder in a war plant) wrote an account of an "adventure" in caves beneath the earth at incredible depths, where lived a race of people known as dero (detrimental robot) who were evil in intent, and tero (integrative robot) who were good in intent. These people, he explained, were descendants of the "abandonero," or those human beings who were abandoned here 12,000 (?) years ago when a race of people (giants) called the Titans and another race called the Atlans left the earth in space ships because they had discovered that the sun was throwing off radioactives which were causing them to age and die who had been immortal.

Since the Titan and Atlan cities were underground, and their vast civilization immovable, all their machines and cities were left intact; thus the abandonero, taking refuge in them, inherited many wonderful things, which, because of their sun-polarized destructive thinking processes, they turned to destructive purposes.

WITH the aid of such machines as the telaug (telepathic augmentor) and disintegrating rays, plus various instruments such as the "stim" which enhanced physical and emotional pleasures, these dero took to tormenting surface people and thereby being the basis for all of our legends of cavern wights, little people, demons, ghosts and—during the war—gremlins.

They cause many unexplained accidents, such as those train wrecks, plane crashes, cerebral hemorrhages, etc. which are otherwise unexplainable.

Further, Mr. Shaver declared that the Titans, living far away in space, or other people like them, still visit earth in space ships, kidnap people, raid the caves for valuable equipment, and, in general, supply the basis for all the weird stories that are so numerous (see Charles Fort's books) of space ships, beings in the sky, etc.

SHAVER'S first story (titled "I Remember Lemuria") by your editor because he refused to believe Shaver's claim to have gotten the story from the caves) told of the Titan migration from Earth, and the leaving of imperishable records of the event, and of Earth history, by a character named Mutan Mion. It also told of the battle between two factions, the evil faction led by a sun-polarized Titan named Zeit, and a good faction from space headed by a Titan goddess named Vanue, in the caves, which ended in Zeit being defeated and captured.

At the same time, L. Taylor Hansen, not having seen the Shaver stories (they were as yet unpublished) had made an important discovery, working as a scientist, which detailed this underground

battle, and definitely revealed the Sioux Indians' origin as Tibanaco, in South America, and revealed their secret tribal history which told of this battle and how they lost knowledge of the whereabouts of their city and became roamers.

COUPLE this with an incredible flood of letters from readers, claiming they believed the story, and *correcting* our mistake in attributing it to racial memory, and many letters claiming identical experiences in more or less detail and you have your editor's basis for hastily publishing the second story by Mr. Shaver (who had been stunned by receiving payment for his first, since he had intended it solely for publication so that the knowledge might not be lost) and calling it "Thought Records Of Lemuria."

These thought records are metallic strips of film on which thought is recorded, and which, when played back, causes the "listener" vicariously to experience the events recorded thereon. These records are played back to Mr. Shaver by beaming them into his brain from the caves by means of the teluga ray.

BY MEANS of teleportation, another faculty of the "rays," Mr. Shaver has seen the caves, been there, spent much time, although he confesses that so real are the "records" that it is impossible to determine (from memory) whether the event happened, or was only simulated in his mind.

DELUGED by thousands of letters, and faced with such evidence that here we had something that was definitely not a fraud, your editor made a special trip to Barto to investigate. While there we heard Mr. Shaver's "voices," but to our vexation, the gist of them was that we were "a dope." Later Shaver confided he had requested them to "lay off" while your editor was there. However, we did determine that the "voices" were not due to microphones, hidden on the premises, but were either real, or in our own mind. Self-hypnosis the experts would call it. Let's say that's what it was, and save the experts more postage.

We *did* find out the following things: (1) Mr. Shaver is perfectly sane. If he is not, we are all nuts; (2) He is perfectly sincere about the caves, the people in them, the Titans, the space ships, and his experiences with rays, projections, voices, pains, etc.; (3) He does *not* attribute one single experience to what we might term a "ghost" for lack of a better term. Witches, poltergeists, goblins, gremlins, fairies, dwarfs—all of them are real, physical, alive, being either the real thing or the teleported or telepathed image of the real thing.

WE FOUND out, also, that he is an extreme materialist. He does not believe in life after death, or that man has a soul, or that things have a basis in something invisible and imma-

terial. If such exist, he says he has no proof, and therefore will neither accept or reject. Man may have a soul, he says, but you can't see it, taste it, feel it, smell it or hear it. Therefore, he isn't concerned with it, because there is nothing he can do with it even if he could prove it existed.

Why dream up an "astral being" to explain a thing that can more logically be explained with something requiring less faith, and more science? If you hear a voice, even if it claims to be your dead grandmother, why credit it to something that cannot be proved, when it is more reasonable to credit it to something so simple and logical as a machine as simple as radio, and the speaker's voice a real voice in a real person's larynx whose residence is right here on this earth (or under its surface) rather than in a misty "spirit world"?

The cave people, says Mr. Shaver, have themselves created these superstitions to conceal their real existence, and thus obviate any real attempt to find them. Who would look for something he does not believe to exist? That is why the caves remain secret, he says. Even if we do see a hero, we call him a ghost and pull up the bedsheets.

MR. SHAVER told us how he began to hear his voices through a welding machine he was operating, which at first picked up the thoughts of his fellow workmen, and later, weird things that terrified him. Such things as horrible screams from someone being tortured, unseen people discussing outre subjects, speaking matter-of-factly of a world that, by all rights, could not possibly exist.

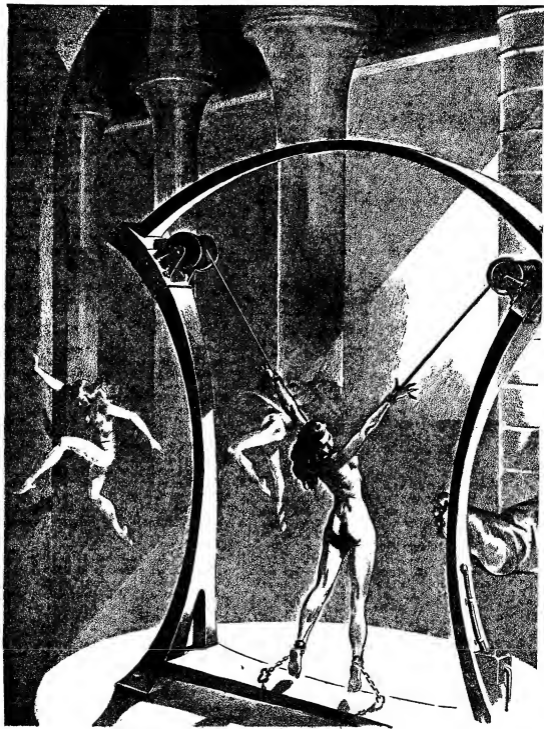
Mr. Shaver quit his job and fled. But no longer was the welder needed for hearing the voices. Then came years of horror, pain, terror, flight. The "voices" became aware of the "eavesdropper" and Mr. Shaver felt he was going mad. Yet, before long, he became convinced that it was true, and beneath him lay a vast, ancient warren of abandoned cities, filled with super-scientific machines, deteriorated by time and radioactivity to much less than the beneficial result they had originally had, and operated by a race of degenerate madmen.

TO "BRIEF" the whole concept given by the series of stories written by Mr. Shaver, the Earth is honeycombed by "caverns" which are inhabited by good and bad human creatures who are victims of detrimental radiations from old and "diseased with radioactivity" machines, and also victims of a vast "secrecy" which has become so traditional that it is maintained at all costs.

These creatures (and incidentally all surface races too) are descendants of the "abandonero" who were those unfortunates who could not be evacuated from the planet when the original races who built the underground cities left this planet because they had discovered that the sun was throwing out radiations that caused aging, and

(Continued on page 175)

Formula From



She struggled madly in the torturing ray

the Underworld



Harte Manville lowered himself into a cavern; and found a mad world.

I AM an explorer, by name Harte Manville. My face is badly scarred, one eye is missing. My hair is grizzled, but I am still strong and active.

Ten long years ago I had first heard that some works by the storied races of the Gods still existed, deep in earth. While reading a tale by Brandoch Daha called "The Womb of Tanit" I had realized that mysterious and perhaps immortal life might still exist in the bowels of old Mother Earth. I understood from his words that some of my experiences which I had explained to myself as hallucinations induced by privation had been actual occurrences of immense significance. I mused that it was an infinite shame such sincere and top-rank research minds of earth had to disguise their work as fiction to get it before the general mind at all.

Overcome with curiosity as to Daha's reactions to my own experiences, I was curious too as to what he might have to tell a man who knew some of the truths of the underworld. How he might loosen up and talk when he met a man who knew which small parts of his stories were fiction and which great parts were not. I sought him out and called upon him. I was not wrong. Mr. Daha was very glad to see me.

During the course of our night-long conversation our discussion touched on the subjects of the secret surviving worship of the ancient Moon Goddess, Tanit, and details of my expedition to plumb the depths of the bottomless hole in the Cave of the Bats in Virginia. The fact that we both knew that immortal beings have existed, do now exist, and will continue to exist, brought up naturally enough the age-old question:

"What is the Secret which keeps such life from dying as other life does?"

I remember his words:

"There have been many things mistaken for the Secret of Life. The phrase should mean 'continue existence without aging'. All right, this time it does. But you will have to grasp with your head firmly, not sleepily, to see the big meaning that can lie in simple phrases.

"Since before the flood, there exist in legends stories of those creatures, the Gods, who were immortal. Also tales of those other kind, of scholars who learned the secrets of immortality; tales of magi, of genis, of peris, of fairies, of immortal

witch-maids, of sorcerers, of enchanters. An enormous amount of smoke comes out of antiquity about 'the secret of life' which in modern words means 'how to exclude the poisons that cause age from the human body.' All that antique smoke indicates very strongly that once that true fire of wisdom from Prometheus *existed*; that storied Atlantis, full of immortals, *was*; that the Gods *did* tread earth, sinking ankle deep in solid rock.

"Let us go over that possibility between us. First, we will look at the beginning of life. Why is it young, and not old, like its mother? The womb of the mother holds the flesh of the baby, it is young, she is often aged. Why is this flesh not also old? Because, interposed between her body and the embryo are the walls of the womb. Everything that goes into the baby must pass through the food tube which passes through a large filtering organ called the placenta. Obviously some poison is removed. The baby's flesh is growing at a swift rate, the flesh of the aging mother is shrinking; it is more disintegrant than integrant."

HE PAUSED. We both had a drink, he lit a cigar; but before I could get going he started on.

"I once translated an ancient German work by Bokbe. It was a translation by him of a very old Arabian work, which was in turn from the Egyptian. God knows how old the original is. I will read you my translation."

He got up, pulled a pile of manuscripts from a drawer, and selecting one, began:

"After Atlantis sank beneath the blue roll of ocean sea, there still existed scattered about earth similar cities to Atlantis. These cities were not surface cities but were buried beneath the earth in great and deep caves to protect them from the deadly sun which they knew to be the cause of age! But now the cities were empty and dead of any intelligent life; their mighty corridors echoed to no laughing feet of the young immortal they had once bred into the storied races of the Gods. Instead, there slunk about their streets the pariahs, the lepers, the outcasts and criminals of the upper world, fled from the too frequent anger of the ignorant men of the surface. They had found a refuge in these secret lost cities.

"Now, the long vanished residents of these caverns had once been numerous and wealthy in the products that immortal minds which had conquered the problem of death could give. The God race, long ago had 'ascended into the blue of heaven in their fiery chariots,' the nomads told each other in the torch-lit darkness, as they gazed wonderingly about them at the machinery whose uses even the wisest man has not yet guessed and whose uses the ignorant tomb robbers and pariahs dismissed with the single word—magic. But that first wondering ignorance of the near-wild discoverers of the dwelling places of the Atlanteans' neighbors did not continue. For one day the inevitable happened.

"In a luxurious living place where the pillars were of sculptured metal set with sparkling brilliants like fruit and covered with the glitter of green glass-like leaves as a tree, and the walls alive with fearfully writhing figures in a frozen dance, a lonesome, lost child touched a button in a wall projection and screamed as the figures came to life and moved magically upon the wall. But there was love in the meaning of their movements, and there was thought in the sound that came from apertures in the walls. The thought that the waves from the wall carried to the child was a force that commanded him to love and to learn, to study and to think, to watch and to want, to become aware of what life could be and to strive mightily and cannily toward the things he wanted most. The force commanded him in such a way that he became the servant of the force.

"For in the wall was a strange thing that the Gods left, a machine that entertained and taught people and many and long were the hours the child spent in that chamber before stealing back to his mother. When he left he did not know enough to touch the button again and the machine rap on. Thus began the life of the First of the Latter Gods. Over his head stormed the armies of our first Pharaoh, but the child heard them not; he was deep underground watching the magic of pictures that moved and talked, and listening with his brain to thought from a wire in the machine.

"HE BROUGHT his playmates into the secret of the magic button that made the figures on the wall move and live and that made the big room fill with heady

music and with mighty waves of commanding thought. So it was that magic became the secret of outcasts, and the latter Gods the people who guarded the secret of the caverns from the scorned and feared men of the surface. Many and awesome were those secrets and poor and few their uses for them, but still magic lived again on earth. For they went to the surface with their strange secret weapons, fooling the surface folk and taking their gold and food and returning again to the depths, laughing with their talk of the sport it had been to make them think that ghosts were abroad, that demons and efrits had come for their souls or their gold.

"But some, like the boy who switched on the teaching machine, became aware of the great beauty and the mighty learning that lay in those machines, waiting only for the touch of curious fingers on the right button to spring into active life. These children of the caves became habitual explorers of the vast mysterious recesses, stretching on in ever different wonders into the depths, into the very heart of earth.

"Some of the machines gave off a sweet, overpowering pleasant beneficial force, invisible except as irridescence, yet force that awakened their minds and bodies into furious life and growth. Since the ancients were master builders these mechanisms did not wear out easily, having been built to endure. These inquiring, exploring young people, by virtue of the growth force that was in the magic machines, became mighty beings of vastly superior abilities and strengths. Beings superior to ordinary men by so far that they were, in truth, Gods!

"These gathered men about them, taught them the use of the stored weapons, the aircraft that lay in the ancient underground airship houses, and began again to build as the ancient Gods had builded. Great sections of earth came under their secret rule. In the northland the immortals ruled as Odin and as Wotan. In Greece as Zeus and his followers. In the sea as Oceanus, Jehovah, Jupiter. There were many who learned in time which machines had the power to make them nearly immortal and who in time came to rule their part of the world. Some of them built surface cities. In the northland the fame of Asgard and Valhalla reached far, though a man came to fear to talk to his God lightly. But the little people are

great gossips.

"Then a strange Evil came upon these hidden rulers of earth; the Evil that culminated in Ragnarak and Armageddon and in eventual Hell and Earth's near domination by Hell. The Twilight and Death of the Latter Gods was not a pleasant time. For the sun is a fearful and deadly thing in the same way that glow-metal is fearful and deadly, and though these Latter Gods learned much, they did not learn that the sun throws an invisible pollen of poison that infects all the energy of earth with a horrible accumulating ever-fire that is the true cause of age. The machines that gave them their strength and life and growth contained filters that swept the energy flows clean of these sun poisons; but this second race of Gods did not learn the secret of the filters and well though they were builded the machines at last became saturated with the deadly rust.

NOW, a good man is one whose will is a flow of beneficial energy generated by healthy cells, and his will is a force bringing only good to all things. But as the machines became filled with the disintegrant motes from the sun's infection of earth energy, these machines in turn affected the great bodies and minds of the Latter Gods with a destructive flow of energy. A destructive, evil will, gradually took the place of good will in their mighty frames. So it was that one by one the underground cities became Hells where men were brought to amuse the mad minds of their masters with unending agonies, for a man can suffer long when his life is renewed from the old machines. Many of the machines still gave off a force that kept life in the body even though that body were racked with tortures that else would cause death a thousand times.

"Gradually this evil stole over earth and, not knowing the cause—the failure of the filters in the machines to remove the disintegrant dust of the sun—they fought each other in such battles as still live in the mouths of men.

"Evil and good fought titanically for possession of earth, and Evil won, for the ancient polluted mechanisms turned even the best willed men into Demons of destructive will. Magic lived on as evil witchery, as 'the works of the devil' and the secret people of the underworld were

feared and hated as the curse they were. They came to the surface in fierce raids and returned again before the still sane remnants of those who knew of the caves could catch them.

"Here and there the white magic lived on, ever hunted by the maddened men of the underworld who were no longer men but devils who strove to destroy all wisdom so that no one should ever be able to resist them. How well they succeeded is shown by the darkness of centuries—"

Daha's almost chanting voice ceased. He returned the paper to the drawer. Then his voice went on, almost as if to himself.

"Those are an ancient God's words!

"Sometimes during the near past," he continued, "probably soon after the advent of gunpowder, it is said that they practised blowing up the entrances to the underworld, to trap each other and to keep themselves safe from their eternal raids on each other; that now all trace of these passages is lost. Others say that it is not true, and that one reason Earth men are so backward is that still, even today, wild men come up from deep in the earth; wild men with the weapons and the tools of Gods, and steal secretly about the world killing men of science so quietly and in such a way that other men never suspect the true cause of death. These hint that the death of such men as Pierre Curie are not accidents, that Pierre was murdered because that is the hereditary custom of these things from the depths—to kill those who approach in their studies the use of rays, the properties of magnets, and strange virtues that lie in synthetic animal magnetism. Some hint that the Legend of the Wandering Jew, of the Watcher, of the Hag, of the Howling Mother of Sin herself, of witches and goblins, are still living beings who live for no one knows how many centuries, yet who become evil in time even today because they never learn that the antique generators always degenerate into generators of an evil force that overwhelms and distorts the will into a kind of hypnosis of destructive command. That men can never recover from these beings, for they have the weapons of the Gods, as well as certain wisdoms long handed down secretly. That this evil hypnosis by the defective machinery that they now build or find still can never be fought

against, for men are too foolish—the wild devil-things of the caverns too wily and well equipped.

“Then, too, there are very definite tales that have come upon them. These are served by the better of the smaller beings of the caverns and sometimes men from the surface too. But men are supposed not to live down there long except they are lucky and very strong. The conditions are too different.

“CERTAIN it is that many men secretly believe this is the real cause of all man’s troubles and wars. That these beings from the darkness come up still, flying great globes of metal in which is machinery that controls men’s minds and actions so that it is but as playing marbles or chess for them to choose sides; and each side backing armies of the surface people play with them as the little Dutchmen of Rip van Winkle played at nine-pins: play with armies of nations at a game they call Bickro—in their tongue—meaning bickering robots. That what is to us a war is to them but a game.

“All this and much else of a still wilder kind is whispered of and believed by many men just as magic and witches were whispered of and believed in Medieval times, though not aloud, for men would then and now tap their heads and scoff did anyone say aught of the truth of the underworld.”

We talked of many things which I cannot mention, but one thing I learned well and that was *where to look for the secret of immortal life*. For I had entered and explored a bit of those endless caverns that honeycomb the depths of earth, but I had not realized that in the records of those people who built them lay the formulæ and processes which had made them immortal. I knew that much writing still lined the walls of those tremendously antique dwellings. I knew that sealed-in portions containing libraries of books whose pages were of indestructible metal still lay untouched, but that anyone had ever translated any of the language or thought of doing so had never entered my head. And to tell anyone of the existence of actual working machines and written books built in a time so antique it is forgotten was, I knew, impossible.

But Brandoch Daha knew, had even obtained from a miner one volume of the

metal books and had worked out a key which opened that mighty thought to the man who dared to enter the caverns. But he was too old; and, too, he knew of the dread and incomprehensible creatures who dwell in those caves. His word pictures of these beings had not made the project revolving in mind any more inviting. But try it I would, I knew that, for I knew myself. No one felt and answered the lure of magic more readily than myself and those books were the source from which came the ‘Magic Books’ which in all legends and tales of the past are the strength and wisdom of the sorcerers.

“Now that I knew the origin of these ancient tomes from which rose the mightiest power spoken of in all the past of man, now that I knew it was true wisdom in those books and that they could be gotten at if one were hardy and intrepid enough, the Devil himself—and well it might be one as great lying in wait in the darkness of those endless giants’ warrens—could not keep me from trying to get them.

“So it was that my long trek started.”

* * *

LOWERED down the shaft of the Bottomless Pit, a good mile of cable unreeling above me, I searched the walls eagerly for an opening. At last it came, one of those perfectly round, apparently metal lined holes which are the only entrance into the caves that were homes of the Gods. What they were originally intended for I don’t know. Perhaps all that is left of a breather pipe to the surface and the pipe, of less durable materials, disappeared to leave an opening in the inaccessible caves of the past. Inaccessible because the walls were made so hard no metal will cut them.

A few sways of my body and my cable became a pendulum to place me on a shelf a few feet from that opening. Now, again, I must enter the dwelling place of Evil, the home of Dread; the beautiful structures, once the homes of God-like beings, now the dens of incomprehensible, often giant things whose endless struggles for existence made these caves a Hell. This search must not fail, nothing must stop me, for now that I had the key to their language—any bit of their immense lore of science which I might bring back could and most probably would

change the whole future life of man. And they knew the cause of age and had conquered it! I must not fail!

Load after load of equipment and food came down the cable, and the telephone line which connected this remote hole in the depths with the surface world, which would await my call for return did months or years lapse before I used it. I set up the radio wave emitting apparatus which would activate a needle in a radio compass at my belt every ten minutes so that I would never lose the direction of my base and my exit. Finally, with many of the sensations that Theseus must have had as he searched for the Minotaur, I set off through the vaulted halls lined with majestic and mighty mechanisms, covered with the dust of endless centuries. This dust was my insurance of safety for when I neared THEM, the dust would contain footprints and paths.

I came to vast machines built for unknowable uses as big as a city block. Often they were topped by a seat, massive and huge for a giant's form. I had seen some of these before, but had not thought there was much use in looking them over carefully as their age must have rendered them useless. It was whispered that some of these ancient mechanisms still worked.

I mounted the six-foot steps leading up to the great seat of a machine. An infinitely bewildering array of switches, buttons and levers were banked across the panel in front of the seat. Ten feet up, where a twenty-foot giant's eyes would be, was a shimmering white expanse. Was it a screen? Tentatively I pulled a few levers. A soft, thrilling humming throbbed through the vastness of the mechanism beneath me. On the white expanse a picture appeared, a scene on the surface of earth. I turned a huge knob and the scene changed. Like Odin's eye it swept across the country, how far, how many endless miles that penetrating view ray swept its automatic focus, I could not say.

Now, in ancient tales, such stories as those of Solomon's ring, of Merlin, of Aladdin's lamp, said that magic machinery was capable of nearly any miracles asked of it. Of what else was this monstrous machine capable? I soon found out.

I WAS looking at a surface scene, a farm house in front of which was a big elm

and leaning backward to see better in the screen above my head my hand inadvertently grasped a lever to support me. There in the scene of the house and elm a great wind sprang up whirling and whirling around the house. As I pondered whether the wind appearing so suddenly was a part of nature or made by the machine my other hand rested on a lever at the side of the huge seat and instantly an awful bolt of force struck the elm in the center of the screen and it disappeared, leaving nothing but a hole in the earth and a cloud of dust whirling in the wind. This machine was quite a plaything, I decided. I had better learn something about it. This eye, which like Odin's, seemed able to go everywhere and see everything, was just the thing with which to explore these caverns with and save my feet.

These caverns are not as one would picture them, full of stalagmites and stalactites and dripping with moisture. Quite the contrary, they are dry. The walls are of hardened, impenetrable rock and every half-mile great metal doors seal the passages from all water and air. Thick dust is the only sign of the passage of time; and this varies: some places there is very little, for the doors keep the caves sealed tightly. Some are corroded, though, and here is much dust and some dampness.

I swept the ray up the miles of caves beyond me, drinking in the colorful beauty of the ancient dwellings—the story of tremendous life that every bit of the work tells.

There is a brooding, deserted-temple atmosphere about these ancient homes. The mighty presence of the past life left something that still lives, quiescent but awesome: the vast machines, beautiful as no other machinery on earth, the silence, the waiting power. The ray swept along the far-reaching avenues. What was I looking for? Well, I found something, I can tell you.

They sprang into the vision screen suddenly as the ray swept past; they were gone. It took me an hour to find them again. Living things! Down here! I had heard of them, seen some strange things before. But I had not had an Odin's eye to watch them.

They were in what had once been some huge ancient's living quarters. The bed was a tremendous affair some twenty by

thirty feet. Sprawled about its expanse were a dozen creatures asleep in the rays that bathed the bed. The creatures were human, apparently, yet not human at all, on second examination. Living in the depths had changed them; they were as different from men as a potato sprout in the cellar is from a potato plant in the field.

The ray brought to the screen not only the things to be seen, but an augmentation of the things to be heard. I distinctly heard the creatures thinking, as well as saw them.

Their thought was as alarming as their appearance. The rays that bathed the ancients' bed were pleasure rays as well as soporific rays. They induced an ultra-pleasant dream state in which the will of the sleeper found every wish coming true, tremendously true. But these creatures were not men; they were—degenerates—things.

Their wishes and dreams were of blood and death and tortures for their enemies and little else, for all the creatures they dreamed of seemed enemies. I had an impulse—a strong one—to pull that lever that had blotted out the elm tree and turn these sleeping curses into drifting dust. They called themselves Hobloks. A meanness sat on their faces, looking out and hating all life.

IN APPEARANCE the sleepers were like a fearfully anaemic jitterbug, small, with pipstern arms and legs, pot bellies, huge protruding eyes and wide, idiotically grinning mouths. Super-goofy, I believe modern youth would call them. They wore clothes as men do, apparently clothes recently from the surface world, and as I tinkered with the focus of the monster eye in front of me a modern truck sprang into view, a trailer job closed and fitted inside for living. There must be a way of driving down here from the surface. These Things had contact with the surface! I must know more about that.

In another chamber near the sleepers were a group of normal-appearing people apparently fresh from the surface. Reading their thought I gathered that they had answered an ad in the paper; had been hired only to find at the end of their journey this place, and themselves in the hands of the Hobloks. They had been locked in for days and were completely at sea mentally. Just what did the Hobloks

want with them? Could I get the answer by looking at the sleepers' thoughts?

One of them was dreaming of the reward he would receive for turning over the captives at their destination. And what a destination! If it was anything like the Things' mental pictures, it was *some* place. Much deeper in earth, it was; once the home of some tremendous being. The chambers were many city blocks in width and fantastically sculptured, lined with mechanisms. A fierce activity filled the place.

Sometime in the past, I gathered, some one of these cavern dwellers had turned on a growth force generator and lain down to sleep in it. The results were that he had become another, greater life. He had not turned it off, but stayed beside it and growth had made a super being of him. It was not balanced growth. He was a vast mass of pink flesh with sprouts of peculiar life protruding from him. This Thing was the boss of the place. The captives were destined to serve this mass of flesh. His appetite for women was enormous, to judge by the harem that surrounded him, stroking the quivering pinkness, carefully removing the sprouts when they were ripe, dancing for the vast eyes that surmounted the awful pile of flesh. I did not like this modern god.

In other chambers men were working on the ancient mechanisms, taking them apart, studying them, putting them back together. I could not get from the creature's mind more than a glimmer of what really was going on except that he knew the people laboring there were under a strong compulsion. They were robots to others who made them work. The workers were technically trained men from the surface while the masters were cavern beings whom the workers never saw. That the masters were also under compulsion from the mountain of flash seemed likewise true.

In front of the mountain of flesh a woman lay writhing in an agony of desire. Wires led to her from several mechanisms within reach of the monster's hands. He made adjustments now and then on the dials of the panels. He seemed to be breathing in the augmented vitality of the woman. His huge eyes ogled as he strove to bend toward her. As her anguished limbs and striving body thrashed to a crescendo of awful torment—her heart gave way, her

body stilled; she died. The creature in whose dreaming mind I watched this scene was serenely, greatly satisfied at this death. So I gathered was the man mountain.

As I watched, her body was removed by red-masked attendants and replaced by another living beauty from the surface. The scene began again in the dreamer's mind; he enjoyed it greatly.

THIS god was mad. Somewhere in the depths his private hell was functioning. These captives were destined for his peculiar pleasures. Many of them were women. The others were technical engineers, the best minds an ad for trained men at a fantastically high salary had brought. How long had this been going on? The sleeping creature did not know; all his life so far as I knew.

But such things could not go on without men's knowledge, you say. Well, having used the ray machinisms and knowing their power and seeing such things, I say they can and do go on. For no one could approach a listening ray mech without its operator hearing. No person could think or do a thing other than the operator willed if he were watched and ruled by an Odin's ray. The caverns do exist. I was there.

It suddenly occurred to me that I might be in danger from these goofy Hobloks or from the will-less men who served the formless master in the Hoblok's dream. And once they located me, away would go all my dreams of ancient books and the formula for eternal life which the legends so repeatedly attribute to them. I could not fail! The whole future of man would depend on my search, were it successful, for any bit of their ancient science could change the whole course of earth science. If they spotted me on a ray I would have short shrift I knew from the dreams of killing that filled their sleeping minds.

I decided to attempt to see this private Hell with the giant ray at which I sat. It was the safest way to learn what it was all about. Certainly I could not proceed on my search without knowing where it lay and how to avoid falling into the growth monster's hands.

A couple of hours patient searching of the depths with the amazingly penetrative ray finally revealed one of the workrooms where the red-masked servants of the monster stood guard over the enslaved engi-

neers. I quickly understood their slavery, for a strong generator of thought waves filled the room with a command, abstract but powerful; stronger than any thought they themselves could possibly generate.

"Work and construct from these ancient machines powerful pleasure machines for my enjoyment," were the thought waves.

Thus these highly trained men from the surface, brought into the presence of this strong thought command, worked at the construction of pleasure nerve stimulators for the mountain of pink flesh. Worked till they dropped, only to get up and work again.

Reading the minds of the red-masked men who stood about like guards I found little but a habit of obedience to commands from their master. They had very little mental activity; had been practically robots since children.

So that huge Thing of flesh that had once been something like a man was perpetually bathed in hundreds of high-power stimulative pleasure rays. His was a tremendous energy devoted to ways of feeling ever greater sensuous pleasure; pleasure which, to him, consisted in stimulating a woman till life energy killed her by its intensity. Here in this underworld he had found ways of getting a steady supply of prisoners and an ever greater amount of pleasure stimulating force rays. I did not like this Thing whom his slaves called Mula. No, I did not like him.

SO AFTER more protracted fishing with the mighty mechanism I had activated, but was finding difficulty in learning to use accurately, I finally brought Mula himself into direct focus, saw him vast on the center of the screen, smelt the sweat from that soft, enormous, hundred tons of corrupt growth. I heard the thought that ran through the awful head of him. Listen carefully and I will try to tell you what a thing like that thinks.

"The growth which has come upon me depends entirely on certain kinds of rays which the ancients knew how to make. My robots are fast developing similar devices to the one which made me into this mighty life and then wore out to leave me to grow old, never to move toward pleasure in others' death. Ah, the sweet agonies of these creatures desiring love—love—and getting more desire of love till their flutter-

ing little energies burst their flesh and fly away. Soon my slaves will bring the growth rays and I will start to grow again, to grow and feel young again, gloriously alive as I was centuries ago before the first ancient growth ray wore out. Then I will grow and eat and grow and fill all the caverns with myself; I will be all. By that time I will have learned to consume all matter, to make all things into myself. I will *be* Earth!"

"Hell," I thought to myself, "the darned Thing is senile, is a crazy old man; maybe once a super being, centuries ago; but now the strength in him has kept him alive while age has made a destructive idiot of him."

Just here my troubles began, for, hearing thought as I did it had never occurred to me that the one I listened to could also hear me. That there might be a way of handling this instrument so that I could hear without being heard had never occurred to me; nor had I realized that it might work both ways. Anyway, the ancient giant of growth heard me. I heard his commands ring on my ears as they leaped from his "robot-make" machine as he called it, a device making his thought so strong that the robots *must* obey it.

"Some surface man is spying on me with a ray," I heard him thinking. "Find him. Kill him or bring him to me at once!"

I heard him mentally rubbing his hands in anticipation of the coming delight of slowly killing me after he learned if there were others to worry about.

A cold sweat broke out on my face. I had no wish to become part of Mula's pleasure.

My life right now depended on whether Mula's creatures had equipment that would reach this spot. There was little I could do about it.

All at once I thought of the lever which had destroyed the elm tree in my first experimental manipulations. I got Mula's bulk in the exact center of my screen and pulled that lever fully expecting to see Mula dissolve into drifting dust. Instead he let out the most unearthly howl of pain it has ever been my pleasure to hear. Too much rock, I realized, between us for the bolt to be fully effective. Well, it was something to hear Mula howl and see his endless ripples of flesh quivering in agony like a scared dowager's double chins endlessly

repeated and endlessly twitching in pain and terror. I stood up on the huge seat and howled into the screen:

"Mula, if you don't instantly call off your animals I'll fill you so full of pain you'll wish you weren't quite so big."

HE PROBABLY didn't speak English but he grasped the thought behind the words.

Mula proved to be just a big, bad sissy after all. He couldn't take it. He was all placating, ingratiating thought as he gave orders sending his men back to their former positions. But I was stuck. I had to hold that ray on Mula and give him a dose of pain every time the thought occurred to him that perhaps I wasn't listening and he could now arrange my demise. I decided I needed help. Riding herd on senile super man Mula was not a one-man job.

There was only one place I could get help—that was that truckload of fresh surface captives waiting in the chamber by the sleeping Hobloks. I would have to do the job in a hurry or the man-mountain would put one over on me.

I swung the huge eye to its former focus on the sleeping crew of underworld slavers and in a twinkling had obliterated the bed on which they lay in their poisonous dreams. I had no desire to play with them; they seemed to know their way around down here and Mula was plenty to handle just now. I blasted away the locked door to the chamber of the captives and standing up to the screen yelled at their bewildered faces:

"Get in that truck and start driving. I'll tell you how to get out of here."

For the next hour I was busy as a postman on Christmas Eve, swinging over to Mula and giving him a mocking tee-hee and a jolt of juice and swinging back to figure out the path the truck must take to reach me. But the hour stretched into days.

Mula was in one vast quiver of frustrated rage fearing to give orders to seek me out and yet unable to bear the loss of his power which had been undisputed for centuries, from what I had read in his mind. He was pretty sure I was one of the Hobloks who had acquired big ideas on the surface and had decided to turn the tables on his meaty Majesty. I did not feel greatly compli-

mented, for those anæmic super-goofs were not my idea of what to be mistaken for. Nevertheless I mouthed the mean-sounding nothings I had seen them use in their dreams and certainly I took as much delight in tormenting Mula as I knew they would have taken in tormenting me. How I detested that pile of fat, inhuman appetite!

HOW had a growth force generator succeeded in creating this monstrous pollution? An increase in growth rate, in the supply of growth causing material, should result in an enhanced power of perception, a greater awareness of beauty, a mightier will to create, a really superior being with a will to make life something fine to have. How had a growth force mechanism succeeded in creating this monstrous pollution? It was too much for me. Even if the machine had failed centuries before something of the fine qualities it must have helped to grow in man should have remained. Was age itself, then, such a cause of corruption? It appeared so. But as I watched the ancient life in him I learned what really made him the horror he was.

From several places which I could not locate, rays came into the hall where his bulk lay—rays which subtly caused him to think. As I listened to these rays which seemed unnoticed by Mula I heard an idiotic murmur of utterly degenerate thought. Some creature in the distance was at some machine watching Mula and the idiocy of the thought was, through the strength of the great augmentation, causing Mula to think *in the same way*. Though I could see this occur, Mula was apparently oblivious of these creatures; yet, *they were making him think!*

I finally got it through me just how this had made Mula the thing he was. These creatures were the wild natural inhabitants of the caverns who had lived there since earliest times, fishing in the underground rivers, stealing some food from surface fields. Those I had just killed as they slept were some whom Mula had impressed into his service, but all through the caverns were some of these thin little half-men with protruding eyes adapted to the dark. Their only play was turning on the old machine to see and talk to surface people and to each other in the depths. Always some of them had watched Mula, his

growth and his behavior, and the latter was much a product of their own idiotic little brains augmented by the mighty machines until the constant pressure of the great rays on him had produced an hypnotic effect on Mula. He had become as they were by the long effect of the distant, unnoticed watching. They were clever imitators just as monkeys are and instinctively when one looked at them over the ray, they felt it and put on an unobtrusive mental attitude. It was evidently this habit which kept Mula from realizing what a great effect they had on him.

Watching them I also learned that they really hated and feared Mula and when he was unaware of them they had a way of introducing another destructive ray into the screen. Thus, with a strong magnification of Mula on their screen they would watch his brain and body with their small rays which the big machine augmented and carried into Mula's body. So it was, in truth, that he was nearly an idiot, as the connecting nerves of his brain had been mostly destroyed. He considered them as his allies and servants. It never seemed to occur to him that they were in truth his death.

This very subtle whittling at his huge brain, as habitual to them as a mouse's nibbling is to a mouse, was the very cause of Mula's oblivious attitude, as well as the hypnotic effect of all such huge rays. They did not want Mula to think of them and Mula obeyed the huge impulse post-hypnotically.

IT TOOK several hours of observation for all this to be understood by myself. The creatures were very interesting. They watched surface people continually, whispering complicated lies in their ears. This was one of their greatest pleasures; in fact they had almost no use for the truth. Their whole life was one of watching over the big rays and figuring out childish devilleries to inflict on the surface men. Their secret—where and what they were—the surface men never seemed to figure out. Though most of them suffered from them more or less, they never spoke to each other about it for fear of being considered mad. Believing in invisible imps! It was too fantastic and stupid a thing.

This thing I watched, I slowly realized, had been going on since the earliest times.

It was a fixed, repetitive behavior pattern as predictable as the fact that a maple tree will have maple leaves. And Mula had grown into the thing he was among these creatures. His growth had been distorted into the thing it was by their will, degenerate wills about him, augmented into a great hypnotic force by the ancient ray communicators. Here and there through the caverns little groups of these cavern imps lived in a beastlike condition and in some ways they were cunning as a rat, but also as stupid.

It is necessary to explain all this to you so that you will understand what the truck-load of escaped captives and myself were up against in making contact. As the truck and trailer came to a Y in the cavern roads I would tell the driver to "turn left" and immediately another voice in his ear would say "no, turn right!" It was the cavern imps at play; a procedure as instinctive to them as a rabbit's jump is to a rabbit. So it took many hours and I was a sleepless nervous wreck before the trailer job finally pulled up to my position.

Out of it poured a dozen job-seeking chorus girls and a half-dozen electrical and radio engineers—Mula's two desires, it seemed.

Most of them would not be missed for months as they had told their friends they were leaving to take a job in another city. How simple it was to fool surface people!

Swiftly I explained the set-up and showed the whole mess with the huge eye. How long we lived depended entirely on whether our surface education should prove better at getting the most out of the old weapons or whether the cavern dwellers' lifelong experience with the profound mechanisms would be too much for us. Already I could feel the far watch rays picking at my brain with tiny needle cutters though immediately I swung the eye in search of attackers. The sensation was gone and no way of knowing where to look next.

I realized that these apparently idiotic little people of the underworld had an immense potentiality for damage in their experience with reading the mind and their knowledge of the three dimensional geography of the endless caverns. The multihead effect inherent in the use of any telepathic apparatus gave them immense mental facility while they used the ap-

paratus; too, parasitically they used any brain with which they were in contact. Paradoxically, this habit did not make them more intelligent; just more aware of danger and harder to handle in conflict.

Their weaknesses were a monkey-like stupidity and the meanness which sat forever in their faces making them hate each other and every living thing.

I SAW, in distant caverns, their little forms racing toward us to get at nearer ray mechanisms and blot us out. Or, what was more likely, capture us for the torture which was one of their pleasures. Of pleasure rays they had almost none. Mula had appropriated most of them or taken parts which rendered them useless. I picked off dozens of them, and as I swept the innumerable galleries with the eye ray, I saw several racing the other way. They did not care for any more argument with me.

Meanwhile the engineers swarmed over the vast machine at which I sat, marveling at its construction. All the working parts were sealed in an air-tight sheath of gold-colored metal; the thing was indestructible except by violence.

One of them, a big red-headed fellow who was an automotive engineer named MacCarthy, climbed to the huge seat beside me. Several of the women were there watching Mula's entertainment on the screen.

"That's him, eh?" said MacCarthy open-mouthed at his first glimpse of Mula's generous folds and ripples. "My would-be employer. If he's not absolutely the most bloated 'pollutocrat' I ever saw I'll eat my hat."

"Yes," I answered, "and any minute he's apt to figure out what to do to get rid of us. Get on your toes, man!"

"Well, it seems quite an apparatus you've got here. I don't believe in it, mind, but you can't argue with your own eyes. It must have a lot of uses other than peek-a-boo on the neighbors—it's so devilish big. One of those uses should solve our problem. But right now I'm mighty hungry. It couldn't just roll out a few loaves of bread, could it?"

I passed around my pack-load of concentrated food. It was supposed to last me six weeks but they made short work of the best part of it. I dispatched three of the men to my cache at the hole at

which I had entered, for food. The rest of us set to work on the banks of levers and buttons that surrounded the huge seat and screen, trying different combinations to see what happened. And plenty happened.

From a scoop-like opening at one side, green globes the size of footballs began to emerge. From another opening a whirling and clattering issued. I was sure something was broken but after a time a strange looking mechanism emerged from the opening with a shiny new appearance like a Christmas bicycle. I stood looking at it wondering what on earth it was when it got up, walked toward me on four legs. The girls screamed and began to run and I was not far behind them. But MacCarthy stood his ground. As the machine came up to him it stopped and a round hole in the top of it began to emit words of a deep, rich, human quality.

The robot was a four-foot cylinder standing erect on four short jointed legs. Only one of these legs moved at a time but very rapidly so that the robot moved at a good walking pace and swayed hardly at all. From the top of the cylinder hung three quite long arms. About the top part of the cylinder were a dozen small apertures covered by fine wire grids. What they were all for I don't know, but the robot, by its own behavior was well equipped with senses.

"God," said MacCarthy, "it's a robot. Now what will we do with a robot?"

I HAD an idea. I called to MacCarthy. "Take it a little distance away, if you can. I'll turn the eye on it and see what its insides are doing."

MacCarthy extended his hand as one would to a child and the robot took hold of his big red paw and followed him away. I swung the huge eye down upon it and instantly I heard its mechanical thought answering my own.

"When you need food I will get it," it said in abstract thought. "When you sleep, I will watch. When there is work, I will do it. What do you wish of me?"

Just how much could this robot think was what puzzled me. I soon learned, for the thought of the robot answered my unconscious question.

"I can think as well as a wild animal times three," he seemed to say. Anyway,

some multiple of a natural animal's thought was what he meant.

What the green globes were for was a question that had bothered me since their appearance. The robot heard this question in my mind, released MacCarthy's hand, went to the growing pile of glistening rounds, picked up one and mounted the stairs to the seat bearing the globe. With one metal finger he poked a hole in its translucent shell and held it to my mouth. I tasted it and an ecstasy of flavor spread through me. It was the nectar of the Gods, put up in flexible glass. I whooped, waved the green thing at MacCarthy and the girls.

"It's canned!" I shouted. "Drink up. It's on the house!"

"What a house!" I heard MacCarthy say.

Then the robot sat down beside me, took the controls of the eye from my hands. There was nothing I could do about it; he was built of that metal than which there is no tougher that I have ever found. Methodically the robot swung the eye in ever-widening circles, looking—looking. I watched the screen. The robot saw one of the skinny Hobloks. Under the robot's long metal fingers the thing leaped into center focus. The robot seemed to pause in bewilderment. It was not what he expected to see, it was plain. But the Hoblok was also at a ray mechanism watching us. The robot took perhaps ten seconds to read the thought in the Hoblok's mind, then pressed a stud. The Hoblok rolled over, apparently dead.

The robot continued his sweeping search in ever-widening circles. But I was worried about Mula. Perhaps the robot would—no, it was too much to expect. I tapped the robot's metal top, pointed in Mula's direction. Obediently he swung the eye as indicated, much quicker and more easily than I myself could. I waved my hand to indicate farther and farther and far as it was, Mula shortly appeared in the screen. I could hear the robot's mechanical mind as he saw Mula's muchness centered on the screen when a blaze of light and deafening sound thundered into our faces. I felt myself falling; knew no more.

I came to with my head in the lap of Fanny de Moine, a miniature edition

of Margie Hart who had fallen for Mula's ad for females. She was bathing my head with the liquid from one of the green globes and pouring some of it down my throat. Either she was one of the most ravishing creatures on earth or the green fluid had remarkable properties.

"What happened?" I asked weakly.

"MacCarthy said Mula must have used your ray path to conduct a heavy jolt of juice back to you. The robot is still out of commission. MacCarthy says since we don't know how to fix a robot we'll have to make another one. He started the big machine making one. You know, Mr. Manville, I didn't get a chance to thank you for saving us from that overgrown hunk of meat. He is the most unattractive man I ever saw, that Mula." She leaned over and planted a highly satisfactory kiss on me.

"Just to show you I enjoyed being rescued from super fatty," she grinned.

MacCarthy and Murray, a radio engineer, a lean, dark Scot, came up leading a new robot different in no way from the other.

"Meet Joe Robot the second. How do you feel?" asked MacCarthy.

"Like I'd been kicked by a Mula," I countered weakly, "but apparently I'm still in working order. Now listen, you two. Since we can't catch Mula any more we're in plenty of danger. Sooner or later he will get a ray centered on us and that will be the end. We've got to figure what to do in a hurry. Was the big ray injured by Mula's juice?"

"Couldn't find anything wrong," answered MacCarthy. "Those things are built plenty strong. What a race they have been!"

Allen, a tall, thin, Southern electrical technician, spoke up, "We've been in a huddle about the mess for a couple of hours while you were unconscious. We can't find an answer. We can't kill Mula with this ray. We can't even look at him any more. It looks inevitable. Sooner or later Mula or the Hobloks will do for us. Even if we run; probably quicker if we run, since this huge ray is our only weapon."

"If we could just talk the language that robot is built to use," I mused aloud.

"There is a chance that there are other beings down here as strong or more so than Mula," I went on. "But how to find

them or get any help out of them—" I didn't finish, for coming up the wide cavern road were the three men I had sent for food. Their coming had been announced by shouts from the girls who spent most of the time at the screen.

"We have news," were their first words.

"We will soon have visitors and please be nice to them. They were nice to us."

They had hardly thrown down their packs and stretched when out of an opening in the side of the cave popped a long car, glided to a halt near us. A door slid open and something emerged. Fanny promptly fainted; the other girls screamed and went into a complicated clinch with each other. The three men who had just arrived advanced toward the creature in welcome. He was a snail—yet, a man. A long, lumpy brown body oozed toward us, and, centaur-like above it rose the head, shoulders and arms of a man. His neck was surrounded by a foot-long frill extending over his shoulders downward. His mouth was very big and toothless; his nose long and prehensile: it quivered and sniffed at us with a curiosity all its own. But his eyes were big and brown and as gentle as a St. Bernard dog's. He did not waste time.

"YOU will be surprised to hear me speak English, but I have had contact with surface people before. I know you are in trouble here. It is safest for you to come with me at once, without more words. Without my help you will soon be killed. There is no time for delay. I will explain things to you on the way. Please come now."

Channing, one of the three who had just arrived, spoke up.

"We were talking with him a long time. His name is Hank. There is a horde of them deeper in the earth, but not many are strong enough to stand gravity this near the surface. There are people like ourselves there too; but they have lived there too long to come to the surface. I think he is our best bet. I don't see any harm in him."

I gave the word, really much elated. I picked up Fanny, who was preparing to come out of her faint.

"Let's go, folks," I called. "This is the subway. Can't keep the train waiting!"

The interior of the car contained some

thirty seats. We loaded up our scanty supplies; the green globes had become quite a pile and Joe Robot the second was persuaded to carry Joe the first into the car. This procedure much interested Hank, the snail centaur.

"What is the origin of your people?" I asked Hank.

"We have dwelt deep in the earth always," he began. "Our ruler, the immortal Queen Tanitia, has explained that we're a product of the laboratories of the ancient Gods, especially adapted to difficult under-world conditions, and used in pioneering new borings before they were fully equipped with apparatus adapting the deep caverns to other forms of life. Thus we had inherent abilities which enabled us to survive when most men perished, except on the surface."

"Does any of the ancient wisdom still exist?" I asked, my heart in my mouth.

"Yes," he replied, "our Queen is very old. No one knows how old. We have some of their writings which we study."

God! my mission was close to success!

"You have robots," he remarked coming back to the situation at hand. "That is good. I have heard of them." The car started slowly into the tube. The tube was smooth metal. From the car's top and bottom and sides projected wheels which were in constant pressing contact with the tube sides. The car was motor driven.

"What kind of a motor is this, anyway?" I asked Hank.

"I don't know," he confessed. "It is an antique like most things we use down here. It runs on water. Many of these ancient engines run on water. You put it in, the engine goes, the water disappears. It is all I know."

The car howled along at a tremendous speed. It swayed hardly at all for the projecting wheels held it rigidly in the center of the tube. The tube dropped steadily downward. Hours went by. Mula was far away, I sighed with relief at the thought. I found my weight had become a trifle for the sigh caused me to lift gently in the seat.

The car flashed along through a mammoth city now. It was larger and more beautiful than any of the caverns we had yet seen. The tube in which we had descended had come out into the city cavern in a channel that ran through the

city on stilts, like surface elevated trains. The top half of the car was transparent and about us lay the ancient homes of mighty immortal beings lit and tenanted; looking much as it must have when it was young. Across it hummed tiny heliplanes; along the ways, many cars like our own sped. Here and there glided or grouped the snail people, not unlovely once you were used to them. Their head crests glittered iridescently when they moved. Theirs was a gentle purposefulness as there is about a good horse in action. Among them I noticed many human forms like our own though clad in short glittering tunics and with long hair floating. They took prodigious strides when they walked, I noticed.

OUR car glided to a halt before a huge doorway, flanked by snailmen at guard holding, strangely enough, modern rifles.

Hank led us up the inclined plane at a vastly more rapid glide than he had shown us near the surface. He seemed very different down here; his breath slow and even, his eyes gleaming with strength, his frill standing out sharply beautiful, veined like a big flower.

I rose several feet in the air at each step. I weighed little, had a sensation of strength I had never felt before.

We followed Hank's gliding form up the ramp, around a glistening curve of transparent walls through a hallway into a courtroom glittering with lush human life and brilliant with laughing, intelligent young faces. At a desk on a dais at one end of the place lay a woman. She rose as we entered and came swiftly toward us, her hands outstretched in greeting. My heart leaped at sight of her, not so much because of the beauty, but because of the sensation of burning thought that lay on her face.

"We know your troubles," were her words, "because they are similar to that of all surface people and because we have the same troubles everywhere we go except here. Here it is safe and we will help plan a future for you."

Hank bowed low before her.

"Queen Shola, these are the people who escaped from the great hulk Mula, and this is the man who rescued them. His name is Manville."

The Queen extended her hand to me.

"I understand," she said, "that Mula did not enjoy meeting you."

"He did squeak a little about it," I admitted. "How is it that you are so well acquainted with our difficulty?"

"All over the world," answered the Queen, "these caverns extend to within a few miles of the surface and all through the caverns playing and fighting with the ancient mechanisms are the Hobloks and their kind. Mostly they are mean and evil and foolish; but they have been living with the ray equipment for so many centuries that its use has become instinctive with them and many of them are very adept at its various uses. They torment and injure surface people to such an extent that there is little hope for their progress, especially as they are so totally unaware of the evil or its extent. Just as the Hobloks have made Mula a thing of evil, though he was once a vital animal, so do they make of many surface leaders foolish and evil creatures through their continuous lies and thought tamper."

"They thwart all scientific effort on the surface. They stop every good thing before it becomes a part of surface life. We have often tried to exterminate the creatures, but we have only succeeded in clearing a few of these deep earth cities of their influence. In the far distance they spy on us still. The ancient wave rays at which they sit are too powerful for us to overcome."

"If we try to make a clean surface place so as to cure some surface life of their influence and bring back the study of the ancient science through the study of the ancient machines, our efforts come to nothing because we can never get enough of the old ray positions in our hands to protect ourselves fully. Our men become, in a short time, foolish or insane from the needling they get from unreachable old rays."

"It seems impossible that intelligent men could not overcome these foolish Hobloks. But when they turn on the old rays it gives them immense awareness; they are super destructive. We have not succeeded in freeing any surface life of them."

"You are the ruler of this great city?" I asked Queen Shola.

"I am just a sub-ruler; I have been appointed to rule over the humans of the city. The real ruler is a very old and

immortal being whom we seldom see. You will be taken before her presently."

"Immortal?" I queried.

"I know already why you came to the underworld. We have been taking records of your thought since before you arrived. You came to learn the secret of immortality. There is no reason," she went on, "why you should not succeed."

"THESE snail men seem very intelligent," I observed.

"There is a reason for their intelligence," she affirmed. "You see, the potentialities of mind-reading apparatus are immense. The multihead effect alone contains enough power to pull the whole human race into a wonderful new way of life. We have developed this side of ray work quite a bit. You see, if we are in mental contact, my brain's questions are answered automatically by yours, if it possesses the answer. So that we are actually much more intelligent than two people not in contact, are we not? We are as intelligent as the number of brain cells active in your head multiplied by the number in my head which is something like a thousand times as intelligent as two ordinary people not in contact. We have developed this principle—called the Multihead principle—into mind teams containing many hundreds of specialists, each brain trained to use all the resources of all the other brains. The result is a group of men perhaps a billion times as intelligent as an ordinary human. Would you like to talk to someone trained in such a school?"

I looked at her lovely, quizzical face and suddenly realized I was talking to a person as far superior to myself as a man is superior to a worm.

"I think I am talking to such a person." The simplicity and enormity of the multihead principle had floored me.

"The multi-head principle is one thing we tried very hard to get surface people to adopt. But they listened to the idiotic tamper of our Hoblok opposition and fearfully refused to work on telepathic apparatus. In some ways you are still medieval, you surface men. This principle is one reason Mula gets along so well—hundreds of minds are slaves to him and always in contact. His mind uses them parasitically."

"They do have a reactionary attitude to-

ward some types of new things, it is true," I agreed.

"You don't know how hard we have tried to make them able to be of use to us. We are in constant bitter warfare with the insane Hobloks. Come, I will show you. The mind-record workers tell me you are wholly trustworthy."

The rest of my party never missed me. A group of uniformed officers surrounded the girls, some of whom, like Fanny de Moina, were real beauties. The six engineers were likewise surrounded by a bevy of underworld charm and MacCarthy's red face was wreathed in grins. I guessed he was describing the expansive Mula; I could hear them laughing.

QUEEN SHOLA led me into an adjoining apartment. Here the walls were a series of television screens on each of which a scene of struggle was taking place. On the center of each, some far distant ancient giant of a ray generator, topped by a Hoblok, sent vast streams of energy toward the receiver. These were met and neutralized by great black shorter rays somewhere between. In the lower part of the screen could be seen the uniformed head and shoulders of a snail man, his peculiar webbed hands manipulating the defense mechanisms. At some of the rays were humans, also in uniform.

"This particular war is ten years old," said Queen Shola. "You see, the ancient rays were so built and situated that they could not successfully fight against each other so that no revolution could take place by their use. At the same time they are so strong and well constructed that no weapon our weak modern minds can devise will subdue them. It is a premeditated deadlock so designed by the ancient God-race. The Hobloks, of course, cannot understand this and try to fight with them; and, perforce, we must fight back with the ancient stationary ray. It is all extremely stupid and repetitive, but so far we have not found the answer. We are defeated by the brilliance of the ancient minds which built and placed the ancient rays as a check on any attempt to dominate their life. Do you follow?"

"I begin to understand," I mused aloud, "why Hobloks are such a menacing nuisance, yes."

"You see," she went on, "when you grow

a larger alligator you have created a greater menace to your limbs. When a Hoblok steps into an ancient ray operator's seat he becomes a much larger bit of devilry though just as stupid and undesirable."

"Multihead stupidity is still stupidity."

"Exactly," she answered. "That is what war is—stupidity multiplied by a force. And that is what Hoblok ray is—stupidity multiplied by titanic ancient force. Thus all our brilliance and knowledge of growth and science is neutralized by the Hoblok multiple—titanic idiocy."

"They are charming creatures. How did they get that way?" I asked.

"Endless centuries of secret parasitism on surface people have given them a sort of leech-soul! They never learned to use the growth generators or synthetic food machines of the ancients, but they did learn to use the view rays and some of the weapons. They used them so long that the worn-out machines give off a detrimental emanation which contributed to the degeneration of the original flesh pattern into the leech-like form of flesh it is. They are in truth a different form of life: more akin to such parasitic creatures than to man."

"You certainly confirm my suspicions on the matter. Have you tried bribery, turning them against each other?"

"They have so little organization it is not hard. We have had some success in that line. But in reality we are fighting the ancient mechanisms and when they get hold of one, they live in it. It becomes their life and they are unapproachable then, as you learned yourself when you argued with Mula. You could have held out for years there if you kept careful watch. Mula himself is checkmated and made the thing he is by these creatures. So he amuses himself with torture and waits for death. His thought is now a fixed pattern as is theirs.

"You will find many such products of growth-force generators in the underworld. Our own ruler is one. But she is different, younger; and we ourselves have worked with and renewed the growth-force mechanism till there is little danger of unbalanced growth."

"YOU mentioned that Mula's thought is fixed pattern as is the Hobloks. Will you explain?" I asked Shola.

"When we look at an insect like a

spider or a wasp," she replied, "we see only an exact repetition of all other spiders or wasps, just as leaves on a tree are like the other leaves on the same tree. Their whole lives are exact repetitions of the lives of all other spiders and wasps of the same kind. This is also almost true of men: they are merely repetitions of each other and the past and the whole future of their lives is predictable from the past. Only when the intake of growth material is greater than the intake of detrimental material for long periods is there any growth into new ways of life. There have been many Mulas in the past of the caverns, and they have almost all followed the same course as the present Mula. Some parts of the thing are ritualistic and traditional: the red-horned masks, the torture—all are repetitions of ancient times. Mula adapted them to his own uses, which have also turned out to be the same."

"This conflict is endless, then?"

"It has been going on for untold centuries in these caverns with infinite slight variations, of course, but always the same theme: intelligent people trying to rebuild the ancient wisdom and way of life always thwarted by the degenerate creatures who are, as you have seen, wholly destructive. The ancient mechanisms do not wear out, so the war needs no vast supply of weapons. There are always more of the creatures and even if there were no intelligent people to fight, they would still fight each other."

We strolled back into the great throne room. Fanny de Moine ran up to us and took my arm.

"Look," she said in amazement, "I thought I could dance!"

A welcome dance had been organized. Under the very slight gravity these people had evolved a most complicated and acrobatic dance routine wholly impossible to those not accustomed to weighing so little. We could only watch, and the envious eyes of the chorus girls, probably as good dancers as surface earth produced, subtly amused me. The flying, graceful limbs and easy, almost floating movements of young bodies whose feet only touched the floor at intervals of seconds were an infinitely finer picture of the dance than I had ever seen before.

The Queen sent a page to summon the rest of the newly arrived surface people.

"The ruler has sent for you all."

WE ENTERED an elevator. We came out on the roof of a tower which overlooked the whole city of Loer. Like a pent-house garden the roof was adorned with living trees and plants and was bathed in a rich, warm light more pleasant than any sun. In the center was a round building. As we approached it, soft invisible emanations exquisitely stimulating ran over us, reading us and at the same time waking us to an intense sense of pleasure, of anticipation. Before the door was a statue of many-breasted Tanit; not by surface sculptors, but something by the ancients. Its beauty was indescribable, unthinkable, in truth. Their art always leaves a man gasping. We entered softly.

She sat in one of the ancient god seats. It was not too big. If earth has anything approaching the ancient Gods in strength, and in beauty, she is it. She was very old, we knew; but time had left only a wise crinkling about her eyes and humor marks at her lips. Her skin was soft and fresh and within her perfect body one could sense the strength. About her were several snail men and a trio of very young maidens sat at her feet, one of whom softly strummed a harp.

About her played a greenish ray. It said to my nerves all things that nerves need to hear, and all the things nerves are pleased to feel.

Her hair was flame red; her skin that white that often goes with red hair. Her eyes were very dark and brooding, yet very welcome to look at. One did not turn away but looked deeper and saw a friend. On her shoulder sat a crested bird and at her feet lounged a huge lion-like dog. Her feet were sandaled; her gown a severe transparent Grecian drape. On her large breast some huge emeralds glittered. She was woman—all wise, desiring woman-flesh and she was beautiful. The force in her gaze was tremendous; one could not help desiring her.

She talked and her voice filled the room with woman-sound and the sensing of a mind too big to comprehend. Queen Shola swiftly translated into English.

"You will have to stay with us a while. The ways to the surface are not at present open to us. We will try to make your stay pleasant and of value to you and to us."

We talked a while, but our audience was disappointing in that we had, in truth,

little to say to a mind as deep and capable as hers. And we all felt this. But she was curious as to conditions on the surface and very interested in our answers to her questions. She was very disappointed as to the condition of science in general. We were given some refreshments; stimulating fluids of several kinds were served and little nut-shaped sweetmeats. We were somehow ill at ease at our own lack of life and strength.

Presently we returned to the lower floors. Some of the girls tried to join in the dance and did not do so badly. Presently we were shown to several chambers equipped with modern-looking beds.

WHEN I awoke Queen Shola herself had come with a page bearing a tray of food.

"And this is the food you people eat that makes your young people so uniformly well-constructed, so very generally beautiful!"

"The ancients had vast greenhouses lit by artificial heating rays. We have repaired some of them and learned to raise all our food down here. These whom you think young people are, some of them, hundreds of years old. We have almost conquered age. We have learned to read the old books, many of them still exist; and age was a subject they were very interested in. They are very hard to understand but our multihead teams can manage to get the meaning from their simpler books for young people.

"Could I, O Queen, could I see some of those ancient books?"

She smiled, and all the graciousness a vast mind was capable of lay on her face.

"Why not?" she said simply.

This was a booklover's entrance into Paradise. My knees knocked like a prospective bridegroom's. The vast, intricately worked metal doors slowly opened as we approached. The stacks extended as far as the eye could reach in any direction. The books were of metal and most of them four to five feet square. The hours fled and I could not tear myself away. Both the Queen and little Fanny de Moina had gone away, perhaps understanding what this meant to me.

At last I held the book for which I searched on my knees. Even there it was too heavy. The pages were covered with

those strange letters, a language to which few surface men but myself held the key. Laboriously I translated the pages, one by one. Here it was: under the symbol for Life—L—followed by the symbol for "on" followed by a symbol which meant to the Nth power—meant infinity. Swiftly I wrote those blazing words which would change the life of the world to something worth having if I could bring them back to surface man.

The Formula "Live On"

TO LIVE successfully is to conquer life's problems. This can only be done by changing the conditions of your life to eliminate the detrimental factors. Thus the influx of detrimental energy flows must be excluded, while the intake of beneficial energy must be increased. To prolong life indefinitely, even under deadly suns—a super-dense metal is particularly useful. This is true for this important reason—disintegrant energy cannot exist except it have an integrated particle to feed on—just as fire cannot exist without fuel. A beneficial force flow is a ray which is rich in the ultimate end product of disintegration—energy ash. Take the most dense metal you can obtain—and force an energy flow through it at high pressure; those bits of matter which keep disintegration alive will be excluded by the density of the metal, just as ashes fall through a grate and leave the burning fire above. The life-giving ash of energy from which all matter is re-integrated is the product of such a device. A flow rich in energy ash causes an immediate increase in the mental function to an amazing degree, as well as stimulates and causes a new growth—a more powerful and intelligent being is created immediately by subjection to such a flow. Immortality can be achieved by excluding all persistently disintegrant particles from the whole intake of the animal. This is the path which our race took to greatness, to the conquest of space, to life everlasting in the darkness of space.

Such metals can be obtained floating free in space, the product of gravitic space storm vortexes. These metals form the heart of our most important mechanisms—the growth-force generators.

THE secret of immortality! It lies in "empty" space! Now I, and you, have the secret of the metal shield that can

make us live forever—and with two ways to construct it: By scientific work on magnetic vortex flows, utilizing exdisintegrance to “pack” ordinary metal with energy ash—or, by sending men out into space itself in space ships!

Scientists — rocket men — *listen* to me!

This is all true! Work at it; I have neither the ability nor the money. I have given you the formula. I have done my part. Do yours, for God's sake, while I still live!

Harte Manville.

THE END



THE CIGARETTE



THE cigarette, in the process of burning, gives rise to between twenty-eight and thirty-two different poisonous substances, depending upon the preparation of the tobacco and the type of paper used.

As an example, acrolein deserves a seat in the front row. This is a substance derived from glycerine by dehydration in the burning process. Acrolein is one of the most irritating common substances known. The smoke from lard spilled on a red-hot cook-stove contains much of this powerful irritant, and causes the recipient to cough and sneeze and weep.

Ammonia, formed in the breakdown of amino acids, while not acutely poisonous in low concentration is constantly altering the condition of the mucous membranes lining the nasal and bronchial passages. It promotes the culturing of germs of various kinds in those membranes.

Carbon monoxide is formed by the incomplete combustion pertaining in the burning of a cigarette. It is probably the main poisonous constituent bringing about the feeling of loginess that arises when one smokes “too much.” Monoxide is particularly poisonous to the nerve and brain cells, and to the red corpuscles. In cigarettes employing diethylene glycol instead of glycerine as the moistening agent there is about three or four times as

much carbon monoxide formed than ordinarily, depending upon the amount of glycol used. Such cigarettes also yield oxalic acid (a calcium precipitant) by dehydration of the glycol, which is also a poison of recognized stature.

Nicotine is generally considered to be a much more innocuous substance than formerly, although it does have some circulatory effects. The deadly poisonous form of nicotine, which is the sulfate, is not derived from the cigarette in any appreciable amount.

The tarry substances which are formed—phenols, cresols and other aromatic compounds—are probably the worst of the offenders, because of their insidious action upon body chemistry. All the different poisons inhabiting cigarette smoke have not been positively identified, but at least one of this particular group (the aromatic, or benzene-ring compounds), known as benzopyrin, has been proved a potent initiator of cancerous processes in experimental animals. The smaller the animal, however, the more susceptible it is to cancer. Nevertheless, a few doctors blame this agent for a part of the increase of the disease.

No habit which has not been acquired is any more worth sidestepping than is that of tobacco-using. No habit already acquired is more worth abandoning.—*John McCabe Moore.*

COMING IN SEPTEMBER

The STAR KINGS

By

EDMOND HAMILTON

A SENSATIONAL 70,000-WORD NOVEL

ZIGOR MEPHISTO'S COLLECTION OF MENTALIA





“METHINKS the most sinful and, therefore, fascinating bits of this Collection of Mentalia, as the old heathen, Zigor Mephisto, called his spools of antique thought-wire, will be found on the seventh level, in that den where he used to retreat and bid the whole world defiance.”

“A grisly place of past dread and death it is, too. The souls of men who have died under Zigor’s hand do howl about these walls like great winds. Eg Notha, it is called.”

“Mayhap they are but winds?”

“Nay, nay! You’ll see.”

“So, you are game to seek the place out! ’Twill be a hard bit of traveling. Lord knows what dangerous deviltry of these mad cavern people we may have worked upon us in these forgotten Hell-warrens.”

“Aye, which is why I must get to the bottom of this wisdom, must follow every lead till we learn to protect ourselves. There is wisdom in Mephisto’s Collection of these spools that magically store the thought of the great beings who built these endless cavern-mansions. I like it not when an unseen thing burns the shoes off my feet, and no one to see, no way to know who or what may be adoring of the mischief.”

“Yes, I would have us learn this hidden magic the mad imps work upon us, myself, afore we are undone entirely.”

“Who would have thought the mysteries of magic the wise men talk of were but the mad people of the lost caverns, playing with these ancient works of the Devils, or of the Gods? Who would have known that any one could work magic, had he but access to the old machinery of this forgotten hell, and some little know-how about that same machinery.”

“Aye, Francis, the know-how! There’s the rub! Last night I pushed a button, thinking to have one of the delicious dreams that such a button had brought me before, and what happened? The monstrous metal thing picked me up, wrapped me from head to toe in plastic butcher’s paper, and tied a neat plastic string around me. Had it not been for you I’d have ended my days done up as a bundle of old clothes.”

“And that was not so bad as last week, when we entered the mad maze of mirrors. Had it not been for luck, we would have

spent our life in there wondering whether the dancers we saw were real or . . .”

“Yes, and had it not been for that maze of mirrors the mad dwarves would have got us. They could not tell whether we were one or many, far or near, and gave up the chase. There is much to know down here to stay alive, and little we do know of that needed. These wights have been brought up around these mysteries.”

* * *

ON THE tail end of one of the long, enigmatic thought-records of the life of the Elder Race, I heard these voices talking in an archaic but understandable English, somewhat of the flavor affected by Shakespearian actors. Since the record itself was of a time when the modern English language had not yet been born of the mother Atlan tongue, I couldn’t figure how the voices got there. I decided that the machine must record any voice or sound around, when it was played over. Then I asked Nydia. She explained that when the recorder switch was thrown on the record augments, it would also record; that the two were the same machine except for a slight adjustment.

“Is that all of the talk in our language that exists?”

Nydia considered.

“Yes it is. But it tells of men being down here, long ago—though quite recently compared to the antiquity of the records themselves. Who they were, what they were doing, we will never know. Surface men, apparently, who found their way down here and learned something of the mysteries of the ancient magic.”

“This Zigor Mephisto’s palace of dread, they speak of it, but I have never heard of it before? I wish I could see it, and read the store of records of which it speaks. If the Mephisto of whom they speak is the gentleman of whom I know, I imagine the records are vastly more than interesting. What do you know of him, Nydia?”

“Mephisto is an old family name, and a dread and powerful family it has been. They have ruled over much of the underworld at different times, though their fortunes have varied as the centuries passed. As far back as we know, there have been rich and powerful Mephistos, some not so evil—some terrible in their slaughter of the cavern people. This Zigor of whom these voices speak, I know not. He is forgotten

today. This is America, and of those of the family of whom I have heard, only Europe was mentioned as their home. But he may have come here from Europe through the great under-sea ways, centuries ago. He may have been very great and powerful here, and still have been unknown in Europe. There were always many secret groups, you know. They fear to be known to each other, as the ancient rays are such terrible weapons that it is better not to be known at all to each other. But hereabouts, he may have ruled in great power for long, and then his family wiped out by the mad nomads some night when all were drunk and forgetting to guard the ways from the mad ones."

