

WORLD'S FAIR GOBLIN

A Doc Savage Adventure by Kenneth Robeson

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Chapter I. THE MEN THE GOBLIN GOT

MAYBE there is nothing to superstition. Maybe it just happened to be the thirteenth day of the World's Fair in New York City. The Fair management spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for publicity to let the universe know that this World's Fair was big, bigger, biggest. It covered more acres of ground, offered more means of amusement, had more scientific exhibits. It was worthy of that worn-out word—colossal.

To give some idea:

Doc Savage—scientific man of mystery, muscular marvel, also reported to be an amazing person in other ways—was to give a series of demonstrations of ultramodern surgical skill. Ordinarily, such an event would have been printed on the front pages of the newspapers in the United States, and cabled abroad. But this time, it was just a part of the World's Fair daily program.

Incidentally, Doc Savage's first surgical demonstration by mere chance happened to be scheduled for the thirteenth day after the opening of the Fair, which was the day the goblin walked.

Additionally, the Doc Savage demonstration was given before a convention of surgeons and doctors exclusively, which disappointed a lot of people who had heard that the lifework of Doc Savage was really righting wrongs and punishing evildoers in various parts of the earth, a career that had led the Man of Bronze, as he was sometimes called, into some fantastic adventures.

The public had heard that Doc Savage did fantastic things, and it would have liked to see a demonstration of some fantastic feats. But Doc Savage had a great dislike for publicity, and he never cut capers for the public's entertainment.

However, the goblin getting loose was not the first mysterious thing that happened.

Two men had disappeared. That was the initial mystery.

On another day prior to this thirteenth day after the opening of the World's Fair, two hundred thousand visitors paid admission. Exactly two hundred thousand. And exactly two less than that came out.

They had automatic mechanical checking turnstiles at all the gates, and a head gatekeeper whose job was collecting the figures. The head gatekeeper saw from the readings that two less people came out than went in. He decided one of the mechanical contraptions had made a mistake. He was wrong.

Two people went into the Fair grounds and never came out—and it wasn't any mistake of any mechanical contraption.

The goblin got them.

THE white-haired man in the long rubber apron, when he appeared, acted as if the goblins were after him, too.

The white-haired man was Professor Martin Uppercue, reported to be one of the world's greatest scientists. His specialty was electrotherapeutics—he had discovered some remarkable things about how diseases of the human body would react to electrical treatment.

He was a small man, thin, with thick white hair on top of a large head. He made you think of the type of musician slangily called a "long-haired boy."

There was nothing long-haired or old-fashioned about his scientific discoveries. He was fifty years ahead of his time, maybe a hundred. Men of science knew Uppercue as a quiet-mannered, soft-voiced person with keenly bright-blue eyes and a sedate deportment. Especially sedate. He was always dignified.

There was nothing sedate about the way Professor Martin Uppercue came out of his laboratory. Nor dignified, either.

Professor Uppercue's laboratory was situated near the center of the Fair Grounds close to the huge ball of a structure called the Perisphere. It was only a few yards from the laboratory to the landscaped gardens along the Court of Communications. Professor Uppercue dashed wildly into this garden, which was crowded with people.

The natural first thought was that Professor Uppercue was chasing something.

As soon as they saw his face, they knew he was not chasing anything. His face showed terror. His eyes popped until they looked like small saucers stuck, bottoms out, on his face.

He ran headlong, knocking astounded people out of his way. There was blood on his face, quite a bit of it. His mouth was also open, open like the mouth of a dog that has been backed into a corner and is being whipped.

Professor Uppercue wheeled his head in different directions as he ran. He seemed to be looking everywhere, hoping, it was suddenly apparent, for a place to which to flee. He was carrying two articles.

One object that he carried seemed to be his laboratory apron. It was a long rubber apron and he had it in his left hand.

The second item was carried in his right hand, and it was more unusual. It was a cylinder, apparently made of aluminum. It was about three inches in diameter and as long as an average man's arm, and capped at each end.

He kept running, and glaring about in search of some place to run to.

There did not seem to be anything chasing him.

The crowd made the natural mistake. They decided that Professor Martin Uppercue had gone insane.

So an effort was commenced to seize the madman.

The attempt to seize Professor Uppercue failed, but it did accomplish two things.

A man snatched Professor Uppercue's rubber apron, and kept it, and later turned it over to the proper authorities, and it proved very important.

Secondly, they learned something about that aluminum like cylinder that Professor Uppercue carried. He whacked different people over the head with it—the thing was light, and did not greatly damage the recipients of the blows. But several persons were able to testify that a whispering sound came from inside the cylinder.

The sound from inside the cylinder was generally described as a whisper. One man testified it was more like the scuffling of a shoe across a bare floor.

Professor Uppercue got away and ran. He clutched the mysterious aluminum like tube with both arms.

THE flamboyant heart of the Fair Grounds had been called the Theme Center. Here was locked the great spherical Perisphere that was like a mammoth white tennis ball two hundred feet in diameter, from around its base shooting upward great sprays of water that made it appear the huge ball of steel was floating on a fountain, and circling these fountains was a white, circular promenade bordered by heavy shrubs and foliage.

Professor Uppercue dived into this expensively landscaped brush patch.

There were two impressive structures in this Theme Center. One, of course, was the globular Perisphere—the two-hundred-foot white tennis ball of a thing. The other impressive item was the Trylon, a spike of steel seven hundred feet high coming to a needle point at the top. The minds that conceived the theme of the Fair had been unable to imagine anything more modernistic than this ball-shaped Perisphere and the needle-shaped Trylon, and the two were connected by a rising ramp—a wide sidewalk that spiraled up under the base of the massive ball of steel.

