

HAUNTED OCEAN

A Doc Savage Adventure by Kenneth Robeson

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Chapter I. DEAD MAN AT THE DOOR

"THERE'S a dead man just outside your door."

The voice was calm and controlled. Its tone might have indicated the owner was accustomed to encountering dead men just outside of doors. Certainly the man who spoke was not greatly perturbed. Doc Savage was facing the man as he entered. Except for a quick stirring of his flaky gold eyes, the bronze adventurer himself did not betray great surprise. Yet, until the visitor had announced it, neither Doc Savage nor his four companions then present had known of any presence in their corridor, dead or otherwise.

That is, with the exception of the man who had made the announcement. And this visitor had pressed the buzzer and been admitted in the usual manner. Moreover, the visitor had been expected. He had telephoned half an hour previously. His visit was for the purpose of consulting Doc Savage on the investigation in which Doc and his four men were then engaged.

There was not a ripple on the smooth bronze skin of Doc Savage's face. Looking at his visitor, he spoke first to the big, solemn-faced man behind him.

"Renny, you will see what has happened," he said, quietly. "You will have a look around and bring the body in."

Colonel John Renwick, known as "Renny," an engineer of worldwide repute, moved his great bulk toward the outer door. Renny was a giant in breath and stature. His rugged features were always solemn, almost melancholy. But that was deceptive.

Doc spoke next to the other big man beside him. This man was of ungainly, squat appearance. His small eyes twinkled under the shaggiest of jutting brows. His long arms trailed his hands below his knees.

"Monk," directed Doc, "you will have a look around outside on the stairs. Perhaps it would be well to drop down a few floors by elevator, then come up carefully."

Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Blodgett Mayfair, known as "Monk," the widely famed chemist of Doc's group, grunted in a childish treble. He scuttled in the direction of the elevators.

Doc thus had started the quickest possible means of finding out what a dead man outside his door might mean. Then he addressed his visitor.

"Your reception has been somewhat unpleasant," said the bronze man. "You have excellent nerve. I take it you are Professor Callus, the oceanographer?"

The man bowed and agreed. "I am Professor Callus. I have been in touch with a friend in the Geodetic Survey. He mentioned you were seeking to trace the origin of the prevailing subsea disturbance."

"We have been working on that," stated Doc Savage. "I admit we probably have little more information than yourself, if we have as much. What we know thus far we will gladly pass along." Professor Callus wagged his head again. His skull had the peculiar appearance of a shining globe.

It was partly bald, and apparently too large for his scrawny neck and skinny body.

"Seeing the man outside the door was somewhat of a shock," he said, slowly. "It was more so because I recognized him."

The voice of Professor Callus was still so calm that another of Doc's companions emitted an exclamation.

"That's nerve!" he said to the man beside him. "He walks onto a dead man! He knows him! And he doesn't turn a hair!"

The speaker was a slender, well-dressed fellow. He had the sharp nose and the keen eyes of an analyst. Which he was. For the speaker was Brigadier General Theodore Marley Brooks, otherwise known as "Ham," the legal luminary of Doc Savage's group. Ham carried a sword cane, the tip of which was covered with a chemical that, injected in the skin, would produce instant unconsciousness. Professor Callus apparently did not catch Ham's remark.

"The dead man is a colleague, after a manner of speaking," he volunteered. "He is—or was—Professor Homus Jasson, and he also has been a deep student of oceanography. I imagine he must have been on somewhat the same mission as myself."

THEY were now in Doc Savage's great library. This room, with other offices and perhaps the world's most completely equipped laboratory were on the eighty-sixth floor of lower Manhattan's most impressive skyscraper.

At the time Professor Callus had entered, Doc and his companions were intensively engaged with a wide variety of instruments. Every known device for indicating weather conditions was in service. For in the past few days, strange disturbances had been reported by the government Coast and Geodetic Survey. Delicate instruments had been disturbed to the extent of being put out of business. The inexplicable emanation appeared to come from the depths of the sea. Tonight Doc Savage was attempting to not only trace the disturbance, but to isolate the position of its origin. Thus far, the man of bronze had been unsuccessful.

Until the moment of the arrival of Professor Callus, the phenomenon had been accepted as probably some natural, perhaps some undersea volcanic, disturbance.

But now there was a dead man outside the door. And Professor Callus had said he was an oceanographer like himself.

THE matter of the identification brought no comment from Doc Savage. Renny was coming in. He was bearing a body of slight form and weight in his huge arms.

"Holy cow!" boomed Renny, placing the body on a couch near the library table. "Feels like he might have been out there some time! The body's already stiff, Doc. And it looks to me like we missed something by him not getting in here alive!"

Doc's bronzed hands were already busy. He was removing a variety of lethal instruments from the pockets of the dead man's loose-fitting, shabby suit.

"Great guns!" exploded Ham. "He seems to have been a man going places for purposes of much violence! Are those things bombs, Doc?"

Ham indicated two round, black objects equipped with timing triggers.

"They are bombs," stated Doc, calmly. "And from their compact form, I imagine they contain enough high explosive to have wrecked this whole floor."

"This is indeed most peculiar," commented Professor Callus. "I've always known Professor Jasson as a very mild sort of man. Yet that must be an automatic pistol. And is that other instrument a weapon?"

Doc had removed a loaded automatic of large calibre. He was examining the other device. It had the appearance of an oversize water pistol such as might have been used by a child. But Doc put it carefully aside.

"If I am not mistaken, this is a gun for spreading poison gas," he said, quietly. "And be careful, Long Tom. Don't touch that for a moment."

The bronze man had taken a flat, ebony box from the dead man's inner pocket. It was a large box to have been thus carried. A clasp appeared to open by the touching of a spring. "Long Tom" had been about to unsnap the clasp.

Long Tom, or Major Thomas J. Roberts, one of the world's best-known electricians, had been helping operate some of the radio instruments.

Doc picked up the flat box.

"I believe this should have special attention," he advised. "Of all this collection of death-dealing devices, I suspect this is the most deadly."

Doc filled a shallow glass receptacle with a clear liquid. This was only pure alcohol. Doc's sleeves were stripped from his forearms. Tendons of cable-like strength played under his smooth bronze skin.

Immersing the flat ebony case, his thumb flicked the spring of the hasp. The case divided. Its opening was accompanied by a sibilant, sinister hissing.

"Holy cow!" ejaculated big Renny. "It's a snake—one of them cobras!"

THE darting, writhing splash of color springing from the flat, ebony case was less than a foot in length. But its head and neck expanded enormously.

"It is the most poisonous of all the cobra species," stated Doc. "It's a hamadryad, which does not reach great size."

The effect of the alcohol was almost instant. The death-dealing hamadryad hissed only once. It struck at the bronze hand which had released it. But Doc's movement had been quicker than the cobra's dart.

Professor Callus gasped a little. It had seemed as if the snake must have buried its fangs in the bronzed skin.

But the cobra stretched its length and fell back. Then it stretched inertly. The alcohol had overpowered it.

Professor Callus blinked a little and his big head bobbed up and down.

"Professor Jasson must have been overtaken by some form of killing dementia," he commented. "Yet why would he be coming to your headquarters, Mr. Savage?"

Doc Savage, as was his habit when some great idea was beginning to take shape in his marvelous brain, said nothing. He moved back beside the corpse on the couch in the library.

The arms of the dead man were sticking out stiffly. His legs were rigid. The face was a cold, blood-drained mask. The eyes were open and staring.

"Must have been dead some time, the way he felt," said Renny.

Professor Callus was looking at Doc, but he did not see his lips move. But Doc's companions knew their bronze leader was on the eve of some important discovery.

"Yes, rigor mortis seems to have set in," said Doc, quietly. "It would mean this Professor Jasson was dead some hours ago. But the man died within the past half hour."

"Why, that would seem impossible!" said Professor Callus. "I thought rigor mortis would not take place for from two to five hours?"

"This man has been killed instantly by a poisonous injection," stated Doc. "And rigor mortis was artificially induced to make it appear he had been dead for some time. He must have been at the door only a short time; perhaps a few minutes."

Chapter II. WOMAN OF VIOLENCE

WHILE Doc Savage was examining the dead man and finding him so thoroughly equipped for violence, the ungainly Monk was encountering another form of violence. But this was very much alive. It was in the form of a slender girl.

The girl's face would have been beautiful, under normal conditions. But when the young woman encountered the terrifying figure of Monk before her on the stairway, her countenance was a strained, desperate mask.

The girl was red-headed. The hair was naturally and vividly red. Her deep-brown eyes were sparkling with menace. Undoubtedly she was scared, but being red-headed, she intended doing something about it.

Monk had been unusually quiet about ascending the stairs. No person had recently descended by elevator. The arrival of Professor Callus had apparently been the only movement of a passenger to the eighty-sixth floor.

The red-headed girl must have seen Monk first. The apelike figure of the chemist moved around an upward turn in the stairs. The Cold steel of an automatic's snout jammed right into his hairy throat.

"Don't move!" said a low, tense voice. "You're him, and I'll shoot!"

Monk did not know who he was supposed to be. But it seemed plainly evident the girl would shoot. The automatic's snout quivered against Monk's tough hide.

"Howlin' calamities!" he squealed in his childlike voice. "Where'd you come from? You musta killed that guy upstairs!"

"I said, don't move!" repeated the girl. "So you know about the murder? You were trying to get away, and you heard Barton! Barton! Come on up here!"

The young man called Barton must have been a floor or two below where Monk had started to ascend the stairs. His feet pounded quickly upward. He was a thick-browed, black-haired young fellow. When he saw the position of the young woman, his face became very pale.

"Lora!" exclaimed the young man. "Who is he? Wait! Give me the gun!"

The red-headed girl shook her head determinedly.

"You walk behind me, Barton," she directed. "Here, take this. If he makes a break, you'll have to shoot!"

Monk's small eyes bulged. The red-headed girl produced another automatic pistol. She pushed it into the young man's hands.

"But lady, dag-gone it!" yelled Monk. "Whatcha think you're doin'? What's the—"

"Shut up!" snapped the red-headed girl, emphatically. "Now you just march ahead of us up these stairs! Barton, be sure about the safety catch! Perhaps Mr. Savage will like to see this hoodlum!" There was a metallic click. Monk knew the sound of a safety catch on an automatic when he heard it. The weapon had been shifted around to the back of his neck. It was no more reassuring there than

it had been against his throat.

Monk's short legs jerked. Step by step, he mounted toward the eighty-sixth floor. At the first corridor above, which happened to be the eighty-fourth, the red-headed girl said, "Wait a minute!" The automatic continued to bore into his neck. The girl said, "Barton, put this in your pocket!" The object, Monk saw, was a hypodermic syringe. Monk's quick-working olfactory sense detected an odor. He could detect any known chemical almost instantly by smell. His awkward body shivered. For he had caught what might have been the odor of burned almonds. That hypo must contain hydrocyanic acid.

THE door of Doc Savage's headquarters was of plain metal. No lock or knob appeared in view. It might have been only an indentation in the wall. The red-headed girl halted, still prodding Monk's neck.

"Barton!" she said. "There must be a buzzer button—"

She ceased speaking. The door was silently opening. At some other time, Monk would have enjoyed this immensely. The electroscope mechanism in the door had been operated by radio control. The red-headed girl breathed quickly, but recovered herself.

"Go on in!" she directed. "All right, Barton! You can put away your gun! I can handle him!"

Doc Savage was standing in the door of the library. Neither his features nor his eyes expressed any surprise. But behind him loomed the sharp features of Ham, the lawyer. Ham let out a delighted yell.

"Now isn't that somethin'!" he said, sarcastically. "Lady, where did you catch it?"

"Doc" squawked Monk. "Willya tell this redhead to take that gun outta my neck! She's likely to pull the trigger!"

"Lady," drawled Ham, maliciously, "go on and pull it. You'll be doing the world a great service. I've always said some one would get the ape, if he was permitted to run loose much longer."

"Dag-gone you, Ham!" howled Monk. "You quit runnin' off at the mouth!"

"Holy cow!" boomed big Renny. "An' Monk brought her up, he says!"

THE red-headed girl seemed to have a disposition like flash powder. The various remarks clearly had her puzzled. Also they struck an angry spark.

"What's so funny about all of this?" she demanded. "You're Mr. Savage?"—she addressed Doc. "Well, I ran onto this ugly baboon sneaking around on the stairway. I was coming up to see you and—"

"Don't believe anything the redhead tells you!" interrupted Monk. "I caught her and this other pasty-faced animal trying to get away, Doc! She's carryin' two guns an' she's got a hypo loaded with enough poison to kill a hundred men! She gave it to this guy with her!"

The young woman slowly removed the automatic from Monk's neck.

"Then he is one of your men, Mr. Savage?" she said with disbelief. "I guess I'll have to say I'm sorry; I made a mistake. I've heard about the one called Monk, but I didn't think any human being could look like that."

This elicited another howl from Ham.

"Neither did any one else," grinned the lawyer. "You've got good judgment, lady, even if he can't help it."

"Listen, you danged shyster!" squealed Monk. "I'll make you eat them words, or they'll pack you outta here in pieces!"

Doc Savage disregarded the apparent deadly hate of the chemist and the lawyer.

"There seems to have been some misunderstanding," stated the man of bronze. "Undoubtedly you can explain your presence here? What is this about a hypo filled with poison?"

The red-headed young woman looked from one to the other of the men. Professor Callus was observing her closely.

"A hypo of poison?" he said. "Then perhaps my colleague has not been dead as long as it appears, or—"

"If you mean the man who was lying out in the corridor," interrupted the young woman, "I know nothing about that. I was coming to see Mr. Savage, with my brother. But when we saw the man—the dead man—we thought perhaps it would not be a good time to enter. We have a hypodermic. I found it stuck into the wall of the stairway between this floor and the one next below." Doc did not say whether he believed or disbelieved the young woman.

"You had some definite purpose in coming to me?" he said.

"Yes, oh, yes!" exclaimed the red-headed girl. "You see Mr. Savage, I am Lora Krants. This is my brother, Barton. We were informed you were seeking the cause of some unusual oceanic upheaval."

"That is correct," stated Doc Savage.

Behind him, Ham murmured to Renny, "And I thought this thing was somewhat of a government secret."

"Then you are the daughter of Cyrus Krants," said Doc, instantly. "We are indebted to your father for many discoveries of importance. His new form of bathosphere has penetrated to unusual depths of the ocean."

"Oh, I'm glad you do know about him!" said the girl. "We have been told you are informed on

nearly all subjects. So perhaps you can give us some information that will help."

The young woman had spoken the truth. There were few subjects on which Doc Savage was not fully informed.

"If you will tell me in what way I can be of assistance," Doc suggested.

The red-headed girl spoke more softly and with deep feeling.

"It's about my father," she said. "He has been missing now for more than a week. The last word we had was a radio message from his yacht in the vicinity of the lower Florida Keys."

"Yes?" said Doc. "We will go into that in just a moment, Miss Krants. Long Tom, you and Renny had better continue checking at once on the radio short waves. If you can fix the latitude and longitude of the broadcasting blind spot, I'm sure we will be getting close to something."

Doc then spoke again to the red-headed girl.

"And if you'll permit Monk here to examine that hypodermic, we then may know the character of the poison which probably has been employed for murder."

"You'll have to trust the big ape," suggested Ham, dryly. "He is good for one thing, Miss Krants, and that's why we keep him around."

Monk glared speechlessly. Now that her first fear and her anger had subsided, Lora Krants was undeniably a very pretty young woman. Monk was extremely susceptible.

"That is strange about your father," said Professor Callus. "I am quite well acquainted with him, Miss Krants. But I never had the pleasure of meeting his daughter, or his son."

"Tell us more about this radio message," suggested Doc.

"THERE isn't much more to tell," said Lora Krants. "More than a week ago, we had a radio message. It seems the boat engines were disabled then for no reason the engineer could discover. And another message said that while the trouble was being traced, the motors suddenly resumed functioning."

"And you have not heard from the yacht since then?" questioned Doc. "No radio or other messages?"

"None, Mr. Savage. The yacht seems to have vanished. We have wired all possible ports."

"I imagine he may be all right," said the man of bronze. "How did you know of the work we are doing?"

"I have a friend employed in the Coast and Geodetic Survey," said the red-headed girl.

Monk appeared in the door of the laboratory.

"It's hydrocyanic, and plenty of it!" he said. "And the needle has traces of human blood. It has been used recently."

Doc Savage's short, trilling note suddenly startled the girl and her brother. Barton Krants had taken no part in the conversation. His dark eyes had glowered at every one.

The young man seemed to have a suspicion his sister might not get fair treatment. Only when he looked at Doc Savage was there any hint of friendliness in his features. And his face remained too white and pasty to be natural.

Professor Callus apparently had taken a deep interest in the young woman. He moved to her side and engaged her in conversation.

Long Tom came to the door of the library.

"Doc, I believe we've got it," he announced. "We've eliminated everything but the blind spot in the short wave radio contacts. It fixes an approximate latitude and longitude."

Chapter III. THE ABDUCTED COMMISSION

"COME into the laboratory," invited Doc Savage. "You will be interested in what we may have discovered."

It had been odd that Doc had made little further comment on the manner of Professor Jasson's death. Nor had he as yet informed the police. The body had been covered in the library.

Miss Krants and her brother joined Professor Callus in the laboratory. The professor's eyes gleamed with appreciative interest.

"This is a treat," he said. "I've heard much of your equipment, Mr. Savage."

Doc Savage produced several sets of earphones.

"If you will listen," he said, "you will hear that which has upset the officials of the Coast Survey. Were it more pronounced, it might be mistaken for the ordinary rumble of some undersea earthquake. But the seismograph has not responded."

Doc explained, after they had listened to that faint murmuring. It was a sound distinctly of the sea. It might have been that peculiar roaring effect produced when a conch shell is held over one ear.

The instruments showed there had been no unusual weather anywhere. The atmospheric conditions remained normal practically all over the world.

"But something has been happening," said Long Tom, the electrical wizard. "Our own radio waves encounter a blind spot at intervals."

"And it seems to come from the depths of the ocean itself," explained Doc Savage. "It is unlike anything the Coast Survey has ever previously encountered. I have been unable to trace it to any manifestation of nature."

THEIR conversation was interrupted by the sharp buzzing of the telephone. Doc took the call in the presence of the others. The voice came over long distance.

"This is the President of the United States speaking," came to Doc. "It is important that you come to Washington at once, for a confidential communication."

"I understand," stated Doc. "What have you heard from the commission?"

There was a few seconds hesitation. Then the president spoke again.

"That is part of it," he said, gravely. "The commission has not reached Calais. The steamship Trafalgar Square has not been reported for more than twelve hours. The other part of it is too fantastic for belief."

"I shall communicate with you when I arrive," was Doc's quiet reply. "The news you give confirms a thought that may be of some importance."

His thought was indeed of the most serious importance. Mention of the commission was mingled with a growing conviction on the part of the bronze adventurer. The dead man outside his door had pointed directly to something new, some human agency connected with all this strange business of the haunted ocean.

The armament of this dead man, Professor Jasson, was indisputable evidence that Doc Savage's present work was unwanted by some one. It seemed clear enough that a reputedly mild little professor had arrived at Doc's headquarters for the purpose of killing, if necessary, and most certainly with the idea of destroying the bronze man's extensive equipment.

THE report of the disappearance of a commission on its way to Calais was of the greatest significance. Doc Savage was among the very few persons who knew of the commission. It might have been correctly called a "war commission."

But its real mission was to end war. That is, the greater nations of the world had decided on the most powerful of all treaties.

This was to be a pact that would include not disarmament of any nation, but the immediate super-armament of the six member nations against all others. Six governments had decided the time had come for them to take a stand for peace against the world.

In brief, they were planning such powerful navies, air fleets and armies as to make a war threat from others impossible. The six great nations had decided to become world police.

Doc Savage had much more than a general interest in this war commission to end war. William Harper Littlejohn, better known as "Johnny," the archaeologist and geologist of Doc's group, was one of the commission.

The six war commissioners had been in London. They were preparing to meet with representatives of other nations at Washington within a short period. The commission had boarded the steamer Trafalgar Square for the crossing of the English Channel from Dover to Calais. That crossing should have required only a few short hours.

Now there had been no radio report of the Trafalgar Square for more than twelve hours. There had been no S O S alarm. The weather had been of the calmest for that usually stormy channel.

Yet the Trafalgar Square, one of the newest and safest of Channel vessels, had disappeared.

Doc checked over in his mind the members of the commission.

Johnny, for the present at least, was representing the United States. The others were Sir Arthur Westcott, Great Britain; Baron Calosa, Italy; Monsieur Lamont, France; Herr Schumann, Germany, and Señor Torron, Spain.

DOC SAVAGE confronted the others. He spoke first to Professor Callus and Miss Krants.

"We have been honored by your interest," he announced. "You are at liberty to remain while Renny and Long Tom make further observations."

Then he issued quick directions.

"Renny, you and Long Tom will confirm as closely as possible the locale you already have fixed. Monk and Ham will accompany me. We will be gone for only a few hours."

Drawing Renny to one side in the library, Doc added instructions unheard by the others.

"For the present, you will not notify the police of the dead man," Doc advised. "But the circumstances are such, it might be advisable to be sure that Miss Krants is safely escorted to her home. Also, it is possible you will have other visitors who will be interested in what you are doing. Treat them with every courtesy."

"Holy cow!" muttered Renny. "And all this was confidential stuff between us and the Coast Survey! There's a screw loose somewhere, Doc!"

"There may be several, but that will develop," was all the man of bronze explained.

Acting on Doc's instructions, Ham and Monk were fully armed when they left the skyscraper headquarters. Which might have seemed unusual for what could hardly be other than a fast airplane trip to the national capital.

In Doc's special armored sedan, the three sped rapidly toward what to most persons appeared to be only a little-used warehouse on the Hudson River. This bore the simple sign:

HIDALGO TRADING COMPANY

The warehouse was a set of hangars housing the world's most modern and remarkable planes,

dirigible and submarine.

At headquarters, Renny and Long Tom continued their checking of the instruments.

"The blind spot," announced Long Tom, "is somewhere in the vicinity of Norway, in the North Sea."
"Remarkable!" commented Professor Callus.

Chapter IV. THE MYSTERY GROWS

"I'VE lost Doc!" exclaimed Renny, suddenly. "Now what's gone haywire with that radio?"

Long Tom, Professor Callus, Lora Krants and her brother pushed forward with eager interest. Doc's plane was already somewhere south of Baltimore, following the coast line. Renny had been keeping in touch with them by short wave.

Doc had replied only briefly to Renny's inquiries. Renny had started to report an apparent change in the locale of the ocean disturbance. Then the radio speaker had squealed and squawked. After sporadic bursts, it functioned imperfectly.

"Funny!" ejaculated Long Tom. "Have a look at the light recorders!"

The needles in circles at the ends of long steel cylinders were oscillating rapidly. These were recording the refraction and gyration of light atoms over a wide area of the ocean. Despite the absence of the sun, light appeared to be increasing over a considerable section.

"Doc!" boomed Renny into the broadcasting mike. "Can you hear me?"

"Um-bum-bum-bul-um!"

hummed the speaker.

Undoubtedly, Doc had heard Renny. But likely his reception of the engineer's voice had been similarly jumbled.

The light recorder showed rising luminance somewhere much closer than the hitherto located blind spot somewhere in the North Sea.

"Do you think something might be happening to Mr. Savage's plane?" said Professor Callus.

"Oh, I hope not!" exclaimed the red-headed girl, breathlessly.

"Nothing to worry about," said Long Tom. "This ocean haunt hasn't been serious in any way."

Lora Krants's expression showed she doubted his words.

The corridor buzzer whined. It was less strident than usual. Long Tom, with his keen electrician's sense, noted this. When he applied the radio contact to work the electroscopic locks of the doors, it responded more slowly than it should.

It was as if the available electrical current had been lessened.

THE little man who came in bowed obsequiously. His flashing white teeth smiled at every one. His skin was of the yellow darkness of an Oriental. But his clothes were elegantly correct. His English was faultless.

"I do not need to confirm the information that this is the establishment of Clark Savage," he said. "I am Kama Dbhana. It would be much simpler to call me Kama, which is the family name."

"Sure!" grunted Renny, who was worrying about Doc. "Mr. Kama is all right with us! What can we do for you?"

"Mr. Savage, he is not now present?" said Mr. Kama.

He glanced with sparkling black eyes at Professor Callus. He had a passing gleam of appreciation for the pretty Lora Krants.

Renny explained that Doc was absent. He introduced the others briefly.

"You haven't said, Mr. Kama, what we can do for you?" Renny then said.

Kama's darting eyes lingered on the variety of instruments.

"I have been informed," he said, "that Mr. Savage is tracing atmospheric phenomena apparently of marine origin. I hoped he might be able to divulge something of its source."

"Holy cow!" thundered Renny. "You, too! And I suppose you have a friend in the Coast Survey, Mr. Kama?"

Mr. Kama, merely bowed and smiled.

The buzzer whined again. It was even fainter than when Mr. Kama had entered.

The man who entered was big and blond. He was a hearty, jolly fellow. His words rolled with Scandinavian slowness of speech.

"I am Hjalmar Landson," he announced. "My countryman, one of the consular staff of Norway, asked of me that I should have some conversation with Mr. Savage."

"Say!" rapped out Renny. "Have you got a friend on the Coast Survey who called you up and told you about it?"

Hjalmar Landson's mild, blue eyes went rather blank.

"I have no friend in what you call this Coast Survey," he said, slowly. "No, it is not that. My countryman, he informed me—"

"You haven't met Mr. Kama, or Professor Callus, or Miss Krants?" Renny asked.

"I have seen this Mr. Kama," said Hjalmar Landson, unexpectedly. "But it does not matter. The others I have not had the pleasure—"

Renny introduced him. Then he made another effort to contact Doc's plane. All he got was a louder squawling than before. Other instruments were beginning to oscillate. But those recording the

weather showed no atmospheric changes.

Professor Callus seemed to take Mr. Kama under his wing. Now he was explaining also to Mr. Landson the purposes of the variety of gadgets.

Renny heard Mr. Kama say he came from San Tao. The engineer had heard of San Tao while he had been supervising a great tunnel in western China. He recalled San Tao was an isolated, little known, but immensely wealthy, mountain province of southern China.

THE telephone buzzed. Long Tom took the call. He looked up with quick suspicion.

"It's for you, Miss Krants," he said. "So others know you came here?" The red-headed girl smiled calmly.

"Oh!" she said. "I was hoping perhaps a cable might come from my father! I left word with the telegraph company!"

A few seconds later, she replaced the telephone.

"There's been a steamer report of father's yacht," she said. "I must go at once to pick up the message. If I leave a telephone number and anything happens, would you call me?"

Though the instruments were in increasing confusion, Renny put on his coat.

"I shall go with you," he announced. "You can give me the telephone number later."

"Why—" began Lora Krants. "You are so busy here—I had thought that—"

"I could very well escort Miss Krants to her home," offered Professor Callus. "There seems nothing more to be learned just now. I have my car."

"Thanks," said Renny. "But I think I had better take her home."

The engineer was following Doc's instructions to see Miss Krants safely home. Also, the big engineer, who wasn't usually susceptible, liked this snappy red-headed girl very much.

"Very well," bowed Professor Callus. "I shall be leaving soon, anyway."

"I should like very much to have the honor of remaining," said Kama, "but I have other urgent matters to which I must attend."

"Me, too," grunted Hjalmar Landson.

The very blond Norwegian and the very dark Oriental followed Renny, the girl and her brother closely, as they got to the lower floor.

ONE of Doc's armored roadsters provided ample space for Renny, Miss Krants and her brother. The thick-browed brother did not talk. The red-headed girl chattered her hope the message at the telegraph office might mean something.