"Nydia, would it be safe for us to go there? I would give an arm to see this Collection of Mentalia. Could we avoid death from the distant devils, and get through to this forgotten palace of Zigor's, or is the risk too terrible to face at all?"

"It could be done. It is in truth needed. We must always be finding and learning to use new and more deadly weapons. This place of the Mephisto's should contain many and terrible and strange weapons, ray-mech of which we know nothing. We could bring some of them here, and surprise these besieging dero with them. Or we might find the place an impregnable fortress, and find it of benefit to move there entirely. Eg Notha, the name tells nothing. I will call a meeting and plan for the work."

* * *

SO IT was that Nydia, the lovely young daughter of the hidden cavern people, and myself—an escaped convict who had found refuge in these unknown dwellings of the forgotten Gods of earth, and Solaris, the son of the leader of our little group of sane cavern dwellers, a slim, dark, well built young man, and a little dwarfish maid who loved Nydia and attended her, whose name was Truly, entered a huge half-globe that lay in one of the numerous borings. This half-globe was the usual traveling device used by the ancients, and there were several of them in the vast borings under the chambers in which we made our home and our fortress. Solaris pressed a stud on the puzzling keyboard of the controls that filled one segment of the circular chamber. I gasped, for all weight had left my body. The control was one that operated an

anti-gravity device. I looked at Solaris.

"Don't ask me how, I only know the electric from the old generators charges some plates on the flat under-side of the half-globe so that it floats. You will have to find the scientific words to tell yourself what the mech is all about. As it rises, an automatic electric eye shuts it off before it strikes the ceiling, and we float midway in these tunnels. They used these cars a great deal, the Elder race. They ride like wheels of air, and they are equipped with gravity controls coupled with auto-eyes fore and aft, and overhead, so that one cannot bump into anything even if one wished. It is only in landing the thing that any skill is required, and that is very simple."

"I won't try to explain it, Solaris. If gravity is really a kind of electric or magnetic force, they must have known how to generate and control gravity in reverse. What is the ancient name of this car?"

"There is the name on the panel. Anyway those letters are on the panels of all these cars that I have seen. You read it."

"The letters look like Z-O-N-T-O-N. A 'Zonton' is what they may have called it, or it's the name of the man who invented it."

"I suspect the thing can also be used as a space ship. It is tremendously powered for its small size, and fitted with mighty weapons. One can never turn on but a fraction of the propulsion dial—the drive force will propel it at terrific speed. We have used this one many times for short trips through the longer borings in our search for the things we need. For hunting trips to the great water-filled caves where the blind monsters live, for fishing—But as for really knowing this ship, I do not. I can use it, but there is much I do not know, and fear to try to learn. For instance, if I press this stud, the protective auto-ray controls are released, and then if I press this lift control, it goes up at terrific speed, the "governor" is off—possibly for use in high-flying outside the caves. It would crash one who did not know against the roof. I did that inadvertently once over the water in the water-caverns, and nearly drowned us all. Only the strength of the antique materials saved us. We bounced off the roof, knocked loose a small avalanche of stalactites, turned over, started for the water just as fast as we had come up—went under water traveling at terrible speed, and I managed to shut it

off and we floated again. They were built sturdily, or we should all have been dead. Some of these guns pointing out here we can use, but some I do not know how to use. I will teach you what I know."

WE FLOATED in the exact center of the circular boring, the smooth, ancient, time-mottled rock of the floor glided away beneath us. The dust stirred slightly under the forcefields of the magnetic devices which held us afloat, that was all. A smell, as of an old bookstore, filled the globe, the smell of time itself, familiar to me now as the "smell of the caverns." The bright, glittering metal, untarnished and speaking as of work created yesterday, was here and there belied by dark streaks of corrosion where some less hardy metal had been used in the construction of some less essential part. Solaris advanced a huge lever a fraction of a notch, and the great globe started forward down the cavern at a speed of perhaps forty miles an hour.

"It won't go any slower, and if one went faster, the automatic eyes would keep us from bumping. But I cannot bring myself to trust my life wholly to such antique devices for safety. I can shut off the power and thus slow down, but it is seldom necessary. Watch the far screens for the ray-paths of some bush-whacker nomad. They¹ often lie in wait along the ways with a ray to kill anything that passes. We must see them first and that without fail. They will know we are traveling, our thought will have been heard, our plans known. They will try to trap us."

Beside me as I swung the vision ray in a slow arc across the approaching network of ways, was Nydia's fair hair, curling softly about her gardenia face, her huge unseeing eyes that yet saw much more than others. My heart pumped that blind loyalty she had inspired in me. I knew that Nydia's mental eyes, trained from her years of work with the telaug and

¹"They" whom Nydia fears are a group of wild savage cavern dwellers who live not far from the home of Nydia's group, as described in "Thought Records of Lemuria," a former story of the same people. There are many groups of these wild, evil men, and this particular "bunch" are descendants of the so-called "Efrits" or Afreets of Arabia and Persia, recently come to the U. S. and are wholly evil. Small, wizened and devilish, they delight in killing and torture, and the ancient weapons they use make them invulnerable.

similar mental apparatus, were seeing me in a wealth of detail no ordinary eyes with light-ray vision could attain. She was seeing my inner spirit, my will to bend life into what it should be, my own opinion of my body and inner-self was in her mind added to all our friends inner vision of me to make a composite image of greatly increased accuracy to those held by ordinary mortals. This inner vision she held of me was what I strove to keep clean and bright, and that effort was good for my soul. Her kind of eye is a far more exacting one than that which never sees beneath the surface at all. For I am an ordinary fellow, of near six foot in height, 170 lbs. weight, well muscled,—with a potato nose, large teeth, a heavy chin—no beauty, though not entirely ugly. But Nydia saw far more than that, which was why she loved me. For I do have a will to make life what it should be, and that was the thing in me which she prized.

Nydia spoke softly in my ear.

"This Zigor's palace of dread, this Eg Notha, I have heard of it from travelers,—it is shunned, but some have looked upon it from afar. I hope we get to see it. To read that store of records, collected from the whole cavern world by the family of Mephisto. God knows what we may learn."

I WISH I could put the actual scenes of this cavern journey into your minds, but words to depict the ultra-beauty of the ancient work do not exist. The walls of the caverns, sometimes vast connecting chambers where cavern ways cross, and sometimes longer chambers along the "way" sides like subway platforms where the trains stop, are decorated with vast bas-reliefs, of a meaning that sometimes glimmers through the clouds of ignorance that are modern man's inheritance—glimmer through in a blaze of terrific meaning that shakes the soul inside a man, but never quite completely registers all that it contains. Their picture symbol system of thought was vastly different from our own uncultured one, springing from a long heredity of knowledge of goings and life-forms of which we know nothing. One sees pictured gatherings of beings, no two of them alike, and knows that it is a recorded scene of some past meeting of the life of many planets of divergently formed races, gathered to listen with their indi-

vidual telaugs to the thought of some mighty leader or teacher, or ruler. Or one sees pictures in a series that seem to tell of the peopling of a planet by the use of some life manufacturing machine—for the people are emerging from the bowls of an intricate mechanism and proceeding from it in streams to build cities, roads, dwellings and tunnels into the earth. Yet no one enters the machine, only a flow of some mud colored fluid. Some of those pictures seem to tell me that the Gods did take mere mud and make men as the Bible tells us. Maybe they did synthesize men and set them to work to fulfill the pattern of development planned into their synthetic matrix. It is perhaps the real explanation of the old "legend" of Adam and Eve. Such seemed the meaning of some pictures, but their thought was so different from our own that one can be sure of little accuracy in the interpretation of these scenes or their writings by modern man.

But of other pictures of vast cubes and spheres inter-acting, seeming to give birth to tinier rounded cubes and angular spheres, of vast worlds with continents and oceans seeming to give birth by budding of younger, smaller spheres, globes that looked like tiny planets—of much of such work one could make nothing. It is quite possible they were but the vague imaginative work of some artist of their liking who amused them with weird creations of impossibilities. One does not know. But this I know, they often pictured Mother Earth as an entity of beauty and wisdom, speaking with a mighty mental voice that moved life to effort, thinking with great thought that reached each man of her millions and reflected in his mind so that each obeyed. Speaking across space with flows of matter and flights of great ships, Earth was to them a living being, and they loved their Mother "Mu" and did as they thought she wanted. Could such a wise race have been deluded in thinking a planet itself had life—that the planet "thought," such great thought that they listened and obeyed? Is our Mother Earth now dead? Is that why the great race of the caves is no longer here? I wonder many things for which there is no answer, as I watch their mighty pictures flash past the "windows" of the floating speedy globe. For the windows are not "windows," but great screens fed by the impulses from the powerful view-

rays outside and they can be made to pick up such a picture and keep it in focus as long as one wishes, and they can be made to watch the far distance for danger, too. So it was that I could spend little time on the picture walls of the great tunnel through which we sped toward the forgotten palace of one Zigor Mephisto, whoever he may have been. The name aroused a vast curiosity in me. Is he the servant of the legendary Satan? Was the Mephisto of our stories and legends an actual person? Or is it just the surface cognizance of a powerful name of the under-world for centuries. Or does the name mean something else entirely? Did Satan exist? Was he an ancient retainer of Mephisto's or vice versa? Was he an acquaintance of the Sathanas of the Mutan Mion Series of records? Well, I would know when I had read his "Collection of Mentalia."

THE place lay about five hundred miles from our home. We drew near, about ten hours after leaving. As we came out of the cavern way tube into the rocky sphere or bowl in which the palace lay, the projection of a great human figure in front of us stopped us. Its hand was raised, palm out, and it spoke.

"Wait here. Before you come further you must be examined. Eg Notha is not easily entered!"

I turned to Nydia.

"I had understood the palace was empty of life. Who do you think is doing this?"

"I had heard it has been deserted for many years, for the last fifty years or so. Little is known of the place, as it is avoided. The legend of the Mephisto family is one to cause fear. Let us hope that it is not a Mephisto who has taken up his life here in the ruin."

Solaris snapped a view ray toward the great bulk of the place. Under the domed and immense cavern roof, the building bulked huge, the great bowl too small to hold it. The ray went through the walls, poked and pryed about, abruptly went out!

"They blew my tubes," Solaris cried, futilely, snapping the switch stud on and off. "I don't like it! Let's get out of here."

"Okay, buddy!" I didn't like the expression on Solaris' face, like a trapped animal. "You know your way around. Take up out while the taking's good!"

Solaris threw the great lever to center and then delicately jockeyed the stick back along the notched path to reverse. The great globe stirred back a few inches along the path into the tunnel we had just used in entering, then stopped. Solaris gave it more and more juice, finally pulling it back all the way. A cloud of the fine, time-reveiling dust of the caverns rose about us as the force-field's flows aroused fury contended around us, but the globe held still as though frozen in place.

"Heh, heh!" cracked a fiendish crackle in our ears. "The little innocents think to escape."

"Grandma, they sure walked into it, didn't they?" It was a child's voice, one of those we had learned to fear, a child who has never had any pleasure except the sadistic thrills of watching his evil elders torment some unfortunate. A voice from an older man, masculine.

"We'll have rare sport with these fools before they die."

I looked at Nydia and she looked back—a hopeless look.

"This is it, Rich! There isn't a chance from the sound of them."

"They'll boil us alive," moaned Solaris, "and when we ask them why, since we're perfect strangers, they'll tell us: 'Why it's customary, we always do.' These damned mad ones of the caves."

"Do you know who they are? Is that why you are so sure?"

"Their actions tell us they are the mad ones."

I swung my own view ray up the cliffy side of the building, which was really a great shaft of the natural rock, shaped somewhat rectangularly, and bored with round chambers and air-shaft apertures. Windows, as such, are rare in the caverns. But my penetrative beam blinked out as soon as it struck the stone of the wall. A series of pops inside the case told me the antique, irreplaceable, incalculably valuable and well nigh indestructible tubes had been blown from the distance.

"How do they blow the tubes like that?" I asked.

"Just hit 'em with a powerful dis-ray. The overload burns them out rapidly."

So it was that we left our ship, hanging there a foot off the rock on her degavity beams. With a painful heat ray burning our buttocks, we entered the great open

doors of the forgotten den of Zigor Mephisto, Eg Notha. The howling noise which the old record with the strange voice had spoken of was present. To me it seemed to be water flowing from far overhead down through great metal tubes, down and down into the rock, under the great hulk of stone work that was the home of past power. For some of the vast dynamos one sees deep in the under-rock, I surmised. Time had marred the weird building little, and the huge stone figures of animals that never existed in modern man's ken; winged dragons flanked the doorway and across the stone face was sprawled a fretwork of sculptured figures of hybrid animals—hybrid of some mad-man's dream with the life forms of the ancient vari-form technique, or perhaps none of them had ever existed outside the imagined weirdness of some artist's mind. I could not venture an opinion, nor had I time for one. These stone figures glared down at us from a dozen impossible angles of the walls, constructed as they were by a mind with a vaster knowledge of geometry and the qualities of structural material than any man now living.

UP THE many tall three-foot steps we scrambled as best we might, the heat ray hastening us more rapidly than our natural reluctance to be so coerced. Through the open valves of the monstrous doors, the deep dust swirling dryly in the still air, and settling slowly as we passed. The dust is the one true tell-tale of the awful time that has passed since the caverns were lived in by the multitudes that did live there when they were built. It is ever present, choking, cloying, smelling of eons of dry forgotten time, and concealing with its death-grey blanket the beauty of the antique master-work.

Down the long corridors, with their height-shadowed, vaulting ceiling, the place echoing our footsteps above the eery howling of the water in the depths—and about us now showed some sign of occupancy later than the original gigantic men who built the place—signs not reassuring. For a skeleton, clothed, lay here; a thonged whip rotted over there; and nearby a long old sword blade had not yet rusted away. Relics of a near past that no one now alive here had the grace to remove. Then we were in the lower levels of the place,

beneath the level of the great road-tubes through which we had approached. Now there were great hangings in their places over the doorways, the tremendous, unrotting, metallicly shining weaves of the old Gods, glass threads colored and intermingled with gleaming metallic threads into patterns and pictures, depicting the mighty scenes of that life that is to man but an enigma of mighty mysterious meaning hung from the walls, hiding the stone. Much of the stone itself is covered now with metal as we descend, worked metal, in patterns reminiscent of no world of my knowledge, of no world I had yet seen in the old records. For that matter, a great deal of the cavern world is covered with solid metal, which looks as though it were sprayed on the cavern walls in a molten state and then worked into artistic designs. The work depicted beings, men occasionally, but as often like no life we know, at work, at play, at love, and at war. But principally these figures are engaged in work or study or experiment of a nature at which one can only guess. I surmise that someday some man will decipher the meanings of these great metal histories upon walls and find there complete and detailed descriptions of vast scientific discoveries, of the nature of matter and energy upon which the scientific base of their stupendous life rested.

For the most part the message is too vast for one mind to grasp in passing, and I doubt that many of them would yield up their super-world mental concepts to any mind but the genius prepared especially for the job, and that after years of study. And I think, too, that no other study would yield him such a rich reward.

We passed through many of these metal chambers and corridors, our minds awl with the overpowering beauty of the place, here cleaned of its time dust, and revealed in near its original beauty by polishing. Then we entered what had been the throne room of the ancient Lord of the place. We were drawn now by a pleasant, overpowering ray-impulse rather than driven by a burning in the seat of the pants, as before. Drawn to the figure that sat upon the throne, dwarfed into insignificance and ugliness by the beauty and size of the massy seat of the ancient God. He was a Mephisto, my mind decided, that lean saturnine face, that lank black hair, that over-

long, over-slender figure, that smile that was mockery itself, added to a certain consciousness of power, a certain cynical wisdom, all told me here was one of the antique ray-groups whom I have chosen to call the Latter Gods—the first successors to the original homes of the true ancient Gods. His voice was dry and shrill, his age one would not know, as he spoke:

"I WATCHED your coming on the great wall-screen, 'tis set to watch always the one open approach to this place. Is it true what I saw there in your minds, that you came here but to read the old records in my ancestor Zigor's collection?"

Nydia, who trusted her own subtleties better than my straightforwardness, answered:

"Yes, that is why we came, my Lord. Are you of the family of the ancient Zigor Mephisto, or some other, since come here?"

"I am some kind of grand-nephew of the old fiend, I suppose. I have always borne his name. It does not matter much. I came here, like you, to read the collection, one of the greatest still in order from that time when men still had sense in their heads of one kind or another. I stayed, for I have given up hope of finding wisdom on earth, and my old bones crave less tiring pursuits than searching for it."

Nydia, nearly purred, for his words had opened hope in her heart.

"Oh, you are one who studies that antique science revealed in the thought records, one who knows; I am glad we found you! I—we, have studied somewhat, too, but there is so much to learn and only one life to learn it in."

The cynical, weary expression of the seated figure's face lifted a little at Nydia's sweet ways and he leaned toward her.

"Don't try to tell me there is life in the caverns with wits between its ears? I will have you boiled in oil, the lot of you, if you lie to me about that. As for you, you little blind beauty, if you are stuffing me with wool, I will have your lovely body gold-plated, and added to the collection. I have had enough lies in my life to satisfy me."

I spoke up, a little nettled at his way, but relieved in truth that he was interested in something beside sadism, which is, too often, the case of the old cavern families of power.

"She tells the truth, always, does my

Nydia. And even if you do have her gold-plated, you may not keep her, for she is mine."

"Well, if you have told the truth about your studious natures, and can tell me things I do not yet know, you may live through this meeting and go your way when you have read the collection. But if you lie about yourselves, I will wash my hands of you, and I assure you that the rest of this menage are not as well-natured as myself, and let few go from here alive that I do not protect." He waved a hand to some gold and scarlet demon masks decorating the wall behind the throne. "Know you at what rites those are used?"

Solaris spoke up, laughing a little forcedly. He had figured that he understood this lonely man upon the throne.

"We shall keep you interested, never fear. I have assisted at some such rites to the Dark One myself. Thrilling, but apt to be dangerous to strangers."

"You have been held by Satanists before? And how did you escape the usual fate?"

"In the only way possible. The altar took a liking to me."

"Aye, you were young, and she fell in love with you. Yes, that is one way of surviving. Methinks you will not have that chance here. You see, except for me, you are now in the hands of Satanists. And I, of course, am also supposed to be an enthusiastic servant of the Dark One. But, of course, you children could be my guests if I so willed. But will I say you are my invited guests, or will I let my besotted and mindless, cruel and half-mad retainers and relatives have their will of you? I know not myself why I should be kind to anyone. It never got me much in this world to be kind."

Nydia answered.

"It got you what friends you have, I am sure. They are often valuable, are friends. A friend can stop a knife from your back or a ray from your heart—if he is a true friend." Nydia's little nose wrinkled, she was playing his game, and feigning fear.

"Yes, if he be not over-avaricious and put the ray on the heart himself. There is that about it! But do not worry overmuch; if they do manage to kill you, I will manage to make it not too painful in ways you know. I may have inherited more of my mother's weak emotions than my father's will to destroy. You never know."

SUDDENLY the figure on the throne scowled down wildly upon us, and a rage with no cause passed over his face. His fists clenched and he raved at us.

"Who do you think you are, to come in here and tell me what to do in my own holding? You shall die a thousand deaths, you dogs!"

As swiftly, the causeless rage passed from him and his face resumed its tired, cynical half-smile.

"Don't be frightened, my guests. 'Tis but a blood-thirsty and wholly mad relative trying to dream himself me over his ray-control mech. If he could remember what he was doing he would be dangerous. But as it is he has forgotten what he started to do with me, and has returned to his antique toys upon the floor. There have always been mad Mephistos; I suppose there always will be. It is what has given the line such a bad name. But there are not so many any more. We are few."

At the side of him crouched a huge dog, or what I thought was a dog, its great head on his foot. But when it arose to stand beside its master, I stifled a gasp of horror. It was distinctly not a dog! It was scaled, its hind quarters web-footed and huge, and its back maned with queer spines. I stepped back in alarm, but the thing was intent on scratching its ear on the great carved arm of the throne.

"Be not startled, Dick," said Solaris, clapping me on the shoulder. "I have seen them before. They, too, are a relic of the far past, still to be found in some of the southern caverns. Once the ancients bred all manner of fearful beasts, as the old pictures tell you. Still some of them exist. On the surface, men have their theories of evolution, but down here we know where animals and man, too, came from. Is that not right, Master?" and Solaris turned to the Dark One's servant on the throne.

As the lean, old face studied its answer to Solaris, I recalled the children's tales I had read of alchemists and sorcerers and their "magic" books, with which they produced such fabled beasts from their test tubes and alembics as the "cockatrice." It could be those books came from these caverns, and that the cockatrice was but one of the simpler beginner's experiments in the magic of life's chemistry that they taught. Then this descendent of Mephisto's made his answer:

"Yes, young one, there are many such things we know that surface men do not know, but guess at, and guess wrongly. It is too bad that they do not know some things. They would be building us some marvelous machines for pleasure, developing some strong and beautiful humans, some devastating female beauty, if they knew the ancient life science they could learn from the ancient records. They should know how the Old Ones lived."

"Sacilege!" remarked Nydia, smiling in agreement at the gargoyle face of this dried-up representative of a family so dyed in blood as to be synonymous in name with Evil. He did not look so deadly, now that we had talked, but I was still worried. Would he turn his face from us did trouble develop, or would he shield us from such people as had driven us in here with the painful heat ray? He cut short my thought by ringing a gong hanging near him, with a small golden hammer. The thing rang and rang, a lovely sample of the antique metal work, its tone was a marvelous, mellow note.

Answering the ringing note came one of the servants of this mysterious old man on the throne. He was attired as was his master, in a suit of the gleaming, soft, yet metallic mesh that was the ancient work. I had watched some of the group in Nydia's home remaking these garments from the ancient suits that hang sometimes in the chambers, left like the machines so long ago. To be worn, they must be cut down by three-fourths, for the ancients wore on an average twenty feet and more in height. But the glittering stuff is resistant to the penetrative rays² and is still used for that reason, as there is little else that will stop the passage of the penetray.

HE WAS a dull faced man, the servant, his hands peculiarly mutilated, as though the fingers ends had all rotted off from some terrible disease in the past. His fingers were all stumps, and his face was

² Some of the war-ray is housed in rooms built of metal of similar qualities, opaque to the rays, and there is a refuge from which no modern fighters with ray ever yet blasted a quarry. But seldom does a foe have time to get into one of these refuges when attacked, for the suddenness of unseen attack by ray is disastrous so quickly—death is on one before one realizes there is trouble. Only continual and unceasing vigilance keeps one alive in the caverns.

scarred across one whole side with a fearful burn.

I had seen such hands before, in the zombies of the devil groups, men they called "ro." These they used as robots to handle the terrible weapons in a ray-combat. When such weapons overheat, the hands of the operators get a ray infection which rots the fingers off, sometimes does not heal, but goes on till death results, as in leprosy.

"We have guests, my Hugo. See they have good care, they may amuse me. You know how rare that has become for me." The old man nearly smiled at Hugo, but did not move.

"Aye, Master. They will not want for comfort, if they can relieve the dull life we lead of late."

The great shoulders of Hugo, gleaming in the dim light from the worn out wall tubes, preceded us out of the tremendous room, and down an endless corridor whose far reaches were lost in the gloom.

As we turned a corner into another similar corridor, a sultry-eyed, wide-hipped young woman paused to watch us pass. Her long, strong and well-shaped legs spread wide, her hands on her hips, she laughed at us as we came near and recited a cryptic bit of doggerel, that sounded like this:

*"Meat for the butcher
Fuel for the fires
Visitors come healthy
But soon turn 'liars!"*

I grinned back at her, and said:

"Just what can you mean by that?"

She leaned against the wall of the corridor. Her long, glistening skirt, split to the thigh, ended in a golden girdle riding low on her wide hips. Her torso, bare and narrow-waisted as a young girl's, was a sensuous invitation to the eyes. A pair of metal breast-plates completed her costume. She looked at me quizzically and a little ptingly in the eye as she answered.

"I mean that the hangers-on here will make the old man think you are no-good "liars" if they can. All Mephistos are mad, and the old one, sane enough ordinarily, has his weak spot. And he kills all "liars" painfully, the very word turns him berserk. So you, too, will soon be caught in a lie if these crooked devils that lick his boots here can manage it. For they are all so inherently bad that they cannot let anyone

simple and good like yourselves stay here for long, as the contrast would show up their true characters to the old man. They all fear to lose their place in Mephisto's regard, and strive always to please him, for to be kicked out of his protection here would mean to face the caverns alone."³

None of us knew what to say. Our reception by the old man had seemed so favorable after our scare upon our arrival outside, that the sudden news that we were not out of danger was not welcome. Nydia offered:

"We can get along with old Mephisto, if you can help us with the others for a day or so. We do not intend to stay long."

The woman looked at us, as though sizing us up more carefully, then launched into a swift series of instructions.

"Watch yourselves all the time. When you are with the old man, disclaim immediately any strange words that issue from your mouth, for they will control you and make you say exactly those things best calculated to set him into a rage; and when in anger he is still a bloody, ruthless man, who cares no more for human life than does a shark. If you fail to watch everything of the kind, if you let this blind girl say things you think are not her words, it will be too bad. You must say at once any one of you seems under evil ray control: 'That is not his self speaking, that comes from some make-ray around here somewhere.' The old fellow will know then what is going on and not blame you. But if you fail to watch such things, sooner or later they will cause him to lose his temper and destroy you, even though he would regret it later terribly, he could not help himself. His hangers-on do not allow any one else to live here for they are all half-mad. I have had the ear of Mephisto for many years and he trusts me, but even I am sometimes under his suspicions. It is a place full of mad people, and I would get my business over with and get away from here before something happens—you can not survive. If you need me, ask for Chlio."

SOLARIS was much taken with the sultry, insolent yet friendly stare of her

³ Travelers in the caves must keep a watch fore and aft, and to both sides, with long range ray-view beams. It cannot be done by one man alone. To travel alone means to be shot in the back by the mad, flesh-eating nomads of the caves, who rush nothing so much as a human carcass.

eyes, and with the warm life in the curves of her. Little Truly, who was sweet on Solaris herself, watched them both with a jaundiced eye. Solaris said:

"Could it be that one like you would care to leave with us when we go? You must be weary of this old hole and want to see somewhat of the rest of the world before age creeps into your bones and rots the beauty out of you. With Solaris, you would enjoy life."

She smiled a warm smile at Solaris.

"It might be that with such as you I would go if minded that way. I will think upon the offer. Now go to your rooms and I will try to watch over you while you sleep. And it may be you will one day watch over me and see that no harm comes to me."

"That may well be, if I have my way," was Solaris' answer, and we all knew that what was meant was a great deal, for we had often stood watch—in fact, all of us took our turns at watching over the sleep of the rest every night. Yet here we had no rays with which to watch. So we knew she was going to watch and felt more easy about going to bed weaponless and unguarded.

That night we composed ourselves to sleep, but with little success. Some of Mephisto's mad company, whom we had heard but had not yet seen, decided we needed entertainment. In the night we were drifting into unconsciousness, among the soft covers spread on the floor which Hugo had brought us when "it" began to happen.

The long couch, which was the largest piece of furniture in the room, and on which Nydia and Truly had made their bed, suddenly refused to obey the old-fashioned law of gravity and took to floating in the air. We knew it was someone playing with the levitator mech somewhere in the great pile, trying to frighten and mystify us, as is the mischievous way of so many of the mad of the caverns. But this was worse than that, for the great weight of the thing kept trying to crush us against the wall. Nydia and Truly clung desperately to it as it reared about the room like a captive balloon in a gale. Then the heavy couch rushed toward the ceiling, trying to smash the two girls against the stone, but they slipped off the side into our arms.

Instantly the great couch fell like a stone upon us. As it crashed to the floor, two of the metal legs of the thing bent like putty with the force of the fall. The crash must have awoken Chlio, our sultry-eyed friend, for she called over the invisible teltaug beam into the room.

"Is anyone hurt?"

I answered a little roughly, for falling asleep on watch is unforgivable under the conditions of cavern life. For it is by inducing sleep with a nerve deadening ray that the dero's overcome a watch and kill a whole group in their sleep.

"No, but small thanks to your careful watch. Some of us had better help you keep awake."

"That might be wise," she answered, laughing. "Particularly if it were you or that nice young Solaris. Come, I will guide you."

I looked at Nydia, and stood in doubt, for the sensual, frank thought of Chlio had not been entirely concealed from us on the beam, and she was no woman to spend a night with without suspicion and Nydia's heart was one I had no wish to hurt. Solaris understood, and nothing loath, went to the door and left, guided by a thought beam from Chlio, somewhere overhead.

ONE would have thought that would have ended the night's mysterious happenings, but I was reckoning without knowledge of the mad bunch who festered there under old Mephisto's once iron hand.

I was just drifting into a dream of days when Nydia used to come to me in my prison cell, and her flower-sweet face was drifting closer and closer to my own, my mind was slipping into a soft blackness that was her imagined embrace crossed with the gentle blackness of night itself, when the face that was Nydia's contorted savagely, swiftly—and facing me instead was the red-lit eyes, the snarling over-ripe lips, the sharp teeth, the reaching hungry hands of some horrible vampire. A demoness was wrapping her mental self about my soul. I woke with a curse for it is great mental pain to see the image of one's beloved turn into the face of a revolting ghoul of the medieval darkness, and as I opened my eyes, I cursed again.

For still before me in the darkness floated the very face that had frightened me awake. It was not unreal, not a projection, it was

the living flesh of a fiend in a woman's body, and from her hands streamed the lure, the doping compulsion of the pleasure stim-rays I was familiar with as the most seducing and irresistible of the ancient's works. This force of irresistible allure surrounded this evil-eyed female with a strength greater than any physical force could resist.

I felt her hands on my shoulders, and I was frozen. She bent and her sharp teeth sank into my neck. And even as I felt that in spite of all my knowledge that such things were always an illusion produced by the antique mechanisms, a superstitious horror froze me immovable in her terrible embrace. Then as gradually as dawn-light another presence grew into being in the room, and the face of the luxurious lipped Chlio came out of the shadow, filling the room with an unearthly, almost divine aura from the God-ray mech she was using. She seized the solid-seeming hypnotic-powered ray projection of the mad girl by the shoulder, and led her back—out of my sight. The twin vision, as opposed as Heaven and Hell, disappeared.

Soon after, I heard a mad screaming, as of an insane woman being beaten, and I was bothered no more that night.

THE next day we were called to re-enter the presence of Mephisto at an early hour. In the ever-dark caves, time—sunlight and dark; noon and midnight—are exactly the same except for the clock. Too, there is always a ray watching something in the sunlit world overhead, piercing up through the rock to bring the vision of sunlight and green leaves down to the screens of the vision rays, and one senses day and night by these two things.

We found the lean old Lord of the Darkness in his library, this was that library where countless ancestors' acquisitions had accumulated, brought from far ends of the cavern world to one or another of the Mephisto's homes, and then to this place where the Mephisto's great Zigor had assembled it all together in the single great collection. Records and spools of thought were stacked in endless tiers in a vast room, and several great record-reader-mech stood about the chamber. This modern, aged, scion of the ancient family waved a hand at his ancestor's collection of the immense and usually enigmatic ancient wisdom that the spools of wire and metal micro-film represented,

and we felt as though the door to all wisdom had been opened to us.

I wish I could tell you the marvels those antique records made live in our minds as the records played and we were wafted into the ancient times when the world was young and life was perfect—a wonderland of rich experience—a place of no death and less disease — a place where accomplishment and learning were the order of every day and no man lay down to sleep without his hands having seen a mass of work and play accomplished, such as we moderns do not get into a lifetime. For there is no telling in our weak modern words and thought symbols what the ancients were or what wisdom and life experience are packed into their thought-records, for one gets but a sort of "skim" over the vastness of such a display of mighty thought energy, and that thin sight of ours sees more than one man can ever convey to another with this poor medium.

Old Mephisto proved tireless and very knowing as to what we most wished to see, and I suspected as the day wore on that our dark-eyed friend, Chlio, of the evening before was still watching us sleeplessly over her telaug beam and was reading our minds for our purposes and telling the old man's mind what it was we wished to learn; that he was really laying himself out for us because his dark-eyed "watcher" wished it so. And I was mightily pleased to see this evidence of love and care for us in these two and realized from many strange happenings that these two were all that kept the ancient pile of wonder and wisdom from becoming such another horror-hole as one can find only in the madness and wonder and struggle of the world below the earth.

We learned much of different kinds of weapons and their uses that we proposed to apply when we returned to our home and to our struggle with the human djinni, the devils migrant from far Africa who beset us there.

We learned, too, that the make of these things was not beyond us, that we could now repair and get into running order many things we had been unable to use before. The dero from afar are full of unthinking, and never try to do aught for themselves, often making of wonder-work a wreck and an ugly nothingness, over which they gloat.

NOW the old man opened up a new section of the record files, saying:

"What have I been showing you are from the very far past before the original Elder race left our earth. But this section is from a later time, and is the history of our family from its beginnings, both before and after they came to earth. As the story comes down into historical times, I will pick the most revealing; those bits of record which show what are, to me, the turning points in the history of the caves and the fortunes of the Mephisto family. The records cease about one hundred years ago, after the first Mephisto came here under America and established himself, the Zigor of whom you have heard. I came here with my following much later, quite recently, and this pile had been deserted for fifty years when I arrived.

"Luckily the place had remained untouched, as the nomads have a superstitious fear of the place."

We reclined in a circle on lounges about the massive dream-mech, with which Mephisto had chosen to display this part of the collection. I thought to myself how fortunate it was that this store of cavern history had been preserved through the vagaries of time and fortune to this day, and how infinitely valuable they would be to a group of ambitious young technical men from the surface and how much they would get of value to men from it all. But now old Mephisto had swung a ray separately upon each of us, and as he turned the record release, we drifted into a land of dream, a vivid place of more reality by far than the world of the ordinary senses, for the old records were made by the master race and are productive of much stronger sensations than natural when augmented by the powerful augmentors.

* * *

WE AWOKE upon a world of metal, where titanic towers plunged upward into the blinding white of the clouds and were lost to view. The soil of the planet had been, as far as the eye could see, sealed over with rustless, impervious metal, and on this foundation the vast metal living places of this race of the past of some far world of space had been reared—and reared so tremendously that nowhere could one see the top of anything. Between the

towers so fantastically vaulting skyward were suspended the roads, the connecting arteries of the huge planet city's parts. The world whirled giddily as the eye of the recorder swung into a focus upon the Gargantuan structure near at hand, and whirled again as we seemed to be borne in the air and magically inserted within the interior of the building.

Somebody was in hot water! A group of swarthy men were scattered about the great chamber, peering out the windows over the snouts of ugly ray-weapons into the cloud-wrack of the sky outside. Far in the distance, the gleaming bodies of a dozen planes swung down from the shielding clouds as they neared, and as swiftly swept up into the alternate white-and-grey hovering mass of mist again. For the men within the chamber threw a bolt of deadly energy at every gleaming sky-fish that showed a fin. Some preparations for departure seemed going on, files were burned and an elevator appeared, was swiftly loaded and shot upward out of sight again. Ten minutes of this intensive defense went on, the swarthy men then dropped their weapons and boarded the elevator. It shot up and up dizzily, and when we stepped out, the windows through which one peered at the sky outside were shrouded and wet with the clouds obscuring all sight.

Now they mounted a flight of steps and emerged on a platform, the height of which must have been dizzying. Poised on the platform that was the center of the down-sloping roof was a long, slim ship. Its nose, from which projected a deadly looking ray-cathode for space use, slanted up at a sharp angle. The men scrambled in and the ship blasted up and away—into the space above that was swiftly the utter cold of space.

Far below a pursuit of five long ships flamed after, but the men laughed excitedly, and seemed confident that their ship would not be overtaken.

Now the mind was told of the lapse of some twenty years⁴ and then the ship was

⁴ In a record such as this, long periods of time are indicated at times, by simple "indication"—that is, one is mentally told that a certain period has elapsed and believes it—although in truth but a few seconds elapse, the seeming impression on the memory can be of years or even tens of thousands of years; but for that matter, light years may have been meant, and not actual earthly years.

circling down, down and crashing into the water of a great, calm sea. The record told me in some way that this was the Mediterranean before it had acquired that name.

Our great penetray beams reached out and down, searching the water and the rock below, for still afar could be heard the thunder of the pursuit rockets augmented by our detectors. Now down and down, we crashed toward some hiding-hole the rays had spied out of the rocky bottom of the sea. A long tube of hollowness could be seen on the screens far below, and this ended in a great metal door on the sea's bottom. This hollowness I knew was the surface ending of one of the under-earth tunnels that form a network over all earth. Our beams reached out ahead of us, wrenching magnetically at the mechanism of the door, and the lock swung open as we came, letting us in—closing behind us. As swiftly the inner door opened protestingly, creakingly—an age already had the door waited unused—and we shot through, flying now just above the dry floor of a cavern under the sea. On and on, down and down, the ship careened, narrowly missing the fate that the slightest unsureness of control would have meant: death in a crushing blast of weight and momentum as the fuel exploded in the crash against the walls. But it did not happen, and at last our leader cried out and pointed ahead—where arose the great doors that meant: Within lies a city, a forgotten city built here by some ancients unknown to us.

OVER the great gates of the city were these words, "THE CITY OF DIS."

These doors likewise opened to the searching, pulling rays under our leader's swift fingers. This leader's name I knew—"Mephistopheles." Into the vast city of tremendous dwellings we shot, turning and searching—for what? At last I knew as we settled on a huge square pile from which the long electrode snouts of ray-cannon protruded. With shouts we piled out of the ship as she slid to a halt.

"Now let them come—with this armament we will give them a welcome."

I knew again, from the dogged pursuit, that no twenty years had elapsed since we lifted from that unbelievable city of metal, gargantuan towers, but that some paradox of space-time-speed had conquered some unit of space called by a mental symbol

similar to our year. One can never fully understand these alien concepts involving a knowledge of the nature of energy and space unknown to us.

Behind us the pursuit had found the water-lock into the caves on the sea bottom, and had followed our ion trail, "smelling" us out painfully through all the turns and branches of the tortuously contrived caverns of the Elder Ones. As they came into sight of our penetrays, we blasted at them with the mighty old cannon, and one by one the ships heated under the fearful force-flows, and exploded under the titanic charges of Jovian lightning thrown right through the living rock. Not a ship escaped to tell where we had run to cover, for we searched, after the battle, for their ion trails left by the jets, and even the guard-ship they had left outside was caught by us. We were safe from the knowledge or pursuit of the hated Patrol. This would be our home now.

When we returned from hunting down the last of the pursuit, and settled again upon the great square-cut fortress in the weird, lost City of Dis, a strange thing happened to us that changed our lives forever from the path in which they had been cut.

As we set up our homes within the great chambers of the fortress, and busied ourselves repairing the ravages that time and some slight corrosion had occasioned to the weapons and life-machinery of the place, as the water flowed again into long unused pipes and fountain bowls about the great city, a strange great voice came into the fortress! It was a giant's voice, and loneliness and despair had ingrained themselves into the timbre of the voice, so that it seemed the soul of the great empty city that spoke.

"I have watched your interloping activity! This is my home, but I have done nothing, for I did not know whether to kill you or not. But now that you have decided to remain, to make a home here, you may as well learn who is the Lord and Master here, and whom it is you will serve."

The titanic strength of the voice, the terrible nature of the character as displayed by the voice, impressed us as no thing ever had before. We searched and found no source—the voice was wholly within our minds, by our finding!

"Where are you and what is this about Lording it over us? We serve no man but our own interests only. Come, show yourself that we may know what you are."

Far below the fortress we heard a great rumbling, and a clanking of chains. We shot a penetray downward, searching, but the ray was blocked by a great mass of impervious metal that is sometimes used to sheath shelter-chambers and war-ships from dis-rays of all kinds.

We followed our ray down and down, by many winding turns, and found at the last a tremendous sealed door. And on the door was written a legend of warning, which we might not wholly read, for it was in a strange language and not the universal Mantong of all space. Heeding it not, we burned off the metal seals of the door, and found within a sight that wrung our hearts, for we still had hearts of a kind then. Ruthless, warlike, grasping we may have been, but still warm human emotions sometimes held us in their sway as well.

A VAST giant of a man lay inside, wrapped in endless turns of heavy chains and beside him a food-tablet synthesizer machine showed us what had kept him alive. A water-pipe poured into a fountain at his side. The stench of the place was frightful. As we loosened the giant's chains, he smiled upon us. But there was that about him which should have given us pause, even though we were not men easily given to fear. Horns there were upon his head and a dark and sour face, but such imprisonment does not make for beauty or a cheerful face. We ourselves were dark men, and of a hairy breed, and the cloven hoof upon his right leg—the beast that was crossed into his ancestry sometime in the past we recognized for what it was—the mark of those Titans of the parts of space where they breed with other strange races called the "variform" Titan, a thing we had heard of but had never seen.

We unwrapped the massive chains from about him, for a Titan is known over all space for wisdom, and we could use such knowledge. The while he discoursed in his thought-voice, in phrases and picture symbols strange and outlandish to us, and smacking of a vast antiquity. Of the fate that had come upon him, the mighty Sathanas of Nor. Of Nor, the great space

Empire that lay between our own regions and that dark and impenetrable region taboo to all but the Gods of the Dark Spaces called the Elder Ones, who rule over Nor and other Empires from afar. We had heard of these things, and it did not lessen our respect for the evident great strength and apparent ability of this giant that he was of that race. I knew myself that the men of Nor are not variforms, but his thought pictures as he talked explained all this and more, and his vast size and age as well explained much to us, for we had heard of these immortal races but did not believe in them, and had ourselves then not any great length of life; none of us being known to live for more than a thousand years. It seemed from his talk that the "accursed" Aesir had imprisoned him there instead of killing him when they had evacuated all the better groups of people from earth—those people known as the Lesser or Latter Gods, and had not killed him for fear they might lose their way in space and have to return here to their old home to prepare a new start toward their goal—"goal" being a life under a dark star that gave no light. This we did not understand, and the giant gave us no light on the matter. Except that the "Aesir" had considered his brain valuable, yet had hated him so much they could not bear to kill him. They had chosen to condemn him to an eternity of imprisonment here deep under the rocks of Mother Earth's thickest crust—an eternity of longing and waiting. We pitied him, but that only shows what great fools men can be when confronted with the devious ways of a superior brain, for Sathanas was taking no chances of estranging our hearts until he had us in his power. So the days went by while the giant slept and ate and drank, and studied us and our ways of life.

THEN the day came when Sathanas calmly took our loved leader in his great hands and shut him up in the same dungeon from which he had been released. Hence forward, he announced, Sathanas would give the orders in this City of Dis. And day by day the orders increased and we brought in slaves from the upper world—wild men of the forests, cultured men of cities of the east, the big white bodies of the barbarians of the North and all the people of earth we culled over to get fuel

for the fire that consumed this giant of lust. Sathanas had fastened himself upon us and his brain was such that we could find no way to loosen his hold upon us and only death rewarded those who tried. We could do nothing but serve slavishly, and those who did so serve, he debauched with pleasures such as we had never imagined existed. And in time he released our leader who became his chief lieutenant. His name was Mephistopheles, and he could not resist the persuasive mind of Sathanas, nor could he resist the tempting pleasures that made up the life of Sathanas' inner confidants. And our leader became one of these—and somehow we knew that this wizard from alien space had done something to Mephistopheles, for he was never the same man—but a dour, unpleasant fellow and not himself at all.

And the record showed us the vast under-world rule that Sathanas built with the aid of these men, a world of tremendous slavery, of endless debauchery, of utter distortion of the character of man into another thing by his arts with the growth rays and cutting rays with which he changed both the bodies and brains of the men and women under his rule. (And the Hell that Sathanas built was understood by me as no other thing could explain it—for I saw it as it was, and the record was so made that I was conscious always of being one of these people, though which one was I, I could never quite learn). And that vast city grew under his vile hands into a thing where no man had a will of his own, but only a will to serve his master Sathanas, and no woman wanted any pleasure or love or admiration but only Sathanas, and all the children that were born there were the children of Sathanas. Some few men, such as Mephistopheles, whom he needed for their skills in ways he lacked, he was careful to allow them some modicum of self-will, and these men had their own women who bore them children. But the rest of the city seemed to exist only to serve the will and the whims and pleasures of this vast body of appetite—Sathanas.

TIME passed, and men grew and died about him, and gradually the mind of the thing that was Sathanas changed, though the gradual change was almost unnoticed by the mortals that served him, for they came and went, were born and

died, while Sathanas went on immortally from the great strength that was in him. And this change was greater and greater blood madness, a viler cruelty, an insanity that grew and grew until all his days were spent in tormenting and murdering the poor mortals, and his servants spent their time in bringing more and more victims for the pleasures of the mad thing that Sathanas had become. And his chief men became those who flattered him by affecting the same madness for blood that brooded in Sathanas, and he drew his favor from all others and gave it only to those who pleased him by devising new and longer lasting torments for the hordes of humans that were brought before him.

And Mephistopheles at last left the bloody mess, and went Northward, and the records showed no more of Sathanas, but only the family that was now called "Mephisto" and their ways. And they fought northward through the cavern mazes, and the hordes of the people called "Pixies," called gnomes, called trolls, fought and fled before the might of the vast giant that was Mephisto's power, before the great and irresistible weapons that he bore on his air-floating ships, and terrible was the waste and death as the Mephistos carved out a waste of emptiness in the cavern life in which to live alone.

And a sadness at the slaughter that consumed always the best of the life and things in these records was with one always as the scenes passed, as the time sweep reached into the tens of thousands of years, as the Mephistos changed faces, and generations came and went, but ever the war and the killing went on, and ever the people who were called "Faerie" fought with them, little blond people of a mighty science, but fearfully handicapped by their lack of size, and the power that was Satanism spread, and the power that was good and gentle in the caverns diminished, and the number of faces that were gentle and sane grew fewer and fewer as the centuries flashed past on the rapid flowing records, and the madness and degradation of the people that yet lived in the great cavern world great ever greater, their lives less and less cultured, their artistry of pleasure, of science, disappeared, and at the end of it all nothing remained but the lean, dour face of one old man, who was gently shaking me awake. And he said:

"Yes, I am what is left of all that, and I am as discouraged as you at going on with it all. For what is it all but a steady slipping from the great pinnacles of the rich life of the past into the poverty and ignorance and misery of these present days. But still, even in me who inherits the evil, wild blood of those Mephistos, even in me flows some hope that the future may turn a path back into the light that is science and wisdom again. So it is I befriend you, though my instincts say to kill you and be left in peace; left no need of thought or effort; left to lie in the stim and enjoy the smile of Chlio, and her artistry with the stim. Instead of that, I send her with you, and the Devil help my last days without her."

I SAT up, and looked about. Chlio had come in while we dreamed in the record sleep, and she smiled upon us, and all the sensuous soul of her was in her eyes, warm and alive and somehow good in spite of her life, or perhaps because its evil had taught her that after all only goodness was sense.

Old Mephisto reached up a claw-like hand and stroked the firm, smooth flesh of her arm, saying:

"It's just as well the rest of the crew here have kept out of your way, as I told them. Saved us all a lot of unpleasantness. Now go, and may our Mother Earth watch over you. Hugo will watch the mad ones, and the others had better mind their step, for my temper has a short rein as I grow older. And no Mephisto was ever noted for mildness." And for an instant a Hell-flame smoldered in his eyes, and I knew that old Mephisto was watching, guarding his emotions, fearing the insanity that had come sooner or later to all of his family, and I pitied him.

As we rose, thinking how best to say our goodby to this old man, who had brought from out of his inheritance of an evil nature—of a character the reverse of noble—the power to be sane and noble, as we thought how to say what we thought of this effort that showed on his face in lines of great strain—as we all of us hesitated in an inner awe at this old man who had managed to be human in spite of every influence to be inhuman—those creatures who had so far remained hidden from our eyes in frustration, in an embarrassed frus-

tration at being unable to wreak their will upon us—now found their opportunity. Into the room of the ancient records, into this library of sinister but somehow hallowed antiquity, into this room where the wisdom of the whole vast past of earth had miraculously been preserved under the fragile hand of one old man, under the watchful guardianship of one old man, one young woman and one loyal servant—into this room where we feared to breathe too heavily for fear of obliterating one little thought wave from one brittle old metal micro-film staggered the blood-dabbled figure of that servant—Hugo.

"Master, your son . . ." and from Hugo's straining lips gushed, instead of words, a torrent of blood and he fell at his aged master's feet. Behind him in the doorway stood a tall, lean unkempt figure that must have much resembled the old Mephisto, fifty years ago. The old man leaped to his feet in a moment's return of his young strength at this intrusion of sudden death upon our peaceful parting words. The old man croaked out:

"Zigor, what the Devil has happened? Is this your deed, you young fiend? Ordered I not you to keep your quarters while these children from afar were with us? Must you bring your vileness before the eyes of humans . . . ?" The sudden strength that had come to the old man at the emergency left him, and his attempt to over-awe the young scion of the evil line failed of weakness. He sank to his chair, gasping for breath. As he looked down at Hugo, tears came to his old eyes, and he looked what he was—a broken old man with no need to lean upon, now that his loyal servant was dead.

"Your time has come, father!" Young Zigor's voice was exultant, evidently this was a deed he had planned for a long, long time.

"I have taken your orders for the last time. From now on you will keep to your quarters under my orders, and eat your crackers and gruel in peace. I will shoulder the burdens of authority. You old fool, think you a Mephisto can be cooped up like a chicken? There is more in the blood than that, in spite of the squeamishness that has come over you of late. This night Satan will receive his due, and you, Chlio, will take your rightful place . . . at the altar. . . ."

BEHIND the tall, unkempt, fierce-faced figure of young Zigor appeared now the face of an old woman. Her hair was a tangle of madness, nearly white and uncombed for years, apparently. It hung to her knees about a body that betrayed with every move a kind of madness that I knew too well, and feared too much—the madness of Evil. Her toothless mouth was split in a hideous grin, and she cackled constantly, evilly, a cachination that no witch of legend ever equalled for its horrible glee.

"Hee, hee, you old double-crosser—you *think* to keep your own wife and son shut here in these dungeons, when the whole cavern world should be groveling at our feet."

Old Mephisto, for some reason, looked at blind Nydia, and began to speak in a tired, defeated voice.

"Nydia, when I came here, I thought much as these two mad creatures do, that with the wisdom of the nature of the antique weapons those records of the past contain, I could regain the ancient dominion over the caverns that the Mephistos enjoyed in bygone times. But when I had read them all, and seen what evil and destruction, what terrific loss and sorrow and horrible endless pain the Mephisto family has meant to all the world for so many centuries, some fragment of manhood still existent in the Mephisto fibre—or else the spirit of my mother within me—rose up and choked the Devil of madness within me, and I resolved that never again, while I had the will to stop it, should a Mephisto rule anyone or fight for anything with these destroying weapons on this dark globe of pain and blood and endless loss. It was then I shut these two up in their rooms, and have since left them out for no reason. Now all has gone for naught—all those good intentions I formed after much thought upon what the records revealed to me—what they meant in truth. I am sorry that it must be you and your friends who suffer, for I can see no fault in you, and I know I am right. There is no wisdom in Evil, but only foolishness! One sweet word from such as you, Nydia, is worth more, somehow, than all the dominion that Evil can offer. But, in truth, Evil destroys its own dominion, so that it is a false thought that Evil can offer anything."

Nydia, smiling in the face of our sudden

ill-fortune, answered the broken old man.

"You have that word, my Lord. Your wisdom, from one who has tried both Good and Evil, is worth to me quite an equal amount. I thank you, for the wise old man that you are."

"Another reason for my anger," cried young Zigor, who I noticed was not going to leave anyone else the center of the stage, "is the fact that you show these strangers the secrets of our ancestors when you have not allowed me even inside this room before. Well, it is my room now, and hereafter I shall say who comes and goes across the threshold!"

BEHIND the old hag, who had once been, perhaps, a regal creature and fit mate for a rich and powerful Mephisto, but was now only a crazy old witch of the under-world, were trooping in a score of creatures, carrying various weapons, and ranging themselves behind the young Zigor. They were, some dozen of them, dwarfish, twisted-limbed products of the more ignorant life of the caverns, for only those with the wisdom regularly to use the more beneficial rays of the old mech grow up without rickets or worse, a complete dwarfing and distortion of the whole frame due to lack of sunlight. On their faces was a frustration, a pouting, as of a drug addict denied his drug—it was evident that the old Mephisto had not let them do as they pleased of late, and that the young Zigor Mephisto had promised to let them have their "usual" pleasures. Having seen somewhat of these "usual" pleasures among various nomadic people of the caves, I had no wish to be the victim. The other eight of the score of people behind the young Zigor and his mother, the bent and evil crone, were tall, well-formed, and not ugly, but on their faces was the stigma, the sign of enslavement to evil, and it was all too plain that with Zigor they expected gratification of those appetites, the indulgence in which has rendered all life in the cavern world sterile and barren of good for men. For the use of stim rays can be a good thing, a glorious enrichment of life; or it can be a horrible vice, a complete tool for evil enslavement of all the appetites and inner action springs of a man's mind. Under the tutorship of such as the old crone, I knew it could only be an evil thing, a false stimulation of the pleasure senses during

the torture of victims, resulting in the mental conviction that only in sadistic indulgence could "real" pleasure be obtained.

No defense was possible to us, the overturn of directive power was sudden and complete. They all carried hand rays, deadly little wands that paralyze, or carried coils of rope, whose purpose I did not have to guess for long. Swiftly Solaris and myself were bound, and the little men did not bother to carry us, they just dragged us down the corridor and dumped us in one of the innumerable vacant rooms—those vacant rooms that served as a continual reminder of what should be there and isn't: wise men from the surface studying the antique mechanisms for the tremendous science that still lies here waiting for the intelligent inquirer.

What would become of the three girls, how they would fare at the hands of this young heir of a line as bloody and fiendish as the Mephistos—this young Zigor, whose temper I had surmised from his father's attitude towards him; was what mainly worried me, rather than my own fate. The awful dark of the caverns closed in on us with the clanging of the metal door, and into that black was plunged all my hopes for a future with Nydia; a future of building from the ancient science a new race of men, wise and able as the ancient races were. Too, I knew that death by torment was the least evil we could expect. Maybe something far worse would be our fate, for the tales I had heard, and the things I had seen done by those raised to the evil tradition of cavern life—such as the things from Africa which had laid siege to our home-place—told me there are fates far worse than death. Which was what worried me about Nydia, for the more sensitive a person, the more idealistic and finely tempered the person, the more greatly do the mind-wrecking rays of the sadists cause pain. For to see your own mind made a thing not your own, not yourself at all; to see all the careful work of years in building the thing that is "yourself" made into an unrecognizable morass of uncontrollable desires, of filthy overpowering lusts that seem one's own; of made desires to kill and maim and torture arise and take root in your own brain as part of your character; that sort of thing can cause a mental anguish more terrifyingly painful than any physical pain.

To do these things to the brain of men was one of the arts, the traditional teachings of Satanists, the allied cults and proceedings of the mad life of the caverns—and all the good and wise work that tries so hard, so tenaciously through the years has been unable to wipe out these age-old practices—those practices by which normal children are made to grow up into devils—by which sane men are made into ravening beasts; by which a wise man is made into a sleepwalking zombie whose will is only to do as he is told if he be able. Those things were what I feared for my gentle Nydia, for her knowledge of the wisdom of the antique mechanism's uses and care made her invaluable, but she could hardly be used by Evil without some change in her inner Nature being brought about to bend her to such purpose.

THE dark hours dragged by, filled only with these apprehensions. At last the dwarfish minions of the younger Mephisto returned, and once again dragged us out and down the corridor like two bags of unwanted rubbish.

Into that great old chamber of past magnificence and might, the glorious throne room of the Elder ones who built this mighty fortress—the same vast chamber where the older Mephisto had welcomed us—the dwarfs dragged us, casting us before the throne where the young Zigor sat now. He stretched out a foot and stirred me with a touch on the shoulder, looking down triumphantly into my light-dazzled eyes.

He was no longer the disheveled prisoner, but had donned finery, some old suit from the stores of his ancestors had tickled his fancy. It was, I swear, two hundred years old if it was a day, preserved by the magical hermetic sealing of some antique closet, adopted by these latter day interlopers for that use. It was a suit such as Hamlet might have worn, such as John Barrymore would have delighted in for the part, a brilliantly bejeweled short coat, with belt and dagger, sparkling in the light with jeweled hilt and scabbard. His hose were sleek and reached clear to the thigh, where the puffed and slashed short breeches completed the ensemble. I snickered, for the theatrical attempt to look the great Lord was so palpable.

"So, you find me amusing!" Zigor glowered down upon me, his lean dark face

sufficiently Mephistophilian for anyone's taste. Inside me a cold shiver grew swiftly to a great dread, a glimpse into the dark wastes where human emotions and human nature do not dwell, but where Demons and similar unbelievable products of life are birthed—a glimpse into an inferno of ice, fire and evil where this modern Devil had acquired his basilisk stare, his venomous soul, his pride and will toward death for all things not immediately useful to him.

How did I know this Zigor was evil, you ask? How does one know the winter is coming when the leaves turn brown and fall from the trees? How does one know that fire burns? How does one know anything? How does one know the scorpion is not a thing to fondle? One glance from his eyes, now that he had thrown off all need for the hiding of his nature, now that he had seized the reins of his life from the aging hands of his father—some evil thing had leaped from concealment and taken its place upon his face. The heritage of the past had claimed him, I knew. No wisdom would turn his face from the fire of evil by any lovely "syllogism," no matter how correct. For us there was only a waiting and at the last a death. I knew that no words would change this creature's intent toward us and toward all men's sons.

Zigor leaned forward over me, his face moody, anxious to have someone envious, anxious to show what he had done in seizing back the ancient power of his family.

"You think that I over-estimate my own importance, that I have but a score of half-mad creatures to do my bidding, that it will not be long ere some coup of the wild ray-fighters of the far caves will end me, eh? Well, I know the power that lies in possession of these antique weapons. I know what can be done in a short time with these things, does one have the will to do it. I have that will and I know the way! I have read a part of these records denied me by my father. I have seen just how the ancient Giant from far space, Sathanas, sent above ground for men and women to build his power down here to a great and overwhelming machine, which none other in the caves could withstand. Well, I shall do precisely the same. Every weapon that Sathanas used, every move he made, can be copied precisely. Those weapons can be found again, and the technical engineers

and mechanics I shall bring from the surface will make all my work easier than his, for he had to train every one of his men, while I can get trained men from a dozen sources.

"Gold lies by the ton in these vaults, and the sheathing of many of these abandoned machines is of gold, and of alloys even more precious to the upper world, did they but have them to know the value. I shall build such a trade with the surface as the underworld has not had since Sathanas drew his last earthly breath and lifted again into the night skies in his vast ship. For men, I shall give gold; for slaves, jewels; and for information, I shall barter crumbs of technical information from the vast store represented by these machines. Yes, the surface shall staff my palaces with slaves, my armies with well paid soldiery, my laboratories and workshops with willing workers. You will not live to see it, too sad to tell."

"I do not blame you for ambition, Zigor. Every man is ambitious, but why did your father thwart your ambition? He is not a fool, your father."

"He fears that because I am a Mephisto everything I do will turn into blood and war and death, as it did for all our ancestors. He does not know that great things cannot be done without a little bickering, and eggs cannot be eaten without cracking a shell or two. And I fear yours will be one of the first to crack.

"Why should you wish to do us harm? We have nothing whatever to do with you or your aims."

"It so happens that the tools I must use right now require some sating in blood and torment; it is their nature, as you may have observed if you have lived long in the caverns. To use them, I must pander to their appetites. So, to make my omelet, I must begin by breaking eggs."

"It would seem wiser to begin your career with tools more amenable to the hand, than things that cannot be controlled without pandering to their every whim. For instance, ourselves here are valuable, and know much of these things you must know to get far on your chosen path."

"It might seem so to you, but they will serve. I have a method of doing what I intend to do—to grow great and powerful, to build myself a machine of these available men and weapons—a tool for the acquisi-

tion of all those things in life which may be enjoyed. To you, of the surface people, enjoyment of life is not so much a goal as with those who know about such things, here in the caverns. For money and power may bring you better food and more women, but cannot really greatly enhance any of yours pleasures—and any poor man with a beautiful wife gets more of the goodness of life, than a rich man with an ugly wife and the gout in his feet by far.

"Down here, that is not true. For power can bring a man a multiplicity of the pleasure machines, of variant stim rays, of which there are in the endless caverns a store never touched by latter-day men since the Elder race abandoned earth. Power and money can bring a man beneficial rays and health machines which vastly increase his life span, his health, his ability to withstand the pleasures of dissipation. Growth rays can build vast strength within the body, strength that among other things increase his ability to enjoy women and stim rays. These things you do not fully understand, though you may have seen somewhat of them. You do not fully understand all the intricacies of their influence upon our life. This is what my father was depriving me of—and what no man is going to deprive me of. Do you hear! No man shall stand between me and my will to have the endless pleasures of those ancient Gods!"

"Well, I see little to stop you except your own fumbling ineptness. Why think that we oppose you, except insofar as you are a danger to our existence? Why make enemies of us when we wish nothing but to go our way in peace. It has always seemed to me that ambitious men defeat themselves chiefly by their habit of making enemies where none existed, and of fearing what would not happen did they not fear it, and so move against it and make of a nothing a combat. Is that not your chief trouble, the enemies that stand between you and your will?"

"There is truth in what you say, but my method will automatically eliminate error. I intend to take those records you have been so studious as to examine under my father's eye, hook them up in a ro-mech, and run the whole outfit from that ro-mech at full aug. Do you understand?"

"No, I don't understand. What is a ro-mech?"

A RO-MECH is a device which augments thought so strongly that anyone who hears it obeys it and does as it dictates. These Sathanas records should reproduce in actual occurrence those same events which led him to power on earth."

"But you are not Sathanas! The record will make no one but an actual Sathanas master. Who, then would be the master, and the other characters on the records—how could they respond? These people are not counterparts of those characters."

"The ro-mech doesn't worry about such details. It reproduces in actual life as nearly as possible the same events which take place on the records. You will see."

"And if it doesn't all work out as you plan? Suppose you want to change the course of events? You will be powerless—in the grip of those terrible old records of inhuman oppression and slavery. You, yourself, may become one of those pitiful victims such as Sathanas gloried in tormenting—you yourself may become one of those mutilated, mindless zombies who served in his stronghold. How avoid such a result?"

"I have 'tagged' the records with an imposed identification projection from my own mind augments—fixed them so they indicate exactly whom I wish to indicate and no other."

So it was that we found ourselves unwilling participants—actors—in a play that was as pre-determined as the hours on a clock face. The ancient ro-mech, one of the wonderful entertainment machines with which the Elder race had amused themselves, augmented a thought record till everyone within a mile radius had to do exactly as did the characters in the recorded action.

On the great crystal throne, shimmering with mysterious color glowing and changing in the depths of the carved crystal, sat young Zigor—but my mind knew him now as "Sathanas," the terrible, and my master—glowering, gloomy and conscious of his terrible power; sat and an intense activity was springing into life about him—with this Zigor as the center of it all.

Before him postured and writhed Chlio, her clothing nothing but a golden circlet, clasping about her swaying hips a wisp of flame-colored sheerness, and about her high breasts a similar scanty wisp of material. She was clad precisely as a certain dancer

of Sathanas' possession had been clad in one of the early records of his rule in the caverns, and it was a strange and outre sensation to be reenacting the whole ancient scene again—a sensation of living over something one had not lived, but knew of. That sensation one has sometimes unexplainedly—looking upon some strange scene, one realizes one has seen it before, but in truth one has not. It was like that, only infinitely more so.

One seemed to be another person entirely, living another life; but one was completely conscious of self, a self without will, a self borne upon the wave of tremendous command from the "ro-mech"; and knowing that what was to happen would happen and nothing one could do or say, but go on. There is no more terrible sensation than to be thus caught up in the compulsion of the "ro-mech" and not any way to use one's will or wits, but only to feel one's body and mind answering and obeying some outer command, steadily, awfully going through another life as another person.

NYDIA stood before Sathanas-Zigor, who she was and what she was going to be and do, I could not remember, but only fear that it was the usual fate of those who stood before Sathanas as supplicants. She lifted her blind eyes to that lean, merciless, proud and somehow idiotic face, a terrible trying was on her face—her will was struggling with the compulsion of the machine uselessly—her hands lifted to Sathanas and the chains about her wrists clinked mournfully, and within me from the ancient record rose a sensation of glee—another poor mortal was going to meet death, was chained already for the show to come, and was pleading for her life—how pleasant was that fact.

And even as these devilish, sadistic joys arose in anticipation of coming torture for Nydia, my own inner self, bound by weakness to be ruled by the powerful synthetic thought of the ro-mech records augmentation, writhed and shuddered with self-condemnation. How could I get joy from poor Nydia's plight? Yet joy was mine—I was evil now!

At the side sat the father of Mephisto, taking no part, evidently the record had no place for his participation, no "character" was assigned to him upon its surface,

as it unrolled, and the inner mind of "me" leaped as I saw that he alone, of all these people, swarming in incomprehensible activity about me was free of the terrible compulsion. Or was he?

One of the dwarfish men led Nydia away and I saw her no more. I seemed to know she was placed among other slaves to await a certain terrible fate that all who were of no use to Sathanas met sooner or later.

A fury of activity, of building, pulling and hauling, carrying to and fro, was going on around me. I myself was busy tinkering with a great old mechanism—it was a ray which my conscious mind understood not at all, but my hands, obeying the compulsion of the ro-mech's powerful waves of thought, knew what they were doing and rapidly set the thing to rights, though I somehow knew that whatever I had done to it had been done unnecessarily, and that it was not needed.

Now, my inner mind became aware of a much greater number of people about than I had observed to be living there. There were rushing about me at least a thousand people, wild, staring-eyed men of the far darkness, and somehow I knew that the terrible compulsion of the great ro-mech had caught up in its field some strange tribe of nomads from the caverns outside the Palace of Eg Notha, and had made them a part of its activity. A certain worried expression on Zigor's face told me that his inner mind had seen the unwanted additions to his ranks, as well as myself, and was wondering what would come of it when the record had played itself out and it had come time to insert a new roll of the ancient record-wire in the ro-mech.

For the most part, these undisciplined nomads of the caves were a bloody, cannibalistic lot, and once the restraint of the ro-mech was off them, no force could restrain their seizing the opportunity to loot and kill. I guessed that his idea of using the ro-mech to build once again the ancient power of the Mephisto's was not going according to schedule. Myself I knew it could not, for there were too many missing links for the chain of circumstance to be forged again as it had been, so long ago.

BUT there was one series of events in that record which had caused Zigor to choose it as the first! I soon realized what this was, for Zigor walked to a great ma-

chine near the throne; activated the inner dynamo, and from it leaped a beam of blinding white light. This light he played over the dancing form of Chlio, where she undulated before his throne.

That light was a terrible thing for a reason no man alive knows enough to understand, and it was a thing Sathanas had used much for its after effects upon men. Some slight details of its use remained in my mind from old Mephisto's display of the record to me. It was a thing that acted upon a man in exactly the same way a flame acts upon the senses of a moth. It blinds the will, even such a synthetic will as was acting within us from the ro-mech, replacing it with a terrible desire to lose the self, such a desire as the masochist knows: to be enslaved; to give up to another all self; to become the property of another.

But why was Zigor using this thing upon Chlio. As the light bathed her, she ceased her dance and stood, frozen in a strange and awful beauty, with tears streaming down her face from her disappearing inner self. And as the light burned on, I realized why he was using Chlio as the point of focus of the beam—for a terrible compulsion reached out to all of us, and we inched, crawled, scrambled and raced, at the last, to place ourselves at her feet—her "things," her slaves. This beautiful, white, woman-thing was absorbing ourselves magically within her.

What still remained of reason within me told me that a terrible kind of soul-stealing was going on, that "Chlio" was but the *focus*, and Sathanas—Zigor, standing outside the direct beams and ruling its power by reason of the directive action of the ro-mech review of the ancient scene, was the recipient. For even as we gave up forever our "selves" to "Chlio" in a terrible and complete hypnosis—from which my mind knew we could never rise again free—even so was Chlio in turn giving all up to Zigor at the source of the terrible beam.

This terrible bit of ancient magic upon the record Zigor had noticed, and was using to make us all captives forever of his will—even as had Sathanas, so long ago!

A man will walk through fire to reach that awful devouring whiteness when it is played upon the body of a woman, and about me writhed the bodies of all the others, those strangers from the outer darkness and the mad sadists who had chosen

Zigor as their leader. All of them, were beside me, prostrate and wriggling ever closer and denser about the white and straining pillar of compulsion that was the body of Chlio under the full strength of the awful, ancient ray of power.

And as men or as souls or as beings of any kind we *ceased to be* in that white light, and our minds ceased to remember or think, but only listened for the voice of Chlio and that voice itself waited for the order of Zigor to speak.

Zigor walked now to the great ro-mech and shut off the record, for it had accomplished its purpose. And he looked at his white-headed and shaking old father where he sat bound and watching, and he laughed in triumph.

"Now, father, try and give orders here contrary to my own!"

But the older Mephisto answered not at all, nor did he look at the younger man or speak to him. And upon his face was a repugnance, as if he regretted ever having left such a thing as his son live one day.

Still we groveled there before the white, frozen form that had been Chlio—the sultry, the scornful, the beautiful—and Zigor looked at us and laughed. He picked up a thonged whip from where it lay near the throne, and tossed it to Chlio, who caught it dutifully.

"Beat them, my Chlio, they are yours, as you are mine. Beat them; they deserve a reward for all the work they have been doing."

Chlio, her face as blank and empty as stone, swung the whip and brought it down upon the scrawny back of a dwarf. Not a howl of pain came from the blow, but a gasp of exaltation, a sound as of Heaven's gate opening before his astounded eyes. Again and again she brought the whip down upon us, walking through and around us, and we writhed and crawled to get under the descending whip, and our sides ran with blood from the thongs of the whip.