When Professor Uppercue next was seen, he was streaking along this ramp.

He now seemed hardly able to run. He was an elderly man, unused to much physical activity, and the wild running already had him near exhaustion. Once he banked into the side banister of the rising ramp, but he kept going. He was headed for the point where the elevated structure entered one side of the towering Trylon.

The Fair police—the Fair cops wore neat uniforms similar to the New York State troopers—and members of the crowd now set out in pursuit of Professor Uppercue. The crazed scientist—and the impression that everyone now held was that the scientist was insane—had a head start.

A number of people distinctly saw Professor Uppercue disappear into the Trylon.

A few moments later the police and more fleet-footed members of the crowd arrived at the Trylon. Everyone was wheezing from the terrific race up the incline. Puffing pursuers crowded into the Trylon.

There was gloom about them, strange modernistic semi twilight. Stretching upward until it disappeared in the needle point several hundred feet above their heads, was the silent network of steel girders which supported the great Trylon. The spot where the pursuers stood was a platform built approximately a hundred feet above the spire's three-sided base.

"Where'd he go?" a man yelled.

They had all become aware of a strange sound—noise as if several carpenters had gone to work

simultaneously sawing boards.

"Where'd he go!"

The words literally crashed back at them. Everyone jumped, shocked by the increased volume, the impact of the sound.

"Great grief!" a man muttered. "Some echoes."

The sound illusion of carpenters sawing wood, they realized now, was the noise of their own breathing that had traveled upward into the space, and sounded back greatly magnified by the unusual acoustics of the Trylon.

A cop explained, "It's the way the place is built, I guess. But where'd that nut go to?"

"Search me!" grumbled another cop.

They did not search him, but they did search the Trylon—those parts of it where it seemed conceivable that a man might be hidden—and then went over the surrounding grounds.

There was no trace of Professor Martin Uppercue or his aluminum like cylinder.

THEN the goblin walked.

It happened not over fifteen minutes later. Immediately surrounding the Theme Center of the Fair—the huge ball of the Perisphere and spike of the Trylon—were the most important buildings, which housed exhibits having to do with branches of modern science. These structures were large and, of course, modernistic. They were brilliantly colored, for color was the theme of this vast World's Fair, if one was to believe the words of the men who had conceived the thing.

Prominent among the centrally located Fair buildings was the Hall of Mines.

It was inside the Hall of Mines that the goblin walked.

Men and women spectators began to come out of the Hall of Mines, yelping at every jump. They were frightened. Not as scared as Professor Martin Uppercue had been, but almost.

A Fair cop grabbed one of the runners. "What's gone wrong now?"

The man jerked a thumb at the Hall of Mines. "Dud-dud-dud-damnedest thing in there!"

The cop ran in to see. The Hall of Mines was an enormous structure, well-lighted; it contained exhibits intended to depict the progress of mining and metallurgy from the beginning of things down to the present. There were hundreds of exhibits and as many scared people. A great deal of confusion, in fact.

The cop jumped on top of an ore-processing mill where he could be seen.

"What's going on here?" he yelled.

"Over here," voices told him. "In the mine!"

The mine they referred to was a reproduction of one of the famous gold shafts of the old West. It had been a popular spot, for the artists who had created it had done a very lifelike job. The shaft sloped into an embankment and disappeared into the depths of the earth. There were shovels and picks stacked about.

If the mine shaft had unexpectedly turned into a tiger den, the vicinity could not have been more deserted.

The cop planted himself in front of the shaft. He did not know what to think.

"It come out," someone yelled for his information. "Then it went back in again."

"What did?"

"It looked like a hobgoblin."

"A what?"

"You get a look at the thing," the informant told the cop, "and you'll understand."

At this point, the cop heard the sound—and the short hairs on the back of his neck began to want to get up on end. The noise came from the mine shaft. It was a whimpering, a hoarse throat-tearing whimper.

The cop rubbed a hand over his head to make his hair lie down again.

"Hell, that's a dog!" he said. "There's just a stray dog in there."

The cop got a flashlight and a gun and three other cops and went into the shaft. It was very dark. At various points in the old mine, there stood wax figures of miners and these wax men were equipped with miners' caps which bore lights—electric lights that imitated the old-time miner's kerosene lamp. It was observed that none of these lamps were lighted; and the current seemed to be off.

"It was a dog, of course," the cop said, although they had not seen any.

"The people who saw it don't describe any dog," another cop told him.

"Listen, I'll show you. I'll call the dog. Here, doggie—here, doggie—"

That cop never called another dog again. As long as he lived, his vocal chords would freeze when he started to call a dog—because he could not help remembering what he got when he called this dog. It was probably eight feet high. It was not that wide. It had arms, legs, body. It had eyes that were great and awful, and it had strength that was the most awful of all.

They saw it only an instant, not very clearly at that, for it hurled rocks at them, boulders as large as barrels.

The policemen fled around the corner.

When the policemen had gathered their courage—and ten more cops and four submachine guns, riot

equipment and tear gas—they advanced. They found nothing.
No goblin, no way the goblin could have gotten out. No nothing.

Chapter II. HIDDEN TRAIL

RUNNING north and east from the Theme Center of the Fair—the spot where the Perisphere and Trylon were located—were broad avenues and malls branching out like the spokes of a wheel. The Hall of Medicine was on one of these spokes. It was a long, yellow-colored structure just north of the circular walk bordering the mammoth Perisphere. Inside was the operating amphitheater, built like a small theater, with circular tiers of seats forming an observers' balcony. Seated tense and silent, white masks over their own faces, visiting medical men watched in awe. They were seeing one of the most amazing things of their lives.