Renny's hands looked big and clumsy on the steering wheel. But the girl gasped at the speed with which the car flicked past the steel pillars of the elevated tracks. The telegraph office from which the notification to the girl had come was about ten blocks from Doc's headquarters.

In the fourth block, Renny shaved a steel pillar. He swung at high speed around a street car on the wrong side. His eyes were fixed on the rear-view mirror.

At the next corner, Renny twisted suddenly into a wider street and drove fast through a block. He rounded through the city canyons and came back to the elevated tracks.

"Thought so!" he grunted. "We've got company, Miss Krants!"

"What do you mean?" said the red-headed girl.

"Closed car, sedan, has been following us," announced Renny. "Now we'll show that driver something."

For the next minute or two, the redhead let out occasional gasps. Her brother swore under his breath.

There was little traffic. But even that didn't seem to make seventy miles an hour safe. Elevated pillars swished past like a row of close-set fence pickets.

If the girl or her brother said anything for the next few seconds, it couldn't be heard. The motor of the car was only a sibilant rush, but the pillars crashed sound with their speed.

Renny grunted with satisfaction. The pursuing sedan apparently hadn't the speed to overtake them. Then they whizzed into a new block. Just ahead was a lumbering truck.

"Look out!" cried the red-headed girl.

Renny twisted desperately on the steering wheel. His strength almost tore it from the post. The big truck was squarely across both car tracks.

The roadster brakes squawled. The red-headed girl clutched convulsively at Renny's thick arm. Her hand slipped off. The tires of spongy rubber bit into the pavement. The rubber burned.

The long hood took the impact. The side of the big truck splintered. Lora Krants screamed.

THE girl's cry was short. Renny's bulky arm was across her body. He was attempting to prevent her being hurled through the windshield. That glass would not shatter. Likewise, it was bulletproof. Renny's giant strength undoubtedly saved the girl's life. But she struck the glass with force enough to knock her completely out. Barton, her brother, flew from the side door. He was lucky in skidding, feet-first, on a smooth stretch of asphalt.

Renny was only slightly stunned. He attempted to get the girl back into the seat. Behind them a sedan skidded to an abrupt stop. Men poured from this car. Others were springing from the truck.

The murdered man at Doc's door had some dire meaning. But it was all a deep mystery to Renny. The snub-nosed gun suddenly shoved under his arm was definite. Not many men would have done other than lift their hands.

But Renny really liked this red-headed girl. Almost as much as he liked a good scrap. Renny had less caution than man power.

He hit the man holding the gun so hard and so unexpectedly, the weapon flew out of his hands. His fists were mauling sledges as he sprang into the street.

One of the attackers made a serious mistake.

"Don't shoot!" he growled. "She said to take him alive!"

Renny was not pausing to think about who she might be.

The engineer picked out the man who had spoken. One fist traveled in a wide arc. It was a haymaker that landed the man five yards away. Renny backed up to the truck.

The giant had no special rules about fighting. In less than half a minute he had piled six or seven men in a heap.

Renny downed two more men with sickening smashes. He waded toward the roadster.

A long arm reached out. It was lengthened by the snubnosed machine gun it held. The steel barrel rapped cruelly upon Renny's tough skull.

Renny went to his hands and knees. He thought the asphalt had heaved up and struck him. Then he was out.

WHEN Renny awoke, he was bound hand and foot. A tight blindfold covered his eyes. But the warmth about him informed him he was in some apartment. His head was aching. But his hearing was unimpaired.

He strained at the cords binding him when he heard the husky, and clearly angry voice of Lora Krants. Then he abruptly ceased his effort.

"Holy cow!" he grumbled. "I mighta known it was something like that! Darned if you can ever trust a woman!"

Chapter V. THE STRANGE REDHEAD

"FOOLS!" spoke the voice of Lora Krants. "He is the wrong man! You ought to have known that. Why didn't you wait for my signal?"

Renny was greatly puzzled. Anyway, he thought grimly, he was the man who had got this headache out of it. Then the girl added a few words.

"Doc Savage has gone to Washington by plane!"

So that was it, judged Renny. The charming redhead had been only a decoy. She had been sent to bait Doc Savage into this trap.

Then Renny was more amazed. Barton, the brother of Lora Krants, had spoken.

"We'll turn him loose then," he said. "We haven't any time to waste. Anything might happen in the next hour or two."

Men came into the room. They pulled Renny to his feet.

"Think you're able to navigate?" said one.

"Untie my hands and you'll think I can!" boomed Renny.

"Guess he's all O.K.," said another man.

"It would be best to gag him until you are out of the way," said the cool voice of Lora Krants.

"We don't want to get the police in on this. They'll be tracing those smashed cars right now."

A gag was slapped over Renny's mouth. He was carried down several flights of stairs. After a short ride in a car, he was rolled out onto a grassy plot. A knife slid along the cords around his arms.

Renny was compelled to waste time untying the knots around his legs. He pulled the gag from his mouth. The tape blindfold took some hairs with it. A car purred away.

Renny stood up and blinked. He was in the approximate middle of Central Park. The car had made only two turns. Renny fixed a location that might be the apartment house from which he had been brought.

That would have to keep. He considered it more important to get back to headquarters. Long Tom was probably alone now. Professor Callus had said he would be leaving soon.

Renny wished he knew why Doc had insisted he escort Lora Krants to her home. Well, anyway, he reflected grimly, he had carried out the order. Hailing a taxicab, Renny headed for the midtown skyscraper.

THE buzzer at Doc Savage's headquarters sounded faintly. It was but a few minutes after Renny and Lora Krants, with the others, had departed. Long Tom had been unsuccessfully trying to make something out of the radio jumble.

"Good gosh!" he exploded impatiently. "More visitors?"

Professor Callus wagged his shiny head and smiled.

"It would seem that secrecy no longer attaches to this investigation of the disturbed ocean," he said.

The man who came in was tall and of the same Oriental coloring as the recently departed Kama Dbhana. His teeth flashed in a pleased smile.

"I have been informed only tonight," he said, "that Clark Savage has been investigating—" "Sure, I know!" snapped Long Tom. "Your friend in the Coast Survey told you! Now what do you want?"

The dark-skinned Oriental continued to smile. Long Tom stepped back suddenly, slowly putting up his hands. The outside door had remained open. Other men with yellow faces seemed to glide in without walking.

There were six of these men. All were smiling. But the guns in their hands brought no smile to Long Tom's face. The electrical expert made a quick movement to reach for a pocket. But he was not quick enough. Six unwavering guns were fixed upon his middle. Combined fire could have sliced him to pieces.

"We know you are alone here, with only this man who is not one of Doc Savage's companions," stated the dark-skinned leader. "You will not be harmed."

Professor Callus sputtered. But he was seized with Long Tom. Steel cuffs of intricate design clinked onto their wrists behind their backs. Damp cloths were slapped over their faces. The drug was not chloroform. Long Tom had never before smelled this perfumed odor. He did not puzzle over it long. He and Professor Callus were bundled to one side. Both were peacefully sleeping.

Directed by their still smiling leader, the six dark men went to work methodically. Strangely, they seemed to be acquainted with the most vital parts of all the delicate apparatus with which Doc had been seeking the origin of the ocean haunt.

In less than five minutes, the wreckage was as complete as if one of Professor Homus Jasson's bombs had been touched off.

Weather instruments, light recorders, the radio were ripped apart and smashed. The Orientals touched nothing in the laboratory except the gadgets used directly in the checking up on the haunted ocean.

They moved out as silently as they had come. The leader pulled the cover from the face of Professor Homus Jasson. The dead man still had a look of horror in his eyes.

The Oriental smiled with his white teeth.

"The master will be greatly pleased," he said. "This makes all perfect for the one who would sell."

DOWNSTAIRS, Renny alighted from his taxicab. He saw seven men getting into a closed car. They had yellow, Oriental skins.

"Good grief!" he muttered. "I suppose we've been having some more visitors! Looks like that guy Kama's friends or—"

Renny whipped into the building. He shot upward in Doc's own private elevator. This rocketlike lift passed seventy floors at a speed that would have projected it through the tower of the imposing mass of steel and marble.

Cushioned apparatus slowed it at the eighty-sixth floor.

Doc Savage's outside door was standing open. Renny proceeded with infinite caution. At the door of the laboratory he halted with a deep groan.

"I might have known something like that would happen," he murmured to himself. "I wonder where—" A dull thumping came from one side of the room. Renny sprang to what seemed to be only the smooth wall. A panel swung open.

Professor Callus rolled out, groaning. His big head seemed to be attached to his body by only a thin rag. But his neck was not broken. As Long Tom staggered to his feet, Professor Callus arose. "This is terrible—terrible!" said the professor. "Everything has been smashed! I thought we were done for!"

"What happened?" demanded Renny. "I saw men who looked like that Kama guy!"

"That's right," said Long Tom, mournfully. "We didn't have a chance! We were drugged and put into the cabinet."

The cabinet was one of the ventilated spaces in which Doc Savage sometimes imprisoned individuals he might want to question later.

"Set up the emergency," said Renny. "We've got to find out what happened to Doc."

Professor Callus opened his eyes. From what appeared to be a blank wall space emerged the complete equipment of an intricate radio and television set. This was a set maintained by Doc Savage for an emergency.

But when it went into service, the squawking and bumbling had become more intense. The apparatus was useless.

Renny had an idea. He went to the telephone. Thumbing through the book, he found the number of Cyrus Krants, the bathosphere man.

It must have been the voice of a caretaker or some servant replying to Renny's call.

"I would like to speak with Miss Krants, Miss Lora Krants," said Renny. "It is important. I have news of her missing father."

The reply was instant, unhesitating.

"Sorry, but Miss Lora Krants is visiting friends in California. You said her father is missing? There must be some mistake. Cyrus Krants has been in touch with his home every day. Who is this speaking?"

Renny did not say who was speaking. His sudden liking for the red-headed girl had completely evaporated.

Chapter VI. DAWN AT MIDNIGHT

DURING the wrecking of his Manhattan weather instruments, Doc Savage had been holding his silver-winged plane to a line closely bordering the Atlantic coast. Ham and Monk were engaged in one of their usual caustic exchanges.

"An' a red-headed woman made a fool out of me," chanted Ham, with tuneless sarcasm.

"Dag-gone it!" piped Monk. "An' you'll shut up or I'll be makin' mincemeat outta you!"

Doc was watching the lights of Baltimore, a mile below.

A shrill grunt accompanied Monk's irate exclamation. An animal that looked to be all ears and legs, seemed to sympathize with the apelike chemist's remarks. This was Habeas Corpus, Monk's pet pig.

"That shote's a fine thing to be taking to a conference at Washington," grinned Ham. "At that, he'll probably make about the same impression as his master."

"Is that so?" sputtered Monk. "If you had his brains, you danged shyster, you'd talk a lot less and think more!"

Doc interrupted the pleasant exchange.

"That's strange," he said, quietly. "It is just after midnight, but it would seem the sun has decided to come up. Look over to the eastward."

"Howlin' calamities!" exploded Monk. "Looks like daylight's bustin' on us, an' comin' fast! What's happened to the radio, Doc?"

"Um- um-

bum- ulbum- ulbum!" squawked the loudspeaker in the plane.

"It has been going bad for some time," remarked Doc.

The man of bronze had figured he would make Washington well within two hours. Suddenly he was not so sure about it.

The eerie dawn at midnight was spreading. The east took on a brighter hue. But it was not as if the sun were rising. Usually, an ocean sunrise is varied in color. This was much like a white fan spreading across the horizon.

"Looks something like the northern lights," suggested Ham.

HABEAS CORPUS, the pig Monk had picked up in Arabia, was an animal of acute instincts. Now he was standing rigidly. He sniffed and quivered.

"Something about it Habeas Corpus don't like," said Monk.

"I don't like that hog, but he is smarter than any ape," grinned Ham.

The radio squawking suddenly was cut off. There had been a sound like a tremendous burst of static. Then silence.

"I don't like that," stated Doc. "Sounds as if something has smashed things at headquarters."

From the plane's motor came a sputter. The engine of finest alloy metal seemed to hesitate. But its cylinders picked up again. Doc's hand moved a lever. This closed shutters around the motor. These shutters were of a special material made to resist magnetic influence. It was insulated against any known form of interference by any of the rays thus far invented.

More than just a false sunrise had become apparent over the ocean. The plane was passing over a vast expanse of shore marshes. No human habitations showed.

Above the hissing of the plane's motor, a low humming became audible. Doc Savage had been hearing this for some time. His ears were easily three times as acute as those of Ham and Monk.

"It might be well to put on the 'chutes," advised Doc. "Those bogs provide a poor footing for setting the plane down."

"Are we going to land out here?" piped up Monk.

The plane's motor gave the answer. Its muffled explosions ceased suddenly.

Doc Savage stared at the switch for a few seconds. The propeller rotated slowly. The man of bronze pushed a button. This should have lighted the instrument board. There was no light. The electrical current had been lost.

"Something wrong with the wires?" questioned Ham. Doc did not reply. The interior of the cabin now had no lights. They were not needed while daylight had flooded the space. In the uneven line of the shore, the low caps of the ocean swells, a fishing launch sprang into view.

Monk and Ham had hastily slipped their arms through the harness of parachutes. The skilled hand of Doc Savage kept the plane winging in a wide, descending spiral.

They were in daylight. Broad daylight at the hour of midnight. The plane was as silent as if it never had been powered. Wind whistled through the wings in its descent.

"Bale out!" Doc ordered the others.

The man of bronze had made no effort to don a parachute.

"You coming, Doc?" said Ham.

"I will be with you presently," said Doc.

Ham and Monk opened the door. Monk seized one ear of the pig Habeas Corpus. They went out and dropped.

Doc was sticking with the plane. The silver ship flashed down. The man of bronze had picked out a boggy hammock. Monk groaned.

Less than a hundred feet above the marsh, Doc leveled off. The wind shrieked as the wings pancaked. The air cushioned the descent. The plane struck, settled into the boggy ground.

DOC and his two companions found themselves in a wide space of mucky ground. They sank over their knees. The going was tough enough for Doc and Ham.

Monk's short legs made it worse for him. The weight of the pig was a handicap.

Monk set Habeas Corpus on his feet.

Doc, walking ahead, rubbed one hand over his smooth hair. Sparks flashed. The atmosphere was charged with some strange force. They came to the shore rocks.

In the marsh, birds were whistling. Some were shrill-voiced, as they greeted the dawn.

Doc climbed the rocks. Ham and Monk followed. Habeas Corpus was still struggling to break away.

Voices of men came from the ocean. Three fishermen on a small launch were tramping their deck and swearing lustily. They were working furiously to get their motor going.

"I surmise we are face to face with whatever has been haunting the ocean," stated Doc. "That launch has no power."

The launch drifted broadside onto the rocks. Doc and the others waded in and helped the fishermen beach the boat.

"What in Hades is all this?" growled one of the fishermen. "Is it the horn of Gabriel or something?"

"Well, it might be at that," replied Ham, cheerfully.

A smudge of smoke showed at sea. It rolled upward from just below the horizon.

"That vessel seems to have stopped," said Doc.

"Yes," replied one of the fishermen. "We were out there when this thing started. It's a coastal passenger steamer. They had to drop their hooks. Their engines quit suddenly."

Doc Savage mounted a point of rocks. All around he was looking at what appeared to be the circular curtain of night. Darkness had been thrust back only a few miles. They were in the center of the eerie midnight illumination.

It was possible to mark three different boats. Two of these were drifting. The other had anchored.

"We must procure some new means of transportation," advised Doc. "It is important that we get to Washington quickly."

THE three fishermen accompanied them around the rim of the wide marsh.

On the first paved road no traffic was moving. An electric railway was close. The building of a power substation bulked ahead. In the doorway were four men in overalls.

"What is all this?" said one of the men. "Our own power went off, and when I tried to telephone, it was dead!"

Doc Savage said nothing. He led the way toward a farmhouse. A puzzled countryman and his wife were standing in their yard.

"I ain't never seen the like o' this!" grumbled the farmer. "Even the derved chickens thinks it's mornin'! But there ain't no sun!"

Doc smiled. "I judge the sun will be along at its usual time."

Two roosters were crowing at top pitch. They were greeting the morning.

"Have you a car?" Doc asked the farmer. "If so, I will pay you well to get to some other means of transportation."

Doc smiled as he asked the question.

Two minutes later, the farmer learned the meaning of this smile. His best efforts got no results. The battered farm machine had no power. The farmer looked up with an oath. Once more, he whirled the crank savagely by hand.

Then something happened. It was like some one suddenly switching off a brilliant flashlight. The darkness of midnight shut in the countryside. The small motor of the car started so suddenly it backfired and kicked the farmer onto his haunches.

Night had returned. From the direction of the railway substation came the sudden humming of a dynamo. The power was on. The three fishermen shouted and started back toward the shore.

Doc produced a roll of bills.

"We won't bother to hire the car," he said. "We'll buy it."

Ham and Monk piled in. Monk dragged Habeas Corpus aboard. The rickety vehicle rattled out onto the highway.

Doc pushed the old motor to the limit. In less than half an hour he had reached an airport and

chartered a fast plane. This arrived in Washington after a hop of a few minutes.

Chapter VII. THE WORLD THREAT

THE meeting between the president and Doc Savage was secret and informal. The president stated he had sought this conversation with the man of bronze because of his vast scientific knowledge.

"The whole thing is fantastic," stated the president, "but it suggests such great possible calamity, it cannot be overlooked! We seem to be threatened by such a power as none of our government scientists and technicians have ever believed could exist."

"Practical science has progressed in an incredible manner during the past few years, Mr. President," stated Doc Savage. "None can say what vast force may be discovered at any time. Unfortunately, the discoveries are not always made by those of balanced and straightforward minds." They were discussing the affair that had begun with the queer disturbance of Coast and Geodetic Survey equipment. Doc had cautioned his companions against mentioning, for the present, the occurrence on the coast.

But they had arrived in Washington to find themselves confronted with several new and serious angles. Not only had the haunted ocean become apparent, but the phenomenon was being used as a direct threat.

The purpose of that threat was of such fabulous character as to border upon the incredible. The government had been informed that it must disarm. Further, it had been stated that all other nations would be similarly compelled to dispense with all of their armed forces.

"We received the communication in such manner as to make it untraceable," said the president.

"The message apparently originated somewhere in the Northern Atlantic. It was relayed by radio from one ship to another."

"And you say the purpose of this is declared to end all war in the world?" mused Doc Savage. "I would say the object is a most worthy one. At the same time, such force as is threatened would not for long be confined to such a benevolent purpose. If the machinery of any nation, any great city could be paralyzed indefinitely, then this force would soon be in the hands of rascals." The president nodded his head.

"That is correct, Mr. Savage," he said, gravely. "But this whole thing savors of a disordered mind. It would seem some lunatic has isolated himself in The Land of the Midnight Sun."

"Howlin' calamities!" rapped Monk.

"The lunatic's ideas of yesterday often become the great inventions of today," interrupted Doc, quickly. "You say this unknown sender of the message demands complete disarmament at once? He declared he has the power to control the destinies of all other countries?"

"Yes," said the president. "And to prove it, he declares he will demonstrate this power. He has set eight o'clock this morning. If he can do it, all of the New York area will be rendered inactive from the hour set until noon."

"WON'T that be something for the anti-noise boys?" said Ham. "Imagine New York City without a wheel turning. No thunder of the subway, no roar of the elevated, no grind of traffic--"

"Anyway," said the president, "the whole thing can hardly be other than the ravings of a lunatic. The whole thing is probably unworthy of our serious attention."

Doc Savage said nothing. He was thinking of The Land of the Midnight Sun. Back there on the Maryland coast there had been daylight.

"I believe with you that this threatener may be unbalanced," said Doc. "But I also believe he will do exactly as he says."

The president tried to laugh. His mirth had a hollow sound.

"And we have received no further word of the war commission or the steamship Trafalgar Square," he stated.

A secretary presented a message to the president.

"Then there is something, Mr. Savage! Some ships were stopped off the Maryland coast! A naval destroyer was without power for nearly an hour! They report a mysterious light like daylight!"

"Yes," observed Doc. "One of my best planes is bogged down in a Maryland marsh."

The president stared at the bronze man bleakly.

"You hadn't mentioned that," he said, gravely. "I wish we had Arne Dass with us."

"I knew Arne Dass was missing," stated Doc. "His knowledge would indeed be most valuable."

"Yes," said the president. "Dass has been gone for more than six months. His scientific work with the navy department was invaluable. We fear some foreign agency may have had a hand in his disappearance."

The work of Arne Dass, an aged scientist, was a high spot in the history of the navy department. He had developed some of the most effective weapons of warfare.

"What steps would you advise we take?" said the president.

"I know of none that might be effective before eight o'clock this morning," stated Doc. "That is now barely six hours away. We shall fly back to New York at once."

DOC SAVAGE was back in his eighty-sixth floor laboratory at dawn. The man of bronze had been busy

for nearly an hour. One telephone call had been a contact with an electro-chemical company plant on the Hudson River.

The man of bronze owned a controlling interest in this works. For ten minutes he talked with one of the machinery designers. The plan for what he desired was being copied by the designer in elaborate detail. The intricate design had been evolved and mapped in the amazing brain of the bronze giant.

"Put all the men necessary on this to have it ready within twelve hours," instructed Doc. The man of bronze returned to chemical experiments he had been making. He was clad in a cloak of gray rubberized fabric. His head was encased in what might have been a diver's helmet of crystal. The chemicals Doc was employing were of a deadly character. It lacked two hours until eight o'clock.

A red light glowed and a buzzer whined. Doc removed the glass helmet and picked up the telephone. "The White House speaking," said a voice. "We have received word of two lifeboats from the Trafalgar Square being picked up. Our information says they were in the vicinity of the Lofoten Islands, off the coast of Norway."

"The islands are a thousand and more miles north of the English Channel," stated Doc. "It sounds rather fantastic. But the commission? What have you learned?"

"Very little. Washington is trying to get a clear story of what happened to the Trafalgar Square. The steamer was abandoned. And it is reported the war commission has been abducted. A lifeboat carrying them vanished into the north. That may be only a wild tale."

"I fear you will find it is true," stated Doc.

The conversation was terminated.

Doc summoned the others to the laboratory.

"Whatever affairs you may have at hand should be adjusted quickly," he stated. "Brothers, we are soon to journey into the Arctic regions, so equip yourselves."

DOC had left off his helmet. The door buzzer whined. Doc threw a switch. A square of frosted glass was illuminated. In that glass was a man crawling. Scarlet liquid oozed from his mouth and dripped slowly from his chin.

The frosted glass gave a detailed view of the corridor in front of Doc Savage's door.

"Great Scott!" rasped Ham. "Another one!"

Renny and Long Tom were staring.

"It's that fellow who said he was a Norwegian," declared Long Tom. "He left here with that fellow, Kama."

Hjalmar Landson, the blond Norwegian, had staggered from the elevator. Likely he had fallen after the car started downward. For he now was making a second effort to reach the door. Doc glided through the library into the outer room. The door opened by the radio contact.

The big Norwegian half arose to his feet. His eyes were like hard, blue ice. But they were beginning to glaze a little. One big hand wiped the oozing blood from his lips.

"Doc-Doc Savage-" he mumbled. "You must-must know about this-Knut Aage-he will-"

Hjalmar Landson slid forward on his face. The ornamental handle of a dagger stuck gruesomely from between his shoulders. Nearly all of a queerly curved blade had been sunk beside his spine.

Doc Savage made a quick injection from a syringe. Hjalmar Landson appeared to come back from death itself.

"They'll get it-find Knut Aage-Salten Fjord-Moskenes-north passage in Satan's Gateway-this professor-who died-Kama wanted to buy-my country-go there-"

The Norwegian's last words were only liquid gurgling. What he might have meant by his reference to the dead professor, Homus Jasson, he now could never reveal.

Stretched in death, Hjalmar Landson more than ever resembled a blond Viking of the Far North.

"Whatever he might have been, he was loyal to his country to the last," stated Doc Savage.

"Moskenes is one of the Lofoten Islands."

"Kama!" exclaimed Ham. "That would be his murderer!"

"Thunderation!" growled Renny. "I wouldn't be so sure! There is that bogus red-headed Krants girl!"

But at this moment, Doc and his companions had another matter to claim their attention.

The heart of Hjalmar Landson, the Norwegian, had ceased beating at precisely eight o'clock in the morning.

And with it, the heart of Greater New York City also halted its loudly pulsing stroke.

Chapter VIII. WHEN A CITY STOPPED

NEW YORK CITY, Manhattan and all of its environs, had been warned from Washington. Several million persons were cautioned to be on their guard.

Trains might stop. Ferries might be disabled. Subways could become unsafe. Elevated tracks might cease to thunder.

In other words, advised Washington by radio and early edition newspapers, a few million persons should be careful of their activities at eight o'clock this morning.

New York at eight o'clock in the morning was going about its customary business. In the eighty-sixth floor headquarters of Doc Savage could be heard the humming thunder of the active city. So great and constant is this roar of traffic, its beat ceases to be recorded by the ears of the average New Yorkers. These waves of sound were rolling up when Hjalmar Landson staggered to his death in Doc Savage's corridor.

Now another wave arose. More appalling perhaps than anything else that could happen. It was an abrupt wave of silence.

Comparative silence, but an absence of sound, nevertheless. For shouting voices, even screaming crowds in suddenly halted subway trains, on stopped elevated coaches, flowing from thousands of automobiles blocking the streets, hardly registered after the customary thunder of traffic had died. New York had stopped. Stopped, paralyzed.

Congestion and panic in the subways were the worst. The trains had stopped. All lights went out. Thousands of workers were trapped in Stygian darkness. Perhaps thousands would have been killed here and on the elevated, where they were pouring from halted trains, had the third rails still been working.

Motormen and guards tried ineffectually to prevent the maddened crowds from seeking to escape along the tracks. The guards were overwhelmed. Crowds streamed toward the stairs leading to the streets.

Doc Savage and his companions looked from a window down into the canyon of the street far below. "Looks like one of those slow motion pictures," observed Ham. "Look, Doc! Every automobile has stopped!"

Bewildered masses crowded into doorways. Their white faces were lifted toward the blue sky. Many seemed to believe this might be Judgment Day.

"The thing is complete," stated Doc. "Our lights are gone. All electrical current has been stopped."

THE man of bronze whipped into the laboratory. He returned with one of their generator flashlights. Even the small generator in this device refused to respond.

"Doc!" exclaimed Long Tom. "We're locked in! The electroscope is out of order!"

The main doors which had been closed, failed to operate. There was no radio contact. However, there were various exits available from the headquarters.

Doc Savage's emergency radio was dead. So much a part of modern life had the radio become, that this one feature alone of the paralyzed city was perhaps the most terrifying. Bewildered housewives, seeking to ascertain why their vacuum cleaners, their automatic refrigerators, their lights and their telephones had gone dead, turned the knobs of their radios.

Within the first half hour, even the voices of the crowds became silenced. The words of individuals were being spoken in whispers. Their natural voices sounded unearthly loud without the accustomed background of the city's clamor.

"Brothers, no such power has ever before appeared," stated Doc. "We are informed this threat is made to force an end to all war. It is a good purpose. But even now, I more than suspect this force is known and desired by fiendish brains."

The murderer of Professor Homus Jasson and of Hjalmar Landson were convincing evidence this was true.

Because it was a clear day, the difference in the quality of light did not appear to the casual millions. But in Doc's laboratory the light recorders were mysteriously agitated.

And in the most acute ears was that low, throbbing hum, as if the air suddenly had become filled with billions of invisible, buzzing insects.

EXACTLY at the noon hour, New York City came to life. The transition from powerless machinery to a sudden surge of returned energy was more disastrous than the stopping of the city had been. Now trains were starting. Thousands of motors started unexpectedly. Hundreds were caught and injured.

Radios squawked. Every telephone was immediately seized upon by the person nearest. The flood of calls overwhelmed the exchanges. The automatic lines were choked.