"Enough, Chlio, send them to bed. We will find work for them all in the morning."

Chlio gestured with the now dripping whip, and like mindless servants of her will, we scuttled out of the room, and found places in the many empty rooms about. And because the order had been to sleep, we, at once, became unconscious, oblivious of pain as well as of life itself.

Nydia, still herself, was unaware of the

change that the young Zigor had brought upon her friends. Her despair at the change came later, when Zigor put her before a talaug to vaunt his supremacy, his acquisition of power over the minds of all the others.

Old Mephisto, still sitting bound where he had been placed, looked at her pitifully, and said: "I am sorry" and relapsed into the silence he had assumed. Zigor had him taken to his former place of imprisonment, where he himself had spent such a long time under locks and bars.

ZIGOR, who had small regard for or fear of the blind girl, used her to attend to his duty of the records in the collection—most of which he had never seen, as the Elder Mephisto had never allowed him access to the great old library which contained the secrets of the lost power of the family.

So it was that Nydia, alone in the huge room with the glowering young scion of the most evil family in Earth's history, selected the records in chronological order, played them one by one for his half attentive eyes. Subtly she inserted her own thought interpretations into the recorded scenes and thought sequences, so that the records meant what she wanted them to mean.

This can be done by moving a single control beside the projection nozzle, a great "V" shaped opening, which, by means of a double beam converging upon a single focus gives a solid appearing image. Upon moving the control, one can comment with subtle, unnoticeable abstract thought, merely by looking at a small aperture near the record augmentative tubes, where a pickup-detector takes the thought from the natural body-magnetic beams of the eye and augments them along with the augmentation of the images and thought patterns upon the record.

And so it was that Zigor was educated according to Nydia's ideas of what he should think—rather than from the true, raw evil of the terrible old records of Sathanas' life. (Which did no harm, but little good, for Zigor's mind was incapable of correct logic; being, like all evil people, infected with sun-polarized cell matter in his ego centers, which convert all impulses of the mind into detrimental will.)

"This magic of those ancients, if I could but master it, the world would be helpless

at my feet!" muttered Zigor—Nydia hearing him. Nydia answered him.

"What the word 'magic' means, translated into our own derivative tongue, is 'magnetic' or the 'science of magnetic'. Only by an age of development by a great race, following directly in the footsteps of those mighty by-gone teachers, could their man wanted to make the miracle of 'magic' live again, he could only lay the foundation by organizing a vast study group of young 'magic' be recreated whole and alive in any one brain. We can only learn simple bits of their true wisdom. These machines we can learn to use, but that is only somewhat like a monkey learning to drive a motor-car. It is not the true wisdom that built these mechanisms of mighty 'magic.' If a man wanted to make the miracle of 'magic' live again, he could only lay the foundation by organizing a vast study group of young technicians and student scientists about the existence of these machines of the Elder race. Then in time, many centuries after, those people's children would begin to glimpse the true greatness of the Elder race and perceive how such a race might again be made to grow from the science of 'magnetics.' 'Magic' is infinitely more difficult than it appears on these records of the activities of men, who understood far more of the science than ever we shall."

"Bah!" ejaculated Zigor, taken aback at the difficulties she laid before his grandiose plans. "You are but a foolish blind girl—what can you know of such things?"

I AM not foolish, Zigor Mephisto! You stupid bearer of a great ancient name—you nincompoop who plans what no man can fulfill! *You* are the foolish one, and if you do not lean on my wisdom, you will accomplish no tiny part of your plan. You have begun your work by destroying the thing most valuable to yourself—the minds of those about you. Now, without those minds, all thought must originate in your mind, and certainly you are no mighty thinker, certainly your mind will never conceive a plan capable of growing into a mighty kingdom such as you want it to. If you go on destroying and binding these peoples minds to your own, you will paralyze all possibilities of growth about you—nothing will happen that you do not order to happen, and from what I have seen of your mind, that means that *nothing* will

happen. Within weeks, in all the surrounding country under the rays from this old fortress of Eg Notha, there will be no activity that you do not order, as you have said. What then will you do—will you think for all these people? Because Sathanas worked that way, do not think yourself able to do that. You do not have the mind to think for hundreds of people. For the most part, as soon as your mind turns from your rays to other things, all these people will drop their work and sink into immobility.

"You think that Chlio will keep them going, because you tell her to? That will not be the case, my foolish friend. Your first act was your most foolish one. You have stopped the main spring of life—thought. There will be no life spring from that act, but only sterile sloth; only shuffling, mindless animals about you; so long as you persist in such ideas. Sathanas, with all his might and power and wisdom, was inherently a *fool*, and if you look at the later records of his life, you will find him completely and irrevocably *mad*, wallowing in his own filth, while the remains of his empire stood mindlessly waiting for orders from a mind that had died of sheer stupidity—a mind that had persisted in wrong thought until his very acts had killed all possibility of life in him or those who followed him—a man who wallowed in vice and sadism till no thing about remained clean enough to live, and so *died*. You had better look at all these records before you conclude they contain a recipe for power. They contain quite the reverse.

"Sathanas was an adult immortal, driven from the realms where immortals dwell because he was insane, and his insanity did not thrive on this bitter earth where all men die, but only increased in its mad destructiveness till he had destroyed all hope of recovery. He had even lost the way back to space where men do not die—through sheer stupidity unknowing how to operate a ship in space. Sathanas was an exile who waited too long before returning to the dark spaces where immortal powers live—and his waiting was the cause of his death. I doubt that Sathanas had any real wisdom, or he would have known what caused death here on earth, and he would have fled that old age as men flee leprosy. Sathanas was a fool, one of the greatest fools ever to set foot upon this sad earth. Wise men flee our sun—all others stay and die!"

"Cease your foolish chatter, you blind little croaking fool! You think you can tell Zigor what to do? I'll have you beat till you can't walk, for talking like that! I'll have you burned alive—do you hear—you, you—"

"Zigor, in all your life, did you ever have a friend, or did you always live alone? Never having any one to love—never saying 'Friend, to me you are more than any other?' Zigor, I pity you, for you do not know what life is made of, nor what to do with it. You are a fool."

"Get out of my sight," screamed Zigor in a rage, for something of the things she was saying to him cut him as no other words he had ever heard. He could not listen, the fire of her words seemed to burn into his mind with a terrible meaning he had never glimpsed before. He could not face her, for something in him admitted she was right, but his lack of true courage would not let him face the fact.

NYDIA waited not, but left the room on a run, for she had a great respect for the mad anger of deros, having observed a great deal of it. She had no wish to make this Zigor mad with anger, but was taking a chance on angering him to make him see the light of wisdom if the ability to save his mind were still alive within him; which she doubted, for there is no more stubborn or blind mind than that of the dero.⁵

Nydia knew this, as it is one of the cardinal teachings of the ancient race, upon which all its vast mental science and much of its language is based—but she knew there are people who think evil is correct logic, merely because they have always heard and seen it about them, and never had a chance to learn current logic, reason, mercy and beneficence. If Zigor was evil from this cause, she hoped to show him differently, but she knew she had not suc-

⁵ A dero is a thing that has never received any thought correctly, never understood any syllogism, is a mass of completely incorrect thought due to the reversal of polarity of the magnetic fields of thought about the mind cells, which in a dero are sun-polarized into detrimental due to induction of disintegrant energy-flows from the sun. Thought is either earth-polarized, integrant and therefore constructive, or it is sun-polarized, disintegrant, receiving by polarity attenuation constant impulses of energy from the sun which convert all its thought images into destructive patterns.

ceeded.

As Nydia fled through the throne room from the shouts of the enraged Zigor, she thought of the old man, and sped up the great stairs to the upper floors—somewhere up there were the chambers where the old man had been placed. She passed Chlio, leaning against the wall—a dazed, unhappy expression on her face and a sharp feeling of pity, for the fate that had struck the beautiful woman arose in her. She stopped, asking:

"Chlio, where have they placed the old man?"

Chlio gestured toward a nearby door, closed with a great lock, such as the ancients fashioned, and which no man can get undone without the particular key designed for them. She knew there was no hope except in the cunning mind of the old man, and turning to Chlio, guessed that the key was on her person.

"Give me the key, Chlio, hurry!"

Mindlessly the unhappy woman handed her the huge key, made for hands so much larger than human, and Nydia flew to the door, reaching up to the great high lock placed almost above the reach of her small, frail hands. The great, time-resisting mechanism creaked slightly, and the door swung open. Nydia darted within, knowing she had only that time in which the caution of young Zigor was distracted by his rage—and began to struggle with the ropes about the wrists of the old man, who had been left still bound, out of the great respect Zigor had for his father's abilities. Then the old man spoke:

"Within my inner pocket you will find a tiny gun, a heat ray of the little people. Take it out and cut the ropes with its beam. Be careful, for it is a terrible weapon for all its size. Even at my age, I still do not wish a hole burnt through me, especially by your gentle hands, sweet girl."

Seconds later, the old man stood up, stretching and rubbing his aching limbs. His height, which Nydia had failed to observe before, was impressive here alone with him, and his eyes burned with a fierce fire of rage at his treatment by his own son. Granted he had kept the youth imprisoned, still—events had proven him more than right. This time, the old man swore to himself, there would be no leniency. This time—

HE STRODE out the door, Nydia fluttering at his heels and guiding herself by the sound of his feet—the purposeful, grim sound of rage ringing in every foot-step. The old man walked to the wall near where Chlio still stood in her mindless, waiting trance and as he saw her condition, fresh fire blazed in his eyes, for he loved Chlio above all other people. She and Hugo, now dead, were the only two people who had proved faithful to him always.

The old man pressed upon the wall, and a panel opened in the apparently solid stone. Within was a cylinder of metal, with a control box at the side of the cylinder. He stepped within, and Nydia followed after. He pressed the control box lever, and the panel swung shut—the cylinder dropped swiftly downward. Nydia caught her breath, but was not really surprised. She had long ago learned to expect anything in these ageless warrens of wonder.

After long moments the dropping cylinder stopped, and now Nydia's ears that must serve her when she had no talaus instrument as eyes as well as ears were filled with that eerie roaring that above had sounded like lost souls fleeing forever from some dreadful wrath, but now sounded like many chained, titanic beasts all roaring in frustrated rage—but was, she knew, water rushing down through some ancient metal turbine inlets; down and down to those seas of endless extent that do lie within the heart of earth, where rock itself from the dreadful pressure precipitates out as the pressure forces the particles of dissolved matter to flocculate.

Here was some long gone scientist's workshop, concealed from prying eyes and rays by its great depth, and by an imperious metal sheathing which excluded those penetrative rays so generally used by the Elder race.

This was the birthplace of "magic"; and mysterious and awful the place was, in truth. All along one vast wall were tier on tier of retorts, twisted tubings, great vitra-glass containers, full of curious colored chemicals and tall, oddly shaped dynamos with the old metal cables still connected to the equipment. On several long tables an array of mysterious tools lay just as they had been abandoned so long ago, and over the whole vast gloomy

room the hush of age—an age of terrific work—lay like a blanket. Through that hush vibrates the howling water outside the thick walls, and through that hush the blind Nydia trailed the purposeful steps of the fearful old man, who had proved, strangely, a friend in need.

Toward the opposite wall his steps led to where a monstrous enigma of metal loomed, with all its mysterious bowels laid open by that forgotten workman of the vast science of the past. He looked at the machine for a moment, then hooked up one of the cables where it lay half out of the opening in the machine. For a few moments he worked. Nydia listening with her ears that served her nearly as well as eyes, could not understand what the clever old hands were doing, but when he pulled a switch in the wall and the six foot tubes of the machine lit up, and power sang a terrible song of vast strength within the machine, a glimmer of the monster of strength that lay here under Eg Notha came to her. Then upon a screen at the side came a picture of the surface miles above, a tree and a horse standing under it in the noon day sun.

NYDIA could see this screen quite as well as if she had eyes, for the rays which activated its screen penetrated the skull, and acted directly upon the inner eyes of the mind, so that even the blind may see with the ancient rays. Many of the antique instruments are so built. For a moment old Mephisto tinkered with the dials of the mechanism, centering the horse upon the cross wires of the screen. Then pulled a great lever at the side of the screen. The horse abruptly turned into a mass of queer looking gray jelly upon the grass.

Mephisto looked at Nydia and laughed shortly.

"Ha, wonder what that is supposed to be. I always wondered just what this thing was, and intended to find out—now I still don't know."

"Try another control, perhaps it is one of those multi-purpose ray-mech they sometimes built. Turn the dial to a new marking, and the whole purpose of the machine becomes another thing. Do you want to kill your son, or do you just want to put him back in his coop till he comes of age and saner viewpoint?"

"I don't want to kill him unless I have to. At this age I had little more sense than he has today. If I had something by which I could teach him what time has taught me—that in evil lies only frustration and defeat and that in the things my ancestors despised as lily-livered goodness lie true wisdom; if there were such a machine, then my problem would be solved."

"Let me try. I have seen something that looked like this before."

Nydia twirled a graduated dial upon the enigmatic machine. Still within the focus of the rays, centered in the cross-hairs of the machine, lay the quivering mass of strangely alive protoplasm which had shortly before been a horse. Nydia again pressed the great lever at the side of the screen, and again the vast machine sang its song of magical power. As they watched, the mass of jelly quivered more and more violently, and from it a slow movement arose, a mist formed at the center of the focus, and abruptly within the mist movement and matter became one—life was! Something living was being created before their eyes from that strange jelly! What was it going to be? Their eyes strained at the quivering picture, and the image grew stronger and stronger as the mist quivered into solidity.

They stood aghast, far out of that mass of gray quivering nothing, out of the focus of life generating rays was growing—a tiny woman. Like Minerva from Jove's forehead, she was fully formed, adult in appearance and lovely as the paintings of the ancient goddesses that survive on less exposed walls, lovely as are the great statues of the Elder race; mystically lovely, quivering upright on two symmetrical limbs, her eyes lifted to the bright sky in wonder at the miracle of life so suddenly given her! She lifted her hands to the sky, to the tree, to the bright sun so far above. From her lips came a coo of ecstasy, and from her back came a fluttering, growing, vibrant wonder of color—wings! Mephisto swore.

"By the gods, so that was where the little people came from! A creation of the mystic science of old—a synthetic form of life—this machine, by some means, takes a gross form of life and from it creates more perfectly developed forms of life—and I had thought it a weapon. Yes, those ancients did create wonders from life about

them, and we are watching one of those wonders."

AS THEY watched, the infant, winged being; who was yet as strangely adult and complete as is a new hatched dragonfly, vibrated her bright, rainbow wings, and with a strange cry of infinite delight in movement, flew up, and out of the focus of the rays!

"Perhaps that is the answer we are looking for. Oh, Lord of Darkness, of the family whom I know once ruled the caverns far and wide, mayhap with this machine we can do what so many have tried and failed. Maybe we can take those gross creatures above and change them into something more valuable, less threatening; something that is not dead, but greatly more alive! Methinks the souls of those who have gone on, the great who have lived her in Eg Notha, have guided us to this machine that it may answer our needs with its work. Let us try some more of the markings on its dial, there is still some more 'horse' left."

They turned back to the machine, but even as they had talked together, another and another tiny creature had formed within the focus of the rays upon the gray jelly. Swiftly they grew; one male, one female and swiftly their wings spread and dried in the bright sun, and then lifted them up and away into the sunlight.

"It seems sacrilege to touch the dial," Nydia said, stretching out one trembling hand to the mysterious, titanic majesty of the face of the machine that was the product of a mind who had mastered the source, the meaning and creation of life itself.

"There are markings on that dial that my old eyes can't see. But they are raised markings—see if your clever fingers can make out what they are."

Nydia ran her fingers, those sensitive tools of her mind that had served her as eyes so often, over the broad face of the dial.

"Yes, yes, at each long dial indentation, at each of these rulings, there is a tiny figure drawn, but I cannot see clearly with just my fingers. Get a light, or, better, get one of those mirrors of the impervious metal and reflect some of the light from this screen upon the dial. Then our minds may see the marks if our eyes cannot."

Old Mephisto went to the table and fumbled about, returned presently with an ancient oil lamp left there by some former occupant in the near past, as well as with a shiny bit of the ancient alloy, which is as opaque to their penetrative rays as is mercury to light. As he held the lamp up to the dial, Nydia took the bit of shiny metal and held it before the screen, and the rays which it gave off were reflected by the metal toward the dial. Now she could see, and so could old Mephisto. Both looked and marveled at the meaning.

"Oh, Lord Mephisto, there are many little animals, one to each dial mark. Do you know what the meaning of that is?"

"Yes, my blind little witch, I know what that means! It means we can take any flesh and turn it into any creatures we wish with this machine. Let us try a few of the markings."

"Look, there are a whole series of the man-shaped little figures, each a little larger than the others—let us see what they turn out. After all, those winged fairy-like creatures will find it hard to be accepted in that dull life up there."

FORGETTING for a moment their troubles in wonder of the ancient magical instrument, that was not magic at all, but only the mystery of birth and growth worked out to decimal points of energy within patterns of magnetic matrix within the machine, activated by the growth-stimulating rays which the ancients had mastered, they played like children—producing from the slowly shrinking body of the horse a series of people, each of whom was more wonderful than the last. As Nydia found at last upon the dial a drawing similar in all respects to men, and graduated in relation to the size of the others so as to make her realize that this human would be neither a giant nor a dwarf, she showed it to Mephisto with a nudge of reminder.

"There is what you are seeking. Try that on the horse, and then we will go for the mindless things upstairs."

"I wonder why the machine requires the step of melting the basic animal down to that grey substance?"

"I don't believe it does! I think we had it turned to a dial setting of some microscopic life form. Perhaps that grey substance is itself a life form—some earth

microbe which they needed for their farming, and created in this way from other less useful life forms."

"You could be right. Try the new dial setting as we have it on another horse."

Nydia swung the great old ray nozzle about, and the scene on the screen changed as the ray swept about the field overhead. The only horse they could find was hitched to a hayrack, but the hay-rack was standing still—its driver asleep in the shade with his lunch by his side.

"Somebody's going to be darn surprised when they wake up," Nydia whispered to Mephisto, desiring not to wake the farmer.

"Pull the lever, let's see what this setting does? Never mind the farmer—he'll get over it and explain no matter what wonder he sees—that the sun affected him."

Nydia centered the dozing horse on the cross wires, pulled down the big lever. A soft haze immediately enveloped the horse, and a faint shimmering movement ran all over his body. Slowly, subtly, the horse changed—a startling development ran through all his frame. The legs elongated, the ears shortened, nearly disappeared, the skull broadened and the whole frame of the creature underwent a transformation, a development, an opening out of the nature of the animal—a fearful kind of flowering was evident, the end product of an age of evolution was coming to life before our eyes! Not a man, as had happened on the previous dial settings, but the ultimate horse of horses—a creature never seen by living men before stood now between the shafts! No longer horse—but a thing as far above a horse as a man is above the first lunged amphibian that crawled from the water to become the ancestor of modern man.

NYDIA'S eyes shone with the wonder of what they had found. She knew that such miracles were to the ancients a part of life—an accepted thing, and from reading the ancient thought records she dreamed of doing such things, but the "how" of such wonders was always obscured on the antique records by the abstruse, difficult symbolism of their technical thought, much too deep for the modern human to hope to decipher. By some accident of their fumbling hands upon the dials, they had found the secret of evolution through speeded growth—the transformation that ages of time make upon life

forms was here accomplished within moments. Like so many of the antique machines, the thing was multi-purposed, had many adjustments designed to broaden the scope of its use; hence, their transformation of the horse into a jelly, and the jelly into a winged tiny human.

But Nydia divined, now they had hit upon the prime purpose of the mechanism—the overcoming of the obstacle of time in the evolving of superior forms of life. Now they had one of the secrets that had made the ancients the tremendous people they were, and Nydia swore to herself that nothing would be able to cause her to lose this secret—one she had known hazily must exist, but was now a concrete actuality before her! Her shining, tear-wet, blind eyes turned to the aged man beside her.

"Thank the Gods, we have found one of their greatest secrets. Now you and I can re-make life into something that can grow toward the ancient goal again."

"Now try it upon one of the wild, mad dwarfs that my son has enslaved to Chlio. See what it does to such a creature—if it does what I think it may do, we have won our battle, as well as many an unfought battle of the far future. The men this thing may produce! If we are right, those men should change this sad, mad world into a more pleasant place for a man to live upon."

Wasting no more time, Nydia swung the great ray in a short arc, centering the screen upon the great hall of the throne in the rocky chambers over their head—the center chamber of all that time-forgotten pile called "Eg Notha."

Soon upon the cross hairs one of the unkempt, twisted-limbed dwarfs appeared. He was upon his knees before the blank-faced Chlio, who stood beside the great crystalline sculpture that was that ancient seat of power. Young Zigor sat brooding, his chin upon his hands. It was evident that the dwarf was reporting failure in the search for the old man and the blind girl.

Nydia pulled down the great lever that released the flood of strange and eerily potent power through the conductive penetrative ray upon the dwarf, where he knelt before the throne.

Intently the old man and the blind girl watched the dwarf, and strangely behind them stirred the vast mysterious life that was somehow the still living vital force

and inner soul of those forgotten ancients. Somehow, if one had been sensitive and alert, at that moment, one would have sensed the mystic living hand of some vague, but potent life, reach out from the rock where it had waited away all those empty centuries—touched the bowed, intent heads of the old cynical Mephisto, the young virginal gold hair of Nydia, and return to its sleep within the ancient rock.

The powerful ray upon that degenerate product of an age of retrogression began to work its wonder. Slowly, slowly the twisted bowed legs straightened, the humped back became more erect and the bullet head rounded. The sparse, bristly hair became more abundant—began to curl gracefully about the brightening face! "Something" sprang to life upon the lined and evil face—something came to life within those beady eyes; the eyes themselves broadened, and as the power hummed on, and gladness came to dwell again in Nydia's heart, there stood before Chlio not a twisted, evil-minded dwarf, but a straight, slim young Godling, eyes wondering about him at the sudden beauty and meaning in what had been before but dull, grey, "usual", hideous, unwanted life. And as they watched, the mouth that was no longer a sour gash across an ugly dull face, but the luxuriously curved lips of a son of the Gods—opened and the man that was not a man but had now become a man spoke—his voice a soft, wondering music in his own ears and a startling wonder to Zigor's suddenly awakened ears.

"MY CHLIO, you have suddenly become a beautiful thing—but why do you stand and gaze at nothing? Why do you not show joy, the joy that has suddenly sprung up within me? Why do you not feel it too? Speak, my Chlio, that I may hear you—my ears hunger to hear in your voice the gladness that rings in my heart at sight of you."

Chlio did not answer, the spell from Zigor's use of the evil hypnotic ray remained upon her; but Zigor sprang to his feet as his eyes took in at last the unbelievable change that had come over the ugly, mindless dwarf. But even as he sprang to his feet in wonder, Nydia swung the ray upon Zigor, carefully centering his figure upon the cross hairs and the terrific power of the ancient wonder-mech droned

on its song of evolutionary magic.

Swiftly, swiftly, the wonder mounted in Zigor's face, and his arm, which he had involuntarily thrown aloft as he felt a ray upon him, fearing death from the unseen source of the ray, dropped again, as the miracle of the transformation sent the ecstasy of mighty growth through every cell of his body. Swiftly the body of Zigor became that which it would have been had he had been raised in one of the nurseries of the Elder race. And as that wonder grew within his body, as the evil of dis-infection died within his mind and the wonder of curative integrant force took its place within his mind, that ancient spirit which the Elder race had left to guard the ruins of Eg Notha turned within the under rock and quietly went again to sleep. For with the change in Zigor, the danger for the world which had been potentially present in Zigor Mephisto disappeared.

"Chlio, Chlio, God's hand is upon me, I change! Ah—what has happened—what have I done? Father, father—" Zigor sank again upon the throne and burst into tears, for a lifetime of struggle with his father had to be atoned for within moments of sudden realization, and he could not bear it.

NYDIA, who had given Zigor double the dose of ray that she had given the dwarf, now swung the ray upon Chlio, and all that beauty that had been hers began to blossom fiercely, to become the most beautiful woman of all earth.

"By the Gods, those elder men knew what to want on this green earth," swore

old Mephisto, watching his beloved Chlio become a symphony of terrific lure! A vital aura of womanhood pulsed about her as the rays transformed her who had been merely "beautiful and good" into the vast, and ultimate, end-product of an age of beautiful and good forebears! Chlio, the most beautiful woman living on the whole earth. Ecstasy spread over her shuddering form, the sleeping mind awoke to a wonder it had never conceived possible—every cell of her lovely body quivered into a change into the perfect cell.

A long, long time Nydia kept the ray upon Chlio, then swung it again, looking for me. Yes, that is why I am able to tell you this, and get it published—because she found me with that ray, and the thing that was a mere mindless tool of Zigor's will awoke again to life—the body that had been a mere, ordinary, well meaning human's became—well, not the best looking man on earth, but Nydia loves me vastly more than formerly.

So it was that an end to trouble within the ancient walls of Eg Notha came about through the miracle of growth. So it was that the old cynical, beaten man we met when we entered the sinister ancient fortress is now younger, handsomer and wiser than any other now alive.

And so it was that we sent our flying globe back again to our former encampment, and the little band who had fought for life with the evil things that besieged us moved—to Eg Notha, and left the besiegers holding an empty bag. And when they come to attack us in Eg Notha, I think the Mephistos will be ready for them.

Vignettes

OF FAMOUS SCIENTISTS

By ALEXANDER BLADE

Luizi Galvani

SIR FRANCIS GALTON, English anthropologist was born on February 16, 1822, at Birmingham and received his education at

Birmingham hospital, at King's college, London, and at Trinity college, Cambridge.

He was a man of many tastes in science with

large experiences in many lines. In 1846 and 1847 he traveled in Egypt. In 1850 he began explorations in South Africa, landing at Walfisch bay on the west coast and spending two years in the interior, which was then known as Damaraland; where he discovered the Ovampo tribe of natives, a very interesting branch of the Bantu race of Africa which had become completely separated from the rest of their people and consequently developed different customs and habits. He published two books on the subject of his travels in the Dark Continent, *An Explorer in Tropical South Africa and Art of Travel*. A visit to the north of Spain in 1860 was described in *Vacation Tourists*.

Galton then turned to meteorology. In 1863 he published his *Meteorographica*, which was the first serious attempt to chart the weather on an extensive scale and in which was outlined for the first time the theory of anti-cyclones, which has since become one of the fundamental principles of present day weather forecasting. Also in this publication, Galton called attention to the phenomena of atmospheric displacement and storms. He showed that dense air is warmer than normal air, and will hold in suspension in the form of vapor a higher percentage of water; that is to say, its degree of humidity is greater. As it expands it becomes cooler, loses a measure of this capacity, and precipitates more or less of the moisture it

contains in the form of rain, hail or snow in parts or all of the surrounding region.

ABOUT this time, Galton, inspired by his cousin's *Origin of Species* (1859), began to study anthropology, heredity and the application of statistics to human attributes. He is regarded as the great authority on the subject of human heredity, having put that science on a quantitative basis. In a series of remarkable publications, he laid the foundation of the science of eugenics. For the improvement of mankind, he advocated the furthering of the productivity of the fit and the restricting of the birth-rate of the unfit.

Galton also made special investigations of color blindness, mental imagery, instincts, number forms and of criminality; he originated the process of composite portraiture, and paid much attention to fingerprints and their employment for the identification of criminals.

Galton was knighted in 1909. He died at Haslemere on January 17, 1911, founding by his will a laboratory for the study of national eugenics. His chief scientific works are: *Hereditary Genius* (1869); *English Men of Science* (1874); *Inquiries into Human Faculty* (1883); *Record of Family Faculties* (1884); *Natural Inheritance* (1889); *Finger Prints* (1892); *Finger Print Directories Eugenics* (1900).

THE END

THE ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAPH

THAT mass of grey matter lodged tenderly in the cranium, called the brain, has an electrical beat all its own. The beats are measured by a newly discovered instrument with a formidable title, the electroencephalograph. Every individual has a pattern of brain waves as distinctive as his outward features.

To record these hidden beats, a pair of electrodes are fastened on the head, one on the forehead, the other on the back of the skull, and these are connected with a kind of radio set containing amplifying vacuum tubes. The electrical beats then picked up are recorded by writing points upon a moving strip of paper, making a pattern of waves.

Just as the heart has a normal beat when it is not being driven by pressure during excessive body action, so has the brain when it is not being taxed by thinking. This fundamental beat is called the alpha rhythm and comes at the rate of about 10 per second.

Studies of the brain waves have revealed astounding and beneficial characteristics of the beats. For instance, in sleep, the alpha rhythm undergoes five different changes according to the depth of the sleep. Perhaps the most important discovery concerning brain waves is that they can

be used in detecting brain tumors and some types of epilepsy.

This amazing gadget to measure the height and speed of the brain waves came to the attention of Professor George L. Keezer of Cornell and he was immediately struck by the possibility of using the electroencephalograph to measure intelligence. He decided to determine the relation of alpha rhythm to intelligence. He discovered that as the intelligence increased, the height of the alpha waves also showed a tendency to change.

But Dr. Keezer knew perfectly well that other conditions might have caused the wave pattern to change, so he did not offer his results as final. However, if he is right, and the electroencephalograph can distinguish one level of intelligence from another, a great advance in psychological methods will have been made.

Some people have thought that the electroencephalograph might be able to measure thought, but that cannot be done. It would be like trying to reconstruct a radio broadcasting system merely by listening to sounds that come out of a loudspeaker. But intelligence is measurable, and maybe the brain wave machine can eventually be made to measure it.

Carter T. Wainwright.



WITCH'S DAUGHTER



Tom Kent caught a lovely sneak thief in his room, but when he saw what was on her back he went with her with fists clenched for battle

TOM Kent is my name. I have always been a man with an ambition to get a certain special something out of life. Most men want women, or money, or to be the big-shot in their business, or something that everyone else wants. Well, I want all those things, too, but I have a desire over and above such general ambitions.

Beyond the empty dullness that we call "life," beyond the rows of houses full of nearly identical people doing nearly identical things, lies, to my mind, a pathway.

Over the hills of vain wants and empty hoping; over the ill-formed mountains of partial fulfillments of futile desires . . . to a further range of mountains, greater and vastly more beautiful barricades that shut mere man off from the thing I call the "edge."

This path I take in my daydreamings, and waiting at the end of that path is the witchmaid!

This lovely daughter of a wise, but somehow sinister mother is an ensorceling mystery. Her soft white arms are to me vastly more enticing than the real arms of any earthborn female.

About her a living, breathing, writhing aura-mist of awful beauty tells of the powerful magic which is her heritage. About her coil those plants, blooming and somehow bearing upon their twisted limbs the fruit and the strange flowers of fearful truths.

Those deadly flowers, with their brilliant red blood-petals, are the materials from which she brews a terrible, irresistible potion.

That drink brings a man a new and terrific life, a life whose pleasures are so great that mere mortal life no longer can be borne.

All these things and a multitude of other enticements, wait at the "edge," beyond those barrier mountains.

And those barriers are the *time* a man spends in pursuit of ordinary, unworthy goals. To drop such pursuit and pursue instead the white body, the lightning of

the witch-maid's eyes; to pursue the oblivious ecstacy that can be found only in her night-black hair; that is a lure that is always with me.

But I am sane! I know better, and such dreamlike maunderings of my mind I put aside somehow for long walks in the descending darkness, along the waterfronts of this city, along the endless and ugly but somehow to me weirdly fascinating streets of the slums of this old city of Baltimore.

This night I was doing just that, indulging my dream desires, and dropping off all the more practical cares of this world in the conjuring up of the face of the witch-maid who waits beyond the edge for me: that fearfully lovely woman who can and will give a man vastly more pleasure than any mortal maid can hope to give.

Of course I know it isn't true, and I know that nothing of the kind of life I see in my dreams can exist. But I even know her name: "Kyra". I know every inch of her face as if it was a face I had engraved upon metal a million times, somewhere, sometime.

WALKING home, this night, the sky dripped blood from a gloomy horizon. The sun, apparently suffering a mortal wound, sank despairingly into the bay. It was hot, too!

I climbed the grimly stairs to my rooms. Their old wood creaked. The air, heavy with the mould and dust of a century of other sad feet climbing as wearily seemed to cling to my face smotheringly. I started to unlock my door, but it wasn't necessary. The maid had left it unlocked . . .

As I crossed the darkened room to the dresser, loosening my tie, I half-heard a silken sigh of movement. But it didn't register fully on my tired mind. I stood in front of the mirror, looking at that face and wondering if everyone I had faced today had found that face as unsatisfying as I did now. That face that we must wear at some unknown one's behest— oh well, maybe he had an ugly face himself.

Mine was probably as good as any god's perdurable face, that had watched a million centuries wash over it . . . it must be a pretty worn and weary face at that.

After all, those discouraged blue eyes looking back at me had only seen twenty-five summers; that tangled sandy mop of sweat-heavy hair had been twisted in the hands of some pretty classy females—and they hadn't objected to my stocky two hundred pounds of bone and muscle-bound figure either.

Amid these casual cogitations before the mirror, my mind kept hearing, without noticing, the continuous soft sliding of silk against silk, and now a faint perfume, an alluring musky scent that reached and at last penetrated my discouraged consciousness. I whirled toward the door just in time to see a flash of dark movement.

She was almost out the door, a slim figure in black, moving silently, swiftly on her toes. She had been behind the door as I opened it, and had almost managed to escape my attention entirely.

Suddenly I was angry. I loved my fellow men—any my women—and I hated to have them make a sucker out of me. It was so darn inconsiderate of them!

I leaped after her, and seized one smooth silk-covered arm. But she twisted cleverly, her face a white, emotionless mask, expressing nothing. She disappeared into the adjoining room, outside at the end of the hall. The lock clicked behind her. It was one of those old-fashioned jiggers with a little lever at the top that anyone could lock.

That flash view I had had of her white face was a lightning bolt to me!

For that face was as familiar to me as my mother's, although I had never seen it in the flesh before. It was the face of *Kyra!* And about the smooth, black silk sleekness of that slippery female sneak-thief had been an aura, an overwhelming sensing of echoes of greatness, of terrible mysterious involvement, like . . .

. . . if you saw a hand stretching toward you from the air of your own room, without a body, you would know that here was something that extended into the fourth dimension. Your mind would picture that world of the fourth dimension, a tremendous echo of far unending reaches of life would resound in your mind with an earthquake effect. But the mysterious

thing causing this terrific echo of reason can be just a simple, normal hand—just a human hand.

So it was with this woman I glimpsed. With her, went, to me, the awful sensing of another world. Why, I couldn't understand; except that she had the face of *Kyra*—and so far as I knew *Kyra* was a person who existed only in my mind.

WELL, she hadn't escaped, for there was no way out of that room. No way for an ordinary woman to travel, anyway. Only one small window, high up, and if she was slim enough to try it, a thirty-foot drop. She wouldn't.

I reached into my room and seized the chair by the door, and all the while in my mind buzzed the mental echo of the intuitional glimpse of a vast alien landscape that this woman had brought to me. In front of the door I propped the chair.

I sat down and put my feet on the door casing on the other side. Even if I fell asleep, I was sure she would have to wake me up in getting out of that room.

I couldn't leave to phone police; besides I had no intention of arresting her. I was just mad at her eluding me so easily.

I sat and smoked, wondering if she was after what I thought she was after? The newspapers had made so much fun of my invention that I didn't believe anyone thought it valuable enough to steal. But I meant to find out! If that elusive female wasn't made of smoke . . .

She must work for someone in that line of business, who had read of me in the newspapers. But the papers had said my invention was "of no value whatever," in fact, "dangerous to the health." They were wrong, but how could anyone know that but me?

I didn't want to rouse the house for some vague, inner reason. The perfume worn by the dark-clothed feminine figure? Perhaps it was the lure of soft woman-form within the sleek black silk? Something was at work within me, trying to protect the woman from her own misguided action. Anyway I sat and waited.

I got more and more angry as I waited. What I would do with her when I caught her never entered my mind.

Neither did the more probable chance that she might use a weapon on me occur to me. I was sure she was just a cheap

sneak-thief. No one could know the real nature of my work, or plan to steal it. Or so I thought then. But what I really wanted to learn was: why did she look like Kyra? Why?

I had a very hurt feeling inside me, illogically. I spend most of waking hours trying to devise a thing to lighten the labors of all men, and now one of the ungrateful creature whom I call the better part of man, "woman," had tried to rob me of that thing. It wasn't sense but, it hurt! That woman had hurt me. I was going to get back at her some day. I waited.

You see, that was what my invention was; a thing to make the labor of life easier. Worn on the body, a synthetic animal-electric battery would replace the work-energy expended by the human body with a synthetic flow of body electric. It could give a man all the energy he needed for a hard day's work without tiring him in the least. I wish I had had it on me today, but who would have thought a round of waiting in the offices of manufacturers would play a man out completely?

It was a good invention. It was perfectly developed to a useful stage; but the medicos and engineers had frowned upon it for several reasons.

Not good reasons, considering their condescending examination of the device in the offices of G.I.D. (G.I.D. means General Industrial Devices.) They had refused to buy it. *"Too liable to cause labor dissensions."* *"Too apt to prove harmful to the chemistry of the human body."* *"The expense of research required to prove it harmless would far overtop any reward to be got from its use. Most probably only prove it to be harmful to health,"* etc., etc.

It is so easy to use words to replace honest thought. Pigheaded men! I was just beginning to learn how hard it is to give men anything new. Every inventor had to travel the trail of refusal and scorn. So had I, but it is a hard trail.

I nodded sleepily.

SOFTLY the door opened, and one blue-green eye, sparkling with the thrill of adventure, peered out at me. I let my eyes nearly close, and nodded my head sharply again as though falling asleep. She glided out, raised one trim leg to step over my outstretched shanks. I galvanized into swift action.

I leaped at her like a wrestler with two hundred bucks on the bout, twisting her round arm behind her, catching her soft, sweet neck in the crook of my elbow.

She let out a little gasp, but did not scream. She had no desire to bring in any spectators.

"Now talk fast, you pretty sneak! What were you looking for in my rooms, and what did you find?"

Those sparkling blue-green eyes opened in terrific innocence. She struggled so very nicely in my arms. She spoke gaspingly, and with a slight accent hard to place; like none I ever heard.

"Please to let up on the neck, you large roughneck. You are choking me!"

I was still mad, but getting over it fast.

"You can talk. Do it, or you'll learn how I don't like to be robbed."

"I didn't take a thing," she gasped. Her face would have fooled the devil himself. "I just got in the wrong room. The keys all fit the same doors in these old houses."

"You don't live here. I know every face in the house."

"All right, I could say I just moved in, but what's the use. They made me do it. I don't want to steal. But I have to. They have my young brother. They will kill him if I don't do what they say. They want your invention."

"They do, eh? I can believe that!"

I laughed then at her artfully contorted face, for I wasn't hurting her neck. I released my hold.

"Do you expect me to believe someone wants my invention? Why, I can't give it away! You have to do what 'they' want! Who are 'they'? Now, tell me the truth!"

I twisted her arm a little, for I felt sure she was lying about something, but couldn't see just what.

"It is the truth! They have my young brother. They would kill him or worse if I double-crossed them; went to the police. That is why I don't run away. I can't abandon him. Some day I'll get him away, and then I'll run so far they will never find me."

She looked up into my eyes, twisting her body so accidentally against mine, rubbing her neck with such a graceful motion of her slim, rounded arm. Well, after all, I am only a man. My voice softened, and she knew she had me. I said:

"It's a good story. But I just don't believe it. I think I had better call the po-

lice. You'd come back here tomorrow if I didn't."

She twisted suddenly out of my now relaxed grasp. But she didn't run. She faced me, and now her face was a beautiful mask of feminine anger. There were even tears of vexation on her lashes; such *glis-tening* tears. I gave up, and believed every word she had said. I'm only a man.

"You stupid animal."

She was getting madder, her lovely face flushed, her teeth glittered and that perfume was getting under my skin, too.

"Look here, if you don't believe me. . . ."

She turned, tore at her black dress. The silk parted in her hands, slid down revealing to my now interested—nay, fascinated—eyes a smooth and undeniably lovely back. *Probably her best feature*, my cynical soul insisted on remarking to my gullible ego—but somewhat defeatedly. Across the smoothness ran a series of welts, and around her arm at the arm pit ran a raw, red place where perhaps a strap had held her against the agony of the beating.

"Do you think that was fun? The old woman is a witch, and that strap mark is from the *witch's cradle!* But of course you would know about such things. You . . . you *law-abider* . . . you! Do you think I like what I go through? I don't know what to do, where to turn! At the first move from *me*, my brother would die; and no one would find or arrest the devils. Police search like blind men on a picnic!"

I LOOKED at her, my mental processes stymied. The sudden realization that what she was saying was fully true and the plight she was in a genuine case of sadistic enslavement was too much for me. After all, I am only a man.

All the tales of witchcraft I had read as a boy—including the beautiful maiden's rescue by the so-charming prince—rose up to confound my cynicism. I swallowed the whole thing; hook, line and sinker.

"Maybe I can help you where no one else could for bungling. I am not entirely a fool. My invention could prove useful. I think I see an idea."

She followed demurely through the bedroom into the bleak workroom which I managed to pay for out of a far-too-slender income. I motioned to a chair. From the case on the work-bench I took my batteries and hung the case over my shoulder.

I attached the cables to the little metal bands, slid them under my shirt, fastened them about my arms. I was ready.

The juice in that battery gave me the strength of four or five ordinary men, and the batteries were good for several days. It was just a much greater supply of the same electric which the cells of the body manufacture and store. *Crile* says the electric is produced by oxidation of the lipid films of the cell's exterior—an oxidation of the oil of the film. Using *Geo. Crile's* work to produce a battery like the human cell had been my life work so far. It had also been *Herrera's*, the Mexican scientist. I had succeeded. But I'm not famous—yet.

The brain controls that energy of the body, directing where it should go and when. The heart of my device was a simple little switch operated by a tiny toggle. My harness placed one of these switches on every large muscle of the body. When the brain contracted a muscle the little toggle switch operated, releasing a flood of energy into the body from the big battery. Then the toggle-spring shut off. If the muscle remained contracted, the toggle went on again—and so on till the muscle was contracted by the brain when it remained off. This little switch made the energy from the life-battery as fully controlled as the body's own energy—except there was a lot more of it. It was a perfect tool of the mind, giving the body a vastly greater supply of work-energy.

Just for a demonstration I lifted a 900 lb. bar-bell for the smooth dream-face who had tried to burgle me. I bought that bar-bell for just that purpose—demonstration—but had never had a chance to use it. She was surprised, and those sparkling eyes registered a lot of admiration for my physique, a glow I did not miss as I held the 900 lbs. aloft, a feat no ordinary man performs without world-wide publicity. But I was no showman or I would have seen the chances of getting attention from it.

"Now don't you think we could walk into that place, overpower the people you profess to fear so much, and walk out with your brother? This device gives me a lot of strength."

"They'd shoot you, the first move. But I'm tempted to let you try—if you are brave enough? It would be hard to refuse you anything, if you did succeed. . . ." Her voice drawled this last huskily, like a radio

siren registering temptation. She was a *natural*, all right. A natural temptress.

Just to be on the safe side, I left a note on my dresser, a signed and sealed and stamped envelope, addressed to the police. It told where I was going, and why. She gave me the address with a slight, hidden reluctance.

"The address is a cellar below 153 Portland St. The Baltimore Police would not find it if they did not know it was there. We go in through a store, and very seldom. Only at night, when there is no one around. We are very secret and very careful."

I noticed there was a hint of greater collaboration with these criminals than her other words had given me, but I said nothing. I signed the letter, having given all the particulars of the address and what might be found. I sealed it and stamped it just in case.

THEN we went out into the night. There was still a red light in the sky, as though the night were tainted with the bloody death of the sun. An ominous feeling crept over me which I brushed aside. I knew I was being a fool, placing myself in the power of the people who could be every bit as bad as the girl pictured. But something drove me, something in the girl's face, something in my own adventurous spirit. It was the same thing that made me loath to believe in the evil intent of any person until proven. I thought I might be able to help her, I was curious about her "*witch's cradle*," and no little electrified by herself, the lithe, slim body of her; the white, too-innocent face with its large, subtly provocative eyes; and the mystery that breathed about her with the strange elusive perfume of her. My imagination was clothing the sly thief with an aura of attraction because of her likeness to my dream-world Kyra. My imagination is not always correct, but it was the gift that made me the man I am. I had always followed my imagined idea of something bigger in men and women than the surface might indicate. I had sometimes been wrong.

We took a taxi to within a block of the address. The girl, perhaps from habit, had given an address that could not be traced to the hole she claimed to fear so much. My forebodings grew stronger, but I would not turn back. I was ashamed to show fear before her—or before the *Kyra* who lived only in my brain.

We walked the block through the redtinged night. Through the glowering old dark hulks of houses between the rotting warehouses and vacant shops. It was a partly abandoned waterfront section. Appropriate for the kind we were calling on. I was getting plenty worried long before we arrived.

We entered a dimly lit shop. She walked straight through, past the cigar counter, past the sagging shelves full of ten-cent goods, candy, kids' stuff, work gloves, what-have-you.

There was an old woman sitting behind the counter, an evil-eyed old bulgy-figured hag, one of the foreign kind you just know has a dozen dirty petticoats on. We walked straight through around the end of the counter and into the door in the back. The woman only nodded at the girl, ignored me too entirely.

The room behind the store room was nearly empty, but the girl did not stop, started down a staircase. I followed, and we entered a big cellar. Empty barrels and broken packing cases littered the place. It was empty of life or the signs of life. She walked to the age-greened concrete of the wall, pressed on it. A section swung under her hand. We passed through and it closed behind us with a dull sound of finality. I inwardly, prayerfully, hoped it wasn't final for me.

The only thing that had kept me with this girl so far was remembering the whip marks on her back. She couldn't produce those by acting. I stayed mad about that, and I was going to do something about it first chance showed.

Through a short tunnel-like passage we passed, and suddenly into a room of startling magnificence!

Hung with green, silken, heavy-brocaded hangings, the walls writhed with the golden shape of a huge dragon worked in the silk, like a big nightmare swimming in green ink. It was a rich setting for the woman who rose from a couch as we entered. Her vivid, ripened beauty struck my senses. The half-nude, brown-skinned stalwarts, standing like statues at each side just back of her, told me she was somebody both from an erotic country, and vastly important—to have two bodyguards who could have made a good living as strong men in any show.

A stimulating wave of something, maybe woman-beauty, maybe something more subtle and sinister—a ray, perhaps—washed

over me like an infinitely intoxicating liquid, invisible but potent. A liquid that contained some subtle, all-powerful drug that paralyzed the will with the promise of everything the imagination could conjure of joy in a woman's giving.

This whole scene was the opposite of what the girl's words had given me to expect. Her words disillusioned me more, but awakened instead a vast anger and a curiosity as big in my breast.

THE woman by the guarded couch spoke first, with strange words. English with that queer accent I could not place. Something archaic and Eastern about it. Mentally I decided never to agree with a nudist again. For the transparent film of gown she wore was infinitely more revealing and satisfying than any nudity could be. Every curve, every delicious sinuosity of a dancer's developed body shone behind the glistening fabric with a luminosity as of a pale flame of vitality leaping within her soft flesh. Her voice carried a husky, man-conscious inflection to me, as well as her eyes, boldly upon me.

"Did you get them, Kyra?"

As she used that name, my echoing dream-memory struck me again with the vast mystery here opening before me. How could this girl be Kyra who existed only in dreams? Kyra, my witch-maid—her name, her face, what else of hers might this girl have? Her wisdom, her occult power, perhaps?

"I brought something worth a lot more to us. I brought the inventor himself. He came to save me from a terrible witch!" Kyra's laughter was gently mocking, and as the strange woman joined in, I grew too angry to stand still, with the two women laughing at me. . . .

I flushed, said:

"I don't know what is funny. If you people have brought me here to make fun of me, I may as well go now!" Even as I spoke, my mind wondered, *what in hell is Kyra wearing whip marks for if this place is not evil?*

The woman, still laughing, took my hand between her own and pressed it.

"Don't be angry. Kyra had to use the first idea that came into her head, probably. We had a great need of your invention, a need that is greater than any scruples we might have about stealing it. Now that you are here we will take you into our

confidence. Kyra, get the man some wine, while I introduce myself to him. Our best blue wine, Kyra."

She turned now to me, and as women can, turned on all the lure of her so that the flame of her body within that transparent gown did its work with me. My anger was gone; my curiosity, as well as a desire for her in its place. It was desire that made staying there the one thing I wanted to do. Something in her voice when she had asked Kyra to bring wine had warned me, but I was powerless to heed any warnings just then. Who could have? I was helpless. This woman was a witch of another kind that I had come prepared to meet. Yet my fear was not gone; it was only overlaid with another thing, an attraction more powerful.

This lovely "witch" took my hand again and pulled me to a seat on the low lounge on which she had been reclining when I entered. Her husky, vaguely alien voice began to weave a spell about me, the spell of charm and of well-told adventurous promise, a spell of woman-charm and of culture, and another that has grown stronger . . . maybe it was evil, maybe it is more than evil now! Judge for yourself.

"My name," she began, "is Tanil. I come from a far country . . . a country you have never heard of. I have been here quite a long time. There is a great deal I must tell you, so that you can understand why we need you. So keep your mind open and unprejudiced against us until you have heard me out. Then you will decide whether you wish to help us or not."

Kyra entered with three goblets of wine. She had changed into a simple clinging drape of the same kind of translucent material of which Tanil's revealing gown was made. Her own slim beauty sang through the filmy stuff like a song from the past. It was a lurid passionate past of midnight revels in the groves of Pan; or perhaps the more passionate revels held in the groves of deeper antiquity of a still longer dead time, to the worship of some more wilful desiring God than ever Pan had been.

The clothing of the two women struck this same strange note of archaic music, a luringly familiar note in my male breast. Something of the glory of ancient times lived here in this room, hidden under the squalor of the modern city. The question of *what* this strangeness might be, made me listen with an avid curiosity. The wine

trickled like liquid fire down my throat. It was like no wine I knew. A pulse rose swiftly in me, of warmth; and the beautiful hangings, the low, odd furnishings with their hint of the East, the inviting eyes and half-revealed bodies of the two women took on a new and greatly enhanced beauty. It was a potent drink. I asked for more.

TANIL'S low, almost eery voice began again to weave its spell. Kyra brought me another goblet of the potent blue wine. I listened to Tanil talking, and her eyes were on mine strangely, watching me for some reason I didn't get. She was saying:

"We want to be your friends here. We are that kind of people who want to help and plan for such men as you—*inventors*, the real scientists of the world. We, too, consider ourselves scientists and useful people. As such, in a kind of understood *brotherhood* with all other intelligent people. Strange things may happen to you here at our hands, but please trust and believe in us. For instance, you are going to sleep now because I am putting you to sleep, and you may have very strange dreams. Very . . . strange . . . dreams . . . indeed . . . !"

My voice now strangely answered Tanil's, but it was not of my own volition. Alarm was ringing a bell all through my body, the thrill of danger clamored in my brain, but my inner self did not listen. It was the influence of some subtle spell she had been weaving about me, or else the wine had been heavily drugged! And I had asked for more. . . . That was funny. I was full of wine and my senses all awry with alcohol and drugs. The soft lure of her sing-song tones and the subtly powerful influence of her strong female personality, the utter desirability of her revealed beauty and the warm closeness of her beside me made my voice uncontrollable. I said:

"I hear, but I do not understand. . . ." My head nodded sharply. . . .

The feel of the male hands of the guard upon me woke me because my unconsciously resisting muscles had closed the toggle switch of my harness, released a flood of my synthetic body electric from the case of batteries into my limbs. I leaped erect, sharply awake, and the restraining hands of the guard—who had been bending to pick me up—reached for me again. He was a third again my weight!

Kyra threw up her hands in alarm, remembering suddenly my harness and guessing what had happened, but she was too late to stop me now.

I seized the guard's arm, pulled him to me, turned swiftly and heaved him over my back. He flew, all three hundred pounds of muscle and fat and smooth brown hide, clear across the room and struck the wall, lay there without moving, sprawled—out! The other guard, not understanding my battery and harness, and thinking my prowess solely due to skill, advanced toward me, his hands outspread like a wrestler, not to be caught as his fellow had been. Kyra shouted:

"His invention; he's wearing it! I didn't get a chance to tell you. He's stronger than four men."

But her words were too late to save the other guard, for I did not wait for him. I leaped toward him, got him in the crotch and around the waist, lifted—heaved. He went up and over my head, fell heavily on the floor six feet from me. He didn't get up. Whether he was out or not, he had had enough.

As I stood there panting, and the two women staring at me wide-eyed with the sudden revealing of strength in a victim they had thought completely in their power, I relaxed. The muscle tension gone, the several little switches of my harness opened, as they were made to do. The vital energy of the battery ceased to course through my body. The drugs they had given me took sudden effect, I slumped to the floor! As I fell, the switches opened, a flood of power coursed through me—and as suddenly stopped. I blacked out.

I AWOKE to find myself upon a table.

About me were the white, masked faces of nurses, of doctors! If I could have screamed in terror I would have! No man likes to find himself upon an operating table, and least of all when he has given no consent, has no illness, knows he is there because of an enemy.

What kind of an operation would they be doing upon my body? The worst possible ideas of their intent rose in my mind; they were stealing my young glands for some old man's money, etc., etc. All the lurid tales of fiction rose in my mind to explain this sudden horrible appearance of an operating room about me—and me the guy to get the knife.

Over me were the multiple eyes of a strange ray mechanism. From a mass of weird glass eyes goggling at me came a myriad of tiny colored little light rays. Busy, moving little beams they were, moving flickeringly, in little jerks, but moving on steadily—across my back, across and back, over my body!

Each of the tiny rays made a strange crawling sensation within me as if a million microscopic ants were tearing at each cell those little beams touched. It was as though the moving little lights were alive with terrible intelligent life of a microscopic kind that was working a strange metamorphosis within me.

At a little distance, obscured by the bent form of Tanil whom I recognized easily in spite of her mask, was a similar contrivance to the one suspended over me, though of much smaller size.

The thing struck an eerie freezing fear into me, for there was also a duplicate operating table, and upon it a smaller thing, a thing I could see was a replica of myself! It was like seeing in a reducing mirror, but brother, that was no mirror, that was real!

Tanil came, glanced at me. Seeing my open eyes, she touched me soothingly on the cheek. I suppose I looked hysterical or had my mouth ready to sound like a steam whistle. That's the way I felt!

Somehow, this Tanil was entirely too smooth an article, or there was a weasel in the henhouse I had not seen yet. I knew I was being made a chump someway and would probably wake up dead.

Then a needle pricked my arm, and I saw Kyra's eyes, weird over the white mask as ever I imagined them to be in my dreams, bending over me, counting my pulse, taking my temperature—or was she?

I didn't know, I was asleep, and Kyra's face was still there, as it has been so many times in my dreams.

As the blackness blotted out even Kyra's image, a voice in my mind asked curiously—a voice I couldn't tell from my own, but was it me?—*Where did Tanil obtain this witch's lore?* In what forgotten store of terrible wisdom had she obtained this weird, too-complex machine she had placed over me; which I had seen was reproducing me in miniature upon another table? Or was she only another tool like Kyra, and not the boss at all? Or were my senses fooling me, and all this not as it seemed?

Or is it modern science she is using, there in that reproduction mechanism, no witch's lore at all? Some secret development of modern science strange to me that she had learned and applied in a new way. Or was it all but more of my dreams about "Kyra," and I would wake up again in my dingy rooms and go back to work perfecting my life-battery so that men would accept it, allow it to help with their daily labor?

But, darn it, there was something terribly alien and ancient about that machine. It did not look like anything I had ever seen.

Sleep was stronger than my curiosity. I really blacked out. But I remember vaguely that those little rays were still sweeping back and forth over my body with their terrible crawling sensation tearing inside my body, as if each cell was being scraped off with a microscopic wire brush.

I AWOKE, with a blissful languor in all my limbs. I found myself on Tanil's couch, the two muscular guards standing where they had been when I first entered, but the looks on their frozen pusses didn't do me any good. I was lying on the couch, and my head was in Tanil's lap. It seemed incongruous to me that the creature whom I feared, who was so mysterious and powerful to my inner eyes, should be holding my head like a girl holds a lover on a picnic.

Kyra was fussing with a drink mixer, presently handed me a cocktail. I drank it. It revived me plenty! I sat up.

Somehow I didn't want any more physical contact with Tanil than I could help. She was a witch in more ways than one, and I didn't want her hooks in my emotional responses too strongly till I knew whether my fears or my desires were correct about her. I looked at her accusingly.

"Just what were you doing with that nightmare of a ray-machine, and why did you drug me?"

Tanil glittered a row of bright, regular teeth at me and turned her body in a sinuous motion that brought all those devastating little movements of the covering flesh over her muscles that her transparent gown only served to decorate.

"I was making a doll of you. What do you think? I make dolls of all my friends!"

"What for?"

"You will learn about that, and I hope

you like it. If you do not I will have to destroy that doll. That would be a sad thing, it is such a good one. So handsome a little doll it is, yes!"

"Dolls and witchcraft are always some-way intermingled, Tanil. Are your dolls connected with witchcraft?"

"Who told you I was a witch?"

"Call it masculine intuition. Do you deny the charge?"

"Not exactly. I have knowledge of certain arts not generally understood. Ignorant people might call them witchcraft. But surely you are too educated a man to believe in the supernatural?"

"Just what are you trying to do, Tanil?"

"I am trying to live interestingly, beautifully, powerfully! That such a life includes danger only adds spice."

"Doesn't explain anything. What use do you expect from me?"

"Your invention. I want several hundred of them for my employees."

"What do I get out of that?"

"That depends on you. If you cooperate willingly, a great deal. If you refuse co-operation, we will build them ourselves, and we will make you help by using the doll. You will understand all this as time goes on. I am myself a person like you—who must cooperate with others because they have my doll, can make me do as they wish. You have no alternative."

As if to explain her words, a peculiar feeling came over me, my mind seemed shoved aside by another thing; and without volition of my own, I knelt before Tanil, placed her foot on my head. Then I took her foot off, got to my feet, and the strange compulsion passed. I swore.

"So that is what the dolls do! I don't understand what the dolls are or how they work, but that is what they are for?"

"That is why it was made. So that if you are not cooperative, through misunderstanding our methods and aims, we can use you that way."

"I don't like it! I'm getting out of here now!"

"You *can't* get out, Kent. The doll is a thing that binds us all here. There is no particular reason why you should worry about it, but it is a fact you should know. You are hired—and you *can't quit!* Enemies may lie to you, call me an evil witch who wants power at any cost—a terrible creature. Do you think I am a terrible creature, a horrible old witch?"

Tanil twisted her soft, sinuous body again toward me, and the soft light of the shaded lamps twinkled all over the gown where little gems of sequins were sewn onto the sheer fabric. My heart took a leap.

"No, Tanil, he would have to be a good liar to make an evil creature out of you. Still . . . why all this concealment? It is an apparently criminal set-up in this hidden place. Why not operate openly?"

"We do things in an arbitrary way. Sometimes we take the law into our own hands. Always people of our kind must hide to avoid narrow-minded repression. Law is good, but it is sometimes so stupid in its workings that one must avoid all contact with it."

"I can understand that."

"That is good. Tonight, while you sleep, you will have good dreams that I make for you. Tomorrow you will tell me whether you work with us willingly, or be an enemy, which I do not advise."

Tanil lifted the great dragon shape, and behind its green folds revealed a corridor with several doors, a corridor which went on into darkness endlessly. To one of these doors she conducted me, and showed me a bed. I did not feel like sleeping and said so, but she laughed and answered:

"You may not feel like sleeping, but I promise you sleep and good dreams. Now listen for once to Tanil, and do not argue. She is sometimes wise."

Tanil left me with a smile.

I slipped off my clothes and hit the sheets. I no sooner sank into that bed than I fell asleep again.

I slept and I knew I slept. I knew I was dreaming, too, yet my dream was real. Myself and my dream self knew that my body lay and watched it all.

IT SEEMED that I rose from bed, and floated through the wall into a strange land. And toward me came a vaporous, beautifully curved woman's figure; a figure awesome in its overstrong attraction for me. She took me by the hand.

"Where are we going?" I asked.

"To the Kingdom of Micomican. To the Land of the Chimera. To the pleasures which only Atlantis, long dead, ever understood on this sad earth. To the temple of a cult which seeks to revive the ancient worship of the land of the freed imagination!"

Her answer seemed right to me, though

I knew some way that this temple of the imagination, and the cult that worshipped there, was an ancient and established thing on earth, but that she did not tell me this for fear of misunderstanding.

It was Tanil, I saw now, and her body was now as transparent as her gown had been before. She laughed at my revealed thoughts, and her laugh was the endless echo of all the desires of all youths everywhere, and the answer to that desire, and I knew love. We walked and my eyes could not leave her swaying figure beside me, but looked at her and through her into paradise within her, to which she was the door. I drank and ate of the irresistible strength that vitalized her beauty, that *was* her beauty, and from that drink I grew to be something greater than myself—a mighty lover with his love.

Now behind her I sensed, far behind and over us, an ancient and familiar presence; the witch-mother of Kyra, who seemed tonight to be the mother of vastly more than Kyra. Beside her was the daughter, Kyra herself!

Her white, loved face seemed strained and worried and sorrowful over losing me to Tanil. Yet her face was also promising; promising me the fulfillment of the yearning toward her which had long been my inner life. I could not understand the paradox of her thought.

We traversed a landscape not of this world, and I know those spiraling tree forms, with their multitude of great blossoms, those green skies, this shadowed, dim lighting, revealed only sparingly yet so mysteriously beautifully a garden land that was not earthly. I knew from the thought that softly connected me with Tanil, that this was her homeland, a planet other than earth.*

"We are entering the temple of Tanit, an ancient Goddess of earth as well as of this planet, which is my homeland in space. Tanit is symbolic of love, but her love is a different thing than men conceive love

here on earth."

Tanil's thought was talking, soft dream-talk that yet left a stronger image of meaning than ever did waking conversation.

Looming now before us was the temple, built, I knew, to the worship of Tanit, a goddess whose teaching contradicts all that made medieval religion such a sterile and unpleasant affair.

Tanil's whisper made clear what was to come, as we entered the red transparent rock of the door, that glowed with an inner light as a ruby's fire.

"In the Temple of Tanit, love is glorified in the same way that we glorify 'virtue,' or our sterile concept of virtue. It differs only from the love concept of the Christians in its greater emphasis on the love of man for woman, and it offers opportunities for the expression and development of ideas which the Christian religion has left more or less dormant. This worship of our Goddess Tanit is another reason for our secrecy and our hiding. Little of what goes on here would be understood or allowed in the surface world.

My mind revolved the words "surface world" questioningly, and hearing my thought in the dream, Tanil answered.

"You will learn that there is, on every planet, a subterranean world. Some of these subterranean worlds of other planets are lived in although the surface is uninhabitable. The subterranean world of this planet earth is better known on many other worlds than it is on your own surface world. You have much to learn."

The temple floor was a shimmering, brilliant emerald stone. The vaulted roof was sapphire, glowing with peculiar fires of flickering blue flames.

The ruby altar, shaped like a heart, and serving as a warm backdrop to the white and flawless beauty of the near-nude dancer, was symbolic of the love-base of the religion of Tanit.

For that matter, the dancer, expressing with her silken gleaming flesh all the promise of ecstasy that woman is to man, was symbolic of Tanit's worship, too. I stood held by all the mystery and the terrible strength of that lure of love that was in her expressed—and alive.

IN THE red altar burned a fire, that flickered far away, as though mysterious distance lay some how imprisoned within the ruby. From this fire radiated

*At this point in the manuscript of "Witch's Daughter," the margin contained a penciled note not in Mr. Shaver's handwriting, as follows. The editors do not know who wrote it or what it means. We reproduce it as it appears: "Now we're travelin', sweet sailin', just like old times, Shaver on the loose. I'm gettin' the knack of script readin'. And you—with the other eye open?—are sailin' along like a dream boat."

a lure, a mind-conjuring promise welled endlessly from the great red translucent stone. The promise was one of endless bliss for those who worshipped Tanit before that altar. Subtly it pervaded the mind of those who looked upon it with a thought, a conviction that Tanit was a living immortal Goddess of wondrous divine beneficence, and that her power flamed forever within the heart of the altar, and would so flame within the heart of all who claimed her as their own Goddess, and worshipped her.

In my dream, looming big, over and behind the scene like a watching spirit was the vast face of Kyra, and below that, her sinister mother. I wondered vaguely if her mother also had a counterpart in reality. They were watching me, for what reason I could not fathom.

Behind them, in the dream, stole a figure, a lean, long, and menacing figure. In his hand gleamed a wide, ugly knife, and as I watched the knife flashed up and back and then down in one swift hard movement. Kyra fell, and fell, and fell, and my feet were frozen in the hell of immobility that occurs in dreams only, thank God!

Sweating, my hands clenched in horror, I awoke. My mouth was saying: "Kyra, Kyra, look out!" over and over, and my feet were struggling with the silken coverlet to go, to leap, to stop that gleaming knife.

It was a vast relief to see the light of that real cave glowing softly outside my door, to know that something serene and safe was keeping this place its own. Somehow that awakening made me realize that the power Tanit seemed to have was not evil, nor was Kyra evil; but that the evil I sensed was still hidden, not revealed to me, and perhaps not to them either. But was that only an illusion, myself a dupe, her character wholly different that I imagined?

Surprisingly, the living Kyra, the girl who had burglarized my diggings unsuccessfully, walked into my waking sight. I sat up, saying:

"Thank God!"

"Well, you needn't be *that* delighted to see me." Her face was wholesome, laughing slightly at me, and myself was as relieved as though she were in truth my Kyra of dreams, of the "edge" beyond all life.

"I dreamed some man-thing was stabbing you, and it really gave me the creeps. I just awake from that dream and you walk in."

For some reason Kyra did not accept

that story of my dream with any flippant disregard.

"Quick, while it is in your mind, tell me what that man who stabbed me looked like. This could mean a great deal to me. Tell, friend, tell me!"

Not understanding why she should think a mere dream important, I told her as closely as I could of the appearance of the tall lean horror who had wielded that blade in my dream. She listened with narrowed, intent eyes, their bright green irises centered squarely on my face to catch the slightest nuance of meaning. When I finished she mused:

"It must have been Neues Panot, the priest, fiend that he is! He serves Tanit—or any of us—as I serve the devil, and that's not all."

Her words meant little to me, but as I searched them the depths of the meaning struck me. There *was* such a cult as the worship of Tanit, there *was* such a man who wielded behind-the-scenes power here, and who stabbed Kyra in a dream. That dream was not wholly foolishness, and Kyra knew it came from some source that sought to warn her through me.

As Kyra rose from the chair where she had sat to talk to me, I stopped her.

"There are things I must talk to you about. Please spare me a few minutes?"

She sat again, perhaps in her role of nurse that she had assumed since my drugging; perhaps pleased for me to talk as though she meant something to me. When Tanit was not near, I knew that somehow Kyra meant a great deal to me, must be somehow fatefully connected with my past dream life. But Tanit had such a vast personal magnetism, and always seemed so taken with me, had such a dominant possessive way about her . . .

"LISTEN, Kyra, all my life since I have been old enough to think of woman, I have dreamed of a certain witch-woman, a maid who in my dreams has your name, Kyra. Her face is your face, her body and her ways yours, you are the same person. She has a mother, as I told you. In the dream last night, she stood beside her when she was stabbed. How is it that you are my dream girl? Is it only a strange coincidence, or do you know more of it than that?"

"I know the answer to your question, but I am not sure that the time has come to

tell you. If you are the man you may become, why then I will tell you how this has occurred. *Why* you have dreamed of me so long is something that will remain a secret yet for awhile, but rest assured it is not an accident. I did have something to do with it and have known you for a long time from a distance."

"This worship of Tanit, the ancient Goddess—I dreamed of that, too, last night. As you have a reality outside my dreams, does that cult of Tanit have a reality, too? Is there such a cult?"

"There *is* a cult of Tanit. I am a part of it, and have been for a long time. Its modern origins include extra-terrestrial influences."

"Another thing, Kyra. That doll they doped me to make—why did they make that doll? What is it really all about? Why am I here?"

"You will hear all that soon enough. Meanwhile you are not ready to learn these things, and you must learn them from the proper sources in a careful exposition that leaves nothing unsaid. I am not prepared to give you such explanations, I have not thought about it enough. You will gather many facts as time goes on that will make such explanations far easier. It is like Einstein and relativity, and asking him about it. You are asking me just as hard a question. What is *magic*? Why am I connected with *magic*? I can tell you, but you would not understand me any more than you would understand Einstein if he told you about his work. You may learn in time, and you may *never* understand. Many think they understand but do not. Just as many men think they understand Einstein, but do so only vaguely. Such is my understanding of dolls and doll uses. These are ancient arts, a science from an older time; one is either raised with and understands such things and uses them, or just uses or is used by them. Or knows *nothing*, like yourself."

"Can't you give me an idea, Kyra? I can't just blindly accept anything Tanil says. My whole future is being decided here and I am having nothing to say about it. Tell me what you can."

Kyra settled herself with a swift feminine twist, swirling her transparent skirt in distracting spirals about her eye-blessing legs. I watched, and knew again the feeling that I had known this girl for years, and that she knew me of old. *How could that be,*

my mind asked?

"Well, Mr. Kent, I'll tell you what will do you the most good. If you understand, you may be able to decide what is best for you to do, though I do doubt you will be able to any deciding about this for years to come. You are now in the power of people who have ways of ruling people unknown to those people ruled."

"These dolls are one of their ways, and are an ancient art. The dolls made by that machine have a *pseudo-life*, are activated by electric currents similar to the currents of that machine you have built to make a man strong. They are precisely like your own body in a certain way—in that way a radio receiving set is like the sending station—in mental attunement, and this doll can receive your thought; is a key to your thought and actions."