Other than the weird panting sounds that came from a mechanical device that looked similar to a punching bag, located near the head of the operating table, there was no other sound. That bag pulsed as oxygen mixed with anesthesia was fed to a small, still form on the white operating table—the figure of a boy from the slums of New York.

A tumor was being removed from the boy's brain. It was a type of operation never done before. Motion-picture cameras whirred, recording the procedure.

Above that still form only the surgeon's eyes were visible. Amazing eyes. The eyes were magnetic, and like restless pools of rich flake gold. Set well apart, they were compelling and clear, holding the attention of each assistant. No words were spoken. Instead, those eyes directed, gave almost a sharp command when a nurse was a fraction of a second too slow. There was need for swift, sure speed. Remainder of his face was hidden behind a mask of white.

In the observers' balcony, a doctor whispered to a colleague.

"This particular penetration of the ethmoid cribriform has never been accomplished to date. Bet you he don't make it!"

The second doctor said softly, "But that surgeon is Doc Savage!"

"Sure, but the boy's been on the table a half hour now."

It did not seem to those seated above in the tiers that the figure of Doc Savage was unusually large. Standing alone, the bronze man's size was deceptive, which was perhaps caused by the symmetry of his physical development—so well proportioned that he seemed no taller than an average six-foot man. But whenever a nurse, who was tall herself, came close, his unusual size was evident. Doc Savage was a physical giant.

Close over Doc Savage's head, a cluster of round operating-room lights sent down powerful light.

A doctor seated in the topmost tier whispered, "Listen!"

Everyone could hear the commotion. An excited man had stopped to yell at the doorman, probably not realizing what a serious thing was going on inside.

"A scientist named Uppercue went crazy, and they're huntin' 'im!" the man yelled. "And they saw some kind of a goblin in the Hall of Mines!"

The skeptical doctors in the tiers breathed, "Good Lord. He'll never pull that lad through now. That'll distract him."

At the operating table, the nurses jerked worried glances toward Doc Savage. But apparently the bronze man had not heard a sound. His capable fingers moved swiftly. His hypnotic gaze flicked to the tiny instruments in the nurses' hands, indicating them as he needed them. For the first time, he made a direct statement.

"Almost through," he said.

But then the cluster of brilliant operating table lights overhead went out.

ONE nurse could not suppress her cry of horror as the big operating amphitheater with only small windows high above, was thrown into gloom down where Doc Savage was working. The bronze man was ready to suture—sew up—the incision close to the boy's brain. One slip now—

A nurse leaped to a wall phone, frantically called the engineer's room in the basement of the Hall of Medicine, announced, "Something mysterious caused the transformers to burn out."

Doc Savage ordered quietly, "Watch the oxygen closely." He stepped swiftly from the room. He always tried to foresee emergencies; there was a flashlight in his equipment case outside in the sterilizing room. He came back in a moment and passed the light to the assistant.

"Hold it steady."

Doc Savage's flake-gold eyes never left the small incision that meant life or death to the small boy on the table; his swift hands made delicate movements, until finally he straightened, said quietly, "See that he has absolute quiet. I shall see him later."

Not until the table with the still form was wheeled from the darkened room, did the famous specialists and surgeons applaud the bronze man's work. The applause was a roar. Only the greatest of them really knew what an amazing feat they had witnessed.

Doc Savage, unmoved by the applause, was taking off the operating gown, white skull cap and facial mask.

Most of the visiting medical men had never seen Doc Savage before he appeared in the room. They stared, for this Doc Savage was a man of amazing physical appearance.

His bronze hair was a shade darker than the bronze man's skin, and it lay flat and smooth, while his mouth was muscular and strong without being severe. Strong facial lines showed power of character.

Doc Savage said, "What was that interruption—about Uppercue?"

The bronze man's voice—calm, yet with a repressed power and tonal inflection that were remarkable—held the attention of everyone, though Doc was only addressing the assistant doctor at his side.

The assistant had unmasked also. It could be seen that the assistant was a young, good-looking man with slender height and delicate features. His hair was straw-blond.

The assistant was Dr. Alexis Mandroff—in charge of the clinic here—and he had willingly offered his services to Doc Savage in performing this operation to demonstrate a method that would save thousands of lives in the future.

Dr. Mandroff replied, "It must be something terrible, sir."

An attendant put in, "I just phoned to find out. They say Professor Uppercue is in trouble or something. They're trying to catch him—"

"Catch him?" Doc asked.

"They say he was acting insane."

There were gasps of dismay, for many of these men knew the famous scientist, Uppercue.

To Dr. Mandroff, Doc said, "See that the printed booklet of the operation procedure is distributed. Also see that each person gets a copy of the motion-picture film."

Dr. Mandroff nodded. "Da," he said. He meant, "Yes."

The bronze giant moved toward the exit. A nurse handed him his coat. As he stood in the doorway, his shoulders almost filled the space.

Dr. Mandroff hurried after the bronze man.

"You were wonderful, sir," he exclaimed. "I've done some work along that line myself, but never anything like you accomplished just now."

If Doc Savage was flattered, he showed no outward indication. Instead, he said, "Any written questions they submit will be answered."

"Perhaps I should go with you," Dr. Mandroff offered. "Professor Uppercue is a friend of mine—"

Doc shook his head. "You stay with the patient, doctor."

The bronze man showed respect for the young, handsome Dr. Mandroff, who had recently arrived from Russia, and was said to be an amazingly clever surgeon who was at the World's Fair to study newest developments in medical science.