In some of the skyscrapers, elevators shot up or down. They had been abandoned with power on by some of the terrified operators.

Yet such was the influence of Doc Savage, he was one of the first persons to put through a call. Having been fully informed of the dubious standing of the red-headed girl who had said she was Lora Krants, the man of bronze was making contact with a banker.

"You have the handling of the affairs of Cyrus Krants?" said Doc. "The information I seek may be of vital importance."

"Yes, I am in touch with the personal affairs of the Krants family," stated the banker. "If I can be of assistance, I will."

"We have been told Miss Lora Krants is in California and her father is in daily touch with his home," said Doc. "Is that true?"

"There must be some mistake," replied the banker. "Miss Lora Krants is here in New York. I happen

to know she appeared to you for help last night. Her father has been unheard from for several days. Our firm would regard it as a personal favor if you would do what you can, Mr. Savage." As Doc replaced the telephone, the exotic trilling of sudden discovery reached his companions. Renny had been listening to the conversation. "The young lady appears to be Miss Krants," stated Doc. "My informant is most reliable." "Holy cow!" boomed Renny. "Doc, when can we get started for the North Pole, or wherever we're going? In a minute, I'll wake up and discover I dreamed all that happened this morning."

DOC made no reply. He was again on the telephone. In a few minutes he had put through a call to the Pacific coast. He held a short conversation with a person in Del Monte, in southern California. When he replaced the instrument, he made no explanation.

During this conversation, a visitor had arrived. He was the massive-headed Professor Callus. "Another one!" he exclaimed in a shocked voice, as he saw the body of Hjalmar Landson. "What in the world can this terrible thing mean, Mr. Savage? Could all of this incredible phenomena of this morning, these murders, be related to our haunted ocean?"

"It would seem that is the case," stated Doc. "Have you ever had any contact with this man Landson, or the man called Kama, before they appeared here last night, Professor Callus?"

"I never saw either of them before," said the big-headed man. "I returned today, hoping to learn what their interest might have been in the ocean disturbance. I did see Landson at an early hour this morning on Fifth Avenue near Central Park."

"Was he alone at that time?"

Professor Callus shook his shiny head, as if with reluctance.

"No," he said, slowly, "but I hesitated to speak of it. Probably it has no relation to what might have happened later. Landson was riding in a sedan early this morning with Miss Krants and the brother she called Barton."

"We might've known it!" spilled Renny. "What time was that, professor?"

"As nearly as I can recall, it was between seven and eight o'clock."

"And he reached here and died just when the city went dead," said Ham. "That seems to provide a clear case of circumstantial evidence."

"Dag-gone it!" piped up Monk, unexpectedly. "That girl wouldn't have done it! She wouldn't go around stickin' a knife in anybody's back!"

"Or an automatic in your neck," said Ham, sarcastically. "Or maybe a hypo in that other dead man."

Doc Savage changed the subject suddenly.

"As I told you before, prepare for Arctic conditions. You will proceed at once to the Hudson River hangars. I shall join you within a short time. Renny, describe for me the approximate location of that apartment near Central Park where you were taken."

Chapter IX. DOC IS TRAPPED

DOC SAVAGE arrived at the address given by Renny.

"The Krants's servants left early this morning," said the janitor of the Central Park apartment house. "There was only the housekeeper and her husband. They've been taking care of the apartment." Doc Savage exhibited no surprise at the apparent absence of the Krants family. Seemingly, the man of bronze left the apartment house. Five minutes later he was ascending the tradesmen's stairway at the back of the building.

The man of bronze had little difficulty in obtaining an entrance. The Krants apartment contained five bedrooms.

Doc glided from one room to another. None of the rooms showed evidence of having been occupied within the past few days. The big living room had been converted partly into a library.

Doc's flaky gold eyes stirred with little whirlpools. Two crossed daggers had been crossed above a big table. One dagger was still in place. The mark on the wall showed the other had been removed recently.

The handle of the remaining dagger was ornamented and inlaid with jewels. The design was a replica of that which had been buried in the back of Hjalmar Landson, the Norwegian.

Doc crossed to a window facing Central Park. He pulled back the heavy drapery a part of an inch.

His face was inscrutable as he watched a sedan arrive and park in the avenue below.

From the time he had left his headquarters Doc had known he was being shadowed. He was not surprised when a man got out of the sedan and crossed the street to a point where he could best keep an eye on the apartment house.

The watcher had a yellowish skin. He was immaculately dressed. His movement was the glide of an Oriental. From the description given by Long Tom, Doc identified the man as Kama Dbhana, of San Tao.

DOC was turning from the window. His movement ceased. His remarkable senses were not of an occult

character. But his ears could detect the ticking of the finest watch. Somewhere in the apartment a watch was ticking. That watch was not hidden in a drawer. For the sound had moved. It was still moving.

Doc kept close to the wall. He glided noiselessly toward the large room adjoining the living room. In the doorway, he halted and listened.

A telephone on the table had been shifted since he had entered. A picture on the wall had been moved. But few men in the world would have noted these minor details. Doc Savage never entered any room without instantly fixing the position of each object.

Doc apparently had not noticed anything unusual. He walked slowly across the room toward an inner door. Except for the door which he had entered, all windows and doors were closed. The window drapes were closely drawn and the room was in semidarkness. This did not prevent Doc from seeing moving figures.

Doc stood in the middle of the room and waited. Into his hands had come two small glass objects. Each contained enough anaesthetic gas to have overcome a dozen men.

The rush toward him came from the shadows. There was hardly a whisper of movement and no voice of command. But Doc saw there were eight or ten figures. All wore clumsy-appearing masks. More strange than the masks, was the fact that none of the figures seemed to be armed. Their hands were empty. Perhaps they counted on the weight of numbers.

The little glass capsules hardly tinkled. They were crushed on the rug at Doc's feet. The man of bronze had inhaled a deep breath, then had expelled some of it. He was capable of some three to four minutes without breathing.

The gas should have put these attackers to sleep instantly. But they remained erect. And none touched the bronze man. He was simply ringed in by the menacing masks. The figures might have had queer weapons not now displayed.

A slender figure separated from the others. The husky, muffled voice of a woman spoke. It was so disguised as to be unidentifiable. The woman was calm.

"You are powerful enough to defeat some of us, Doc Savage," advised the voice. "But you could not overpower all of us. I would advise you to surrender. Your devices are useless against us. We are doing this for your own good. We would save the lives of you and your companions."

In addition to her mask, the woman wore an enveloping hood.

"I seem to have no choice," replied Doc, quietly. "But you should put up your hair more carefully. Where it shows, it is red."

There was no red hair showing. But the woman's hand whipped instantly upward, feeling the hood. At once, she laughed huskily.

"I've been informed you are very clever, Doc Savage," the woman said. "It seems you live up to your reputation! But that cannot save you now. We are—"

Doc expelled his breath slowly. The anaesthetic gas had dissipated into the air. It was only effective for a lesser time than Doc could hold his breath.

His symmetrical body moved with flashing speed. The arc of the bronze fists could not have been followed by any human eye.

Most certainly the blows could not have been dodged. Knuckles crunched into masked faces. The figures massed in a combined rush. Doc's twisting hands caught up one man and hurled him broadside against others. Four men went down in a heap.

Only four figures were on their feet. A sinewy arm went around Doc's throat. His effort to free himself from the grip caused a gun to be shoved into his neck. At least one attacker was armed. Doc realized the odds were against him. He relaxed his fight. They bound him and carried him with them when they departed.

"ONLY by the certain removal of Doc Savage can our enterprise be made safe," spoke a voice.

"I agree with you perfectly," spoke a woman. "I am glad you have come to see it my way. He tricked me into betraying myself. He undoubtedly knows who I am. When will he be removed? They say he has powers that amount to black magic!"

A macabre laugh came from the invisible man.

"That has all been arranged," he said. "The automatic device on the death tank will work in fifteen minutes. By then we will be conspicuously in another place some distance from here."

Doc Savage heard this conversation. He had been dumped on the bare floor of what appeared to be a large room in some deserted loft building. There are hundreds of such lofts located along the Hudson and the East Rivers.

Doc could tell this building was close to the river. Boats were passing not far away. The man speaking might be Kama. At least, the voice was the same.

All of his devices had been stripped from his body. Knowledge of his many secrets was indicated. Even his bullet-proof skullcap of metal had been removed. His feet were bare. False toenails were missing. Hollow shells worn over some of his teeth had been taken out.

It was the most thorough job of rendering the bronze giant helpless he had ever encountered. The bonds held him rigid. He could only wait.

The woman laughed again, harshly.

"Well, let's be on our way," she said. "You will be going to Washington tonight?"

"I'm not so sure of that," replied the man's voice. "Perhaps it would be best to hold out for greater returns."

Their feet beat hollowly on the bare floor of another room. A distant door was slammed. Doc could hear the thudding of their feet on stairs.

Doc's acute senses picked up a ticking. He judged it was some device for timing. There was not so much as a table or chair in the room. Doc had tried all of the muscular contortions that would have freed him from ordinary bonds. He met with no success.

Thick dust of the abandoned loft choked his nostrils. It was useless to call for help in this empty building. He rolled in the direction of the ticking.

A bright aluminum tank was set in an alcove of the big room. All of the windows were tightly closed. Some cracks had been carefully sealed with strips of paper to make more certain it would be a death chamber.

A timing device was affixed to an ordinary alarm clock at the top of the tank. The ringing of the alarm would release a spring. This in turn would release the valve at the top of the tank. Doc had no doubt but that the cylinder contained some deadly gas.

A small vial contained a colorless liquid. It was set to fall and break on the floor. Doubtless it contained an inflammable chemical which would be set off by the jar of the vial. Perhaps the gas in the tank would be combustible. Or it might merely kill.

The fire chemical on the dry floor of the loft would start an immediate blaze either way. Before the fire would be discovered, the identity of a body would be almost entirely destroyed.

Doc rolled close to the tank. His first thought was to break the timing device. Then he saw that any disturbance of the tank would cause the spring to release the death valve.

Likewise, a touch would send the fire chemical to be broken on the floor.

More than five minutes had passed. Doc rolled to the window. By tremendous effort he again got to his feet. He teetered forward and his bronzed head crashed the glass and the frame. But only a small aperture was made.

Below was the river, down ten stories. Boats were passing, far out in the stream. Doc attempted to break out another section of the heavy sash with his head, but the effort threw him on his back. Then the alarm clock device rang. Immediately, there came a low hiss of escaping gas. There was a slight thud and a tinkling of glass.

Bluish vapor rolled into the room. As it struck the air, it seemed converted into writhing, bloated globes.

A quick, bright flame was spreading on the floor of the alcove. A tongue of fire darted up the wall.

DOC fought to his feet. He jammed his head and shoulders into the space of the broken window. That way, he would have fresh air for the maximum of time. He knew the death gas was filling the room behind him.

The alcove had become a flaming mass. Doc looked intently at the river far below. But he could not force his body through the small window space.

Behind Doc, the room was being converted into a fiery furnace. The bronze man's clothes smoked. The back of his neck was being blistered. Only his face being jammed into the window saved him from breathing the deadly gas.

There came a great crashing. Doc thought at first a part of a wall had fallen. But it was the door which bulged on its hinges. It might have been a sledge hammer that struck it. At the second blow, a stout panel cracked.

The third blow smashed the panel altogether. It was no hammer. A great, knuckled fist projected into the room. Another fist struck. The whole door buckled. A voice boomed.

"Hey, Doc! Holy cow! You in there?"

Doc called, "Keep back, Renny, keep back! Poison gas!"

"Howlin' calamities!" howled the voice of Monk. "Lemme get at them windows, Renny!"

Side by side, the giant Renny and the grotesque, apelike chemist shouldered into the room. The draught from the door fanned the fire. Their clothes smoked.

But they took the windows. They smashed them with their big fists. Sashes and glass disintegrated. Renny and Monk were holding their breaths. So were Ham and Long Tom. The latter two were freeing Doc.

Within forty seconds after the door had been smashed by the great fists of Renny, Doc and the others were clumping down the stairs. Above them, the top of the loft building was an inferno. A dense cloud of flame and smoke rolled out over the river.

Fire apparatus was wailing into the street. Doc led the way from a side door. So far as outside information was concerned, he desired it to be believed he had perished in the burning loft.

AGAIN it was night.

Doc Savage was directing the stowing away of a strange contrivance aboard the speediest of his tri-motored planes. The plane was fueled for four thousand miles. Not that it carried an

extraordinary amount of gas and oil. The new motors, more modern than any other in the world, consumed a minimum of fuel.

Doc's companions saw a new machine had been placed aboard. The machine was in the form of an immense snubnosed cylinder. Part of its construction must have been a new combination of the vitreous elements of glass. Coils of pipes and a few tanks could be seen plainly through the outer shell.

This machine had just been delivered from the electro-chemical machine plant. It had been constructed within twelve hours.

Doc had inquired what had brought his companions to the burning loft building.

"A woman called us," had been Renny's reply. "The phone was ringing at the hangar when we arrived. The woman said to be on the top floor of that loft building at six o'clock, just at sunset. We made it just in time."

All of the signs at the now burned loft building indicated Doc had been conveyed there by several men. A woman, and Doc believed a red-headed woman, had been in command of the crowd that had taken him prisoner.

Was there still another woman involved?

The man of bronze had arrived at one definite conclusion. Already several foreign countries were in the market for the power that had paralyzed New York, haunted the ocean. And most nations find women, pretty women, valuable for this class of intrigue.

The big plane was ready to taxi from the hangar onto the wide Hudson River for its take-off. Doc Savage made a telephone connection with Washington.

FROM the White House came new and startling news.

The crew of a rescued lifeboat from the missing Trafalgar Square had talked.

"Men in the boat say they were hauled at tremendous speed by some invisible force," Doc Savage was informed.

"That might account for their being in the vicinity of the Lofoten Islands," stated Doc. "The boats were picked up not far from Moskenes Island, near Salten Fjord."

"How did you know that?" came the amazed voice from the White House.

"Mere surmise," stated Doc. "You have no word of the war commission, but you probably have received a new message."

"Yes. Another relayed radio. I'll read it: 'The United States must disarm. So must all other nations. You have five days to decide. The navy must be laid up. The army must be disbanded. All armament must be destroyed. The same order applies to all nations of the world. Peace will be applied at any price.'"

"Sounds as if the sender knew definitely what can be done," stated Doc.

"Yes," said the White House. "If we only had Arne Dass here to advise us. He knew a great deal about atomic energy he never revealed."

"Perhaps we may find Arne Dass," said Doc.

He gave no reason for his belief.

As the conversation ended, Monk was dragging Habeas Corpus aboard the plane. The Arabian pig already was shivering. He had seen the queer suit of fur Monk had provided for him.

"We leave at once for the Lofoten Islands off the coast of Norway," Doc announced. "Perhaps we shall soon have a trace of the war commission and Johnny."

On the open sea, far in the north, at least one man in a lifeboat would have been gratified to know Doc Savage's plan. At the time the bronze man's speedy plane took off from the Hudson River, the position of Johnny and those with him was hardly enviable.

Chapter X. THE MIDNIGHT SUN

EIGHT men occupied the open lifeboat. Two were in the uniform of sailors. The other six wore plain business attire. Luckily they had heavy-collared overcoats. These they had with them for the chilly crossing of the stormy English Channel.

None of the six had suspected what extremes of cold these same coats would be called upon to resist.

The faces of the six men indicated they were uncomfortable, and completely mystified.

The lifeboat was now speeding through the calm, green water of an inner channel under towering ice cliffs. At first glance, it would have appeared the lifeboat was moving by black magic. No propeller swirled at its stern. Its bow cut the water on a rising crest.

One of the men was a skeletonlike figure. He shook in his big coat as if his long, skinny body would fall apart. He had the fine, intelligent face of a scholar.

He was the fifth man of Doc Savage's highly trained group, William Harper Littlejohn. Once he had occupied a chair of applied science in a leading university of America. But since he had shared the adventures of the great bronze giant, he had come to be known simply as "Johnny."

Now Johnny said, "In no other locale has there ever been such opalescent radiation, even in the summer. At that time, the continuous solar suspension above the horizon produces streams of light from all parts of the periphery which diffuses vertically over the hemisphere."

"Jolly well put, Mr. Littlejohn!" replied a ruddy-faced man with a drooping gray mustache. "If I were not feeling so fearfully peckish, I might appreciate the thought. By jove, it will go tough with these blighters when His Majesty's navy arrives!"

The man was Sir Arthur Westcott, British member of the abducted war commission. He had not the slightest idea what Johnny had been talking about. But he had everlasting faith in the British navy. Johnny seldom used a short word when he could find a longer one. Just now, he had been speaking of the effect of the Midnight Sun. In the summer season, the sun never dropped below the horizon. At this season it did not rise above the rim.

Yet, where there should have been darkness, relieved only by the northern lights, the big lifeboat was speeding through daylight of a strange white quality.

JOHNNY spoke in simple English the others could understand.

"If only we had some way of getting in touch with Doc Savage," he said, thoughtfully. "But we had no warning. No time. And now we've got no radio. We are in a dead world, except for that mysterious monster with the horns. But Doc Savage would know what to do."

"You seem to have a lot of confidence in this person Doc Savage, old fellow," said Sir Arthur, pulling at his long mustache. "I would prefer to rely upon His Majesty's navy. After all, old chap, the British navy goes everywhere."

"I'm inclined to believe Doc Savage has been places even the British navy never will see," smiled Johnny.

He thoroughly respected His Majesty's sea force. But Johnny had his doubts about British warships chasing a mechanical undersea monster into the treacherous channels and fjords inside the Lofoten Islands.

Johnny's other companions were Baron Calosa, of Italy; Monsieur Lamont, of France; Herr Schumann, of Germany, and Señor Torron, of Spain.

None had evolved any theory which might have explained the four mysterious prongs drawing their boat closer to the icy polar region. The prongs might indeed have been the horns of some underwater monster.

The eerie daylight bathed the blue, icy water. The intense radiation obscured the customary northern lights, the aurora borealis.

Perhaps a hundred yards ahead of the big lifeboat projected the four prongs. These cut through the calm sea. No turmoil of whirling propellers was apparent.

From the bow of the lifeboat extended a slender steel cable. This drew the boat along at great speed. All instruments with which this cable might have been cut had been removed. The lifeboat bore the name, "S. S. TRAFALGAR SQUARE, DOVER, ENG." The steel cable ran down into the sea.

"I'd jolly well like to know if the blighters down there can see us through those queer eyes?" complained Sir Arthur.

The four prongs traveled a few feet apart in a straight line. The eyes were like great mirrors. They reflected the strange daylight with dazzling radiation. This sometimes nearly blinded the eight men in the lifeboat.

GREAT, glittering bergs of ice came floating over the horizon from the north. This horizon now appeared to be defined by a definite circle of the daylight.

"If we only could guess what all this means," added Johnny. "Here we are a war commission bent on ending war. We are bundled out of our berths in the middle of the night. We don't see the men with the guns, but evidently they forced every one to leave the Trafalgar Square. Do you suppose the other lifeboats have been brought up here?"

None of the others had any answer to this.

Undoubtedly, the projecting prongs were attached to some new and incredible undersea craft. Yet it never had descended far enough to submerge the rearing prongs. Johnny was shrewd enough to deduce that these horns and the mirrorlike eyes had something to do with the motion of the craft.

If there were motors of tremendous power, then why was the progress of the submarine so noiseless?

Again Sir Arthur Westcott affirmed his faith in the British navy.

"They'll jolly well have a hundred boats searching for us," he declared. "They'll find us if they have to send out the whole British navy!"

Doubtless the whole British navy would have been turned out if necessary to rescue the war commission. But just now His Majesty's sailors were having a puzzle all their own in the North Sea. Daylight had struck at an unearthly hour. In all of a vast area, every vessel from fishing trawlers to patrol destroyers had become powerless. On all of the wide expanse through which the strangely abducted commission had moved, not another boat was capable of motion.

Chapter XI. WHEN GUNS FAILED

HIS MAJESTY'S farthest north submarine was in the vicinity of the Lofoten Islands. Its presence was by the chance of having been sent to investigate the drift of ice along the Norwegian coast. The influence of the Gulf Stream to some extent kept this shore clear of solid freezing.

The commander of the submarine had been exploring the hundred-mile shelf of the ocean along the northern Norway coast. This shelf, having a depth of five hundred to six hundred feet, extended for some hundred miles from the mountainous shore.

The submarine had been cruising on the surface during the night. The craft's radio had picked up the broadcast of the apparent disaster overtaking the Trafalgar Square in the English Channel. The commander made note of this.

The Channel crossing between Dover and Calais was too distant to cause concern to a submarine crew in the vicinity of the Lofoten Islands.

But now, when there should be only the dark sea above, the surface had taken on the glowing aspect of daylight. The commander ordered the submerging tanks pumped out. His Majesty's submarine nosed slowly upward.

The commander himself was at the periscope glass. The slender tube poked above the calm water.

"Well, by jove!" he exclaimed. "I'm seeing things! That could not possibly be a lifeboat sailing along like that under its own steam! Crickety! Have a look, lieutenant! It's a boat from the steamer Trafalgar Square!"

"You're jolly well right, sir!" exclaimed the lieutenant. Then he muttered darkly, "But I do not believe in sea serpents, and if those are not the horns of some monsters, I'm crazy!"

The commander rapped out a hurried order. The submarine tanks hissed. The undersea craft was coming up.

"MAYBE you're right, after all, Sir Arthur," said Johnny. "His Majesty's navy does seem to get around."

He was forced to speak loudly because of the whistling wind. Sir Arthur exclaimed jubilantly and tugged at his mustache. The periscope of the submarine had come into view.

The submarine was moving at good speed.

"Britannia still rules the waves, old chap!" said Sir Arthur.

The towing prongs with their flashing mirrors had suddenly lessened their speed. The moving periscope was possibly less than one hundred yards away. The submarine did not seem to have had its power affected as had surface craft.

Johnny and those in the lifeboat had no means of knowing of the suspension of power. If they had, they would not have been so confident that help had arrived.

Those operating the craft of the four mysterious prongs apparently had known of the submarine's approach. The speed of the prongs lessened to about the same movements as the British boat.

"Good grief!" exploded Johnny. "You don't suppose our friends are planning to fight?"

"The blighters will be handled expeditiously," assured Sir Arthur. "They are under His Majesty's guns."

The submarine was taking the surface. It headed directly for the lifeboat. The long black hull was only a hundred yards or so away when it broke the water. The conning tower thrust its round shape into view. The submarine reversed its engines. The propellers sucked in tons of water. Machinery clanked. The hatch of the conning tower was opening. Gilt-braided officers came onto the iron-back deck.

Again the mirrored prongs moved more rapidly. They started pulling the lifeboat away from the submarine.

"Heave to, in the name of His Majesty!" bellowed a British voice from the submarine.

THE prongs started in a tantalizing circle of the British sub.

Another sharp order was barked. It gained no attention.

Then a rapid-firing deck gun swung from the conning tower. The submarine still was moving slowly. Its motors had not yet felt the effect of the mysterious power which seemed to accompany the eerie daylight.

The sub's deck gun barked viciously. The shot skipped across the green water. Whether by accident or intention, the shell clipped squarely into one of the moving prongs. The horn snapped off. Its mirror reflector vanished into the sea.

Instantly, the other three prongs moved faster.

Johnny had no long words now.

"My gosh!" he exploded. "They shoot off its horns, and still it doesn't stop! Look! What's happened?"

There was apparent consternation aboard the British sub. The officers were waving their arms. Voices shouted. The submarine had ceased to move. Its engines had been suddenly paralyzed.

"I wonder about that!" muttered Johnny. "That sub seemed all right until it came up. Remember, the engines of the Trafalgar Square were stopped suddenly, just before they grabbed us?"

The submarine commander was barking more orders. Apparently, he had the thought to close the hatch of the conning tower. But the motor operating the machinery was also dead.

"And that apparently washes up your British navy," declared Johnny. "Now what?"

From under the submarine emerged a slender, fishlike shape. It was a long, deadly torpedo. The quick-witted commander had ordered the explosive in an effort to halt the strange prongs.

The torpedo had been shot from its compartment deep under the water. Its own motive power sent it streaking across between the lifeboat and the mirrored prongs.

"Get set!" yelled Johnny. "We're all due for a cold bath! When that thing hits, we'll have to jump!"

The torpedo was perhaps halfway from the sub to the three moving prongs. Johnny wondered if it were traveling at a depth sufficient to strike the mystery craft. Then he ceased to wonder. The torpedo seemed to expire like a fish suddenly harpooned. It floated to the surface without forward motion. It became very much of a dud. The strange power of this daylight in The Land of the Midnight Sun had killed the torpedo motor.

THERE was no explosion. An effort to release another torpedo from the British sub failed. Orders were barked. From the waving of arms, it was indicated the commander wished to submerge immediately. Perhaps he imagined his disabled engines could work underwater.

But there was no clanking of machinery. The conning tower hatch remained open. The British sub floated as helplessly as the dead torpedo.

The three pronged mirrors were speeding up. The lifeboat resumed its northern course at a fast pace.

And the war commission of six great nations was again on its way to an undetermined destination. "Anyway," declared Johnny, "I'm now sure of one thing. This whole incredible happening has been too big for Doc Savage to miss. We'll be hearing from him."

Johnny was partly correct. Doc Savage's plane was not far away. But it would be some time before this would be of any help to Johnny and his companions.

Chapter XII. NEW SKY POWER

DOC SAVAGE'S plane motors were probably the most noiseless of any in the world skies. The big cabin ship was being held at an altitude of only a thousand feet above the shifting surface of the North Sea.

Though it was night, Doc Savage was scanning the ocean intently. Every wave crest and every floating object was clearly revealed. Yet no visible light projected from the plane toward the dark water.

Doc was wearing a pair of oversize goggles with complex lenses. From under the plane shot an invisible beam, which spread over a wide area. In the radius of this beam everything became outlined in stark black and white, much like a motion picture.

The beam was an infra-red ray. The goggles worn by Doc and his four companions made the beam serve as a great light.

"We're on another blind spot," announced Long Tom from the radio, which he was handling. "And, Doc, this location doesn't seem to check with the position we fixed back in New York. Anyway, the dead area seems to be in motion."

The radio reception was highly static. Yet it picked up stuttering reports.

From Washington came, "Still no word has been received of the missing war commission."

From London more exciting news was being broadcast.

"Warning to all ships—strange disturbance in North Sea—many boats disabled—queer light has appeared—"

Then came an extra flash.

One of His Majesty's submarines was unreported in the Far North, in the vicinity of the Lofoten Islands.

"Doc," exclaimed Monk, "isn't that where we're headed?"

"That would seem to be our immediate destination," stated Doc. "The other report is not surprising. Our radio blind spot is in that vicinity."

"This daylight thing they're reporting, Doc?" questioned Ham. "After what happened to us in Maryland, suppose the same thing smashes us down away up here? Then what do we do?"

Doc merely smiled and said nothing.

"Ham, you're gettin' to be as big a calamity howler as Monk!" grumbled Renny.

Doc's companions had been intensely curious concerning the immense glass-like cylinder aboard the plane. But Doc had explained nothing of its purpose.

Suddenly Doc sighted a drifting ship. It showed like a silent, ghostly silhouette in the infra-red beam.

"We have reached the Trafalgar Square," Doc announced. "The steamer has been wrecked on the rocks."

THE abandoned Trafalgar Square was solidly wedged in the rocks of the forbidding coast. Its bow plates had been crumpled.

Doc brought the plane to a smooth landing close to the ship. It became necessary to use one of the rubber pontoon boats to reach the vessel. Monk was dragging the pig along.

When they reached the high side of the ghostly steamer on the rocks, Habeas Corpus stiffened. He resisted Monk's effort to drag him aboard.