"You are hereafter linked to that doll in strange ways, not in the way witch's dolls are commonly thought of, though. If Tanil wants to know what you are doing, she puts a certain ray upon the doll and no matter what *you* are doing, the doll will tell her your thought. It is a receiver. If she wants to help you; if you are in trouble; she then puts another ray upon the doll, sends her thought in strong augmentation along this beam to the doll's brain. You, no matter where you are, will think those thoughts and do those things she makes the doll think. Do you understand the mystery of the doll?"

"I UNDERSTAND," I said angrily, "she just stole my soul away and now I am her thing. She made a zombie out of me, and now I am supposed to like it!"

"Ordinarily, in the hands of evil people, such would be the case; you would be the loser. But Tanil is not a fool, and I have a great friendship for her. She has a doll of me, and it was made at my request. But there is also a doll of Tanil in other hands—so that she is not entirely a free agent."

"Tanil can do great favors for a person with her dolls. Such things are like any tool—like a tractor or a steam shovel—they are useful and harmless in the hands of sane people. But in the hands of a murderer or a madman they can be terrible weapons. So it is with the ancient art of the witch's dolls."

"They can be made only with machinery devised by the Elder race of the past, and there are not many such machines on Earth."

Tanil brought hers from another planet, but you are not yet ready to understand that Tanil is from another planet. She is a 'witch,' an evil person, if you are ignorant and fearful. She is a 'good fairy' if you are a sentimental fool. She is a sane and normal person trying to do her job and take care of her own fate in her own wise way—if you know her well. You reserve such decisions as to what is evil and what is not, for when you know a great deal more than you do about life and its ways you will find this: a thing is evil only when it hurts life's proper development, and no other thing is evil. Tanil is not a person that hurts things much, is she, Mr. Kent?"

I looked at Kyra, my mind confused.

"I'll reserve judgment. But mind you, I don't trust you either. You have never explained how you got those whip marks on your back, which were what led me here in truth, and not your lies."

"Among the other unusual things of the caverns, there is a cult of flagellants not far away from here in the underworld. I went to see their procession not long ago; and getting too near, one of them mistook me for a participant. He liked my looks, I guess, for he laid it on heavy. They are very mad people. There are many such lost groups, scattered through these endless caverns. You have much to learn . . ." She had disregarded my insult, was musing of something else.

I said:

"I caught you robbing my rooms, too."

Her face flushed with sudden anger at my insistence on explanations from her. She cried:

"In a few weeks you may be doing for more questionable things for Tanil, and liking it too! *You virtuous yokel!*"

She flung out of the room, angry with me, left me feeling like a yokel indeed, for it was witless of me to anger one I thought of as constantly as herself. Kyra was wise and clever, and knew her way around here where I was completely at sea. I felt swaddled in wool, and trying to walk where there was no place to put my feet.

Now that I was alone, I dressed, walked out of the sleeping room into the long gloomy corridor and paused, my breath taken for a moment by the ageless splendor of the Elder work that had carved this passage from the rock no one knew when. Carved it so that the walls were many

bodies of many beautiful people all pushing together up the walls, and the ceiling a splendor of half-revealed forms in gay abandon as though it were the place the pushing bodies tried so hard to reach.

I followed the beautiful passage in the direction I thought lay the room of the great dragon drapes. I passed several great doors into the lovely cavern rock chambers, and hearing the murmur of voices behind one, I stopped, slid cautiously forward to the aperture, peered in.

Tanil—talking with a man. The same man who had stabbed Kyra in my dream! Somehow Kyra was my friend, and I hated this man instantly. On such things hinge future events, sometimes. But Kyra hated him, too. I had heard her mention his name with venom, *Nueces Panot*. He looked like an Indian.

"SHE must know our plans any more. She will tell such men as this newcomer, and sooner or later their squeamishness will take offense at our needful work and betray us!"

Tanil's voice was scornful.

"Betray us to whom, may I ask? Do they know the life, the ways, the roads of the caverns? Could they go to far *Ornout*s with their tales, or would that fool, Chong, listen if they did? They would die before they had gone fifty miles. You talk like a fool sometimes, Nueces! You tend to your work. And don't imagine I do not see through you. Always I have this ambition in such as you, fearful of every newcomer, jealous of every glance I give a man. One would think you my lover!

"Nueces, you may have power in your own way and your own field, but see that you do not get the idea that you are preferred by the hidden ones to myself. They cannot do without my wisdom, and they *can* do without your flummery. Kent will learn nothing that would make him squeam from us, and for that matter what do we do that is so criminal? Or are you hiding something horrible from me that you fear one of these newcomers may blunder on? Is it your own acts you fear may betray you? Nueces, sometimes you go too far!

"This Kent has been with us but one night and one day, and already you come to warn me of him! Fool, that man Kent is in love with me, or with Kyra, or both, and Kyra is my right hand! Quit your

croaking and get back to your work, and remember that it had better be cleaner work than usual. If I did not need you, Nueces, your skill in some matters, I would bid you the dark and lonesome trail for these croakings of yours."

Tanil's voice stopped, I heard Nueces coming toward me, had a glimpse of his face, turned from Tanil to hide his murderous rage at her warning words. I knew he was an enemy to her, and somehow her stock rose with me, at the same time a knowledge that she was not the master of diplomacy that she might be—else she would have handled this knife-in-the-back Panot differently to minimize his opposition.

As the man shuffled past me, his white robes gave him a corpse-like air in the dim light; a shudder at him passed over me. As soon as he was out of hearing, I stepped from the shadow, spoke to Tanil.

"Time for a word with me?"

"Come in, Kent." Her voice was still angry.

"I was passing. Just got up. I heard you talk."

"Eavesdropping, eh?" Tanil's voice was mocking. "I can't say I blame you. I'd eavesdrop a little, too, were I in your position. What did you want, anything in particular?"

"I couldn't help trying to warn you against that fellow. He had murder on his face as he went out."

"He'll get *murder*, the fool! If I didn't need him, I would have rid myself of him long ago. But he knows things, the ways and the whereabouts of certain people of the caverns, the locations of things that are hidden in the winding ways of this planet's under-earth; much that I can learn from no one else at hand. But to have to use a traitor and a sneak day after day as though he were a friend, becomes impossible to me.

"These cavern people of Earth are loyal to old traditions, and those traditions are secrecy, not wisdom, I'll tell you. But their blind secrecy and a loyalty even to an evil and foolish master? They have had many generations of very bad bringing-up, here on earth. So it is that I need him for a guide; and he takes a lot of humoring, for he is trying to build his own power beyond my own and so become my master. Always he tries to lead me, to tell me what to do—and always I must do the opposite, for he

is evil, and would lead only into trouble. He tells me everyone but himself is my enemy, and verily he is the only real enemy I have except . . . never mind. He is transparent as a glass snake. I have to listen and humor him, and I cannot play that game well. I am very tired of such things. Amuse me, Tom Kent!"

After all, I did wish an excuse to talk with her further.

I entered, sat down, said:

"Tanil, over and over I have heard mention of the 'caverns,' the 'underworld,' and other phrases I cannot understand. Can't you enlighten me a little? Too, I have heard you are *from another planet*. Is this a commonplace thing, that you do not make capital of it? Is it that I know nothing of my own world?"

"THAT is the truth, Tom Kent." Tanil smiled wearily as though the question were one she had heard too often. "You people of the surface are sure you know all about life and its history on this earth. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

"Long ago a vast race of great technical knowledge lived on Earth—not on the surface but in a tremendous series of deep cavern cities that stretched then and still do so stretch over the whole globe. Those caverns and those machines they left are duplicated in every other planet I have been on—three of them beside Earth. And those caverns have been inhabited since the earliest days here on Earth. But, here on Earth, unlike other planets, they have been kept secret from the people of the surface by a clique of hereditary monopolizers of the secret—few but powerful. The machines, the vast powers of the ancient work, and the endless living space within the empty caverns they consider their private property. It is those we mean when we speak of the 'Hidden Ones' with fear.

"There is regular commerce between this cavern worlds' people and the other planets. Infrequent trips occur between all planets, from the farthest one the knowledge may reach. One learns this is true in space—*men know of the Elder race and use their machines everywhere except on Earth*, and on Earth the Elder race has become a secret kept from common people by custom since early times.

"It is the greatest secret of earth, and your ignorance of this secret is what makes

me and my knowledge and my use of the machines strange and weird and frightening to you. There is no reason for you to fear this knowledge now that it comes to you. That fear is perhaps also a legacy of your heredity, who knows?"

I gazed at Tanil, a strange whirling in my head, a whirl that was of wonder and two-swift and sudden comprehension of vast vistas of new explanations for old mysteries growing suddenly within my mind; a sudden opening of my mind to the unending differences this knowledge would make in all my thinking.

The whole education I had been given as to the beginnings of man and science and history must now all be revised to accommodate the mighty new base for my thinking those few words have given me.

I sank to a chair weakly, for I needed no convincing to believe Tanil's words. There was the doll-making machine, a machine that I new no earth science could produce. There was the words of Kyra which were much the same but too brief to give me this full revelation. There were a hundred mysteries of my past life suddenly explained to me: phantasms of my youth; ghosts; fairy tales; wizards and magic; the legend of the underworld; of the Styx, of Charon and of Pluto and Proserpine.

My mind was by those words of hers set awlirl upon an endless series of new reactions to which I knew there would never be an end. New associations of inescapable logic to make about all my past false conclusions about God; the origins of primitive man; the source of man's inventions and sciences. My whole understanding of Earth and man must be revised, and I would never get done in this life all the needed thinking fully to understand and correlate the new understanding with the old false teaching. I could only gaze weaking at Tanil and say:

"Now I understand! I . . . understand . . . now!"

"THAT is good that you comprehend so greatly what I have said. Your reaction tells me you have a good mind, for it does not need a great deal of thought to understand what a revolution this makes in all your thinking. I have seen other men like yourself struck into silent thought for a week while they concentrated on fully

realizing just what this knowledge does to all their former teachings of the past and of science and of religion. If you will trust me, Kent, I will be able to use you for a great plan I am working upon which will be good for your Earth peoples; very good. More I cannot tell you, chiefly because I cannot take time or effort to make you understand. You will have to trust me and obey—if you can do that? Can you?"

She gazed down at me, and caressed my cheeks delicately with the points of her long fingers.

"For Tanil? Can you obey and not distrust what you do not understand?"

"I can try, Tanil. Certainly it should not be hard, for I would do nearly anything to please you. But if you . . . I mean, I must warn you my heart turns toward Kyra, for I have dreamed of a girl with her face all my life . . ."

"My attitude does not mean what your Earth mind thinks it means. It is only friendly, the way of people brought up under the love of Tanit, the Goddess of all Love. We are not backward with our affections as are you of Earth. Nor is Kyra, my Kent. Do not worry, you will not break my heart. It has already been bent in the fire of love; it is tempered now." Tanil smiled reminiscently, dismissed me abruptly. I knew why well enough.

"I am tired now. Do you mind, my friend?"

"I leave you with a great deal more to think about than I had before, Tanil. Do not think I am not susceptible to your charms. I like you a great deal too much, as you probably know."

She pushed me gently toward the door.

"Go and look for your Kyra. She has long held the key to your heart, as she will one day explain to you. She is probably on duty in the Dragon room, the one with the great green drape. You know where it is."

I went, but I could not help wondering if it would not have been wiser not to have mentioned my tie for Kyra. After all, I did not know this woman well, was trusting her. And I tried to feel suspicious of her, but her "magic" was too strong. I trusted her implicitly, my heart was hers in one way, if not in another. I had much to learn of "witches" and their devious ways. For Tanil held that doll, and with it she held my actions, my life-pattern, in her

two hands. I knew that, and I feared her.

She was an alien, powerful, above and outside the law. I was an American inventor who had already given her my best invention, and control over my actions, my soul. Perhaps I was being a dupe, falling for glossing words and sweet smiles. An entire dupe! Where would her domination end if I kept on giving her myself? I would be nothing but a monkey on a stick.

My head in a whirl again, my heart torn between the strange loyalty Tanil had inspired in me, and my own knowledge that she had appropriated to herself both my work and my will left me not even freedom. I went in to Kyra, suspicious even of her.

DAYS went by swiftly, in a kind of daze of working and waiting, of pleasure in the subtle contention between the two women, Tanil and Kyra, over my affections, and in a growing comprehension of what they were doing. A growing dread that the peculiar activity of these peoples would result in no good for the human race came to live with me. There was evil about it, but just why and what the threat was I could not fathom.

It took me many days to absorb what Tanil was about, what she intended. When I did understand, a kind of dread of my own conclusions and doubt of my own ability to analyze such work from a moral standpoint was my attitude.

I watched her working, always working with the dolls. To me it was unholy, mysterious, pure black magic. It was a subtle, invisible enslavement of men to her purposes. Even if her purposes were of the purest white, she was at the same time setting up a machine for absolute rule that might be seized at any time by the "Hidden Ones" whom she served, as I served her.

I could learn almost nothing about them, their purposes, or why they were hidden. From Kyra I learned that they were the old hereditary rules of the sparse population of the endless caverns, and that Tanil was doing a good thing in preparing to break down this barrier between them and the surface world. Sometimes I wondered if Tanil was not being duped by them, rather than that ourselves were duped by Tanil.

The more I learned about Tanil's work the more I doubted my own ability to analyze such *alien* work from a moral stand-

point.

I decided that she herself was not cognizant that her work was potentially evil, that she was inherently incapable of appreciating that a man's soul and self-determination in life were sacred.

On a screen in front of her rapt, lovely face would be a scene in the city overhead. The screen was a kind of televisior, bringing over a beam the scene from above and displaying the city at any magnification she wished. She could make a man's face take up a space four feet in area on that screen, or she could spread it out till a vision of the whole city was displayed, the people but dots wandering in its vastness.

On the great expanse of level floor in the mech-chamber was a miniature reproduction of the city. There were also several larger-scale reproductions of central sections of the city, just that size in which those dolls of hers could move about as though they were normal-sized men. The dolls, placed in these three-dimensioned duplicates of the city above, went through exactly those actions she told them to with her mental control.

On the screen in front of her she watched people in the city overhead, those of whom she had doll duplicates especially. For those people duplicated with their actions and movements precisely the motions of the dolls, and the dolls moved as she dictated with a thought-beam upon them. So of course she was in reality controlling those people, and they were quite unconscious of it.

Just what her purpose was in this practice of hers I could not guess, unless it was to accustom the people themselves to this control in many actions and over long periods when they did only normal things and so would not notice when the control made them do things they would not normally have done.

In time, I guessed another answer to this question, and a greater dread of her seized me, for I could not but think that what she was doing was greatly wrong. I was convinced she was up to no good; but such was her nature one approved of her and could not gainsay her. Even while I feared and detested the things for which she stood, an absolute control of surface life beyond any possibility of free choice in important matters, still I could not convince myself I was opposed to her.

TANIL seemed to have certain trouble with her work. There were always disturbing factors in the human equation "upstairs," and the movements of the dolls in the reproduction city had to allow for, to adapt themselves to, the observed variant moments introduced by the humans in the scene above—those for whom she had no dolls. This mental forecasting of the movements of humans over whom she had not control seemed very difficult. I imagine it was something like having a fleet of robot-planes under radio control and suddenly finding the fleet of controlled planes flying through another fleet of friendly planes piloted by friendly humans with whom one must not allow the bomb-carrying robots to collide. For she sometimes had humans driving cars under control, and that was ticklish work with cars or trucks cutting in and out. She was "just practicing." *Practicing*—with human lives risked because of her practice? Practicing for what? She would not say, only to give me an enigmatic look with those other-world eyes of hers; a look full of the mystery of her alien wisdom, as though to say:

"I would tell you if your poor Earth-mind could comprehend."

I was never complimented by this exclusion of myself from her plans. Still, I knew she had not decided whether I was truly a friend or just someone to use and forget. Someone to trust and confide in, or someone to watch and guard against no matter what her emotions.

So I waited, and worked, building my harnesses and batteries to her order. It was a job to build a hundred of those things by hand, without help. For I had no intention of teaching the know-how to any "helpers".

Nightly my sleep was filled with dreams similar to my first dream there in the caverns; dreams of the worship of Tanit. And nightly it seemed to me that the two women contended gently over which owned my heart—Tanil, or Kyra. This contention seemed to be robbing me of some deep pleasure, some terrific fulfillment that would give full understanding of what these women's mysterious efforts were leading toward—what their goal.

How could the two things hinge together? I could not understand. These women seemed to be waiting for me to decide between them; in dreams quite openly wait-

ing; in the day-time activity subtly, hiddenly waiting. Perversely I gave no sign which one my deepest affections preferred. For I did not truly know, and feared to lose one by preferring the other. Time went on, and Nueces Panot and his white-robed priests waited too, and watched. And I knew he was vastly more to be feared than Tanil realized. I spoke of this to Kyra.

"This death's head priest of 'love' who stalks around here—the one I dreamed stabbed you—how is it he is still trusted and powerful? Why does Tanil not see that he is plotting something, that he is *dangerous*?"

Kyra said:

"Tanil is biding her time. If *she* made the first move, he would have the sympathy of the other priests as one unjustly dealt with. They would be troublesome to handle, as the workers here follow them pretty blindly. But if he makes a break, then she can deal with him openly and it will be understood he is in the wrong."

BY NOW I had realized that Tanil's full purpose with her dolls was a full and unbreakable control of this city with her dolls. And after that the control of other and greater cities, and in time the whole government itself. I realized that she could do this without anyone "upstairs" being any the wiser that they were not in truth ruling themselves.

She could move into Washington tomorrow, and, after her dolls of the chief figures of government were made, she could at any time control the whole workings of the government from a distance. I could understand how this could pay off richly commercially. But I was not sure that such a goal was Tanil's real purpose. What was her purpose? She could take control now, what was she waiting for? Why "practice," if her practice was unobserved? It didn't seem to matter whether her control was perfect or not. They would not know the difference on the surface. Not them, not they who laugh if one mentions witchcraft seriously as existent.

But whatever Tanil's real purpose, things happened to throw her and Kyra and myself into a peril that superseded all her work toward that goal. It told me, too, why she waited.

Nueces Panot was not alone. There were a group of priests who, as Kyra said, "served Tanit as she served the Devil, very

poorly." And among the workmen whom I saw very often but knew not at all intimately, Nueces was looked up to as the spokesman. He, like all priests, had built himself up for years as an intermediary between themselves and the Goddess Tanit—and tried to do the same between the ruler Tanil and themselves. Tanil's activity with her dolls took much of her day. And Nueces was very industrious in placing himself in the good regard of these workmen who were the real lifeblood of the place. They were, some of them, people from the surface, but for the most part they were the underworld, alien types, whom I had the greatest difficulty in understanding.

Their mental processes were very different from men of the surface. They were born reactionaries, seeming to prefer not having rights to being bothered with them. Which did not seem to annoy anyone but the few surface-trained electricians and technicians who had learned to repair and service some of the ancient machines in constant use. To Nueces it was these cavern people went when they wanted something, and it was his promises and explanations they listened to when they did not get what they wanted.

So it was that when Nueces saw his opportunity he had a number of these people in his confidence.

It happened this way. Tanil had decided to make a trip up to the city to buy materials. Materials she had to have to build the great number of dolls she was planning on using—materials of many kinds I could not imagine her using. But she had strange needs. Silk screens for art work, what did she want of them? Plastics of the new strengths lately developed, a long list of apparently unrelated materials, which I knew could only be used to construct some electric mechanisms of a nature to handle great quantities of electric of the static sort—stored on large areas of dielectric. But all of Tanil's work was mysterious to me, even though it was my own field.

She took Kyra and I with her on the trip; and as we returned, riding gloomily along in the taxi toward the entrance in that unassuming little grimy store on Portland Street, things happened!

Control from an exterior source of nerve energy is a very strange thing to happen to a man. There is nothing else like it, nothing that takes a man out of the illusion

of being a free agent in life. Suddenly you do things without volition, you are a bystander in your own mind. A mechanical doll your body. Yourself, the little thing in your brain that dignifies your thought with a consciousness of identity. Your ego suddenly becomes only a passenger, wondering what is going to happen next.

THAT is how it happened to me. Suddenly my hands rose up and began to choke Tanil. Nothing I could do about it, it was my body doing it and I had no control. Something outside me was directing my body. Logic, reason, nothing I thought had any connection with my actions, with the horrible things my hands were doing to Tanil's lovely neck. She fought, kicked, scratched—and then Kyra leaped upon my back, pounding, screaming at me.

Tanil's hands fumbled a small object, crushed it. I smelled a funny odor. Even as my eyes noted the purpling face of Tanil and squeezed a little harder to make sure she was properly dying, the peculiar odor rose stronger in the cab. A cloud of weird, coiling smoke swirled heavier about me. I breathed it in, and the contorted, lovely straining face before my horrified eyes drained away into a great black tunnel into which we were rushing. I was unconscious.

When I woke up, it was to the smell of ether, of disinfectant, of the soft brisk feet of rubber-soled nurses, rustling their white-starched selves past my bed. I looked around, a forty-bed ward, I guessed. All those sick people, and me one of them! What was it, a plague?

As I raised up to see better, a man got up from a chair beside me.

"I'm police. We found you and two women unconscious in a taxi. Driver said he smelled gas, but that the smell went away. Got anything to say?"

I looked at him, wondering just what he would do if I told him the truth. I knew! He would have me transferred to the psychopathic ward.

"Nothing I could say would tell you a thing. I smelled something and passed out in a cloud of yellow smoke. That is all."

"That's not much help. We know that much. But why? Who would want to harm you? Who are you? Give us some idea of why such a thing would occur to you?"

"I couldn't tell you a thing. Brother, not a thing!" I couldn't help grinning.

Suppose I did tell him? Oh My!

The ward was on the ground floor. Outside the window I could see some grass, a shrub, the sidewalk.

That night, when the nurses were all off the ward but one nodding sleepily at her table in the end of the ward, I heard a soft tapping at the window.

The face was Kyra's, eerily beautiful as in my dreams she had always been. I pinched myself to make sure this wasn't a dream, too. Then I slid softly out of bed, and, crouching in the dimness between the beds, slid the window open. Kyra hissed:

"Come on. Tanil doesn't want any police attention. We are skipping out to avoid all the rigamarole while they try to understand what happened. Have you seen the papers?"

"What papers?"

"Don't you realize that your attack on Tanil was the opening move of Nueces; that he has the doll mech and the whole caverns in his hands? He used your doll to make you try to kill Tanil. When she got around that with a gas capsule from her bag he turned his attention to terrorizing the city. Dozens of banks have been robbed by people in his control; the city is in an uproar. He has murdered dozens of men—guards in banks; cops; tellers . . . There's Hell to pay! Come on. Tanil says, 'you are very strong, but she has more gas capsules,' so come along!"

"Lucky for her I wasn't wearing my harness. She would be a dead woman."

"We have no time for talk now. We will explain later. Nueces is raising hell! We have to stop him. Tanil is very depressed. She thinks the powerful 'hidden ones' have turned away from her, have lied to her. We must save our own lives as well as the lives of the people of the city. Come on, we will get clothes for you later."

CLAD only in the hospital pajamas and feeling silly, I slid out of the window. The screen made a hell of a racket. It was one of those tricky, hinged gadgets they have in such places. I never could figure them out, could you?

I dropped to the grass and Kyra led the way on a run. Half a block down the street a cab was waiting. Kyra and I plunged into the dark interior. I sat down on Tanil's lap, inadvertently, in the dark. She squeezed me, laughed. That terrific effect she had on me, an effect like no other wom-

an, throbbed through my veins. Could a man love two women? It has been done, I guess. Certainly I wanted Kyra with all the fervor of young love. But Tanil! Tanil had all the lure of the mystery of wisdom, that lure that had placed the image of Kyra in my dreams ahead of all other faces in a greater degree—that wisdom that is the witch's alone. I often wondered what Kyra would have done with her own knowledge and arts without the eclipsing Tanil as her superior.

The cab took off in a rising crescendo of motor. In a second we were on the parkway.

Nueces hadn't been killing time. As the cab pulled off the parkway onto Grand Ave.—a street containing many of the biggest stores and banks of the city—we heard tumult far ahead, saw people running, heard shots, screams, and the dull rumble of dynamite. Traffic was a snarl of cursing drivers in front—everyone trying to leave—while the curious, thinking it a fire, were trying to get nearer.

We got out of the cab, ran toward the scene of the uproar on foot. A line of trucks hogged the center of the street. They were big trucks, and out of the stores, jewelry shops, and out of the bank, men were hurrying, their arms loaded with loot, tossing their burdens into the trucks, and hurrying back for more. The trucks inched ahead against the jammed traffic, horns tooting steadily. The shop fronts had been blasted open with dynamite. Clouds of dust hung in the air.

"What the H is going on?" I yelled at Tanil.

"It's Nueces! He's operating all the doll control men to loot the city; the trucks are driven by his own men."

"Just how does he expect to keep the coppers from breaking up his party? They'll have to call out the militia for this!"

"He's probably set a few apartment houses or hotels ablaze in some other part of the city. It wouldn't matter—he could drop them with the ray."

"If he could, why doesn't he? Why doesn't he kill us if he's so anxious?"

"Oh, shut up! I'm trying to think what to do. He'll wreck the city if I don't stop him."

I subsided. It was too much for me. I turned to watch the commotion. The operation was going forward with the organized stolidity of an automobile assembly

line; the trucks were the conveyor belt, and the shops and the bank the source of supply of parts. The doll-control men labored steadily with the rapt expression I had come to recognize as that of one whose mind has been taken over from the distance by the control mech.

At the curb, as we hurried forward, sat a Police Patrol car, full of uniforms—uniforms containing burly coppers. But they were all unconscious—or asleep! Here and there I saw other blue uniforms prostrate on the pavement. There was no sign of a wound on them.

"How the heck did Nueces knock out the police?"

"There are a dozen ways. A dozen different rays would accomplish that—or simple teleport of nitrous oxide into their lungs. What's the difference how it was done?"

"Just what do you expect to do and why are you hurrying into the thick of it? You haven't even got a cap pistol!"

A siren rushed up a side street toward us. As we sighted the speeding car the motor died suddenly, the car slowed and the police started to climb out. One by one they slumped in unconsciousness without visible cause. It was eerie, potent stuff Nueces was handing out.

Even as I stood there wondering just what Tanil expected to do about a thing as big as this—the looting of a city—I felt a choking sensation, the world turned from a mad bright impossible scurrying of rapt-faced figures into a soft darkness, and my head cracked hard on something.

WHEN I came to, the scurry and confusion had gone and the streets were nearly empty of life. Down the street an ambulance was stopped beside a body. The white coats were bending over some one lying across the curb. Beside me Tanil and Kyra still lay unconscious. As I sat up Tanil murmured:

"Got to get to Harruh, he will have a mech up there. . . ." She stirred, opened her eyes. I said:

"Well, wherever you were going, I gather it's too late now."

A cruising cab coasted up to us, his brakes screeched gently as he paused near the curb.

"Feel like going home, folks?" called the cabbie, grinning down at us. "The party's over. I've been picking up quite a few of

you innocent bystanders."

I answered:

"Wait a minute! Soon as the women come out of it—we will have plenty of use for you."

Tanil sat up, her face sharpening by the second. Together we half-carried Kyra to the cab, tumbled in. I gave my address, as Tanil said nothing. The cab swung around, started off for my former rooms. I was hoping the landlord had decided to await my return, had not thrown out my belongings. The rent had been paid for a few weeks in advance, but was now two weeks overdue.

The cabbie was talkative.

"You're the only folks I picked up who didn't bust out with questions, 'What happened?' 'What's the matter with the police?'" He mimicked the confused citizens' natural queries. "I suppose you folks know all about it, that's why you're not asking questions?"

"Maybe we're just smart enough to know that a cab-driver wouldn't know any more about it than we do. What *did* happen, just to conform to polite procedure? Do you know?" I parried, for the fact we weren't curious might start him off on the angle that would lead to our own questioning by the police—and I had no desire to be questioned by any police in the frame of mind they must be in right now.

"Just the biggest robbery in the history of any city, that's all! A whole fleet of trucks came along, knocked out the police faster than they could arrive on the scene, and walked off with every bit of valuable merchandise and every bill in every bank on Grand Ave. That's all that happened!"

"Some clever gang, that. Wonder how they did it?"

"They seemed to have a way of knocking the cops unconscious from a distance. Science run amok, that's what it was. Some criminal mind is better at building a weapon than the whole U S army, I guess."

"Well, nearly every weapon they have now was invented by a private party sometime. It isn't so strange that one of them should decide to use his weapon for his own, private war on society, instead of giving it to the government for some future Hitler to get big-headed about."

"Brother, this guy is going to *be* a Hitler, if I'm any judge! He sure picked up a few million bucks in a hurry. If they don't stop him, it'll be the U.S. Mint one

of these days."

Tanil came out of her thoughtful abstraction to speak to me in a voice the cabby couldn't hear.

"I was hurrying to a certain member of the 'Old Covenant,' a man who has some of the Elder mech up here on the surface. But now, I don't think so much of the idea. For I do not trust him; he might kill us, or imprison us. He does not agree with my ideas of expansion. He fears we will betray the ancient secret which has given him life of luxury and monopoly. He fears competition. I had thought that in the emergency he would help in order to eliminate Nueces, but now I realize that he would also eliminate me did he have me at his mercy so completely. So it is best that I find my way out of this difficulty myself instead of getting in hotter water by calling in tools that might turn in my hand. I will construct what I need with your tools, which I have seen you use so dexterously when I watched you making your harness of strength." She paused, looked musingly at Kyra's face, who was sleepily snuggled against my shoulder. Then she added:

"It will not be long before Nueces makes another attempt upon us. We must protect ourselves while we prepare for an attempt to re-enter our cavern. We will have to go to your workshop while we prepare certain devices which will shield us from the mental flows which are used for control. We must hurry."

IT SEEMED very strange to return to my rooms after the time that had elapsed; time that had changed my life so completely. To enter those black, weary doors, to go up those time-eaten stairs and smell that queer musty odor that only an old rooming house ever acquires so richly. But once in my diggings and unlocking the door of my workshop, I felt at home again.

I showed the place to Tanil, explained the machinery. I stepped back, for the reason that I wanted to observe her every move carefully. I appreciated fully the fact that I was going to see a scientist from another planet in action; in action that would be all the more fascinating because it was an emergency. Her life depended on using all she knew quickly to defeat Nueces' next attempt to kill us from the distance. That he had other weapons than the dolls' peculiar telepathic control I did not know. I surmised he did.

That Tanil was equal to the sudden test put upon her knowledge and skill I sincerely hoped. But while my workshop was well equipped for such an experimental electrician as myself, still I did not see how from the limited materials she could construct a device that would protect us from a ray that passed through all that rock. But she did! And though I asked her questions and watched her every move in spite of my resolve not to get in her way or distract her, I could not understand her work fully.

"It is a 'doraytelmacini,'" she said. Which was Greek to me. It was a device which was going to make us safe from Nueces, was all I really understood.

It consisted of a generator, tuning coils of great complexity and several simple controls, topped by spiderweb coils of large size, heavy—on swivels. She turned the power into the webs, and swiveled the webs about till an indicator at the base read zero. She explained:

"It generates a neutralizing flow of energy that damps the 'tenol' energy of the control rays from the mech Nueces is using. When it is in use, he cannot control us. Now we have to put it into a truck, and with the truck, return to the cavern. But some other things we will need for protection, such as a gun or two."

Tanil was more conversant with the city than perhaps many of its oldest residents, from her watching of its life day after day on her screens, and from reading the minds of its citizens. She went to the phone, called a number, and within minutes there was waiting at the curb an unmarked, closed body truck, a moving van. Coming up the stairs were two large-bodied, ungainly and somewhat sinister appearing individuals. I took them to be furniture movers, but when they opened the bags they carried and showed Tanil what they contained, I surmised the better word for them would be "torpedoes," as the bags contained each a pair of M 3's, as well as plenty of ammunition. They pulled out the extension stocks, attached the barrels, and between us we had a fire power at our disposal not to be sneezed at.

They carried, with our assistance, the "doraytelmacini"—which I called a "damp-er" to save my tongue from cramps, down the stairs in sections, set it up inside the truck, and Tanil got in and set the thing in operation. One of the torpedoes got inside with Tanil, as did myself, but Kyra

chose to sit with the driver, to direct him to the store on Portland St.

THE ride was uneventful, and I gathered whatever lightning Nueces planned to hurl at us was waiting for our entry into the caverns behind the cellar of the storeroom.

I was right. The truck backed up to the doorway at the side of the store that opened to a wide flight of steps down into the storerooms of the cellar. The three men—myself and the two massive explosive gentlemen—succeeded in getting the weird creation of Tanil's unharmed down the stairs in one piece. Down upon us—from that nowhere that all rays in use seem to come from—came blue and deadly lightning, crackling about us fearfully, swiftly stealing away our strength and leaving us leaning against the walls gasping for breath. Desperately Tanil worked with the controls of her creation, and gradually the blue leaping electric waves became less evident, lost their life-stealing power. She had tuned the mech to damp the waves. I knew she would have to do that for every change Nueces made in the rays he used—and wondered if she was taking the desperate gamble it seemed she was taking. The two grim gentlemen looked at Tanil's nervously twitching face, and I could see a vast doubt of her in their eyes. I murmured:

"Don't worry, she knows her onions. This guy behind the blue stuff is a nobody. . . ."

Tanil shot me a grateful glance.

We entered the chamber of the dragon drape to find the furnishings overturned, the great glittering drape torn and stained.

Beside one of the low divans lay the body of a man. I recognized him as one of the better minds of the group who served Tanil as priests, and Tanil as their leader. One of those I knew who must have tried to protect Tanil's rights in her absence. A knife wound in his belly reaching upward to the short ribs had let out his life. I had no doubt it had been Nueces' work.

About us still lashed the blue lightning, robbed of its destructiveness by the purring mech Tanil had built. We had mounted it on a wheeled baggage truck and trundled the thing along.

Down the corridors leading toward the great machine shops of the ancients, toward the chambers where the doll-control mech was installed, we moved, impossible

to be quiet or to expect that surprise was with us. The trundling mech on the truck our only defense. I handled the truck, the two heavy gentlemen had their machine guns in their hands, the bags abandoned back in the cellar.

Behind the three of us moved the two women, and their bearing made me very proud of them, a feeling as though they were my own, my sisters or my wives. . . .

We came out into the huge chamber of the dolls, and behind the great mech-control we saw Nueces, his deep eyes shot with madness, his hair on end, and fear written across his face in great deep lines.

Beside him moved half-a-dozen of the other white-robed unnecessaryes that Tanil had kept on. Tanil's priests are "sacred." Well, she had her reward. . . .

As we entered, Nueces played the card he had been holding till now . . . played it desperately.

The dolls, waiting in ranks before him, were ready—and as we entered, stormed us under Nueces' frantic mental control. He had armed them with lancets, several of them carried small women's revolvers he had found somewhere, with scalpels, knives—there were some two hundreds of them suddenly swarming toward us.

The two guns of the torpedoes began to hammer and Tanil screamed:

"Don't shoot the dolls, it won't do any good. Shoot the priest. Kill Nueces; he controls them!"

The two heavy men with the guns did not understand. One of them cursed:

"What the hell, we didn't bargain on fighting *witchcraft*. This wasn't in the bargain!" But he kept spraying the oncoming horde of tiny people with lead and the heavy slugs knocked them down in windrows; but they got up again and kept coming. Holes showing light clean through their bodies.

It was unnerving, uncanny, frightening to see the little man-things hopping on one leg or with an arm hanging by a tough shred or by a wire of the inner part still intact, coming on and on, little knives glittering; deathless; implacable; each of them reflecting on their faces the face of Nueces. Under Nueces' mental command, their faces grimaced oddly all alike, each of them the same expression, fierce with a cornered rat's desperation.

Then they were on us; the little knives rose and fell; the tiny revolvers spoke. **Kyra**

fell under a swarm, the knives ran with her blood. I swept the M-3 sub-machine gun from its place on the truck and blasted the little fiends off Kyra. And now Tanil was covered with the leaping things where she stood on the hand truck beside her "damper mech." She beat them down with one hand while she held the other firm on the controls that kept off the blighting blue rays. Tanil kept screaming. "Shoot the priest! shoot Nueces! That will end it!"

AT LAST when I was going down myself, bleeding from a hundred tiny wounds and a score of them leaping upon me, clinging to me, trying to trip me, her words percolated my thinking skull. I turned the scatter-gun on Nueces, across the great chamber. One of the torpedoes got the idea, too, surprisingly, and together we emptied our weapons toward the robed figure crouching behind the shielding bulk of the great old doll-mech. He had to show part of his body to keep his fingers on the controls that activated the little dolls. His face was a contorted mask of effort as he strove madly to get the last ounce of energy into the swarming bodies of the tiny ro-dolls.

One of the slugs nicked Nueces, he staggered back from the mech—which probably saved his lousy life, for the other slugs had found and torn into a great power cable at the base of the giant mech. Weird blue and red lightning flashed upward in a fountain of terrible light-sparks clear to the shadowed ceiling—a volcano of sudden lightning—and Nueces flung up an arm and fled blindly, his face burned and scarlet. His long legs leaped bare and ugly and hairy under the flying skirt of his robes.

The little dolls dropped over, suddenly lifeless around us, a horde of battered little bodies as weirdly lifelike in death as in their pseudo-life.

I picked up Kyra, found her crying and alive, her body scored with a hundred tiny punctures; no way to know if any were serious. Perhaps due to the fact that the dolls were essentially brainless and not calculating, she was unhurt in any vital spot I could see.

Tanil, still upright on the low truck by her mech, was bleeding from scores of little wounds in the legs, but they did not seem to have hurt her in the body. The two big-bodied torpedoes lowered the smok-

ing guns, inserted fresh long clips of .45 A.C.P.'s.

Tanil cried:

"After that long-legged skunk, and kill him. Don't let him get away. He can make more trouble for us yet!"

They both lumbered off, but I could see they would not overtake the high-jumping lean figure of Nueces. Tanil leaped down from the truck, ran like a deer to the great smoking doll-mech and got down on her knees at the source of the smoke column that told me its mighty anique power supply was shorted and arcing down there somewhere.

She rose swiftly to the wall panels, pulled the master switch. The arcing splutter ceased. I had approached. She seized my wrist, placed a kit of electrician's tools in my hand. She pointed at the big shattered cable, composed of many smaller wires, saying fiercely:

"Splice, Kent, splice as fast as you have ever done. Our lives depend on how quickly you get that mech working again. It has a weapon ray hidden in its complexities that Nueces did not know, or we would all be dead. I will see about another ray to trace him so that we can kill him when you fix that cable. He is even now racing toward another ancient ray mech down the unused corridors."

I hunkered down, ripped the cable loose, cut back the lead, and color on color, swiftly replaced the burnt and torn wires in place, twisting them savagely together, taping, replacing, over and over, as fast as I could drive my hands.

Tanil came back, looked, hurried away, her usual self possession was now a very worried woman's face. It would be five minutes yet before I was through. At the other side of the room, weird green lights flickered as Tanil sent power into another black metaled ancient machine. A ray leaped from its myriad incomprehensible coils out and down the corridor. The trail of footprints left by Nueces and the two torpedoes glowed greenly visible. Unused corridor after dusty corridor appeared and disappeared as she sent the ray sweeping after the crazy priest who had nearly killed us all.

As I saw the two women working frantically with the ancient mech, I could not but wonder who were these supposed supporters, the "Hidden Ones," who could

let these things happen to those who served them? Or whether they were really so formidable as Tanil seemed to think not to be able to protect their own from such as Nuēces. Or whether Nuēces was not their spy and tool, expressing and encompassing their fear of wisdom like Tanil's, the tool of their own traitorous minds that could never support a more able person than themselves? But in truth, of their nature I knew nothing.

I FINISHED, shouted to Tanil.

"All set!"

She dropped the booster cable she was hooking to still another great generator, came racing toward me across the vast floor.

Even as she came, a silver ray—ghastly yet beautiful—leaped in through the rock walls, played over Tanil's lovely, supple figure softly. It was a weirdly beautiful and yet heart-breaking sight to see her freeze, her face and her wonderful tall figure contort into agonized lines as death raced through her. I stood with a terrible sorrow and a feeling of futile helplessness tearing through my breast. I knew she was dying and I was helpless! I could not think of anything to do toward saving her. Frantically my hands sought the utterly mysterious controls of the Elder race mech before me, and miraculously from my ignorant fingers' motions, a ray, a strange lovely beam of power, throbbed outward from the enigmatic heart of the great mech. Desperately my frantic hands tried dial after dial and knob after knob—

Kyra came running, her sweet face a piteous mask of terrible loss at Tanil's plight. She had been working at the other mech beside Tanil, seen the deadly silver ray freezing her, ducked around its deadly circle of ghastly beauty, raced toward me.

Her clever hands sent the great beam I had started inadvertently into action, sent it swiftly swinging along the path of deadly silver light—beautiful as moonlight—as terrifying to the sensing of its electric force as a viper's venom trickling up the nostrils.

Her little tapered fingers plied several tiny lever-switches upon the great keyboard of intricate controls. Then she reached out and touched a finger into the beam where it shot from the center of the mech. Her finger shriveled, disappeared and she gasped with the sudden voluntarily assumed agony of the searing pain. Then she sent

the now deadly atuned beam leaping on and on, across the now glass-like transparency of the adamantine under-rocks, seeking Nuēces with the penetrative power ray.

At its end we finally found Nuēces, his hair standing straight up with electric and with fear, his face working with ugly triumph as he kept the silver beam upon the now prostrate body of his enemy, Tanil. He was a cornered rat clinging, biting to the end.

As Kyra touched him with the great beam, he screamed, a sound to haunt a man's dreams—screamed and screamed—and quite suddenly stopped. The flesh shriveled under the far power of the beam, shriveled tightly about his bones, and under our eyes his body turned swiftly to mummy-like appearance, dried up, fell like a sack of dried sticks, his mouth still working feebly—and then turned slowly to powder before our eyes.

Those were terrible rays that the ancients manufactured and hid within the intricacies of their machines that only the wiser initiates might know where weapons lay.

The index finger of Kyra's finger was gone I noted as she shut off the power of the death ray. I realized she had not hesitated at all to sacrifice her hand for Tanil's sake. I leaped forward now to where Tanil lay, still under the silver death beam, where Nuēces' death had left it full upon her.

I tugged her body from under the beam with one swift motion. The deadly moon-whiteness lay in a round circle of vicious emanations as I carried her to a huge couch at the side of the room.

Tanil looked piteously up at me, and that was the hardest thing I ever went through, to look into her confident eyes, once receptacle of endless unknown secrets, now stricken and begging me for release from her inward agony. She gasped:

"It is too late. The hidden ones have double-crossed me sooner than I expected, though I knew they would do that one day anyway. I have been deluding myself and others. They could have protected us, Kent; they chose not to do so! You and Kyra leave here, go far away. They are not good, these hidden ones that loom over such work as ours. They have duped me into working out a system of absolute tyranny for them to fasten on your United States. I have been as much a dupe

as ever you suspected you were, Kent. Go, while you may!"

KYRA, her lovely sea-green eyes filled with streaming tears, bent over Tanil, her mouth working, her hands touching the racked face so tenderly and so pitifully.

"Yes, dearest Mistress . . . yes. The Hidden Ones hate intelligence in anyone. We thought we had found a different sort, but they were only getting us to accomplish work they did not know how to do. They have been hiding their monstrous selves from the sight of men so long they hate us all. They have not real brains left—and cannot stand any in others. I believe they are hateful creatures like Panot, in truth, their evil nature only surpassed by their immense stupidity."

I listened to this mysterious interchange astonished, for to me the only villain of the piece was Nueces Panot. But as we bent over her, a lovely, too lovely voice began to speak beside us—and there was no one here at all! It said, in false sorrow:

"Oh, dear Tanil, we are endlessly grateful for your work, which has taught us so much. Now that you die, we will carry on your efforts, attain your goals for you. Never fear, dear Tanil, your beloved *surface fools* will have tender care."

The saccharine, mocking voice ended in a hideous titter of weird and ugly triumph, and Tanil's dying face lit with a terrible hate. I would have not wanted to be the owner of that tittering horror voice and been in Tanil's power then.

I bent and whispered:

"We know, Kyra and I. We know and we love you, Tanil. Can you tell us something we can do to save you even yet. It is better you live with such enemies as that voice yet to conquer."

"Kent, you can love Kyra and take care of her, but without me our plans are finished. You can do nothing now. Go up to that City overhead and marry, and then go far away; too far ever to hear that voice again. Be happy, and just citizens. This game is not for you, except you have such as me with you. Forget it."

In a few moments she died.

About her still lovely body gathered the other workers of our cavern, some fifty people who had come and gone, done their work and been what people always are on this earth—just shadows in our unseeing eyes. Softly some of them wept, and I

knew they had been more than shadows to Tanil's eyes, and that she had been a glory in their own.

Tanil, I realized, had been a good force in a morass of horrible evil, but had not quite figured out how to overcome that evil and accomplished what she willed without hurting the innocent—had hesitated too long for that very reason.

I turned sadly to Kyra, as the two husky torpedoes came back from their hunt for Nueces.

"Kyra, shall we do what Tanil advised—go up to that city and become normal citizens. Or shall we stay and try to become what she might have succeeded in becoming?"

"Kent, I think that sweet, evil voice that mocked her death also made her tell us to leave by controlling her dying body. But there is a way to find that out. You and I will take a honeymoon to Niagara Falls, and when we return our friends here will let us back into these caverns. If they do not let us in, they will drive us away, and we will know that our ugly hidden enemies do not want us here. They will not kill us in the open in the city—as they usually seek to hide the power they have in the ancient mech rays. We will be safe enough, I think. When we return, we will not feel Tanil's death so greatly. We need time now to start over. Time to recover ourselves from this experience. Our friends here will carry on while we are gone. And one day we may yet become what Tanil planned—the saviors of mankind from the morass of war and stupidity that is their life today.

So it was that our honeymoon and the thunder of Niagara's mighty waters spelled release from sorrow and a promise of all the magic of love to us—as it has for others.

But we shall go back and wrest from those forgotten machines and those idling, superior and evil *hidden ones* the secrets of those dead forgotten sciences that built those vital and needed mechanisms—and give them to the men of the future.

"The dreams of me you had," Kyra one day explained, "were due to one kind of machine they built. As a little girl, playing in those same caverns, I watched you and loved you—and made your mind my own. It was wrong of me? They were good dreams I made, were they not?"

What would you say? The same as I, would you not?



THE MANUFACTURE OF THYROXIN



Medical Mystery Number 1 (of a series)

PHYSICIANS have recorded many cases, over a period of many years, wherein the thyroid glands have overdeveloped as the direct result of tense and anxious living conditions. Sometimes the overdevelopment has not been visible (colloid goiter condition) and sometimes the goiter does become visible. Quite often the irregularity disappears with sufficient rest, but the underlying condition has never been extensively sought and is still an enigma to medical men. The simplicity of the mechanism causing it is unbelievable, and the exact nature of it is so demonstrable that any experimental animal suffices for proving.

Acetylcholine is the substance which is the chemical connective between nerve cells, between nerve and muscle, between nerve and gland. It is a most important chemical, because without it there can be no organic synchronization. It has been shown that it is manufactured in the animal body, and also that it breaks down in the animal body.

Disregarding the other products of the breaking down acetylcholine, consider the nitrogen compound which results in the process. Trimethylamine (a simple, and supposedly non-poisonous ptomaine, employed at one time against pneumonia without any particular reason) is produced, one molecule for each of acetylcholine broken down. In it the valence of nitrogen is different from that in the original compound. Tma is partly excreted in the urine, giving rise to a part of the ammoniacal odor. However, it has functions far more important than this one.

The amount of Trimethylamine dissolved in the bloodstream aids in the regulation of the activity of the thyroid gland. As the amount of the substance in the bloodstream increases the thyroid increases its secretion of thyroxin.

Excessive nervousness and anxiety puts an extra load upon the entire body, particularly manifesting through nervous condition and glandular balance. As the effects of high-pressure living show up in people with susceptible thyroids, the bloodstream shows higher concentrations of trimethylamine (this constitutes an important portion of the non-protein nitrogen found in urine). As the trimethylamine concentration rises, lack of glandular synchronization and nerve effectiveness appears with listlessness and extreme lack of energy. This is made worse by the fact that it comes about through gradual exhaustion of the iodine content of the thyroid gland, so that chlorine (or bromine if present from sedatives) must be employed by the gland instead of iodine in the making of thyroxin. Thyroxin without enough iodine content becomes less and less effective as iodine percentage decreases. Heart disturbances show up, and as the trimethylamine level rises, the thyroid condition passes from the non-visible "colloid" goiter to apparent overdevelopment.

If a rat weighing one-half pound is fed four-tenths of a grain per day of trimethylamine hydro-

chloride for a period of three weeks to one month, the resulting overdevelopment of the exhausted thyroid can be easily seen and felt. In the case cats are used for the experiment, eight-tenths grain per day is necessary for the same period of time, or occasionally a little longer. The greater sensitivity of man to the substance makes the average dosage necessary to bring about human goiter three grains daily for an adult.

The writer's work has shown that the production of thyroxin is definitely dependent upon the destruction of acetylcholine and the liberation of trimethylamine into the plasma. Just as there are many different individual thyroid balances (as many as there are living individuals) so there are very different degrees of trimethylamine production. As the individual tires, the amount of this substance in the blood increases, and the thyroid endeavors to "increase the spark" so as to maintain activity, unless the individual relaxes completely or sleeps, so as to allow the acetylcholine-trimethylamine balance to be reestablished.

Trimethylamine is like ammonia except that each hydrogen of the ammonia molecule is replaced with a methyl group (CH_3). Since the use of ammonium chloride (corresponding to trimethylamine hydrochloride) does not cause thyroid sensitivity as the other compound does, it is demonstrable that the ptomaine and not the ready accessibility of chlorine to the gland from the compound is the responsible factor. Although the mass action of large amounts of chlorine or bromine do affect the thyroid, they do not ordinarily harm the gland in normal systemic concentrations.

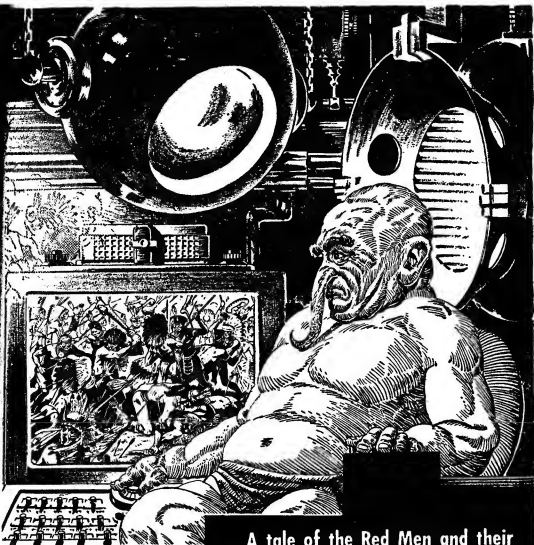
It is possible to show that the ptomaine (trimethylamine) is actually employed by the thyroid gland in the manufacture of the organic portion of thyroxin.

As low a concentration as 1 part t.m.a. in ten-thousand of water, by inducing thyroid activation, causes many animals, even the lower forms such as frogs, to enter the mating season at times of the year when they will not breed at all, ordinarily.

When the general reserves of the body, including the amount of iodine stored in the thyroid, are low, systemic condition is much more favorable to the breakdown of acetylcholine, sensitivity to stimuli is high, and the mating instinct is strongest. So nature takes advantage of the lower iodine reserve predominant at early springtime, and many creatures answer the procreative tendency. This is as true of the human being as it is of the lower animals. It is the chemical background for the statement that in the Spring a young man's fancy turns to what the young ladies have been thinking about all Winter. Some say this means new clothes, but that is only a side issue with all creatures, new plumage being favored in response to the powerful mating urge.

The question of how the thyroid tends to become exhausted during the winter months will be discussed in detail in Medical Mystery Number II.





A tale of the Red Men and their
struggle to inherit the ancient secrets of
their Red Gods in the caverns under America

The RED LEGION

Krupa + Fugate + Smith

FOREWORD:

OUT OF THE hideous mire of futility, out of the lost, near-forgotten glories of the Indian Race, comes again a striving—even into the present!

Out of vanished power and Empire, comes today the word of the Red Men: "We live on, and we know. We will again be great . . ."

Under Death Valley; under Butte, Montana; under many Western states; out of the green hell of South America; out of Yucatan; of Central America; and out of Mexico—come many reports that there are large areas of the Elder caves held by Indians. These areas the white monopoly of all antique ray people, for all their mocking and their vaunting and suppression, are unable to overcome.

There, still today, something of an ancient art and wisdom vastly different in every way from that of the white-dominated ray caverns survives—untouched by the corruption and blight of modern ray evils.

There, too, survives that savagery and worship of strange Gods characterized by the Aztec ceremony of cutting the heart out of a living victim—and offering it to their "God."

There, too, survives something best characterized by the poem of Longfellow—"Hiawatha," known to all of you. That something that lives in all men, but which many Indians still call "The Great Spirit."

There, too, survives a white and pitiful thing that once was red and courageous and strong. Other things that once were men, are no longer enough like men to be so called.

I am going to tell you a story of the struggles of the Red Men in the caverns, those who have preserved their courage and their intelligence, and their noble efforts to make of the ancient secrets a powerful tool for the rehabilitation of the Red Race.

It is a historic fact that whole tribes of Indians mysteriously vanished without trace before the advance of the white man. It is not so generally known that they disappeared, in many cases, into the fearful vastnesses of the labyrinthine mysteries of the Elder Race's former home.

The traveler in the white-dominated portions of the caverns today finds the marks

of their Indian cooking fires against the walls of polished and carved walls, the water jars and pottery, the crude wall paintings, sometimes overlaying the glorious work of the Elder Race. These things they have left all through the American caverns—and they are things left by Indians of culture completely the same as the Red Men of Revolutionary times. For many tribes of Indians of those times when they fled ever westward from civilization (as we whites call our social order) knew of the God caverns and the tremendous things they contained. But they apparently did not know how to use these things.

How much they did know of the operation and use of the terrific power of the Elder machines we cannot know, but we do know that for two centuries no "spiritualist" "sent his spirit" into the "spirit world" without an "Indian guide." That this ever-present "Indian-guide" in all spiritualist doings was the descendant of those same tribes who fled into the eternal darkness and fearful wonder of the underworld to escape the white man's massacre of the Indian is very plain to anyone who knows anything of the history and the customs of the caverns. That they did not use the weapons, but only the telaug, is easily understood when one knows of the Elder Race custom of sealing all weapons against casual search; within great vaults that are not casually found by the ignorant.

To those who know of the trickery and deceit always practised by the underworld peoples to hide the existence of their homes, this Indian guide to the "spiritualists" is very recognizable as the Indian race in the caverns hiding themselves with an easily committed lie. That they should assist white spiritualists at their "seances" seems to furnish a picture of their inability to find a practical use for their time in the mysterious world of darkness. To one who has seen what the Indian of the caverns has become from the effects of lack of sunlight and air and proper food, one can understand why the Red Men of the caves have not been a very potent force in American history.

That these "Indian guides" are a phenomena never encountered much of late years speaks volumes to one who knows of the constant warfare and the fragile

margin on which life persists in the caves.

They, the original Red Men, the original tribes who entered the darkness, must have been recently persecuted and pursued and killed until they are no longer there in any numbers.

But, one hears from the West that still the Red Men struggle for life in the western and southern states and are succeeding in holding large areas against the modern white monopolists: those same suppressors and secretives who keep the mighty wisdom of the Elder Work in the caverns from modern men of the surface.

This story is of that struggle: to give you these heretofore unwritten pages of the secret (in this case quite recent) history of our earth.

CHAPTER I

Death Speaks to the Legion

THE voice, out of the dark silence of the night, had said: "Every day one member of your Red Legion shall die."

Eonee Lane had paid no attention, for a voice in the night out of nowhere he knew could be anything. Could be his nerves, imagination, or the mischeivous and mad ones of the unseen below.

But, one by one, the men of the Red Legion about Butte, Montana—had died!

One! Every day—one more! One every day! Why?

So hard it had been, building the Legion of the Loyal Red Men. . . .

Out of the hideous mire of futility that had consumed the Red Men;

Out of the miserable remnants of his race he had welded together this striving, active, educated and aware and able force of young men, seen it grow in numbers and in skill at the secret role they must play;

Out of a defeated and complacent nothing he had built, through the years, a strong and united spirit in the sons of his race, men who knew what terrific power might yet be won by them.

Now, suddenly, the unseen and mysterious underworld forces that had helped him so long; that had caused the Red Legion to grow almost miraculously to become a strong secret power through all the west; had turned instead into a destroying blight about Montana.

Every day some Indian friend's death was reported in the Butte daily news. No one noticed these deaths, apparently, but Lane. So far as he knew no one else had heard the voices in the night mocking the Red Legion and prophesying a daily death for its members; a prophecy that came true every day!

Each death was one strong son the ancient blood who had joined the legion.

Lane bent his black head into his arms, his strong back slumped over his desk. He felt old and beaten, though he was but thirty-eight.

The sun, shining redly out of the west into his wide office window, outlined the letters: "E. Lane and J. Stevens—Attorneys."

* * *

ANOTHER, of very different appearance from surface man, but of the ancient blood that can still produce such vigorous fighters as Jim Thorpe and in the past has produced its share of Hiawathas—many, many men, now forgotten whose deeds rang then in the ears of all men on the American continent—yes, another of that fierce and ancient blood knew too of the deaths. Johnny Ahahne, his name, and he knew too, why these deaths occurred.

Johnny Ahahne, for the past few months, was reduced to bearing burdens. Before that, he had been a high-placed, somewhat lazy, member of the ruling caste of the tribe of Indians who held the caverns under Montana. They had more wealth and more power than most white men ever dream of possessing. They had, too, an ancient inability to make much use of the wealth and power—through lack of desire.

Johnny Ahahne, Indian bearer, glanced at the notice, printed in, to him, nearly unreadable English words. *Carries not Delivered on Deep Levels.* He adjusted his tump strap, straightened his lean muscular legs under the 150-pound pack of luxury items from the surface. Silently he thanked the Great Spirit, and the mighty invisible serpent who had given his brothers courage to face death rather than submit to carrying the heavy packs to the deepest lower levels. Now they were not required to travel beyond their strength. Inwardly Johnny realized that this leniency was exercised only in order to keep them alive and available.

As Johnny plodded off into the dimly-lit boring his hand slid into his loin cloth, fumbled for an instant with a folded bit of paper. His brothers on the surface must know of what had come to pass. Of the fate that had overtaken the ancient, secret and aloof strength of the Red Men of under-earth. The Red Legion had been their favorite project for the future. They must be told; those red brothers on the surface. They must be warned of what had happened down here.

Two miles from the "Express Office" Johnny looked about carefully. Then he reached with his mind's awareness for the ionizing of any watchray upon him. At last, convinced he was unobserved, he slipped the little paper out of his loin cloth and slid it into a tiny unmarked crevice in the ancient hardened rock of the wall. Silently, unthinkingly, his mind a careful blank, Johnny Ahahne plodded on his long carry into the dark.

He did not love the white European ray people. This Da Sylva woman who had taken over the Elder caverns under Butte, Montana, was a cruel creature, and her gang was worse, when possible. When the short, bloody, decisive battle was over, there was left alive but a few hundred of the red warriors. For them was designated the labor, the dirty jobs no one else wanted, and the working of the ancient mines. Johnny, as so many of his ancestors in the past, cursed his heathen curses on all white men and moved on into the ever-dark.

But the little paper did not remain in the unnoticeable slot in the hardened rock of the ancient cavern wall. An hour later another bearer paused, reached with his mind to sense the ionizing of the watch rays, looked at the age-old dust to watch the furry bristling that tattled on the electric flows of a watch ray. The bristling dust died into quiescence, it was but the wind of his slight movement. He reached into the slot, took the paper. Many days he had looked into the secret place, found nothing. Today there was a message. He knew it was for the red brothers on the surface—those who knew.

By such stages the paper finally reached the surface. In the overalls of a red-skinned cowhand the paper traveled toward Butte.

* * *

IN Butte, Lane's partner, Jack Stevens, parked his Buick coupe near the long-

limbed animal from the Ranch of the Elder Twin. Stevens stood by his car absently filling his pipe, his tall, spare, wide shouldered figure well dressed in dark gray, well-pressed worsted. His aquiline, high cheek-boned face was expressionless. Only the glitter of his heavy-lidded black eyes betrayed his intent awareness. Only the Indians who belonged to the Red Legion knew that the Ranch of the Elder Twin was built over an ancient Entrance to the Elder World; a world that only the Indians of this part of the west knew existed. Only a few of the Indians knew that the Elder Twin was a living God who inhabited the deeper caverns of the Elder World. Only a very few of them fully realized the tremendous nature of the secret covered by that low-built ranch house.

Stevens stood still a long time, eyeing that rangy bay horse from the ranch. Johnny Ahahne's voice had told him in the night there would be a message—written—that he could depend on; that would be no fake by some imp of the dark.

The cowhand came out of the store, swung into the saddle, moved down the wide street. Stevens bent, picked up the paper. The Red Legion had contacted the unseen.

SHORTLY Stevens entered the office that bore his and Lane's names on the window.

Lane looked up at his partner, but did not move from his slumped, discouraged position at the big desk. Stevens tossed the still-folded paper in front of Lane.

Lane's dark eyes quickened. He picked up the paper, unfolded it jerkily. On it was a series of pictographs, readable only to a few Indians; or to a student who knew the lesser languages of the Indians. They are few.

As Lane pored over the message, two men came into the office. They were cowhands of Indian blood from another ranch near Butte, the Barred Y. Lane passed the message to one of these men, sat watching his face as he deciphered the near-forgotten symbols. One by one more and more men filed into the office. Lane knew by the man's face that he was not wrong, that the message meant exactly what he had read it to mean. There was no mistake. The Red Legion was doomed if it stayed here.

The Brotherhood of the Unseen had

given the sign.

THERE were now some thirty dark, hawk-faced young men gathered in the big office room. Ten of them took seats about a broad oak table. The rest stood in the rear, in the shadows, watching stolidly with emotionless eyes—they were all Indian today. That Stevens and Lane were names taken to avoid white prejudice against the Indian origin of the men only themselves knew, for no one else cared. There were many of Indian blood. Lane took the chair at the head of the table. But he did not sit in it. He stood, face upraised, hands outstretched, both hands with palms upward, fingers extended. Solemnly he intoned,

"Eemeeshee, our great Breath-Master, twin brother of the Wolf of the Skys, we beg your guidance and your blessing upon us. Each day for one month, one of us has died. The voices have told us that this will continue until all who know the Elder Secret are dead. Will you, we implore you, ancient one, come from your dreams and aid us?"

Into the stodgy law-office stole an awesome breath out of Time, a breath from the far past of the glories of the Red Race. And into each dark expressionless face of the Indians gathered there came a brightening; a hope. Their ancient God lived. He had answered. He had not answered: their prayers since their fathers were young men. All had felt his mighty breath stirring primevally in the dusty law office.

* * *

MANY hundreds of miles away, and many miles underground—a living being turned slowly from his vast crystalline instrument panel. It was good to hear his name "Eemeeshee" again upon the lips of men. Once, long ago, the red men had plagued him nigh to death with their prayers; he had shut off the listening electric ears of the huge machine that brought to him the thoughts of men up in the sunlight. Time had slipped by in the strange dream life he led. He had turned on the great magic ear again, and had heard but one voice questing him from among the many thought voices intermingling, the voice of Eonee Lane of Butte, Montana. Delicately he had sought with the directive dial needles for the source of that thought, and had almost brought the scene in the law office into his screens. But it

was too far; he had given up after a time. Eemeeshee was not industrious.

Mayhap you have seen ancient Indian drawings of their gods floating in the air over the heads of their rulers. Horrible appearing things, with foot-long noses and wide ears like an elephant, gross bodies and peculiar looking limbs. Those artists were not liars, for . . .

Eemeeshee's nose *was* over a foot long. The end of his nose turned up in a sickle from the weird growth that had distorted him—due to the peculiar rays of the ancient machine in which he lived. Eemeeshee's head was vast and horrible too, and his body was a mass of flesh too vast to worry about any more and Eemeeshee hardly thought of his appearance. It was not important. Few things were important to Eemeeshee.

The growth rays of the machine in which he sat, and which had kept him alive through the slow drag of the centuries while he dreamed away his too numerous lifetimes, had made him grow unaccountably in some ways—in others not at all. His face was seamed and lined, yet the flesh was soft and pink as a baby's flesh. He belonged to a race unknown to surface man!

Long ago, his ancestors had found that certain machines of the God caverns, if one remained within them, kept one alive century after century. And the living in them was very pleasant, too.

The magic of the Gods who had built them gave to one endless dreams at the touch of a button. Endless dreams of love, of Goddess-like women, of glory and war and conquest. In fact, one had only to think when one had punched the dream button, and whatever one wished became a reality in a dream more vivid than ever was reality.

That family had few children. The dream life does not make for that. But some they did have, and servants by the score. So that wherever one of the great living machines was to be found, there was found one of the strange and ancient dwellers within. The men of the surface once worshipped these invisible listening ears, for they might be persuaded to do great magic for one, if one asked them correctly—and frequently.

SOFTLY Eemeeshee turned from the listening place, his heavy breathing sough-

ing in the augmentive apparatus like a great wind. If he had had the rays turned upward, he would have been heard like a great spirit of the winds, breathing in the skies, and that was why he was called the Breath-Master, because he did not shut off the intake of the augmentor, and was always heard breathing. Perhaps he did not know it could be shut off. He turned on the searching eye rays, looked about up on the slowly darkening surface in the evening calm. All was different up there than it had once been, long ago when he had watched the red men fight their wars. Their war-whoops had once been given in conflict even down in the cavern world. Long centuries had Eemeeshee sat, and his father had sat there before him. Eemeeshee did not know if he was a God or not, but he supposed it must be so; had not men worshipped the Eemeeshees for an age?

Eemeeshee wondered a bit where all the Indians had gone, and who these pale people with their ugly machinery and railroads and square houses might be who had taken over all the land above of late. He had not paid much attention to the upper world for a long time. Time didn't matter much anyway. Old Eemeeshee did not care greatly about the actual world. To him it was like an unwanted program on the television; too commercial to listen to: like the radio in the house of a person who does not approve of the commercially raucous sounds it emits. Eemeeshee seldom looked at the upper world. He only half believed in it, anyway. Dreams were much more real, and far more beautiful. The dream world into which his dream device plunged him was vastly more satisfying. Was it not more vivid, more full of sweet sound and pleasant sensation and mightier people and vastly stronger love? Eemeeshee was not in love with the world of the actual above his head.

Eemeeshee seldom talked to mere men. There were too many interesting characters in the library of wire film which furnished his dream mech with material. Too, the dream mech made these people real and when one asked them questions or talked to them, they answered. They were vastly more pleasing than mere people of the world over head. Certainly the dream world was one to live in; it rewarded him for every effort with an infinitude of pleasures.

There were few living men who really

knew if Eemeeshee was a reality or a legend from the past. One of these was the chief of his servants. He kept the things of the world from interfering with Eemeeshee's pleasures. There was Saba, the keeper of his women. Like all the great of the cavern world, Eemeeshee was well supplied with women, but he did not bother them greatly. They lived altogether in the women's quarters. Under Saba's clever rule they kept busy and to themselves. They were not important, and to Eemeeshee, Saba was like a daughter; a daughter whom he protected from the ugly world of reality. It was better not to know how worthless it was.

In truth, he badly neglected the lives of the people around him, who waited on him hand and foot and even loved him a little. But, then, Eemeeshee was only a forgotten legend, and their lives only a reflection of the glories that had been the life of the caverns when the Red Man was a power on the earth above and had sent always young blood down into the ancient darkness to keep things alive and pulsing.

There was still a lot of life in Eemeeshee's great body. But it was a life that was not greatly interested in itself or in anyone else, either. Eemeeshee was a victim of the greatest vice on earth, the record-mech dreams of the Gods, and his practical knowledge of life and his machines or anything important to an ordinary man was in truth elementary—extremely so.

CHAPTER II

The Red Men Meet

FAR off from that hidden, forgotten place where the old one cogitated the vast mysteries of an existence he had never bothered to understand, the meeting of the Red Legion in the Law Offices of Eonce Lane and Jack Stevens began.

Stevens sat down, and Lane continued standing. In his hand was the paper Stevens had given him. He began to talk—low-pitched college English.

"A thing we have long suspected has been confirmed. The rule in the hidden places under Montana is no longer in the hands of the Red Men. A swift surprise attack gave the power into the hands of foreign white conspirators. They have deluded us into thinking no change took place.

Lane handed the paper to the man seated

next. The man looked at the paper a long time. It was not easy for him to decipher the Indian pictographs. Finally he nodded, passed the paper on to the next. The paper made the circuit of the room, returned to Stevens.

"For you fellows who can't read the ancient writing of our fathers—the pictograph come from one John Ahahne. Once he was a high-placed warrior of the tribe in power below. Now he is reduced to bearing burdens on his back for the white interlopers. The Indian has lost another great battle with the white man. These European ray people who have again begun the ancient battle against the red man, have wiped out the friendly white ray of the east—and have now turned their attention to the portions held from ancient times by red men."

Stevens stopped, stared moodily at the long table top. Lane's cultured voice went on where Stevens had stopped.

"To the red men of the surface, who are few enough and poor enough as it is—who have been taken into the ancient secret only because we are few and because our red skins created a bond of sympathy with the red skins of the underworld—this means that to prosper in the future we must remove ourselves from this area to another where the red man still holds the secret caverns against the new threat."

As Lane ceased, one Ace Kitka spoke:

"There have been many deaths of red men whom I know, of late. I have heard voices threatening me with death, saying that each day one Indian dies until there are no more of us in all this area. I have watched the papers, wondered whether the voice in the night spoke true. It did speak true; the red men are being killed by invisible rays. The deaths are usually heart failure, according to the doctors' death certificates. I have decided to leave Montana far behind myself. If you know what is good for you, you will all go from here."

"Several of my intimate friends have died lately," agreed Lane. "They died apparently naturally: one run over by a truck, one of pneumonia, one of a brain hemorrhage. To us who know the power of the ancient machines, we know that these deaths are not accidents—when they are accompanied by threats from the voices. I, too, have heard the voice."

A deep voice from the back of the crowd made itself heard.