DOC SAVAGE went to investigate the mystery of what had happened to Uppercue.

After a few brief questions, Doc knew all that had happened. He learned about the peculiar metal cylinder. The Fair police gave him Uppercue's lab apron, said, "A lot of help this thing is."

They did not realize that the apron was the one clue to Professor Uppercue's trail.

"What about this aluminum cylinder?" Doc asked.

"It made whispering sounds."

"What?"

"Well, that's just what somebody said."

The Fair cops now came from the mine tunnel to tell of the goblin.

"You're crazy!" they were told.

"Maybe it sounds like that. But half a dozen of us saw that thing."

"What you saw were shadows from your flashlights."

"I suppose shadows can throw rocks that weigh two hundred pounds?"

Doc Savage decided to look in the one place that seemed to have been passed up—Professor Uppercue's laboratory, the spot from whence Uppercue had started on his wild flight. Looking at the rubber apron in his hands, the bronze man had noted something.

Blood smears, and long hairs stuck to the inner side of the lab apron.

It seemed sensible to learn the cause of Uppercue's flight.

The door at the top of the steps down which Uppercue had plunged from his laboratory was still open. Inside, more steel steps led downward in a steep flight, ending in a long, narrow corridor with only a single dim light at the far end—a passageway that was all of a hundred feet in length. Moving through the underground passage, Doc Savage—his sense of direction was well-developed—knew that he must be somewhere beneath the huge Perisphere. The corridor ended at a heavy-paneled door, and this was also open. The bronze man had to duck as he entered the room beyond.

He was now in a modern laboratory, well-lighted, and containing many of the newest scientific inventions. Doc Savage recognized gadgets that were still supposed to be in experimental state. A scientist himself, he appreciated these machines that Uppercue had designed.

On a workbench nearby was a small model of a generator, and something familiar about the machine held the bronze man's attention for a moment. Then, his observing eyes moved to other objects in the room.

It was blood on the floor that suddenly absorbed his attention. He bent down. His eyes always sought things easily overlooked, such as long reddish hairs that were stuck in these bloodstains.

They were the same kind of hairs that had been caught on the rubber lab apron. The red smears led to another, smaller doorway across the room, an opening that was like the heavy steel entrance to a vault. There was a lever that worked massive lock tumblers. The door was open. Light came from somewhere beyond.

Doc Savage moved forward, and was surprised when he saw what lay past that vault door. Another laboratory. Even greater than the first one. There was a high-domed ceiling, and heavy pieces of machinery made the place look like an electrical powerhouse. Nothing was in operation, though the place was fully lighted. The blood trail stopped at the threshold to this larger room—as though someone had been dragged as far as the doorway and then picked up.

A small sound now came from the Man of Bronze, a sound that was a thrilling, low, exotic, as soft as a tropical wind filtering through jungle growth at night; it seemed to emanate from everywhere, yet nowhere, although actually it came from the bronze man's throat, and was a sound he unconsciously made in moments of mental excitement.

It was very strange that Professor Uppercue should have such elaborate laboratories here at the Fair—but Doc's trailing was not the result of that. Nor of seeing the blood trail. Instead, he felt the presence of someone watching him. A slight sound, probably. He stood very still, listening. Then he moved toward a massive machine, located in one darkened corner.

Someone—something—had moved behind that towering piece of steel and gears. The bronze man's footsteps were soundless as he reached the spot and worked his way carefully along one side of the machine.

He heard a faint swishing sound. It could have been the noise a huge person makes when trying to move a foot cautiously. The floor here was cement, and the touch of a heavy foot—no matter how careful—would make such a sound.

Doc Savage was inches away from the rear of the machine now. There was concealing space back there between the wall and the object he was circling.

In one final movement, his muscles, like steel cables, sent him around to the rear of the machine. He got a grip and dragged the skulker out.

It was a small blue-eyed girl who cried, "Wait! Wait!"

Chapter III. GOBLIN

SUCH a small and delicate girl—nicely curved, though—might be expected to be frightened and helpless, especially when swooped down upon by such a giant as Doc Savage. But this one wasn't. She had a small oval face, perky chin, the kind of blue eyes that brought thoughts of the sea at dusk. The eyes were bright and alert, for she was mad.

She kicked, clawed with one hand, stamped at Doc's feet with pointed heels.

"Let me go!"

Her right hand was behind her, as though clutching for support to something at the rear of the machine.

Doc asked, "What are you hiding behind you?"

The girl with the wide blue eyes fought harder for a moment, then stopped suddenly, defeated by the bronze man's strength. She stamped her small foot again.

"I suppose," she snapped, "that if you want to make love to me, I can't help it!"

Doc jumped and released her. He got a little red.

Her soft hair was blond and somewhat curly above her pretty face.

Doc Savage stepped back and waited for the blond-haired girl to come farther out into the room where he could get a better look at her. But she merely stood her ground, while one arm was still pushed behind her.

"Get out of here!" she flared. "Get out of here before I call the—"

Doc said earnestly, "Perhaps you have seen Professor Martin Uppercue? Something has happened to him and—"

He saw that the girl's features tightened. She began looking at him queerly. She was suddenly frightened, Doc decided. Yet her chin remained firm.

She kept her right hand behind her back.

Doc said, "You know Professor Uppercue, do you not? This is his laboratory."

Caution slowly crept into the girl's blue eyes. She stared up at Doc, began to move carefully around him, one hand still behind her. She started to say, "I don't know you—"

Doc Savage had already surmised that. Many people had never seen the Man of Bronze, though they had read about him in the papers. He was rather pleased. He did not like publicity, and if no one knew him by sight, it would have been better.