"Dag-gone it, Doc!" exclaimed Monk. "I don't like this! That pig knows something's screwy about all this!"

Doc was carrying a square, black box with a lense that looked like black glass. This was a fluoroscope. The man of bronze walked along the tilted side deck of the Trafalgar Square. He passed the lense of the box along various stateroom windows.

Suddenly there was a curious blue glowing on one window pane. Words leaped into view.

"I hoped Johnny might find time to leave some message," said Doc.

But the words furnished little information:

Doc, if you see this, the war commission is being taken into a lifeboat by armed men—our engines stopped—all of the crew and passengers are taking to the boats—

This was all. The message had been written with a chalky substance that fluoresced under the ultra-violet ray, sometimes called "black light."

Doc led the way to the big engine room. There was no sign of life about the passenger steamer. Nor was there evidence of violence.

DOC wasted no further time aboard the Trafalgar Square. The passenger steamer was doomed to break up on the rocks with the first storm.

The tri-motored plane headed again into the north. Almost immediately, the radio sputtered and ceased functioning. The stark, rocky headed coast of Norway was picked up. Doc Savage set the controls immediately to gain altitude.

"It's the same thing, Doc!" exclaimed Ham. "Only this time it's coming out of the north! This isn't such a hot spot to be forced down!"

"Into all of your heaviest stuff," instructed Doc. "We are approaching what I had feared. See that you have all of our equipment. We have many other things already aboard."

These final words were somewhat of a mystery.

But the swiftly increasing dawn in the north was no mystery to Ham and Monk. It was the same white daylight they had witnessed off the Maryland coast. Only the plane was headed directly into the area, and this dawn seemed to be arriving more swiftly.

The motors labored in the higher altitude. Doc opened a switch. There was a slight hissing from the sides of the cabin. The ventilators had been tightly closed. Oxygen was now filling the cabin. It was necessary at this great height.

Then from the night around the plane came the steady humming of power. Motors droned in the sky. It was as if unknown ships of the stratosphere were thundering down to intercept their own plane.

"Planes!" boomed Renny. "An' listen to them motors! Boy! They sound like thunder itself!"

"There are only three planes," Doc announced. "They are tri-motored like our own plane, but they have a different sound from any I have ever heard."

Apparently the pilots of the three mysterious planes at this unusual altitude had no intention of intercepting Doc Savage's ship. Or perhaps they had missed it altogether in the darkness.

Slowly, the thunder of the strange motors died away.

"Well," breathed Long Tom, "I guess we're out of that one, all right! Now I wonder—"

THE electrician did not complete his question.

With the suddenness of a bursting Very flare, daylight struck the sky. It was an enveloping whiteness that gathered the tri-motored plane into its band of illumination.

The big trio of motors were instantly silenced. Possibly six miles above the earth, Doc Savage's plane had lost all power.

"Be prepared to leave quickly, when we land," advised Doc, as calmly as if they were about to alight from some automobile on land. "Have everything ready. We may have little time."

That mysterious northern light was not the aurora borealis. Yet it illuminated all of the bleak, hard coast in infinite detail. Back from the inlet of the ocean stretched the great plateau of Norway.

Closer to the ocean, wide glaciers moved inexorably down upon the scores of fjords to be seen from this great height. Some of these sea channels extended for many miles inland.

This land now was intensely cold. The insulated walls of the big plane excluded the chill. But the temperature ranged far below the zero mark. The wisdom of Doc Savage in ordering Arctic outfits was proved.

"Habeas Corpus won't like this," complained Monk. "I oughta got him some blinkers. He'll get snow blindness."

"And if he gets some kind of permanent blindness, it will be perfectly all right with me," retorted Ham, ironically.

Doc Savage was gliding as slowly as possibly with the weighted plane.

"Look, comrades!" he directed. "Those blue shadows over there are the Lofoten Islands. One of those is Moskenes Island. That is what Hjalmar Landson spoke of just before he died."

BETWEEN the blue shadows and the mainland was an expanse of smooth, green water. At different points, three dark blots seemed to be motionless.

Doc's keen eyes saw more than those of his companions.

"Fishing boats and they are powerless," he said. "Two of the crews have rigged up crude sails. They are making for shore and there must be a village."

Between two ice walls near a fjord appeared a dark spot. Smoke eddied upward.

"Perhaps we are in luck," stated Doc. "Anyway, that is a Norwegian or Laplander fishing village. These folk are usually friendly."

"Holy cow!" boomed Renny. "I hope they're friendly! This would be a tough spot to be on our own!" They were to discover these simple fishermen were not friendly. The welcome signs had been taken off this particular village.

Chapter XIII. THE FACE OF A WOMAN

PERHAPS there were other fliers who could have made that landing on the icy sea. But few indeed could have set the loaded plane on that green surface without either dragging off the tail assembly or nosing over.

Doc Savage slid the pontoons onto the surface as if they were greased. The plane settled deeply, but remained upright.

Against the strange daylight, the mountains of the coast bulked like huge, blue cathedrals.

Glaciers filled the valleys.

As the plane settled, Doc's men poured out onto the wings.

"It won't be much of a job to get ashore here in the rubber boats," commented Long Tom. "We can make several trips and take off what supplies we may need."

Doc Savage stood outlined against the fuselage. He was looking into the north. Up there, the area of daylight seemed to be banked solidly against a black curtain. For a few seconds the other four men heard the bronze man's weird trilling note.

Habeas Corpus was standing on the wing of the plane. His body had become rigid. His long nose pointed northward.

"Dag-gone it!" advised Monk. "The pig smells something!"

"I might suggest you move away from him," grated Ham. Clearly the pig was scared. Then Doc turned quickly.

"I've been afraid of that all the time," he remarked. "This haunted ocean has two-way power. Force to disable and another force to supply motor energy."

The bronze man's meaning became all too apparent.

Out of that black curtain to the northward flashed three objects. From specks, they speedily took on the shape of speeding planes.

And they approached with flashing speed. They must have been hitting three hundred miles an hour. For they were directly above the plane floating on the sea almost before Doc's men had started to move.

"It would be just as well to stay outside until they pass over," advised Doc. "The results would be the same."

HIS judgment was quickly proved. The three planes were flying low. They passed over at a height of barely one hundred feet.

"Holy cow!" grunted Renny. "Doc, did you notice? All you can hear is the wind of their props! Their motors aren't makin' any noise at all!"

"That made itself quite evident," stated Doc. "But when they passed us in the night up above, their motors were noisy enough. I would suggest they are not now flying with the same motors."

Monk was dancing around on the wing. His short legs and long arms made him look surprisingly like an excited chimpanzee.

"It was her, Doc! That red-headed dame!" Monk was shouting. "An' I thought maybe she was O.K.! But she's in one of them planes! I saw her face an' her red hair!"

"He's right," drawled Long Tom. "And that fellow Kama was in the same plane. They were looking down. Doc, we've been trailed all the way across the Atlantic."

"So I surmised," said Doc, calmly. "Yes, it was red-headed Lora Krants and that fellow who says he came from San Tao. Now get inside. They'll be coming back."

Only the two faces had been observed in the flashing planes. It could only be guessed who the other occupants of the ships might be.

The three planes vanished quickly to the southward. But they were not absent long.

Doc and his men were back inside the cabin. The man of bronze pulled levers at the end of the big glasslike cylinder. A tight-fitting cover slid smoothly open. Inside there was only room for a few persons.

"We'll wait for a moment," advised Doc. "But be prepared to get in quickly. We are about to be attacked."

Almost immediately, the three planes again whispered in the sky. They were flying back over their course. This time they had lifted a few hundred feet. Long Tom and Renny already were squeezing into the close spaces inside the glasslike cylinder.

"But what is the thing, Doc?" said Ham. "You don't mean--That won't go under the water, will it?"

"That is the purpose for which it was designed," stated Doc, calmly. "It may accomplish more than just going under the water."

The three planes again passed over.

"I noticed something funny, Doc," said Ham. "Those planes didn't have any shadows when they passed the first time."

"Without direct light from above, shadows could not be expected," stated Doc.

Ham shivered, then said quickly, "One of 'em's banking, Doc. It's coming back!"

ONE of the swift planes of mysterious power had separated from the others. Directly over the floating Doc Savage ship, it tipped its wings in a descending spiral.

Doc and his men did not see the shining object flash toward the water. By sheer luck, the aim of the pilot was poor.

The object struck more than fifty yards from Doc's plane. The erupting explosion geysered tons of water. A huge wave threatened to wreck the pontoons.

"Inside, all of you!" ordered Doc. "He will probably have his distance better gauged the next time."

The glasslike cylinder provided just enough room for the five men and little more. They were surrounded by a variety of metallic tanks.

"Holy cow!" growled Renny. "It's going to be plenty dark!"

Doc said nothing. He ran his hand along a panel. This uncovered long tubes. The tubes suddenly glowed with a weird blue light. The emanation was phosphorescent in character. It provided illumination.

Doc did not say what chemicals had been employed. It was apparent the lighting system did not depend on electrical current.

The entrance lid of the big cylinder slid into place. Doc turned some knobs and a slow hissing came from some of the tanks. Oxygen was being slowly released.

"Now if we only had some power, we'd be going places," said Ham. "I suppose our next stop will be the bottom. And the shelf along this coast, they say, is nearly six hundred feet deep!"

The faith of Doc's companions assured them that the contrivance they now occupied probably had been provided with everything. Everything, but power, they imagined.

Habeas Corpus grunted. His long nose poked into Ham's neck. Ham made a move as to withdraw his sword cane.

"You get that crossed-up quadruped out of my neck," he yelled, "or I'm slicing off one of his ears!"

Monk only grinned and grunted. The floor of the cabin sagged and tilted. One of the pontoons had been cracked by the exploding bomb. The three planes still whispered above them.

"Probably the next one will be better directed," stated Doc. "I think it is time we are leaving."

There was a grinding noise. The floor of the cabin seemed to dissolve under the big cylinder. It dropped by its own weight into the green water. Hardly had it submerged under the floating plane before concussion threatened to cave in its glasslike sides.

The second bomb above had made a direct hit. Doc Savage's ship had been destroyed with a blast that scattered its parts. No person could then have been in the cabin and remained alive.

IN one of the planes overhead, a man's voice spoke.

"The great Doc Savage is finished!" he said, venomously. "His knowledge was the only thing in the world we had to fear. If he had been given time, he would have got to the bottom of the mystery."

"Dot iss goot!" spoke a voice with a broad accent. "Ven do ve haff der price to puy?"

"Perhaps the sale still rests on the figures of the highest bidder," said the other voice. "No nation has a treasury too big to risk all of it for this power. A few men alone could control the world."

"Dot is vot makes der vun man to slit anoder man's throat," suggested the other voice.

"Yes, and the throat-slitting will be well taken care of," said the first man. "Any nation will buy. Which one, will be for me to decide. We no longer have Doc Savage to fear."

The three mystery planes streamed again into single line. In one of these planes sat Lora Krants, the red-headed young woman. She was staring at the green sea as they passed over where Doc Savage's plane had rested.

Nothing of the metal ship still floated. But all about was a multi-colored, rainbow spread of oil.

"He is gone," the girl whispered.

"Yes, that's the end of Doc Savage," said the dark-browed young man beside her.

A yellow-skinned man showed his flashing teeth.

"Those who tamper with the will of the infinite invite their own destruction," he remarked, cheerfully.

Apparently, the man called Kama was not grievously affected by the evidence of Doc Savage's swift and gruesome death.

THOUGH crowded into the compact space of the cylinder, Doc's crew was comfortable. For several minutes, the cylinder remained suspended like a toy balloon floating in air. The last bit of the wrecked plane had slowly sifted toward the bottom of the sea.

Now the cylinder started sinking again. It reached a depth where the pressure must have been terrific. But the material of which the strange diving affair was constructed was capable of resisting.

"This feels like being in a coffin," complained Renny. "Doc, this makes some hide-out, but it seems to be a little too good."

Doc Savage smiled and said nothing. His bronze hands were busy.

"It is advisable to wait a little while," stated Doc. "We are in conflict with more than one clever brain. Many nations are in the market for this white light of the haunted ocean. It is a power that would make the smallest of countries absolute."

The man of bronze was waiting until he was convinced the men in the three planes could not possibly suspect his men and himself had survived.

Now Doc moved a small lever. To his companions' amazement, the cylinder was instantly filled with the throb of power. A small control steered the craft. Close to the murky bottom of the ice-cold sea, the cylinder moved like a great fish seeking for food.

"Holy cow!" exploded Renny. "What a submarine! Now maybe we can go places! Have you discovered the power that kept those planes in the air, Doc?"

The bronze man shook his head.

"Perhaps we shall find that out later," he said. "For the present, we are moving by the release of compressed air."

Chapter XIV. A HOT RECEPTION

HABEAS CORPUS didn't like his close quarters. Even in the face of deadly danger, Ham had discovered a means of annoying Monk. When the fur-clad pig squeezed too close to Ham, the lawyer jabbed the point of his signet-ring knife into the animal's tough hide.

The pig grunted. Monk swore at Ham. The fur on the pig was not intended for inside wear. The Arabian misfit became most malodorous.

The cylinder might have been moving toward the shore.

"If we have to break out of this thing down here, we'll be pulverized," said Ham. "It isn't big enough to have submerging tanks, so we can't expel any water to rise to the surface."

This was somewhat of a grisly thought to the others. The oxygen in the tanks could not last forever. The time during which they could breathe was now being reduced to minutes.

Doc Savage made no reply. From flat alloy containers, he was pouring three powdered chemicals into an odd-shaped retort. A tube extended from this vessel into the side of the cylinder.

The cylinder had been constructed with a double wall. Between the skins was considerable space. This space had been made a vacuum.

The envelope of the cylinder was filling. The contrivance was being given buoyancy. The cylinder started toward the surface.

"Holy cow!" exclaimed Renny. "Now we're all set! That gang run by the red-headed dame believes we're dead! Doc, we can land at that fishing village! It won't be any trick at all to find out about this haunted ocean stuff!"

DOC SAVAGE was watching a small compass. The rocks of the shore loomed under water like a black wall. The man of bronze set a course along these rocks. Soon the cylinder was nosing into a fjord.

"Your idea is not bad, Renny," said Doc. "But I have a feeling our appearance may prove somewhat of a shock to these fishermen. That will be especially true if they are Laplanders."

A sandy spit projected between two bulking rocks. At its end was a small wharf. The glass cylinder was only a few yards under the surface. A queer figure stood at the end of the little wharf. His garb was that of some shaggy animal. The skins had been sun-cured with the fur on. The man's face was furrowed by weather and sun. Beady, black eyes were peering down into the water. The man emitted a yell. He shouted two words. Then he caught up a long-handled walrus harpoon and hurled it downward.

The words were in the Laplander tongue. "Sea devil!"

The point of the harpoon bumped the cylinder. Doc and the others saw the weapon flash downward.

"You said they were a very primitive people, Doc," remarked Ham. "I have a feeling our arrival is inauspicious."

"More than possibly there will be some misunderstanding," said Doc Savage. "Have your weapons ready, but don't use them unless compelled to do so."

Monk, Long Tom and Renny were armed with their super-firing pistols. These weapons had huge drums loaded with mercy bullets. Doc Savage and his men did not kill unless it was absolutely unavoidable. The bullets in these queer guns would render men unconscious.

The cylinder's nose was pushed into the frozen sand. Doc snapped open the door. He was the first to slide out. Before the others could emerge, the air was filled with angry, frightened shouting. Doc Savage understood the tongue of the Northland. So did Ham. From a score of places in the

rocks came the booming of guns. Harpoons and spears hurtled toward them. Lesser crackling explosions were the more dangerous.

The booming weapons were old-fashioned, muzzle-loading guns of the type used for shooting birds with small shot. The others were rifles.

The shouts were repeated.

"Kill the devils of the sea!" they meant. "Kill the devils of the sea! They make dead men float!" This last was a remarkably queer statement.

Doc and Ham slid to the temporary cover of a big rock. Renny, Monk and Long Tom found another rock. The pig, Habeas Corpus, had been plastered with fine shot. He let out an unearthly squeal. Perhaps a hundred fur-clad figures showed among the rocks of the shore. Behind them was a circle of huts, made of skins stretched on poles. Thick, greasy smoke poured from vents in the top of these.

Shooting stopped for a few seconds. One strange figure in skins was pointing at Habeas Corpus. His words were, "Spawn of the sea devil! Kill! Kill!"

It looked bad for Habeas Corpus. The pig stood shivering. The heavy half of a harpoon struck the apelike Monk across the forehead. He fell down and rolled into cover. For a minute, the chemist was stunned.

There seemed no hope for the trembling hog. The pig's big ears waved.

"That miserable pig's my own personal meat! I've been saving him!" asserted Ham, suddenly. Two squat Laplanders were rushing upon Habeas Corpus. They held long harpoons. The slender figure of Ham moved with incredible speed. There was a whirling gleam of steel.

"You come asking for it!" yelled Ham.

The Laplanders turned their harpoons upon him. The fighting lawyer was between the weapons. His sword moved too fast to be followed. Its needlelike point flicked through the fur of one man. A harpoon struck the rocks.

The Laplander only grunted once. Then he apparently went to sleep. The other harpoon struck sidewise and knocked Ham to his knees. His sword point jabbed the fur-clad wrist of the wielder. This Laplander, too, dropped on his face.

With an expression of utter loathing on his ascetic face, Ham grabbed one of the pig's long ears. Shot whistled around him as he dragged the hog to safety.

Though some of the villagers looked grotesquely small, others were of giant size. In their skin clothes, they looked like the real Vikings of a past century.

Doc arose and began speaking in their own language.

Chapter XV. HOODOO OF THE SEA

"WE come in peace," stated Doc Savage. "You have had some trouble. For that, you have united." The man of bronze had quickly analyzed an unusual situation. Some of the men of this queer village were the dark, squat Lapps. Others were the huskier, blond Norwegians.

Only some common danger could have drawn them together. They were of different speech, habits, dress and thought. Even now, a commanding figure was stepping into view.

Doc had spoken in the Norwegian language.

"Vaer god! Vaer god!"

the commanding figure shouted to the Lapps and his own fellow Norwegians.

The words meant simply, "Be good!" This tall leader was open to argument. The Lapps were the more numerous. They did not heed.

"Na! Na! Na!"

some shouted.

Another rain of harpoons showered from among the rocks. Guns exploded. Some poorly aimed shot blasted the face of the Norwegian leader. Blood flowed from his torn cheek.

Perhaps others imagined the wound had been inflicted by Doc's men. A strange, small figure appeared on a rock. He was as small as a half-grown boy. But white locks of matted hair framed his diminutive, wrinkled face.

Doc Savage instantly identified him as a jarl, one of the sub-chiefs of the coastal clan.

"Na! Na! Na!"

this old man shrilled, joining the angry Lapps.

Again were uttered the words meaning "sea devils."

The man of bronze was forced to drop behind a rock. Plainly the fishermen had been terrorized. Lapps and Norwegians jabbered. Their eyes were fixed in fear upon the glasslike cylinder.

Doc Savage knew the many legends of the Edda. Norwegian fishermen were a superstitious lot. The Lapps perhaps were worse. They believed in huldrefok, evil fairies of the fjords.

Recalling these legends, Doc Savage realized the fishermen would not feel safe unless they exterminated these men they believed to be sea devils.

Doc spoke to his companions in ancient Mayan.

"Do not kill any of these people under any circumstances," said the bronze man. "They are harmless, but greatly frightened."

"Howlin' calamities!" yelped Monk. "We won't last long unless we do something!"

Steel-headed harpoons clanged on the rocks. Shotguns continued blasting.

AGAIN the bronze man spoke quickly in Mayan. Then he sprang from behind the rock. With a striding glide, he was close to the nearest group of fishermen.

From his garments, Doc flipped four of the usually effective anaesthetic capsules. The fragile glass tinkled on the rocks. The nearest Lapps subsided in grotesque heaps of furs.

But the winter air was clear and cold. A chill wind swept by. Lapps and Norwegians rushed upon the bronze man. The gas capsules were not effective over enough area.

For several seconds, the Lapps armed with harpoons must have imagined they had been struck by a cyclone. Doc narrowly escaped being impaled. But his bronzed fists were moving too fast for the eye to follow.

Fishermen armed with harpoons tumbled and groaned.

The point of a harpoon caught Doc's right arm. That whirled him from his feet. Half a dozen weapons were aimed at his body. He was for the moment helpless to ward these off.

"Holy cow!" thundered Renny. "Let 'em have it!"

There arose a deep humming like giant bullfiddles. The superfirers streamed mercy bullets from the hands of Renny, Monk and Long Tom.

Fishermen were piled in a heap around Doc Savage. Doc's men rushed out. Warm liquid gushed from Doc's wounded arm and dripped from his fingers.

There were too many fishermen scattered about to be reached by the mercy bullets. Doc and his men were in one of the tightest spots of their career.

The half of a heavy harpoon cracked Renny's skull. The big engineer grunted and fell down. Ham's sword was broken in his hand by the blast of a shotgun.

Then Doc's men were given respite from an unexpected source.

The uncanny daylight winked out. The eerie illumination was shut off as abruptly as if some one had pulled a switch. There was no lingering twilight. Only the shadowy fingers of the aurora borealis beyond the mountain.

Comparatively, the darkness was intense. The fishermen fled into the rocks. They seemed to fear the shutting off of the inexplicable daylight.

RENNY was reviving. Doc ordered the others again into shelter. For several minutes, there was a lull in the attack.

Oil torches flared. What appeared to be a big pot of blazing whale blubber suddenly rolled into the open space. Against this smoky glare the fishermen were crouching shadows, waiting.

"We must undertake a bold move," stated Doc. "All will walk into the open and throw down your weapons. We must end this misunderstanding or we will be killed by some of the very people we must free."

The surprise of Doc's strategy must have awed the fishermen for the moment.

Renny and the others walked boldly into the glare of the whale oil pot. They threw their superfiring pistols with their drums of bullets in a heap. Ham contributed the hilt of his broken sword.

Doc Savage himself was not armed with any gun. He believed men who went armed came to rely too much upon mechanical force and not enough on their own wits and strength.

Doc walked out with the others. His hands were raised.

"Now shelter yourselves," he admonished the others. The figure of the shriveled, ancient Jarl was outlined by a torch. For several seconds, the surprised sub-chief did not speak. Doc Savage was striding straight toward the jarl and the largest group of fishermen.

Then the jarl shrilled out a command.

The bronze giant understood the words. They were an order to kill. Doc kept his hands uplifted. From the rocks guns started snarling. Some were rifles that cracked viciously. Lead shot and bullets hailed into the space.

Doc Savage held his head in a bowed position to protect his face. Lead pounded onto his bared bronze head. Bullets whammed into his magnificent torso.

But the bronze man's pace was unaltered. He must have seemed to the simple, superstitious fishermen like a real devil, or a god of the sea. He was impervious to their bullets.

Doc's body was sheathed in bullet-proof garments of finest chain mesh. This extended to his knees under his other clothing.

The bronze hair in view was on the outside of a skullcap of thin, but impenetrable metal alloy.

The leaden bullets and fine shot flattened on this surface.

It was terrifying. This immense bronze giant walking toward them. One charge of shot blasted from an old-fashioned gun. All of it splattered squarely into Doc's breast. Yet he neither faltered nor staggered.

This was a little too much for the nerves of the Lapps. They began squawking. It sounded like, "Wha! Wha! Wha!"

Doc knew this signified one of their spirits of the Skager-Rack. The Skager-Rack was the devilish turmoil of tides between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. Because this claimed so many victims, the

Lapps had peopled it with their own conception of a devil.

The fishermen were throwing down their weapons. The ancient jarl shrilled commands without effect.

It seemed for the moment as if the bronze man would be able to parley.

But a harpoon whistled from a high rock. A retreating Norwegian had hurled it as he fled. It was a walrus harpoon and heavy. Unfortunately, it struck with violent impact across the bone of Doc's leg below the knee.

Doc was thrown off balance and he fell.

Cries of fear immediately changed into yells of menace. Lapps and Norwegians united in a rush.

Doc was crushed to the ground. He made no resistance.

"Let yourselves be taken," he instructed his companions.

THE bronze man permitted thongs of walrus skin and reindeer hide to be wrapped about his limbs. The bronze man's companions were similarly bound. The fishermen apparently had changed their minds about an immediate killing.

Outside the edge of the whale oil flare had arisen another commotion. Many of the fishermen were rushing down to the shore of the fjord. Their oil torches flared across the blue water beyond the glass cylinder.

"They're about to put our new submarine out of business," said Ham. "It doesn't look so cheering."

Doc and the others were now lying on the ground near the whale oil pot. They could see the smooth surface of the fjord.

"Another matter may be to our advantage, temporarily," stated Doc. "I heard them speak of dead men floating. It seems a dead man has come to our rescue."

The others now could see the body in the fjord. It was a floating man. The figure was not half submerged, as a drowned man might be. Instead, the body floated high on the surface.

The dead man appeared to be buoyant, as if made of cork.

Chapter XVI. SATAN'S GATEWAY CURSE

ROUGH hands bore Doc Savage and his men toward a building of outlandish appearance. The structure was blackened. It appeared to be very ancient.

"Looks like a place that might be inhabited by some of the devils they've been talking about," grunted Ham.

"On the contrary," advised Doc, "it's the reverse of that. It is one of the oldest of churches, called a stavekirker."

The building was without windows. It jutted into many square towers and sharp gables. On the gables were the blackened prows of ships that had been wrecked.

The faces of the towers were carved with legendary figures.

The structure was composed of heavy timbers. There was only one massive door.

Inside was a nave, a shrine and a single broad aisle.

Their captors dumped Doc and the others unceremoniously on the floor of earth. All but two armed Lapps rushed out again. The excitement indicated the arrival of the floating dead man was of greater importance for the moment than the prisoners.

Doc and his men were left to themselves. Two voices were disputing loudly near by. They were speaking in a queer conglomeration of languages. Occasionally, they said something in broken English.

Doc disregarded these for the moment.

"All of us saw the phenomenon of the dead man floating in the fjord," the bronze giant stated.

"Brothers, it is not remarkable these people have been frightened to killing terror. Dead men do not arise to the surface in these ice-cold waters for many days, often weeks. Then they are not perfectly preserved, as was that corpse."

"Do you think it has something to do with the haunted ocean?" said Ham.

"I am sure of it," declared Doc. "I believe we are close to the source of this power. Floating dead men would be an effective means of driving curious fishermen away."

The quarreling voices beyond the wooden bench were silent for a few seconds. Then one spoke in broken English.

"Amerikaner!" it exclaimed. "You haff also put yourselves into dis trap!"

Two men rolled into view. They were bound with strips of hide.

"Zarkov," stated Doc, instantly. "And Larrone. The haunt of the ocean seems to be a magnet for many parts of the world."

"Doc Savage!" exclaimed the bearded little man called Zarkov. "So you haff come here also! But you would not haff come for buying, maybe?"

Larrone spoke in good English, but with an angry snarl.

"It is not so that Doc Savage would buy anything!" he said with disgust. "If he has his way, none will buy!"

"By that, I infer you have come for the purpose of purchasing this power," stated Doc. "I recall

both of you were once detained in my country for attempting to purloin some secret of the navy. By the way, those secrets were those of Arne Dass, the aged scientist, who has disappeared. Perhaps you would know something of Arne Dass?"

The eyes of the pair met briefly.

"We know nothing of this Arne Dass," said Larrone. "We are engaged in a legitimate mission."

"I have no doubt of that, from your point of view," stated Doc.

THE man of bronze desired more information.

"Perhaps you could inform us about what these fisherman seem to fear so greatly?" he suggested.

"Before you were taken prisoners, did you know of these floating dead men?"

Zarkov explained quickly.