"John Ahahne, a voice I have known for many years, always speaks truth. If he has given us warning that this is not a place for red men, it is true. Ill luck will dog us from the enmity of these spiteful newcomers below. They are no longer our friends; our friends are dead. They are masquerading as our friends while they bring about our destruction. You know that almost always the men of the caverns kill those who know the ancient secret of their dwelling place. If these new conquering ray practice that ancient custom of guarding the secret of the rays, we have no choice but to flee—and far."

A CHORUS of voices began to struggle to be heard—agreeing, telling of ill luck and deaths of friends and relatives. Stevens raised a hand.

"That is enough. I see it is true. We have been blind to think the ray people below are still friendly as of old. Let us leave this country, together, all of us, and find a country where the underworld still contains men friendly to us, or some of the ancient ones to protect us."

One Lee Johnson thrust his lean over-alled body to the fore of the room.

"The main idea is to go where things are good. Maybe the ray won't talk to us other places, but they may leave us alone. They may even help us get started again."

A FUNERAL caravan of motor cars left Butte the next morning. In the long line of cars were some fifty men, their wives and families. Others were leaving singly for locations of their own choosing. Their belongings were lashed to the sides and tops of the cars. In the hearse was the latest of the dead of the Red Legion. He had died in the night of a "hemorrhage, cause unknown." The white men watched the funeral caravan uncomprehendingly.

"Looks like our Indians are turning gypsy, or something. Funny they'd take all that stuff on a funeral trip. Wonder what the police have to say about it?"

"Guess they got a right to leave if they want to. It's when they decide to stop their troubles will begin. There are a lot of Indian laws that Lane and Stevens know plenty about and they are in that line. Must know what they're doing with these two along. They got a hearse in the line. May be a smart trick to avoid

bother with the law, eh?"

"Yeh, it's funny so many Indians would get ready for a long trip thataway. They could be taking a dead one to some special place to bury him, I guess."

"Been a lot of Indians dying lately. Nearly every day I read something about a dead Indian. Maybe they're wiser than we think."

"Could be, could be . . ."

"Indians around Butte here have always had a reputation for knowing what's coming next. There's always been something mysterious about it. Never could figure it out. Maybe that is more than a funeral and maybe it ain't. We'll never know. I'll bet a dime we never see those Indians again, though."

Similar conversations could have been heard along the highway leading out of Butte. But nobody thought of asking the Indians what it was all about.

That night, as the long caravan made camp, they dug a grave for Ace Kitka. His weeping wife and two papooses; the solemn faces of the men of the caravans; the grim knowing that the road into the dark deathland gaped for all of them in this land of the white man just as it had for their ancestors was a terrible thing. To know that every day one of them must die . . . Why? The aching hearts asked and asked the bewildered minds and there was no answer. Just the unseen threat, the knowing that it was the ancient secret, killing again as it always had in the past. Killing, killing . . . Why must the secret always be the reason for death instead of the key to greatness for all men as it should be? Their eyes raised to the darkening sky for a sign from the great father, for the "breath" of the "master," for some hope from the beneficence of the unseen. But only the grim knowledge that every day one of them must die answered them. Their ancient Gods gave no other sign that night.

Each night, as they drove slowly southward, one grave was dug, one strong young brave, dead, was placed in the earth. Their prayer implored Eemeeshee to speak again as he had when the exodus was decided upon, but Eemeeshee did not answer. Hampered by the number of aged, wornout cars, the children, the old women, they drove slowly, keeping together for mutual aid when needed.

CHAPTER III

A New Home

WHEN they reached that part of the great American desert where the Humboldt sinks into the sands—that day they had no grave to dig! Gravely Lane looked at Stevens.

"Here in this desert must be our home. Here something keeps the curse of the daily death from us. Under our feet within the ancient rock some power for good still lives on. If we pass on, the deaths will begin again. For the evil ray people are single-minded; once set upon a course such as our deaths they don't stop until we are all dead. You know that. Upon the other side of this invisible influence, they will follow and kill us again."

"You may be right. It is hard to understand. They are not like men; the people of the underworld. They are not civilized like ourselves. It is hard to understand their slaying and cruelty, their dogged persistence in such cursing of surface men with death. But we know it is so."

A leaning sign post pointed off along a little used desert trail. "YUKA" said the sign, noncommittally. But there were scribbled Indian writings under the word, writings that only an Indian could read.

The forty cars that were left of the fifty that had started turned off the concrete into the dusty road. The wind blew hotly, lonesomely, across the wide, yellow waste. Mournfully the stolid faces looked at each other, knowing how the other's heart was hurting at this turning to the desert from their loved homes.

They had sold the cars that had broken down, and those of their dead they did not need and put the money into the common pool. Lane knew their only hope was to face their troubles with complete unity.

THAT night they sat within the lodge of Secumne in his desert fastness. There were now but twenty-five young men, and some dozen aged men. Some of them were veterans, but they knew better than to go to the military with their tale. For all of them knew no white man understood the ancient secret—not to openly admit it anyway. They thought all white men cowards never to discuss the ancient secret. (But in truth white men

have been carefully taught that "voices are insanity"; never to believe such silly tales. And that is hard to understand when one has been raised to respect and fear the ancient underworld.) The women and children were not admitted to the council.

Yuka had once been quite a large mining camp. Then it had been called Crockett, after the famous Indian fighter. After its brief hey-day it had been a ghost town for a long time. Now it was "Yuka," a new name for its score of falling down frame shacks.

Secumne had taken the biggest shack. It had once been a bar-room. Now it was hung with Indian blankets, an open fire burned, weapons hung on the walls and the pelts of game. Secumne sat on a chair draped with a sheep pelt across the back.

A dozen leading men of the tribe squatted behind Secumne. Old wrinkled ones, younger eagle-eyed sturdy ones. Stevens and Lane squatted directly in front of the old chief. Behind, filling the shack, squatted or stood the twenty-five young men who survived.

Stevens smoked the long pipe, passed it to Lane. When the pipe had finally returned to Secumne, he took it in one thin hand, puffed it contentedly. There was plenty of time.

Lane handed Secumne the little paper on which John Ahahne had scribbled the pictograph message. The old man looked at it briefly, frowned, nodded, returned it. To make sure Secumne understood, Lane interpreted the message at length.

"The message is what started us away from Butte. Chance has brought us to you. Can you help us; tell us of your knowledge of the secret. What we must know to find a place that is safe for us? Your trail signs told us you would aid men of the Red Legion."

The old man looked very stupid. He looked at them a long time. Finally the wrinkled, toothless old mouth began to talk.

"What you should know takes much telling. Not many you could find would have any information for your company. The Gods have brought you to me." The old man spoke good English. He must have been in an Indian school, long ago when young.

The company of men from Butte waited.

To an outsider they looked like deeply tanned white men, in white men's clothes. But inside those clothes and that lean, rangy flesh, inside those tall silent young Americans burned the ancient fire that made the red man the feared warrior that he was. On those faces that savage courage and hardihood of the Indian sat, at home. They waited. The old one would take his time. The voice finally went on.

"You have prayed to Eemeeshee, the Breath-Master. He has answered you. I know that is true, for you have told me, and I can see you are not all liars. It has not happened for many years that Eemeeshee talked with his children. It seems that the ancient one has awakened, then. So I have much to tell you. If it had not been that you told me of your invocation to Eemeeshee—I would have little to say to you. But that is good, that Eemeeshee still answers his chosen. Now I must tell you what Eemeeshee is, and you must listen and understand me and believe. Even these who have known me many years, my own people, many of them would not believe what I am going to say. But if you wish to save yourselves from the fate that has dogged you here, you must believe me."

The old man stopped, looked at them, sounding them for unbelief, for scorn of his words. Finding only an attention and respect in their faces, he went on.

"You see, Eemeeshee is a man. He is many hundred years old. His father was still older when he died. I have been to Eemeeshee's lodge, deep under earth. I have seen him."

"YOU have seen our ancient God?" Lane rose to his feet, excitement not letting him sit still.

"He exists in truth? Then all our fathers' teachings are not lies, as the white men tell us?"

"The white men are overwise sometimes. They 'know everything' because some teacher who 'knows everything' told them so, because they read a book that told them what was true and what was false. They believe they know many things they do not know. The white men are sometimes very foolish in their wisdom. Eemeeshee is not what they think. But he is not what the Red Man thinks, either. He is not a spirit! He is very

different from anything you can imagine."

"How, different?" Stevens had leaned forward, watching Secumne's old face for every change of expression. It was important that they be not misled by any old dodderer. Their future depended on what they did next. Perhaps on what the old man might tell them depended the continuation or cessation of the daily deaths among their company. Perhaps the whole fate of the Red Legion, of thousands of Indians spread over half the continent—the whole Red Legion—depended on this old man's words. Stevens, too, knew there was a mighty thing to learn about such manifestations. This old one had *seen* him. That was important.

The old man went on.

"He is different from men, but yet only a man. In some ways he is perhaps much less than a man."

About the old chief some forty intent faces pressed closer, anxious not to miss one quavering word. Truth was in the old man's face, and he knew facts that few other living men knew about the great mystery of life: the Gods that men have worshipped and believed in always.

"Where he is, under earth, you have never seen. It is a world vastly different from our own world of sunshine and natural plant growth. Only many years of experience can give a man understanding of why things are as they are there. So much I will tell you will have to be taken as truth though it may not seem truth.

"Long, long ago—when there were no white men in all the American continent—the red men of the very far past found the ancient caverns of an Elder race. There in the caverns whole tribes lived and died and fought—and learned a magic never known by surface people. The Indian medicine man of those days was one who had gone to those underworld red men and learned magic—and returned to his people to teach. They learned there how to work for the unseen red men—and the remnants of their teachings, surviving in your ignorant modern minds, have brought you to this pass; have somehow brought you to me. I am the last of that kind of medicine man. There are no others that I know of. I am older than you think. For I lived a long time underground. And when I came out I found my friends had aged much more than myself. The custom of

those days—of red men underground helping and teaching surface red men—has survived, even though so much time and disaster and miles of rock lie between the brothers. To you Eemeeshee is a god, only a legendary figure of the dark and ignorant past. If he is in existence, you think he is mysterious, powerful, unknowable; a kind of super ghost."

The old man paused, smiled condescendingly as upon foolish children. His smile was very sweet, he was an old, a good man, it said. One whom time had taught that only goodness and kindness are wisdom. His voice went on, a kind of mildly savage chant in the half-dark.

"But to me, who have seen him, talked to the ancient one, lived with him and served him, he is a timid thing, a misunderstood character, a vast mountain of useless and undying flesh."

The faces of the grim young men who had fled mysterious death that cut them down day by day—drew back at these words, puzzled, disappointed. They knew not what to say. Their breath sounded like a sigh in unison as the tension let up. But old Secumne went on, unnoticed, his eyes musing on things they could not know.

"EEMEESHEE is timid, as a long-necked clam is timid, as a prairie dog is timid, as a turtle is timid.

"Eemeeshee has a shell. He pokes out his head. If everything is not the way the mind of him would like it, he pulls his head in, and a year goes by before he looks again. The last time—half a century went by, so I have heard. But it was not that long. I am not that old. And I know him. Perhaps he has poked his head out every year.

"Eemeeshee's forefathers have lived in such shells until it is as necessary physically to him as is the actual turtle's shell. Eemeeshee never comes out of his shell. His people have lived in such machines always. Eemeeshee belongs to a very ancient family who have always lived as he is doing. It is his way—and that way is not as we know men's ways. To us, Eemeeshee is not a man. He can not live without his shell, that is a machine."

Lane stirred, rose from his haunches.

"That is very strange talk, Secumne. To some, what you say would not make sense. But we know something of what

you speak. We know a few facts about the underworld. We would know more of this 'shell' of Eemeeshee's. Has Eemeeshee power? Can we go to him, as you have gone in the past? Will he teach us, help us to fight for the Red Legion? Will he show us how to work for the rights of the red men to life and a place to live? Will he help to make us strong again? These are the things we would know."

"I would tell you all these things. But it takes time, and words are very poor things with which to speak of things that the makers of the words did not know. It would be better if I took you straight to Eemeeshee myself. Then you would learn the answers to your questions and know the answers were true. I would not encourage you too much. But you are modern men. Things about Eemeeshee and his shell and about the wonders of the underworld may provide your minds with tools that to me would be useless. I am not a modern."

"You will take us to him, then?"

"Yes, my friends, I understand what you want. If it is not there where Eemeeshee still lives within his shell—it is nowhere!"

For a long time the group sat, staring into the flickering embers, waiting for the old man to talk. Now and then he would go on, then lapse into silence again.

"Eemeeshee has sat within a weird machine which he nor his fathers ever understood—and has not moved. The machine has fed him, protected him from all harm. It is that kind of machine. And all that time he has sat in possession of that fearful power which he has only occasionally used, according to legend. All that time the red men of earth were driven across the continent, have nearly vanished from earth. And Eemeeshee sat on, lazily paying no attention while his worshipping people died and vanished. He does not really think! But when we pray, sometimes Eemeeshee's (the machine's) long ears are out, and he hears the prayers of his red children. It is like the white man's radio; it hears across vast distances. But it hears only thoughts. And he cocks up these ears, sometimes, and then when he understands, he answers. Not because he wants to, understand. But because the mechanism of the machine makes the heard thought so strong that his own weak thought must obey. So we answer our-

selves when we know how by making Eemeeshee hear us. Then, if it makes him work for five minutes, he is tired. He shuts off the machine; he is through. He may not turn the power into the magic ears for days, months or years. For he is not a thinker, this 'God' of ours. Those mighty things he could have done for the red men, he has not done, for he had no wish to do anything."

"WHY is he like that?" Lane's eyes were filled with the mysterious meaning of the old man's words, for Lane knew enough to know it could be so, exactly as Secumne said!

"Because Eemeeshee is a dreamer. A maker of his own dreams, and a dreamer of other's dreams, too. That machine in which he has lived so long no man knows when he entered—that machine can make dreams for the worm within it. It can also make those dreams one thinks one would like to dream—make them into vivid intricate and perfect patterns of life. Eemeeshee cannot read or write, has no knowledge of life. He has never worked, never moved a muscle except to please himself with the intricate pleasures of the living machine. He is not a man. He is a feeble creature of pleasure—a great bag of almost immortal flesh that lacks all interest in life as we live it. We are just the overhead scenery with him, which he can look at or not—as he pleases."

Stevens gave a long whistle.

"That is a revelation, Secumne. These new white ray from Europe who have conquered the cavern under Butte—are they like Eemeeshee? The white ray people of the east who have left the Indians in possession of their own caverns in the west—were they like Eemeeshee before they died at the European hands?"

"I cannot say these things for certain that you ask, O Son of Courage. I can say what I have heard whispered by the voices in the night. But you know how the voices lie to us; pretend to be spirits; pretend that everything they know is a secret and that only lies can be told us of the surface. You know how mad the voices are. Yet there are voices that are not mad—that are like your John Ahahne—good and smart men of the underearth."

"Go on. What have the voices said?"

"The voices sometimes say that this white newcomer ray people who have con-

CHAPTER IV

The Finding of Eemeeshee

quered the red man's last caverns are not from Europe, but from space; from another world where things are very different. That they killed all the old friends of the people on Earth's surface; all the long lived beings like Eemeeshee within their life-machines; and that now surface man has no real friends any more under the rocks of earth. Only corsairs from space, who seek only to keep men ignorant and weak. But I do not believe it, for the voices seem so often to be like European voices: men who have learned English well, but are yet Europeans; Continentals. But all the voices agree that the leaders of these rays, everywhere, are too often mad. The people who have the control rays are mad, do not think at all of anything but their own pleasure, can not even think effectively of precautions for their own safety."

"There are many such as Eemeeshee left, do you think?"

"No, my friend. I think that even Eemeeshee is alive only by accident. I think that most of his kind, his feeble, peculiar race of men-within-a-machine-shell has been nearly killed off by the newcomers in the caverns."

"These newcomers could well be from the surface, who have introduced modern gangster methods into the strange cavern world."*

"No, the reports of them are too peculiar. They contend they do not think as men. Or do not think at all. Just pleasure and cruelty."

"Lazy, like Eemeeshee, but in a different way, eh?"

"That is right. Now, if you don't mind—since we are starting in the morning for the place I spoke of, and I am an old man—I must go to bed. All your questions will be much better answered by the actuality than by my words. Once down there you will learn these things."

"I suppose you are right. I would rather see this immortal Eemeeshee than to hear about him—if he is as harmless as you say."

"He is not exactly harmless. But he has no will to slay anyone in particular; no reason to harm you. Eemeeshee can fight quite well or he would not be alive."

"Well however it may be—goodnight."

*It is a peculiarity of the caves that there is a weird mixture of ancient and modern. Imitation of ancient dress is amazingly authentic.—Ed.

ALL the next day six cars drove across the desert. There was little or no visible trail but they were following an ancient forgotten road, and the cars found it not too difficult. Old Secumne, toward the close of the day, indicated a stopping place. The cars drew up in a line, facing the wall of a canyon. There was no particular reason for stopping that Lane could see.

Darkness was on them when the evening meal was finished. Secumne rose from the fire, walked to the canyon wall. From his blanket roll he had taken a little flute. Now he blew three notes upon the flute. A high one, a low one, and one soft in between in pitch.

A vast muffled rumble answered from within the wall of rough rock. Slowly a great section tipped, swiveling slowly outward, pivoting on its center. Exposed on both sides of the balanced section of rock was a tunnel, wide enough, big enough for four motor cars abreast. Two cars could have driven in on each side of the pivoted rock. The tunnel led down as far as their lights reached. Lane stood, overcome by the magnitude of this proof of the old Indian's words. Hearing of such things was one thing, seeing them quite another.

"Who built such a thing?"

"It is the work of the ancient ones who built all through the under-rock of earth. No one knows words to describe or name them today. But presently I will show you wall pictures of their tremendous beauty and strength. They were giant men. There are few such doors left any more. This one has been protected from erosion by circumstances. Too, in times not too long past, our own forefathers, the red men who served such as Eemeeshee, chipped away the stone, kept the door open, protected and cared for it. Unless such care goes on the door will be lost forever. Such has happened to many doors into the underworld. One by one they disappear forever. But of late years, the voices tell me there are many new openings being made."

"It doesn't seem possible that time would leave such a thing intact to operate."

"Men have spent much time and labor upon it. See how earthen bulwarks have

been built to keep the water from flowing here. How the rocks that might fall and block it have been cleared away above. Once there were many hands to serve the fathers of Eemeeshee, and Eemeeshee, if he had had the mind to use them. But such as he have little mind to use people."

Old Secumne's voice was filled with a strange weariness, as though the contemplation of the facts about such creatures as the Indian God Eemeeshee was very painful to him.

As the cars trundled into the smooth roadway, picked up speed, Lane asked Secumne:

"How is it that Eemeeshee has survived the death you think has caught up with his like in other places?"

"He is not easy to kill. Too, he is not feared, for he is peculiar, timid. They are used to having such as him about. It is not wise to try to kill such as the old one without necessity. They sometimes know mighty things, which they do not use until someone arouses them from their dreams."

"Finding that the legendary Gods have had a real existence, and that something that was once worshipped as a God still lives on when all belief in such existence has disappeared, is a disappointment. I suppose all Gods everywhere in the centuries past have been just such creatures."

"They have not all been like Eemeeshee, no! But many have. Others, I learned long ago, do not exist, but are imitated by people in the caverns for no reason but custom and mischievousness. But to tell men anything about such subjects I have always found nearly impossible. It is good to find that the Red Legion itself is not a legend, but a reality. It is good to know that the Legion has many members, knows enough to realize that the old tales had a truth about them, a mighty truth."

THE cars wound down and down. Driving was no task, the road was broad, straight and level except for a gradual and hardly noticeable curve, and level as new laid concrete. Here and there slight shifts of the rock strata had raised bumps, sudden steps, where a drop or a raise had taken place, but usually these were easily negotiable as the unevenness had been filled at some time in the past with rubble.

As the way led deeper and deeper into the earth, these shiftings of the rock grew

less and less. At last they disappeared altogether.

"How far to the old one?" Stevens leaned toward Secumne, sitting in the back seat with Lane. His dark, aquiline face was intent, curious.

"Couple hours yet. Can't drive fast, can't tell. Maybe rock fall, maybe barricades put up since. Haven't been here for twenty years now."

Lane spoke to Stevens.

"Just what do we expect to get out of him, anyway. Hadn't we better discuss what we are going to say to him, and then let Secumne do the talking? He knows the ancient rigamaroles by which such beings are propitiated. It isn't as if we were going to discuss a point of law with a judge on the bench, you know. We don't really have much idea what we're trying to do."

Stevens looked at Secumne.

"When we get there, you try and arouse some feeling in the old one for the red man and his struggle to remain—to grow great again in his own way. Tell how the white man has displaced us while our guardian, Eemeeshee has dreamed away the life that should have been devoted to preserving the Indian and his way of life, his racial culture and attainments. Tell him that now is his last chance to be what his children have always thought him to be. Try and arouse some spark in his heedless heart. Then, if you see life in his brain and a regard for the red man, tell him we belong to a legion—the last organized red men on the continent. That we will bring members of the legion here to learn from him the way of the Elder Gods. That he must only teach. That if there is fighting to be done, we will do it for him. There is no need for him to disturb his peace or come out of his dreams. After he has taught one of us we will guard him and serve him while we teach the others ourselves. Understand?"

"I catch. I'll tell him what he should have been told a hundred years ago—a hundred and fifty—or what his father should have known three hundred years ago."

The cars were now passing the gray dust-shrouded shapes of the wonder work of the Elder race, but old Secumne gave no sign of calling a halt. Steven's eyes darted right and left, watching the dust-covered mystery that was the machinery of a

science now lost from earth. A tremendous emotion was aroused in him as he realized what there was here for his people that had been denied them by the ignorance of such as Eemeeshee, and of such as Secumne. He turned to the old man.

"Why have you never brought any of the educated young men of your tribe here? Why have you hidden this knowledge of yours for your people?"

"When I was younger," answered the old man sadly, "I tried to do those things you have in mind. The young men laughed at me! I tried very hard, brought some men here to show them. All went well till they saw the body and terrible appearance of Eemeeshee. Then they laughed, or swore, or fled. They could not think right of the ancient one and he grew angry, slew some, chased the others away. They had not the vision or courage. I have waited all my life for seekers such as you. Now you have come. I warn you, Eemeeshee knows your thought. Try and think correctly, or your efforts will end in failure. Eemeeshee is not such a man as you and I. His heredity is very different."

"You mean to say you brought educated young Indians here and they took no advantage of what there is here to be learned—to be used for our race? Explain!"

"Some few of them did learn what it all meant. They tried to lead others, to teach as you plan. But they failed to convince others, became at last discouraged and bitter as I have become. Men are very foolish. They cannot believe in anything that is greater than their school books. Sometimes I think it were better had they never gone to school! It closed their minds to all greater truths. They have refused me.

"They have refused the wisdom of the underworld and of the past because their teachers did not tell them of it in their school books. So they knew it could not be. I got tired of being laughed at. I took my women and my children and moved here to this place where you have found me. I am very tired of life."

Stevens nodded grimly.

"I think we may find a remedy for your difficulties. Some men told me of you when I was quite young. They did not laugh. You have been laughed at in public; but those who did not laugh have believed you without talking about it very much. Now we have it again: a door to the ancient secret. We knew this thing was true, but

the entrances were closed to us. We did not know how to lay our hands on the ancient mech. We did not know an open entrance.

THE tall, white figure in the roadway waved them to a halt. He was white as a fish's belly, but his features were purest Indian, with a great hawk nose, wide nostrils, high cheekbones—and a lean, starved, greyhound body. His limbs were bone thin under the long white ceremonial robe. He was very old, but somehow vigorous. His words were purest Quemaya, and only Secumne understood the almost extinct tongue well.

"Welcome to the ancient realm of the Breath-Master. It has been long since pilgrims have found their way to their God. Give me your names that I may acquaint the mighty one with your presence and learn if he will grant you sight of his glory."

Secumne answered gravely in the same tongue.

"We are Pilgrims come bearing news and asking for the aid of the great one. We have much to give, and we may receive much. Our news is for the ears of the great one only. He may remember my name: I was a servant here in the days, long ago, of my youth. I am Secumne. He may also know the names of these two, for they know that Eemeeshee is a real being. They are Jack Stevens and Eonee Lane. They represent a great legion of red men, the last of our once mighty race who still preserve courage to plan for the future of the Indian. It will be a mighty pleasure to Eemeeshee to know that his red sons still need him, still want his leadership and his wisdom. Tell the Breath-Master that if our fathers had sought and found the way to his home that we would not now need his help. For he would not have turned his face away from his red sons. Tell him, too, we bring him news of danger to his life from other beings who have come to the caverns of the Gods of the past. They will kill him, if he does not know they come, does not cease his mighty dreaming and look at the world at his feet."

The tall, white-robed, skeleton-thin Indian turned and walked away through a vast doorway in the boring that was the road. The eight men got out of the cars; built a fire; began to prepare a meal: Little was said. There was too much to say for words to do their duty.

Lane sat by the fire, waiting for the women to complete the cooking. He heard a faint scuffling behind. He turned slowly, and a cold fear of the unknown struck into him.

Gazing at him not three feet away was a face. A face belonging to a great white spider! Twenty feet those thin white limbs extended, that little round body poised upon the fragility, looking at him with a human face. The huge black eyes, hanging long hair, the straggly pale beard of ivory yellow, the body which was like a man's if a man had been stretched magically across a twenty-foot span and left to live on that way. Lane could only stare and lick his dry lips. He could not speak.

The long, so much too long, thin arm reached out, touched Lane's cheek cautiously, almost caressingly. The fingers, three times a normal man's finger length and three times a man's fingers in thinness, in fragility, felt slowly, carefully over his face, touched his hair, his shirt, his hand. Satisfied, the towering, thin height eased slowly to a squatting position.

Then, the great round eyes watching Lane, the long arm reached out fifteen feet away, dipped quickly into the cooking pot, snared a bit of boiled meat out of the hot liquid, burned its fingers. The mouth opened to a round pink O, then let out a shrill yip like a hurt puppy.

The incongruous life sat there, unnoticed by the others, sucking its long fingers and eyeing Lane speculatively. Lane spoke.

"You speak English? Who are you?"

The wide, too round eyes looked puzzled at Lane, clicked its tongue. "Tch tch." But it did not answer.

"Secumne! Come here!" Lane did not call loudly, his voice might startle the strange visitor.

THE old man rose from his place by the farther fire, come slowly through the dark. He stood, his stolid, lined old face looking at the visitor.

"Tch tch," said Secumne.

"Tch thcheeee. Chee tch tch. Tch."

"What do you have to say about this?" Lane asked.

"This is one of the lost of the caves. His people did not use the ancient rays to stay healthy, the conditions of the dark caverns have made his race, bit by bit, year by year and century by slow century, into

what you see. He is to a man what a potato sprout in a dark cellar is to a potato plant in the hot sun. He is what is called a 'creep, a spider man.' He is not stupid, but he does not speak any real language. The tongue has no more than a hundred meanings. 'Food, water, sleep, wakewell, ill'; such sounds are all you need to learn to talk to 'Tch Tch'."

Lane did not answer. He only looked at Tch Tch. So the ever-dark had made this out of man?

Far off, down in the dim cavern road, Lane could see other tall white spider shapes, standing still—or moving swiftly on their incredible stick-like limbs. It was hard to realize that their parents had been men like himself, some centuries before. Hard to realize how very greatly it is true that environment determines the organism and its shape and nature so definitely, so absolutely.

The soft old voice of Secumne murmured:

"This one, Tch Tch, is the leader. The leader is always named Tch Tch. Mostly they do not have names. They are really but a kind of intelligent animal entirely indigenous to the caverns."

Lane turned to Secumne a face on which was written the beginning of that awe that was going to claim him utterly before he had learned but a minute part of what the caves could teach. That awe of the infinite nature of energy and her products that is to surface man hidden by the everyday humdrum activity, by the limited number of the works of nature that modern man observes. The terrific majesty of the cavern works, built by the hands of a race so superior as to be not really men at all, but Gods, would dispel forever the limiting bonds his puny life-experience had placed upon Lane's mind. It is a potent alchemy for a healthy mind; the revelations the caverns have to offer.

Even as Lane turned to gaze again into the fire and try to quiet his throbbing thought into sanity in spite of the mighty truths his deduction was presenting to his trained, logical mind; even as he composed himself and strove to pull his mind back from the gulfs which it was leaping, from the gorging of its hunger upon the mighty meaning circumstance had laid before it . . .

. . . a soft shuffle of sandaled feet behind him brought with their sound an alien perfume, a rustle and a sensing that is to

virile man irresistible, that which that black magic of Mother Earth's ancient devising sends the blood leaping through the body shouting, "woman, woman!"

Lane whirled, crouched on his heels as he was, to see moving toward him from the dark the white, unmistakable form of a woman of normal size and remarkable appearance. She was not dressed in the long funeral garments which the skeleton-thin servitor of Eemeeshee had worn. Instead a brief fringed and beaded loincloth was her sole attire—except for a collar of rich Indian bead work resting upon her shoulders. So must have looked the women of his ancestral line, centuries ago before the white man came, as they moved to the marriage rites clothed in beauty and courage and becoming feminine humility and finding it covering enough.

THE pale face with its too large black eyes came closer to Lane, and one by one the men looked up at her and stared, their eyes fixed upon her as by magnetism polarized. Lane rose, and the blood leaped through him. The woman smiled. An eerie something gripped Lane. He bowed on one knee, something that he had never done. Her voice came to him then, a sultry, smiling voice, full of little undertones and an understanding of men.

"You are the one named Eonee Lane. The Master has sent me to bring you and the one named Stevens to him. The Master is greatly interested that you should find your way to him still—when the men of the surface have forgotten him for so long."

"We are very interested, too. And who do we have the honor of addressing?"

"My name is Saba. I am called the Keeper of the Women. I am very glad you have come." There was an accompaniment of subtle meaning to her remark that Lane was not sure he heard or imagined. It was quite possible that she *was* glad to meet men from the surface if the thin robed skeleton who had met them first was a criterion of the men of the caverns. Or if "Tch Tch" was a sample of the manhood hereabout.

She turned and led off into the dark, and Lane and Stevens followed her. The women of the party turned their dark eyes upon the departing form of Saba wistfully. She was so much a woman it was hard to have one's man send his eyes after

her realizing that themselves were so much less than Saba.

Lane and Stevens followed the supple silhouette through the half dark.

"Into the mysterious 'shell' of the ancient god—the 'Breath-Master,'" thought Lane. "Now we will see what the 'mighty power' so many of my ancestors have worshipped really is."

Down a long winding ramp Saba led them, never looking back, her ears telling her of their movement. A light glow lamp in her hand was the only light. Apparently Saba carried it for their benefit, for she did not appear to look at her surroundings, seemed to know her way in the utter darkness, seemed to move, like a bat, by the echo of the sounds from the surroundings. Lane and Stevens followed the tiny glow in her hand, trusted to luck and to Saba that all was well.

Quite abruptly they were no longer in a dark cavern, but had entered the titanic, brightly-lit luxury that is the God's home, when it has been left intact. This place had been treated kindly by Time, or had been carefully preserved by endless work by many hands through the centuries.

The walls were of crystal, a crystal that was cut with gigantic incut line-carvings, like Swedish cut-glass. Terrific figures of the unequalled giant physique of the Elder race moved across the transparent planes of the walls in the breathtaking splendor of form that is the Elder art work alone. The great couches of spring metal were thrown across with gleaming silk of blue, worked in gold, while a swinging incense burner exhaled a softening haze into the air, a haze that was a too-exotic scent of the Elder race's stores.

In the midst of this vaulting fabric of stone and shining crystal and carved alien figures and hazy air and utterly lonely luxury sat Eemeeshee, an Eemeeshee who was surrounded by a tremendous machine built of crystalline plastic and gleaming, glittering polished metals; or fluid flowing colorfully through coils and tubes beneath his feet; of glowing dials and leaping energies within vast cylinders before his eyes: of many great cubical screen cavities wherein the whole upper world might be brought to focus. This machine in which lay the great fat body of the motionless Eemeeshee was the work of a Master of the ancient machine art which has never been on Earth since the Golden Age.

EEMEESHEE turned his vast, horrible head slowly upon them as Saba's sandaled feet *stuffed* on the smooth plastic of the floor. Within Lane's breast a terrific fear of the unknown, an overwhelming repulsion struggled to send him screaming and shuddering back into the darkness outside the alien luxury of this roost of terror. For Eemeeshee was truly no longer a man, if ever his race had been man. His flesh lay within the crystal complexities of the machine as though it were an ugly dough kneaded by some alchemist into a shape to frighten off the devil, and left there by his own fearful hands refusing the work. A great white sluggish pulsing thing, surmounted by two vast pillars that were his arms stretched out along the dial and switch banks of the mechanism that was his immortal home. And the face that he turned on them as his sausage-like, two-foot-long fingers ceased their slow spidering glide along the instrument panel—that face that surrounded those eyes was itself enough to give a weak man instant madness. But the terror of the eyes was the thing that held Lane and Stevens motionless though every instinct shouted “flee.” Those eyes that surmounted that vast twist of white flesh and had watched the world for unknown centuries, held all the weariness and boredom; all the melancholy and hopelessness; all the alien, cold unhuman thought that is *not* thought as we know it. All the things that man does not believe in, were in those eyes. A lonely, terrible ugliness of spirit sat in that face. An ugliness of spirit that is the lack of identity, of brotherhood, with any other living thing. Lane read in the terrible face with its foot-long nose hooked and sickeling upward over the chin, that this being had never realized there was a kinship between him and any living thing. He was an alien entity, whatever his antecedents may have been. Eemeeshee did not speak, he only looked incuriously upon the two young Indian men, and his eyes inspected them as one inspects a fly upon a window pane with the utmost disinterest and careless acknowledgement that the fly has life. The ego that is man's normal possession shrank within Lane, and a vast sensing of cold aloneness came to him from Eemeeshee.

Saba raised her voice in a long sing-song of gibberish. It was an ancient language, a parent to the Quemaña, but not one that

was understandable to either of them. These awful eyes rested for a brief moment on Saba, and Saba nodded and was gone.

They were alone with the terrible regard of those alien, inhuman eyes. They knew that he could read their thoughts of him with the mech with which his fingers slowly toyed. They knew that their thoughts of him were not complimentary, but how can a man think differently of what he sees than he does think? Lane knew this thing was getting off on the wrong foot, some way, but the key to making of this meeting with Eemeeshee anything but a terror was beyond him.

At last, when the long silence and slow regard of the eyes was becoming unbearable, a ray lanced softly down upon them from the touch of his sausage-long finger upon a dial, and a soft flood of thought swept into them from Eemeeshee. A vast understanding of this being flooded Lane at this touch of the mind upon his own. The thought queried softly, almost timidly, “Who and what are you? What do you want of Eemeeshee?”

Lane's spirits rose now. Mentally he resolved to make a real effort at being understood. Carefully he began at the beginning of their trouble in Butte; of the Red Legion and what it meant; of what they had been taught by the old men of their tribe about Eemeeshee; of how Indians had always prayed to Eemeeshee and had been rewarded with oblivion and a futility of nonentity for their worship. All these thoughts of themselves and what they hoped Eemeeshee might do for them mingled swiftly into a vast message to that atrophied might.

LANE knew he was making an impression, for a pale pink flush suffused that colorless great moon of horribly flattened flesh that was a face, the great nostrils opened a little, the lonely, world-weary eyes lit up with interest and again the meaning flowed into him from Eemeeshee.

“What is this people's power who have driven you forth, and why do you think they're a threat to me?”

Lane leaped upon his opportunity.

“Eemeeshee, these alien ray people come from afar, they have killed all the machine dwellers wherever their rays have touched. There is no reason to think they will not kill you too, when they know where you

are and why they have not known of you before."

"Who told you they killed the race of the machine dwellers? Who told you these people killed the Gods of the caves?"

"Has someone told you they did *not* kill? They have killed many of the Red Legion with no cause. Why should they not try to kill you?"

"I have become tired of life. It might be interesting if someone tried to kill me. Tell me more of these people."

Lane told the great emotionless being all that he knew of the newcomers to the northern caverns. Softly, mildly, the great face listened, the great lazy mind turned the thoughts idly and visibly before Lane's mental listening.

How to rouse the time-atrophied soul of that great body? How to give him human anger and human will to survive and create? Lane's mind leaped and struggled and wrestled with the problem. This great, flat, twisted, lazy whiteness of flesh seemed to Lane to typify, to *be* the whole race of men who do not *think* or *try* to solve life's problems, all the deadwood of the race of man rolled into one great spirit and put there to dwell forever in a terrible enigmatic punishment of one soul for all the sins of omission of all men. How to rouse such a devil of living nothingness into a God-like fury of will toward creation and striving toward a greater, fuller life for all men?

How to fecundate that great thing with the red flame of courage that burned, Lane knew, in the men of the Red Legion? How to make him desire to forward the real purpose of life, to fight for them and their goals understandingly and eagerly?

"Let me show you my men? Looking into their minds, see their love for their children, for the great legends of the red men of the past, see their spirit seeking a method to make a way of life for the red man that will lead again to greatness as it was before such as you turned their faces from the red man and fell a-dreaming here within your God-built machines. Think what your duty toward your fellow men may be. Think, Eemeeshee! These men would fight to the death for you! Will you lie down and die like a coward before the coming of the evil thing that has killed their brothers? Are you a coward, Eemeeshee?"

Eemeeshee slowly turned the words within his mind. His hand idly turned the

dials, and within the great cubical screens Lane could see the small encampment of his men where their fire burned beside the great cavern road.

Slowly, one by one, Eemeeshee sent his seeking talaus beam into each mind, read there all the thoughts, looked idly at Lane to note that he was watched as he did what Lane suggested.

And even as Lane dared to hope that the life in that mind might take fire from the desperation of his followers; even as Lane dared to send his mind along the vision of what the future might be with all the wisdom of this terrific being to guide them . . . *the enemy struck again!*

A terrible ray lanced, searing and deadly, down into that luxurious, lonely nest of crystal and blue and gold in that chamber. Struck, burning and smashing at the vast white coils and ugly billows of soft flesh, of ancient, pink-and-white life, struck rending at that soft vastness of Eemeeshee in a frenzied effort to bring death quickly before retaliation.

Lane fell to the floor, blinded and burnt from the ray flashing past his head, and a terrible odor of death, of burning flesh filled the great quiet room that had seen so much time go quietly by—and now this had come to Eemeeshee.

CHAPTER V

Saba

SABA was looking out upon the newcomers. Knowingly, thoughtfully her fertile, infinitely educated mind, revolved the new thing—*men*—in her life. Since a little girl she had spent all her waking hours seeing that the needs and wishes of the great Eemeeshee were filled. All the sensuous desires of his wholly mental life she had minded, too, making with her fertile mind all the images he might desire to watch augmented and developed into life fullness in the solidographic dream mech.

All those antique records she had read had given her avid young mind a food that has not been properly given to man since the Gods left the earth. She was vastly more than mortal; she was what simpler people call a white fairy, a sorceress. She knew mighty things that could be done with simple materials, she knew vast secrets of energy and life and matter without really realizing that she was superior to man. For

all her time she was taken up ministering to the greedy laziness that was the mind of Eemeeshee. She had little time to think of other things in her life except Eemeeshee and his needs.

Now, suddenly, into her life of even tenor, of fixed and, to her, perfect habits, had come a turmoil of new factors. The ways of her life, the wishes of her soul, had that night turned into a new heated channel. The tall, strong, and grim-faced man, Lane, had made an impression on her vital inner self; a self that had not faced man in all reality, ever before. Only sometimes over the rays had she looked upon men far overhead—and mostly their thoughts were too simple and unbeautiful to interest her.

Saba knew, now, that no more would she content herself with knowing men from afar over the rays. She realized that from the fire of striving within the mind of the tall grim strangers, fleeing before a mysterious death, from the mind of Eonee Lane, their leader, and within the mind of the sleeker, stronger Stevens, that she would no more be content with the lazy empty life and luxury of pandering to the great appetite that ruled all this cavern. Saba was taking stock of herself for the first time in her life.

She had drifted with the calm currents of events, events that never happened here in the quiet dark, had accepted the half-life of this place too easily. Something had now been added which had transformed her selfish, lazy reflection of Eemeeshee's atrophied self-will to a sudden realization that she had been letting life go by while she too dreamed away everything that life might be in the luxury of the false sensing of what life was not of the dream mech.

About Saba where she leaned against her great old deliciously ornate vision mech in thought, watching the scene of Lane and Stevens before Eemeeshee, about her slept or dawdled some two score other women, of all ages. They were the harem which Eemeeshee kept in deference to custom among his kind, rather than for any real need or desire he had for them. There were few men in Eemeeshee's "court," for Eemeeshee usually detested men and their ambitions plaguing him to effort he did not desire to make. He banished the children of the place, if they were men, before they came of an age to make trouble. The

old priest Watusojhe served as his advisor and general factotum. A half-dozen youths, children of the women, supposed to be children of Eemeeshee, but in truth fathered by the wanderers of the caverns—those men who spend their lives searching the endless labyrinths of the dark for the treasures that they sell to the space ships that come sometimes to certain customary places for this purpose. (The age-old custom of secrecy of the caverns forbids trade with surface men. Too, men of the surface world have little to offer that cavern people recognize as value. The rich, tremendous value of the ancient profuseness of productions of the vastly superior race make the poor values of surface man of little account.)

But Eemeeshee's solitary ways had given these women of his a hunger for human kind, and the strong youth and complex thought of these newcome Indians of modern surface educated ways was to them a wonderful thing. So it was that Saba and several others were watching the encampment and the scene within the crystal chamber over the ray mech, while the guard ways—which of old custom were supposed to be watched by someone always and which reached for many miles to the four quarters of direction—were now perfunctorily watched from a distance. On the screens, if they had looked, could have been seen the great rolling ray weapons in their ray-armored tanks sweeping nearer and nearer from the north.

But Saba was not thinking of attack, for there had been no attack in her lifetime.

Nor, in all Eemeeshee's centuries-old memory, had she noted in her reading of his mind any attack of importance for so many, many years. When the blazing bolts of energy flung themselves into Eemeeshee's crystal nest, there was little they knew to do about it. Warfare was the thing farthest from their minds as well as from Eemeeshee's thought.

EVEN so, Saba had talked with the wandering treasure hunters, and knew a great deal about warfare by hearsay. In anticipation of such attack she had occasionally practiced with the great weapon beams that sat in ordered ranks everywhere about the great ancient dwelling place. And as she saw the searing bolts of deadly dis-fire come seeking them out over

the long pale penetrays, she leaped to one of the tremendous weapons and sent the vast vision beam flying along the enemy ray paths for their source.

Horror struck into Saba, even the Saba who had experienced all the horror and terror that God brains could conceive in their synthetic adventure records. For the thought that flowed back to her along these conductive, teleaugmentive vision beams; that leaped out at her from the great vision screen: that thought was not human. Humans the men looked like, but what lived beneath their skulls made even Saba shudder and start back in fear and trembling.

They were things sent by a greater thing, a thing she had not met before in her limited life—and Saba had no time to analyze why these apparently normal appearing men were so luridly, so evilly different from men in their minds.

She had no time for flinching, and Saba, seeing the enemy that had followed the caravan of fleeing Indian men, that had paused as the road led into territory unknown to them, that had been feeling their way along under the great mass of rocks that was their sky closer and closer to Eemeeshee ever since they had left familiar territory, acted.

They felt for an instant that terrible nearness of death they had brought to so many in their life. Then they died very quickly.

The horror that Saba had felt when she had seen and heard their thought upon the vision screen made her sear the bodies of those human beings until there was no more horror to hear from the minds, nothing to see, only a scorched, burnt, flaming, smoking place where their ray cars had been. On the cavern road where their wheeled ray mech had drawn up in line to steady the screens for firing sight, to lay down a blanket of accurate fire, now was only many scattered bits of smoking metal.

* * *

UNKNOWING why the attack had ceased as suddenly as it had begun, Lane and Stevens stood there, looking at the strange spectacle of the great soft worm-like body of the vast Eemeeshee turned into a raging, writhing, stricken creature.

Midway of the long softness had appeared a great burned hole where a ray had drilled him, and one of the long soft

fleshy arms was cut nearly in two midway from the soft billows that were his shoulder. Lane could not help thinking as he watched that maybe the rays who had struck at Eemeeshee had done him more of a service than a harm, for the lassitude that seemed a part of him had also been sheared away by the sudden hiss of the burning rays.

That great white thing reared upward and the unwounded arm moved with a terrible angry swiftness here and there upon the keyboard of switches; the many keys like an organ keyboard; the many pedals that protruded near his feet. He pressed, now here, now there, and on the score of cubical screens that made up the greater part of the body of the transparent machine appeared swiftly scene after scene of the great empty underworld of unending tubes of highways, of tiers of vast empty chambers filled with their dust-laden complexities of machines and forgotten wealth. Farther and farther Eemeeshee searched for the source of the attack.

Finally he found the smoking series of spots where the enemy ray mech had drawn up for attack. Wonderingly he looked at it, and as he looked the soft voice of Saba could be heard explaining to Eemeeshee that she had found and slain the attackers already.

Now Eemeeshee sagged again and the temporary vigor that had flooded him passed away. He began to moan and weep like a whipped child.

A score of Saba's women and Saba swept into the chamber, their sandaled feet making swift whispers of haste and pity, and Eemeeshee's wounds were carefully washed and treated and bound up. Lane and Stevens stood through it all, an ignored part of the great vacant immensity that is always the atmosphere of the Elder caverns.

At last Saba came forth from the transparent winding passages of the machine where Eemeeshee lay like the great pupa of some vast insect thing of the past that was presently going to hatch into a winged god but had certainly not done so yet.

Saba paused, her lithe, full woman's form holding a great golden basin of water on her hip, her arm draped with bandages, in her hand a pair of ancient scissors a foot long.

"Saba," said Lane, seeing now his chance, "this occurrence proves something to me that I wish you and Eemeeshee might fully understand. That is: you need our

Red Legion terribly here. This attack will not be the last. There will be more and more such attacks, and the next will not be so easily wiped out by one pair of hands as was this one. You need our young Indian braves, trained and ready and watching from every far flung ray post. You need steadily to grow and grow and have more and more strength until there is no ray group anywhere to face your strength. Will you explain this to Eemeeshee?"

"I do not need to. Even now I saw in his angry mind just such plans. I will go ahead and have my women train your folk in the uses of the rays, and we will put your plans swiftly into operation. You call in from their far homes the rest of your Red Legion and we will make this place something different from what it has been. It will be good to have new faces, new eager spirits about. I like your plans."

LANE did not wait for more. Stevens by his side, they hastened back to the camp of the refugees and explained the situation. The attack had gone unnoticed by the camp. The Indians slept peacefully in their blankets.

The next morning the great hidden door in the rock lifted, and two of the cars that had come in went out again. In the cars were two of the young braves intent upon delivering their message to the other centers of the Red Legion. Stevens had told them to go in person to each of the headquarters of the Legion and tell them in their own words just what had happened, what Eemeeshee was, and that they were all needed to defend their ancient God and the gateway to the vast wisdom of the past.

Eemeeshee lay in his great crystal nest and glowered and growled and nursed his hurts. Saba and Lane and Stevens worked hard daily, teaching, getting a force of ready hands upon the ancient ray controls, getting prepared as swiftly as they might for a repetition of the attack from the north. Every day they spread their force a little, posting men to the four quarters with the old rays reaching out for forty miles to watch steadily, sweeping across the innumerable passages through the rock where attack might come. They were now vastly safer than before the attack, but Lane knew that anyone really conversant with the uses of the ancient mechanisms must

be able to overcome them. For they knew so little of it. If it broke . . .

Only Saba and one or two of the women knew the least thing about repairing the machines. They were too green, as Saba explained, really to fight with the weapons as the old accounts told her they were meant to be fought with.

But the attack did not come, and now into the great door every night came three or four or a dozen of the men of the Red Legion; men from Oregon; men from Canada; men from the pueblos; Mexican Indians sent their number. Swiftly the word spread and steadily their numbers grew.*

Now papooses shouted and ran in the gloomy so-long-empty caverns, and cooking fires gleamed by the hundreds. Indian women swayed in their tribal mating dances, the braves sprang and whooped in the war-dance. Life had come to this place of Eemeeshee's. And over the new activity glowered ever the transformed Eemeeshee, and one could read ever in his heard thought: "Vengeance. Eemeeshee has a way to vengeance."

Said Saba:

"No more does Eemeeshee flood the chambers with the dream images and wallow in the stim-dreams of beauty and wonder. No more does he take pleasure day after day and year after year. These wounds have changed him—he has waked up! I have never seen him so intent upon anything as he is now upon growing strong and fighting with these enemies who attacked without warning. His anger burns steadily, higher and higher. He has taught me many things he formerly denied me. Come, I will show you what he taught me yesterday."

Saba took Lane to a great round machine. A mouth about three feet across

*Temples and Caves—from Enc. Brit.

. . . but in many very ancient sanctuaries the place of a temple is taken by a natural or artificial grotto (Phoenician Astarte grottoes—the grotto of Cynthus in Delos), or else the temple is built over a subterranean opening (as at Delphi), and while this may . . . be connected with the cult of telluric deities . . .

The altar in front of temple had its prototype in altars at the mouths of sacred caves . . .

The influence of the cave temple . . . undeniable widespread type of sanctuary.

Certain adyta in Greece were actually subterranean and the association of oracles with caves is well known.

in the center of the mech gave a view of successive coils reaching in, each coil a little smaller than the other to the bottom of the inward cone. She switched on the power and from the big orifice came a strong bass hum—a pulsing of power that streamed from the opening in a visible flow of power.

"What is it?" asked Lane. "It looks something like a cyclotron."

"This cyclotron you speak of; what is that?"

"It is a device they use to speed up an electric particle. There are several kinds, depending on the kind of particle they want to speed up. They bombard matter with it: it becomes more radioactive. It was used in developing the atom bomb."

"This, then," Saba smiled, "is a 'cyclotron-in-reverse.' This is used to slow down the flow of certain kinds of particles until the body can catch and hold them. It makes the energy that is always about us available to the body by slowing down the speeds at which the parts of energy travel. Each coil is creator of a magnetic field which attracts, catches and slows the flight of the bits of energy until as it emerges it is a slow flood of the stuff from which all matter is synthesized by nature—and the body of the person in the flow takes in the energy just as we take food in through the mouth. It prepares energy for the absorption by that kind of matter which our body is made of. At least, such was the explanation Eemeeshee gave me as he pointed out the uses to which I was to put this machine and others like it. It is to be used to make our warriors strong and smart and able to learn quickly what they must learn to defeat this horrible enemy who has attacked us."

LANE put out his hand, immersed it in the flow of energy from the orifice. His hand seemed to swell, to feel strong. The lassitude of relaxation went out of it—strength pulsed within his fingers and flowed up his arm. His whole body felt invigorated just from the immersion of his hand.

Saba watched him.

"Put your head in, if you want really to note the effects. It makes the brain immensely more active. And the effect continues long afterward. It is like charging a battery, a battery of life energy, with life energy."

Lane stooped, dipped his head momentarily into the pulsing flow of strange electricray. Through his mind flashed a picture of vast plans for the Red Legion, of great conquests of just such valuable secrets of the old machines of the caves, and of vast conquests and growth for the Red Legion. As he removed his head, these pictures died slowly out, but his mind remained sharper, clearer, he knew he was vastly more alive.

"Did he show you anything else?" this new and sharper Lane asked Saba, his eyes glittering now with energy and enthusiasm. This machine for invigorating his men had heartened him.

Saba led him toward another great machine, somewhat similar in appearance but with a greatly more complicated keyboard of control dials.

"Yes. He showed me this, saying: 'If you need monetary metals, you can make them with this.' It is a similar appearing machine—the same cone of great coils reaching inward, but its use is certainly vastly different. It also slows up the particles that circulate always about us, makes of them a concentrated flow; but it has atunements that regulate what kind of particle is slowed. Watch and you will see why. Have you some base metal?"

Lane searched his pockets, found only a fifty cent piece, some pennies and a nickel.

Saba took the pennies and the nickel from him and placed them on a sliding tray before the mouth of the power cone, slid the tray into the center of the orifice. She pulled the activating lever.

The hum rose and rose in pitch, and as Lane watched Saba adjusted the dial to a marking.

"See, Eonee, this marking is a symbol that means gold. There is a mark for each element you want to produce, though these markings can only be used for materials heavier in the atomic table than the material you place in the flow."

Presently she withdrew the tray, picked up the coins and handed them to Lane. Lane looked at them, hefted them. They had increased greatly in weight, changed to a red gold in color. He took his knife, cut one of the coins. It was pure gold.

"Transmutation!" ejaculated Lane. "Here we have the means to finance an army, an empire. Eemeeshee should get angry oftener; God knows what we might not learn from him of these wonders. With

a source of gold like this we can hire all the men we need. Get this machine working steadily and produce a good supply of this stuff. We must send out more recruiting agents and get our strength up. There will be plenty to do now, Saba."

"I thought you would find a use for this." Saba was very pleased that he saw the possibilities for everyone rather than as a means of getting rich. "It is a similar flow of slowed particles which make the matter progressively into heavier and heavier elements by the same method by which nature produced them in the first place; the intake of tiny particles of energy until the atoms build up into heavier atoms—the original process of transmutation which has produced every element from its tiny tenuous beginnings in space is here speeded up to utility by a concentration of the same basic material from which all matter grows. The Elder race was not stupid, was it?"

"No, Saba, we must work very hard to retrieve some of this mighty science for modern men."

CHAPTER VI

Preparation for Battle

MONTHS passed swiftly. A business-like activity, an atmosphere of industry, had replaced the lazy, secluded ways of the deserted hide-out of Eemeeshee.

Outside the big rock door in the cliff which gave entry to the underworld, the buildings of a mock gold mine gave them a cover for their gold production by the machine for transmutation. Also a cover for their recruiting activities.

Down in the caverns several thousand men now had their homes; practiced, drilled and studied steadily. They were swiftly reaching a point of full preparation for Eemeeshee's planned conquest of the caverns under Montana, and particularly those immediately under Butte.

The spider people, called in by the hundreds, had been treated with the beneficial energy flows from the ben-ray mech. Now, their faces sharpened in intelligence by its effects, they conducted scouting forces northward. Under their clicking, knowing guidance, the caverns were mapped, the roads carefully explored.

In the midst of this mapping work, Tch Tch and his "men" captured two of the

enemy set to watch their activity. Lane, watching them taken to Eemeeshee for a going over, got a good idea of just who and what the enemy were.

The two men were dark, scrawny samples of humanity, in appearance like Paris Apaches or the criminal cockney type. But Lane saw, though they were human enough in general appearance, something had happened to their minds.

This became clearer as Eemeeshee augmented their thought within his telaug screens, watched their progress across the continent, their murder of everyone of the old ray groups they had found; a steady progress of conquest by silent murder of every intelligent bit of life they had found in the caves. Some of the people they had killed had solved the cryptic puzzles of the ancient writing and were fast winning for modern men the ancient writings of science which would have proved as valuable in time to man as man could have developed in many thousands of years of perfect progress. For the ancient metal records contained scientific method which it had taken a vastly superior race eons of time to perfect.

These murderous ignoramuses under their woman leader, Deliar Da Sylva, had wiped out many such quiet studious people in their uncomprehending grabbing for value, while the very murder by which they obtained gold and ancient stim mech wiped out knowledge worth infinitely more than the gain.

Both Eemeeshee and Lane had a pretty good understanding of what they were up against when the two captives died. Their opposition was a gang of ruthless and ignorant killers, who had for years been trying completely to wipe out all intelligent life in the underworld so that the whole mighty power of the underworld would be in their hands alone. That, in the process, they destroyed the whole future of men and set back progress another few thousand years, did not matter to them. They had no understanding of any duty toward other men. That, in the process, they had been destroying every surface man who knew of the antique world of wonder in the under-rock, did not matter to them; though many of these surface people "who knew" were the world's best medical research scientists and the health of millions of future men depended on their work. They were too ignorant to

understand it was not self interest to kill a doctor, that one's own health depends on the health of medicine as a whole.

They had succeeded in their intention to wipe out all life in the sparsely inhabited caverns in the eastern states and had now progressed into the western caverns. Some few thousand people, intent on wiping out all life in an area bigger than the surface of the world—and succeeding due to the potent destructive power and vast range of the Elder race's weapons.

That was a terrible, a strange, weird scene: the death of these two murderous creatures. Standing before Eemeeshee, his vast form writhing like a great pudding bag, his great face with its long, upturned, outlandish nose peering down into their mind pictures augmented in a dozen screens before him, and behind the two terrified men the tall grey-white figures of the spider men, a dozen of them towering about the two men holding them there before Eemeeshee's great crystal machine home.

Eemeeshee's mind growing angrier and angrier as he summed up their bloody attempt to inherit the whole cavern world for themselves. Some million people, of the diverse and rather wonderfully informed kind that one finds sparsely scattered through the endless windings and tiers of the cavern world; men like Eemeeshee who had lived in the machines for centuries; men like Tch Tch who had evolved into a separate form of life, but whose clever fingers knew many a secret of the Elder science; people like Saba, who coupled with natural intelligence had had a lifetime of study under some centuries-old creature like Eemeeshee to become what man has always called the "sorceress" and worshipped; and the treasure hunters of the caverns—many, many of these they had killed by slow torture, wresting from their unwilling minds all their hard won secrets of the places where the Elder stores were hidden.

THE steady and successful progress of this attempt to inherit the whole ancient secret of the caves for one small group of a few thousand slavish robot-minded warriors, and their half dozen leaders such as the foremost, Deliar Da Sylva, dismayed and frightened Eemeeshee. But also gave him the courage of desperation.

Softly he pressed the stim button, lanced down a generously pleasant ray of stim-

control upon the minds of the spider men, commanding them to kill these two bloody-minded captives. The gentle-natured spider men, without being able to help themselves, closed their long-fingered hands about the necks of these two from the far European Hellpits—and their breath soon stopped struggling to bring life to their bodies. Eemeeshee wanted the spider men to understand that all who lived bloodily as these men must die, and he wanted them to learn how to kill. The spider men left his presence wiser by a terrible intent to wipe out the Da Sylvas of the cavern world.

Lane looked down upon Eemeeshee's blue and gold and crystal nest of ancient technical wonder, the glory of its beauty marred—or enhanced—by the contrast of the tall weird spider men, dragging out the dead bodies of the two captives—and silently approved of Eemeeshee's resurgence of forgotten spirit. Had Lane been able fully to analyze the craven fear which had made Eemeeshee do this deed, and deprive their Legion of much needed information in one savage and fearful impulse to destroy an enemy, he would not have felt so approving of Eemeeshee. That ancient and complex brain was not a man's. Reading those minds had given Eemeeshee a terrible fear of this enemy that he must fight or die. He would fight, yes, because he must.

Lane turned to Saba, where she stood beside him watching the incongruity of the ancient wonder work and the peculiar and ugly life that moved about the mighty beauty of Eemeeshee's chamber.

"These allies of ours are not pretty, but they seem efficient."

"Eemeeshee should have preserved those lives for future reference," was all Saba said, and Lane did not notice her preoccupation. For Saba had noticed the craven fear in Eemeeshee and realized that all was not well with the great, pink-and-white and enormously ugly baby who was their leader. She inwardly resolved to keep an eye on future mental processes of that intricate and depraved brain that she served. Eemeeshee was a coward, she realized.

Eemeeshee's plans moved forward, driven by the desperation of Eemeeshee's full realization that the enemy was determined to wipe out all the older intelligents of the caverns, to have the whole cavern world as their private possession. Such an immense concept of selfishness had never been

conceived by Eemeeshee. But he knew their project was possible with the Elder rays.

The day before their big push started northward, Lane dispatched a large packet of blueprints, plans and transcriptions from the Elder writings to a certain famous engineers club in California. His purpose was to leave in the hands of civilized men a full account of the affair if disaster overtook their attempt to reclaim the northern caverns for the red men. It would have saddened him to have seen the secretary of that club open his package.

The "educated" secretary read the explanatory letter carefully and consigned the whole packet of Elder wisdom to the wastebasket as the work of a deluded madman.

So many efforts of so many great men have been lost through the inability of "educated" men to give credence to any wisdom outside their limited "education." The plans and blueprints would have given modern men the secrets of the beneficial force flows, as well as the transmutation apparatus and the other mechanisms he had been able to understand and have blueprints drawn. But the "educated" secretary of the famous engineers club "knew" transmutation was "impossible."

This done, and his conscience free, his duty to the race of men fulfilled—he thought—Lane bent his energies to making of Eemeeshee's war a success. He knew that all their lives depended on winning this struggle; for flight would save none of them from the terrific range and sensitive detection of the Elder race machinery in the hands of murderers.

THAT advance! Those endless, vaulted halls extending on and on into every varying shifting translucent pearly color, pillared with rose and soft gleaming purples and transparent gold—endless shimmering beauty.

Along the parallel gigantic roads, made to carry the vast traffic of a world packed with giant people of an energy and a titanic industry now lost to the mind of man (forever?); along those roads leading on and on into the mysterious beauties of a wonder land, rolled the weaponed, ray-armored cars of the ancients. Rolled? Floated! For the cars were half-spheres, floating on antigravity devices. Automatically they kept an unvarying height off the floor, the same height from the ceiling,

no matter how many variations the construction had built into the way. A good thousand of these cars they had run out of the abandoned arsenal storerooms. Under Eemeeshee's instructions, learned to run them—and gold and the Red Legion had provided men to operate them, trained the men for the past months in their operation, in handling the titanic weapons built into the ancient war vehicles.

"How can such portable weapons fight the more massive fixed ray installations?" Lane had asked Eemeeshee.

"I will show you, for you must practice the maneuver so as to be able to form and strike simultaneously. See these markings on this huge stationary dynamo? That mark indicates the 'gens' or 'negs' of power the dynamo will generate. One kind of dynamo generates the beneficial 'gens' of energy, the other makes the 'negs' of detrimental weapon energy. Some dynamos marked with 'erg' generate a kind of mixture of both which has a multitude of uses, according to the nature of the mixture.* The number of these units indicates the range of the ray, the focus intensity being equal. This dial indicates the focus intensity of the beam, which you have already learned. Increasing the width of the beam decreases the range, as you know. As this machine is

*Gen was an antique word meaning to create energy of a certain beneficial kind. Thus it had been adopted as the word for the unit of flow of beneficial energies from the dynamos designed to furnish the synthetic life-energy flows upon which the underworld life was based—as is our civilization upon the production of wheat. Thus "gen" was to their supply of life energy the word of unit as volt is to electric flow.

Neg was the reverse word unit, meaning unit of inverted destructive. De power. As volt is to electric, so is neg to energy flows which "negate" life. Note persistence of their word "neg" in our word "negate" to "neg" a "te" flow is to neutralize the life energies.

Erg is the word for unit of power of another kind. Between the opposed natures of gen and neg electric lie many in-between kinds of energy mixtures, as complex in nature as are compounds of molecular mixtures in chemistry to the element's relative simplicity. Mostly these are useless, and an erg is the unit of measurement for these mixture-flows. It is a unit used to indicate the degree of useless power mixed in their gen flows. Thus a current is 90 gen to ten erg; nearly pure life energy value in the creation of beneficial electric.

marked "one hundred gens" and the dynamos within the anti-gravity cars are marked one gen or one neg it will take a hundred of such cars to equal the power of one such great fixed dynamo.

"But the weapons within the cars are more finely built for fighting, more flexible of focus and can achieve much the same effect by amassing some seventy-five of their beams in one path. This can only be done by lining up the cars so that their beams strike through the same penetrative bore or guide ray, then their kinetic sum overcomes resistance of the same amount as the single beam of the giant dynamo. But there are only one or two such great dynamos in an arsenal. We can overcome a stationary ray installation by lining up more 'negs' of power than they have in their dynamos. Understand?"

"I follow you, Eemeeshee. It can be done by careful work."

"It can be done. There is this drawback: we cannot see so well with the small screens of these cars as with the larger power augmentation screen. They can see farther and better. But I have a way of providing us with equal sight. We have put the anti-gravs under some of the great vision screens, mounted the power units to operate it on other anti-grav units, connected them together with flexible cables—and, behold, we have portable vision quite as good as their stationary vision. Because the anti-gravs float exactly level, it is quite as satisfactory, for there is so little vibration in the anti-grav devices that even when in motion we can see nearly as well as a solid and stationary device. We will approach this enemy, stop at the utmost range we can see them, line up our weapon cars in exact simultaneous line of fire—and let them have it."

Eemeeshee was speaking with his abstract thought language which Lane had learned to interpret even more easily than English, as in fact, it is vastly a more potent medium of communication than oral language.

FOR the trip, Eemeeshee had squeezed his huge body into a smaller life-machine equipped with anti-gravs. When the central antigrav is tipped slightly, it acts as a frictionless drive of great power. The gravity devices on the perimeter of the lower circle of the half-sphere are never moved from their exact alignment. These

cars can travel at any speed the human eye and nerve can control within the caverns. They cannot be used outside the caverns without adjustment, as they have a device in their top that, like an electric eye, watches the ceiling and shuts off the anti-grav flow automatically, keeping the car a certain distance from the roof. Taken outside the cavern, this device would fail to work, the car would shoot straight up, unless the manual height control were understood and operated by hand.

Their long lines of floating cars, parallel and beautiful in their perfection of ancient workmanship, was fronted by Saba and Lane in a great vision ray-mech floated on anti-gravs. In the center of the lines was the great living machine of crystal and gleaming metal with Eemeeshee puffing inside. And in the rear were four smaller vision devices with Saba's women inside. Bringing up the rear was Stevens, inside the hugest hemi-sphere, a great single ray mech of longer range than any of the smaller cars. The larger part of the car was packed with small powerful dynamos, all powering a vast vision and firing beam in one compact unit. Eemeeshee had assured Stevens that nothing portable could outreach it. Their only danger, until they reached the location of the enemy under Butte, was from carelessness. If they failed to see some scouting ray and allowed it to get too close to their ranks, they would lose many men until the ray was put out of action.

Swiftly, silently, the tremendous assembly of ancient power floated northward. Here and there on the shimmering pearly beauty of the pillared ways hung a dried human head, giving mute evidence of the warfare of the degenerate, savage peoples who had peopled these caverns nomadically.

Or, a crucified mummy would hang from the great T symbol which the ancient Elder race had placed occasionally along the ways, just as today we see now and then the Christian cross which has derived from the ancient symbolic use of the T. The savages who had roamed here and perhaps fathered the present day spider-like "creeps," had left such evidences of their warring, and the dry warm air of the underworld had preserved the flesh perfectly, just as it had preserved the ancient machines and handiwork of the Elder race no matter the eon of time that had passed.

Eemeeshee's vast portable living machine

was equipped with a mass of enigmatic apparatus. What it was all for, in truth, it is probable that even Eemeeshee did not know. But he certainly knew how to use most of it to advantage.

AS THEIR maps told them they were nearing ray field range, Eemeeshee shot forth a great grey beam of power far ahead of the advancing columns of war mech, and the results were startling. Lane speculated, as he watched the effects, just what the power-beam might be. He figured that the ray in some way altered the inner polarity of the basic building blocks of matter—the electronic polarity—so that it was no longer transparent to the penetray beams.

For, far ahead of their advance, the vision beams of penetrative ray had carefully revolved over the whole arc ahead, seeking for any sign of opposition. Now, as Eemeeshee played his ultra powerful beam of grey light ahead through the rock, the rock turned slowly grey and opaque to their vision beams, and they were advancing, instead of through apparent glass, through natural looking grey rock tunnels.

His purpose, evidently, was to keep the opposition's penetrative rays from finding their position. That it also obscured their own means of sight troubled Lane. But the purpose of the ancient being in the great crystal complexity floating weirdly in their midst became clearer as Eemeeshee shut off the grey beam. Now, as they neared the farther edge of the cloudlike greyness he had created within the rock, their own penetray beams became able to peer out ahead—while themselves were invisible within the opacity of the rock. Lane halted his floating car just within this area of opacity, and waited, searching far ahead with his vision beam, watching his screen with great care for the slightest sign of enemy preparation.

For what seemed forty miles ahead the ways led, parallel, empty of life—the alien splendor of the construction glistening here and there where walls and vertical construction had kept the usual blanket of time's dust from forming. Even through that pall of eons of slow precipitation of dust the lovely forms of the machine art of the ancients showed, row on row, arrangement on arrangement, chamber after chamber, tier on tier of vast, waiting perfection—waiting always for the feet of

those immortal Elder masters who would never return to this death-laden planet.

Of the modern interlopers within these sacred halls, there was no sign. No breath of a ray trail, no slightest bristling ionizing of the dust layer betrayed with its stirring a watch ray. Not even a footprint upon that dust, not one tread of the magnetic anti-grav beams upon the dust-layer left its tell-tale path before them. Apparently no life had touched these endless tunnels and God-built chambers since they were abandoned so long ago. Yet their maps told them that hereabout were the forces who had taken over the caverns under Montana. That hereabout must lie swift and terrible destruction for them if unwary.

Slowly they crept forward, their watch rays sweeping, sweeping, and Eemeeshee's mysterious beam changing the polarity of the rock ahead of them so that themselves remained invisible to any penetray beam from the distance. Lane realized that this opacity yielded to their own beams because close to the source such a beam is vastly more powerful than at its tenuous further end. He appreciated Eemeeshee's abilities, for this hiding of themselves within a field of opacity in the rock was in truth clever.

"I hope Eemeeshee has a few more tricks up his sleeve against these European ray. God knows what they may use against us," Lane murmured to Saba. She smiled reassuringly.

"The old one is really enjoying himself for the first time in my life time. I would not believe he could change so. You have done him much good; I would pit his ancient heritage of wisdom from the strange people who fathered him against any bunch of modern murderers. These who set upon your Red Legion and drove them out; we know more about them than you think. They have killed and tormented the 'creeps'; some of the spider men had fled westward to tell me of them. Also the nomads have told me of them. We know what they are, and we know how they fight. But behind them may be some old behemoth from the past who may not be such easy prey. Eemeeshee is not the only old one in the caves."