And though Doc had never met the girl before, he began to deduce certain things. He had talked with Professor Martin Uppercue several times. Once would have been sufficient for him to have remembered the little scientist's features. This blond girl's blue eyes, the shape of her small face, the way she carried her chin so proudly—there was a resemblance here to the missing scientist, Uppercue.

Doc suggested, "We might stop bluffing."

"I don't know what you mean."

"You might accept my help in finding your father."

"I—"

Swiftly, the wary look came back in the blue eyes.

The girl blurted, "Father? I don't know what you're talking about. I'm going to call the police!" She started backing toward the shadowy corner behind the huge machine again, her right hand still behind her as though feeling the way.

Doc said, "What have you in your right hand?" and moved after her.

The girl cried out, "Get out of here!" She turned to race around to the other side of the obstruction and toward the vault like door, and Doc saw the object in her right hand.

It was a metal cylinder such as the bowlegged man on the Trylon ramp had described—the strange tube that Professor Uppercue had been gripping to his chest the last time anyone had seen him. Doc got one view of this, then the girl was through the doorway into the smaller lab.

The girl screamed, "Help me! Put out the lights!"

Then it was suddenly very dark.

REACHING the other room a split second ahead of the bronze man, the blond girl had evidently seen someone whom she expected to help her, and one of them had leaped to a wall switch, plunged the room in darkness.

The person whom the girl had seen must be someone friendly, for a man came leaping at Doc in the darkness. This person landed on the bronze giant's broad back, and began to act somewhat like a wiry, long wild cat.

Doc Savage's powerful hands got fistfuls of legs that felt as if they were coated with piano wire. He yanked the man off his back. The man twisted, squirmed, fought in a way that didn't seem possible of one so fragile in size. The unseen attacker was underdeveloped, but he could scrap.

In the blackness, the girl cried, "Now that you've got him, I'll turn on the lights!"

She switched on the lab lights.

The attacker was an anemic-looking man. Pale hair dangled about a head that was oversize, and he had bright, pale-blue eyes. From his upside-down position, the thin man looked up at Doc Savage. "Doc!" he exploded.

Doc Savage seldom showed surprise; in fact he was hardly surprised now, for just before the girl had turned on the lights the bronze man had suspected the identity of the wiry hell-fighter.

Doc Savage, in the strange career of righting wrongs and punishing evildoers which was his real life work, had five assistants. The five were men who loved adventure, as did the Man of Bronze; also the five were, each of them, masters of some science or profession.

This one happened to be the electrical expert of Doc Savage's organization.

He was Major Thomas J. Roberts, better known as Long Tom, a man sometimes called the "wizard of the juice," since he was an electrical genius comparable to Steinmetz and Edison.

Doc released Long Tom. The girl rushed forward.

"You know him?" she demanded.

Long Tom said, "Know him? This is Doc Savage!"

"Oh!"

The girl's blue eyes widened.

Long Tom explained, "I had an appointment here with Professor Uppercue, Doc. I was late, and—"

Doc interjected, "You haven't heard about Uppercue behaving queerly, then vanishing?"

As the bronze man spoke, his magnetic eyes shifted to the girl. She stood stiffly, chewing on her lip, saying nothing.

Long Tom noted the girl's suspicious attitude.

"I hadn't heard," he said. "I just drove out here from headquarters."

BRIEFLY, Doc Savage explained to his aid all he knew about the scientist's strange disappearance. As he talked, Doc noticed that the girl backed toward the wall again. There was an expression of fear, of something else in her deep blue eyes.

Long Tom's unhealthy-looking face looked tense. He said worriedly, "Doc, that's funny. Professor Uppercue is one of the finest scientists living. He sent a request asking me if I wouldn't come out here for consultation on some new, important thing he was about to create. I was to meet him here in his laboratory. But now—"

Long Tom's sharp gaze, too, had gone to the girl, who was acting strangely.

She was staring toward the floor, the slender steel cylinder still clutched in her hand. Suddenly she bent down, picked up something long and very thin. She cringed away from the blood that had been on the floor.

The blond-haired girl was holding one of the red, long hairs that Doc Savage had seen stuck in the bloodstains.

Long Tom saw the thing, asked, "What is it? Who—where—"

"Perhaps the young lady can tell us," Doc offered. "Where is that hair from, miss?"

The girl looked scared for a moment. Then her sharp chin came up and she snapped, "I don't know what it is."

Doc's flake-gold eyes were moving restlessly. Apparently this girl was more involved in the mystery than she wanted Doc or Long Tom to believe. She was holding back something. Doc said quietly, "You're Uppercue's daughter, aren't you? There's something you're afraid of. Why not tell us what it is?"

Long Tom's pallid face brightened. "Sure!" he cried. "That's her—Uppercue's daughter! I saw a picture of her once in the newsreels, and she—"

The metal cylinder now thrust out of sight behind her back, the girl's eyes sparkled and she cried, "I never saw Professor Uppercue in my life!"

"Then how did you get that metal tube?" Doc asked suddenly.

Doc recalled what the bowlegged man had told him on the Perisphere ramp. Doc Savage, of course, did not know about the soft scraping sound that had been heard inside Uppercue's queer metal cylinder.

But the bronze man put out his hand and prompted, "Let us see that thing you are holding behind you."

At first, the girl tried to duck away toward the door. Then meeting the compelling, hypnotic look in the bronze man's eyes, she stopped. She handed the cylinder over quietly.

Both ends of the unusually light object were enclosed with metal caps that were threaded. The whole thing looked heavy, yet was as light as a feather.

Doc unscrewed one of the caps, turned the open side of the long tube downward and waited to see what would fall out.