For several weeks, fishermen on the coast had been dying mysteriously. Only the week before, a fishing boat had entered the fjord known as Satan's Gateway. This fjord was one of those below the great Jostedalbrae glacier.

This was the greatest live glacier in Europe. For many thousands of years, its mountainous ice had covered more than three hundred and fifty square miles. Ages old, parts of the Jostedalbrae were covered with many feet of ice dust.

The great, living glacier was forever moving. Its icy arms reached into gouged-out valleys. It was believed to have hollowed out immense caverns under the mountains.

Five men had been aboard the fishing sloop which had entered Satan's Gateway, Zarkov informed Doc Savage. Four of the five men had died mysteriously before the boat returned.

But the fishing sloop had come back strangely. For the craft had come floating into this fjord against a rip tide.

One man, said Zarkov, had lived a short time. And he had spoken of men who went naked. Naked at a temperature of forty to fifty below zero. Men who seemed impervious to the cold.

And when all of these five men were dead, their bodies had seemed to become of the lightness of cork.

Since then, a few other fishermen had lost their boats. They returned, however, without them.

Came back floating like lightest wood, high on the surface.

FROM outside came cries of lamentation among the fishermen.

Now four women entered the stavekirker that was serving as a prison. They bore wooden platters of food.

It seemed the woman had been sent to feed the prisoners. Doc's men, Zarkov and Larrone were fed like children. The women were Lapps. Their dark faces had little expression. They filled their hands with what appeared to be a hard, black bread and strips of dried codfish.

"Holy cow!" grunted Renny. "If this ain't somethin'! How'd they think we—"

A greasy hand stuffed his open mouth full of the black bread.

"Dag-gone it!" gulped Monk. "Them dames has been sent to choke us to death! You don't suppose they're feedin' this junk to Habeas Corpus?"

Ham chuckled through a mouthful of tough fish.

"That's the only thought that makes this meal bearable," he asserted.

"An' I hope you choke first, so you'll quit talkin'," chirped Monk.

When the women left, Zarkov declared the fishermen now would send no boats near Satan's Gateway.

Only the two guards remained at the single doorway. Doc Savage had been working at the tough rawhide around his arms. But his right arm was wounded. The hide cut into his flesh.

The interior of the stavekirker was lighted by only two of the smelly whale oil torches.

Ham rolled close to Doc.

"If we could get all of these cords cut at once, we might be able to make a break for it," he suggested. "I can get at all of you, one at a time."

The lawyer worked fast. The large signet ring had not been removed from his middle finger. From inside it sprang a razor-edged knife blade. With this he worked first on the thongs around Doc's wrists and ankles. When he had finished, the hide was cut almost through.

Ham went to work on the others. Renny's bonds were cut to the point where he could have heaved himself loose.

But none were then to go free. Wails arose outside.

"Knut Aage! Knut Aage! Awai! Awai!"

"HOWLIN' calamities!" squealed Monk. "Now it's something else! Sounds like a funeral!"

"Knut Aage!" said Zarkov. "He is the one big man of these fishermen. We heard he was going alone to investigate this Satan's Gateway."

"Holy cow, Doc!" boomed Renny. "I remember! Knut Aage! That's the name that fellow Hjalmar Landson spoke just before he died!"

"That is true," said Doc. "Then perhaps Hjalmar Landson came from this place."

The two guards rushed outside. Doc started to free his hands. A rush of feet thudded over the rocks.

"This Knut Aage is the brother of that skinny little old man they call the jarl," volunteered Zarkov. "I'll bet he's come floating back."

The ancient jarl led the men entering the stavekirker.

"Don't let it appear we might free ourselves," Doc advised.

"Howlin' calamities!" squealed Monk. "Wouldja look who's here!"

"Now this is something!" agreed Renny.

The "something" was the red-headed woman, Lora Krants. She was being conducted into the gloomy prison. Beside her walked Barton, the heavy-browed young man she had called her brother. And behind her was the dark-skinned Kama.

The fishermen were jabbering. Doc interpreted their excited conversation.

"Our friends seem to have been forced down in their plane a short distance at sea," he interpreted. "They were picked up by one of the fishing boats. Perhaps they were depending on the power of the haunted ocean, and it failed them."

"But look, what's that?" exclaimed Ham.

Four Norwegian fishermen were bearing between them what appeared to be a crude boat of split bark. In this boat lay the nearly nude figure of a man. His body was magnificently proportioned. His rugged face was hewn in the lines of a Viking of old.

"Knut Aage, he came back like the others," said Zarkov. "Only for him they seem to have built a boat."

Lapps and Norwegians were wailing in a mingled chorus. The ancient jarl walked beside the strange bier from the sea. His white locks draped around his pinched face.

Doc Savage was studying the rigid outlines of the body on the bark boat.

"Frozen," he said, quietly. "And frozen alive. Like those naked men the fishermen reported who did not seem to feel the intense cold. It is possible this man, Knut Aage, still lives."

THERE was an interruption. Because of the poor illumination in the stavekirker, Doc and the other prisoners had not been immediately visible to Lora Krants and the others being brought in. The red-headed girl apparently heard Doc Savage's voice for the first time. In the whale oil flare, the young woman's face went ghastly white.

"You! Why, it couldn't be!" she murmured, then cried in a louder voice. "It is! Mr. Savage, and the one called Renny! All of you! Oh, I'm so glad—so glad! But how—"

"Holy cow!" thundered Renny. "I'll bet you're some surprised!"

"Oh, please, please!" cried the red-headed girl. "You don't know how much I mean it! I'm overjoyed at seeing you here!"

Kama, from San Tao, was staring at Doc and the others. His eyes seemed dark, for the moment, with hate. But he spoke in a suave voice.

"Evidently the infinite ocean has been overcome by some superior magic. Let me congratulate and felicitate you, Doc Savage, on your escape. We happened to come upon your plane after it was wrecked, and we feared you had perished."

Doc Savage was watching the red-headed girl. He apparently was reading much deeper than the others. Perhaps he really believed the girl was sincere.

The dark-browed brother was sullen. He said nothing.

Zarkov seemed to be keeping his face averted. Suddenly the ancient jarl stood before the prisoner. One skinny hand gripped Zarkov's shoulder. The prisoner's face showed in the light. The jarl was speaking in Norwegian, which Zarkov seemed to understand.

Doc and Ham also caught his words.

"My brother, Knut Aage, he is not dead," said the jarl. "He is not old enough to die. It is some black magic of Satan's Gateway."

Doc Savage looked at the rigid form of Knut Aage. The bark boat, which had become a coffin, had been set upon one of the wooden benches. Trembling hands placed lighted candles beside the dead man's head.

Suddenly, the interior of the stavekirker was filled with an eerie, fantastic trilling. The hands of some fishermen flew to their weapons. None could determine from where the rare, almost tuneless melody had come.

Doc's companions knew he was on the verge of some discovery, or that some plan had come to him.

The bronze man spoke slowly, impressively, in Norwegian. He was talking for the jarl.

"Your brother is only in the frozen sleep," Doc announced. "We of the sea know that he is not dead. He can be awakened. If I am freed, I will see if the magic of life cannot be applied."

Chapter XVII. DOC'S MIRACLE

THE ancient jarl was not easily convinced. But he must have had some of the fear of the others for Doc Savage and his men. Had they not come up out of the sea, in the strange, transparent tube? The jarl's sunken eyes had a piercing brightness. Suddenly, his thin voice pronounced his decision.

"You shall be given the chance. If my brother lives, all shall go free! If he is dead, then all of these prisoners shall die at once! There is no alternative."

Doc Savage indicated this was agreeable. The bronze man knew that Renny's thongs had been cut. The big engineer could free himself at any time.

Doc indicated Ham, and said, "I must have this man to help me." Then he pointed to Monk. "And this man must be permitted to bring me the magical potions from the glass fish."

This aroused much jabbering. But the jarl consented. Monk was cut loose. Doc directed him to bring the portable laboratory which had been stored in the cylinder. The hands and feet of Ham were freed.

THE man of bronze stood beside the still figure of Knut Aage. He had no illusions about any supernatural ability to revive a man who had been frozen. Very evidently, Knut Aage had been frozen while alive. There was no mark of violence.

The rugged face was like chiseled marble. The eyes were closed as if the Norwegian leader were only sleeping.

Doc Savage said nothing. Guarded by half a dozen fishermen, Monk was bringing in the portable laboratory.

The man of bronze proceeded slowly with his preparations. None there would have believed a human hand could be quicker than the eye. But the hands of Doc Savage were performing a miracle which had nothing to do with bringing Knut Aage to life.

From Monk's laboratory, Doc produced a shallow, flat vessel. Solemnly, he placed this near the head of the dead man in the bark boat. At the same time, his incredible hands were concealing various devices from that same laboratory about his clothing.

"Oh, you can't do it—you can't do it!" breathed the red-headed girl. "All of us will die! Mr. Savage, I want to tell you about the plane and—"

The dark-browed brother, Barton, caught the girl's wrist. Doc did not seem to notice this. But Lora Krants winced with pain.

The dark-skinned Kama moved close to the pair. Words he believed none but the girl and her brother could hear, were hissed. Doc Savage's trained ears caught them.

"The boss man will come, you fool! A loose tongue may fasten a noose around the whitest throat!"

Doc Savage was pouring three chemical powders together from containers. He mixed them slowly with a glass rod. The chemical reaction produced a blaze of reddish blue.

The man of bronze seldom displayed any great amount of ceremony. But now he was as solemn as any priest of a temple. He began a slow chanting, a singsong of apparently meaningless words. These were in the ancient Mayan which only he and his men understood.

"Monk, Ham and Renny, your hands are free—you will first cut the thongs on Long Tom—for the others we have no time—lead them out—Renny and Ham will get to the weapons by the door—when I pour on the chemicals, cover your eyes—it will be less than five seconds—be certain to lead all the others from the stavekirker—"

"Lead that redhead out?" growled Renny. "And that Kama? Why, they would—"

Doc gave no sign that he had noticed. His chant continued. "Lead all out—perhaps there is much you cannot understand—"

THE singsong chant had impressed even the ancient Jarl. The monkeylike small figure was tense. His sunken eyes were fixed on the mixture in the flat vessel beside Knut Aage's head.

Doc Savage picked up the fourth container. He held it above the blue flame as if to filter it slowly into the blaze. But his powerful fingers closed in a terrific grip.

The strong glass containing the chemical was crushed. All of it dropped and spread at once upon the blaze.

Instantly, the interior of the stavekirker was illuminated with a blinding flare. Doc was pressing the balls of his hands over his eyes. His own men were doing the same.

The jarl and his crowding fishermen were perhaps too amazed to act at once. Then, too, they might for a few seconds have imagined this was part of the ceremony of producing life from death. The regard of the jarl for his Viking brother was intense.

"See—as the light comes—Knut Aage will live!"

The bronze man's words gave them a few seconds more of time. With hands still pressed over their eyes, Ham and Renny were moving toward the weapons near the door. Long Tom was freed.

Zarkov and Larrone had not understood what was transpiring. At Doc's word, Long Tom had sliced the thongs around their ankles.

"Come with us!" muttered Long Tom.

It was Monk whose furry hand fastened on the wrist of the red-headed girl.

"Keep your mouth shut and come along!" ordered the apelike chemist. "An' if you let out a squawk, I'll smack you down!"

"Oh!" gasped Lora Krants. "I'm blind! I can't see!"

Doc Savage himself seized the blinded Kama.

"You're coming with us," said the bronze man. "You will be unable to see for an hour or more. It is well for you, and it may help answer some questions. Anyway, you're taking us to where they landed your plane."

"Those in darkness have no choice of paths," said Kama, mockingly. "However, I shall not lead you to the plane, for it is sunken in the fjord. You are not clever enough, Doc Savage."

THE Lapps and Norwegians became aware of the truth. They heard the voices of their prisoners. Completely blinded, the fishermen were groping around. They started jabbing with their harpoons. The bronze man and his companions aided the others to evade the futile attack. The interior of the dimly lighted stavekirker became a bedlam. In the midst of this, Doc suddenly released his hold on Kama.

A miracle was taking place. The nearly nude figure of Knut Aage was no longer rigid. One great arm was slowly lifting. The blond head was being raised.

Doc Savage knew he had nothing to do with what might be happening. His chemicals had been mixed for the sole purpose of creating a temporary blindness. They had no potency either for illness or death.

Perhaps it was the warmth of the stavekirker's interior. Or, more likely, it was the condition in which Knut Aage had been placed by the mysterious men of Satan's Gateway. Apparently, the Norwegian had been frozen.

Could it have been some new form of suspended animation?

The bronze man's sensitive hands touched Knut Aage's heaving breast. The flesh was uncannily cold. It might well have been frozen. But Doc detected a slow, pulsing beat. It was the heart. But this was the slowest throbbing of a heart Doc Savage had ever encountered.

The strokes could not have been above twenty to the minute. This was out of accord with all medical science. Life blood could not flow through any man's veins at this sluggish rate.

But Knut Aage's eyes had opened. They were as glinting blue as the clean ice of some new glacier. The white lips were attempting to form words.

None but Doc's own men could have observed this apparent miracle. And Doc's men were otherwise engaged. Ham and Renny had scooped up the weapons near the door. Some of the Lapps started a blind rush in the bedlam created by their own voices.

The superfiring pistols whoomed suddenly, steadily. A whole line of harpooners pitched to their faces. They would be out for at least two hours under the mercy bullets.

From his clothing, Doc Savage produced a hypodermic syringe. In this was perhaps the most powerful heart stimulant in the world. The man of bronze carried it always. Its contents could put unconscious men on their feet.

A small part of the mixture was adrenalin. The rest of it was the result of Doc's extensive surgical and medical knowledge. The man of bronze plunged the needle into the seemingly frozen flesh of Knut Aage's breast. The needle penetrated to the heart muscles.

Knut Aage's heartbeat may or may not have quickened. But the seeming dead man who had returned in a coffin of bark sat up. Then he spoke. Because they had been closed, his eyes had not been blinded.

"Doc Savage," were his first slow words. "Hjalmar Landson said you would come."

Doc Savage spoke quickly.

"We must get out at once, Knut Aage. But if possible, I shall return in a short time."

Doc again gripped Kama's wrist.

"I have heard the voice of Knut Aage," spoke Kama. "The renowned Doc Savage undoubtedly will fancy he has performed amazing magic. But there are more remarkable forces of which the world never before has been aware. It is no miracle."

Doc impelled the dark-skinned man of San Tao toward the single door. Renny had ceased using his superfirer. The giant engineer was standing waist-deep in writhing bodies. Each time he struck with one of his tremendous fists, another body was added to the heap.

Monk was howling, "Dag-gone it, Doc! C'mon! I can't hold onto this redhead much longer!"

One long arm of the apelike chemist was sweeping around. It was helping Renny and Long Tom clear a space to the outside. Monk's other hand was still fastened to the read-headed girl's wrist.

Barton, the dark-browed brother, remained close to the young woman.

Zarkov and Larrone were among the first out of the stavekirker.

When they were outside, the interior of the stavekirker still resounded to wild cries. The blinded Lapps and Norwegians were fighting each other.

With Kama close beside him, Doc Savage led the way up a sloping, icy trail. Ahead was the monster glacier of Jostedalsbrae. Somewhere in the wilderness of ice was Satan's Gateway.

Chapter XVIII. MEN OF ICY BLOOD

DOC SAVAGE and his men had undertaken a Herculean task. The ascent of the rugged mountain toward the Jostedalsbrae glacier was a feat for the strongest man. In this case it became the job of each one of the five to lead one blinded person.

With Kama beside him, Doc Savage led the way. The fleeing party crossed the mountain between spitted peaks. Suddenly, they were floundering in mingled snow and the dust of centuries. The man of bronze was forced to seek a trail of harder ice.

He found such a pathway. Here steps seemed to have been cut into the ice.

"This could be no other than the work of men," announced Doc. "We are ascending what was once a

great wall."

Kama only chuckled evilly. Then Monk let out a howling complaint.

"Howlin' calamities! I gotta go back! I've got to get Habeas Corpus!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the red-headed girl. "Who could have a legal name like that?"

"It isn't a 'who,'" rasped Ham's sarcastic voice. "It's a pig!"

"A pig?" said the red-headed girl. "Goodness gracious! You want to go back for a pig?"

"Dag-gone it!" yelled Monk. "I wish I'd 'a' let you go an' brought him along!"

Doc was leading the way up the roughly hewn steps of the ice wall. Zarkov and Larrone were disputing. They were accusing Doc Savage of deliberately blinding them to prevent the carrying out of their mission.

Kama still was saying nothing. The ice stairway led up a wall where the top was invisible.

Suddenly the steps ahead were obscured by ice blink. This was a dense fog which was composed of minute particles of blowing snow and ice.

Doc Savage projected Kama ahead to where another step should have been. The step was not there.

The bronze man's feet slid onto a smooth slope. Still gripping Kama's wrist, the man of bronze felt himself sliding rapidly downward into the fog.

"HOLY cow!" boomed Renny. "I knew there'd be a trap in this somewhere! Now where are we headed?"

No one bothered to reply. Each was busy trying to slide feet foremost down the slippery grade.

Doc Savage attempted to set his heels. This indeed might be a trap. The ice slope possibly would end in a glacier crevasse.

Doc's men, who were blind, thumped into a heap on clear, flat ice. As they gained their feet there was a moment of intense silence.

Then somewhere in the fog above them sounded a peculiar clop-clopping. The sound was like the iron-shod hoofs of a horse slowly pounding on hard ice or rock.

"Some one is passing over us," stated Doc. "it is perhaps some person in a stolkjaerre, one of the native carts. Roads among the most ancient in the world have been carved out of some of these mountains."

"Maybe we'd better give the fellow a hail," suggested Ham.

"It would hardly be advisable," said the man of bronze. "At this moment, we are being rapidly surrounded by many men."

There had been a rustling movement from four directions. This was as if moccasined or skin-packed feet were shuffling over the glacier.

Now there came a clink of metal. It was like the snapping of a safety catch on a pistol.

The slowly moving horse on the road above was still clanking his iron-shod hoofs. Steel tires squealed in grittily cold snow.

Doc Savage pushed the blinded five into the middle of a small ring. He and his own men stood about them.

Like the throwing of an electrical switch, the ice blink and the darkness was swept away.

Uncanny, white daylight enveloped them.

THE little party was huddled on a wide, flat plain of the great glacier. Here the constant wind had kept the blue ice clear of dust and snow. The space was perhaps a mile in extent. Beyond it rose a sheer black wall of rock.

It was on a high, winding road of this precipice the horse had passed with the stolkjaerre. The cart had vanished.

"Holy cow!" grunted Renny. "Wouldja look at them! Doc, we ain't got a chance!"

"Fifty below zero, and they don't seem to have any use for clothes!" exclaimed Long Tom.

Between forty and fifty strange figures ringed the party. They had halted perhaps a dozen yards from Doc Savage and his men. All appeared to be white men of normal size.

And at first glance, it seemed all of the men were naked. Then it was to be observed that each man wore what might have been a breechcloth of skin. Otherwise, their bodies were fully exposed to the rigorous temperature. All of Doc's men and the others were thickly clad in furs.

The strangely naked, and equally strangely silent men were blond and tall. Each held a modern rifle across one arm. One man spoke in the Norwegian tongue.

"If you understand our language, you will make no resistance," he said, calmly. "We have been sent to conduct you to the Man of Peace under the mountain. You have not strong enough force to do us any damage."

"Oh!" cried Lora Krants. "The Man of Peace! At last!"

"Now what do you suppose is on her mind?" growled Renny.

Doc Savage made no answer to Renny; he spoke quietly to the naked men.

"It would seem we can do no other than accompany you," he said.

The tall leader of the naked men stepped closer. Then it was that Kama, of San Tao, cried out sharply in his own language. The Oriental must have regained his sight more quickly than the others. Also, it was apparent he knew something of this place. His flowing command rapped across the glacier. Men clad in furs poured from what appeared to be the mouth of a cavern.

NO time was given for an order from Doc Savage.

Guns started cracking venomously. These were in the hands of the new arrivals. These men were short, and dark of face.

Three or four of the naked men fell at the first volley. Kama, of San Tao, was running. He darted across the ice toward the new party. His voice shouted a new command.

Though the naked men had been taken by apparent surprise, they acted. Their rifles belched fire. The impetuous Renny opened up with his superfirer. Three or four men went down before the mercy bullets. Doc Savage took the weapon from Renny's hand.

"It would be advisable for us to keep out of this," stated the man of bronze. "Wisdom directs us to retreat while we have opportunity."

Kama was now among the new crowd of men. Plainly they were from his own country. They were like those who had appeared at Doc Savage's headquarters in Manhattan and attacked Long Tom and Professor Callus.

Zarkov cried out with pain. His hands were flung out and his body pitched to the ice. He would not speak again. A rifle bullet had bored into his skull over one ear.

Larrone yelled, and started running in a circle. He still could not see.

The illuminated glacier was all white daylight. Doc Savage was looking up the wall of black rock. Close to this wall, in the distance, were what appeared to be streaming rays of light.

It was clear to the bronze man that this uncanny daylight must be coming from this source. Doc could make out what might have been described as short stacks of steel.

At the top of each stack appeared to be an eye. A luminous globe. The glowing daylight was greater than the light of the aurora borealis.

Doc directed the others to crouch close to the ice. The naked men and the dark men were about evenly matched in numbers. The naked men moved toward near-by ice ridges.

Eight or ten of the nearly nude figures lay on the ice. Doc made note of a queer circumstance.

Though these men were dead or seriously wounded, no blood had flowed from the bullet holes.

Kama now was leading his group toward Doc and his men. The dark men switched the object of their fire. Bullets buzzed off the ice. Some thudded into Doc's bulletproof garments.

From one of his many pockets Doc produced two small metal globes. On each of these was a small lever. Doc moved these levers. He tossed both objects toward the oncoming men of Kama's.

Between Doc's party and Kama's attackers the glacier split into a wide crevasse. Two explosions drowned out the cracking of the rifles.

Kama's dark men were blown from their feet. But none seemed to be seriously injured. Their advance would only be temporarily impeded.

The man of bronze had refrained from killing with the high explosive chemicals in the tiny bombs. He hoped only to break up the glacier between them and provide respite by which they might escape.

Kama was shouting. The leader of the nearly naked men was trying to halt the flight of his force.

"We will try and get back to the stairs of the icy causeway," said Doc. "It is certain Kama does not want us to live. We do not know what might happen in the hands of the others."

The red-headed girl still was unable to see. She attempted to rise. One foot slipped and she fell back. Her face was very white.

"I'm afraid I've twisted my ankle!" she moaned. "All of you get away. Don't wait for me."

The man of bronze caught up the red-headed girl as easily as if she were a small child. Renny and Ham pushed her brother and Larrone in the right direction. It seemed they would have time to get back up the icy slope to the stairway.

As suddenly as it had come, the eerie daylight was switched off. The fog from the ice had not been dissipated. All were groping in a darkness. Visibility had been reduced to a few feet only.

SOMETHING new happened in that darkness. The nearly naked men rallied. They surrounded Doc and the others. They made no effort to use their rifles.

Doc Savage was hemmed in by men of as great size as himself. Their movements were slower. The man of bronze let the red-headed girl slip to the ice. His incredibly fast fists struck at shadowy figures.

Three or four men pushed him to the ice with their weight. Doc's bronze fingers fastened on the neck of one. His thumb pressed a nerve center. The man should have become unconscious instantly. But the paralyzing hold seemed to have little effect.

Doc Savage had the queer sensation of having pressed his fingers into dead flesh. It yielded. The skin was as cold as ice. The usual nerve reaction failed to take place.

"Dag-gone it! Lemme go!" howled Monk.

"Holy cow!" boomed Renny's voice. "I didn't know it was you!"

They had exchanged blows in the fog. Renny's fist must have knocked Monk out. The chemist said nothing more.

Doc Savage was fighting the weight of numbers. From a distance, he could hear the cracking of Kama's rifles. But they did not seem to have crossed the blasted crevasse. The bullets were flying wild.

The man of bronze attempted to get at some of the anaesthetic capsules. Cold, heavy arms pinned him to the ice. The bronze giant was being held down by what seemed to be the relentless weight of men whose flesh seemed frozen.

A blow from the hard butt of a gun rapped across the base of his skull. Doc's senses faded out.

Chapter XIX. THE WANDERING PROFESSOR

DOC SAVAGE came to his senses with the queer feeling of having been carried and then dropped roughly. He put out one hand and it touched bare flesh. This was very cold.

The bronze man was still enveloped in the glacial fog. He could hear two voices faintly.

The man he had touched was one of the largest of the nearly naked Norwegians. Doc produced his small pencil flashlight. The spring generator hummed inside. The ray widened on the white body of the man on the ice.

The man was dead. Without doubt, he had been carrying Doc Savage. An ugly hole appeared between the man's shoulders. A bullet had gone in through his spine.

Doc got to his feet. From near by came a low moan. A few yards away lay another of the Norwegians. His skull had been clipped by a slug. But he was still breathing. His head had only been creased.

The man of bronze wondered what had happened to the others. The last he could recall was battling with a weight of cold flesh. Then he had been knocked unconscious.

Apparently these men, carrying him away, had been attacked. Or they might have been hit by bullets fired from some distance.

The voices Doc had heard grew more distinct "Dag-gone it!" piped Monk's voice. "They've got Doc, and I think you know something about it! I oughta make you walk!"

"Please, oh, please!" came the voice of Lora Krants. "I don't know what happened! There were men all around! Mr. Savage was knocked down! I thought I saw them taking him away, but I couldn't walk!"

"Over this way, Monk!" called out Doc, flashing the pencil light.

The big chemist let out a whoop of delight.

"An' it's a good thing for you I found him!" he squealed at Lora Krants. "I was just about to let you find your own way outta this mess!"

Monk's ungainly figure came into the circle of light. For all of his threats, the apelike chemist was carrying the young woman in his arms. He set her carefully down on the ice.

"I'm glad we found you, Mr. Savage," exclaimed the girl. "I was afraid something awful had happened! And my brother's gone, too!"

"Where are the others?" asked Doc—"Renny, Long Tom, Ham, Larrone."

Monk shook his head dubiously.

"The last I remember, Renny cracked me one and I hit my head on the ice," he said. "When I woke up, I heard the redhead crying. Doc, I don't trust her any more."

MONK was being quite frank about Lora Krants. The girl spoke suddenly.

"The circumstances are unavoidable," murmured the girl. "I am here, it is true, but I cannot tell you why. Not now. I hope everything will come all right, then you will know."

Doc Savage turned to the wounded Norwegian. The nearly naked man was still groaning.

"Dag-gone it," Doc!" exploded Monk. "She knows something about this fellow that naked guy called the Man of Peace!"

Doc seemed not to have heard Monk's protesting statement. He was examining the wounded Norwegian.

"It is strange," said the man of bronze, "that blood should not flow from a wound. The man's flesh is cold, like all of the others."

"They're not frozen, they're—"

The red-headed girl seemed to have spoken involuntarily. She ended her speech by stuffing the back of one furred mitten over her red lips.

"I knew it!" yelled Monk. "I'll bet this dame knows all about this, too!"

"Perhaps that is true," assented Doc. "But I'm sure Miss Krants will talk when the time comes."

"Thank you, Doc Savage," murmured the girl.

Doc had extracted an instrument from his clothing. It looked like a combination stethoscope and sick room thermometer on a miniature scale. The man of bronze attached it to the man's breast with a slender, piercing needle.

He listened for a moment with the earpiece of the instrument. As he did, the fantastic trilling suddenly filled the ice fog. Doc looked closely at the tiny thermometer.

"What is it, Doc?" questioned Monk. "Is the poor devil about to pass out?"

The wounded Norwegian's muscled breast was heaving with slow breathing.

"According to the most reliable medical information, this man has been dead for some time," stated Doc, calmly. "Any physician would probably declare rigor mortis has set in."