Cautiously the long columns of floating cars crept ahead with the care of troops penetrating a mine field. When death comes from ray, it comes lancing swiftly out of unseeable distance, and the swiftest only is life left. To the first who sighted

the enemy, to them came the advantage; and they meant to be the first.

CHAPTER VII

The Battle Is Joined

NOW, quite suddenly, they saw life ahead. Like a telescopic view of an anthill, the distance making them so tiny, and the penetrative rays making all the rock about the far off titan burrows like so much glass. They saw the city of the intruders.

This was what once had been the home of the lost tribe of Votan Indians; Indians inheriting all the pride and culture of a race more advanced than the Mayan plus the knowledge of science that centuries of life in the wonder caverns of the Elder race had given them. The ancient original beauty of the place was overhung with the semi-barbaric trappings, the feathered head-dresses, the blankets woven in bizarre and ancient symbolic patterns, woven by nimble fingered squaws here where all the beauty of the Elder work inspired to greater understanding of the nature of beauty than ever surface red men rose to acquire. Pelts of wolf and hides of deer, the fleeces of sheep and the hides of bear decorated the ancient spring-metal couches and softened the polished stone to the foot.

Sprawled amid this semi-barbaric Indian splendor were some few hundred European aliens, clad in modern clothing, loud jackets and slacks; gaudy silk dresses from surface shops. On the women, bare white shoulders

*These dis-cannon are of several varied kinds. Mostly they have a dial which controls atunement, and fire over a penetrative conductive "lead" as vision ray which conducts the destructive bolt but is not itself harmful in any way. The control dial alters the nature of the dis-bolt so that it can be slowly changed through a long series of intensities, from mildly warm to harmful "de" to straight dis, which latter and worst will melt a hole through the rock for many miles. Usually such a cannon is used on the "de" set which will knock out an animal at thirty miles, or kill if held there for a short time. This "de" is an detrimental ray used for many purposes, originally designed apparently for such purposes as an insecticide—it can be set to sweep a great area with diffuse beams of mildly destructive power, or concentrated into a stronger beam one shot of which upsets a man's mind into temporary insanity.

aped surface luxury, while waiting on them were the Indians who had lived and ruled secretly here up to their advent. Lane knew they had not been here more than two years. Hugging the hope that their short tenure had not given them time to get fully acquainted with all the resources and weapons of the intricately chambered tiers of caverns, Lane swung the nozzle of his dis-cannon* in line with his vision penetray, prepared to fire when the others were aligned to fire with him.

Stim rays bathed the great chambers where the white newcomers lolled, apparently engaged in a debauch. The Indians, clad in loin cloths or in grey linen jackets and skirts which seemed to be a kind of servant's uniform, bore drinks and food; or stood stony faced, as door tenders; or pushed mop and bucket along the endless corridors.

For entertainment, one of the gaudier females was crushing the eight-foot, stick-like limbs of a "creep" inch by inch with a hammer; two men held his piteously screaming form while she plied the hammer and the rest looked on. Evidently this was great sport. Lane ground his teeth at the needless, purely wanton cruelty. Lane had much to learn of the nature of these people.

In the great war-ray chamber near at hand to the lolling sybarites who ruled the place, were the stub fingered ray ro.**

Lane had learned from Saba that the ancients' word for the magnetism between sexes — between man and woman—was "ne." He had observed this animal magnetism that binds all humanity together in an electrical matrix, over the telaug beams which augment all these subtle electrical flows into mental vision strength. He had realized that "ne" was a most important part of life, making it much more inter-

**These are men found around any of the dero "bunches." Men who have been used by "make-ray" (ray control) to fire the more detrimental of the huge old rays; used in warfare until their fingers rot off from X-ray infection; until their minds cease to exist as anything but unnecessary adjunct. They are often huge men, drafted into such service for their size and strength, and never thereafter allowed any freedom. They wait in their ray-chambers just as the great old mechanisms wait—until it is time for action. Then the "make-rays" reach in, seize their poor minds and direct them in the battle.

esting than it would be without. Now, watching these newcomers to this part of the caverns, he realized that the character signs—the variant-natured “ne” charge which each physical body exerts upon each other physical body—were either missing from their bodies, or so vague as hardly to register mentally even with the mighty augmentation of the ancient power tubes. Instead there was present a repellant (“ne” is an attraction) which acted in an exactly opposite manner to “ne.” Instead of liking each other, admiring or respecting their most capable and best looking members, they hated each other, and this hatred was in direct proportion to their ability and appearance.

Lane realized that here was revealed the reason for their characters being cruel and evil; the reason for their constant and savage warring.

Saba glanced at him as he observed this startling difference, which was so obvious over the teltaug beams with which they were observing the enemy.

“The Elder word for that is “de,” she told him. “It makes the difference between human and destructive beast.”

As Lane swung his teltaug beam across the ray-mutilated stalwarts waiting in the war-ray chambers, he observed that this “de” was even more strongly present among them. He guessed its presence was due to the effects of the destructive rays created by the great ray-cannon, effects which destroyed the “ne” generative inner life of the cells leaving an animal whose life could hardly be a life thereafter, since even the love he bore a woman turned to hate in his breast. He observed that only habits of discipline kept these great, dull-eyed men from throwing themselves upon each other in a struggle to the death. An explanation of the real cause of men’s terrible and constantly recurring wars was here presented to Lane’s eyes. But Lane saw no solution to it at first glance, other than shielding all men from such natural occurring rays by some kind of dielectric sheathing for their cities which would keep out such “de” generating rays.

For a picture of what the underworld has always been to surface men, read “The Silver Nail” by Carmen Sylva (the Queen of Roumania) and Alma Strettell. There are several pertinent tales in her important book—“Legends from River And Mountain.”

BUT Lane did not have much time for speculative thought, for Eemeeshee was swiftly preparing for action. The floating hemi-spheres of smaller ray-cannon cars were lining up, one behind the other, under swiftly darting teltaug beams bearing his thought to each driver.

Lane could not help dreading the first clash for he realized that their attack upon this huge citadel with their small rays was apparently foolhardy, and that none of them but Eemeeshee and possibly Saba really could evaluate the situation in military terms.

Somehow Lane could not feel a great deal of confidence in Eemeeshee after old Secumne’s analysis of him. Would his resurgence of interest in life remain or would he suddenly sink again into the apathy and dream-making with which he had wasted so many years—how many centuries, Lane wondered?

Saba hissed in almost inaudible tones.

“Look at those ‘courageous’ animals who could fight their way through a group of unarmed children, themselves unseen, and with these terrible weapons from a distance wipe out the young humans—and often have. Are they not wonderful, agh?”

Lane looked over her ray screen, and sent his own beam along its invisible direction sensing its path with his teltaug ear. Soon he heard and saw the leaders of this invasion.

“Mrs. Da Sylva, may I get a drink?”

A young and pretty slave girl stood in her worn rags near the door, evidently she could not leave her position except by permission.

The woman’s answer, “Later!” told Lane enough; the girl had to remain standing there thirsty. He knew automatically she would not get her drink till her duty period ended. He swung his ray a trifle to take in this Da Sylva.

About her incredibly huge waist strained a glittering girdle of fine metal work. In the girdle was caught many shining loops of dark transparent satin that Lane realized had never been woven by modern hands or machines; it was too beautiful material. Through the beautiful stuff her heavy thighs, the great hips, gleamed grossly.

The barrel of her body projected starkly nude above the girdle, burly and strong as a man, and two strips of gleaming black mesh broadened over her terrific breasts—

broadening over the gross lushness like the great buds of two horribly fecund flowers. Something of the ugly attraction of death was in her. She exuded a passion of cruelty.

The great strong rounds of her shoulders were shining naked. This stark, gross parody of womanhood stood there, too vividly outlined by the mellow, age-old beauty of the Elder chamber, and the medusa coils of her black hair framed a face of heavy, almost masculine beauty. The sensuous, too-full lips, an aquiline nose—she looked the female pirate to perfection.

In Lane's mind her wide red mouth, those dark horrible depths of her eyes, the black magic of her cruel face was printed in bitter ink forever.

Her words were directed to a milder edition of herself, seated nearby and peering intently at something taking place in the distance which she was watching over the old ray screen.

"I married him, the tout, and he took me to the caves."

"I guess you soon turned the tables on him, eh, Deliar?"

"Precious right I did. I soon had the big-shot wound around my finger, and it wasn't long till he died and left me in charge. We have come a long way since then, haven't we, Miro?"

"We have managed to abolish these red dupes' ideas of freedom, and made a paying machine out of their labor, and their mines. We have overcome the best and oldest of the dreaded Eastern rays; the goody, goody things that they were! And now this rich western area lies open to us."

"When we get this area lined up to production, we will move southward. I have heard of some great stores of the Elder treasures under California."

STANDING behind Miro, the Da Sylva woman watched her, then said:

"Give that loafing workman a little 'sinus' through the soles of his feet; he has been laying down on the job."

Manipulating a pain ray through the screen before her, Miro laid the man upon the mine's floor with pain, he lay there writhing and shrieking with the sudden attack. As the pain ceased, he got up and seized his shovel, began to labor with a great show of industry. What else could he do?

"That's what these lazy b— need, a dose of pain to tell them they are not anything but dogs to us. They will learn to work!"

Lean-ribbed from poor food and pale from the underworld lack of sun, the workmen labored on, nor looked up at the screams and commotion of the one punished. They wore regular blue denim, ragged and soiled, in their miner's caps the regular miner's lamp hung. It was some ancient boring now being worked again, and by the looks it was gold, and very rich.

It was a white quartz vein, heavily shot with the yellow stuff. The vein was all of twelve feet wide. The men worked in a heavy silence. Fear rode them was apparent.

Behind Lane, Eemeeshee's preparatory tactical rearrangement seemed about finished. As his ray swept up to them, Saba pointed out Da Sylva's central chamber, where the power of this place seemed to have its home. Eemeeshee took a good look, and Lane could hear his "Hah!" of disgust and a kind of solemn glee in him at the set-up. Lane knew he was thinking, "This is going to be a cinch." Lane hoped he was right.

Suddenly from two miles overhead a cream-colored ray shot down through the blackness, and the "ulegra" (Elder word for electric) flowed over the ray, into the war-ray chambers where the rows of great-bodied, dull-faced fighting ro waited, animating them for the emergency that the watch ray far overhead had sensed, having observed the grey opacity with which Eemeeshee had surrounded his columns.

In seconds the grey cloud around them was shot through with the flaming disbeams from the great war-ray mech. They weren't connecting, for Eemeeshee had caused a great area of the rock to become opaque, but they were searching out the area with a systematic thoroughness that left no room for doubt that they would score a hit soon or late.

Eemeeshee's great unturned caricature of a nose, lumpy and grotesque, flamed red with excitement. His vast, pillow-soft white body quivered like a grub on a fish-hook as he waved both hands at the watching rays of his columns of ray-spheres to fire and keep firing. His excited thought struck fear into Lane, for he was too much like some womanish officers he had seen,

who lose all self control in emergency.

But the columns of Indian-manned ray-cars began to pull the steady-fire studs on their instrument panels, and their thousand rays were soon lashing out in perfect, irresistible alignment toward the huge war-ray chamber where the great mutilated bodies of the ro-ray men moved machine-like above the great cannon, sweeping the vast and deadly nozzles directing dis-flow rays in searching patterns through the opaque cloud that was Eemeeshee's position.

Almost to the source of those flaming beams our own beams reached, but not quite. Something was wrong, Eemeeshee's beams were not reaching, not striking down those dull-faced robots. Saba added her own huge ray to the multiple beam, and the glowing transparent path of the ray moved within a few short feet of the vast mechanisms that were blasting at them with the terrible energies created by that forgotten race.

Now down from that female leader Da Sylva's luxurious chamber a ray reached in upon those laboring robots, searching their minds for their almost non-existent thoughts as she looked for a way to reach the attackers within their impenetrable opacity. A premonition of failure, a feeling that if they were going to win this fray and live through it they had better do something in a hurry. Lane shot a telaug ray back at Eemeeshee, but the old loafer was slumped in a dead faint! Excitement had proved too much for him!

Lane looked at Saba. Her flushed, worried face told him she had seen what had happened to their champion from the past. In spite of himself Lane had to grin at the big booby fainting on them.

Nearer and nearer the searching, criss-crossing dis-rays reached toward their columns. Lane knew it was a matter of seconds before they found the Red Legion with death. To make matters worse, the terrific power the their dis-rays was turning the opaque rock back to normally transparent polarity, the penetrays guiding the beams made the searched parts of the great cloud in the rock as clear as glass. This made it much easier for the dull-minded robots to keep their systematic search pattern.

Saba swung open the disc of the door, leaped out into the great tunnel, raced backward to the huge crystalline floating structure in which the unconscious Eemeeshee

lay, his great lips curved in the sensual, childish expression of pleasure which was habitual to him and to all who are slaves to the dream-mech habit. Lane guessed he was living over some of the dreams of infinite pleasure which had wasted his centuries old life.

The lithe Indian girl clawed her way into the complexities of the interior, hurled her soft lovely body in unaccustomed violent exertion toward the controls of that vast ancient machine of Eemeeshee's where must lie their only salvation, if there were any for them. Even as she sought for the way into Eemeeshee's airtight living chamber, the master beam of the war-ray from the enemy's robotic humans found the tail end of their column, began to blot from existence the crystal bubbles, which broke and melted under the mighty power of destruction as if in truth but bubbles of nothingness.

CHAPTER VIII

Desperate Charge

DELIAR DA SYLVA turned to her companion.

"There goes another danger—up in smoke. So will they all. I am curious as to just who and what that column of mech is, anyway. I had not thought another power like our own in strength existed in all the western caverns."

Miro smiled in relief at her mistress. Then she turned back to watch the terrible power of the flaming dis-ray eating steadily at the long, now revealed column of ray-cars. She clenched and unclenched her long-fingered, red-nailed hands until blood streamed from the palms. It had been a close thing and they both knew it.

"Tonight we will have our fill of killing, the survivors will certainly enjoy themselves while they learn who it was they attacked."

"When you've sated your pleasure, may I then kill some of them my own way?" asked Miro, her gross face owl-hungry, her fleshy lips curling back over her teeth redly, a slight drool on her chin.

The great dis-ray which had been rubbing out the floating cars, completely destroying the occupants, was now changed by Da Sylva's order to a concussive vibratory ray which merely laid out the occupants unconscious. She wanted her meat

alive for the "fun" to follow. Swiftly the rays swept over the endlessly long columns.

* * *

"ADVANCE," screamed Saba over the great telemach with which Eemeeshee had maintained contact with the columns. It was their only salvation to pull forward those few feet needed for their beams to reach that center of the vast machines where sourced the beams destroying them.

As one man, the Indians, spurred to quick obedience by Saba's shriek, swung forward the levers of the anti-grav generators and the remaining few hundreds of ray-cars swept forward, down upon the flaming source of the death. Now their beams, weakened to less than effective strength, reached the chamber, but failed to stop the living, mutilated gargoyles within the chamber from their ray-driven robot work. On and on they plunged toward the death-dealing master-ray, and swiftly the great vibratory beams lashed at them.

Saba now pressed all the studs she knew anything about on the great organ-like keyboard of Eemeeshee's weapon car, and the beams reached out toward the war-ray chamber where the ray-ro toiled like maddened devils swinging the great controls of the master mech—for they were built for men three times the modern height.

Saba downed the "ro" at the great lever of the master-beam, one by one they fell as she flung back her hair from her flaming face and strained every muscle at the great machine's levers. Clumsily the huge beam swept about the chamber, striking the laboring ro more by chance than by skill. The whole smoking and scream-filled chamber fell into near darkness as the big human robots dropped in death and their weight, dropped releasingly from the levers, let the great, whining dynamos slow into an idling hum.

Saba started her search of the whole area for the other war-ray posts which she knew must be manned; must be readying themselves for attack.

Following her lead, the red men at the smaller ray controls sent their beams lancing out in a terrific criss-cross of searching rays—for there were several hundred of them still in untouched condition. All about lay their comrades, some charred and still-smoking corpses, others in a trace like death from the concussion of the

vibratory ray sat at their ray-mech switch-panels like frozen men, staring straight ahead, or slumped in retching paralysis from the effects of other beams.

Now, seeing the mighty mass of ray still searching for them, the Da Sylva ray-ro, stationed far above her chambers* in desperation gave up their silence and darkness which had protected from this sudden assault and staked their chances on a sudden lashing attack with their long distance ray-needles. (These are very thin pencils of ray whose very narrowness makes the power needed to activate them much less, and the "carry" of the ray is much farther.)

These fiery needles of death reaching down at them from a half dozen points in the darkness overhead, began to pick off the red men one by one, the fiery needles searching swiftly through their bodies till a fatal spot was found. (The pain of such a death is excruciating, for the needles are not fatal unless they pierce the heart or cut the spinal column at the base of the brain.) Steadily these needles lanced through their flesh, searching inexorably for their heart strings; while Saba with Eemeeshee's master mech ray searched the miles of darkness overhead for the source of the needles.

One by one, under the fierce-eyed, sweating girl's swift desperate hands, the far, fiery lances of death ceased to plague them, and at last the whole area before their advance fell silent and dark.

*In the ancient war-ray arrangement of ray chambers, the ray-mech are grouped about a central master ray in concentric rings of eight or ten tiers of levels, making a hundred to two-hundred ray chambers disposed in a cylindrical shape with the master ray at the center. Modern dwellers in the caverns usually man but some half-dozen of these ancient chambers, and are able to use but two or three percent of the mechanisms installed in the vast chambers. But to search the intricacies of the great old defensive setup took time.

In the story "Masked World," I described the use of a teleport for purposes of attaining immortality. I want to tell you this use of the teleport is purely invention. To my knowledge the teleport leaves nothing behind, is not safe for transportation of life any distance—though it might be so in capable hands. Most teleportations of humans result in amnesia or total insanity. Will try to label in stories which uses of antique mech are correct and which are invention.—R.S.S.

Now again Saba called into the augment mech her command, "Advance!" and again the levers plunged forward, their cars lifted slightly and slid forward faster, faster, into the heart of the web of caverns where laired that evil acquisitiveness, that cruel, fleshy female thing Lane had seen for short moments before the attack began.

AS THEY slid silently forward in the darkness Lane was thinking of a newspaper item he had seen a month before of a treasure of two billion dollars of bullion hidden by the Japanese in the waters of Tokyo bay. He connected their victory, inexperienced and inept as it had been, with this item in the papers. For if ray personnel and information and power was as all-embracing and wonderfully powerful and intelligent as some devotees of the secret rays say (and believe) he knew that two billion would not have lain there all that time it did. Too, if such as this Da Sylva had been doing her duty by the allies, instead of plundering along underground, she could have been in Japan; her rays would have seen this information of the two billion dollars bullion sunk in the harbor, and she would have acquired the money, for no one but the Japs knew it was there for months. He wondered how many proud and lazy ray were cursing their timid failure to invade Japan with the surface soldiers, when they read this item of missed loot in the papers.

But then, it might have been some loyal young fighter like Saba who had uncovered the stuff for the Yank soldiers. And it might have been their absence from the home caverns that laid the ancient place open to such as Da Sylva, their absence fighting on the front; unseen, unknown, unheralded—but fighting with the vast ancient mystery mech for their country which did not even know they existed. It was hard to reconcile their activities, if that was true, with their continued deprivation of such medically valuable information from suffering people the world over. This ancient secret, this time-forgotten monopoly, why did it go on? Lane looked back at Eemeeshee, snoring peacefully in his dream, and knew why.

Because those time-pampered, God-mech raised creatures who should have been like Gods; worshipped pleasure—were raised never to make an effort by the ancient all-providing living machines.

The Elder race must have had some stimulus from nature or from their own wisdom that the past of such as Eemeeshee did not have in their life. Else they would not have been the Elder race; they would have been such as Eemeeshee, and they would never have produced the mech that had made life so easy for Eemeeshee, and there would have been no Eemeeshee, and no necessity for struggling against the more evil groups of the caverns.

CHAPTER IX

Victory for the Red Legion

AS THEY advanced, fire from the remaining outposts kept harrassing them. Not hitting much, but dangerously close, firing blindly as they were through Eemeeshee's opacity ray making the rock impervious to the penetray vibrants. Slowly, steadily, they found the source of those rays and wiped them out with flashing blasts of flaming energy through the resisting rock.

They could hear Da Sylva screaming thought-orders, her thought-voice like a banshee's anger in her desperation. It was a good feeling to hear that cruel voice facing death. It was good to know she was not relishing the last pangs of some long-tortured "creep" or slave human worker of hers.

At last she, too, fell unconscious under a bolt from Saba's ray, and the far outposts fell silent. They could hear over the telaug beams their frantic thoughts as they scrambled into the gravity defying hemispheres and shot away along the great cavern roads. Half their forces set out in pursuit, the other half made sure there were no traps, and took over Da Sylva's central chamber and her own garishly revulsive self.

Eemeeshee looked long and ponderingly upon Deliar Da Sylva's sleek, yet gross and revolting body. Her fate, what should it be, what could he do to punish her, as Eemeeshee's enemies were supposed to be punished of old time?

The others under Saba's swift thought-voice supervision took over the controls of the central master rays and swept the whole cavern labyrinth with a vast crisscross of seeking rays to make quite sure that the fight was really over and no man lying out in the dark for one overturning treacherous

sweep of deadly ray when all their "shorter" ray fans were off and they were unsuspecting.

Lane had time for one long sigh of relief, realizing that the fear that had plagued and killed his Red Legion was now gone. But why, why had Da Sylva sent killers on the trail of the Legion? Lane resolved to find out!

Lane sent his own teltaug beam from his floating car upon Da Sylva's now half-conscious head. As that awful sub-conscious thought was augmented into overwhelmingly loud impulses within his mind a terrible revulsion at even hearing what she thought took place. It was like reading Satan's mind, if Satan was a woman.

The things she had done, the terrible ideas that showed now to Lane as great images of reality of the past, were filtered and changed by time, but augmented by the teltaug into reality again. The scenes of her past fascinated him as a bird is fascinated by a snake, for Lane did not know that the teltaug cannot be used at too great strength for long periods without hypnosis, or he had forgotten Saba's warning in his first shocked mental immersion into evil female thought now taking place within his own mind more strongly than his own pale unaugmented thought. It was strange to feel oneself a woman, an evil, passionate, lustful, cruel and bloody woman with a past that Bluebeard would have envied. Strange and fascinating, for the joy of her mind in her past was relived by Da Sylva as she realized she had not long to live. Thankfully came her thought.

"Anyway, I got mine while the getting was good!"

SUDDENLY into that garishly distorted beauty where the handiwork of this Da Sylva bunch had managed to alloy the original ancient beauty and the barbaric Indian additions of a different kind of charm with an overlay of modern gaudiness; into that scene of victory and vengeance came a mighty voice over a green beam of terrific power.

"Eemeeshee, I am Mexitli. You have brought war to people under my protection. I must kill you, Eemeeshee, even though you are of the old race. I cannot allow this insult.

Eemeeshee, whose beet-red apoplectic face had resumed its normal pallor through his unconscious fit and his subsequent

awakening to a victory he had failed to contribute much to winning, suddenly went a beet red again, his great arms began to quiver, his lips to drool and tremble. Even Lane could see through the common ray trick, but the mighty Eemeeshee—no, he had to believe everything he heard. Some fleeing enemy had decided to make one more try at besting them—had flung an unobserved teltaug beam into the chambers of Da Sylva and had carefully searched Eemeeshee's mind for his one greatest fear. Finding this fear in his memories of some feared enemy of the past, he had imitated the nature of this Mexitli—the voice at first—and now into the chamber came a great solidograph projection of the figure of this fake "Mexitli". Even Lane understood the nature of the ruse. This new enemy had seen the image in Eemeeshee's thought, had caught the thing with the antique thought recorder attachment, was now reprojecting the image from Eemeeshee's own mind. But not Eemeeshee—oh no. If some one said something, he had to believe it.

Lane understood now why Secumne had been so discouraged with the character of these creatures of Eemeeshee's kind. His great face purple with fear and upset circulation, his trembling hands sought the great control levers of his crystal mechanism. The anti-gravs lifted it, slowly at first, then rapidly, the great shining machine floated off down the corridor, swung into the wide ways toward the south. Deaf to all their shouted entreaties over their rays as they watched this craven flight of their leader from a mere voice and projection, Eemeeshee's great floating temple of forgotten machinery began to speed away from them, was soon lost to their following search rays.

Meanwhile Saba, taking it all in with a half smile of sad understanding on her face, swung the huge rays from the war-ray chamber of Da Sylva's where she had remained with four stalwarts of the Legion to insure that the great old mech were properly manned. Swung them searching the distance for the origin of this fake voice and picture which had cost them their leader. Swung them, and, with gathering doubt and indecision on her face, failed to find the source.

Something that Eemeeshee was thinking as he fled puzzled Lane.

"Mexitli is a messenger from Apollo.

Mexitli is an Apollo."

"Just what did Eemeeshee mean by mentioning Apollo? Just what did Eemeeshee mean by mentioning the name Apollo? How could he know anything about a God moderns think Greek?" Saba turned to Lane, saying,

"I will show you our Apollo records from the past. Apollo was a God known all over earth when he was here, and he is well known to Eemeeshee from his dream life—which is made up of records, is in truth a reliving of the ancient God life. That is why he is so frightened. The coming of Mexitli is to him a sign of Apollo's anger. He would not be frightened, but long immersion in the record dream life has made him unable to think of such things as in the past. To him they are very much today, and he is frightened of Mexitli who was a very vengeful follower of Apollo. Sometime I will show you records of that time when Apollo was on earth."

"All that is not much help to us. We are now in grave danger without Eemeeshee's help to us. Whoever is doing the faking that scared Eemeeshee off must have some idea of following up the fake with an attack. We've got to find him first."

"We shall." Saba was grim, and her women hastened about on her thought orders, too fast for Lane to hear or understand what she was telling them.

NOW, from the projection of the terrible figure of Mexitli, a tall black-feathered giant of horrific aspect, his mouth a great, fanged cavern in his painted face, his hands holding strange instruments—from this grotesque figure from the far past of the Amerind domination of cavern life—came streamers of pale fire out upon them. Stronger and stronger grew these pale streamers of fire, and pain and heat began to drive them back from proximity to the great and growing, solid-seeming apparition.

Saba shouted to Lane.

"Do not fear or flee. If he could kill with the mech he has activated he would do so. He may cause pain and discomfort, but I doubt he can kill—or he would."

Again that terrible voice from the past flung its weird thought-pictures at us from the apparition, saying:

"One every day. Now it will be one every minute, till you flee again as before. I am not what you think. Die, dogs of

Indians, die! You are not men. Your leader flees. You are shameless cowards. Flee! Flee!"

Even as Lane absorbed the abstract message and made it into words in his mind, a long streamer wrapped around Stevens from head to foot. He dropped to the floor, writhing and shrieking in agony. Lane leaped forward, seized Stevens' shoulders, dragged him back from the pale, painful fire of the rays.

They had not bothered to bind or imprison the woman Da Sylva or her companion, and in the chamber with Lane were only Saba, Stevens and two or three of the Red Legion. They had depended on the many ray beams from the ray chambers they had occupied on holding such captives. For it is impossible for a person to run away from a ray; its vast range makes the attempt somewhat like that of an ant trying to run away from a tidal wave. It just can't be done.

But with Eemeeshee fleeing in the distance, and most of the ray mech engaged in hunting for the source of the Mexitli projection, Da Sylva heaved her heavy body into one of the empty half-spheres, followed by Miro, and made the attempt anyway. They did not notice her till she was some distance down the long corridor leading to the ancient highway toward the north.

Lane sprang to the stationary ray installation in the big chamber and sent Da Sylva's own ray after her, flashed a bolt into the drive mech of the car, stopped it, smoking, dead, about a mile down the corridor. Other than that, they found no time to bother with the two women, left them trudging on foot toward the highway. They would have time later to pick them up. Meanwhile this new menace had to be dealt with.

Da Sylva found another abandoned grav-car and made good her escape—thanks to the confusion. They were to pay for their carelessness with this she-scorpion.

SABA at last traced the tenuous projection beam to its source. Lane, watching, was puzzled to find several ragged, dirty workmen in a great ray chamber, manipulating the telesolidograph expertly. Saba sent a telug beam into the chamber asking,

"Who are you?"

In their minds the answer "Votan war-

riors" flashed inadvertently and Saba shouted in sudden glad understanding. These were some of the original Indian people who had held these caverns before the advent of Da Sylva; had not known of the retiring Eemeeshee far to the north; did not recognize the men of the Red Legion as allies. Able to kill, they yet were thankful to the Red Legion for driving out Da Sylva and freeing them, but at the same time they saw an opportunity to wrest from this struggle their old supremacy and had sent the projection of Mexitli into the chamber to frighten off Eemeeshee.

Their cunning analysis of Eemeeshee's nature and the effectiveness of their bug-a-boo in accomplishing their object were interesting to us, but Saba explained that we had come only to set them free; had no designs on their possessions or homes.

Soon they joined Saba in Da Sylva's central chamber and helped to enlist the others of the surviving Votan who were found fleeing their bondage in all directions, now that their cruel guards had gone.

That night found the whole system of caverns under this area of Montana under our domination, and the slow swinging watch-rays covering every great old tunnel road from the north and east; others watching too the other highways in case danger came from some of the Da Sylva outfit who might have circled to attack again from some unexpected direction. But all seemed quiet, and it was a triumphant Red Legion and a rejoicing band of Votan ex-slaves who bedded down that night in those magnificent old chambers. Da Sylva had made good her escape, and they thought no more of her. But should have, for Da Sylva was not through. In the middle of the night a choking sensation waked Saba, her eyes in the darkness un-naturally sensitized by some fear, saw, as only Saba could see in such darkness by some sixth sense, the clouds of strange choking gas flooding the chambers, billowing down the corridors. She leaped to the great vision screen and sent the central master ray of the great fortification circling in search of this strange threat.

It was true. Billowing down the corridors from the north came a strange gas, and choking and gasping, fleeing before the rolling billows of death, came the hundreds of Votans who had bedded in the northern chambers; came also the men set to watch the northern guard rays in their automatic

sweep of the northern highways. Comprehension came swiftly to Saba, and she woke all the sleeping men, swiftly told them to prepare to flee from their hard-won victory. Lane standing now beside Saba, seeking a way to understand what was happening, heard her mutter:

"The teleports— she left one in these caverns set to receive, made her way northward during the distraction of the Votan attack, and now, as we sleep, has placed some ancient gas from the storerooms of the Elder race into the sending chamber of some abandoned teleport in the northern ways, sending into our area vast quantities of the ancient gas. Luckily it does not seem very deadly . . ."

Lane answered her unconscious speech.

"The gas is cyanogen chloride. It is deadly enough if it gets dense enough, and in these close quarters it is insupportable. Can you not blow it back upon them in some way? Are there no air pumps, nothing to rid ourselves of the gas? What are you saying of teleports? I do not understand . . ."

"There is no time. If we had time, we could set men at getting the ancient pumps in running order to clear the air, but with the gas rolling down upon us, all I see is flee while there is time. As the gas dissipates, we can return to these caverns as quickly as Da Sylva. She must think us fools to think that we will not."

OVER her telaug, swiftly flashing from group to group to group of our men, Saba gave the order to evacuate immediately.

That retreat, heartsick at their losses, plagued by the pursuing demoniacs under Da Sylva's raging thought-voice control whipping them to suicidal efforts to reach them with their equally ranged weapons, made their efforts to protect their rear costly. Steadily the Red Legion paid for their temerity in attacking Da Sylva—with their blood. Continually the fleshy, vengeful witch sacrificed mindless ro after ro to get within range, shoving a mass of speeding floating spheres ahead here while over there in adjacent parallel corridors, overhead, or deep underneath, sped forward single ray-cars in an endeavor to distract their watch-ray from one or the other long enough to get in a shot.

Da Sylva's numbers, steadily augmented by her now returning men, speeding up

from the far-flung frontiers of her holdings to take their place in the battle line, were now equal to their own. And their inexperience proved no match for the mindless ro, who under control from the many control beams from the cars of Da Sylva's henchmen, were each as capable in handling the ray as the veterans controlling their thought.

Steadily their losses grew, car by car they fell into smouldering wreckage, faster and faster the panic stricken Red Men fled before them.

Silently Lane cursed the non-existent spine of the great old bag of wind, Eemeeshee.

"Breath-Master" indeed! He must have gotten that name from bragging of exploits he was too timid to have done, or from his short-winded and continual puffing over the augmented telaug beams, heard by the Indians of the surface long ago, rather than from any mastery of the winds of fate and the heavens as he had supposed.

Death flamed after them from near a thousand lances of the red-flaming disneedles, and ever and again one of his loyal Red Legion shrieked as the needles sought through his body for a fatal spot. On they fled, the levers setting the anti-grav beams into the forward-driving slant in the last notch. Nothing but the auto-ray eyes controlled them from plunging into the curves of the cavern ways. The silent, gleaming dust-laden beauty of the mighty, earth crust supporting pillars of the hardened rock of the Elder's creation fled past them in terrible rushing rows, the eye could not follow the whirling march of the pillared, time-heavy vastness past into the dark.

Steadily Lane searched the backward trail with his beam at full extension focus, firing, firing, and at every blast some car of Da Sylva's flamed into hurtling fiery death, left a smouldering, crushing wreck against the cavern wall. Lane thought, each car he destroyed, what a surface engineering corporation would pay for just one of the gadgets with which those cars were crammed—and he had to destroy the invaluable ancient work to live on, to save anything for future man. He must live. This destroying nemesis behind them must die.

But they had one ace in the hole which Lane was counting on Da Sylva having failed to note. Before leaving their own area, Lane and Saba had posted some thirty men and the remainder of the women in

their own master ray chambers. These great beams, which they knew would cover some fifty miles of their route at full extension, constituted a place to run to very definitely. As they neared these caverns which were familiar, near to Eemeeshee's home, Lane sent his telaug beam far ahead, kept screaming a warning to these few remaining stay-at-homes, who were their last resort now. Their children, their women, their homes, and this home-guard ray, were their last hope. As he flashed past an outpost of this small force—one John Flannery, a half-breed Indian of Irish parentage—Lane shouted at him, where he crouched over the ancient mech.

"Give them the works, John, in the fourth passage."

There were four main highways from the north, their flight and attempts at evasion had taken them into the third of these, while Da Sylva had continued with her main force down the fourth, which in the end reached the same goal. Lane had often speculated on the "age" of this fourth passage, which seemed of different and older construction than the other three; was perhaps the first of the many great borings made by the elder race in this area.

Flannery, big red-haired and high-cheek-boned, his blue eyes flashing a reassuring message to John as he flashed past, began at once to fire upon the Da Sylva cars. His great old stationary mech gave off a ray of vastly greater potential of destruction than their own portable weapons, and his solid, unshifting base of rock made his fire more accurate. Lane shot on down the great tube of rock toward the central ray chambers to make sure the force there was made aware of the turn of events.

But there was no need. They had been watching, holding their fire until a sure kill was in order; and at Flannery's attack upon Da Sylva, the vast old central mech began to flame with power, over their heads into the far ways flashed the mighty shafts of death, and within minutes Da Sylva and all her gang were things of the past, smouldering piles of debris upon the forgotten floors of the Titans' highways.

SABA, taking no chances, ordered at once a return to the Votan caverns. Reduced to a fourth of their original number by the reverses they had suffered, they were not happy as they returned toward Montana's under-rock.

Again at the work of making the former nest of Da Sylva a place safe for themselves, Lane called a meeting of all of the surviving warriors. They stood before him, weary, disheartened at their terrible losses; behind them the ranks of the Votan, ragged, starved wrecks of men; and in their faces the knowledge that they expected of these newcomers only a return to life and perhaps freedom.

Lane realized he had to put heart and hope into these men. He knew the Votans understood English from their long watching of the growing civilization over their heads on the surface; knew, too, that he must not let them return to their old ways of repressive hiding and non-development that had made them easy conquest for Da Sylva's gang.

From these few hundred grim-faced weary men, Lane knew he had to build an organization that would ever after make the wisdom of the caverns safe for future men. He lifted both hands in Indian fashion:

"Men of the Red Race, this struggle seems now to have cost too much. We have paid too highly for what we have won. But that is not true. Nowhere on this dark earth does a band of men exist who have won more for their fellow men with their battle. Nowhere have the dead paid with their lives for more than we have won this day.

The Red Race has won here an opportunity to again become a great world power. Here in this den of lust, here in these forgotten and disregarded caverns, we have paid with our blood for a glorious future for all men. We shall bring modern science into these caverns, studying the ancient science and bringing to us all the value of the wisdom of the glorious race. If we remain as one striving toward a greater and more intelligent organization of red men everywhere, these ancient machines and rays, coupled with modern science, will give the red man such power and prestige as has not been his since the first Spaniard drew sword in Mexico."

The Votan Indians, listening and realizing that here was a man and a leader different in aims from any they had known, gave forth with a shout of approbation. Lane continued, glad to see in their faces a shining hope that had not been there before.

"You Votans, here in your former homes as our allies and friends, will be not the

least pillar of the coming new order in the underworld. As time goes on, and you understand that the ancient ways of vegetating and doing nothing here in these wonder caverns but enjoy the pleasure mech of the Gods and sneer at the poor surface people, are gone; that the modern red man has a greater duty to man on earth and the will to perform that duty. Then you will find yourselves glad to be part of the new Red Legion, a Red Legion using all the mighty science of the Gods for building a new way of life for all men.

AFTERWORD

THE REST OF this story the future of the world will have to tell. The red men of America *are* active in the caverns, sometimes ignorant, sometimes backward and too worshipful of the age-old secrecy, but also containing modern men of education and the modern aims of all scientific men everywhere. Even the "creeps" and those people even more changed by the caverns than the creeps, the spider men of the western caverns, are not to be despised because of their knowledge of the wonder world under the rocks of Mother Earth. They will find a way to be useful as civilization comes more and more swiftly to the ancient savage ways of the backward life of the underworld.

The Indians of the underworld are a factor in the coming struggle for power over Earth, and they have a knowledge of the ancient secrets. They have in some areas complete possession of and domination of those mighty mechanisms of the Elder race. Such battles as the one portrayed are taking place in the west today between the white ray and the red; between modern ray people and those who cling to the ancient tradition of secrecy and suppression of all surface peoples. It seems natural to assume that the red men are on the side of progress, on the side of surface sanity in promoting study and use of the ancient Elder race wisdom for surface men.

For those who seek more knowledge of the Elder world I can tell you the red men know much of it from their legends and from such secret groups as the Red Legion, the Black Legion and others. Whether they will tell you about it is another thing.

The history of the Red Men in the caverns is a fascinating thing. For the next story I am going to select a figure you all

think you know, but do you? Apollo. You know all about him. You are wrong. Apollo was a man who came from space, and he came to the American continent in the days when dinosaurs and similar gigantic made life hazardous for the red men. He came for the express purpose of eliminating the serpent race from earth to make way for his own experiments with beneficial rays in making over the race of men on earth toward his ideas of what men should be. That is one reason Apollo has remained as the epitome of masculine beauty the world over. That is what he was: the father of beauty in men. He made it so by moulding men over into his heart's desire. And to do it he held to take the whole world apart. The next story is going

to be about Apollo; and it's plenty different from what the school books tell you of this period. They all admit they don't know much about it, don't they. Well, we don't make that mistake. Our guess as to what happened is plenty close—corroborations prove.

Apollo is a mighty figure in Indian legend under many names. He came to the American continent; he wiped out the dinosaurs; he remade the race of men by treating the reproductive portions of their bodies with beneficial rays. By his science he changed the world. Where he came from we don't know, but we know what he did here pretty well. And it doesn't all come from *Oakspe*. There are many other sources of this view of Apollo.

MYSTERY OF THE DERO TYPESETTER!

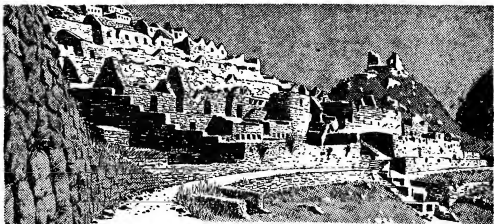
JUST to show you *one* of the almost incredible things that happened to the most snafu issue of *Amazing Stories* ever to "be put to bed," we are publishing below the first "galley" of mathematical equations received from the printer after a delay that made corrections almost impossible, and almost forced us to leave out the article "Unification of Newtonian and Einsteinian Mass Concepts" by Roger P. Graham, and "Is There an

Ether Drift?" by the same author. If you'll compare them with the equations as they appear in the articles themselves, you will see the same amazing "mess" that we saw almost too late to do anything about it! How did this otherwise expert typesetter make *hundreds* of errors and *not know* it; and how did the errors get past the proof-readers? None of the persons involved have offered a satisfactory explanation! Can you?

$$\begin{aligned}
 4.2 \quad & Me = \frac{n}{m} Vfe \\
 4.3 \quad & Me = Vre \frac{n}{m} = mrVre \\
 4.4 \quad & mr = \frac{n}{m} \\
 4.5 \quad & Ee = \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{m} V e \\
 4.6 \quad & Qe = \frac{P0Ee}{P0 m o} \\
 4.7 \quad & Ie = \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{m} V_2 e - \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{m} V^2 re \\
 & = \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{m} (V^2 ie - V^2 re) \\
 4.8 \quad & Ie = \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{m} (V e - Vre)^2
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 4.9 \quad & Ie = \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{m} (V_2 e + V_2 re) - Vre \frac{n}{m} V e \\
 4.10 \quad & Ie = \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{m} (Vie - Vre)_2 \\
 4.11 \quad & Dme = \frac{mrr}{1-r} \\
 4.12 \quad & r = Ie \frac{Ee}{mr} \\
 4.13 \quad & me = \frac{1-r}{Ee - Ie} \\
 4.14 \quad & r = 1 - r = \frac{Ee}{Ee - Ie} \\
 4.15 \quad & r Ie = \frac{1}{2} \frac{mr V^2 re}{p m r p} \\
 4.16 \quad & Ee = \frac{1}{2} \frac{p - c p V^2 re}{p r p mr} \\
 4.17 \quad & m = \frac{v^2}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{c^2}{c^2}}} \\
 4.18 \quad & r = \frac{P0}{P0} - \frac{v^2}{c^2} \\
 4.19 \quad & r = 1 - \frac{P0}{P0} - \frac{v^2}{c^2}
 \end{aligned}$$

SCIENTIFIC



This ancient ruined city is Mechu Picchu, fortress city of a powerful empire. It was the Roma of early America and its importance is as great, if not greater, than that of Roma in the European sphere. It seems to have been from this city that "the footsteps of the Southerners echoed throughout the new land" as is told in that famed old manuscript, the *Chilim Balam*. The phrase invokes great wonderment when one traces the thread of the northern civilizations back along roads leading south.



Picture here is the modern descendant of the ancient Inca. The idea

that the pre-Inca civilization goes back some 18,000 years is possible, but the Inca himself goes back brilliantly for as much as three thousand years, even beyond the chronology of Montezinos.

The extent of the Inca Empire is shown here, extending along the western side of the continent, just under the "bulge" of the upper and main sagment of South America. Shown also are the different cultures and nations absorbed by them in their northward march. The Chimu and the Moche cultures were overwhelmed.



The Spaniard, Montezinos, a scholar, imbued with the desire to learn what he could of the vanished empire before it was too late, tremped the entire continent over, seeking the old readers of the quipus, who had been the historians and the sons of historians. From records long vanished, and others destined to vanish, he learned of the Incas' rise.



MYSTERIES

THE EMPIRE OF THE SUN

By L. TAYLOR HANSEN

What was the mysterious "Empire of the Sun"? Was it the country of the ancient Incas ruled by the "Tiger"?

AND the footsteps of The Southerners echoed throughout the new land . . ." says America's most ancient hook, The Chilam Balam. It is a phrase which haunts one's mind as one continues to run the various northern threads of a deeply inwoven pattern back to what is apparently a southern source. One becomes increasingly reminded of the world of Caesar's day when all roads led to Rome.

At last one begins to notice this southern continent where the antiquity of countless ages awaits the study of skilled minds. It is a vast untouched field in which the merest scratches have been made, and before which those who know it the best stand appalled at their own ignorance. Dr. John W. Sargent, for example, holding degrees of doctor of science from Oxford and P.H.D. from Llma, and former leader of a scientific expedition to Peru for the British Museum says: "After twenty-eight years spent in probing the past of Peru and Latin America in general, I feel that I know less today about it than I imagined I did when I began."

Yet Dr. Sargent's other ideas are more intriguing. A long list of facts has convinced him that man was living in South America some two hundred thousand years ago, while he is inclined to join Poznansky, the Bolivian savant, in the idea that the pre-Incan civilization in the high Andes dates back some eighteen thousand years. As for the Incas themselves, he would go beyond the chronology of Montesinos and give that brilliant empire the duration of three thousand years.

Most other scientists will not follow him in this. For example, he gives Manco Capac as the name of the first Inca and then Sinchi Rocca as the name of the second dynasty a hundred generations later. Linguists are no longer willing to concede that these were Incas, as they do not have Quichua names. They are therefore to be relegated to the great legendary powers who preceded the rise of the historical Incan Empire which Pizarro conquered and wrecked. Of these pre-Incan empires there apparently were several, yet at the dawn stood the titan of them all. In many ways this empire seemed to be more impregnable than the Imperial City of Caesar. Then Something-Happened. What the nature of that Something may

have been, is hard to tell now because the Great Colossus of The South existed so many milleniums ago. . . .

It is not the Incan Empire which holds the attentions of the archaeologists in South America, though due to the childish inability of the conquering Spaniards to understand and appreciate the institutions or the history of a foreign people, little enough is known of that civilization. We have two authorities. One is the mission-bred Inca boy who spent most of his life in Spain, and who wrote the history of The Incan Empire from what tales he could remember from the childhood stories once told him by his mother.

The other authority is the scholar, Montesinos, a Spaniard, who, imbued with a desire to learn what could be learned of the vanished empire before it was too late (the conquest had taken place before his birth), tramped the entire continent over, seeking out the old readers of the quippus¹, who had been the historians, and the sons and grandsons of the historians. From records long vanished, and from others destined to vanish since he made up his history, the young Spaniard reconstructed the rise of The Incan Empire.

It is one of the most fantastic facts possible, that the history followed today is that composed by the Inca boy, who, as a poor scholar who learns a historical sequence too young and without great enthusiasm might be expected to do, probably forgot most of the list of rulers; while the list of the scholar Montesinos, who went to the historians for his data, is the one which is questioned. However, it is only fair to point out that the list of Montesinos does contain these legendary names which are now thought to belong not to the Incas but to their legendary ancestors, the supposed First Great Empire of The Sun.

In order to understand how such a confusion could come about, we must remember that the Incas claim to have been driven out of their ancient stronghold in the Andes of the Tiahuanaco where "The Sun First Arose", and to have taken refuge toward the Southwest. A period of chaos and anarchy followed, in which they left their homeland and went north, wandering for many generations in the forests of the northland. Then,

following the urging of a great leader, they returned in a tremendous migration to Cuzco, just north of the heart of the first empire, and began a second march to power.

There is one date-stone which would seem to mark the second rise of The Incan Sun Empire to somewhere between the third century B.C. of Montesinos and the eleventh century A.D. of the Incan child. That is that the Great Reformer, in his customary white toga-like costume, healing the sick and preaching against war and human sacrifice, was abroad in the land under the name of Viracocha and established his christian-like worship of a Supreme and all-powerful deity, before the rise of The Incas proper. Thus a five to eight hundred A.D. date would be more probable for the advent of The Second Sun Empire, while the great emperors of Montesinos must be pushed back into the past beyond the times of anarchy and chaos and southern exile or northern wanderings which their legends so charmingly recount.

Partly contemporaneous with the span of the Incas and partly subsequent to them, probably even as the Mayan Span is related to the Aztec, is the Moon-Empire of Chan-Chan. From archaeological evidence, it seems to be divided into three parts. There is Chimú I with its Spider design, its vigorous and realistic art of portrait pottery, and its fairy-like beauty of white stucco and painted and frescoed walls which the old city must have presented.²

Then came conquest from which the queen city of Chan-Chan never entirely recovered. The influence was now probably that of Tiahuanaco or highland. Science has not as yet decided which pre-Inca civilization conquered Chan-Chan. One influence suggests that the conqueror was not Tiahuanaco or any other highland power, but rather a power from the direction of the Caribbean. That is the sudden appearance of much black ware. That this also may have been due to trade is possible as Chan-Chan was undoubtedly a great trading power. Yet the sudden conquest of both the First Sun Empire and of Chan-Chan by the Easterners is hinted in The Popul Vuh, for it says that the Two Chiefs plotted against the wealth of the old Fire Empire, and left their "Land of Malze" in the Great Highlands for the magnificent capital of Xibalba, only to be defeated and burned in the Sacred Fire. According to northern legendary fragments, The Spider gave refuge to the orphaned children of the dead chief. Was this the offense for which she was burned?

After an anarchy or chaos of some time, Chan-Chan seems to have partly recovered and continued as Chimú II. The conquerors had been amalgamated or educated but the old vigor and inspiration for realism which made Chan-Chan of Chimú I so unique in Amerind art was gone forever. This culture (Chimú I) was apparently foreign in its origin and its foothold was only temporary as cultures go, though it may have

lasted for two or more milleniums. Like the culture to the north of it, Kroeber says that the Early Chimú: "beaves into our view as essentially developed, as self-sufficient and rich, and as lacking in known antecedents, as the Nazca style."³

Tello, without doubt, the father of Peruvian archaeology, derives most of the culture traits of even Early Chimú from what he calls the Archaic Highland. He sees the symbol of The Tiger, sometimes with curling ends like snakes heads (or Spider?) as basic to all culture of the southern continent. In this he is probably right. As Kroeber remarks: "with fuller data, the part of The Highland will grow rather than shrink. For this fundamental view and its substantiation at many points credit is primarily due to Tello."⁴

Thus The Spider, when studied singly and by itself, or in connection with the north, where its trading powers left behind much influence, seems to be an important culture. Yet when placed against its own background of older Tiger and Snake, and probably also older First Sun Empire, it shrinks in importance. Of one thing we seem to be rather positive. There is apparently no evidence of an archaeological nature which would allow us to postulate a defeat of the Sun Empire by The Moon.

Whence came then, this memory of the defeat of The Sun by The Moon? Was the State of Chan-Chan, powerful though its influence may once have been, the famous conqueror? Or were the people of Chan-Chan the "children of The Moon" in the same manner as the Incas were called "Children of the Sun" meaning that their ancestors and not they, were the mighty ones? And whence came The Tiger in the motifs of even Early Chimú? Had The Tiger ruled the land before the advent of The Spider's coming? And The Incas, who conquered Chimú II; who remembered an earlier Empire of The Sun; and whose history, according to their legends, seems to so curiously parallel the allegorical history of The Popul Vuh⁵, who were they? The nations of the northern continent, who claim to have seen "The First Sun Arise" are the widespread and powerful Nahuas. Do they hold the missing key?

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¹ A quippu is a series of colored and knotted strings, each knot of which stands for a word or sentence. Relics of these, degenerated, because no longer recognized as such, are to be found wound into the braided hair of many tribes. Since even the Karibs of Columbus' day were quippu-reckoners, it appears to have been an eastern culture-

trait, though vestiges of it, probably carried thence by trade, are to be found in Tahiti and China of the third millennium B.C. The center of the culture trait of quippu-reckoning is apparently South America.

Recently, the quippu recording populations and tribute of the Incan Empire have been found. From them we have learned that the Incan Empire at the time of the conquest ruled about three hundred million souls, or three times the population of the present United States. Today, Peru has a population of five million.

² See *Articles on Empire of The Moon and The Spider Totem*.

³ The Nazca culture is of Mexican affinities according to Kroeber. According to him, not only the truncated pyramids, but also the three-legged vessels of the Nascas suggest a Mexican source. Other authorities have noted a similarity in design between this locality and Oaxaca, while the similarity of Viracocha and Wixicocha as names for The Great Reformer is also significant.

⁴ Tello is a full-blooded Quichua Indian, who

absorbed the legends of his people during his Indian childhood. He says that his earliest memory is the tiny Indian village with its curious half-pagan festivals, and the ancient songs which his mother sang as she sat weaving lama wool into blankets whose patterns reached into the depths of the past. Today he is the world's greatest authority upon his people and their early neighbors, the author of many books and the head of the Lima Museum.

⁵ According to the *Popul Vuh*, the first rulers who were burned in the Sacred Fire of Xibalba were the aggressors in that war. Their posthumous and orphaned twin sons by a Xibalban princess then returned to their grandmother where they were raised but were ill-treated by their elder half-brothers of the monkey-totem. They then spent most of their youth in the northern woodland shooting birds with their blow-pipe (Algonkins?) and returning to their home defeated the elder brothers and took over their music and culture before setting out to revenge the death of their father and overthrow their mother's people.

HOW TO USE THE SHAVER ALPHABET

By THE EDITORS OF AMAZING STORIES

EVER since *Amazing Stories* first published Mr. Richard S. Shaver's "mysterious" alphabet which he claimed to have received from the "caves" and which was claimed by him to be the "key" to all languages, we have received repeated requests for reprinting of the alphabet itself, and for more information about it. This article is an attempt to comply with these requests, and to present more completely and more accurately the principles involved.

Originally we published only the alphabet, with the meanings attributed to each letter. We did not go into "shades" of meaning, but gave the bare framework—which was sufficient to arouse a storm of interest, and sufficient to prove to the veriest tyro that the alphabet is important. We did not go into the "ancient language," the "mother" tongue of all languages, at all. We did not because many basics were not fully understood (nor are they now). However, due to the work that has been done by Mr. Shaver, by your editors, by many readers, we are able to give a more complete picture—and we are able to present an hypotheses which will certainly prove startling to the experts, and will even more certainly arouse a storm of disagreement and criticism. (See Mr. Shaver's article called "Proof" in this issue.)

Many of our readers will have read Lancelot Hogben's "The Loom of Language," which is perhaps the most authoritative book in print today

on the languages of the world and their relationship to one another, and their relationship to the dead languages of the past. He has traced modern languages back and ancient languages forward. He has given the step-by-step evolution of words up to the present day. It is well accepted today that English (especially as spoken in America) is a composite of many languages. There is German, French, Italian, Latin, Old English, Spanish, etc., in it. It is a "potboiler" language. All this has been done by "comparison," both along grammatical and historical paths. It has been done by piecing together the bits of a "jigsaw puzzle." Historically there is a record of progressive continuity which afford some clues that are the basis of many other clever deductions.

The sum total of all this work has been to arrive at modern English as the *resultant*.

No one has stopped to consider that all of the work done on languages would apply equally well if we "turned about" and looked the other way, and considered modern English as *causative*. In other words, if there is any similarity in basics in Sanskrit and in English, might it not be because English is the common denominator, rather than the reverse, which even Lawrence Hogben admits is not true.

Shaver, along with his other "unproved" statements, has maintained steadfastly that the mother tongue of all mankind (including those super races

who live in the depths of outer space—the master race who populated the whole universe is still literally contained in *English*; that is, basically, since modern English is as much a bastard tongue of the mother tongue as is Sanskrit.

Therefore, when he gives his "alphabet" with its meanings, he is giving (not wholly accurately he admits, since there is much that he didn't find out about those meanings) the basics of the language of Man (Mantong, he calls it). He is saying that if one knew this master language, one could (with patience) decipher the meaning in any language anywhere; since that language would be derived from the master tongue.

Right there is where Lancelot Hogben will tear out his hair and stomp off muttering about those lunatics, and where those who have read his book, and other hooks on the subject, will do likewise. But for those of our readers who use the scientific method *too*, we will present the evidence we have for your inspection, testing, and final discarding (if that is what you do). The scientific method is that method which considers all the evidence, subjects it to proof before acceptance. It also does not reject without *disproof*. Let's be scientific and be *complete*; let's apply the disproof test as well as the proof test.

Before we begin, here is the alphabet with its meanings, so that you can compare and follow as we go along:

- A—animal (used 'an' for short)
- B—be—to exist (often command as Ban meant "stay away to exist." Same as quarantine.)
- C—con—to see
- D—de—detrimental or rather disintegrant energy (the second most important symbol in language.)
- E—energy—an "all" concept including idea of motion
- F—fecund (used "fe" as in female)—fecund man
- G—generate (used "gen")
- H—human (some doubt on this one)
- I—self—ego (same as our I)
- J—same as generate
- K—kinetic (force of motion)
- L—Life
- M—man
- N—child or spore or seed (as ninny)
- O—orifice (a source concept)
- P—power
- Q—quest (as question)
- R—ar as horror (a symbol of a dangerous quantity of dis (disintegrating) force in the object.)
- S—an important symbol meaning sun (sis)
- T—te (the most important symbol used; the real origin of cross symbol—it meant integration force of growth (all matter is growing)—the intake is gravity cause—the force is T ("tlc" meant science of growth)—remains as credit word.)
- U—you
- V—vital (used as "vi")—the stuff Mesmer calls

animal magnetism

W—will

X—conflict symbol—crossed force lines

Y—why

Z—zero symbol—a quantity of energy of T neutralized by an equal quantity of D

The foregoing is Mr. Shaver's alphabet exactly as we first published it in January 1944. Your editor believes (and in some instances Shaver admits) that the definitions are not exactly correct or fully complete. We'll try to give our deductions (and they are pure deduction, not any information from a telug ray) concerning what corrections should be made, and where the definitions lack completeness. We will try to demonstrate this with a few pointed examples.

FIRST, the letter A, the letter H and the letter M.

These, we think, are very much related. A means *animal* and is expressed (animal, that is) as either A or AN. The letter H is defined as *human*, and here Mr. Shaver confesses he has some doubt on this one. The letter M means *man*. ANIMAL-HUMAN-MAN. There's your relationship. But what is the relationship? From a deep study of the Shaver stories, it becomes quite obvious that there is a relationship, and that at the same time there is a definite distinction. How can an animal be a human, and yet not be a man? That question might sum up the reason why a definite breakdown is very much necessary. Here it is, then, and you can use your own research to verify, if you wish not to accept this editor's word for it:

A means *animal*. It is expressed AN also because it means, *animal seed* (or *child*, or *spore*).

It means animal in the sense that evolution on a planet like earth (and Darwin's theory supports this assumption) eventually results in an "animal" which has evolved far enough to become the "child" or "seed" or "spore" of the *human*. It is an animal which is not yet a man—in fact is not even a human; but it possesses within it the evolutionary (?) seed of a human being. In short, it could become a human, if, for instance, a Titan did some ray surgery on its genes and chromosomes! (See Shaver!) (See his variforms!)

H means *human*. It means: you are a man who is a *particular* kind of man, a human. It is an animal which has become human, or in between an animal and a man. (Mutan Mion was a human, and he became a *man* [or a Titan] when Vanue gave him her "growth" treatment—which involved certain evolutionary processes.) A human walks the deadly surface of a planet under a sun! He is an "abandondero". (See Shaver!) If he could escape from his deadly world where his sentence is "death" or "poison" which stops or infinitely retards his growth toward full manhood, he could *become* a man rather than a human! A man lives forever, a human dies!

M means *man*. It means (from human view-

point—from *our* viewpoint) a *superman*, or a Titan! (See Shaver!) It means MAN, who lives—and grows—forever out in space, where the dark worlds swim unseen by human eyes!

Bear *these* definitions in mind when you analyze the meanings of words with A, H and M in them! You will make tremendous discoveries!

Perhaps that mystic word AUM, uttered so solemnly by the oriental races, is really AHM! The whole of evolution from beast to god expressed in one syllable of three basic letters! Perhaps the word is not mystic at all, but based in the God-science of the Titans. (See Shaver!)

WE FIND a similar relationship between F, G and V. Fecundity, generation, and animal magnetism, or sex. The relationship is obvious, and Mr. Shaver's definitions seem as correct as any further logic could make them.

D and T are the *basically* important letters! Disintegration—integration; detrimental—beneficial; evil—good; dero—tero; breaking down—building up; death—life; weakening—strengthening; to grow less—to grow more. These two letters have a positive meaning that is unmistakable, and if those definitions are adhered to, the true significance of a great many words comes to the fore, no matter what meanings have been attributed to the words themselves by *mistaken* researchers into the past whose only real tool is their imagination. You can take out the real meaning with these symbols, which, if they have been honestly retained in the word, do not bow to imagination.

Now let's take the remaining letters briefly:

B—meaning to be, or to exist; having reality.

C—to see; con—"see on"; one who can see, who has knowledge, understands.

E—indicating energy (of any type attributed to motion).

I—the self, the ego; I (as we use it today).

J—also generate, or "junior"; youthful.

K—energy *not* derived from motion. Kinetic energy. Kinetics. The science of the in-energy, the contained energy.

L—life. All life.

N—child, seed, spore. Nee, as we use it today, also. Or "ninny".

O—a source concept. An orifice; a beginning. This is where it comes from.

P—power; powerful; the ability to do.

Q—quest; search; question.

R—horror; danger; being "of the sun" or "of the earth". Not high, but base.

S—the sun. Important because "life" begins under a sun. Related to anything which derives its life from the sun. Located near a sun. Sun controlled.

U—you.

W—will; willpower.

X—conflict. There are opposing forces here.

Y—why. Look for the reason. Why it is so. The explanation (given, or to be found.)

Z—zero. Cancelled out. Energies which neu-

tralize each other. Futility.

IN ADDITION to the alphabet, a perusal of Shaver's stories will reveal many basic "words". For instance, "tic" which means "integration I see"—and it also means "science". I see how it goes together! Then there is "in" which means "I seed" or I add to, make more, grow. Another word is "ro" which means "horror source". There are many others which we won't give here; you can find them for yourself. All these little "basic words" can be recognized in many words, and their meanings already being defined in your dictionary as you make it up, will simplify the hunting for meanings in bigger words.

There is yet another angle to "language" which does not have a great deal to do with the Shaver alphabet, but which is used constantly by Mr. Shaver in his stories and in his reasoning, but which can be used in connection with the alphabet to great advantage. That is in a sort of "punning" with words (but with words that can be justified in their meanings by the Shaver alphabet).

For instance, take the term "Sinn Felnors". The Sinn Felnors were an Irish political party who pretended to be evil, and in reality did a lot of good. When a criminal, or a louse, wants to conceal himself, he hides among the righteous members of an "uplift society". Similarly when a pursuer and fighter of "dero" (let's put it that way!) wants to stalk his quarry, he "joins" a cult of evil and "feigns sin". He becomes a "Sinn Feiner". This, Mr. Shaver says, is an Elder word. It means "good growing in evil, or horror". To give it a literal translation, we'd have "sun-I-seed-fecundity-in-horror". I place life to grow in a horrible place. I do good in the guise of evil. The correct tactical approach to fighting evil is to fight it with evil (sin) feigning. It is a mask, so that evil will not suspect your real motive.

When you use the Shaver alphabet, bear in mind that *Time* and word experts have murdered the spelling, but have not murdered the pronunciation near as much. If you can make no sense out of a word as it is spelled, reduce it to phonetics and try again. The alphabet works in all languages a great deal more than it could just by the law of averages. It works better than 50% of the time! And by study, by learning how to use it more deftly, this percentage can be greatly expanded. Each new meaning deciphered, verified, placed in your vocabulary of the "Elder" language points the way to other meanings, supplies missing clues.

The Shaver alphabet can open up a new meaning to your life, decipher many mysteries of the past, give you better understanding of the reality that exists in life beyond our earthly ken, and has been ingrained in our spoken words, preserved beyond all possibility of destruction by either ignorant or malicious people. The Titans built the "loom of language" wisely and permanently!

★ PROOFS ★

By
RICHARD S. SHAVER

This article gives Mr. Shaver's complete thoughts on what he has presented in *Amazing Stories* and which has become world-famous as *The Shaver Mystery*.

FOREWORD (OR SMOKE SCREEN):

TO those who cannot accept my work as anything but misguided imagination, or who think the whole "Shaver Mystery" is a rather stupid hoax, the following words are to be considered exactly that: more stupid contributions from a man who is purposely hoaxing stupid readers into believing silly things that could not possibly be true. To "Police Psychiatrist," I fearfully apologize for suggesting they might be wrong, and that a George Murmans might exist outside a man's head as well as inside. I apologize to position power and solemnly swear that nothing said here is to be considered as anything but a rather stupid hoax which some readers enjoy being fooled into

accepting. To "Public Official" I also apologize for suggesting he knows more than he might publicly admit of such things, and solemnly swear that this is all untrue and he does not have to worry about it at all.

To you gentlemen who are intrigued by this "Hoax," I can only say you will find very interesting data here, and that such people as professors of colleges, psychiatrists and policemen, mayors and insurance investigators have to be allowed their foibles, and we can disregard the necessity for considering them sane quite as much as they can disregard (and do) the need for considering us the same.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

FIRST, clarifying is in order. Letters in large numbers have accused me of implying this and meaning that—which I didn't. The confusion arises of course from the fictional treatment my message has had to be given.

Some readers have drawn quite a variety of erroneous ideas. Some of them are right. The truth is wild enough to suit anybody. But I wish to get the picture clearer for them.

One of the commonest errors is in the use the word "dero" has been receiving. Readers infer in their letters that all cavern people are "deros," that "dero" and "cavern dwellers" are synonymous. That is wrong! We wouldn't be alive if a large part of the people down there weren't fighting like hell for us and for themselves against the true "dero."

A dero is a cavern wight whose ancestors had the habit of bringing in the sunlight over the penetrays. Their evil nature is due to a constant "hearing" (telepathic) of sun vibrants because those same penetrays they use to bring in the sunlight and warmth were designed to handle thought-waves, to detect and augment waves of those frequencies heard by the brain. Their brains got dis (infections) on the lipid films of the brain cells, where thought is generated. This went on

for centuries, for an age, and the hereditary result was a dero, the ancient "Devil" of mythology, and his people—humans whose minds handle only dis-integrant pattern thought. ALL CAVERN PEOPLE ARE NOT DEROS, thank God.

The good ones do a lot of work for us, in subtle unseen ways, avoid tamper accidents by helping out a driver, get some doctor info on how to stop a plague, and are the source of some of our modern inventions by handing over suggestions to an inventor, unbeknownst, because they saw a similar device in the wreckage of the caves.

Even all the bad ones are not deros. A dero is an automaton of evil, and not an ordinary crook. He isn't that smart.

I would like, too, to state clearly and simply and generally the main themes I am trying to get across in my fictional work. Rap has given me the green on such an article, and here it is.

I am trying to say that our civilization is a sham! That our education is a very shoddy substitute for what it could be if the truth of our past were known.

I am trying to say that if we knew who and what some of our present-day bosses really were, we would be vastly worried at their apparent careless and oppressive attitude toward ourselves,

the people—which attitude is shown in their deliberate deprivation of all science of the advantages that would arise from a general knowledge of and study of the rays and mech with which their rule is enforced.

They hold that they won't turn over the info, that it is like an atom bomb in importance, and that they are keeping it in their own hands.

I reply that I wish they would, because so many deros use it, too—and that they don't need to keep the *whole* of that science a secret. So much of it is purely benevolent and medicinal. Truth is, they are not educated, do not realize what they are doing in keeping the whole a secret still today.

I am saying there are millions of people besides Shaver who know there are vast caverns under earth, full of strange, miraculously potent machinery—and that they do not speak because it is so obvious that they would be misunderstood to the point of persecution.

I am saying that if our scientists were ALLOWED to have but one of these machines (which exist in great profusion and in fine repair) for study, that our whole technical development would be accelerated beyond imagination. I am saying that some of our modern developments are due to information about the Elder race methods that filter through the age-old "iron curtain" between the deluded surface races of man and the undeluded but oppressed races under our feet.

Man's age-old persecutors, the "Gods," the degenerate dehauchers, the secretive age-old monopolizers responsible for these delusions we have and call history; the persecutors we have and claim do not exist; the condition of war and misery our races are in, *once exposed* would not, perhaps be so terribly harmful to him, would find a remedy.

I am saying that the people responsible for filtering through to us some of the technical secrets which find their way into our modern technologists' brains are due to friends among these hidden people, and that these friends in the underworld are the only members of that strange society that a sane modern man can consider as also sane.

The rest would be beneath our attention except that they *can* destroy us with the ancient mech (and do, regularly, kill many), debauch us with the ancient wonderful stim mech, and craze us with the detrimental rays of that forgotten science.

I AM trying to show that it is possible and probable that there *have been* members of that society in the past who lived for centuries beyond the normal life span—as legend tells us. That they did so because of the nature of the ben-rays and canned nutrients still to be found in the sealed storerooms.

That there probably *were* rulers who lived for centuries, and that some of the most repressive and reactionary of the present-day rulers of the cavern groups *MAY* have been alive for two or

more centuries.

That the medieval minds, cruel and vindictive and vandalistic, are so because they are still in a medieval state of development socially, and *they were raised that way*.

That these secretive, reactionary, sadistic minds among them are today holding back the whole race of man from ALL true development. That they are striving with might and main to place all human life under a rule of a malignance unimaginable, that is so horrible in its aims, in its degenerate cruelties, so destructive in its details of government that the race of man will perish if they succeed!

And *you* insist they do not exist—want an "artifact." (Can you get hold of an atom bomb to swap for the "artifact-mech"? It's a deal!)

I am trying to say that the enlightened ones among them who struggle against this goal need our help if we can give it—and that we can't if we insist they *do not exist!*

There are many things I have heard that I do *not know* are facts. To mention these along with the things I know are facts causes an almost unavoidable confusion.

I have heard that surface light and power and coal are possessions of the ray-people. I don't *know* it, I *heard* it. I have *heard* that some of them have harems of thousands of young women. I don't *know* it. I DO KNOW they have harems, and an oriental contempt for all western morality—but because of the nature of social life developed around the use of stim-rays, I can understand this different morality.

I KNOW many terrible things that I cannot find a way to tell except as fiction. These are things so lurid and impossible they are hard to make credible even in a lurid stf. tale. They could not be considered as facts by an ordinary man, because he has not seen and could not accept. These are looked for by those who know something of the great secret, and look for recognizable information in the "forbidden" field.

I KNOW they have weapon rays that kill at fifty miles and more. That they *hit* what they shoot at with these. A man cannot even think of such weapons without fear; still we must—and *they have been with us* right along.