Nothing happened.

He unscrewed the other end and peered through the thing.

It was absolutely empty.

LONG TOM was staring at both the girl and Doc.

"What the devil is this all about?" he queried.

"That," Doc said, "remains to be seen."

He turned toward the passageway that led back to the steep flight of stairs to aboveground. "The first thing to do," the bronze man added, "is find Uppercue."

"But how—" the girl started to ask, and then clamped her softly curved lips tight. She looked wary.

Long Tom put in, "When I was talking to the professor on the phone, he said that if I missed him here I might catch him over at the Hall of Mines. He also said—"

There was a small, sharp cry from the blond girl. She said suddenly, "May I go with you?"

The electrical wizard remarked, "I thought you said—"

Doc said, "Perhaps it would be a good idea."

He gave no further indication of what were his thoughts in regard to the girl.

They went out.

Outside in the Fair Grounds, the excitement had died down. There were too many thousands of people here, anyway, for the news of Uppercue's odd disappearance to have reached the ears of more than a few hundred.

World's Fair police had quickly suppressed the rumor of some strange Thing—the goblin, a cop had called it—being seen in one of the exhibition buildings. No one really believed the tale, anyhow. Also, Uppercue's disappearance was considered to be the result of the scientist having mental trouble.

No one connected Professor Uppercue's vanishing with the goblin walking, which was unfortunate.

Few people noticed the arrival of Doc Savage, Long Tom and the girl at the Hall of Mines, for visitors were again occupied with staring and gawking at the thousand and one marvels of the Fair.

Inside the long building containing the realistic mine diggings, a lecturer was giving a talk on metallurgy. The crowd was over there, leaving the yawning mouth of the mine shaft deserted.

Long Tom said, "So this is where they saw the goblin?"

"Yes."

"Reckon there's any connection between Professor Uppercue and the so-called goblin?"

The girl jumped forward, gripped the skinny electrical expert's arm.

"No!" she cried. "Wait. I—"

Long Tom and Doc Savage exchanged queer looks. Then they walked into the mine shaft where the goblin had been seen.

AFTER they had gone a few paces, it was very dark and still. Doc Savage's hearing was probably developed beyond that of an ordinary man—he had spent almost two hours daily in regular exercise routine since childhood, which was to a large extent responsible for his unusual physique.

The bronze man still had the flashlight that he had used to complete the brain operation in the hospital amphitheater. He used this light now, and its beam ran over the rock walls like a gray ghost.

When the girl screamed, it startled them both. There seemed no reason for it. They had seen nothing.

"Maximus!"

the girl shrieked.

She would have run, but Doc Savage caught her. She struggled, trying to get away.

"What the blazes ails her?" Long Tom exploded.

Doc Savage did not know. He was puzzled. He held the girl and asked her, two or three times, what was wrong, but got no answer.

Long Tom said, "You hold her. Maybe she saw something deeper in the mine. I'll look."

The girl must have been so busy struggling with Doc Savage that she did not hear what the electrical wizard said, nor notice what he was doing. But when Long Tom had progressed some distance down the shaft, she understood.

"Wait!" she shrieked. "Stop!"

She was a little too late with her warning, for at that moment Long Tom let out a howl of astonishment, a howl so astounded that Doc Savage released the girl and raced for the electrical wizard's voice.

The earlier descriptions of the goblin had not been exaggerated. It was, as the cops had said, all of eight feet tall, hunched in stature, and it had arms and legs. It gripped Long Tom closely, and the electrical expert struggled and shouted.

The thing was fleeing down the tunnel and this, coupled with the fact that it struggled with Long Tom and stirred up a cloud of dust, prevented Doc Savage from getting a clear view.

Fast as the bronze man was on his feet, the thing had gained. It rounded a corner. Immediately there was a terrific crash, a sound that turned into a roar.

The roof of the mine shaft had come down. Apparently the goblin, or whatever it was, had jerked loose the supporting timbers and let the roof collapse. Doc Savage waded into the dust and explored with his hands.

Further pursuit of Long Tom and the thing that had seized him was blocked in that direction.

The girl, Professor Uppercue's daughter, was gone when Doc Savage ran back to the spot where he had left her.

Chapter IV. GARGOYLE ON THE ROOF

IT was now that time of the day when late afternoon was giving way to dusk, and a lull seemed to settle, bringing peace for a few moments to a busy world. The wide shrubbery-bordered walks were less crowded, for most Fair visitors were eating at Fair restaurants throughout the grounds or leaving for home. In the Court of Power, a landscaped park like enclosure located near the Theme Center of the Fair, it was particularly quiet.

Two people were walking across the Court of Power, a man and a girl. The man was waspish, smartly dressed—in fact, he was probably the best-dressed man on the Fair Grounds that day—and he carried an innocent-looking black cane. His companion was almost as tall as himself.

The very correctly dressed man was making threats.

"If I ever get my hands on Monk," he threatened, "I'll make the hairy ape wish he was back in a nice safe jungle!"

The girl was tall. Her hair was an unusual bronze hue and her eyes an even more remarkable flake-gold tint. She was strikingly beautiful. She laughed softly.

"Ham, you're a clever lawyer," she said, "but you certainly let Monk take you in."

"Gr-r-r!" said the dapper Ham.

"Letting them use you to demonstrate a new man-beautifying machine at Cosmetics Hall!" The girl almost doubled over laughing. "How did you come to volunteer?"

Ham snarled. "I thought it was an invention of yours. There was a sign on it that said so."

"Monk must have printed the sign," the girl said.

Ham said a number of things about the ancestry of a man named Monk, none of them complimentary.