"Howlin' calamities, Doc!" squealed Monk. "The fellow's still breathing!"

"That is true," advised Doc. "Also, his heart is still beating. Yet the temperature shows at exactly twenty-six. The heart action is recording only thirty-two beats a minute."

"It ain't possible!" squawked Monk. "What do you say, Doc, we get out of here? I don't like this

place!"

DOC was examining the wounded man more closely.

"Only a few known animals can be frozen and still survive," stated Doc. "There's one, the Chorni Ryba, or Alaskan blackfish."

"But dag-gone it, Doc," protested Monk, "the human temperature has to be around ninety-eight, and the pulse about seventy-two."

"That is true," stated the man of bronze. "In some acute cases of illness the human temperature has been known to go as low as seventy-five. But there is danger of death. Adrenalin increases heat and heart action by burning bodily sugar. I would say nearly all of the sugar has been burned from these men. So they have become almost impervious to freezing temperature."

Doc's hands probed around the base of the Norwegian's brain.

Monk was watching Lora Krants. She again clamped her furred mitten over her lips, as if to keep from speaking.

"These fellows did not yield to nerve pressure," stated Doc. "Now part of the reason becomes apparent. The nerves controlling temperature are known as the diencephalon. They are located at the base of the brain. A scar shows where nerve groups must have been changed."

Doc Savage ceased speaking. The cold-blooded Norwegian at his feet had ceased to breathe.

"LISTEN, Doc!" admonished Monk. "Hear that? Isn't it that horse again, upon the road?"

The iron-shod hoofs were clanking. The steel tires squealed in the sandy snow. From a short distance up the black wall, a voice hailed.

"Hello there, below! Can you direct us to a way down? My driver said there was a fishing village near by, but this road seems to end in a mountain meadow!"

"Howlin' calamities!" exploded Monk. "Doc, that's Professor Callus or I don't know voices! This whole thing's crazy!"

"It is Professor Callus," agreed Doc, calmly. Then he called out, "We know of a way down afoot, but not from the road up there."

"Doc Savage!" shouted Professor Callus. "I might have known you would have found your way into this place! But I had greatly feared you were lost in your plane, after I learned you had started for the Norway coast!"

"We escaped that disaster," replied Doc. "Your own presence indicates you are greatly interested in the mystery of the haunted ocean, Professor Callus."

"Indeed, and who wouldn't be, after all that happened in Manhattan," replied the professor. "When I learned you had started for The Land of the Midnight Sun, I chartered a plane. We were over a great plateau of snow when that strange disturbance of the ocean must have started again. Our plane lost its power and we narrowly escaped death.

"I accompanied my two pilots until we found a village. Then I heard of this fishing town and hired one of these Norwegian carts. Do you think we could get down this cliff and join you?"

"That might be possible," stated Doc. "Also it might be advisable for your own safety—"

THE words of the bronze man were lost in a sudden crackle of gunfire. The fusillade apparently came from the road above not far from the cart of stolkjaerre.

"Doc Savage!" shouted Professor Callus. "We are being attacked! They are—"

His next words were lost in the crashing plunge of a horse. Above in the ice blink fog the stolkjaerre crackled as if it were being dashed against the rocks. A hoarse voice cried out in Norwegian.

"They've got him!" yelled Monk.

The stolkjaerre and the horse came rolling down the black wall. They struck the flat ice with sickening impact. A man's body thudded onto the glacier.

A command was shouted above. It was the voice of Kama.

The man who had fallen, lay almost at the feet of Doc Savage. Plainly enough he was the skydgul, or driver of the cart. His head was horribly crushed.

Professor Callus had not fallen with the cart. Doc Savage whirled back to the others. He caught up the slender form of the red-headed girl.

"We must get out before they find a way down the wall," advised Doc. "Farther on, there may be some trail leading up to that mountain meadow. I imagine it would be unsafe to go back down the causeway."

Above them, the men of Kama were scrambling along the road. It was apparent they were seeking a way down. Now Kama knew Doc Savage still lived and was below.

"If there is a mountain meadow at the end of that road, I think there will be a way down for us," advised Doc Savage.

"How would you know that?" said Monk.

"You will find a strange means of transportation from every mountain meadow along this coast," stated Doc.

The man of bronze seemed not to mind the weight of the red-headed girl. His progress was so swift

Monk was compelled to lope along on his short legs. They were concealed by the darkness. The men of Kama were making so much noise they could not have heard them depart.

Doc had progressed more than a mile along the wall before a break appeared. Monk had great difficulty climbing the steep ascent. The bronze man cradled the girl in his arms and swung easily upward.

They emerged upon a road that had been carved centuries before.

Chapter XX. THE SKY SLIDE

DOC SAVAGE carried Lora Krants into the mountain meadow. On this soil, in season, a crop of hay had been grown. Some of this was covered with snow where it had been spread upon wooden racks to dry during the summer.

Lora Krants tried her twisted ankle. It would not bear her weight.

"I don't see how we can ever get out of this place," the girl said. "If Kama's men come up the road, we are trapped."

Doc Savage did not reply. The man of bronze could hear the pursuit. The slight crunching of men's feet in the snow had not yet come to the ears of either Monk or the girl.

Doc was following the rack of abandoned hay. At one end the meadow seemed to tip off into space. And far below showed the hazy flare of torches. The meadow seemed to lie almost directly above the fishing village.

"Dag-gone it, Doc!" complained Monk. "If them devils are on the road, we can't get out of here! It's more than a thousand feet down!"

Doc was stripping back some of the hay. From the drying rack he pulled two queer-looking iron hooks. They were covered with heavy, dried reindeer hide.

"Now we will find the hesjire," stated Doc. "Unless it is too badly rusted, we have a means of transportation it isn't likely any one will use to follow us."

Now Monk and the girl could hear the crunching feet of the oncoming men. Their pursuers were already entering the farther side of the meadow. Some of the pursuers whooped. They had come upon the tracks of Doc and the others.

"All right," said Doc. "Monk, you will go first. I will follow with Miss Krants."

"Down that thing?" growled Monk. "You mean we're doin' a circus act down that measly wire?"

"It isn't much of a stunt," said Doc, calmly. "The people here find this crude elevator quite convenient."

Monk and the girl were staring at the slender wire attached to a heavy, wooden post. The village flares looked miles away. Only a few feet of the tight wire was visible. It slanted down into space. Doc wrapped one of the hooks over the wire. Under the hook was a loop. On this crude contrivance hay was shot down from the mountain in the summer to the village below. Perhaps, as Doc had said, the wire might be rusted and weak. But it was the only means of escape.

Monk hooked one hairy wrist into the loop. He drew a deep breath. Then he stepped off into space. The tough hide of the hook squawked shrilly on the wire. Monk almost instantly disappeared.

SPARKS flashed from the hook and wire.

Behind them, Kama shouted out an oath. Now he had discovered the plan of Doc Savage. Rifles began to explode. Bullets clipped the snow.

"You'll have to trust me and hold your breath," counseled Doc.

"You have trusted me, and I don't know why," said the girl.

"Perhaps it is because I know you are not Lora Krants," said the man of bronze, unexpectedly.

Kama's men were running. Their rifles whoomed now. There seemed no further effort to spare the girl. Doc felt the slugs nipping at his furs. But the bulletproof undergarment was stopping them. He gathered the girl into one massive arm.

Doc's other bronzed wrist wrapped into the loop of hide. He put the hook over the wire and stepped into space.

The red-headed girl suddenly clung to Doc Savage's neck.

"Oh, we'll be killed—I must tell you—the plane—"

The girl gasped these words. The hook over the wire was screeching. It must have seemed to the girl their descent could only be checked by a crushing impact.

Yet, as swiftly as they were dropping, Doc Savage felt the tremor he feared most. Kama's men were hammering at the wire post above. Bullets sang past their flying bodies. If Kama succeeded in getting that wire loosened, only a miracle could save them.

Doc's powerful wrist was twisting the hook. They had dropped almost five hundred feet before he started checking their speed. Below them, the strained voice of Monk called up.

His words were unintelligible. The wire seemed to slacken suddenly. At its lower end this hesjire, or mountain elevator, curved into a deep bend that was intended to slow down any descending object before it crashed the lower post.

Doc and the girl were in this bend when the wire sang wickedly. It had been cut at the post above. Their bodies turned over and fell.

Even at forty below zero, the deep water of the fjord never was frozen. This was because of the

influence of the Gulf Stream.

"Hold your breath!" commanded Doc, as they flashed downward.

The bronze man could not be sure whether they were falling into the fjord or upon the rocky shore.

DOC SAVAGE had sucked air into his great lungs. Holding the girl, his giant form struck with a force that would have stunned another man.

The water of the fjord received them. The thick furs helped break the shock.

The girl had become limp in Doc's arm. Fighting back to the surface was a gigantic task. Doc succeeded in stripping the upper part of his body of the clinging furs. His massive arm and limbs churned the blue water.

Doc Savage had underwater training comparable only to the skill of South Sea pearl divers.

No doubt, Lora Krants was in that state described as drowned. Her lungs had filled with water.

When they reached the surface, she was for the time as dead as she would ever be.

Monk helped get the girl to the shore. Now the quick freezing of that fearful temperature became an imminent menace.

"I thought you was gone for good that time, Doc," declared Monk, plaintively. "Now what are we going to do? I guess the little redhead is dead. We can't do much without a fire. If we build one they'll be right on our necks from that crazy village."

Monk was scratching his nubbin of a head. Anxiety screwed his homely face into an ugly knot.

Doc Savage was stripping off nearly all of his clothing.

"Get off her furs and the rest of her clothing," he ordered Monk. "We can save her without a fire."

Doc Savage might have added that only his great surgical skill could accomplish what might otherwise have been impossible. Monk's awkward hands trembled, but he clicked his teeth grimly and went to work.

While Monk was preparing the girl, Doc did some exercises that restored his own circulation. The red-headed girl lay on her face. Monk applied what he knew of first aid. This was having little effect.

"Monk, you will go to the first of the skin huts in the village," directed Doc. "You will find some are unoccupied. Take the driest skins and bring them back."

For Monk, this was a welcome mission.

Doc Savage had become the great surgeon. Monk had dropped his own outer furs. Within five minutes, Lora Krants gave a great sobbing breath.

Monk's outer furs were wrapped about the young woman when Monk returned. He was carrying an armload of miscellaneous furred skins. Doc and the girl were quickly clothed.

The man of bronze had preserved all of his devices in the pockets of his bulletproof garment.

"Oh!" gasped the girl. "I dreamed I had died, and I saw my father! I thought that I had crossed the ocean and—"

The girl's eyes widened with dawning realization of her present position. She ceased speaking.

Doc ignored her words. He had said he knew she was not Lora Krants.

"Our best chance for the present is to discover if the cylinder is intact," stated Doc. "I believe the superstitious fishermen would hesitate to touch it."

DOC SAVAGE had guessed correctly. The strange glass fish was still in the sand where it had been beached. The tide was ebbing.

"Howlin' calamities!" gritted Monk. "Are we going down again?"

"We must find the wrecked plane at once," stated Doc. "Perhaps the fate of Johnny and the commission, and all the others depends upon our getting some means of entering the fjord called Satan's Gateway. Miss Krants now will direct us to the spot where the plane was beached."

"I will do anything I can," stated the girl. "But for you, I would not be alive, Doc Savage. The plane was beached. Its power is lost without the daylight you saw. It has other motors, but they failed."

Oil torches still flared in the stovekirker. A light moved among the skin huts of the Lapps. No person was near the glass fish.

"We have enough compressed air to last perhaps an hour," stated Doc. "In that time, either we will reach the wrecked plane or get to Satan's Gateway."

Monk and the girl were crowded into the glass fish. Doc was pushing and pulling the cylinder into position where its own compressed air force would slide it, into the fjord.

Doc slid inside the glass fish and closed the lid. Immediately the blue, unearthly light of the tubes began to glow. This gave the transparent cylinder a supernatural appearance.

An oxygen tank hissed. Then Doc Savage switched on the compressed air. Sputtering explosions resulted.

THE tail of the glass fish was buried in the sand. It was as if a great hand pushed it into the deep fjord. The cylinder sank a hundred feet.

"Where is this plane?" said Doc Savage. "We have but little time."

"It was pulled up on a shelf at the north side of the fjord," said the red-headed girl. "Perhaps if you can reach it, the power of the ocean will come on. Then you could use it."

Doc Savage said nothing. His real purpose in reaching the plane was to examine the strange machinery. He hoped this would give him some inkling of the force which must be overcome.

"Doc," said Monk, "do you suppose they took Ham and the others alive? If they've killed Ham, I'll stay here and take these mountains apart!"

Lora Krants stared at the ugly chemist. She had imagined Monk and Ham would have slit each other's throats at the slightest excuse.

"Before we reach the plane, Miss Krants," suggested Doc, "have you any other information to divulge?"

The girl's eyes suddenly went cold.

"I may seem ungrateful, Doc Savage," she said, "but I have nothing more I can tell."

Doc did not insist. He had arrived at an amazing theory. If what he believed proved to be the truth, he imagined Washington would be rocked.

NEAR the entrance to the fjord of the fishing village, Doc mixed the chemicals which filled the outer envelope of the cylinder with the powerful lifting gas. The girl was watching the bronze giant with increasing amazement.

Then they reached the plane.

The modern, streamlined plane rested on a narrow shelf. Its wings and fuselage were marvels of mechanical genius. The design rivaled the best of Doc's own superior ships. Apparently no great damage had resulted from the forced landing.

"If that thing only will fly, we could bomb that Kama off the glacier," suggested Monk, as the glass fish nosed close to the shelf. "I'd like to get my hands on Kama!"

Doc was sliding back the lid. The play of the aurora borealis was giving some light. But it could not give the bronze man visibility around the point of the jutting mountain.

Beyond their range of vision, two ordinary fishing schooners were nosing across the fjord. From winches on the deck of each boat extended cable ropes. These went down into the sea.

The fishing boats were perhaps three hundred yards apart. Between them was nearly all of the width of the narrow entrance to the deep fjord.

"Remain here until I investigate," directed Doc. "If it is possible to operate the motors, we will board the plane."

"This cylinder will be all right," protested Monk.

"That may be," agreed Doc. "But close the lid and be prepared to submerge if anything should happen. I will be gone only a few minutes."

Chapter XXI. IN THE DEVIL'S NET

DOC SAVAGE reached the roomy cabin of the mystery plane. The craft had been operated part of the time by ordinary motors. The propellers were not now connected with these.

The bronze man's fantastic trilling filled the space. He was inspecting short metal prongs extending from the cowling. These were equipped at the outer ends with what might have been bright mirrors.

Doc determined these were powerful lenses. They were of the type employed in the greatest telescopes.

The prongs were of hollow metal alloy. They concentrated on groups of selenium cells. These were arranged in the form of batteries hooked together for the concentration of power upon one objective.

"It was bound to happen some day," mused the man of bronze. "The light has been discovered to operate the machinery of the world. This could only be a power that would revolutionize all transportation."

He saw the plane props had been operated by the power of light. The mysterious property of selenium, already applied on a small scale to operate motors in laboratories, had been amplified on a greater and more practical scale.

The mystery of the apparent uncanny daylight was unfolded to Doc Savage. He realized that a band of such light, with proper motive machinery, might some day operate every ship that sailed the seas, every vehicle of transportation in the world.

The regular motors of the plane had been irreparably wrecked. Parts of the machinery had been fused and ruined.

So engrossed was Doc in his investigation, he failed to note the lights of the fishing schooners coming into the fjord. The dark hulks of these craft lay close to the opposite walls.

The boats were dragging something between them. One boat was slowly approaching the spot where Monk and the red-headed girl lay in the transparent glass fish. Perhaps its blue, unearthly illumination was seen by men on the fishing boats.

"There are lights coming along the fjord," said Lora Krants. "Do you suppose we should call to Doc Savage?"

Monk shook his nubbin of a head.

"Doc's eyes are quicker than yours," Monk boasted. "He has seen the lights. He knows what to do." Monk was even then planning to open the sliding door. One long arm reached out. A blundering elbow struck the lever controlling the compression tanks. The air hissed and exploded at the tail of the glass fish. With a vibrating movement, the cylinder slithered from the shelf. Its lifting gas had partly evaporated.

DOC SAVAGE emerged from the plane's cabin. He had seen the ship rested so that the removal of its wooden blocks would slide it off the shelf into the fjord.

The bronze man noted that the tide now had changed. As in these northern latitudes, the flood was starting with a rush. A swift current was beginning to boil along the cliff.

Doc Savage started toward the spot where he had left the glass fish. Suddenly he hastened his stride. The chugging of the motors of the fishing boats had come to his ears. He could see their distant moving lights.

The man of bronze had expected to be guided back to the glass fish by its phosphorescent illumination. The light had vanished. He believed for a few seconds that Monk might have tampered with the tubes.

But it was not that. Doc Savage checked his rush at the edge of the sloping shelf. The green depths, he knew, dropped here to perhaps five hundred feet.

Doc stared bleakly down into the deep water. He could just mark a dim, blue radiance. The glass fish was submerged. It was at least a hundred feet beneath the surface. It was still sinking.

Doc Savage rarely had a sensation of helplessness. For just a few seconds, he stood rooted to the spot. There beneath him, Monk and Lora Krants were slowly dropping into the depths.

Doc could only depend upon Monk's knowledge of chemistry to bring the glass fish to the surface.

Apparently Monk had been unable to apply the lifting gas. Doc Savage remembered an oversight.

The final chemical combination, the key to the production of the gas, was now in his own pocket.

He had expected to be gone only a minute or two.

Monk was powerless to bring the glass fish from the bottom of the fjord.

An eddy in the sweeping flood tide caught the light far below. Its force whisked the blue radiance from view, downward under the straight wall of the black cliff.

Doc Savage groaned deeply. The faithful Monk and the red-headed girl were undoubtedly going to certain doom.

The fishing boat on this side of the fjord came nosing along on the tide.

DOC SAVAGE whipped back to the mystery plane. He could do nothing here. None of his vast forces could reach down into the murk of that icy water. The glass fish had apparently become a coffin from which no human agency ever could rescue its occupants.

The man of bronze brought his mind to the thought of his other men. Johnny, the member of the war commission; Renny, Ham and Long Tom, if they were alive, must be prisoners in the hands of Kama-or this Man of Peace, whoever he might be.

Doc kicked the blocks from under the wheels of the amphibian plane. The streamlined ship rolled toward the water. It slid into the fjord. The pontoons had not been damaged.

The bronze man swung to one wing as the rushing tide caught the plane. The pontoons lifted the ship buoyantly. It was swept along the face of the cliff toward the inner end of the fjord.

Farther out in the sea, beyond visibility from the fjord, lay another craft. But nothing of its hull was visible. Only three, horned prongs stuck above the surface.

These prongs had eyes, but the eyes now were apparently dead and sightless. If Doc Savage had seen these things his action would have been different.

MORE than a mile above the fishing village, the mystery plane ground along the rocks. Doc Savage leaped ashore. He wedged one of the ship's wings into a cleft of the rocks.

The man of bronze was a strange, almost appalling individual. The cured skins taken from the village were his only clothes. He had fitted them about his giant body as best he could. His movements were like those of some grotesque animal.

Doc glided toward the mountain trail. He headed upward. His intention was to return to Jostedalsbrae glacier. Somewhere beyond the ice stairs he hoped to pick up the trail of some of his missing men.

Still the northern lights afforded the only illumination. Doc arrived at the first finger of the glacier. He floundered over the surface covered with mixed dust and snow.

Suddenly the bronze man halted. There was no sound that any normal man might have heard. But the keen wind whipping down from the Jostedalsbrae brought something to Doc's sharp olfactory sense. This was a human smell. And the odor of tanned hide. It was so faint as to have been missed by other than the noses of the plateau wolves or the deer of the mountains.

Doc flattened himself. He became a part of the dust-covered ice. But he had not been quick enough.

A blue flame sliced from the edge of a glacial crack not far away. The explosion of a rifle followed. Dusty snow slapped into Doc's face. The rifle cracked again. The second bullet skipped

about the same distance away.

Doc carried no device that could have reached the gunner. He waited for the third shot.

A voice spoke in Norwegian.

"You will stay where you are until I see whether you are a friend or an enemy!" it commanded. "I will not kill you unless you resist!"

Doc Savage replied quietly.

"I had hoped to find you somewhere on the glacier, Knut Aage. You were wise to give such warning. I believe we have a common purpose."

"It is you, Doc Savage!" exclaimed Knut Aage in perfect English. "It was to seek you I ascended the Jostedalsbrae. I found evidence which made me believe your party had been wiped out. You must be the amazing man Hjalmar Landson reported."

KNUT AAGE came closer. His face was still as white as that of a death's-head. His skin had the coldness of marble.

Doc was sure Knut Aage had been made a victim of the icy blood.

"I fear I have lost one of my men, the chemist called Monk," said Doc Savage. "My other companions may be prisoners of one of these conflicting forces of the glacier. Perhaps you would know something of what is behind all of this, Knut Aage?"

"I know much, Doc Savage, but not enough," said Knut Aage. "It is only enough to know that I shall sacrifice my life if necessary to destroy the devil they call a Man of Peace. He is the real satan of the ice caverns. You say, Doc Savage, you have lost the man known as Monk?"

"Unless I am mistaken, Monk and a girl who calls herself Lora Krants have perished at the bottom of the fjord beside the fishing village," stated Doc.

IN the meantime, the glass fish was sinking toward the bottom of the mountain-walled fjord. The face of the red-headed girl was white as death. But now that the end seemed to be near, her red lips were tightened in courage.

Monk was attempting to get a proper mixture of chemicals in the gas-making retort. He found three powders. They produced a blue flame. But the element needed seemed to be missing.

"Now that it seems as if we are to die together, Monk, you might be a little more pleasant," suggested the red-headed girl. "I think you and all of Doc Savage's men are swell! My own mission in this country was to save you from disaster."

Monk only grunted. He shut off the compressed air. The glass fish had been moving against the flood tide. Monk had decided to save what power he had.

He stared bleakly at the gas-making retort. He wished for his portable laboratory. The suck of the tide started whirling the glass fish over and over. Its spinning motion seemed to be boring toward the bottom.

Monk again turned on the compressed air. The glass fish nosed into the flood tide. But it had no buoyancy and would not ascend. Monk had a tight feeling across his throat.

The girl's attractive face was suddenly buried in her hands. She had been nodding sleepily.

Monk guessed the reason. Their oxygen supply was running low. He turned on the last of the small tanks. There was no hissing.

Monk rolled over, facing the girl.

"Dang it!" he managed. "I ain't so mad at you! I guess maybe you have your reasons."

"You are a funny, ugly, kind-hearted man," whispered Lora Krants. "It hurts to breathe, to talk, Monk. I guess this-is-about the end—"

Monk's possible reply was snatched away. The glowing blue glass fish struck some obstruction. In spite of its compressed air power, the cylinder was hurled over and back into the tide.

The glass fish lifted and tilted. Its blue radiance illuminated the water for several yards on the outside.

"Howlin' calamities!" gasped Monk. "A whole flock of big fish have grabbed us! Next thing we'll be swallowed like Jonah by the whale! Wouldja look at that!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Lora Krants. "We're trapped at the bottom of the fjord!"

It seemed both statements were correct. Giant codfish with eyes sticking out like huge knobs pressed against the transparent cylinder. Silvery salmon flashed among them.

The glass fish was being swept along.

"Oh, I believe we're going up!" exclaimed Lora Krants. "Monk, we're caught in one of those great fish seines! I'll bet Doc Savage had found a way to save us!"

"Doc's a lot of things, but he ain't any fisherman," asserted Monk. "An' he wasn't carryin' any fishin' seine around with him. It's them heathen have got us again!"

The glass cylinder was rising rapidly toward the surface of the fjord.

ON the two fishing boats the fishermen were gabbing excitedly. The schooners had been dragging their giant seine into the fjord on the flood tide.

Fishermen jabbered. They had seen the strange, glowing monster strike the net. Winches began to grind. Cables were pulling the great seine toward the surface.

These men on the boats had not been in the village during the presence of the glass cylinder with Doc's men. They were seeing the weird blue glow for the first time. They could see through the glass sides. Monk and the girl were visible. They were motionless. Apparently they were corpses in a lighted glass coffin. Still, the winches turned.

Like the flicking of a switch, eerie daylight flooded the fjord under the mountains. The grinding winches stopped abruptly. The engines of the fishing schooners crackled and ceased turning the propellers.

With fishermen falling on their knees, the fishing boats were swept along by the power of the tide alone. The big seine sagged, pulled the boats slowly together. The glowing glass fish again was sinking.

Lapp fishermen flung themselves on their faces. They were awed to speechlessness.

Three prongs were sweeping into the fjord at incredible speed. Their mirrored eyes were absorbing power from the uncanny light.

Without pausing, the strange undersea craft ripped into the great seine. The deep net was torn loose from its cables. The folds of tarred cords wrapped around the long hull of the pronged submarine.

Chapter XXII. HORNS OFF THE DEVIL

ONLY a few times had Doc Savage ever given up any of his men as lost. But if he had not abandoned all hope for Monk, the bronze man was unusually saddened.

He could see that blue glowing fish of glass sinking deeper into half a mile of icy sea.

"I have come upon things which the most credulous would refuse to believe," stated Knut Aage. "My own condition was a part of it. After being trapped in the ice caverns under the Jostedalsbrae, I was made unconscious. You did not have time to observe the scar at the back of my neck?"

"I have now seen it," stated Doc. "The mysterious nerves governing bodily temperature and the heart pulse have been changed by surgical skill."

"I have not known what it was," said Knut Aage. "I seemed to go into a strange trance. Since then, I have no sensation of heat or cold. I can think how I want to move, but I can do it only with great caution. All of my muscles are sluggish."

"You saw others in the ice caverns perhaps?" inquired Doc.

"I saw several who were prisoners, and apparently two crowds of men opposing each other," stated Knut Aage. "There are those of my own race. Some are Orientals who take commands from two persons. One is this Kama who was in the stavekirker. I do not know the other."

"And the prisoners?" suggested Doc. "Was there one who seemed like a skeleton?"

"I recall him," said Knut Aage. "A man with a scholarly face, but very tall and thin. He was with an Englishman and four others."

"Johnny," said Doc. "He's William Harper Littlejohn. He is one of a war commission of six that had disappeared."

Knut Aage frowned deeply.

"That is very bad," he said. "For these six are chained on a rock shelf in the cavern known as the Place of the Glacial Death. Once each year, at this season, the old Jostedalsbrae pushes a wall of ice through the cavern. This extends over a deep underground fjord."

"You mean this finger of the glacier fills the cavern?"

"Exactly that," said Knut Aage. "Thousands of tons of ice scour that wall where the prisoners are chained. It comes each year."

"But what could be the purpose of exterminating the men of the war commission?"

"I learned little of that before I was trapped," said Knut Aage. "It concerns this one they call the Man of Peace. His brain alone holds knowledge of the power of this artificial daylight. Another is seeking the full knowledge. I understand the Man of Peace does not desire to kill needlessly. But he has been told all prisoners will be crushed to death a slow inch at a time by the glacial push if he does not reveal all of his secret."

"But your escape was unusual, Knut Aage."

"I think I was set afloat and brought back to the fishing village as a final stroke of terror to drive all of the fishermen from this vicinity," stated Knut Aage.

"I fear," stated Doc, "that others of my men are now there. I shall not ask you to guide me to these caverns, but I must go there."

A grim smile crossed Knut Aage's white face.

"You do not have to ask, Doc Savage," he said. "You cannot prevent my accompanying you. Hjalmar Landson, who informed me you would come, was my brother in the blood. His death must be avenged. I have received a mysterious communication, Doc Savage. It informs me this woman of the flaming hair who was with you in the slavekirker was Hjalmar Landson's murderess."