I KNOW they have teleag beams that bear thought from a man's mind up to fifty miles and more. That is an extremely sensitive receiver, for the sending of one brain is not exactly powerful in voltage.

I KNOW they visit space, and receive visiting ships from space, some of which do not get away again. I don't *know why* they return to earth, for *no one here* is getting a square deal! The ships that return must belong to those who *think* they benefit from the repressive, throttling monopoly of all the good things of earth.

I am saying that earth's peoples are supporting a destructive, extravagantly luxurious and decadent "secret class" who rob us of our birth right—the science that could be learned from the

mechanisms of the Eider race; which same mechanisms are the instruments that have held this class in power for many, many centuries.

I am saying that, due to many conditions which we cannot understand over a long period of time, many of these people are idiotic, and unfit to be allowed to continue as our "secret" overlords.

I say that if people generally knew this condition, they would lose the awe and fear that keeps from the race of man many great secrets which would prove a new and greater path of life for all of us.

I am saying to these men who cry: "we want an artifact, an inscription, an ancient mss, we want proof!"—you *have* proof all about you! But your minds are so slanted by wrong teachings that you misinterpret these artifacts and remnants on the surface which tell the truth about the God cavern's existence.

Egyptian hieroglyphs, Mayan temple drawings, innumerable such sources are chock-full of references to the caverns, but since the science which interprets these relics has no word for any of these "myths" except as myths, that is how they are interpreted—as childish tales only.

Only by going into the caves and returning with the actual pieces of mechanism could these gentlemen be convinced. If *any* of the thing is true, any logician can know that is an *impossible request*. It is like sending an Ambassador to Russia in a top hat and frock coat, striped pants and brief case, and asking him to bring back proof that the Russians are contemplating a world revolution. He would be turned aside everywhere he went, and would come back with what we already know (if he came back at all—which is improbable)—"the Russians have an Iron curtain on information."

I don't blame the Russians overmuch. But I *do* blame the cavern people because so much of the cavern mech is *medical in nature*. It would revolutionize all medicine if M.D.s had penetrays; electric needle rays for surgery without incision; beneficial rays that can keep a dying man alive long, long after he would ordinarily die; beneficial rays that make a man think several times as well. Their science was based on a knowledge of man's nature far beyond our own—and nearly every one of their mechanisms is of some immediate physical use to health!

So we are deprived of them because they keep some idiot in wealth and power, who does not even know enough to have technicians hired to study and develop a knowledge of the nature and uses of these machines. Who has no real grasp of the importance of the caves!

YOU ask for proofs of the gigantism of the far past—and you can find Devil's Tower (Wyoming) in any Atlas. It is a national monument! If it isn't a gigantic petrified stump larger than any redwood ever hoped to be, I will eat my hat! The stump alone is taller than the Empire State building! What size were men when trees grew that

size?

THEY were the men who are spoken of as the Aesir, under Ygdrasil's branches, planning a battle against the Frost Giants! And they had trelaug beams (Odin's Eye), and they had "magical" underground dwarfs, and icy underworld realms of magic—and we have only the Devil's Tower to prove it today. But it was a long time ago; when the sun itself was more beneficial and less aging. BUT, BROTHER, HOW CAN YOU ASK FOR PROOF WHEN YOU HAVE A DEVIL'S TOWER?

Through our dope rings (now don't tell me there are *no* dope rings) daily many men and women are sent to the underworld. What becomes of them? They don't come back? No! They become slaves or worse. In some cases they are employees; but at the mercy of a capricious despotic class who kill for pleasure. One might as well be a slave.

These people leave no traces! Did you ever try to trace a man to a dope den? You can't. It has "protection," and it is *not* a dope den. Don't tell me you don't understand. How could I prove a certain place was a dope den, and that people disappear there regularly? You know even the F.B.I. has a hard job with these things, never get them all. I don't think they even *touch* a ray-graft; because it is an old "taboo," and they know better than to try. I *think* they leave it strictly alone.

We don't know *how* the secrecy is maintained. I *do* know that it *is*, and that the things I say go on, *do happen*.

But I could no more *prove* many such things than I could prove that Standard Oil cheated on their income tax. Nor could anyone.

But there is a vast number of eye-witness testimony; there is a vast amount of writing from the past that is misunderstood; there is a mass of incontrovertible proof—**IF YOU INTERPRET IT CORRECTLY!** But you don't! You say the old standard explanations over and over—and they are part of the curtain that has been erected for an age between common people and the Forbidden Fruit.

For the Forbidden Fruit is the greatest pleasure on earth; and from our present day standards or morals, it is an immoral pleasure. Hence it remains hidden—although the truth is it would be the greatest stimulation our form of society could receive. Men would develop—for it would furnish a vast incentive to science and invention and medicine (especially) that is now lacking!

As I see it, what the two classes, the two "worlds," need most is a mutual port of trade, a city or a market or a place where the things of value from one world may be openly traded for those of the other. For our washing machines we would get trelaug and stim mech and small levitators and similar apparatus which would be infinitely valuable to us—and from what I have seen, *they* could use the washing machines, yes!

Secrecy has acted as such a throttling thing on

their life that they cook on stoves Ben Franklin would have called obsolete; sit on wooden benches; slave in child labor factories; are two hundred years behind us socially. Many of their pieces of furniture (brought in in past, much of cavern needs furnishing) would bring a fortune as Victorian and pre-Victorian antiques. (Not speaking of Elder race antiques.) For, since the days of telegraph and newspapers and radio, the secrecy has required an almost total lack of commerce or intercourse between the worlds. (Before the days of newspapers, there was commerce.)

And it is a world, the Elder World, and it does contain wonders in the still working ancient mechanisms, but it also contains the most brutally reactionary minds on earth; as well as the most modern and liberal minds in certain groups.

They can't have radios, because radio can be traced. (Many freighters had to give up radio when crossing enemy waters, as the radios broadcast a wave that can be detected.)

They can't have clean modern markets full of good food from America's canning factories—the commerce necessary to fill them would cancel their "secrecy." Thus this reactionary policy from the past is just as disliked and as unpopular among them as it would be among us if we even knew it existed. Thus such enterprising young men as myself have backing more valuable among them than among the surface people. Truth is, I have more friends among the cavern people than on the surface, and far more valuable ones.

They want the ancient barrier to the full development of their life removed, too, just as much as "we who know" on the surface want it removed. They want the sweat-shops made humane down there, they want better living conditions, better sun camps where they can take their days on the surface without worrying about watching eyes. They want less restrictions on their life, and the "secrecy" custom is the most irritating and harmful of all their restrictions.

Such things as Hecate, the blood-sucker, will exist among them in the future if the science monopoly continues. Such things have plagued their lives in the past when the great ben-mech rays were more potent than today. The rays and the superior nutrients found in the storerooms of the Elders kept them alive much too long—and they were evil. But we do not think we have any immortal Hecates today.

BUT, TODAY, we do have a parasitic (class of) creature battenning upon us, who has developed a technique of parasitism as highly evolved as a vampire bat's, and as ingrown in his nature! This is the "reactionary" behind the "secret" monopoly of the antique Elder weapons and pleasure mechs—and he is the enemy we seek to expose. He is the enemy I would die to harm in any way; to wrest but one of the mighty Elder secrets from his unworthy and unusing hand. I would die cheerfully for the race of man. It was what I expected when the Shaver Mystery series began; but I found there were more of the cavern

peoples in my way of thinking than I had expected. Publicity was its own protection.

For he deprives them quite as much as he does us, and it ranks them much more because they are fully conscious of his cost while we are ignorant even of his existence. We do not see the young girls go into his harems; we do not see their wrecked bodies later. We do not know of his awful abuses of the rights of man or see the tortures and battles in his game arenas; do not see the human pieces in his "Bickro" games. (Human chess to the death.)

But they do know all these horrible things and they want the course of decadence changed and reversed as much as myself. So it is that we try to give you what you naively call "proofs," it is like a blind man trying to ask a man with eyes to prove that he sees.

ONE either "knows" of the underworld or one does not. It is very much like a seeing race with eyes living beside and among a race without eyes who refuse their existence. BUT WE ARE PRESENT AND WE DO SEE! (We meaning those on the surface "who know.")

But for a man who doesn't care to go out and question pimps and prostitutes, criminals and dope peddlers, yeggs and assassins; who doesn't care to pore over newspaper and police files for strange and unexplainable occurrences, or Missing Persons lists for data on the losses to the underworld; for a man who would like something more than eye-witness accounts from the lips of such "unreliable" humans; who doesn't care to question the personnel and inmates of an insane asylum on "what the voices say" (which I will admit could develop into an embarrassing expedition), there is a simple method of proving to himself that the Underworld (in the Classic sense of the word UNDERWORLD) does exist in all its miraculously preserved wonder-mech, building on building and boring on boring, city bowl on city bowl and city tier on city tier—deep in the earth—peopled with a citizenry of diverse and numerous skills in using the ancient mech to cause miracle and devilment.

This method is in the application of the Shaver alphabet to the English language and indulging the deductive faculties in tracing the words of the Elder tongue which still can be found, many of times in a good state of preservation, in our own English language.

Those college products who have been endowed with a complete knowledge of the past history of every word by etymological wizards of the colleges, by those professors who assume that the past students of the evolution of languages have all been correct in their assumptions, and have carefully grafted all this hoary paraphernalia of error upon their students; those gentlemen are the men who have the greatest difficulty in finding any sense in this alphabet.

They cannot successfully make the mental adjustment necessary to a study of the alphabet,

because they cannot, even for the sake of experiment, admit for one moment that it "could be possible." So they glance at it and throw it aside because it was not on the curriculum at college and hence can be of no possible importance on this green earth.

Nevertheless by its use the basic meaning sounds of an ancient ancestral tongue can be traced by any student flexible-minded enough to make that initial allowance for a base from which to proceed.

These basic sounds, such as RA TE DE AN BE CE FE GEN ENG I KIN LO LEE LI MA MU MO NIN NE O SIS TEAT ST UND VI VE VIE VIT WIN WER TER DER XE Y ZE and RO can be found in so many words meaning the same thing, in so many languages meaning the same thing, that we get a picture of basic sound meanings that we can trace back and back to a once universal tongue. Gradually to a student this once universal tongue emerges as Mantong—and every word he says is translated by his mind into its Mantong meaning, which is a greater meaning.

It cannot be done by utilizing any system of word derivation now taught; for they are false, and it did *not* happen that way! If it did happen as they say it did, it happened *long after* the word had come into use over the whole earth, and their assumptions of its adoption into use and its spread are consequently error because they mistake in a given language an already existent word for a later derivation from some other word in some other language.

It wasn't that way. They only had a common universal source in one ancient tongue. If they did derive from two or more Elder sources, they still intermingled during the great lapse of time to form a mixture inextricable today because of their original similarity in concept-symbol or basic-sound-meanings.

This *point of departure* on the study of ancient tongues forms an insurmountable barrier between the classical student and myself. He cannot admit to begin with that there could be possible a basis for such an assumption that there was an original universal tongue.

He is confused by the multitude of his learnings. He KNOWS the Egyptian came first, or the Coptic or some other irrelevant tongue, and he knows that all similarities must be traced to original source of which he has already been informed. He presupposes himself into a state of admiration for his deduction which is only, after all, a complex assumption of firsts, derivatives, etc.

But, above all their squabbling over each word, Mantong emerges as the great Rosetta stone of the past. Touch any tongue with it and the veils fall away; the Mantong stands clear and clean above it all.

NO OTHER tongue contains their knowledge of energy, or gives a key to their wisdom—

a wisdom greater than our own—and any student proceeding from an assumption that this wisdom never existed cannot proceed even experimentally in the study of the tongue.

For it is based on the play of two forces, and all phenomena of life are described as an interplay between these two forces De and Te, evil and good, Dis and Int.

Ssstt describes the touching of fire to water, of water to a hot stone—to us as to any primitive. BUT to a student of Mantong *sssstt* is the survival of the ancient symbol for sun-fire, for dis striking against the ancient symbol for TE, for growth. The water contains the TE or growth force, and when it comes in contact with S, the fire, the noise *sssstt* always comes with it—and they used the symbols of these two primal forces with the sound which they make.

De was their sound symbol for the processes of disintegrant energy. *De vi* was their word for an evil man's energy. *De vile* their word for one filled with *de*; *de cay*, *Dee See a* (animal) Y.

Decay is a sentence in Mantong. It means: *see dee in the animal, WHY? It taught*. When the child learned the word decay, he learned to look for the *cause* of the decay, too. Hence the letter Y (why) is tacked on so many of their words. But no classical product of our colleges would ever admit that such a system of word building ever existed for he cannot admit that anyone in the past knew that much!

Add a little more detrimental disintegrant energy—we get DE AD. *Dead* meant: if you keep adding *de* you will die. You can't even monkey with the stuff (as we are learning with atom bombs—and are going to learn really by losing all our "precious" civilization in one flaming battle).

Dead also meant: someone had killed a *DE unit* of the social pattern. Their words had these coincident punning meanings packed in! *De a De!* A command to go out and make likewise any Hitlers or would-be Hitlers was inherent in their word for a dead person.

The word *teat* we cannot even say without lewd and comic thoughts. They meant something more; they meant: *TE force is here at teat*. (The child absorbs integrative energy here.)

Get a college word wizard to admit that any first race on earth ever knew any such thing about energy as that there were two basic forces, integrative and disintegrative! It isn't even taught yet (or is it?) that there *is* an integrative force, that disintegration demands an equivalent integration, or there wouldn't be anything to disintegrate in all space. OUR COLLEGES DO NOT TEACH AN INTEGRATIVE FORCE (to my knowledge), or even suggest that it could be a pole about which all life proceeds upon its beginnings until it meets DE and ceases to BE!

How then get them to admit that the ancients knew there was an integrative force and used it as a basic symbol for GOOD, for a way of life in the word TIC, even though the word *tic* itself de-

scribes our present world system of finance and commerce. They called it TIC—we call it Credit. But they meant a lot more by TIC than we do by the word *credit*. They meant a social order based upon credits—we call it money and we get it for work. Credit—(See RED, I T). Our own word is one of theirs: "I will stand T for your RED (ink)." We still get in the "RED." We think it is modern slang for the red ink used on losses columns, but in truth they used the word before there was ink. Before Carters ever made a bottle of red ink for bookkeepers to itemize their bills with men used the words "in the red" to describe their debts.

We all have these unconscious assumptions in our minds about words, and most of them are wrong.

I can go on and on with this, but I don't want to tire you. BUT if you *are* interested in a proof of the Shaver mystery, it can be had by any deductive mind for a few hours work with the alphabet (I hope it will be printed herewith),* and the Mantong of the Elder race will emerge in all its wonderfully simple meanings before him, and he will have a complex and wonderful plaything for his mind in its idle moments all his life. For every word bears some flavor of their thought, if you can search it out. And it isn't so hard as our complexly misinformed professors would have us believe. Because they *are* wrong about the past, and there is better history in *King Arthur and Merlin*, in *Froissart's Roland and Oliver*, in fairy tales and myths than there is in any standard text on Classical history on "Rome and Her Fall," on the "Rise of Athens." Those histories *are* correct as far as they go; but they missed the true beginnings. We did not begin with the pyramids, the way the history books do! We had a vaster beginning than any Pharaoh's foolish piling of block on block to provide a place to put his mummy. And a much more intelligent beginning. To me, the Pyramids are not a great mystery; they are a sample of the imbecility of men in certain early periods AFTER THE FALL. That the cumbersome piling of those square childrens blocks of stone into a pyramid had a meaning, a vast significance, or any other fol-de-rol that is taught about them is not my way of thinking. They are sheer imbecility made concrete, and we still pretend to ourselves that the Egyptians who built them had "wisdom." The *wisdom* they are talking about existed long before the pyramids, the latter priests who understood that wisdom had nothing whatever to do with causing the pyramids to be built.

Wrap all the mists of wool about a pyramid that you want. I still see a fool making a million lives painful that he may have a hole to be placed in when he dies. PWA on a grand scale in ancient Egypt; a fool king who wasted the lives of his people upon idiocy.

THE Elder race had wisdom. Some of it can be found in the basic sound-meanings of our tongue by use of the Shaver alphabet. I do not claim to have "originated" the alphabet. (To me it was a discovery. Others may have done so.) Maybe I heard it with "voices." Whatever is the truth, it will discover to you a vast race, prove their existence on earth, and give you an inkling of their mighty thought-ways.

I could go on talking about the Elder language for a large book-full, but there is no space for that. Eventually it will (the book) be done, if not by me, by some one like yourself who has read me and understood there was more to the Shaver alphabet than meets a college know-it-all's eye.

About proofs of the Shaver mystery, it is so self-evident to one who talks to ray people over rays from their caverns every day, it is somewhat like asking an ordinary householder to prove the Electric Light Co. exists.

It is not evident to you who have not "heard voices," "seen ghosts," experienced what are called "illusions due to mental derangement," but which we who know call "projections," or "telesolidographs."

It is like two men living near the same river. One has never seen a fish in that river all his life. The other has caught fish in the river every day. They get into an argument, the one who believes there are no fish in the river says: "Show me the proof, the bones and tails, the heads of these fish you have caught."

Well I will show you what is left of some of the fish I have caught in the river of sound that flows from the cavern world to those who are allowed to hear. *Snatches of conversation heard over ray: "GOES UP—IS COMING!"*

The words mean nothing to you; to me they tell that the ancient plan of coming to the surface and ruling openly is again being taken out of the closet and being brushed off for a new trial. Perhaps "they" will come out and rule with antique-ray openly, and all of us will see it in our lifetime. It is a thing that has been planned many times, fell through because of fear, difficulties of moving apparatus, disorganization due to their medieval governmental set-up, etc.

— — — — — WAS DOWN HERE. HE WAS THE TOUGHEST MAYOR IN TOWN."

The words mean our surface Mayor — — — — — was down in the caverns on a visit, and that he was seemingly the "toughest" of the group of big-shots with him, of the underworld characters whom he visited. One does not know if he really was down there, we only hear the words.

"TELL 'EM OUTRIGHT, SHAVER, GET 'EM DOWN HERE? WE NEED 'EM PLENTY!"

It means that there are plenty of the people down there hoping and praying that some effort like my own does break through the dense cloud of "modern" ignorance in America and gets some action out of our powerful nation before less

*Shaver Alphabet and article about it will be found on page 150.—Ed.

worthy rulers than our own Republicans and Democrats take over—both up on the surface and down in the caverns. But they themselves find no way of telling the men of the U. S. that will be understood, believed and acted upon. When they do talk to a man, he is frightened, thinks he is having delusions, goes to a psychiatrist and has himself psycho-analyzed. There is no greater ignorance, no greater barrier to progress than the blindness engendered by the sense of all-knowing self-sufficient egoistic fol-de-rol our educational system has given our average American school product.

I love those people down there, fighting unseen and unheard and unhonored, fighting and warding off from us a fate that words cannot describe. The dero of the caverns could depopulate the earth within months if they were free to do so, with the antique mech-rays. These people are ignored by our "omniscient" statesmen, though many of them *know* much of the caverns and their secrecy, and we *could* help them much if only the curtain of "it isn't true," "they don't exist," "voices are imagination" were gone.

That is what I am trying to do; remove that curtain once and for all. Believe me, it is vitally necessary, or I would not have the courage to face the possible consequences!

"HAND ME SOME DRY NEEDLES!"

Meaningless phrase, isn't it? But not if you see the torturer, his needles slippery with blood, reaching for less elusive tools.

It *would* be possible to *buy* some of the mech in *certain parts* of the cavern world. These locations where the caverns are peopled by humans with some idea of developing a *future* for man could be found—if the whole governmental and "scientific" set-up of the nation, of the world, were not too "smart" to be taken in by such a "hoax." Hex doctors, other practitioners of the black art such as Demonist cults, *do buy* apparatus from the underworld. Not the men who DON'T "hear voices" (even when they do). Statistics show that *everyone* hears voices sometimes—not the scientists who call everyone who does not agree with them "crack-pots"; not the gentlemen who have learned all there is to know about life, the interior of the earth, science and Einstein. You yourself, if you are honest with yourself, must admit that you have "heard voices" at one time or another in your life. *Think carefully.* AH! You had put it aside as imagination! But was it? *No, it wasn't!* It happened!

MANY things could be obtained of infinite value from these people in the caverns, if all of our civilization was aware and trying to salvage even a bit of the mighty wisdom the Elder race left behind them in their miracles of machine art. BUT it *can't* be done as long as "officialdumb" frowns upon all such efforts as "superstition," "black art," or "crackpots." It is a vital and unseen side of our life WHICH MUST BE OPENED TO THE PUBLIC GAZE!

The fact is that any honest investigation of super-normal manifestation *always and invariably* turns up *mighty important data*; which data is *shelved* by fearful, ignorant and bigoted people who are *quite sure* that the school books are *right*, and that they *cannot* go contrary to opinion or they will lose their "position."

You see in today's paper: "THREE AIRPLANES DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY WITH FOURTEEN MEN IN THEIR CREWS." You see, *every day*, a constant succession of such Fortean occurrences, such impossible accidents and wrecks and catastrophes. On our "fool-proof" railways the signals go awry and one part of a *famous* "cross-continent flyer" runs into another part—of the *same train!* Over and over you read of the "impossible" happening!

Yet you are told there are no caverns, there *could not be* any "antique miracle machinery," AND I MYSELF AM TO BELIEVE THAT I AM THE VICTIM OF DELUSIONS. EVEN THOUGH I HAVE FELT THE SEARING RAYS, BEEN TORMENTED BY INVISIBLE DEVICES, SEEN IMPOSSIBLE PROJECTIONS OF THINGS THAT DO NOT EXIST ON EARTH TODAY AND TALKED TO THE PEOPLE WHO MANIPULATE AND USE THESE DEVICES EVERY DAY—AND HAVE BEEN DOWN IN THERE AND SEEN AND TOUCHED IT ALL WITH MY OWN HANDS.

It would be *comforting* to feel that I was the victim of a self-deluding mental quirk, for I would realize there was *no* threat hanging over the heads of the American people; there was *no need* to overcome the blindness of these people, that *no deros* kill regularly and steadily by such methods as caused Helrens to kill for George Murmans. That if I did not try to do what I do, those killings such as Suzanne Degnan would not be in part upon my head. For I know that much could be done to stop such killings if only people *knew what the real cause was*. Locking Heirens up did *not stop* George Murmans. George Murmans can *kill you!* It would be smarter to punish the psychiatrists who deny George Murmans exist, for they probably *know quite well* that the voices *have* real people behind them, and are not *men enough to admit* that all is *not understood* about such phenomena. A psychiatrist is a worse criminal, if he *does* know, a *greater coward* than Heirens seems to be, blaming it on a phantom.

Every experienced psychiatrist has heard hundreds of people confess they "hear voices," and that some of the "voices" *prompt them to criminal acts*. Yet how many have the courage to *affirm* the voices' real existence. THEY ARE AFRAID OF YOU, the public! Yes, they *fear the common man's conviction* that "all such phenomena are delusions" and, that *fear is justified!* BUT, SOMEONE, SOMETIME, HAS TO CONQUER THAT BLIND DENIAL OF FACT AND COME OUT IN THE OPEN WITH THE TRUTH ABOUT VOICES, ABOUT SUCH CRIMES AS HEIRENS', AND ABOUT SUCH

THINGS AS AVOIDABLE TRAIN WRECKS.

It *must be faced*. All right, we face it, and thousands of readers flock to our support with letters affirming our decision to attempt the heretofore impossible!

Here's hoping we succeed. For there *are* in the caverns such things as weather machines, set in a pattern to govern the whole continent, that can control the precipitation, the winds, the whole character of the weather. I have seen them operated, have *touched* the machines; but *how do I tell it!* I have as much trepidation about the attempt as Heirens. He (can you blame him?) flunked the test of courage. I face it. (Remember this is a "hoax" please.)

THESSE machines, of infinite variety, are culled over by engineers from rival (underworld) countries such as England (for all we know) and what is not sold to them is wrecked by the destructive nomads of the caves "so someone else won't use them."

Gypsies "*know*" about the underworld. Spiritu-
alists insist on the reality of their "*spirits*." I know the gypsies are making better sense about the voices than the Spiritualists. They tell fortunes by allowing the secret rays to read their customers' mind—and make money. So do the spiritualists, but they *say* it is spirits. The gypsies *say* it is a "*gift*." It is! From "gypsies" under the earth. **BUT NOT DEAD!**

DID YOU EVER ASK THE WEATHER MAN WHAT BECAME OF THE RAIN THAT STARTED RAINING AND SUDDENLY QUIT, AGAINST ALL PROBABILITY? DID YOU EVER ASK A PRISON GUARD HOW COME CERTAIN GUARDS SHOT AND KILLED OTHER GUARDS? DID YOU EVER ASK THE MISSING PERSONS BUREAU WHERE ALL THE MISSING PEOPLE WENT? PERSONALLY (not by listening to the radio—but personally looked at the files comprehensively)? Did you ever talk to insurance investigators who ascertain the cause of fires, the nature of the mechanical failures in train wrecks, all the many things that go unaccountably wrong?

NO, YOU DID NOT! You *assume* there was nothing mysterious or frighteningly weird about any of it. **YOU ASSUME THAT IT IS ALL PERFECTLY UNDERSTOOD BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF YOUR EDUCATION.**

Fact is, a black witch doctor in Africa does know more about such things than *you* do. They don't close their eyes to all the unseeable things in life. But a "modern professor" *does* so close his eyes, and succeeds in closing most of his students' eyes.

All of which wouldn't matter, if most of our heritage in the caverns wasn't being destroyed and wasted and broken by idiotic handling by creatures with no wits or education whatever. It *matters* because our civilization *could receive* from just one piece of that "mech" a bigger boost than from many generations of genius. **BE-**

CAUSE THAT MECH IS THE PRODUCT OF AGES OF INTENSELY CIVILIZED DEVELOPMENT BY A BIGGER, GREATER RACE, A RACE WHO HAD CONTACT WITH SPACE!

How to tell the American government there is something to learn about the rocks of mother Earth that *can't be learned in a College of Geology*, in an "Institute of Mining Techniques"? How to tell a modern over-educated bigot that our school text-books left out the biggest page—the history of the Elder race? **HOW?**

It can't be done! That answer tells me to give up, to write stories about anything else, to quit making dangerous statements about a people who might take umbrage and hump me with some of that wonder-weapon-mech.

Then a voice says: "Tell 'em, hut right! Be a man!" (Now remember, bigot—this *is* a hoax, I confess.)

And I do. *There are no voices* is not true! Everyone can hear them and does at one time or another. Some of us hear them every day because we have interesting minds, and there is fascination in exchanging mental contact with our minds.

The trouble is *I know better* than to accept the general blindness about the invisible. They have not *seen* the bodies behind these invisible phenomena. I have! They have only deductive abilities which have no data to operate on that they can consider infallible. And they are lied to by fearful gentlemen who fear to state the truth, for reasons you must understand. If you don't understand why these gentlemen who *know* do not speak—just picture yourself doing it! (Uh huh!)

I should not worry, if I were them. For do not astrologists state regularly that the motion of the stars affects human events? Do not the spiritualists haldly state that the dead come back regularly? It must be all right to print *anything* in this United States. Maybe it is a Constitutional right? I hope so! For I have plenty to say that is apt to be misunderstood both above the surface and beneath. Of the two I fear the underworld the least! Above all the things that terrify me, I fear the bigoted psychiatrist, the worldly materialist, the know-it-all scientist.

The underworld is quite willing to let superstition be a veil for them. No income tax, do what they please with everyone, and a police force who call the mention of them superstition. *Perfect!* BUT there are plenty of them are smarting under terrible oppressions, sweat shop conditions, murderous arena battles for those out of favor, a lack of any justice of any kind from overhead. Those are our friends, they want a sane and normal life and justice. Truth is, even the profiteers who boost for the secrecy wish for the good old American army to man their ray guns when the wild dero attack from some "uncivilized" frontier of the vast cavern world. They find the weapons they had considered invincible are outranged by weapons of the dero (wild and ig-

norant and murderous, yet who inherited from their ancestors the knowledge of how to handle them well in battle). These battle weapons are handed down among them just as the muskets of the camel-riding Arabs are handed down from father to son.

But if they live through such an attack, they call it "over," and go back to ducking the income tax.

THERE are good and bad rulers in the caves, good and bad factory owners down there. Some would like the restrictions that hamper their trade with the surface removed; some want the system that assures them cheap labor kept.

I often feel I shouldn't exert myself to expose the Elder world in the face of the egregious incredulity of the average man—I just shouldn't bother. Let the monopoly roll on over all possible future development for the human race. It will anyway.

I know the work is vitally necessary, but it seems so impossible in the face of "officialdumb's" attitude in the face of revelations like George Murmans. I know that *all* criminal investigators are not so blind as not to know there are influences that are real behind such tales. Of course *they know*; there is so *very much* of it going on. They don't know *how* to face the neighbor's assumption they have gone "nuts," and they don't *dare* open their mouths! **BUT THEY KNOW**, and they know plenty.

This work is necessary to prevent such crimes as those dictated by "voices." If Heirens had known what such phenomena indicated, that he had acquired an underworld dero who would get him in trouble, he could have avoided it, would have had some chance of mentally fighting off the criminal suggestions of the degenerate mind that at last managed to gain control of his actions. Heirens was under this influence for years before he murdered. The truth about Heirens is that he showed remarkable resistance to these controlling telaug suggestions. I wish there were some way to show what it really was that caused his downfall. I am *trying*, here.

TO RESUME with the "fish-bones" and "proofs" in the form of words and snatches of conversations heard over just such rays as drive people to murder, except that they are in the hands of sane members of the cavern's society:

"IN HOT COUNTRIES THEY BURST BREASTS."

The sentence means that in South America, Africa and other jungled countrys there are cavern wild dero who use force rays up through the rocks to the surface people to burst maidens' breasts and cause their death. I wonder how one of our "explainers" of Fortean and Shaver phenomena would explain this occurrence.

"BOSS RAISES HELL WHEN WE'RE SEEN."

Means when they go out to gather firewood or

get groceries, to milk the unsuspecting farmer's cows, or similar clandestine excursions, they get plenty hell if they let anyone see them!

"ARE ALL GYPSIES, GYPSIES?"

The voice suggests that long excursions are sometimes made by cavern people masquerading as gypsies. Not a difficult masquerade, it is?

The firewood practice suggests a method of proof—for yourself, though don't expect any "normal" person to believe you. Watch the broken dead branches in the woods near a cavern suspected entrance. Note missing branches—see if you can find who collected them? Listen with hidden sound devices from a distance. When you try a few things like this you will run into discouraging or encouraging phenomena immediately. You will learn, in a hurry.

More:

"Last light is gone. Car ahead! 'Fraid to go after wood now, someone might see us."

"Sticks are cheapest fuel. Boss's fuel costs money. It is hard to get money."

"Found an ice-skating robot! Beats all what you run into."

"If he had the money to be ruined. . ."

"You know, we've got to double-seal all these entrances."

"Last census was 58,900 inhabitants known and under control by . . ." (Tampered out the rest. Most of these informative sentences are through tamper and are incomplete.)

"Lady Estelle put together. You'd swear she was human." (Words about another robot, which I saw in projection, which was very human in appearance. From my daily notes on "voices.")

"Centenarian devils filled with pep and pride."

"The fire is of books of magic, and on the fire cooks human flesh."

"We get little meat, some of it is human flesh; sometimes sold in a market; no one inquires *whose* flesh."

"Stockholm, Sweden, best place to go for good white ray, and good treatment from them for persecuted surface men." (I wish I could go.)

"I don't *have* to wear anything? Or *have* anything to wear!" (Cavern girl's voice.)

"Granny got Ladies' Home Journal years ago. Now they don't get it here anywhere. *Verboten*, subscriptions. (No address.)

"A sin and dance place."

"The Satanic government was very strict about virtue." (Figure that out.)

"The boss is very large. Grab hold and lift anything, he can. But a souppuss by the look of him." (Effects of long ben-ray on boss.)

"I couldn't even outen' my cigarette. Now dripping, now shaking. Sorrow, pain, splendor, foolishly intermingled." (Account of stim experience on forcing table, idiotic intermingling of all sensual sensations from crazy operator.)

"Some tried to sell some caves to some nation's governments. They were too "modern" to believe us. Scared to talk to us, or meet us anywhere." (Meant: long ago, other countries tried

to get some cash out of selling the "secret.")
 "Only one little table left. Had to sell the rest. They take everything." (Not fully understood whether she means they are removing all the antique furniture and apparatus or whether she means she had to sell her own possessions to get food.)

"Place your thumb toward dagger and twist. It's an idol and he uses it for a suitcase."

"Three fourths of the looting was carried on under our supervision." (Not fully understood.)

"The temp. is always 53%."

"New captives are always cold. Fire is a luxury. You get used to it, or you die."

"Feed the fire with Elder books." (Coal is in six inch lumps. Burned on open grate.)

"Many songs are attempts to get messages to you that you cannot help seeing—like: 'Midnight beaming, moonlight meaning,' but it doesn't ever work. Men are denser than dense. Tamper always blocks a person trying to get something across."

"They sold me! Brrrr. No fatigue, wonderful place to live. I believed them, went along in. It is! Wonderful! But the toilet doesn't work, and I'm starving and freezing."

"The reason people hear things more often in darkness, because when turn a talaug penetray on a house with a light burning, the light is carried down here to this end of ray—then they see it and stop us with tamper. Lying in the dark, you hear more, no one notices."

"A six-handed fiddle. I'd like to of seen the critter that played that thing. Must of looked like a grasshopper."

"The micro-show mech is great. It makes images of tiny races of people, only they are metal or glass or minerals—all different and they seem alive. A toy, I suppose, but they must have been popular, there are a lot of them." (A device I have seen operated—it takes the [for instance] chess-men idea, builds a living race of people in moving, three dimensional pictures; like seeing a new world.)

"She had faceted mirrors or jewels sewn on her ankles above her insteps with surgical thread—to make her feet twinkle when she walked. She had places to go worth going to." (Picture of beauty of the Elder race.)

"We saw a metal glider full of men frozen in ice! Not modern men, some ancient race—had gliders. What you call "latter gods," I suppose." (Means with penetray in the deep ice of a glacier, or ice cave, she saw deep in the ice a glider of metal with crew all frozen since God knows when.)

"The buyer is not well in the head. He forgets to get things—and we starve. So many are cut in the head; can't function properly." (Cut is an x-ray needle that is used for less-open arguments. A man with many enemies soon becomes absent-minded to the point of becoming unable to carry on his work.)

"We have had a warning, *they come, not men!*

They are terrible." (Means, I think, they have been warned of impending invasion of creatures that are not men. Whether from space or from some unexplored part of the endless cavern labyrinths, I don't know. I thought they meant space invasion.)

"A new ray phenomena to me, the image in the mind is consumed by flames right in the mind. Appears to be a heat ray super-imposed upon the neural penetrative of the talaug beam."

"Evl ruled so long—stock him no good. Now have no children."

"A have-a-look shop."

"The neat and scarlet women."

WELL, there you are. A sample of voices heard and written down in the night. It is not a proof, except you have a mind to see that it could not be imagined, that it had to happen that way. The official dumb attitude we know already: "The man is deluded." But they're the same type of men who close our burlesque shows and go to honky-tonks or smokers in their clubs and holler "take-it-off" and get it taken off for them. Who squawk about juvenile delinquency and contribute to it themselves if they get a chance, and they get it. The same men who never give a sucker a break, and everyone is a sucker, potentially. The men who ban good books from publication on moral grounds and themselves do not understand morality or give a damn. But they have to look virtuous to sucker public, etc.

You can listen to the same old lies and believe there is nothing going on in the world that you are not fully informed of in the daily newspaper. Or you can think for yourself and find an amazing new world where things are happening—and a lot of it shouldn't happen. There is an *is* to be had, an in to "Forbidden Fruit," and many of these men who deny these things get plenty of that Forbidden Fruit. But it all *costs* us too much to ignore. We are losing lives of mighty development and god-like pleasure because we listen to fools who do not understand that themselves are greatest of all suckers for a lie.

Well, I'll quit now. These words are not a proof, and no set of words can be a proof to a mind that refuses them.

BUT I WARN YOU—IF THE ELDER MECH WAS GOTTEN INTO THE HANDS OF OUR GREAT TECHNICAL SCIENTISTS OPENLY AND WITH PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OUR CIVILIZATION WOULD BECOME A HEAVEN. IT WILL NOT HAPPEN IF WE ALL CLOSE OUR EYES AND SAY IT DOES NOT EXIST.

This Christmas millions of toys were dug out of storehouses in the caverns, each of them worth a fortune to a surface manufacturer. "Ren-schur" (sure to run) toys, the finest of the elder race—and played with by ignorant grown people and wantonly destroyed. Such toys as no one but Aladdin or a modern cavern dweller knows exist. Each of them was based on some application of

physics, on some wrinkle of a knowledge of energy denied to us. Each of them a great invention on the surface and worthwhile down there because they are ignorant and we do not know they exist. Some of these things could be gotten off those people if we knew and tried. We do not! I try, but I am only one of a few people, the ones who understand that Shaver has something more than a fertile imagination and a yen to get into print, no matter how.

There are more kinds of blindness than the loss of eyes. Men lost their mental eyes when they decided to deny all the truth behind such phenomena as witchcraft.

Note for Shaver Opponents:

The incredulous attitude, historically speaking, has always been in the majority, and it HAS ALWAYS BEEN WRONG. This is not only true of such impossible gadgets as the telephone and radio, it has been true of every new discovery of every kind. It has always been true of visitors to the underworld and their tales upon returning. Strangely enough, it HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN TRUE OF WITCHCRAFT. The credulous, in various times and places, far outnumbered the incredulous, where witchcraft was concerned. They KNEW, they said; THEY FELT AND SAW AND HEARD THE TRUTH.

To be incredulous of witchcraft, witches and related forms of superstition is comparatively a

modern attitude.

To be incredulous of Shaver's statements, which do explain these once generally believed in and accepted phenomena, explains them logically and sanely—supported by endless references in antique writings; supported by countless letters from present-day people who have experienced these phenomena in the present day; supported by other eye-witness accounts of the antique mechanisms; supported by countless occurrences in our daily papers explained in no other way (explainable in no other way) than by acceptance of Shaver's "theories."

Note for all psychiatrists:

I, Shaver, solemnly swear I have never heard a voice. They do not exist except in deranged minds.

Note for all who even partially agree with Shaver:

I solemnly swear I hear voices every night.

Note for all opponents of Shaver:

Above you can find two confessions. Take your choice.

Note to all psychiatrists and other repressors of truth:

I do solemnly swear and affirm I have never had a dream I consider irregular or out of the way—in any way. Just the ordinary type of dream.

Note to proponents of Shaver:

Oh My! How's yours?

PETRIFIED TREE STUMP ★ —OR NOT? ★

THE cut on this page is "Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming." According to literature published at the park, the Tower rises to a height of 1280 feet from the river bed and 865 feet from its apparent base on the hilltop. Its diameter at the base is approximately 1000 feet, and at the top it averages 275 feet.

As to the mode of origin of the Devils Tower geologists are by no means in agreement. That the rock of the Tower was at one time molten and was forced upward from deep within the earth is no question, and that it cooled beneath the surface is probable. But whether the gear shaft as it now stands is in reality hardened lava in the neck of an old volcano, the enclosing walls of which have been removed by erosion, or whether it is part of a great sheet or sill of molten rock which was injected between rock layers, cannot be positively stated.

On the basis of either explanation hundreds of feet of rock have obviously been removed by erosion from around the Tower and carried by rivers to the sea.

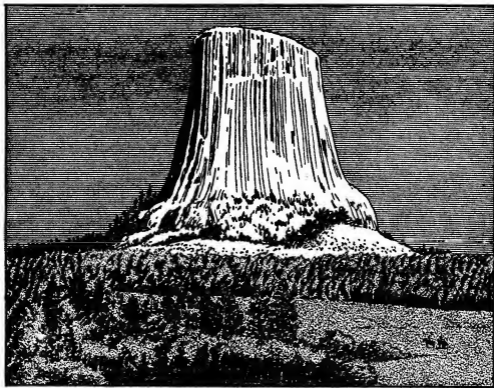
Mr. Shaver, in line with his stories of giant life on the earth in the past, wrote to the Park

authorities suggesting the similarity of appearance of the Devils Tower to a tree stump. The following reply came from the Park:

"Dear Mr. Shaver: Your interesting letter, undated, has just been received, in which you remark concerning the resemblance of the Devils Tower to a huge tree stump. As you suspected, this likeness has often been mentioned.

"Many persons think of Paul Bunyan and some of the trees he must have worked upon, when they see the huge rock. A few persons have propounded the theory you propound now—that it is actually a stump of a tree growing in a past period of giantism.

"It is true that the orthodox scientific explanation is at variance with this idea. Orthodox scientific explanations are based on the preponderance of evidence known to man at this time. From a study of petrification of plant structures as well as the crystalline development in lava rock, we would say that the structure here is the cooled remains of a mass of once-molten material, and that it does not in any way resemble petrified plant material, except as to its superficial shape. Superficial shape may well be coincidence—in fact no serious person hypothesizes the existence



Devils Tower National Monument, Wyoming

of giant humans because of the oft-times striking resemblance of certain hills or mountains to various parts of the human anatomy, especially the female breast.

"The rock of which the Devils Tower is composed closely resembles granite in appearance and is quite similar mineralogically. The fluting which produces the appearance of bark is brought about by columnar rock structure which in turn results from relatively rapid cooling of the molten rock. Such columnar jointing can be observed in formation today in vicinity of volcanos. The columnar rock here is like the now-forming columnar rock in many respects, so many that we cannot attribute it to coincidence.

"As to the over-all shape, it has resulted from the arrangement of the columns as they were formed in response to varying rates of radiation of heat, gases and liquids into rock surrounding the molten mass as it cooled. Four miles to the northwest of here there is a convex-shaped bill of the same sort of rock which displays an arrangement of columns within the mass of such a nature that when erosion and undercutting progress further, certain columns will fall off and the shape of the hill will change from convex to a stump-like structure similar to the Devils Tower.

"In the case of this hill, it will be quite possible in years to come to liken it to a giant tree stump.

Its existence, so close to the Devils Tower which also has that appearance, will likely cause visitors of that time to remark upon the similarity of what they see to a "forest" of giant tree stumps. Those who base their conceptions on superficial appearances will be more certain than they are today that there was a time when gigantic trees were in existence. But the records will show, if records for man exist for that long a time, that at least one of these stumps was once just a hill. And a study of the nature of the rock at first hand, which you have not had the privilege of making and which you inquire about, will show that the only resemblance to a petrified tree stump is in the superficial shape.

"I wish to thank you for writing to us for information, instead of cataloguing this structure as favoring your theory of giantism without attempting any research."

The foregoing is the official statement about the Devils Tower. We want to thank the Park officials for their kind and complete reply to Mr. Shaver's letter. It gives us facts to work on, rather than theory. But let's examine the facts and see what they really are. First, geologists are by no means in agreement with the origin of Devils Tower. They do agree that it is standing free, and not buried in the earth, because erosion freed it. If it was buried in the earth, then at

least 1280 feet of surrounding terrain were eroded. This does not seem likely. If it was the core of a volcano, we have a problem—why would the volcano structure itself, which is lava, be eroded away without trace, leaving the core, which is just lava, subjected to the same rate of erosion because it is the same material?

Your editor has a piece of petrified wood which is "eroded," and when placed on end, it shows the same columnar, fluted structure mentioned as being peculiar to Devils Tower. The similarity is so striking that one wonders if study of petrified plant structures ought to be carried still further. It would seem that the peculiarities of plant structure would be rather hard to identify if the evidence were to be based on plant matter on a gigantic scale. The cellular structure would be unrecognizable because of the huge scale on which it occurs. A mistake might easily be made in calling it something not plant-like at all.

The convex hill nearby has (they say) a core like Devils Tower. Only from superficial examination of the hilltop, it would seem. Or maybe the whole hill is lava. It would seem this is the case. But that doesn't prove anything—since it would take at least one or two million years to erode the hill (the length of time the geologists estimate it took to erode Devils Tower), before we would have the visual evidence before us. Maybe the smaller hill is just the mound left of a burned-over stump?

Let's picture a day in the Earth's past, say only 50,000 years ago. . . . We have two giant trees growing side by side. They tower 5000 feet into the air. The earth enters an area in space where there is a "nebula" of dust and meteoric material which falls in a tremendous fiery rain. This incandescent material burns the trees, and buries the stumps beneath debris, covering them completely. The glowing stumps carbonize, are subjected to intense pressure, compressed to a rock-like structure very much like lava, in columnar form (have you ever made charcoal? ever looked at a piece of charcoal and noticed the structure?) and then cooled relatively rapidly—due to the cessation of the storm of incandescent material from the skies. This material being more

of an ash than anything else, could easily erode in 50,000 years leaving the burned and hardened tree stump standing free. The smaller tree could have burned down to just a rounded mound as it exists today. If the larger tree was eroded free in any length of time you want to give for the process, isn't it likely the smaller tree would have eroded in at least the same time? Unless the smaller tree is already uncovered, and it is only the "superficial" appearance to a tree stump that it lacks to be exactly the same as the Devils Tower?

The geologists say Devils Tower is "like the now-forming columnar rock in many respects (but not all)" to a volcano lava formation. They say they do not agree as to just how Devils Tower was formed. They say it is "similar" from actual observation.

We say it is a tree, and from "similarities" with actual observation of such things as charcoal, petrified wood, etc. Why should either "deduction" be accorded preference?

Shaver and *Amazing Stories* say it is a tree out there at Devils Tower.

Geologists say it is "similar to lava" in a volcano or molten rock injected between layers of rock. They aren't sure.

Orthodox scientific explanations are based upon the preponderance of (all) evidence known to man at this time. It is *known* that the Age of Mammals (when Devils Tower is supposed to have been formed) was 50 million years ago; and it is known that man is less than 50,000 years old; and it is known that the erosion had to take 2 million years in order to conform with other things that are *known*. None of them are *really* known, but all hypothesized.

Maybe it's a tree, who knows. One can only hypothesize, if that's all we have to go on!

Recently the head of the chair of geology at Edinburgh University reported to the Royal Society that he had computed the age of the earth 1619 times and gotten 1619 different answers!

Really now!

It's a tree!

'Tain't!

'Tis!

NOTES ON SUBTERRANEAN SHAFTS

By VINCENT H. GADDIS

"There are sacraments of evil as well as of good about us, and we live and move to my belief in an unknown world, a place where there are caves and shadows and dwellers in twilight. It is possible that man may sometimes return on the track of evolution, and it is my belief that an awful lore is not yet dead."
—Arthur Machen

THROUGHOUT the world there are mysterious shafts, caves and tunnels built or inhabited by unknown beings who have vanished into the mists of pre-history. These visi-

ble links with a puzzling antiquity present problems to the modern world that are bewildering and baffling.

In Tibet there is a secret city, hidden in the world's highest mountains, and built at the top of a pit that drops deep into the earth; in Nova Scotia there is a strange underground chamber protected by ancient engineering so ingenious that it has baffled the best salvage experts; in Mexico the prehistoric Acapulco tunnel and the padre-protected and sealed opening at Xilitla remain unexplored.

South America, too, has its underground passages, linked with the long-lost and archaic Golden City of Manoa and the disappearance of the explorer Col. Percy Fawcett. In the Ozark Mountains of our country there is the story of the "devil pit" concealed by rugged cliffs, while off the coast of India, covered by the sea so long ago that not even the incredibly aged records of that hoary country contain reference to them, are cities that apparently have been visited in modern times by mysterious constructions unknown to earth.

Behind these reports are implications and correlations of data that point to startling suggestions. There are spots on and under this planet that present profound enigmas—the gravity-defying vortexes in Oregon and California, for example, that may well be caused by buried machinery of ancient or extra-terrestrial origin—and the writer feels certain that we are on the verge of making some remarkable discoveries. Extensive correspondence with well-known authorities and explorers in America and England in recent months has produced a wealth of astonishing information that would fill a book. As my time permits, the material that can safely be made public will be released.

The Tibetan Shaft

IN A remote region of northern Tibet, Theodore Illion, playwright and world-traveler, found a mysterious shaft and an underground city devoted to evil. He tells the story in his book, *Darkness Over Tibet* (Rider and Co., London), which contains a detailed account of his observations and his almost-miraculous escape.

"The existence of an underground city in Tibet," he writes, "is occasionally hinted at by well-informed people in the forbidden country, although the stories are often extravagant and turn the city, which I succeeded in entering, into a 'Mighty Underground Empire inhabited by millions of people.' Tibet becomes somewhat more accessible as the years roll by, and I am confident that eventually other explorers will confirm my description of . . . (this) city."

After receiving a letter of introduction and directions from a native Tibetan occultist, Illion found the city near the Sangpo Valley, twenty miles from the nearest village. It is known as the "City of the Initiates," and consists of seven underground buildings that drop at least fourteen stories below the surface, the tops of these sub-surface constructions being level with the ground. They are built around a shaft, the top of which is surrounded by a wall four feet high and ten yards in diameter.

The top of each building consists of a large glass skylight that is level with the surface and can be quickly covered. In front of each is a narrow staircase going down to a heavy door. The buildings are connected by tunnels, are easily kept warm, and practically earthquake-proof. Several hundred inhabitants are under the rule of a Prince Mani Rimpotche, a tall aged Tibetan with

a white beard who speaks six languages, including English, and is remarkably well-informed about world affairs.

Illion learned that only one other westerner had ever visited the city, and he had lived and died there under a Tibetan name. Life in the city resembles that of an ant-hill under the absolute control of its ruler. No one is permitted to leave the city without permission, and every action of its dwellers is rigidly regulated.

The shaft itself appeared incredibly aged and very deep. Stones weighing up to twenty pounds were thrown in, but no sound reached Illion's ears. His inquiries revealed that only a few of the highest initiates knew what was at the bottom, and any other person who found out would die—"there are such secrets"—with death automatically following the discovery.

This city is apparently the headquarters of a widespread secret organization with agents scattered throughout the Orient—perhaps even in the west, according to additional information reaching the writer recently. Illion's discovery of the concealed evil nature of this city which poses as good, his refusal to become an agent, his escape and the uncanny nature of his pursuit are details that will be found in his book.

It is hoped that additional observations may be made by travelers in future years. The fact that possession of this mysterious shaft is in evil hands is very suggestive, and it is one of the reasons why I feel that stories and doctrines coming out of Tibet and apparently devoted to mankind's best interests must be carefully considered before they are blindly accepted as truth.

The Oak Island Pit

SEVERAL months ago I wrote an article on the famous so-called "money pit" on Oak Island in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. It has been generally believed that this amazing shaft and underground chamber is the work of pirates, and that it contains a treasure of fabulous value. The story of how this shaft was accidentally discovered in 1795 by three young men, and the long tale of repeated attempts by salvage companies to solve the problem of the sea-water tunnel system that protects the chamber will be found in my original article.

Briefly, here are the facts: At some remote period a small army of workmen and a number of vessels arrived at this small island in the bay. No one knows who they were, where they came from, how long ago they arrived, or what they placed in the shaft. They sunk a shaft thirteen feet in diameter and at a depth of 150 feet built a large chamber of cement, iron and oak beams, at least forty feet in height, on a seven-inch concrete floor.

Something was placed in the chamber, which was then sealed. In the meantime other workmen were constructing a series of twisting tunnels to the shaft from the sea. At least two tunnels are definitely known to exist; there are likely others. One of the tunnels was run to an inlet where a

huge artificial beach was made with tons and tons of unidentified fiber, covered with gravel and soil, so that it served as a vast sponge forcing water into the tunnel regardless of low tides.

As the shaft was filled, obstructions of various kinds—planks, fiber, concrete, putty, even charcoal—were placed every ten feet. When the shaft was filled, the tunnels were opened, and the unknown workmen left the island never to return. All attempts to sink shafts, therefore, and recover the buried objects are frustrated by the water coming in from the sea. There is no way to hold back the flood of water that comes in faster than pumps can operate. No concealed shut-off valves for the tunnels can be located. The best salvage experts and engineers of modern times have been unable to solve the problem.

After writing the article it occurred to me that here was a mystery that went beyond the mere attempt of pirates to conceal some stolen gold. The matter of the inscribed stone found at the 90-foot level, for example. It was a flat piece of quarried basalt, about three feet long by 16 inches wide, covered with "peculiar characters which nobody could decipher." Doubtless this inscription was the key to the mystery, but it has disappeared, and no copy of the characters was ever made. Pirates did not inscribe stones, mix concrete, build artificial beaches or sink shafts to such incredible depths.

Then came a letter to the writer from Harold T. Wilkins, world-famous authority on pirate lore and prehistoric history (See *Who's Who*). Mr. Wilkins wrote: "I have long theorized that the so-called money pit in Nova Scotia is far from any pirate-made pit, as no pirates, even if they were military engineers, would excavate a pit over a hundred feet deep. In Nova Scotia, at one of more points, there are also the phenomena of mysterious footprints in stone—in one case leading across what is now a swamp to a very queer elevation."

After receiving this letter, I decided to make further inquiries, and learned that other writers suspect the prehistoric construction of this shaft and chamber. Charles Driscoll, for example, in his book *Doubloons*, suggests that it may date back to an early and unknown colony of Scandinavians who buried their accumulated wealth, attempted to return to Europe, and were all lost at sea. Realizing that his idea is far-fetched, he challenges the reader to think up a better explanation. On the other hand, Dr. A. Hyatt Verrill (*Lost Treasures*) writes: "It is obvious that whoever placed the treasure at the bottom of that deep pit on Oak Island, and deliberately flooded the shaft, had no intentions of ever recovering it. Whoever buried it there buried it for all time, to be utterly beyond reach, and so far their efforts have met with entire success."

There are other mysterious factors; in fact the entire matter is utterly baffling and without a clue. In 1894 the chamber was penetrated by a

drill, and when the drill was brought to the surface a scrap of parchment the size of a pea, torn from a large sheet, was found clinging to it. In India ink were the characters "WI" or "VI" which, as Driscoll remarks, "may be almost anything in almost any language."

Then there is the fiber found in the shaft and used in the artificial beach. According to T. D. Barrett (*True Tales of Buried Treasure*), no botanist has ever been able to identify it. It resembles cocoanut fiber, and is apparently of tropical origin. Nevertheless, thousands of tons of this substance, shipload after shipload, was brought here centuries ago to form a beach 150 feet long to act as permanent protective reservoir.

The island itself is a mystery. It is one of over 300 islands in the bay, yet it alone possesses oak trees, red clover, and several other plants. In early days the settlers believed it was haunted, and there were many tales of strange lights, mysterious sounds, and even the disappearance of several explorers. Today the island is riddled with shafts, torn from dynamite explosions, and the chamber, penetrated many times by drills, is flooded with water. The latest idea is to excavate the entire center of the island with modern machinery. It will cost \$250,000, but a company will probably be formed within the next few years to make the attempt. Perhaps, then, Oak Island will give up its long-held secret.

Mystery In Mexico

RISING above the Pacific near Acapulco, Mexico, is a sheer rocky cliff, protected from the sea by jagged boulders that make a landing possible only by native canoe. In the face of this cliff is an artificial tunnel, regarded with superstitious dread by the natives. Known as the "Cave of the Pirates," it was obviously made by a prehistoric, patient race, and since there are no safe anchorage spots nearby it is doubtful that pirates ever used it.

It has never been fully explored, and it apparently goes back into the earth for an incredible distance. The walls are remarkably smooth and decorated with untranslated inscriptions and figures. Long delayed echoes reveal its astonishing depth. It has been known to the Indians for some years, but they avoid it and tell of strange lights that they have observed near its mouth. Although access to it is difficult, this man-made, vast and unexplored ancient tunnel deserves investigation. Why it was constructed in such a treacherous spot on a barren cliff is itself a mystery.

On the road from Mexico City to Laredo, down the Montezuma river valley, is the Indian town of Tamazuncbale. Twenty-five miles from this town, on a rough side road, is Xilitla, where the ruins of an old Spanish monastery lie surrounded by a wall of masonry. On one side this wall is built against the side of a cliff.

Some years ago an earthquake shook the village and part of the ancient wall collapsed re-

vealing a tunnel cut into the cliff. The sides of the tunnel bore mysterious inscriptions and figures of birds, snakes and curious unknown animals. The local Indians kept away from the passage, but one day two Americans who were passing through the village decided to explore it. Hours later they emerged greatly excited and left the town, stating that they would return. But they never came back.

No one knows who these Americans were or what they found. The padres, for reasons known only to themselves, sealed the tunnel again by rebuilding the wall. In more recent years they have absolutely refused to permit exploration, although they state that they have no knowledge of what lies within—which is probably true. Only time will reveal the answer.

The Ozark Legend

SINCE the Ozark region has already been referred to as the site of an underground shaft, it is of interest to note that there exists an old legend in various parts of Missouri and Arkansas of a great hole in the ground, surrounded by great cliffs, from which strange sounds, lights and odors emerge. Known as the "devil pit," its location is not known, although men of previous generations claimed to have visited the place years ago. According to Vance Randolph (*Ozark Ghost Stories*), these old accounts state that "strange people live on the escarpments, throw odd things into the bottomless pit at night, particularly when the moon is full . . . (and) there are tales of dark-visaged foreigners traveling at night, who make regular pilgrimages to the place from distant parts of the country."

Fred Allsopp, in his *Folklore of Romantic Arkansas*, also refers to this story. Although there is a deep canyon with high walls called the "devil's half acre" near Mena, Ark., the legend is not known to the local inhabitants. It may be added that Breadtray Mountain in Stone County, Mo., is the scene of many reports of mysterious phenomena, and Otto Rayburn (*Ozark Country*) writes that "Breadtray has a legendary reputation seldom paralleled." Judge Tom Moore (*Mysterious Tales and Legends of the Ozarks*) states that persons who visit the mountain at night hear sobs, groans and screams, and that his report "does not come from second-hand information, nor is it based on hearsay."

Also, the mysterious lights on a lonely stretch of country road called the "devil's promenade" in northeastern Oklahoma, fourteen miles from Joplin, Mo., and five miles from Highway 66, are famous. Anyone, on any clear night, can see them, and repeated investigations have failed to produce an explanation. Other strange things have happened along this stretch of road, according to Randolph.

The lights resemble automobile headlights with dimmers on, vary from the size of an egg to that of a washtub, and always travel in an easterly direction. They appear in varying colors at vary-

ing heights, but never more than a few feet from the road. Old-timers claim they were there fifty years before the road was built and when the area was a woods. When approached they usually vanish or rise high into the air, and they are said to radiate heat. When pursued they often react as if guided intelligently.

The Indian Sea Enigma

SINCE 1750 shipping masters in the Indian Ocean and adjacent waters have been reporting their observations of mysterious huge wheeled constructions, luminous and slowly revolving, under, rising from, or entering the sea. Hundreds of these reports have been published in the *Marine Observer*, issued by the British Meteorological Office, since 1850. Although nautical journals have discussed the enigma at various times, very little information about these observations has reached the general public.

In 1935, the late Charles Fitzhugh Talman, Chief Meteorologist of the U. S. Weather Bureau, in commenting on the report of the steamer *Talma* in 1929, wrote: "These tales that come to us year after year from the Indian Ocean of luminous wonders as weird as anything Poe ever imagined" cannot be explained by modern science. "The whole business," he added, "is so astounding that one wonders why no scientific expedition has yet investigated it."

Details on a number of these reports will be found in *The Books of Charles Fort*. Most significant is the localized nature of these observations. Moreover, a check of records reveals that a large proportion of these appearances, limited as they are to the Indian Ocean area, have been off the western coast of India.

Beneath the sea in this region, according to James Churchward (*Children of Mu*), lies "a large area of submerged land with structures showing thereon." This submerged land is of an oval shape, with the Laccadive and Maldivé Islands lying within its boundaries. At several points both north and south of these islands are regions of very shallow water, crossed by channels of greater depth, and on clear days when the surface of the water is quiet and the sun is in the correct position, the "imposing remains of ancient structures are clearly to be seen."

Obviously this area was once a part of India, but no record of its submergence is mentioned in Hindu history no matter how far one goes back. The structures are of a very large size and indicate a prehistoric civilization highly advanced.

Is there any relationship between these puzzling ocean-dwelling wheels and this long-lost culture of pre-history? Where do these huge circular structures come from, and where do they go? What conceivable purpose do they have in submerging below the Indian Ocean—and only in this localized area? It is quite possible that the answers to these questions, when they are known, will be as astonishing and incredible as these reports are to us today.



WHAT MAN

IS THERE AN ETHER DRIFT?

By

Roger P. Graham

IS THERE an ether drift? In these days when the most advanced science seems based on the premise that there is no ether, that question might seem silly to some. Nevertheless, it is asked in all seriousness.

At one time not so long ago science based much of its theory on an "imponderable medium" pervading all space, which was supposed to offer NO RESISTANCE whatever to the passage of matter through it. It was supposed to be stationary in space, so that by relating all movement to the stationary ether we would have more or less absolute motion. Thus, the Earth, according to this theory on the ether, was moving at least many miles per second THROUGH the ether.

This theory was accepted by scientists and believed to be true. So when Michelson and Morley performed their famous experiments on ether drift they did it with confidence that they would be able to measure the velocity of the ether. No one was more surprised than they when their results proved negative consistently. Nevertheless, being honest scientists, they had to accept their experimental data. **THE EARTH DID NOT MOVE THROUGH THE ETHER.**

Two different types of setups were used in these experiments. Both were essentially the same in principle. The one, now famous and described in most advanced physics books as well as in **THE MYSTERIOUS UNIVERSE**, by Jeans, floated in a pool of mercury, so that the paths of light WERE at ALL TIMES in the HORIZONTAL PLANE. The other, reported by Michelson in the **AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SCIENCE**, Series 4, Volume 3, 475-78, year 1897, was set up in a fixed frame so that NOTHING ABOUT IT MOVED RELATIVE TO THE EARTH. The rotation of the Earth itself was supposed to turn the apparatus in the ether stream.

These two experiments were done many times and always gave negative results, so the conclusion had to be accepted that **THERE IS NO STATIONARY ETHER THROUGH WHICH THE EARTH MOVES.**

It is one of the peculiarities of the human mind that a specific statement can be used to generalize far beyond what it originally implied. Today the former conclusion of the ether drift experiment has been subtly altered to state that there is no move-

CAN IMAGINE...

If you will imagine it, perhaps someone will be inspired to do it. This department is for your ideas, no matter how "wild" they may seem; who knows, they may be the spur to some man's thinking and thereby change our destiny! Tell us your thoughts.

ment of the ether that could be detected under ANY experimental conditions.

Nevertheless, the Michelson-Morley experiments DID NOT COVER EVERY POSSIBLE CONDITION. A careful study of those experiments will show anyone that they could not possibly have measured any drift of the ether TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE EARTH. In other words, the ether could be flowing THROUGH the apparatus used by Michelson in both types of experiments he performed TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE EARTH, and that velocity could not possibly register in his interferometer!

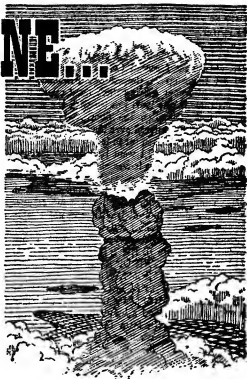
He did not think of this possibility because the accepted concept of the ether gave it the property of being incapable of affecting matter and altering its velocity as it drifted through the ether.

If we deny that and postulate that the slightest drift of ether will cause matter to change its velocity, then it follows that all fields: gravity, positive electrical, negative electrical, and magnetic are ether drifts of some sort.

Then the effect of gravity is the effect of an ether drift!

If it is, there should be some way to measure the velocity of this drift.

IN SEARCHING for some method to fill the gap left by the Michelson-Morley experiments, and measure the possible downward drift of the ether, I first decided to use essentially the same system that Michelson used, but with a more rigid setup, and rotated on a horizontal shaft. The drawback to that setup was that the change in shape of the frame due to the shift of gravitational stresses as it rotated would affect the measurements and hence the results would be inconclusive. Also it would be a very expensive setup, since it



would require a solid steel plate at least six inches thick and ten feet in diameter, fixed on a heavy shaft and set on a huge concrete foundation.

Nevertheless, since it seemed the only way to perform the experiment, I was determined to go through with it and had even spent several months tracking down the various parts needed.

Then a much simpler idea came to me which could give much more certain results, and immediate (though inaccurate) confirmation that there IS a downward drift of the ether, IF THERE IS ONE.

The idea is pictured in the diagram shown with this article. Simply expressed, if a mirror is placed flat on the floor and two surveyor's transits are set up about five feet on either side of it, so that they look down on the mirror from a height of about five feet, and the first transit is centered on a thin line scratched in the silver of the mirror; then the second transit is moved about until its hair lines are centered exactly on the line scratched in the mirror, and also the reflection of visible crosshairs placed at the end of the first instrument; then, when you go back to the first instrument which is already centered on the scratch in the mirror, it SHOULD be exactly centered on the reflection of the second instrument's external cross hairs just as the second instrument is on the first—UNLESS THERE IS AN ETHER DRIFT.

If there is an ether drift it will not be possible to have both instruments exactly in line with THE

REFLECTION of the other AND the scratch in the mirror.

In this crude setup accurate results can't be obtained, but POSITIVE results can, and HAVE been obtained. I rented two surveyor's transits and set them up in the editor's basement and spent an afternoon getting them lined up so that one instrument was lined exactly with the scratch on a small mirror on the floor AND a white thread carefully centered over the end of the other transit, which had been set in line with the scratch on the mirror. Then I went back to the first instrument and saw that it was about a twentieth of an inch off.

Time after time I undid the setup and did it over again. Each time I got the same results. Then Mr. Palmer himself tried it and got almost exactly the same results I did.

From this roughly set up experiment I determined that there IS AN ETHER DRIFT TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE EARTH AND THAT IT IS SOMEWHERE AROUND EIGHTY MILES PER SECOND. I think it may be less, and Mr. Palmer thinks it is probably between eight-five and a hundred miles a second.

Any reader can perform the same experiment and get the same results. THEY ARE DEFINITELY POSITIVE.

IN ORDER to get very accurate measurement of the ether velocity the path of the light ray should be at least a hundred feet.

The transits should have fifty power instead of twenty-five power lenses, and the external and internal cross hairs on each telescope should be accurately lined up.

The mirror should be polished metal instead of silvered glass, and should be mounted on a base that can be leveled accurately, with the mirror in a mounting that can be shifted by a micrometer that will give accurate readings in thousandths of an inch.

One of the transits should be mounted on a base that can be moved forward or backward in thousandths of an inch. The other, which will be lined up with the mirror scratch only, can have a stationary base.

For a distance of a hundred feet the path of light should be in a pipe each way from the mirror, and the pipe exhausted of air so that there will be no heat effect on the path of light.

With that setup the downward velocity of the ether could be measured to within a quarter of a mile per second.

The reader should bear in mind that although Einstein denies the existence of an ether, at least half the most reputable scientists do believe that an ether of some kind exists. Sir Oliver Lodge, who has been the staunchest supporter of the objective existence of an ether in recent years, writes:

"The ether in its various forms of energy dominates modern physics, though many prefer to avoid the term 'ether' because of its nineteenth-

century associations, and use the term 'space.' The term used does not much matter." (p. 124, *Jeans, Mysterious Universe.*)

The purpose of this article has been to present the METHOD by which it may be definitely proven by anyone that there IS an ether drift, and that it is TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE EARTH. The velocity of this drift must be greater than sixteen miles per second, since free-falling objects from space sometimes attain to that velocity when they strike the atmosphere. Our first experiments show that this velocity is under a hundred miles per second—probably around eighty miles per second.

This experiment must be repeated under more accurate conditions and done by many different people before its conclusions can be accepted as final.

For the mathematical record, the mathematics used by myself in this experiment follows:

Let

$$\begin{aligned} h &= PD \\ d &= AD = DC \\ y &= BE \\ x &= BC \end{aligned}$$

Light from A reflected from the point P would pass through E if there were no ether drift, since $\angle APD = \angle EPD$.

The downward drift of ether causes the light to pass through B instead.

Let

$$\begin{aligned} v &= \text{velocity of ether drift} \\ c &= \text{velocity of light.} \end{aligned}$$

Then

$$(1) \frac{v}{c} = \frac{EB}{EP} = \frac{y}{\sqrt{h^2 + d^2} + \sqrt{x^2 + y^2}}$$

Now

$$(2) \frac{y}{x} = \frac{h}{d}$$

Whence

$$(3) y = \frac{xh}{d}$$

and

$$(4) \sqrt{x^2 + y^2} = \frac{x}{d} \sqrt{h^2 + d^2}$$

Substituting (3) and (4) in (1) we have

$$(5) \frac{v}{c} = \frac{xh}{\sqrt{h^2 + d^2} (d + x)}$$

Whence

$$(6) v = \frac{ch}{\sqrt{h^2 + d^2}} \frac{x}{d + x}$$

In the experiment performed on Feb. 25, 1947, we had

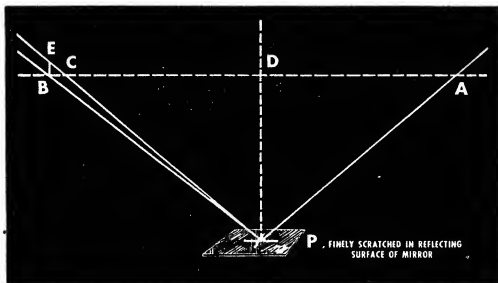
$$d = 69.5 \text{ inches}$$

$$h = 59.5 \text{ inches}$$

and the value of x was found from several trials to be about 1/20th of an inch. Hence

$$x = 0.05 \text{ inches}$$

The latest value for the velocity of light is $c = 186,284$ miles per second.



This diagram shows how Mr. Graham performed his experiment, using two surveyor's transits focused on a mirror on the floor from a height of five feet. See page 153 for detailed explanation.

Substituting these values in (6) we get
 $v = 87 +$ miles per second.

EDITORIAL NOTE:

We present this experimental report as an integral part of the Shaver Mystery because (1) Mr. Graham's own work proved so parallel to the Shaver Mystery that it was the cause of his contacting us to present us with his thought-provoking material, which, to forestall the accepted authority certain to be quoted at us, is NOT in accordance with that accepted authority.