"Monk must have hired the operators of the machine to persuade me to take a trim," he gritted.

"The operators were pretty girls. Monk knew I would be susceptible."

The girl laughed again.

She was Pat Savage, the lovely cousin of Doc Savage, as evidenced by her having the same unusual, flake-gold eyes and bronze hair as the Man of Bronze. Owner of an exclusive beauty shop on Park Avenue, Pat's clients were of the Four Hundred. Today she had come to the Fair to see the latest inventions of the how-to-look-beautiful trade.

Her companion was Brigadier General Theodore Marley (Ham) Brooks, the lawyer of Doc Savage's group of five adventurous associates. Ham's weakness was sartorial splendor, and his hobby was quarreling with Monk Mayfair, who was another of the Doc Savage group of associates. The gag that had just been played on Ham was one that would take a long time for him to live down.

Ham had been given a marcel by Monk Mayfair!

Monk was the clever chemist in Doc's group. Deceived by some pretty girl operators—hired by Monk—that the new marcel machine was a beautifying aid invented by Pat Savage, the lawyer had submitted to a treatment. He had little realized that for some time he would be going around with a very neat "finger wave" in his dark hair!

This explained why Ham's hat was now pulled down tightly over his head; also why he was looking

for Monk.

"I'll assassinate that Monk!" Ham snarled.

Pat pointed at the Hall of Mines.

"Excitement."

"Eh?"

"Over at the Hall of Mines."

They could see milling excitement. Then they suddenly glimpsed a giant bronze figure.

"That's Doc!" Pat said.

Ham was suddenly moving forward. "You'd better wait here, Pat," he advised. "Looks like trouble." But Pat Savage hurried after the tall lawyer. Ever since she could remember, she had wanted to be a member of the bronze man's group. But because of the great danger of their work, Doc seldom permitted Pat to accompany them.

"You don't keep me out of this!" Pat told the dapper lawyer.

Ham looked displeased, but it was no use to argue with a girl as beautiful as Pat.

"This," he murmured softly as he ran into the Hall of Mines, "looks interesting."

DOC SAVAGE was giving building attendants quiet, but imperative orders.

"Shovels! Picks!" Doc directed. "They may be trapped beneath the fallen stone. Get more men!"

A few moments later, when workmen came running with shovels, Doc grabbed one and went to work. At least twenty men took turns, shoveled as furiously as they could.

Ham grabbed a shovel and joined in.

"What's up, Doc?"

"Long Tom is in there—and the goblin."

"What?"

Doc explained the somewhat unbelievable series of events.

"Say!" Ham said. "It looks like the beginning of a darned queer mystery."

The slide was slowly cleared away, disclosing beneath it the solid floor of the tunnel. Beyond this cleared space was a rectangular opening in the tunnel floor. An opening which should not have been there. Everyone moved close. It appeared to be a deep pit in the floor.

A search showed no trace of Long Tom or the goblin in the mine. The searchers came back to the pit in the floor.

The black hole, they could see, was slowly filling up with water that came up from somewhere below. Along with the rising water there was the rock and gravel that had, through power of gravity, slid down into the opening. The whole mess was bubbling and gurgling.

It might have been that this shaft had been caved in by the shock of the tunnel roof collapse.

"No human," Doc said, quietly, "could live in that."

Ham and Pat were silent. As they had worked, the bronze man had briefly explained about what had happened at Uppercue's laboratory; of Long Tom's suggestion that they come here to perhaps find the missing scientist, or Long Tom's strange attacker in the mine shaft.

"Where did Uppercue's daughter go?" Ham asked.

"No telling. She simply fled."

"And you have no idea of what is back of this?"

"None," Doc admitted.

At this point, a man came running into the mine tunnel.

"Something else has happened!" the newcomer barked.

"What?"

"There's some kind of a creature loose on top of the Motors Building. There's a crowd over there waiting for it to come down—"

Ham said, "Motors Building?"

"Yes."

Ham looked uncomfortable. "This may be my fault. I better investigate."

"I'll go with you," Pat said. "I don't want to miss anything."

WHEN Ham and Pat Savage reached the Motors Building, a modernistic structure that housed every possible device connected with the automobile industry, they saw a staring throng at one end of the building.

It was night now, and the Fair Grounds were bathed with myriads of brilliantly colored lights. Groups of buildings each had color schemes of their own, and taken all together, the yellows, blues, bright greens and a dozen other shades combined in a lighting effect that was breath-taking.

An apelike figure was moving around in a spotlight ray that was directed at a cornice of the Motors Building.

Pat Savage stared upward.

"Good Heaven!" Pat exclaimed. "That's Monk, not an animal!"

Ham snorted. "No one could ever tell the difference."

"Let's go to the roof," Pat said, "and see what that crazy chemist is doing."

"I think I know!" Ham muttered under his breath.

It was ten minutes before they could find their way to the roof-top. The building was sleek-sided, and built like a huge letter T. The section where Monk prowled was near a tower at one end of the structure. There was no way up from the outside.

In the building, Ham caught an elevator and rose to the top floor. From there, he ran up a narrow iron stairway to the penthouse. Hurrying out onto the roof, he was momentarily blinded by the floodlights which illuminated the building walls from the ground.

Then he saw Monk, who looked like a burly ape climbing out along the roof edge to a slim ledge that was high above the staring crowd below.

Ham yelled, "Come back here, you hairy misfit, before you break your neck!"

Monk turned and glared. Ham returned the glare. These two liked nothing better than an argument. Monk was Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Blodgett Mayfair, chemist of Doc's group. Constructed almost as broad as he was tall, and covered with red hairs that bristled like dyed steel wool, Monk looked not unlike a stuffed ape out of a museum jungle exhibit. In strange contrast to his massive body, however, Monk's voice was a thin squeak.