"Others have been convinced of that same thing," advised Doc. "But you will do well to investigate thoroughly before you act."

"I never act upon an unproved report or even my own unverified opinion, Doc Savage."

"I had judged you that way—"

THE two men were at the edge of the great glacier. They were making their way slowly back toward the fishing village. Knut Aage was impeded by the sluggishness of his muscles. The uncanny daylight flooded the mountains.

"If there were only some way we might enter the caverns without being observed," Knut Aage had just suggested.

Doc's fantastic trilling filled the icy air.

"If the light of the peace power will persist for only a few hours, there may be a way," he stated. "Come with me, Knut Aage. That plane in which Kama arrived must now be equipped with power." The mystery plane still was wedged in the cleft of the rock. Knut Aage watched the play of Doc Savage's corded bronze arms. The facile fingers were examining the parts of the strange motor connection.

"I believe we now shall have the means we seek," stated Doc.

The plane's two propellers were whispering, turning. There was no sound of an exploding motor. Only the low humming of powerful electrical motors. The selenium cells apparently were releasing or transmitting the amazing energy of the daylight.

Doc Savage swung the plane onto the sweeping tide of the fjord. He turned the streamlined fuselage with its nose to the wind of the mountains.

The ship shot toward the open sea. Knut Aage grasped Doc's arm.

"Look below!" he shouted. "It's the undersea devil my men have feared! It's one of the craft of the Man of Peace! Those horned prongs are its only power!"

"If the prongs were removed, it would not sink," stated Doc.

"No, but it would be powerless," stated Knut Aage.

"That would be one group less of the enemy to combat," said the man of bronze.

THE strangely powered plane dived with shrieking wings. It skimmed the fjord. Its pontoons clipped into the speeding prongs.

Doc Savage and Knut Aage had only a flashing glimpse of what might have been a writhing, distorted monster just under the surface of the green water.

Whatever its motive power, the propellers of the mystic submarine had ceased to beat. The impelling force of the white daylight had been severed. The craft was perhaps sixty or seventy feet in length.

Doc's trained senses took in more details than Knut Aage. With its remarkable horns clipped, the vessel was not rising to the surface.

The devil's own blast of wind howled and shrieked in the canyon of the fjord.

"We cannot reverse here," stated Doc. "We will swing outside the walls and return."

"That flood tide has tremendous force," said Knut Aage. "Likely the vessel will be dashed upon the rocks."

"I had thought of that," said Doc. "We will attempt to get back in time to rescue the crew from drowning."

The screaming wind on the plane's tail projected it over the sea of the wide channel outside the cliffs.

Two black fishing schooners leaped into view. Their crews were like struggling knots of puppets. They were hauling in the tangled wreckage of a great seine.

"You see, Doc Savage, the men of that submarine are ruthless enough," pointed Knut Aage. "They have torn away a seine which was the result of a year of effort."

The bite of the plane's props was tremendous, but not enough to give it speed. That mountain wind was a blast of more than gale intensity. Doc glided to the fjord. He permitted the flood tide to catch the pontoons.

"They'll not have a chance if the submarine strikes," said Knut Aage. "It will sink immediately." But the dehorned monster of the sea had not sunk. It was a mile or more from the plane when it was shot into a slanting scar of the cliff. This break led into the trail mounting to the Jostedalsbrae glacier.

What served as a conning tower must have opened. The half dozen figures emerging were mere specks at that distance. They were in flight toward the great glacier.

"We could ascend and trap them easily," suggested Knut Aage. "They will be many hours making their way back to the ice caverns over the Jostedalsbrae."

"Time is more valuable for other purposes," stated Doc. "The submarine appears to be undamaged. The few hours they require to reach the ice caverns of Satan's Gateway must be employed."

"But what can be done with the helpless vessel?" said Knut Aage.

"That remains to be determined," advised Doc.

THE pointed snout of the submarine rested easily in the rocks. The craft might have been a stranded aluminum fish. Four jagged sprouts showed where the plane's pontoons had sheered off the prongs.

Doc whipped from the plane into the door of the conning tower. Knut Aage followed more slowly.

When the Norwegian got inside, the amazing bronze man already had a wrench in his hand. Multiple coils of pipe lined the sides of the forward chamber. Below them were geared motors. The boxing of a propeller shaft extended through the lower floor of the sub.

"This is one of the most intricate vessels I have ever seen," stated Doc. "It has many principles that will some day be applied to all undersea boats. Beside the daylight power, there are auxiliary engines for motive force when the prongs would be submerged."

"And they were trapped by the rush of the tide before they could get them in operation," stated Knut Aage.

"Exactly," agreed Doc. "Perhaps the crew feared our return. They would have expected to be attacked with bombs before they could get out of the fjord."

Doc was disconnecting the broken prongs inside the submarine. Knut Aage explored through several bulkheaded compartments.

Doc Savage had been working with great haste. He started outside toward the moored plane. His purpose had not been clear to Knut Aage.

Knut Aage was near the middle of the sub. Doc heard him call out excitedly.

"Doc Savage! Here's something!"

The man of bronze whipped back into the craft. A central compartment looked as if it might have been a torpedo room. But there were no torpedoes. Iron-clamped doors showed where there must be openings for leaving and entering when submerged.

In the middle of this room lay the glass fish. It's tubes still glowed with blue phosphorescence. The sliding door was open. Doc breathed with relief.

"They have got Monk and Lora Krants," he stated. "Strands of the big fish seine are hanging onto the hull. It must have caught the cylinder as it was sinking."

FROM what appeared to be an outer air chamber came a thudding knock. It was like a man's head being butted against a wall. It was a head, Monk's.

Doc snapped off the clamps and the figure of the apelike chemist rolled out. Monk had not been bound. He scrambled to his feet. His hairy throat heaved as he pulled in fresh air.

"A couple more minutes and I'd been through breathing," gasped the chemist. "Them dag-goned devils meant to suffocate me! And that redhead is nothing but a sneaky double-crosser! Doc, them men took to her like she was a queen or something. I told you she was crooked."

"What happened?" said Doc quietly.

"The glass fish got caught in a seine with a lot of other fish," said Monk. "We were dragged up and then we went down. The oxygen tanks were empty. After a while, we passed out. And I'd got to kinda believin' that red-headed dame was on the square."

"An' then what happens?" squealed Monk. "Next thing we're being rolled outta the glass fish. Them devils runnin' this boat act like they think the redhead is a princess. I don't know what she told them. They were them fellows running around without any clothes."

"You think perhaps they might have identified Lora Krants?" said Doc.

"Dang it, Doc, they almost kissed her!" exploded Monk. "Then they got off in a corner and talked among themselves. I tried to horn in and a couple of 'em grabbed me. The redhead must have told them what to do. So they crammed me into that hole in the wall."

"It does seem peculiar," admitted Doc. "But we have work to do. Monk, scramble around and pipe a new hook-over from their air-chamber pumps. I believe we can charge our compressed air tanks. You will find several oxygen tanks aboard. Substitute those for the empties in the cylinder."

Doc went outside. Knut Aage watched him in amazement. The bronze man had disconnected the power prongs from the plane. He brought them into the submarine.

"I never would have thought of that," said Knut Aage.

"They have been made standard size," said Doc. "Their seating is the same on both sets of light cells. We will soon have the power to reach Satan's Gateway, if the daylight is kept on."

If haggard prisoners in the Place of the Glacial Death could have known of Doc's intention, their spirits might not have been so low.

Chapter XXIII. THE CRUSHING DEATH

SIR ARTHUR WESTCOTT'S mustache had become scraggly. The usually imperturbable Englishman gnawed at its straggling ends.

"By jove!" he exclaimed. "When they find out what these bally blighters have been up to, there probably will be a war! Nobody can kick one of His Majesty's subjects around like this!"

The usually dignified Englishman had lost all of his calmness. His wrists were locked in manacles. These were fastened to short iron chains stapled into a rock wall.

"Indubitably an international complication will eventuate," drawled the voice of the skeletonlike figure chained beside Sir Arthur. "It is extremely doubtful, however, if it will provide any insuperable obstacle to the irresistible pressure of glacial erosion. While they are summoning

conferences, we will have become particles of infinitesimal indifference to diplomatic processes." The four other members of the international war commission made no comment. Their English had its limitations.

If Johnny had said, "Before Great Britain can start a war, we will be ground to bits by that ice wall," they would have understood.

Johnny was a woeful object. The six temporary statesmen of the great nation were a haggard lot. This speech took place at about the time Doc Savage was getting the conning tower of the light-powered submarine closed. Johnny's faith in the man of bronze was now expressed. He reverted to short words.

"My hope lies in Doc Savage," he said. "Something tells me Doc isn't far away."

The other members of the war commission were hunched in a strained position on a narrow shelf. Back of them the wall oozed cold moisture. Overhead a smooth, vaulted roof bore the scored marks of eroding ice.

Where their chains were attached to the wall, there were gouged grooves. Even the narrow shelf on which they were situated was a scar left in the hard, black rock by thousands of tons of grinding ice.

"By jove, old fellow!" spouted Sir Arthur. "You have a great eye! The bally wall seems to be slipping!"

THE wall was a solid, towering face of a creeping finger of the great glacier. It was pushing through a cleft cut in past centuries. It was like the glittering head of a slowly moving piston. This filled all of the cavern at one end.

In the other direction a series of passages showed. All of the inner caverns had been continuously lighted by the uncanny daylight power. Some fifty feet below the narrow shelf was clear, deep water.

Johnny and the others had been brought here in one of the pronged undersea boats. This submarine passed back and forth often. Johnny had judged there were at least three of these submarines. One had only three prongs, having been partly dehorned by a British gun.

"That ice is moving now at the rate of about a foot an hour," stated Johnny. "When it happens it won't be over with quickly."

This was an unpleasant thought.

The gleaming ice completely filled the space from side to side.

FOUR prongs swam into the Fjord. They had come from the inner caverns. As nearly as Johnny could judge, the strange daylight emanated from some source farther under the mountain. The geologist could occasionally catch the low, vibrant humming of machinery.

The submarine emerged close to the shelf. The conning tower opened. Half a dozen dark-skinned men came out. They were pushing prisoners ahead of them.

"Renny!" shouted Johnny. "Long Tom! Ham! Sir Arthur, I told you Doc Savage would be along!"

With these three of Doc's men were Larrone, and Barton, the heavy-browed brother of Lora Krants. They were shoved to the narrow shelf. Skin thongs were exchanged for the iron manacles chained to the wall.

"Holy cow!" exploded Renny. "How'd you come here, Johnny?"

"Same way you did, I imagine," replied Johnny. "Where's Doc?"

There was a minute of silence. None of the new arrivals spoke.

"You don't mean something's happened to Doc?" demanded Johnny.

Then Renny exploded irately, "Well, if anything did, it's that red-headed dame again! The last we saw of Doc, he was trying to save her from a crowd of naked guys who didn't have any blood! I saw Doc and Monk go down under a whole bunch, and then we were grabbed!"

Renny always took a gloomy view of things. Ham was more cheerful.

"And by this time, I'll bet whoever landed on Doc is wishing he hadn't," said the lawyer. "We were brought a long way to get in here and Doc might be any place by this time."

"By jove!" exclaimed Sir Arthur. "I was of the opinion your Doc Savage could not cope with these blighters!"

"Whoever you are then," observed Ham, scathingly, "your opinions aren't worth ten cents a dozen! You don't know Doc Savage."

Kama's dark-skinned men returned to the pronged submarine. The strange craft submerged. The prongs passed directly under the arching wall of the glacial crusher.

"If only that ice would let go right now, it would suit me fine," said Johnny. "Brothers, it looks like we're going to discover what it would be like to go through a slow-motion meat grinder."

THE movement of the ice wall was slow, but its progress was certain. Already a section of the narrow shelf on which they were chained was being ground to atoms.

The gleaming, blue wall was like a great knife pushed by a mountain. Sir Arthur Westcott was closest to the creeping death. Next to him was Johnny. Beyond were the others.

The usually sartorially perfect Ham was a sad-looking human. But he maintained a light tone.

"Anyway, I'd never figured when my time came they'd have to move a whole mountain," he commented. "Maybe we'll get a break, though. One gang headed by this fellow Kama, from San Tao, is fighting that Norwegian crowd. They had one jam on the glacier. If they get together down here, it might help."

Sir Arthur Westcott gnawed at his mustache. The creeping wall was barely six feet away. The solid wall trembled. A part of the narrow shelf split off. It left scarcely two feet to where Sir Arthur was huddled.

"I'm jolly well glad," remarked the Englishman, "I'll be the first to go."

He didn't look jolly well glad. Johnny scowled at him.

The others were getting the picture. They would be crushed slowly. One by one they would go.

First the ice would touch. Then its weight would begin pushing.

The prisoner would strain away in his manacles. The chains would hold him against the ice. His body would be pressed the fraction of an inch at a time between the wall and the glacier.

"But have you discovered, Johnny, what the purpose of all this might be?" said Ham. "If either of these crowds wants us out of the way, it would have been much simpler to have put us out quick. Or do you suppose we are being used in some way to bring pressure upon Doc to lay off?"

"It might be that," stated Johnny. "We have learned enough to know there is some strange power of light. In some manner, the war commission was about to interfere. But I don't understand this slow-torture angle."

IF the chained prisoners could have been in a mammoth inner cavern, they might have understood the purpose of the horrible, creeping death by the glacier ice. This apparently did not concern any pressure to be brought upon Doc Savage.

The greatest cavern of all was at the end of a connected series. The passages leading inward were partly of clear blue ice and partly of black rock.

In the midst of this room sat a man who when younger must have been a magnificent figure. His thick hair, now snowily white, was in shaggy confusion around a rugged, wrinkled face. Before him on a wall was a panel containing a number of spread charts.

The man was following lines on these charts with a slender steel pointer. As the pointer moved, his lips murmured.

"Each man to his own country," he was saying. "Press of population brings wars. Conquest must cease. Each nation must develop and exist by its own resources within its own boundaries."

The steel pointer swung.

"Conquest, always conquest!" the man murmured. "I have but to move one finger and it will cease.

In this way only, can war be ended. Only my own craft and my own air force shall have the secret of moving by the light of peace."

In towering columns of some transparent substance varicolored lights spit and crackled. Many giant tubes converged on conductors which seemed to project through the roof into outside space. The white-haired giant spoke louder. While his sunken eyes held a fanatical gleam, his voice was gentle, kindly.

"Some may die, but it is best, for I shall save the world from wholesale murder. And all of this shall be for peace. Peace for the whole world!"

ANOTHER voice spoke with a high, sarcastic inflection. The owner of this voice was invisible.

Apparently he was standing somewhere outside the mammoth room of the peace power. Perhaps he was speaking into a conductor.

Around this second speaker other men must have been assembled. Movement of bodies, muttered words could be detected.

"I have come for an answer," spoke this voice. "Your ideas of peace for the world are all a very fine theory. But we will not go on until you have imparted full knowledge of both the positive and negative light rays."

The white-haired giant laughed softly to himself.

"What I have given a lifetime to learn is only for myself to know," he replied. "I am not deceived. You already have bartered to sell this power. But none may purchase that which you do not possess. Without the key, you are helpless."

The other voice laughed mockingly.

"The time has come for a showdown, Man of Peace," spoke the voice. "I have waited until now. I will wait no longer. The precious war commission which you intended to instruct has been put in the Place of the Glacial Death. Within another few hours, the representatives of the greatest nations will be crushed slowly to pulp!"

The white-haired giant jerked to his feet. His big hands trembled. There was now anger in his voice.

"You have gone too far!" he rapped out. "None is to die, as you were instructed! You cannot compel me to do your bidding! I will summon my men!"

"You may summon them in vain," mocked the other voice. "Do you imagine I have been so foolish as not to prepare? Look around you. Then, if you think it is wise, summon your men."

THE sunken eyes of the white-haired giant turned slowly.

In the several doors of the mammoth room stood armed figures. All of these men were short and dark-skinned.

"But you cannot do this! One of our purposes was preservation of the white race—"

The white-haired giant was raging now.

"Calm yourself," mocked the outside voice. "It is already done. We have possession of one of the subs. Your men without blood have another. The third will return presently. It will be seized as it enters Satan's Gateway. We shall take possession of all the machinery. If you desire this war commission to survive, you will impart complete information."

"You condemn these innocent men to death for your own petty purpose?" shouted the white-haired giant.

"Petty purpose hardly describes it," said the voice. "One Oriental province alone has offered one hundred millions. There are twelve other foreign bidders. The power will bring five hundred millions before we have finished."

There was the clicking as if a switch had been pulled. In front of the white-haired giant a dark panel glowed with purple light. Living figures leaped into the square.

"You can see for yourself," rasped the voice. "Not only are some there of the war commission, but there are others. Once you had a very great friend they call Doc Savage. Perhaps you would like to see four of his men crushed by the Glacial Death? And Doc Savage himself already has died."

The big hands of the white-haired giant moved helplessly, as if he would push away the vision in the glass. The television showed the narrow shelf of the Place of the Glacial Death.

The blue wall of ice was slivering. Pieces were falling. Tons of crushing force were sliding along the shelf. Stone was being reduced to pulpy powder. A mustached figure—Sir Arthur Westcott, of Great Britain—was pulling at chains holding him to iron pegs in the wall above the shelf.

The face of the living glacier was hardly more than a foot from the Britisher's writhing body.

The faces of the other prisoners were mirrors of stark horror.

The mocking voice said, "One by one, the others will see what it is like for living flesh and bone to be pinched, ground slowly to bloody nothing. Each one will die slowly. He will fight his chains, but before those iron pegs could be torn out, his body will be in fragments. Is it not a nice picture?"

"You arch-fiend of hell!" shouted the white-haired giant. "I shall destroy all—I shall—"

THE deeply sunken eyes were staring at the shelf of horror in the television. But those orbs were fixed more upon one figure than any other. It was the dark-browed brother of Lora Krants. Into the sunken eyes crept slow, desperate anguish. It was succeeded by cunning.

One hand of the white-haired giant moved.

"Do not do that!" rapped out a closer voice. "If you touch anything, you will die instantly! We shall at least have the power as it is! No doubt, we can discover the full knowledge we seek!"

Rifles pointed at the white-haired giant. This new speaker was Kama, of San Tao. His teeth flashed in a cheerful smile.

The white-haired giant refrained from touching the levers. He must have realized that his own death would not save those in the glacial chamber.

But the giant was sliding one foot slowly forward. It touched a contact. The Man of Peace undoubtedly had prepared for just such an emergency. At the same time, he bowed his head as if resigned.

"What do you hope to gain by assisting a traitor?" he said to Kama. "He will sell to the highest bidder, if he learns all he must know."

"Perhaps I shall be the highest bidder," suggested Kama with a smile. "If not, then the amount shall be great enough to make the sharing of it worth while."

The white-haired giant had apparently touched nothing. But from some distance underground came a humming throb of power.

The voice outside spoke sharply.

"Look out, Kama! We have been tricked! Have your men seize him! He has summoned the other submarine!"

The white-haired Man of Peace laughed loudly, suddenly, horribly. His great figure plunged forward. His hands were thrust toward the levers. Kama's nearest men moved with the quickness of striking cobras.

IN the Place of the Glacial Death, Sir Arthur Westcott had ceased speaking. Though the temperature was far below freezing, the sweat was popping on his reddened, desperate face. Liquid ran from the corners of his mouth, dripping from the ends of his gnawed mustache.

The British statesman had virtually ceased to "carry on." His teeth had chewed his lower lip to red fragments. Now he could have moved his head and touched the face of the living glacier.

The crushing, slow death was only inches away.

Sir Arthur Westcott had perhaps half an hour, a little more or a little less, before his body

would begin to flatten, to dissolve, between the pinch of the glacier and black rock.
"Look!" grated Ham. "Maybe, after all, we'll get a break!"

Chapter XXIV. BATTLE OF THE MONSTERS

INTO the blue water below the narrow shelf moved two sets of objects. Each of these consisted of four prongs. They entered from opposite ends of the glacial cavern. They were moving at high speed. "Holy cow!" boomed Renny. "They're going to smash each other!"

But the commanders of the peace power submarines were too skillful to risk collision. Like horns of submerged monsters, the prongs ceased moving. Around the silvery crafts just under the surface the water boiled.

"They're coming up!" said Long Tom. "Now what do you suppose we're in for?"

The sleek, shining bodies rolled to the surface together. As they emerged, two conning towers opened noiselessly. Men poured onto the backs of the boats from these.

All those who appeared carried rifles. The guns started snapping almost before members of the crews had regained their balance.

Leaden slugs buzzed like bees in the echoing caverns. The slight explosions were sufficient to cause sharp, crackling reports from the living face of the glacier.

"Good grief!" rapped Ham. "They're bumping each other off! It is a break!"

"It might be well to point out just where we will benefit," said Johnny. "Suppose they keep that up? When they've finished, then where will we be?"

His questions were logical. On the rounded back of one horned sub were the nearly naked figures of giant Norwegians. These undoubtedly were the loyal adherents of the white-haired one who called himself the Man of Peace.

On the other craft were the dark-skinned Orientals. Owing to the limited movement from the conning towers, they were for the moment evenly matched.

A huge Norwegian received a bullet in his hairy breast. Without a sound, he pitched into the underground current. His body rolled over. It disappeared.

The following Norwegian pierced the skull of the Oriental who had killed the first man. The little Oriental splashed into the water. A red blotch stained the spot where he disappeared. The Norwegian who killed him was next to go.

Four men had been killed on each sub before a command was given. The Orientals faded back into the conning tower.

"Holy cow!" growled Renny. "I thought those dark-skinned guys had more guts than that! They're still even and they quit!"

"I have an idea that if we have any chance at all, it lies with the naked blond fellows," said Ham. "But the little dark chaps don't quit like that for nothing."

HAM'S opinion was quickly substantiated. With the cessation of shooting, the white bodies of the Norwegians became more numerous. There were more than a score crowding the back of their craft.

"That's idiotic," surmised the wise Johnny. "I'll bet the dark guys are playing just for that."

From the conning tower of the Oriental submarine racketed a weapon. But this was no cracking rifle. The high, deadly chatter was like the hammering of a riveting machine.

The result was ghastly.

Dead men slid from the Norwegian submarine into the underground sea. Some lived long enough to writhe with agony on the sloping deck before they slid off. The men on the narrow shelf stared helplessly at the massacre.

The Norwegian deck was swept clear. Only two men lay draped across the rounded surface. The machine gun still hammered at the conning tower. A slow, heavy voice spoke a command.

Air hissed in the cavern. The water bubbled. The iron port of the conning tower started to close. One of the men on the deck moved. He got to his feet and lurched forward. Already the tanks of the submarine were filling.

The craft was submerging. The wounded Norwegian pitched toward the closing iron port. His head and shoulders were thrust through.

Then he screamed with agony. The closing iron was pinching his bared torso. Excited voices yammered inside the sub. Evidently an effort was made to reverse the submerging operations.

The order came too late.

"Holy cow!" boomed Renny. "They're going under with that conning hatch open!"

The sleek, horned vessel dipped beneath the surface. Water gurgled past the wounded man wedged in the port of the hatchway. Someone attempted to open the door and release the body. The underground sea poured in with a flood.

Oil sprinkled with air bubbles oiled the surface. Into this heads began to pop up. Evidently the Norwegians still in the submarine were making their final desperate fight to live.

Already, the silvery craft was beyond the view of the prisoners on the narrow shelf. The water here apparently was of great depths. More than a dozen heads came into view.

On the side of the cavern opposite the high, narrow shelf was a broader ledge at nearly the level of the water. The swimming Norwegians made for this refuge.

Above them, the Oriental undersea craft swung slowly broadside. The snout of the machine gun poked out.

"Good grief!" barked Ham. "The devils couldn't do that!"

But the dark men had no compunction. The machine gun weaved slowly. Fire sliced from the muzzle. Lead pattered along the water. The slugs skipped and danced among the bobbing heads. One by one, the skulls were filled with round blue holes. Some were split open, as more than one bullet found its mark.

The bare arms of the Norwegians beat the surface hopelessly.

The prisoners groaned in unison. The last bobbing head had been punctured. The last white hand had flashed up, then followed a body to the bottom.

THE uncanny, white daylight continued to flood the interior of the Place of the Glacial Death. The submarine of the Orientals swung on the surface.

Kama, of San Tao, stepped forth. His teeth flashed in a cheerful smile. He seemed immensely pleased with the amusement his men had been given. He looked up at the prisoners. He probably had as much feeling for them as he would have had for a similar number of flies pinned on a wall.

"There is one among you who can influence the Man of Peace," said Kama. "We have not been informed who this fortunate individual may be. But the Man of Peace has betrayed himself. If that one of you will make himself known, he will be released and taken to the inner cavern."

Doc's men stared at each other. Sir Arthur Westcott had ceased fighting his chains. The ice was still moving slowly, inexorably.

Suddenly, the living glacier itself gave the Englishman a reprieve for the time being. Perhaps it had been the shooting. A great corner cracked from the ice wall and crashed into the water below. It opened a space of perhaps two feet close to the shelf.

At the rate the glacier was moving, that might mean another hour before the first victim would be crushed.

The prisoners were saying nothing. They were waiting for one to reply to the Kama.

It was the dark-browed brother of Lora Krants who spoke.

"Perhaps I am the one you mean," he said. "I am not saying this to save myself."

"Then you know the Man of Peace?" said Kama. "That, indeed, is most strange."

"I am the one," repeated Barton Krants.

Two of Kama's men ascended the narrow shelf. The manacles of the youth's wrists were unlocked.

They lowered him to the sloping deck of the sub.

"Holy cow!" rasped Renny. "I knew it all the time! An' that red-headed dame's another one of them!"

But the eyes of the others were snapped away from the dark-browed Barton Krants.

The four prongs of another peace power submarine were gliding into the cavern. The four mirrored horns seemed like the head of some stalking beast of prey. Kama uttered a curse in his own language.

Barton Krants was shoved quickly into the conning tower of the Orientals' submarine. Kama ordered his other men below. The Oriental potentate, if that was what he claimed to be, no longer was smiling.

Commands flowed from his lips in the language of San Tao.

Johnny, alone of the prisoners, could understand the words.

"Prepare to attack, but we must preserve this submarine!" directed Kama. "It would be well to riddle their power projectors with shot! Then they will come to the surface."

The Orientals were bringing their machine gun into position.

THE four prongs of the new submarine slackened their speed. The craft had been heading directly for the glacial finger where it extended into the cave. There was considerable space between this ice and the water.

The glacier's weight was supported by its own thickness and its crowding of the upper walls.

"This sub has also lost one of its eyes," remarked Johnny. "The mirror, or whatever it is, has been taken out."

The four prongs came to a complete stop. The silver craft was motionless. Its sleek sides could be seen a few feet below the surface. Three of the light-gathering lenses were shining.

But the fourth prong seemed to be an eye socket with an empty hole.

"It may be they are using that prong for a periscope," suggested Ham. "There doesn't seem to be any other device for observation."

In this he was incorrect. The craft was equipped with something better than a periscope. The observer inside could survey the outside for a long distance. The device was something on the order of a television arrangement. And it could also bring to view the interior of another vessel.

"Perforate the projecting inductors!" commanded Kama.

The machine gun was aimed at the four prongs. An Oriental tripped the trigger.

A stream of slugs skipped the water. They slapped around the prongs. Some bullets pinged off the gleaming metal, but apparently did no great damage.

"Aim for the lenses!" yelled Kama. "Smash them! The Norwegians will be forced out!"