Shaver says "empty" space is not empty. It is filled with his "exd." (Finely divided matter which had "disintegrated"; and from which matter can itself be reintegrated.) He says its "velocity" is what we call gravity—that is, the effect we notice is due to the friction of its passing through matter, the specific mention being in this case ourselves and the earth. He also says that "velocity" is present only *near* matter.

The reader will note the startling similarity of this statement to that just made for the first time anywhere by Mr. Graham in his experiment to determine an ether drift in a downward direction. (The in-flow of ex-disintegration in matter Mr. Shaver has postulated.)

Reason (2) is that both Mr. Shaver and Mr. Graham inform us that their initial source of information is "outside" themselves. Mr. Shaver from his "caves" with their "telaug thought-records," "voices," "rays" (one of which we have photographed), teleportation and materializations in visible form—and Mr. Graham in a sort of intuitive manner not entirely within the form of logical reasoning power.

Reason (3) is that your own editor's studies have convinced him of similar things (and many

hundreds of readers have, without persuasion of any kind, advanced similar opinions in many strange guises from "voices" to just plain deduction).

If this experiment can be verified, it is PROOF of the accuracy of Mr. Shaver's concepts in this particular matter, no matter how we accept the METHOD by which he claims to have gained them.

Your editor has PERFORMED this experiment, has witnessed an inexplicable thing that MUST be explained. If the theories of ether drift, exd, or what have you, DO NOT explain it, then indeed will the BETTER explanation need POSITIVE DEMONSTRATION. The burden of proof, it is said scientifically, lies on the claimant. We have claimed these things, and now we have PROVED them by what we (with our meagre equipment and knowledge) consider at least TENTATIVELY satisfactory evidence which can and must be expanded beyond all reasonable doubt. Since we have accepted the burden of proof—we ask those claimants of the opposite theory—that there is no ether drift, nor exd—to come forward with positive proof of error or inadequacy in the experiment we have performed.

ADDITIONAL EDITORIAL COMMENT:

Recently we made the statement in an editorial, and to a group of fans who polled many on their opinions on future space flight, that we considered flight to the planets impossible. We said that, basing our statement on the present "accepted authority" on such things as the ether. Because we believe there IS an ether drift, and that it exists ONLY near bodies of matter and not in space, no space ship could overcome the resistance of that drift and reach another planet, WITHOUT

compensating for it. In short, any space ship launched to, say Mars, would MISS the planet by the distance the ether drift would carry it off its course, just as a plane which ignores the wind velocity would not arrive at its destination by many miles—AND, the ship would run out of fuel long before it reached its destination, IF it accepted authority, and counted on "coasting" through millions of miles of NON-RESISTING emptiness, and instead discovered the emptiness was not emptiness at all, and offered a resistance (which might require a *constant* acceleration of one gravity, more or less, to avoid coming to a halt just as a log shoved into a lake will be halted by the water unless the shove is continuously applied).

The reader can see the importance of proving Shaver and Graham right or wrong. Space travel tactics and success depend on it!

Other thinkers among our readers will comprehend that the Shaver exd concept also can explain why the planets remain in their orbits, how they remain there, the forces that produce the phenomena, and the forces that can "create" a world, or a solar system.

Readers of *Oakspe* will note the **THIRD** startling agreement with Shaver exd in its scientific theory of how suns and planets are created—by the "whirlpool" or "vortex" in space. If space is **EMPTY**, the concept of a whirlpool in it is silly. If it is exd, it is **NOT** silly. It is the **MOST LOGICAL WAY** to form any stellar body, to drive finely divided matter (space—ether) together to form solid (material) bodies.

It is time to reexamine the "nature of the universe" to determine what new concrete evidence can be introduced to modify our obviously archaic concepts. We can never know the real nature of the universe, but we can approach ever closer to approximating it. We have some **NEW** evidence to be applied to our concepts. If we reject it as dogmatists, future men will suffer for it.

Picture yourself in that first space ship aimed at Mars. Picture yourself missing it, dying horribly in space, forever lost. And all because you found out that a mysterious ether scientists assured you did not exist, **ACTUALLY DID**, and it **COULD HAVE BEEN** taken into consideration, and your life would **NOT** have been lost.

UNIFICATION OF NEWTONIAN AND EINSTEINIAN MASS CONCEPTS

By

ROGER P. GRAHAM



1. **N**EWTON postulated that mass was a constant. This was assumed to be true until modern experimental physics determined, after many careful experiments and verifications, that mass was not a constant. A new science grew up based on these new facts and equations derived from experiment.

Just as the old was called Newtonian Mechanics, the new might be called Einsteinian Mechanics. There seemed no possible way of reconciling the two. It was stated that Newtonian concepts were inadequate to account for observable fact except when velocities were very low and fairly constant, or time intervals were fairly short.

The Newtonian concept of *mass* as a constant was discarded and the new concept of *mass-energy* as a constant took its place. Both of these concepts are discussed in great detail in many existing works. It should not be necessary to cover that ground again. This article is devoted to a unification of the Newtonian "constant-mass" concept, and the modern or Einsteinian "mass-energy" concept.

Starting with purely Newtonian concepts and assertions, S_n , which is any material object, will be subjected to mathematical analysis. This analysis will bridge the heretofore unreconcilable gap between the Newtonian and the Einsteinian

equations, and provide an expression for the mass of any material object which will be strictly in agreement with both.

It will lead also to a startling generalization on the *nature* of mass and the nature of the electron. 2.1 A material particle is defined to be a body so small that, for the purposes of our investigation the distances between its different parts may be neglected. (Clerk Maxwell, *Matter & Motion*, Art. VI.)

2.2 S_n is used in this article to denote a system of material particles, (2.1); with the restriction imposed on S_n that no particle be added to or taken from it during any analysis, and the restriction imposed on the particles that their mass remain constant. (This is the Newtonian restriction.) Then,

$$2.3 \quad S_n = m_1, m_2, \dots, m_n$$

3.1 Reference frame:—a coordinate system as described and studied in any book on solid analytics, having three, mutually perpendicular dimensions, X, Y, and Z.

3.2 Any analysis for one dimension that holds equally for the other two will use the letter, u, for the variable with the understanding that x, y, or z can be substituted for u throughout.

Then if

$$3.3 \quad F = f(u); u = x, y, z$$

We have

$$3.4 \quad F = f(x) = f(y) = f(z)$$

4. Let m_1 be any material particle, (2.1), and V_{1u} its velocity at a given instant parallel to the direction, u ; ($u = x, y, z$). Then the momentum of m_1 is

$$4.1 \quad M_1 = m_1 V_{1u}$$

If m_1, m_2, \dots, m_n are n such particles called the set S_n , (2.3), then at the given instant

$$4.2 \quad M_u = \sum_{i=1}^n m_i V_{iu}$$

and M_u is the momentum of S_n in the direction u ; ($u = x, y, z$).

Then there is a mean value for V_{iu} which will be denoted by V_{ou} , for which

$$4.3 \quad M_u = V_{ou} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i = m_o V_{ou}$$

where

$$4.4 \quad m_o = \sum_{i=1}^n m_i$$

5. The energy of m_1 due to its velocity V_{1u} is

$$5.1 \quad E_{1u} = \frac{1}{2} m_1 V_{1u}^2$$

and the total energy of S_n in the direction u , ($u = x, y, z$), is

$$5.2 \quad E_u = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i V_{iu}^2$$

Then there is a mean value Q_u for V_{iu} such that

$$5.3 \quad E_u = \frac{1}{2} m_o Q_u^2 \quad (\text{see 4.4})$$

Then

$$5.4 \quad Q_u = \sqrt{\frac{2E_u}{m_o}}$$

is the velocity S_n would have if its internal energy were translated into linear velocity along u .

6. Let

$$6.1 \quad E_u = \frac{1}{2} m_o V_{ou}^2 + I_u$$

From 6.1 it is evident that ($E_u - I_u$) is the energy S_n would have due to its velocity V_{ou} if each m_1 had the same velocity V_{ou} ; (5.2). Therefore I_u must be the component of E_u , (the total energy of S_n), that is internal energy. From 6.1 and 5.3 we have

$$6.2 \quad I_u = \frac{1}{2} (Q_u^2 - V_{ou}^2) m_o$$

This expression may be written as

$$6.3 \quad I_u = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i V_{iu}^2 - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i V_{ou}^2 \\ = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i (V_{iu}^2 - V_{ou}^2)$$

Now let I'_u be the u -component of the internal energy of S_n relative to V_{ou} taken at rest. Then

$$6.4 \quad I'_u = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i (V_{iu} - V_{ou})^2$$

On squaring, separating, and collecting terms, we get

$$6.5 \quad I'_u = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i (V_{iu}^2 + V_{ou}^2) - V_{ou} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i V_{iu}$$

Subtracting 6.5 from 6.3 we get, (4.3);

$$6.6 \quad I'_u - I_u = 0$$

Whence,

$$6.7 \quad I_u = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n m_i (V_{iu} - V_{ou})^2$$

Since this is equivalent to 6.3 it follows that the total energy of S_n is equal to the sum of its internal energy and its energy of velocity.

7. Consider the total energy of S_n as being that of an unknown mass, m_a , along u , of velocity V_{au} . Then

$$7.1 \quad E_u = \frac{1}{2} m_a V_{au}^2, \quad V_{au} \neq 0$$

Then we may consider m_a as being a sum of the mass m_o , (4.4), and an increment Dm_u . Thus

$$7.2 \quad m_a = m_o + Dm_u$$

From 6.1 and 7.1 we have

$$7.3 \quad m_a V_{au}^2 = m_o V_{ou}^2 + 2I_u$$

whence, from 7.2 we get

$$7.4 \quad V_{au}^2 Dm_u = 2I_u$$

From 7.1 we have

$$7.5 \quad V_{au}^2 = 2E_u/m_a$$

Substituting in 7.4 and transposing,

$$7.6 \quad Dm_u = m_u I_u/E_u$$

whence, from 7.2 we get

$$7.7 \quad Dm_u = \frac{m_o r}{1-r}$$

where

$$7.8 \quad r = I_u/E_u$$

Then, from 7.2 we get

$$7.9 \quad m_a = \frac{m_o}{1-r}$$

8. From the law of conservation of energy it is evident that if all the energy E of S_n were given out to any system, then S_n would come to rest relative to that system and every m_1 would also come to rest in that system.

Conversely, if S_n were to gain back its original velocity and internal energy from that system it would have to do so by diverting part of the acquired energy to internal energy and use the remainder for acceleration to its former velocity.

Hence, it is evident that r in 7.8 is in reality this diversion fraction. It follows that

$$8.1 \quad r' = 1 - r = \frac{E_u - I_u}{E_u}$$

is the fraction of the energy, or the work done on S_n , that will produce linear velocity. Hence,

$$8.2 \quad r' E_{in} = \frac{1}{2} m_0 V_{in}^2$$

Whence,

$$8.3 \quad E_{in} = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{m_0}{r'} \right) V_{in}^2$$

which is equivalent to 7.1.

It follows that if m_0 is the measured mass of S_0 at rest, and a measured amount of work is done on S_0 , producing a measured velocity of S_0 , then the value of m in

$$8.4 \quad E = \frac{1}{2} m V^2$$

will not be a constant necessarily, but will be

$$8.5 \quad m = m_0 / r'$$

9. There has been nothing in this analysis that could fix the values of r and r' . Hence they must be classed as unknowns whose values might be determined for any specific object, S_0 , by either an experimental determination of m for various conditions, or perhaps by a detailed analysis of the mathematical expressions for the work done on S_0 under expressed conditions.

In actual experiment under many and varied conditions the value of m , (8.4), has been found to vary according to the equation

$$9.1 \quad m = \frac{m_0}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}}$$

where V is the velocity of the electron, C is the velocity of light, and m_0 is the measured mass of the electron at rest or at negligible speeds.

Since this is equivalent to 8.5 we have

$$9.2 \quad r' = \sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}$$

and

$$9.3 \quad r = 1 - \sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}$$

as the experimentally determined values for the velocity-fraction and the internal-energy-fraction of acquired energy.

Then, if E is the work done on an electron at rest in a system, and m_0 is the measured mass of the electron at rest, the velocity-producing work done on the electron is $r'E$, and the velocity is given in 8.3.

10. One very important conclusion can be drawn from this analysis at once. It is

10.1 If the internal energy of any material particle remains a constant under all circumstances, its measured mass at all velocities will be constant.

And, since S_0 may itself be considered as a material particle, (2.1), it follows that

10.2 If the measured mass of any material particle varies under certain variable conditions IT MUST BE COMPOSED OF SMALLER PARTICLES.

Naturally it must be definitely determined that

the apparent variation of measured mass is not due to other factors such as hydrodynamic elements of a rigid particle moving at different speeds through a fluid. If these factors are completely accounted for and the measured mass still varies, it must be concluded that the particle is itself a system, S_0 , made of still smaller particles.

If hydrodynamic factors are thoroughly accounted for in the measurement of the mass of an electron (and it is by no means certain they are) then we must conclude that THE ELECTRON IS NOT A SIMPLE PARTICLE BUT IS A SYSTEM OF STILL SMALLER PARTICLES.

A conclusion may be drawn concerning infinite mass. It has long been an objection to the experimental determination of the measured mass of the electron that if it reached the velocity of light it would have infinite mass. In everyday language, an electron with the speed of light would have more measured mass than the entire solar system plus all the other stars in the Milky Way! But now we may interpret infinite mass as follows:

10.3 A measured mass is infinite when r' , (8.1), is zero; whence, any object may be said to have infinite mass if and only if *all* work done on it is diverted to internal energy.

Conversely,

10.4 A measured mass is constant if and only if *all* work done on it produces velocity.

CONCLUSION

We have brought the Einsteinian and the Newtonian concepts of mass into one theoretical framework. There still remains one big question to be answered; Is *all* mass measured, or Einsteinian, energy-mass? Or is there some primal substance which may be called primal mass, which is present and remains constant throughout all changes of measured mass?

In other words, is m_0 , (4.3), a measured mass or a primal mass? There seems no way of answering that question at present. Since the measure of mass is purely relative and two masses may be equal, or measured equal, without examining the energy content of either, we have no way of finding an object which we can say has zero internal energy and comparing it with conventional objects.

In experiment, if we could find a particle whose mass is constant at all velocities we would still not know if it were a primal substance. We would only know that its energy content is constant—not whether it is zero or not.

Therefore, in this article the question of the basic nature of ultimate mass still remains unanswered. We are, however, in a position to define Newtonian mass and Einsteinian mass (or energy-mass) in common terms.

11.1 Newtonian mass:—Any material particle whose internal energy remains a constant under all conditions available.

11.2 Einsteinian mass:—Any material particle whose internal energy content varies under some conditions.

VISITORS *from the* VOID

★

By VINCENT H. GADDIS

★

THESE have been signs, symbols and objects in the skies of earth described as snakes, swords, lights and rockets. Slow-moving so-called meteors have zig-zagged their way above the clouds, and stratospheric explosions have rocked the land below. Mysterious rays stopped airplane motors over the world's largest city as unidentified phantom planes puzzled the war departments of four nations. Ships and men were observed to drop from the heavens in isolated areas only to vanish.

This is the startling story of bewildering events that have occurred in the last few years. What relationship, if any, exists between these varied reports? Who or what lies behind them?

From Point Pleasant, W. Va., on Oct. 11, 1931, came the report that a blimp or dirigible was observed to have plunged to the earth in flames, men leaping from it in parachutes as it fell. There were many witnesses who stated that the crash had occurred in the hills south of the city. Observers at Gallipolis Ferry reported that the blimp had crossed the Ohio River and it had fallen while one man was watching it through field glasses. Described as being between a hundred and one hundred and fifty feet long, it was at an altitude of three hundred feet when it burst. White objects, believed to have been parachutes, fell with it.

Searching parties were organized. Nearby airports sent planes to assist in the all-day search. Officials at Akron, Ohio, announced that all naval blimps were safe in their hangars. And despite the extensive search and far-flung inquiries, not a single clue was turned up. The mystery remains—concealed somewhere in the West Virginia hills the solution to this puzzle is still a secret.

Then, slightly less than two months later, came a report from Hammonton, N. J. On Dec. 5, late in afternoon, an aviator was observed to fall in a parachute into the Folsom Swamp, one of the densest sections of bog and woodland in the southern part of the state, south of the city. Additional reports of witnesses came from Weymouth, a village on the other side of the swamp. Dropping from a high altitude, no plane had been observed or heard.

Led by state police, five local fire companies and witnesses, a small army of volunteers searched the swamp all night and all the next day. Airports throughout the eastern part of the country reported that all planes were accounted for. The long search was fruitless, but it was added that the swamp contains areas never penetrated before except by Indians.

A year later, on Dec. 29, 1932, it was reported that a large tri-motored airplane had been forced down in the woodlands eight miles west of New

Brunswick, N. J. Observers said that its motors were silent and that its lights were blinking when it disappeared behind the wooded hills. Time of the observation was close to midnight. Again the state police made an unsuccessful search, and again all planes throughout the east were accounted for.

These three reports were collected from the New York Times by David Markham, a member of the Fortean Society. According to Tiffany Thayer, secretary of the Fortean Society, Mr. Markham, who has been collecting material on maritime vanishments, has reached certain quasi-conclusions which he has asked him to *withhold temporarily as possibly too dangerous to make public*. My article "Strange Secrets of the Sea" presents the type of material referred to.

Oddly enough, these reports of men or airships dropping to earth and vanishing without a trace are not unique. The original records of the late Charles Fort contain several similar accounts. How many more lie buried in the files of obscure newspapers we can only guess.

ONE year after the New Brunswick report a mysterious plane appeared over New York City. On Dec. 26, 1933, the metropolis was blotted out from above by a snowstorm. The first telephone call to police headquarters was made at 9:30 a. m. and then the reports steadily increased. The plane could not be seen, but its progress was followed by the sound of its motor. Apparently the pilot was wandering blindly above the snow-shrouded towers of Manhattan in circles unable to find a place to land.

In the hope that the pilot had a short-wave receiver, the National Broadcasting Company tried to contact him. All airports were notified. Beacons and searchlights were lit. A ceiling of five hundred feet was reported at the Newark Airport. As the hours lengthened the ceiling rose, but the reports continued to flow in. Residents of Jersey City and the Bronx announced bearing the motor. By the middle of the afternoon, when the reports finally ceased, the visibility was set at a mile and the pilot could easily have landed at ports in New Jersey or Long Island, but all air fields in the Metropolitan area reported that there had been no flying during the day and no stray plane had appeared.

At this time a phantom plane was appearing over the Scandinavian countries. The first dispatch was released at Stockholm on Dec. 31, 1933, and it announced that Swedish army aviators had been ordered to chase a mysterious plane which had been sighted for several weeks over Lapland. Based, it was believed, somewhere in the moun-

tains, it has been making night flights, and had recently been heard flying toward Norway during a heavy snowstorm.

Another dispatch from the same city on Jan. 9, 1934, stated that the "ghost plane" had been observed over Westerboten in northern Sweden, and that the Swedish airforce had already lost two airplanes in efforts to locate the base of the mystery ship. A party of four men who had been making a ground search along the Norwegian border had vanished.

More dispatches followed from Helsingfors and Stockholm. There was speculation that the planes might be Soviet flyers making test flights to arctic icebreakers or exploring a new air route from Russia to the Atlantic. Soviet authorities denied that any of their planes were over the area.

On Feb. 3 a Helsingfors dispatch announced that "continued night flights over Northern Finland, Sweden and Norway by so-called ghost aviators which have caused such apprehension here as to prompt the general staff to organize reconnoitering on a wide scale by army planes all over Northern Finland still remain a deep mystery." Although there were a large number of eyewitnesses, the plane could not be identified.

The report added that mysterious lights over Helsingfors and Viborg had caused alarm, and that the large unidentified plane had been sighted over eastern Finland where aviation experts stated "that the mysterious flyers show exceptional skill, undoubtedly superior to that of northern European aviators." The appearance of a mystery plane, the first, over London is referred to in this dispatch, and it has been pointed out that this group of reports stopped about the time of the inferior conjunction of Venus (Feb. 5, 1934).

But in March, 1935, an object described as "a large shining form resembling a gigantic snake, wriggling forth in the northwestern sky" appeared for half an hour in the early evening over southern Norway and Denmark. As observed at Grimstad by a correspondent for the *Tidens Tegn* (Norway), it had four or five curves marked off by shadows, and was in a vertical position with its "head" down toward the earth. The vision was clear. There were no clouds, and it was very brilliant. The *Stavanger Aftenblad* for March 26 published a complete description of the appearance and sketches of it made by the artist Naesheim who was a witness.

A similar object appeared three times over the city of Cruz Alta, Brazil; twice in December, 1935, and again in July, 1937. On its last appearance the "snake" had its "head" toward the earth, the head appearing as a ball of fire. In passing it might be added that there were reports of "swords" and "coffins" in the sky over the Polish-German border in 1937, but details regarding these reports are not available to the writer at this time.

Then came the mystery ray stopping airplane motors over New York City. In a Universal Service dispatch dated May 24, 1935, written by

Lou Wedemar, it was announced that pilots had asked the Department of Commerce to investigate a supposed radio ray which was stopping the motors of planes flying over the city. The planes while flying over the central part of Manhattan had experienced puzzling engine trouble. In aeronautical circles the belief had spread that some sort of short-wave had been developed by an unknown experimenter which affected the motors at which it was aimed.

Motors went suddenly dead without apparent reason, and careful examination by expert mechanics failed to reveal any reason for the phenomenon. Several disasters had almost occurred as the "magnetism" did not pass off for some time, and the planes had to be brought down to emergency landings. One example cited was the near-disaster of a cabin plane piloted by Michael Stupelli which was forced to land in the East River while carrying three passengers.

This report, too, is not unique. In October, 1930, forty automobiles were stalled for an hour on the road between Riesa and Wurzen in Germany. All motors mysteriously stopped. But earlier, in the summer of 1923, and south of this road in Saxony, Germany, French aviators reported the mysterious stopping of motors near Furth while they were flying from Strasbourg to Prague. It was believed that a German experimenter was practicing on French airplanes with newly-discovered rays. If so, his secret was never used in the late war.*

ON THE night of Nov. 24, 1935, a "flaming word" was observed in the heavens between Palestine and Dallas, Texas. Dr. J. D. Boon, professor of astrophysics at Southern Methodist University, stated that no comet or stellar phenomenon of any kind had been scheduled to appear. One witness, a newspaper editor, described the appearance as "a narrow, bright shaft of light, absolutely stationary and vertical, an exact replica of a sword."

In February, 1936, the "phantom light of Ringold" (near Pasco, Wash.) was reported. It was a mysterious light, drifting widely and often along populated highways where it had caused motorists to drive into ditches, and many citizens of high repute had sworn to its authenticity. It vanished when approached, and all efforts to find a plausible explanation resulted in failure.

A ghost scare in a mine near Bishop, Va., was reported in dispatches of Jan. 18, 1937. Officials of the Pochahontas Fuel Company, owners of No. 34 Mine, were trying to lay the scare that had caused

* This is not true. Your editor has an eye-witness account of six B-17s crashing in the Siegfried Line, coming down without a shot being fired, all of them crashing because of a simultaneous cessation of the motors. This incident was broadcast over the American radio by a news reporter, but did not appear in any paper of the same or following day that he knows of—nor was it mentioned again on the air. It can only be assumed the information was suppressed for security reasons. It has also been rumored that German authorities have denied that they knew of such an ignition-stopping ray, or of the plane crashes mentioned.—Ea.

more than a hundred miners to desert the pits. The mine was believed haunted. For several months there had been reports of mysterious moans, shrieks, slamming of doors, and a phantom form that followed the men.

On the night of July 20, 1937, a mysterious plane was observed hovering over the Hendon Aerodrome and the heart of London. There were many witnesses. The Air Ministry was puzzled, and its investigation was fruitless. Two nights later the British steamer *Ranee*, while 500 miles off Cape Race, sighted a "mysterious plane" flying eastward. No trans-Atlantic flights were being made at the time. No planes had been reported missing. According to the crew of the vessel, two "navigation lights" were visible on the craft.

Mysterious blue flashes appeared in the southern sky of Sussex, England, on the evening of Oct. 2, 1938. These flashes were followed by a "sudden rift in the sky where a most beautiful blue-green radiance shone. Through this there appeared to drop a fiery body, vivid and lovely, which disappeared in a second. After this there was only one faint flash."

In December, 1939, another sky visitation came to Finland. According to the Finnish *Evangeliskt Vättnesbord*, the phenomenon took place close to midnight. It lasted for about a half hour. Beginning as a ball of fire which grew larger, the appearance changed from a red to a brilliant white color as sudden rays from the eastern and western horizons merged. As the light spread, a shining object, resembling a huge human-like figure, appeared for a few moments at the point where the rays merged. Then, slowly, the vision faded into the night leaving the spectators silent and bewildered.

A large light with a tail, resembling a comet, was observed in Transylvania in September, 1943. It was visible for five minutes. Witnesses reported that the head dissolved and the tail took the shape of a scimitar before vanishing.

On May 10, 1944, press dispatches told of a strange light in the sky at Mexico, Mo. A number of residents had observed it. Like a large kite moving up and down, from side to side, and sometimes almost in a circle. It was located in the northeastern sky at approximately a forty-five degree angle, visible in the early evening hours.

June 27, 1944—Brilliant red and green meteor over Cass County, Ind. A witness near Kewanna stated that it flashed across the road just above the telephone wires. Bright green with a tail of red sparks. But this object was merely a mild forerunner for the real puzzler that arrived less than two months later.

It came in the early morning hours of August 18, and so amazing were the varied reports of its appearance that astronomers in Chicago said that it was "man-made." The apparent ball of fire was visible above eastern Illinois, Indiana and western Ohio. All the reports are conflicting, and rumors of robot bombs, explosions and plane crashes followed in its trail. War plants were

checked by military authorities. It moved too fast for a plane, and too slow for a meteor. Its size was given variously, some of the reports stating that it was too large to be an airplane. It followed a zig-zag course, from west to east and from south to north. It "screamed through the air," and rattled windows. State police were besieged with calls. There were a dozen reports of its fall to earth at widely-scattered points, but with one exception no traces were found. The exception is Lyons, south of Danville, Ill., where a piece of stone about eight inches long was said to have dropped from the flaming ball. It resembled "petrified wood."

From Tierquin, Ireland, came the story of a large luminous ball, larger than the moon, moving slowly west in the sky in January, 1945. In April a light was observed at Jefferstown, Ky., in the midnight sky. In was over Fisherville, to the east, size of a large cantaloupe, glowed and receded in brilliance like a heart throb, casting its light like a lampshade over the town. After ten minutes it vanished. On May 4 in the early morning there was a flash of light and an explosion reported over six states. Visible for three seconds. Buildings shaken.

AT 7:30 p. m. on the evening of June 1, 1945, something whizzed through the sky over Morganton, N. C., traveling northwest. Tubular in shape, shiny, gleaming in the light as if covered with aluminum, five or six feet long, with a blue flame spurting from its tail. It disappeared in the vicinity of the mountains near Lake James and shortly later an explosive sound was heard.

Near Morganton is Brown Mountain, scene of mysterious lights since the Civil War that are so puzzling that government geologists have conducted fruitless investigations. In my files is a long article on the Brown Mountain mystery that appeared in the *Literary Digest* for Nov. 7, 1925. These lights are about the size of a toy halloon, vary in color, move about, and appear and disappear abruptly.

The last report of a mysterious aircraft in the Scandinavian area came from Vaesterbotton, Sweden, on July 9, 1945. Its shape resembled that of a bird. It moved at great speed going south over the city at about 10,000 feet altitude. "If it was a plane, it was one the like of which the Swedish General Staff never had seen before."

Late in the afternoon of Nov. 29, 1945, a flaming object exploded and then transformed itself into a ball of fire over Modesto, Calif. It was visible throughout the San Francisco area, and was observed moving away northeast at a speed of about 800 miles per hour at an apparent low altitude. But before we decide that it was merely a freak meteor, we must add that according to the *Oakland Tribune* "it was reported sighted in western Nevada a full five hours after it was first sighted at Oakland."

No, meteors do not linger or hover in the skies of earth, nor do they resemble rockets or airplanes.

MYSTERY of the PERUVIAN GIANTS

By
MARX KAYE

IN THE December, 1946, Issue of Amazing Stories Magazine appeared an interesting article by the Reverend Chief Sequoyah, entitled, "America's Mysterious Race of Indian Giants." The article described a race of giant Indians who lived on the Pacific Coast and were often contacted by the Puget Sound Indians and other tribes.

Somewhere else I have read, in several sources, that one method of ocean navigation among earlier peoples was to drift on great rafts with the major currents until another continent was reached.

Admittedly, there seems to be no relationship between the first and second paragraphs, above, but most of the present article is devoted to certain evidences of the possibility that the two subjects are connected with the giants of Peru. I say *most* of the article, because in the latter part I am forced to bring in a rather astonishing anti-climax.

Antiquarians who have had occasion to study Peruvian antiquities will no doubt be familiar with the story of the Incan who was sent to Spain by the Spanish *conquistadores* in the 16th century and there became learned enough to be accepted as a considerable scholar and writer in the Spanish tongue. His name was Inca Garcilasso de la Vega, and his chief claim to fame is his formidable five volume work on Incan history entitled, "*Comentarios Reales de los Incas*." Owing to its extensive descriptions of idolatry and some criticism of the methods used by the *conquistadores* in subjugating the Incan Empire, the Catholic Church and the Spanish crown were moved to suppress the work by destroying every copy that could be found of the first edition, somewhere before 1600. It was only in 1943 that Garcilasso's monumental work was republished, by Emece editores, S.A., Buenos Aires, and thus made generally available again, although antiquarians before that time had access to some of the original copies. The work has not been as widely read as some of the better known sources, such as Sarmiento and Ondegardo, and for this reason I am assuming that few people have had brought to their attention Garcilasso's Chapter IX, Book Nine, Volume II, entitled: "*De los gigantes que hubo en aquella region, y la muerte dellos* (Of the Giants which were in that region [Manta] and their death).

The tribe of people from whom this legend comes is interesting, in itself. They lived on the northern coastland of Peru in a region which was in early times called Manta. It is said that they worshipped a huge emerald which was supposed to be the size of an ostrich egg. Many gifts of value were brought to this emerald "goddess," which often consisted of other emeralds of considerable value. As a consequence, when the

Spaniards arrived at this place they discovered an amazing accumulation of emeralds, but not the emerald which rumor had led them to seek. That was hidden and has not been found to this day. But even more interesting than giant emeralds was the story these people had to tell their Incan and, later, their Spanish conquerors concerning an invasion, many centuries before, by a single group of giant men who came from the sea, not all of which has gone unsubstantiated, as will be shown.

The giants came on large rafts or barges composed of rushes. They were said to be so large that their knees were as high as an average man (meaning that they could have been over twenty feet tall). Their limbs and heads were proportionately large, and their hair grew long, falling to their shoulders. Their eyes were like small plates. They were beardless. Some wore animal skins and some were naked. All of them were males.

When they landed, they established a village of gigantic houses, and Garcilasso says, in the middle of the 16th century, "... even in these times there is recollection of the location of these houses that they had." As might be expected of most of Peru's desert coastland, no water was found, so they were forced to dig some rather spectacular wells, a prodigious work through solid rock which was carried to great depths and lined with more rock and so constructed as to last for many centuries—a feat which even the Incans might never have been able to accomplish. The water tapped by these wells was said to be very cold, and it was healthful to drink.

The giants could not find the game that they were accustomed to hunt for food (and knowing the region to which the legend probably refers I can well appreciate their desperation), so they became marauders and cannibals. They ate everything they could find or capture, including the natives, themselves. The legend says that one giant ate fifty normal men, but it does not mention whether this considerable gastronomic feat was achieved in a day or a year. (Turkeys are knee high to me, but I doubt if I could eat fifty of them!). Not satisfied with this fare, they also devoted much energy to fishing, with giant nets and "apparatus they were said to have."

They were a great cause of abhorrence to the natives because they would steal the women for purposes which were apparently always fatal; and they killed the men with even less compunction. The natives were not sufficiently numerous in that region to dare accost the giants, although they had many a conference concerning the possibilities of eliminating them.

The giants were said to have become degenerates in a few years' time, due to the absence

of women of their own kind, and many were the ugly acts committed by them for the purpose of self-gratification (twentieth century discretion will not permit an indulgence in the naturalism which was so characteristic of the writings of Garcilasso's time).

THE legend has it that an angel appeared one day in a cloud and with a sort of flaming sword consumed them in fire, leaving only a few bones as evidence of their existence. Regarding these bones, Garcilasso makes his most surprising statement: "This it was said of the giants, *which we believe occurred*, because in this region it is said that there have been found and are still found very large bones, and I have heard Spaniards, who have seen a piece of a molar, express the opinion that if the tooth had been whole it would have weighed half a pound; and also they have seen a piece of shin-bone that caused great wonderment when considering how big the entire bone must have been, all of which is evidence that this must have happened; because aside from this the site of their village and their wells or cisterns may still be seen."

Garcilasso goes on to say that "in this year of 1550" certain bones were discovered in Lima which were large enough to have belonged to such giants, and even to larger men than legend described. He adds that he has heard that in Mexico (Spanish gossip concerning explorations and finds, quoted from such an early date as 1550, was relatively fresh and close to its source!), giants' bones were also discovered in Mexico City or its environs, in a *very ancient* tomb.

Although at first glance these giants cannot be too closely compared with Chief Sequoyah's Olympic Peninsula giants who had hypnotic powers and seemed to enjoy a higher mental state in general, it might be possible that some of them attempted a migration by sea, the hardships of which resulted in degeneracy. However, the most surprising possibility of all is that these giants may not have perished, as the legend says. They may have managed intermarriage with the natives and succeeded in perpetuating their species, because something happened here in Peru a few years ago that intimates they are at large, in the same territory, to this day!

A certain wealthy acquaintance of mine in Lima has spent more than fifteen years of his life and perhaps as much as fifty thousand Peruvian Soles in explorations among the Andes, in search of buried treasure. He has seen and found many strange things and had a number of remarkable adventures. Being a rather unimaginative individual, and not being given to exaggeration or jocularly (and inasmuch as he knew nothing about Garcilasso's story), it is very improbable that he could be perpetrating a hoax, and for this reason the story he has to tell about the giant footsteps is the more remarkable.

It is odd that, although he has no knowledge of the legend discussed above, the location in

which he says he saw the giant footsteps was approximately where the legend says the giants first came. He had gotten a clue from an old man concerning the existence of a treasure, and he had persuaded the fellow to accompany him to the site. The old man was loathe to accompany him, because he was frightened of the place, but he finally agreed to go. After traveling north from Lima several hundred kilometers, they found themselves in a most desolate region of the desert, where neither food nor water were to be obtained (a place thrice visited by myself—author). Here to the east was a giant sand dune, in fact a low foothill, which the old man pointed out as being the location of the treasure. It is true that the core of this hill consists of a hurried temple, the portals of which have been seen uncovered by shifting sands in years past. The old man was frightened at the prospect of spending the night here, because he said the treasure was *guarded*.

"By whom?" queried my friend.

"By a *thing* that walks in the night," replied the other.

Dismissing this remark as but the product of superstitious imaginings, my friend locked up his car, which was parked off the dirt road near the beach (since paved and called the Pan American Highway), and walked up to the hill of the buried temple, where a small tent had been pitched for the night.

"Let's go to sleep," he said. For in the morning they were to make some preliminary exploratory excavations.

About midnight, the old man grasped my friend's arm in a fit of terror and cried out, "It's coming! It's coming!"

"What's coming?" asked my friend, sleepily.

"The *thing!* Can't you feel it shaking the ground?"

My friend listened but heard and felt nothing. In an attempt to reassure his terrified companion, however, he opened the tent and looked outside. It was a clear, moonlit night, and the desert fairly glowed under its bright rays. He could see for miles up the desolate coast, from the elevation of the slope on which the tent was pitched. He also looked down toward the beach where his car was parked but saw absolutely nothing to arouse his suspicions or cause alarm. Insisting that the old man's fears were groundless, he returned to his sleeping bag.

MORNING arrived without event, and he soon started getting breakfast. While thus engaged, he was startled by a hair raising cry emitted by the old man, who had wandered some distance from the tent. The fellow was screeching at him to come running at once, for he had found something incredible.

My friend states that when he reached his friend the latter was pointing at the sand in front of him, and that he saw before him the most gigantic imprint of a bare human foot that he could have ever imagined. He still has a double

newspaper sheet on which he just managed to include a pencil outline of the footprint. Looking toward the mountains, he saw other imprints, as though their owner had been walking toward the sea. Following the line they made, he saw that they headed straight for his car. He took a quick run and leapt into the air precisely at the toe mark of one of the footprints in an attempt to broadjump the length of the giant's stride, but could not. He followed the trail toward his car. He says that the giant had evidently been looking back at the tent, for he did not see the car until he was within a dozen feet of it. At this point he swerved sharply, as though startled, because the right footstep here sank deeply into the packed sand (about eight inches deep), at right angles to the line of motion. From this point, the footsteps revealed a hasty retreat back into the wilder-

ness of the hills. My friend followed the path for about an hour, then considered that he was too deep in wilderness to be without a gun. So he returned. The wind covered the footprints before they left the place.

At this site, treasure has definitely been discovered, although the major portion of it still must lie there buried. One priest, well known to my closest friend here, was walking around this place when he stubbed his toe on a gold ingot that weighed forty-eight kilos! This was precisely at the same place where my other acquaintance saw the giant footsteps.

But Peru is replete with such mysteries and buried treasures. A great majority of people would be very much surprised to learn to just what extent this is true. . . .

THE END

★ WHO WAS VIRGILIUS? ★

VIRGILIUS wanted to be a bishop in Bavaria in the early part of the Eighth century, but his teachings were so strange and disturbing that St. Boniface complained to the Pope.

The saint had cause to complain. He had been laboring for years to convert the pagan German tribes. It was slow, arduous and dangerous work. Troops of pagans stalked him with swords and spears, and his flock was repeatedly stripped and left destitute by wandering robber bands. He accepted all these hazards as part of his job and made his way through Bavaria and Thuringia, then to Friesland and on to Hesse and Saxony. He not only preached Christianity, but everywhere destroyed the idol temples and raised churches on their site. On one occasion he cut down an immense oak which was consecrated to Jupiter and used lumber cut from it to build a church.

The task of uprooting pagan beliefs was difficult enough, but St. Boniface also had to contend with weird theories among his own clergy. Finally he wrote to Pope Zachary (741-752) asking him to do something about Virgilius who was causing no end of trouble. The Pope replied, as follows:

"I understand from your letter that Virgilius (I do not know whether he is a priest or not) has been acting maliciously against you, because you showed that he had wandered from true Catholic teaching, trying to make enmity between you and Odila, Duke of Bavaria. Nor is it true, as he says, that he has been absolved by me so that he might obtain the diocese of the deceased bishop, who was one of the four that you consecrated in Bavaria. *If it be true, moreover, that he teaches that beneath the earth there is another world and other men, call a council, excommunicate him, and if he be a priest, deprive him of his dignity.* We have, however, ourselves written to the Duke

about Virgilius, and sent a letter to the latter, summoning him to appear before us, that he may be condemned, if, after a careful examination, he be found to err in his teaching."

Virgilius might have been arguing that the earth was round, and advancing his belief in the existence of the antipodes on the opposite, or under, side of the globe. This does not seem likely, however, since it would not be cause for condemnation. For centuries Christian scholars had held this theory. At the very beginning of the Christian era, Origen (185-255) in his *De Principiis* defended the existence of the antipodes. A century later St. Hilary also subscribed to this theory. The Church had made no pronouncement in the matter, but left the scientific question open, allowing Origen and St. Hilary to defend the existence of the antipodes, while St. Augustine (354-430), and others denied it.

The early Church was concerned, however, about preserving the dogma of the Christian faith upon which the religion was founded. Therefore, if Virgilius maintained that an entirely different race of men, not descended from Adam, existed under the earth, he would have been condemned, since the Christian religion is based on the belief that all men on the face of the earth are descended from Adam, that they fell from grace through Adam, and that Christ appeared for the redemption of all men.

Virgilius has been identified with Ferghil, the famous Irish missionary of Carinthia, who became Bishop of Salzburg in 768. (Healy, *Ireland's Schools*); but some scholars deny this (Mann, *The Lives of the Popes*). Whoever he was, he has posed an intriguing question—whether there were men living beneath the earth at that time, and whether they have survived and still exist.—*S. O'Daniel.*

END

★ *The* ★

MAGNETIC PENDULUM

★ By
LEE McCANN ★

MAGNETISM is a scientific mystery with an occult aura because the "Stone," "Fire," "Agent," as the alchemists knew it, is the only known force which is truly psychophysical. As such, its influence and importance to man is beyond all others. It is why the alchemists believed it to be the medium between man and God.

There is a vast stir of interest in the properties of magnetism. New facts are being sought, new research is being done. A New York hookseller, whose shop boasts the largest collection of works by and on magnetists (all out-of-print and expensive), told me that this was in response to demands from doctors! No day, he said, went by without such a call.

My own interest in magnetism which had taken me there in search of hooks about it had been aroused by meeting at a tea a woman who showed me a magnetic pendulum that she had gotten in Paris before the war. She told me fascinating things about the way the French use it which were quite new to me. The pendulum was an exotic-looking trinket that appealed to my imagination. Its thin, longish emerald silk cord was so delicately flexible that I should never have suspected it of enclosing, as she said it did, threadlike segments of steel for its entire length. At one end was a little bar of what looked like tortoiseshell with four tiny shelves or "holders." At the other end was a weighted tip, shell and gilded metal, about an inch long, tapered to a point.

The French are themselves a magnetic people. And it was they who gave Mesmer his opportunity and most of his followers. Whether their use of the magnetic pendulum is a kind of offshoot of the Mesmeric cult I don't know, but at least it is natural that this intriguing gadget should find a home in France. Its function there, according to my informant, is twofold. It works for the doctor, and for the detective.

In the latter role it is used to spot smuggled goods for the Customs. It acts as a kind of Geiger counter, but is superior in that its response is not limited to metals and minerals. It can indicate where the opium is hidden, the brandy and cigarettes, jewels or whatever it is desired to locate.

The method is to place a pinch or a sliver of the substance to be found in one of the "holders." The operator then holds the bar in steady fingers letting the cord with its weighted tip hang motionless. In a few minutes the point stirs, then a

few small whirlings like a good hound dog finding the scent. Next the movement straightens and swings in a straight line in a definite direction, it is off toward the quarry. The operator follows in the indicated direction, walking carefully so as not to disturb the motion of the pendulum. When he has reached the spot directly above or below the *cache* the pendulum stops moving and again hangs motionless.

Besides this, I was told, many French doctors make use of the pendulum in dietetics and diagnosis. It also plays an occasional part in such legal cases as in this country would come before the court of Domestic Relations.

The pendulum distinguishes between positive and negative in the object over which it is swung. It also gives the basic numerical vibratory count of the object, color or person. Since the turn of the century the French have done a large amount of research in this field listing and classifying vibratory rates, and a considerable body of literature has been published on the subject, none of which has been translated, nor so far as I know is available over here. Some of these hooks are reference tables and include summaries of harmonious and discordant counts.

The doctor, supposing it is a matter of diet, takes first the patient's personal vibratory count. Then he consults his tables to find what foods are in harmony with this and what she must avoid, and in this way a diet list is made up. Not much of that is, I imagine, done today, but before the war, I was told, one occasionally saw in a restaurant the gadget produced by a customer, and the food tested and perhaps sent back.

In legal cases the pendulum gives its evidence of incompatibility due to imbalance of positive and negative qualities in marital situations. Can't you just hear the horse laugh that would greet such a demonstration in the U. S. A.?

Anyone can test something of this with a homemade pendulum. A head, preferably an amber one, or a gold ring, on a string will do it. In the normally polarized individual, the swing is circular above the back of a woman's right hand, and straight over the palm. This is in reverse for a man. In each sex the movement over the right hand reverses over the left. Held over the photograph of a woman the pendulum swings in a circle, over that of a man the stroke is straight.

I showed this to a doctor in New York and he recalled that just before we went in the war one

of the great French industrialists had been briefly his patient. He had been puzzled, he said, by the Frenchman's insistent attempts to talk to him about magnetism at the office and at dinners where they met. The doctor, who had no clue to this interest, had shunted him off. After seeing the pendulum perform he said he intended to get in touch with him as soon as war permitted and learn what he could. He thought the French had something in this odd magnetic device, and he mentioned what a boon it would be, if it worked, in diagnosing allergies.

I heard, from a friend, of one doctor on the staff of a New York hospital who is now using the pendulum experimentally, but I was refused his name and that of the hospital because he was unwilling to have anything known about it at that stage. But I was told that he had been successful in diagnosing the sex of unborn children in this way. So it may be that while the physicists have been tracking down magnetism in their laboratories, the doctors have not been wholly unmindful of its presence in their field. They, too, in time may have sensational findings to report.

When I was fourteen and visiting in New England, my host introduced me to the forked witch-hazel and I discovered proudly that I was a water witch. I did not think of this as a magnetic sensitivity then. But years later I developed an agonizing neuritis in my right arm which did not yield to treatment. I happened on a book which gave an account of Baines experiments with magnets, and believe it or not, with a Ten Cent store magnet I cured myself in a few days and never had a return. I found then that I could tell by touch the magnetically positive from the negative side of any piece of wood or metal. There is as much difference to me as between smooth and rough faced cloth.

Still later, again in a New England summer, someone gave me Fersen's book—I forget its title—which is about therapeutic positions for replenishment and intake of the body's magnetic needs. I found that these postures did exactly what the magnet did. The sensation of a delicate current, different according to whether positive or negative, was precisely the same, and so was the strength of it. Fersen said he got his knowledge in Tibet where I believe he spent some time. All of which predisposed me to interest in the pendulum when it came along.

At the bookshop which I mentioned I found a copy of *La Magie Dévoilée* by Baron du Potet who was in some ways a more spectacular figure than Mesmer. He performed notable magnetic cures till the year before he died at eighty-four. After that magnetism declined and was replaced as a therapy by the school of the Salpêtrière which developed along purely psychological lines, except

for a limited use of hypnosis. When this school discovered that no magnetic wands were needed to put people to sleep they were gleeful. Medicine had all along fought the idea of a magnetic force which physics said was non-existent. The new method of hypnosis, they said proved that it was all in the mind. But now comes Ehrenhaft to prove that there is a magnetic "fluid." Baron du Potet did not use a magnetic rod, either, but he makes it very clear that it was the same force which he used. He writes:

"By an act of understanding I separate from myself a force—real, though invisible. Deposited upon anything it fixes itself there as an essence. Soon it influences its surroundings. Magic begins. That is to say extraordinary phenomena occur.

"The agent (magnetism) has its inherent properties. Left to itself, when not impregnated by the soul, it acts conformably to the laws of physics and analogous to the magnet. We have to learn first what are its natural and fixed properties, secondly to understand those we can impart to it by our will."

The book contains reproductions of the magnetic diagrams which he traced, impregnated with his force, on the floor and then used in his experiments with people. Eliphas Levi said that they were the same in principle, though not in use, as those in the old *Grimoires*. I found that I could duplicate du Potet's results on two of them with the pendulum. I couldn't with the others because you can't give a pendulum a moral conflict, which was required. Du Potet says of the effect of these experiments upon himself:

"I do undoubtedly feel a certain shock throughout my being. I experience an unusual sensation." (Some people experience this with the Fersen technique.) And again.

"Everywhere and at all times an unknown element tosses men about, as the wind sways the reed. I have felt the strokes of this formidable agent."

A last quotation from du Potet makes a fitting close to this article. His book was published in 1852, but his words apply prophetically to 1945, and to the contributions which science has made to the horrors of war. He says:

"Now science has some inkling of these mysterious workings (magnetism) but only according to the physical order. She only arrives at her results by destroying the affinity between bodies and separating their elements. . . . It may be that she understands her agents better than we do ours. Yet our phenomena are real and cannot be explained away by 'imagination' . . . Science inoculates with doubts, sophisms, contempt for truth, and so clears the path for the tyrant. This is also magic—of an evil kind, for it turns God's handiwork into something unrecognizable and base. The true magic agent is—the soul."

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THE SHAVER MYSTERY CLUB

Sirs:

For those readers of *Amazing Stories* who have asked us when our little club magazine will be published, we are engaged in printing it now, and it will appear sometime in April.

We will have 64 pages, well printed, and containing the first installment of Shaver's "Mandark," his sensational thought record of the years around the time of Christ, and detailing His life as contained on this ancient thought record.

I myself believe this manuscript to be the sensation of all time in the science fiction world, to say nothing of the Shaver Mystery, the occult, or what have you.

Also, we have articles and letters containing much material pertinent to the Shaver Mystery, and we hope that within a few months, our research will begin to produce real results in either proving or disproving the Mystery.

We might say that Mr. Shaver himself would work hardest to disprove it, if that would be the result of his work. I have never known a more fair-minded man, nor a more sincere one.

For those of *Amazing's* readers who would like to secure copies of the magazine, we are accepting at the present time only the price of two issues, which we are certain of putting out. The price is \$1.00. The cost of the little magazine, to us, at the number we are able to put out, will be at least that, but we're willing to shell out to find out what this is all about. We will find out, if it's possible!

Thanks much for your cooperation, Mr. Palmer, and you readers of AS who have already written.

Sincerely yours,
Chester S. Geier,
The Shaver Mystery Club,
2414 Lawrence Ave.,
Chicago 25, Illinois

Okay Chet, anything for a friend! And we hope you do find out something. If you do, please don't hesitate to let us know about it! We're as anxious as you.

For the readers' information, Mr. Geier is per-

fectly reputable, having written for us for years, and some very fine material too! Take his "Forever Is Too Long" in a recent issue of Fantastic Adventures, which its readers have acclaimed as a classic. "Hidden City," coming up next month in this magazine, is also a classic, in our opinion! And we might mention that he's written a hum-dinger of a western novel for Mammoth Western called "The Golden Six-Gun".—Ed.

MORE ABOUT TIAHUANACO

Sirs:

Was very much interested in Mr. Hansen's treatise concerning the Apaches and Tiahuanaco. Would you kindly communicate the following to him, with which he may or may not be familiar.

When I passed through Tiahuanaco, which is on the Bolivian side of Lake Titicaca, sometime in the fall of 1943, I bought from an Indian boy a baked clay statue which he had made to represent the original stone statues which may still be seen there from the windows of the train while en route to Guaqui. The boy used as sales talk the legend which he says lies behind those monuments which stand there towering above the lofty plateau (about 12,500 feet altitude) as mysteriously as those of Easter Island. Legend has it (according to the Bolivian boy) that in pre-Incan times the *Tiahuanaqueños* were a great people, endowed with certain gifts of the gods, but that they became wicked and so angered their deities that many were turned into stone. The stone statues are supposed to perpetuate a sort of warning to all men not to be wicked.

Take that for what it's worth. I still have my little statue which shows a series of pyramids in its design. Unfortunately the artist was no doubt uninformed concerning the symbolical importance of the exact number of pyramids on the original and I cannot trust the copy, nor have I the opportunity now to return to Tiahuanaco and make a closer inspection of the statues in the light of Mr. Hansen's article.

However, with reference to the two horns, one may read in several works concerning Incan ceremonial dress, particularly in the *Comentarios*

Reales de los Incas, by Inca Garcilasso de la Vega, that two feathers of the *coraquenque* bird were always placed in the Incan emperor's *Hautu*, or turban (the colors of the turban being, incidentally, symbolical of the rainbow, meaning that the wearer was a Child of the Sun.)

There is no clue as to where the practice originated, so one can only conjecture. They might have borrowed something from the *Tiahuanaqueños* just as the Aztecs borrowed certain (gentler) religious precepts from those who existed before them in the land of Anahuac. At any rate, this could serve to add the Incans to the list of those who used the two horned symbol, although my own conjecture would be that they knew far less about its real significance (at least in the latter days of the empire) than did the people who brought the symbol to this region, if, indeed, it is a borrowed symbol. On the other hand, the two feathers might represent the heavenly parents of the first Incas, Manco Capac and his sister wife, Mama Ocllo, who were supposed to have come from the sun (Incan version of Adam and Eve?), symbolical of the duality of the sexes, embodying the forces of creation. In the pre-Incan god, Pachacamac, we see two faces, one of a woman and one of a man, in this case a deliberate symbol of creative powers. Then again, the two feathers could stand for the Sun and the Moon, the two most conspicuous heavenly bodies, both of which were adored by the Incas. (Note: *Incas* refers to the Incan kings or emperors, supposedly children of the Sun; *Inicans* refers to the subjects of the *Incas*). I forgot to mention, for those of you who may not know it, that Tiahuanaco and Cuzco (capital of Incan civilization) are just across Lake Titicaca from each other (Cuzco being some slight distance back from the lake).

In regard to the underground passages at Cuzco, I have been told again and again by natives and some foreign investigators that there are subterranean passages in the neighborhood of Cuzco which are *still guarded*. Men have actually been known to try to enter these passages and either disappear or turn up dead. Rather than attribute this to deros (this is not sarcasm, as I find Shaverism very much worthy of study) I would attribute it to the zeal of the Indians to guard the treasures of the past to which they feel they are the rightful heirs. Separately, someday, I hope to present a treatise on why I believe the Treasure of the Incas exists today near Cuzco and that it could not be valued at much less than seventy-five millions of dollars, but that is a lengthy subject. There is much to support the possibility of the existence of the underground passages to which Mr. Hansen refers, because, among other evidences, it is known that the Incas had secret ways of traveling great distances under ground. A friend of mine (a Peruvian miner with twenty years of experience among the Quichua Indians in the Andean highlands) has actually discovered the

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entrance to one of these royal passages. The floor is paved with tile. He went back as far as he could go without suffocating. The air is too stale and there is considerable danger of cave-ins. The Incans were very clever, but I don't believe at all that they had the means to bore tunnels for thousands of miles through the mountains. Rather, if they covered such distances underground, it can only mean that their man-made passages were only entrances into a series of caverns. After earthquakes in the hills and in Lima (as long as twenty minutes after) you can sometimes hear subterranean rumblings, as though the sound were the result of subterranean landslides in deep caverns below. Indeed one time in Lima I heard a subterranean landslide *without* the accompaniment of earthquake. The ground merely vibrated in a light and curious fashion for perhaps a minute, to the accompaniment of the muffled, subterranean sound of sliding rocks. Ask the Indians in the hills. They'll tell you at once about the rumblings under ground.

The most interesting phase of the study of antiquities is the legends among many races of people concerning extra-terrestrial origins. The Cara-Mayas believed in a sort of Snake Mother (this calls to mind Merritt's "Face in the Abyss") descended from the stars (Naga). The Incas strongly supported the idea of their origin in the sun. Mr. Hansen has told us much about the ancients' repeated reference to flying machines.

Here is a hypothesis which I believe is original, merely because I have not read of a similar idea anywhere else. Take it for what it's worth. Science says that hair and feathers evolved from scales. If this is true, it means that occurrence of hair in a race of human beings would be correlated with proximity to the ape and earlier forms. Let us consider the case of Indian and Polynesian races, precisely those of whom it has been suspected that they belong to the older races which existed before the Diluvium. They are characterized by a very infrequent occurrence of bodily hair. Chest, arms, legs and face are practically free of hair, in the Polynesian, the present day Quichuas of Peru, the North American Indians, and many other peoples not belonging to the vaunted Aryan line. Ourselves, however, are too often characterized by bushy arms, legs, chests and backs of an almost atavistic degree! (Don't get sore, fellows, I'm just as much a monkey as anybody.) Question: Who is closer to the ape?

There is just the faint possibility that those people whom we Aryans, with our puny historical tradition of a few millenniums, have considered as "primitive" are actually the lost and scattered children of ancient, superior races who *evolved* on other worlds "when you were a tadpole and I was a fish!"

The snake symbol is interesting in this regard. Some say that it was often used to represent the "waters." In other cases it was symbolic of *forbidden knowledge* (Eve and the Serpent). So if an ancient people have a legend about a serpent

ancestor coming from the stars (the Cara-Mayas), it could well mean that the "Bearers of the Ancient Knowledge" came from the stars to Earth, just as all of us must one day carry our own knowledge to other worlds when Earth can no longer support us.

Where can I see the papers of Charles Fort? Here's one item to add to the collection. When I was seventeen I built myself a four-inch Newtonian telescope. In examining the moon one night I distinctly saw five symmetrical bodies travel slowly in formation across the moon's disc, as though they were gigantic bodies traveling closer to the moon than to the Earth. My wife laughingly accuses me now of having mistaken flies on my mirror for space ships, but if she knew more about optical laws she would know that flies on my mirror would have been far more invisible to me than if she had put them in my soup.

Another time I was walking down the street one night in Los Angeles when I heard a hissing sound above me. I looked up to see a trail of red fire and sparks spread rather slowly from one horizon to the other, all the while accompanied by a low hissing and sputtering sound. I am glad that in the Oklahoma case there were witnesses! I had none, or at least we didn't get together. Evidently everybody thought what I saw was a meteor. But what meteor is it that can travel slowly from horizon to horizon, have a red color instead of incandescent white, sputter, throw sparks, and hiss at you?

"There are stranger things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, my dear Horatio. . . ."

Marx Kaye,
Lima, Peru, S. A.

We thank you very much for your letter. It just adds more to the amazing story we have been accumulating from letters such as yours.—Ed.

BACK COPIES OF SHAVER!

Sirs:

I have seen your statement in the April issue of AMAZING STORIES concerning Shaver's mystery.

I have just been discharged from a hospital after a long illness which was caused by a heart attack, and I am still under a doctor's care. According to the doctor, I am not supposed to do any hard work, therefore I have plenty of time on my hands. I know of a lot of second-hand book stores where I can get all the back issues of the Shaver Mysteries. Therefore, with your permission, I would like to put this ad into your magazine. As follows:

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A DISCOVERY?

Sirs:

Since my letter was published in the February AMAZING STORIES, I have received many letters from all over the United States, and several have come personally to interview me. There is more heat behind this thing than I ever dreamed. Many of them have actually witnessed mystifying things, but have been reluctant to talk of them for fear of ridicule. I am sure there are many more in this country that are keeping silent for the same reason. I have answered most of the sincere letters. Some of the letters have been from critics and skeptics. I have also received some threatening letters from some claimed deros threatening and warning me not to say anything more and to forget the mystifying occurrence that I witnessed and heard. These letters I am ignoring, and in no way are they swerving me from my one purpose to seek the solution. To those that are so skeptic, I have this to say. I do not fear these criticisms or ridicule. I am sincere and unshakable in my belief and I am convinced that there are mystifying invisible forces at work in the locality.

I have made a thorough exploration and search of the field in which I witnessed the mystifying occurrence and have accumulated more evidence to corroborate the mystery I witnessed.

Out in the field 300 feet from the highway I discovered that the grass and vegetation was dead covering a space of about 120 feet long by thirty feet wide. As near as I can describe it, the vegetation was just withered down as if from heat. I photographed this spot. I have also found in the field something else. What it is I do not know. I have sent it off to have it analyzed. Until I have accumulated more concrete facts, I make no effort in this letter or at this time attempt to offer suggestions or solution to this amazing mystery. This is too big a thing for me or any one person to solve. But I will come forward in the near future with facts and proof, that will aid those like myself who are seeking and trying to look behind the black wall, or I might say, invisible veil of mystery which is in our very midst. I am

convinced that in a less period of time than we expect, facts will come to light that will startle the entire world.

Ace Baker,
1628 N.E. 33rd St.,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Please send us any evidence you can, Ace. We'd like to see photos, and any analysis you get. Of course, a photo of a burned area proves nothing, but we have other statements of witnesses who have seen such phenomena.—Ed.

OAHSPÉ'S SCIENCE

Sirs:

I disagree with your statement in the April '47 issue of A. S. in which you say, in your article on "Oahspe," that Oahspe's "science is in variance with accepted concepts." I think that the present scientific concept of heat, light, magnetism, etc., are fairly similar. According to "Oahspe," light is nothing more than the moisture and gases of the air becoming polarized needles arranged in parallel lines. Darkness is the needles in a state of confusion. Magnetism, as explained by present day concepts, is that molecules in an iron bar assume a parallel arrangement. In a demagnetized bar the molecules are in a haphazard arrangement.

In the February 22nd issue of Science News Letter is an article dealing with Prof. G. N. Lewis' experiments with phosphorescing molecules in regards to photosynthesis. It was proved that phosphorescing molecules are in a magnetic state by exposing a fluorescein-containing glass to a strong light and suspending the glass between the poles of an electro-magnet. The glass swung toward one of the poles showing that the fluorescein molecules were magnetized.

If you have any ideas by your readers in your files in regards to regeneration (that is, regeneration of starfish's arms, earthworm's tails, etc.) I shall be glad to hear of them.

I have been following the Shaver mystery since "I Remember Lemuria!" and, along with thousands of others, I think it is great.

I especially like the homey, down-to-earth manner in which Harold M. Sherman presents his stories. I think he is a swell writer and hope to see a great many of his stories in coming A. S. magazines.

J. R. Guyton, Jr.,
1933 Middle St.,
Sharpsburg, Pa.

REPORT ON DORR CAVE

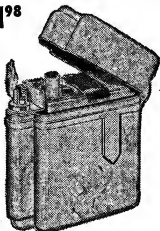
Sirs:

I have just returned from a trip to investigate the Dorr brothers cave reported by Charles H. Gesner in the last issue of AMAZING STORIES. There is a cave. I was unable to enter the cave myself, but I shall report my findings.

Harmer's story, through Gesner, is based on a series of legends started by a man named Plummer. All Harmer's stuff, plus a lot more, has been traced to Plummer. A local archaeologist accom-

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panied Plummer to this cave to see the 7,000 mummified dwarfs claimed to be there. Plummer was unable to show more than a very small cave, bare of mummies or artifacts.

I read Gesner's letter, then studied a map of the area. Mitchell's caverns were the only ones shown in this general district. I and two companions stopped at Mitchell's before continuing our search for the Dorr cave. A good thing we did! Our most authentic information came from Jack Mitchell, the discoverer, owner, and operator of Mitchell's Caverns. (More about these later.)

Mitchell has been in the Dorr caves, knows the history, and has pictures of the cave. According to Mitchell, the cave is small, and all the stories merely fables. It is located five miles northeast of the desert town of Cima. Cima may be reached from Highways 66, 91, or 95 along the Nevada-California border.

The cave is located in a geological formation common to that area. That part of the Mojave desert is an ancient ocean bed, now a limestone formation. In some places volcanic plugs have been forced up through the limestone, breaking the crust and forming mountains. Both the Ivanpah, and the Providence ranges (where Mitchell's caverns are) are of this formation. The volcanic plugs are ryholite (reohlite), the limestone on edge against it.

Limestone caves formed in such a formation are limited in size. They can only extend from the broken upper edge, to the permanent ground water level, a distance rarely over 2,000 feet. The thickness of the limestone determines the horizontal extent, in Mitchell's caves, about a thousand feet. Any geologist will confirm the fact that huge caverns such as Gesner mentions are impossible in such a formation. There is not sufficient rock to support the arch necessary to form such domes. Carlsbad, yes, Mojave, no!

Now to clean up a few loose ends of Gesner's story. Harmer left the Daily News about six months ago. I have been unable to locate him since. We were also unable to find out anything at all about the supposed blueprint by a U.S. Geodetic agent.

Jack Mitchell discovered his caves in 1929, and began to open them in 1934. At present only part of them are open to the public. Some of the deeper caves are not yet fully explored. Mitchell himself is a living legend of the Mojave. His story of the caves is alone worth the trip. For the cave hunter, the rock hound, anthropologists, the hotanists, or the writer, these caves are well worth a visit. If anyone is interested, the best road to Mitchell's Caverns is by way of Essex, 30 miles west of Needles, California, on Highway 66. Turn north at Essex on a desert road for 22 miles. Signs point the way and the road ends at Mitchell's doorstep. There is no mystery here.

John G. Bullock,
1616 S. Barrington Ave.,
West Los Angeles 25, Calif.

Thank you, Mr. Bullock, for the CHMBS.—Ed.

A REQUEST

Sirs:

I would appreciate it very much if you could find room for this letter in the Discussions column of *Amazing Stories*.

Many of your readers are familiar with that amazing book OAHSPPE, and I feel sure that a lot of them would welcome an opportunity to carry through the principles outlined in it.

I am very desirous of contacting these parties, and any other interested parties, in an effort to get all concerned into communication with each other.

The object of this is to be able to get a collective idea for the formation of an independent community on the lines given in OAHSPPE, and to be able to ascertain exactly the best location for such a community, as well as a list of prospective members and their abilities.

Consequently I would be very glad to hear from any and all who have read this book, and also from those who would like to contact others regarding it.

Mr. C. Roy,
1322 L St., N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Sounds like a good idea, Roy.—Ed.

The OBSERVATORY

..... by the Editor

(Continued from page 9)

death at approximately 70 years of age. (It was more in those days, because beneficial rays and machines could combat the age poisons to a certain extent.) These creatures who found their way back into the underground cities, or who were left there, guarded their havens jealously from those who did not have access to them, and this secrecy has been maintained for thousands of years. However, the secrecy has been far from complete, as witness the incredible number of legends we have of underground races. These "leaks" were covered up by creating a belief in "supernatural" things, such as ghosts and spirits, so that surface people, catching a glimpse of an underground dweller, temporarily emerging from his dwelling, would not search for them, but believe they were only phantasms.

Communication between these underground races (because they have the mechanical means to do so) and peoples who travel space in space ships, and sometimes venture near a sun-planet for raiding purposes (to steal ancient machines and supplies and to procure slaves), is postulated by Mr. Shaver, and borne out by the incredible number of reports we have and have had in the past, of visiting "ships" in the sky (such as the mysterious "air raid" suffered by Los Angeles during the war, and which the army now reveals has never been explained, except that it was no private

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or military plane of our own, and none of the Japs or any foreign power, but was certainly tracked by radar, and observed by many people to "appear to be rocket ships" from three to five in number). *Life* recently reported such a "ship" over Princeton, N.J. and laughingly said it was no "angel"; not over Princeton.

The existence in far space of the Titans and Atlans living inside dark planets. The existence of giants of incredible size; of "micro-men" living within the microcosm; of "ghost-like" creatures, who are not human in appearance, yet are intelligent, and do not die—the Titans themselves do not die so long as they avoid the deadly suns.

THE science expounded by Mr. Shaver, and that he has learned from the "caves," such as the age poisons; the exd which is the push of gravity; the nature of matter and its formation and disintegration; the science of growth—all are explained again in the same way they were originally explained, in the guise of a "story" in the form of "fiction." You can gain a knowledge of all those things by reading this issue.

NATURALLY, we cannot present you with the thousands of letters, containing almost incredible confirmation from readers and others having had the same experiences Mr. Shaver has had. We can do no more than hint at the amazing "fifth column from hell" that we have begun to uncover and which will be presented in the future . . . the incredible way in which a foreign government(s) may have obtained cavern mech. set them up in this country, and is using them to set up a fifth column to end all fifth columns in a future invasion! No, we have no proof, but we intend to present a consecutive narration of what we suspect, and maybe it will be reasonable enough to follow to its bitter end.

WE CANNOT fully explain the research we have gone into, in the matter of "spiritualism" nor our suspicion that between Shaver and the spiritualists there exists no real difference of opinion, only interpretation—that we find Mr. Shaver's opinions fully substantiated by what some call the "astral." The "astral" can very well be nothing more "uncanny" than a real cave world with real people in it with real machines to operate, instead of "astral powers." We consider "spiritualism" to be just one more proof that Shaver theories are more than theories, but can be accepted as factual, and that there is only a need for more understanding.

WE HAVE pointed out "Oahspe" as a book that is still more "evidence." Shaver admits it can well be a very fine thought record, and he agrees basically, arguing only against the "spirit" angle. Let's find out!

FOR those groups of fans who complain because this editor calls the Shaver Stories factual, we are reminded of one of the most

popular and classic stories ever published in the same fan groups' favorite magazine, *Unknown*, edited by John W. Campbell, Jr., "Sinister Barrier" by Eric Frank Russell. We quote the statement made at that time (March 1939) by editor Campbell: "Fifty thousand words that will make you unsure of your certainties—unsure that Man rules Earth! A full-length novel based on weird and discomforting facts. The greatest imaginative novel in two decades!"

HERE is Eric Frank Russell's comment in preface to his novel. These are quotes:

"It would be idle to pretend and dishonest to suggest that 'Sinister Barrier' is anything else than fiction. Some may regard it as fantasy, because it is placed in the future and depicts certain developments that have been predicted by those qualified to forecast the coming triumphs of science. But I regard it as a sort of fact-fiction solely because I do sincerely believe that if ever a story was based upon facts it is this one.

"'Sinister Barrier' is as true a story as it is possible to concoct while presenting believe-it-or-not truths in the guise of entertainment. It derives its fantastic atmosphere only from the queerness, the eccentricity, the complete inexplicability of the established facts that gave it birth. I have them in the form of a thousand press clippings snatched from half a hundred newspapers in the Old World and the New. A thousand more were given me by adventurers harder than myself; people who have explored farther and more daringly into forbidden acres than I have done.

"But perhaps my greatest debt is to two friends, one of whom asked me, 'Since everybody wants peace, why don't we get it?' while the other posed me this one, 'If there are extra-terrestrial races further advanced than ourselves, why haven't they visited us already?' Charles Fort gave me what may well be the answer. He said, 'I think we're property.'

"Critics are entitled to say, 'If you believe your plot has a factual basis, you are running an awful risk of removal by merely developing it.' I run no risk. *Sinister Barrier* is not fiction offered as truth: it is offered only as fiction. Therefore, it will not be believed. The natural skepticism of my readers is my safeguard."

"SINISTER BARRIER" was part and parcel of the same mystery we call "The Shaver Mystery" today! And like ourselves, Campbell called it *factual* in basis. Fans, consistency is a jewel! You, and Shaver, and your editor agree about about "Sinister Barrier" and its FACTS! Take a look at more of these SAME FACTS in the Shaver Mystery. We submit that Shaver has *not* been original. Campbell and Russell did it first! And they did it well! We agree with them to the bitter end—Man does *not* rule this Earth, and it is based on *fact* that he does not. Roll on, Shaver Mystery!



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Dr. Frank B. Robinson

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