"Good grief!" groaned Renny. "We're about to witness another bloody slaughter!"
The machine gun was lifted. Slugs buzzed around the shining mirrors of the horns.
Then from the prong with the missing lense curled a yellow wisp of smoke. Puffs came from behind it. The vapor mushroomed and spread rapidly. Apparently it was coming from the craft with the force of a pump behind it.
The prongs vanished in a cloud. The machine gun's stream searched for the target. But there was only the spreading cloud of yellow vapor.
Kama yelled, "Get inside! This is something new! Where did those Norwegians get it? It may be poison gas!"
The machine gunners ceased firing. The Orientals scrambled for their conning tower hatchway.
"I'd be willing to bet a million against a thin dime that it's nobody but—" Ham started to say. Then a scared Oriental poked his face from the conning tower. He yammered excitedly at Kama. But there were two words for which there seemed no equivalent in the language of San Tao.
"Doc Savage! Doc Savage!"
Kama slapped his hands together and swore vilely. The other craft was hidden by the yellow smoke screen. Kama followed his men into the conning tower.
"I told you, Sir Arthur, Doc would be around," drawled Johnny.

Chapter XXV. UNDER THE ICE

DOC SAVAGE glided from the big retort that had been converted into a smoke screen pot. This chemical container had been ingeniously connected with the open inductor prong from which the lens had been removed.
"Monk, have you got the connection for that extra air compressor tank?" said the man of bronze. Monk was engaged in mixing half a dozen chemicals in metal containers. The apelike chemist had seemed to forget their mission and all of its danger. For they had discovered a completely outfitted laboratory aboard the mystery craft of the peace power.
"Yeah, Doc," stated Monk, "I've got the compression and the hook-up. All I need to do now is slip the acid into this mess. And when it starts spouting, there won't be any doubt about this being Satan's Gateway. It'll probably be hotter'n that."
"Then we are going under the ice of that glacial finger," stated Doc. "I estimate we have perhaps half an hour to discover what lies beyond. By that time, the glacier will be carrying out the terrible purpose for which the prisoners have been chained to the wall."
"But Doc," said Monk. "Why couldn't we pull up there and free all of them right now?"
"Because we probably would be overtaken by the same fate that wiped out the Norwegians on that other sub," stated Doc. "Perhaps not all of our enemies are in the craft with Kama. We are opposing forces about which we are not familiar. This daylight power now is on. If it should be switched off, it is possible we should fail."
Doc had the prongs moving under the ice. The craft was headed for the inner caverns.
"The other craft is pursuing us, Doc Savage," stated the voice of Knut Aage. "Kama is driving directly toward us at high speed. He will ram this vessel if he gets the chance."
"I had judged he would make that mistake," advised Doc. "Monk, release the outside port of the exit chamber. The stuff is ready."
Monk's nubbin of a head bobbed. He scuttled to a lever. In the special periscopic device, Knut Aage was watching the slender needle of Kama's submarine shooting toward them. Its prow was in the form of a pointed ram.
Monk pushed the lever. Immediately the clear, green water around them took on a purplish color. This deepened. It became an intense black. Though their own visibility ahead was not lessened, behind them the channel became a vast pool of ink.
"Their craft has disappeared, Doc Savage," said Knut Aage.
"And for the present, we are lost to their view," stated Doc. "You say the chamber of the light is at the end of this cavern channel?"
"It is there the Man of Peace controls the destinies of this power," said Knut Aage.
"We shall proceed there," stated Doc.

KAMA stood at the periscope device in his submarine. He had ordered full speed ahead, despite the danger of crashing a wall. His purpose was to ram the submarine carrying Doc Savage.
Then the underground sea was blackened. Visibility and direction became confused. Strangely enough, Kama could still observe Doc Savage and the others inside their craft, but steering a direct course had become impossible.
Kama released a flood of Oriental curses. Then his teeth flashed in an evil smile.
"We will take the passage of the short cut!" he ordered.
The prongs of Kama's submarine immediately swerved from the channel. Slow speed was ordered. The craft nosed slowly along the wall. In a few minutes, the craft swung off under the mountain glacier.
"We shall arrive at the cavern of light ahead of this bronze man of magic," stated Kama. "And we shall be ready to receive him."

AHEAD of Doc Savage's submarine loomed the entrance to the cavern of light. A queer, pink radiance bathed shallow steps cut from the water into the mammoth room.

"Keep close watch, Monk," directed Doc. "I shall investigate."

The ballast chambers boiled. The power craft slowly came to the surface. Doc Savage opened the conning tower hatchway and emerged.

Monk was grumbling. He was beside Knut Aage at the observing device. Kama's submarine had not again come into view.

"Dag-gone it, Doc," yelled Monk, "I don't like this! Maybe that heathen got lost in that ink an' maybe he didn't! It's too danged quiet to suit me!"

Doc Savage did not reply. He was moving along the sleek back of the submarine. Its prow touched the shallow stone steps.

From the lighted mammoth room came the low humming of some kind of machinery. There was a hissing and bubbling. This was like liquids gurgling in great retorts.

Doc Savage stepped lightly to the first of the shallow stairs.

From this position, his vision swept the interior of the great cavern. The bronze man's remarkable powers of observation took in several hundred details of the machinery.

From among this intricate mass he unerringly selected the vital instruments. His rare, fantastic trilling broke out. Now it was a tribute to the mighty brain which had conceived this power and perfected it to practical application.

The trilling abruptly ended.

Doc Savage was taking in a new scene. And in this scene was the white-haired giant, the Man of Peace.

The man of bronze stood motionless. His powerful hands hung at his sides. Not by any visible action, did he betray that which his own super-senses had conveyed to his brain.

For Doc Savage knew he was surrounded. He had become aware that hidden black eyes were even now sighting along aimed rifle barrels. There were more than a score of these weapons. Yet so perfect was the drilling of the Kama's subjects, not the faintest sound had been created.

The voice of Kama spoke mockingly.

"You will walk ahead, Doc Savage, into the cavern of light," said Kama. "Your determination to solve the mystery of the power of peace shall be gratified. I would not deny you that. Walk forward, I command! Either that, or you shall die where you are! Our bullets will not be wasted! For your eyes alone shall be the target!"

"A wise man, Kama, knows when to obey," said Doc Savage, calmly. He raised his bronzed hands. Step by step, he went up the shallow stairs.

HAD Kama been closer, more ready to reveal himself, he would have noted a queer circumstance. Doc Savage was apparently accepting his defeat in this trap. Stair by stair, he climbed toward the cavern of light.

But the flaky gold eyes of the bronze man were closed. The lids concealed the whirlwinds that must have been stirring in the depths of these hypnotic orbs.

And as Doc walked up the stairs, his knees rubbed slowly together.

The eyes sighting along the rifle barrels were all within a few yards. Kama's men were enclosed in the cold, icy cavern.

The crushing of fragile glass could hardly have been heard. Some steam arose from the icy water in the cavern. The vapor slowly spreading along the stairs around Doc Savage might have been mistaken for that.

Only, where the bronze giant had been walking under the menace of the rifles, there now was no one.

Kama yelled, "Shoot now! Don't wait!"

The Orientals were accustomed to many kinds of magic. But this sudden disappearance of Doc Savage paralyzed them temporarily. Then a dozen rifles slapped flame and lead at the place on the stairs where Doc Savage had been.

The man of bronze was no longer there. His massive legs had been sprung like springs of finest steel. He had propelled himself backward. But when he struck the water, he checked his descent so that no splash sounded.

Doc Savage did not possess the power to make himself invisible. His apparent disappearance into thin air was only in the eyes of the Orientals. Especially those whose rifle sights were fixed upon him.

The vaporlike gas released from the containers strapped inside his massive limbs affected the sight of Kama and his men for only a few seconds. Then it was dispelled. Other Orientals dashed from their places of concealment in the cavern of light.

Doc Savage was alongside the peace power submarine. One bronze hand lifted. It was visible to Monk and Knut Aage. The hand made quick signs.

"Howlin' calamities!" yelled Monk. "Doc's gone crazy! He's telling us to dive!"

Knut Aage was sluggish, but he was quick enough to act now. Already, he was closing the conning tower. The bronze man was making another sign.

"There he is!" screamed Kama. "Alongside the sub! Fill his worthless body with lead!" The Orientals made a most desperate effort to do this. Rifles belched. Bullets scored the side of the submarine. Water was boiling from its ballast tanks. The silver fish of the peace power was submerging.

Only the four prongs now were visible. A leaden hail squawled over the surface near the craft. One of Doc's bronze hands was seen for a moment. Then it slowly disappeared.

"This time, we have left no possible doubt!" gloated Kama. "It would have been best to have permitted him to view our power, but all things must be as they are!"

For the fourth time, Kama was convinced the man of bronze had died. Now he rapped out another order. The four prongs of the sub were moving away from the stairs.

"We must now capture the peace sub for our own purpose," announced Kama. "Without Doc Savage, the others will be easily overcome."

Kama led the rush of his men to their own concealed submarine. The craft had been hidden in one of the numerous side channels near the cavern of light.

KNUT AAGE was at the controls, as their pronged craft moved slowly away from the stairs of the cavern of light. Monk whipped back into a middle compartment. His hairy hands shifted levers with frantic haste.

"Dag-gone it, Doc!" he was muttering. "I knew I should've gone with you!"

Monk's hands whirled a wheel. A metal panel started sliding. Some green water flooded in.

Doc Savage climbed to his feet. He shook the water from the sleek mask of his bronze hair. His golden skin seemed itself waterproof. His lungs filled with air.

This had been his first breath in nearly four minutes. During that time, he had dived. Then he had clung to the outside clamps of the entrance-and-exit chamber of the submarine.

"Dang it, Doc—" Monk began.

"We have no time to lose," interrupted Doc. "At this moment, we have been compelled to wait too long. The ice of the glacier is upon our companions. If we do not hasten, the Englishman and the others nearest him will be crushed. Johnny is chained beside him."

Knut Aage stared at Doc Savage as he came into the control room.

"You are almost as much of a miracle as the men who floated after they were dead," he stated.

"And I discovered that was simple enough. Their blood had been removed and their veins filled with a chemical gas."

"My own escape was just as simple," was Doc's only comment.

The bronze man regarded this statement as true. He never looked on his apparently miraculous powers as extraordinary. Knowledge of thousands of devices and their application, and the use of his wits in preparation for nearly all emergencies, he did not regard as supernatural.

Knut Aage was back at the observing device.

"Kama's sub is coming again," he stated. "He probably believes you have perished, Doc Savage."

"Only until they pick us up with their own underwater television observer," stated Doc. "And we cannot lose them as before. We have no time to mix a new lot of the screening chemical. Moreover, I have another more vital use for the projector."

Kama's submarine was coming along rapidly. Doc headed back for the Place of the Glacial Death.

Both craft were speeding about evenly. Kama apparently was trying to come alongside. The movement indicated he did not intend to repeat the effort to ram the other submarine.

"Monk, prepare the big retort," directed Doc. "Connect it with the compression tank. Have the igniting acid ready."

A broad grin crossed Monk's face.

"If there's really a devil in this Satan's Gateway, we'll give him something to play with," he piped.

The great metal retort with its strange mixture of chemicals was placed under the prong projector from which the eye had been removed. A person with chemical knowledge would have known the retort and its connection were of alloy that was designed to resist the most intense heat.

Kama's submarine speeded close. Doc saw the craft was making an effort to crowd their vessel into the wall. He shot his own boat ahead at dangerous speed.

Chapter XXVI. DEVIL'S OWN FIRE

"I GUESS this is the finish for him!" grated Ham. "What do you suppose could have happened to Doc in that pronged boat? Could Kama have got him?"

The first of Ham's remark was directed at the plight of Sir Arthur Westcott. Despite his stolid British courage, the Englishman groaned loudly.

There was a deep grinding of ice against rock. Sir Arthur had strained the length of the short chains. But the slowly pushing ice already had caught his shoulder. The pinch had cut the flesh. Blood flowed over one hand.

The narrow shelf under Sir Arthur's feet slivered off. The tortured Britisher was suddenly left suspended by the chains. Against him a corner of the ice was pushing, pushing, pushing.

Perhaps, in time, that chain would break. But it could only be snapped by a pressure that would

first reduce the prisoner's body to a thing of jellied bone.

Sir Arthur suddenly shouted in an agonized tone. Plainly, his brain was giving away under the strain.

Then Johnny spoke quickly, "He's back—Doc's come back! There's the submarine with one empty eye—" "Yeah!" rapped out Ham. "An' there's Kama's sub right on their tail! There doesn't seem anything Doc can do to shake him! I'm afraid there's nothing even Doc can do in time!"

Doc's submarine shot toward the hanging finger of the glacier. The prongs passed underneath the ice close to the point where Sir Arthur was being inexorably squeezed. The Britisher now was only mumbling out his intense suffering.

The four prongs of Kama's submarine crossed the open space toward the ice. They were stopped.

FROM under the ice leaped a blinding light. It was as if a blowtorch of giant size had suddenly begun spurting fire. The flame danced with varied colors from the face of the glacier.

Johnny, who was next to Sir Arthur, lost all of his scholarly aplomb. He shouted.

"I told you so! Doc's got it! Well, I'll be superamalgamated! The whole place is getting hot!"

Johnny spoke the truth. All of the inside of the Place of Glacial Death was becoming heated. From under the corner of the crushing glacier leaped darting tongues of blue-green fire.

The heat must have been withering. Probably it was of an intensity that would have cut into the hardest steel.

Most certainly the spouting flame was penetrating the ice of the glacial finger. One wide crack appeared. Into this, water started pouring down. This was on the corner which was slowly crushing Sir Arthur to squeezed flesh.

Abruptly, the whole corner of the glacial finger split. Tons of ice were being dissolved as if they had been pushed into a fiery furnace. The face of the glacier closest to Sir Arthur roared of its own weight and went crashing into the water under it.

"Holy cow!" shouted Renny. "If that ever hit that sub, it would be all up with Doc!"

But this falling chunk dived, then came slowly up. It was as large as a small berg. Its fall revealed Doc's submarine.

From the prong without an eye shot the melting flame. The heat of it was so intense, even the alloy metal of the projector was beginning to fall away.

The fierce blaze hissed with the pressure behind it. Doc's men on the narrow shelf could not understand the source. They did not know of the laboratory Doc and Monk had discovered. Nor did they know of the compressed air tanks which had been charged from the ballast power pumps of the submarine.

Doc's craft moved slightly. The gigantic blowtorch was touching more of the glacial finger. Like a knife dividing soft cheese, it cut the granitelike ice apart.

"Your Doc Savage," murmured a voice. "He arrived. By jove! I admit he's a great fellow—a great fellow—almost as great as the king himself."

Then Sir Arthur Westcott, loyal subject of His Britannic Majesty, fainted. He was hanging suspended by the chain manacles. His injuries were painful, but he probably would live.

"I was afraid of that!" groaned Long Tom. "That devil, Kama, is going after Doc!"

THE prongs of Kama's submarine were moving swiftly. No doubt, the maddened man from San Tao had decided to ram Doc's craft. This time, he intended to destroy the bronze giant in such manner there could be no doubt of his death.

The prisoners groaned. After all, if Kama won this battle, their deaths had only been delayed.

"He's going to ram right into the other sub!" said Johnny.

Kama's silvery fish gathered speed. The monster blowtorch was filling the cavern with heat.

Another mighty section of the glacial finger was loosening.

The prisoners gasped. With a roaring crash, Kama's submersible smashed its pointed prow into the other vessel. It seemed the ram had passed clear through the other craft.

Air hissed. A flood of oil painted a rainbow across the green water. The flame of the giant blowtorch snapped off as if a wire had been cut.

"There ain't anything can save Doc now!" groaned Renny. "Unless maybe that devil Kama gets him outta there!"

But Kama, the man of San Tao, was not to rescue Doc Savage.

Thunder shook the mountain. It was like the rumbling of a great earthquake. It was crackling, crashing sound.

At least half of the glacial finger in the cavern had been split off by the effect of the terrible blowtorch from the prong of the now-wrecked submersible.

With a roar, more than a thousand tons of ice crashed down into the green water. The massive chunk went deep. There were other splintering sounds.

"Well, I'll be superamalgamated!" grasped Johnny. "Doc and Kama both! The subs went down!"

THE other prisoners gasped and swore. There was no doubt of it. The fishlike submarines, joined by their collision, must have been flattened under that ice like a watch might have been under a

steam hammer.

All around, the green water arose in a great wave. It slapped over the prisoners chained to the shelf. Only their chains prevented them from being dragged from their places.

As the water subsided, a few bodies rolled to the surface. None attempted to swim. Some of the Orientals had been mangled to death, even before they had been drowned. Oil and blood floated up together.

"It looks as if that's the finish for Doc!" moaned Renny.

"He saved us for the time, and then he got it," stated Ham.

"I'm afraid you are correct," said a new voice. "I was hoping to get here in time to prevent it. I was imprisoned in the cavern where the power is located. I just managed to escape and I found the keys that may unlock your manacles. We will see."

"Holy cow!" exclaimed Renny. "Professor Callus! And I thought they had got you up on the mountain!"

"No," announced Professor Callus. "They seized me and killed the driver of my cart. I was brought under the glacier and imprisoned in a big room."

The professor's enormous head rocked on his skinny shoulders. The strange daylight shone from his hairless skull.

"I thought I had discovered the mystery of the ocean haunt," he said. "I was hoping Doc Savage and I could work out the formula together. There's a fellow called the Man of Peace who knows all about it."

Professor Callus was trying the keys. One by one, he was freeing the prisoners. Renny was the first to swing over and get to the limp figure of Sir Arthur Westcott. He deposited the limp man on the narrow shelf.

"That red-headed woman had a lot to do with getting us into this, an' it ain't the first time she's tried to kill Doc," declared the big engineer.

"I am much afraid you speak the truth," declared Professor Callus. "Unfortunately, I was unable to reach Doc Savage on the glacier above. I had learned some strange things about this Lora Krants." "And what were these things you learned?"

The heavy voice rapped out from back of the narrow shelf.

Professor Callus had come onto the shelf through a passage which the prisoners had not known existed. In the entrance to this passage stood the heavy-browed Barton Krants.

The youth accompanied his question with an unexpected leap. He struck savagely at the professor's shining bald dome. The blow was a glancing one.

For a man devoted to scientific pursuits, Professor Callus was surprisingly quick. One hand lashed out. The skinny fingers fastened on Barton Krants's throat.

The youth smashed again with his fist. It seemed to have little effect on the hard, shining skull. In the professor's hand appeared a snubnosed gun. He pushed this into the youth's stomach.

"You and your sister are fakes!" he shouted. "I've known it all the time! You have been responsible for most of this killing! But you have come to the end!"

"Hey, don't do that!" shouted Renny. "You can't kill a man because—"

THERE came the briefly spaced double crack of an automatic rifle. The explosions whirled the prisoners around. They were looking at an ordinary fishing schooner. The vessel had glided into the glacial cavern from an outside passage.

Professor Callus gurgled in his throat. His snubnosed gun hit the shelf and bounced into the water below. Across the shining dome was furrowed a deep, red line. Close to it was another mark. But this was not a red furrow.

It was a clean, round hole. The eye behind that rifle had been certain. The hand on the trigger had been sure.

Professor Callus uttered no further sound. His great head seemed to weigh his small body down. The shining skull rolled off the shelf. The weight pulled the rest of his skinny form along.

The water splashed. Barton Krants yelled, "Sis! Good enough!"

"Holy cow!" rumbled Renny. "That red-headed dame again! And she murdered the professor in cold blood!"

The slim, red-headed girl stood on the foredeck of the fishing schooner. Death smoke still curled from the rifle in her hands.

"Barton!" she cried out. "Are you all right?"

"I'm all right!" replied the heavy-browed youth. "But I've got to get back! Sis, I've found him! You wait here!"

"Say," barked Ham, "what's this all about? You stay here and explain!"

But the heavy-browed Barton Krants was slipping back into the passageway. The fishing schooner scraped the black rock wall. On its deck were eight or ten nearly naked men. They were the huge Norwegians.

A mast with a rope ladder touched the narrow shelf. The red-headed girl ascended it lightly, the rifle still held in her hands. Some of the nearly naked men heaved after her.

Renny barged forward and seized the girl's wrist. With a cry of pain, she dropped the rifle.

"I guess you've got some explainin' to do, sister!" growled the big engineer. "Beginnin' back in Manhattan when you grabbed me, an' then tried to burn Doc alive!"

The nearly naked men pushed forward. They jammed guns into Renny. Rifles menaced the others. Renny released the red-headed girl.

"Never mind, they'll be all right," said the girl. She spoke in Norwegian. "They're my friends, though they don't know it."

"Holy cow!" grunted Renny. "You think we don't know you're hooked up with these crooks? Professor Callus spilled it before you murdered him!"

THE girl smiled sadly. She shook her round head.

"You'll have to listen, Colonel Renwick," she said. "You were kidnaped by mistake by some of my men in Manhattan. They believed you were Professor Callus. You were released, when I told them their mistake."

"Yeah? Then, Miss Krants, explain how you happened to head the gang that tried to bump off Doc? They've finally done it, those devils of Kama's, even if they did go with him!"

The girl's face became deadly white.

"You mean they've got Mr. Savage?" she murmured. "Oh, they couldn't! Not now, after everything else seem to be coming out all right! Doc Savage is alive! I just know it! Don't you understand? I played in with that crowd to trap Mr. Savage in Manhattan! That got me in with the brains of this whole scheme! But I telephoned you at the hangar in time to save Mr. Savage from being burned to death."

Ham stepped forward. His lean face lighted.

"That's right, Renny," he stated. "It was a woman who telephoned. It sounds reasonable. There is much to this which we haven't discovered. But, Miss Krants, I fear Renny has spoken the truth. Doc was buried with the others under the glacier when it fell."

The red-headed girl sobbed convulsively. There was considerably more than just interest in a friend in her grief.

"He saved my life," the girl said, slowly. "Nothing could have happened to Doc Savage."

But the cold, green water of the underground sea had ceased to ripple. The great bulk of the floating ice reared like a slowly moving monument to death.

"I wish I could have your faith," began Johnny. "But—"

A rending, rumbling explosion drowned his speech. The uncanny daylight went out as though some one had thrown a switch. The Place of the Glacial Death became a Stygian tomb.

"Oh!" gasped the red-headed girl. "It has happened!"

Whatever the fearsome thing might be, it was still happening. In some distant cavern flared a great pinkish glow. Through the ice caverns seeped the acrid smell of acids like the burning of sulphur.

Then once more the darkness became intense. Bit by bit, great chunks of rock or ice were thudded from cavern roofs in the distance. The last bit fell, then there was silence.

"He has done it," spoke the red-headed girl in a stricken voice. "Barton! Barton!"

"Can't we muster up some sort of light?" questioned Johnny in Norwegian.

"Oil torches, Skavnar!" said the red-headed girl, more firmly.

The torches began casting fitful, grotesque shadows on the deck of the schooner.

Then Long Tom cried out, "Look! He's coming up out of the sea! Miss Krants, do you know if Doc had the glass fish on that submarine?"

THE reply of the red-headed girl was not needed. A faint blue glow appeared far down in the water. It spread rapidly. It was rising to the surface.

Doc Savage's glass cylinder emerged close to the side of the schooner. As it touched, floating, the lid slid back. First appeared the dead-white face of Knut Aage.

After him came the ugly, apelike countenance of Monk.

"Hello, insect!" rapped Ham, hiding his feelings with heavy sarcasm. "I can't get rid of you! I can't even get rid of that pig!"

The smooth, bronze head of Doc Savage appeared. The giant adventurer stood erect on the deck of the fishing schooner.

He spoke rapidly in Norwegian to the nearly naked men. Their oil torches clustered around him.

"We thought you had taken your last dive," said Ham, grinning. "No one could live under a thousand tons or so of ice."

"We were too far down for it to reach us," advised Doc. "We saw the glacier breaking. The glass fish was a couple of hundred feet under when it struck. We saw the body of Professor Callus. His head seemed to be pulling him deeper. Miss Krants, I am glad you have arrived. We must get to the cavern of light at once."

The lips of the red-headed girl trembled. Tears spotted her white cheeks.

"You know—oh, you do know?"

"Yes, I know nearly all of it," stated Doc Savage. "I have been partly informed ever since I made a telephone call to Del Monte, California, before we left Manhattan. The real Lora Krants is in Del

Monte. She confirmed her friendship for you and your brother. She did not object to your assuming her identity."

"Howlin' calamities!" squeaked Monk. "I knew all the time the redhead wasn't playin' on the square! She shook hands with me! Then she had them indecent guys without clothes try to smother me to death!"

The red-headed girl smiled at Monk through her tears.

"I like you too much to have harm come to you, Monk," she said, softly.

"Maybe she was just trying to do the world a great favor," said Ham, maliciously. "Too bad they didn't finish the job."

"I don't know why Doc took the trouble to melt off that glacier!" howled Monk. "Think of all the people who would have been spared listening to your loose mouth!"

Sir Arthur Westcott opened his eyes and spoke feebly.

"Well, by jove! What queer fellows your blighters are, Doc Savage!"

Doc Savage said, "We must not delay longer. Let us get to the cavern of light and find this Man of Peace."

Chapter XXVII. THE MAN OF PEACE

BARTON KRANTS held the body of the white-haired Man of Peace in his arms. The rugged face was peaceful. The sunken eyes were closed in death. But a smile remained on the giant's lips.

"He realized at the last what this power of light would mean to the world in the hands of the wrong persons," stated Doc Savage. "So he destroyed his lifetime of work and himself with it. It was a great atonement."

The red-headed girl knelt beside the white-haired giant. Her hand softly stroked his shaggy hair. "It is best this way," she murmured. "Oh, if we could only have reached him before it was too late."

"The murderer of Hjalmar Landson has met justice," stated Knut Aage. "Those who would have turned the evil force loose upon the world have been destroyed. My people can resume their occupation of peace."

"Yes," stated Doc Savage. "Many murders have been avenged. The first was that of the professor, Homus Jasson, who was killed at my door in Manhattan. He came to warn me, I believe. Another man trapped him."

"But, Doc," said Ham, "how about all of the weapons Homus Jasson was carrying, and that deadly hamadryad cobra?"

"I am sure they were on the person of the other man," stated Doc. "He intended to destroy us, fearing we would detect his scheme when Homus Jasson arrived. After he killed Jasson, he planted the lethal weapons upon him. He felt that for a time he would be safe."

"Dag-gone it!" piped up Monk. "I don't quite get it yet!"

"The President of the United States will be greatly pleased and greatly grieved," said Doc Savage. "The Man of Peace before you was Arne Dass, the great scientist who disappeared. Miss Krants and her brother are Kana and Barton Dass. They were the first to suspect their father was the originator of the haunted ocean fight. They were made agents of the department of justice."

"Holy cow!" gulped Renny. "Then I was grabbed by a bunch of them G-men in Manhattan?"

"It would seem that was it," smiled Doc. "The man who Arne Dass trusted to help bring peace to the world, realized the millions in the power. Dass sent him to Washington to negotiate with his own government. This man contacted Kama, of San Tao, and his crowd. Then he contrived to get many bids from other nations."

"But these men of the icy blood?" said Johnny.

"The person who was aid to Dass was a great scientist himself," advised Doc. "He produced rigor mortis in Homus Jasson a few minutes after he was killed. He had the secret by which the loyal Norwegians were made almost impervious to cold. But the Norwegians fought for the Man of Peace, Arne Dass. The aid was compelled to use Kama's men for his own ends."

"So Professor Callus was the real crook, the killer?" said Ham. "And the girl played along with him to try and save her father?"

"That about sums up all the answers," said Doc Savage.

"Howlin' calamities!" squealed out Monk. "I forgot all about Habeas Corpus! I've got to get outta here and find that pig!"

"Your queer quadruped is being well taken care of," assured Knut Aage. "My people will give you a different reception, when we return. I instructed them the animal was not to be harmed."

"And that just about spoils the whole finish to a great and perfect adventure!" rapped Ham.

"There doesn't seem any way I can get rid of that pig!"

Ham and Monk in all probability would argue about Habeas Corpus the duration of their trip back to New York.

THE END