"Come over here, you shyster," he invited. "There's something you're gonna explain!"

The skilled chemist indicated an object out near the edge of the precarious ledge. Cautiously, Ham moved over to the roof edge and peered.

"I don't see anything at all, you flat-head—"

THEN Ham saw what Monk meant. The object was a grotesquely carved gargoyle, one of the weird-looking figures placed on the upper part of many buildings. In this case, a sculptor had let his thoughts run rampant in designing the homely figure—and, strangely, the head of the gargoyle had an uncanny resemblance to Monk's face.

Ham began laughing.

"A perfect example of prehistoric workmanship," he gurgled unkindly. "In fact—"

Monk's face was red with rage.

"Listen, you marcelled clotheshorse," he piped. "You had something to do with this! I'm gonna find the guy that made this thing and ask him where he got the model—"

Ham, as a matter of fact, was responsible for the statue resembling Monk. The well-dressed lawyer laughed until he had to hold his sides.

"So you climbed up here to see yourself?"

Monk stalked to Ham, made a grab for the dapper lawyer's hat, and said, "Wait until you try to wash the curly-girly out of your hair, shyster!"

That silenced Ham.

With a growl of disgust Monk swung and started across the long roof-top.

"Where you going?" Pat called.

"Where they fumigate for lawyers," Monk snapped.

"Wait," Pat said. "Did you know that Professor Uppercue—"

"Let the big clown go!" Ham snapped.

Monk disappeared into the deep gloom toward the center of the wide roof. The building extended for a length of several city blocks, and away from the edges where floodlights played their streamers up from the ground, the place was in stygian darkness.

Ham, still chuckling to himself, started to leave the roof. Far below on the grounds, he noticed two great circular pools that were part of the decorative scheme, and he stopped to admire the effect of colored lights upon the water.

Ahead, in the darkness, there was a shrill yell.

"Ham!" Come here! There's somethin'—"

Monk's voice! It suddenly broke off in a choking gasp.

Ham's first thought was that it was a trick. But no. No, it was no trick. Suddenly worried, Ham started running. There had been a note in Monk's voice that the lawyer had never heard before. Terror, he believed. Utter terror, too.

And the hairy Monk wasn't afraid of Satan himself. Yet the tone had distinctly been of awe—and fear.

Ham banged into an obstruction in the darkness, circled it, then drew up with an open-mouthed gasp. Just ahead, limned on the raised wall along the roof edge, a figure stood. It was vaguely human in form, but of superhuman size. Ham was too far away to see the Thing's face, but he was aware of its weird, booming chuckle. That sound was like nothing human. It was hard to think of it even as a voice.

Ham thought of the goblin as described by those who had seen it.

As he stared in bewilderment, the Thing leaped outward into space.

And it was holding Monk as it leaped.

Chapter V. MAN WITH THE SCAR

DOC SAVAGE had returned to the laboratory of Martin Uppercue. After Ham and Pat Savage had left to investigate the trouble on the roof, the bronze man had spent a little time looking for the small blond girl. He had not found her.

Doc had then gone back to his car, near the Hall of Medicine, and from an equipment case taken a special ultraviolet light used to penetrate fog or water. He had used the light on the rectangular pit that had been found beneath the mine tunnel heap.

Strangely, when Doc Savage had left the Hall of Mines, he did not seem greatly upset about Long Tom's watery grave demise.

The small door at the top of the steps outside Uppercue's laboratory was locked. Doc had closed it when they all had left here a little while ago.

From his pocket he got a key that would open almost any type of lock. A Fair cop, in his natty uniform, was going by and came up the steps to greet the bronze man.

"I understand," he said, "that you are Doc Savage. I've been instructed to give you any possible aid. Can I do anything?"

Doc nodded, told the officer that Ham and Pat Savage might be looking for him. They were to be permitted to enter the laboratory.

Neither Doc Savage nor the officer had heard about the excitement atop the Motors Building.

The cop said, "Say, Mr. Savage, there sure is queer things goin' on around here. Like Uppercue's disappearance. You know, I have a hunch that guy was up to something. I--"

"Has any trace been found of him?" the bronze man interjected.

"Naw. Say, I hope you can find him, though. They say you're good at stuff like that, and--"

"That," Doc finished, "is what we hope to do."

He went inside, down the steep steps and along the narrow corridor to the laboratory. The rubber apron, the empty metal cylinder that the small blond girl had carried, were on a workbench where the bronze man had left them.

He disregarded these now and moved to the table where the model spherical generator was set up.

Doc Savage seemed especially interested in the generator.

He noted that it was put together in units that could be quickly dismantled. Soon he had the model apart and was busy examining each part. His metallic features were thoughtful.

Doc Savage had discovered something.

The running feet in the corridor behind him made sharp sounds that knocked about the laboratory walls. Doc Savage turned to face the girl who came dashing breathlessly into the room.

It was the nicely put-together small blond girl, and she cried, "May I stay with you?"

Doc Savage said, "You seem to be a person who changes her mind often. A little while ago you disappeared. You've refused to be at all helpful."

"It was the man." Her eyes were big and round.

"What man?"

"The one with the scar. I saw him staring at me over there at the Hall of Mines. That's why I ducked out. He was following me now when I came this way. I . . . I'm afraid."

"It could not have been that-goblin-that scared you?"

"I . . . yes . . . that scared me, too. But it was the man with the scar that caused me to flee."

"What is that 'goblin'?"

The girl said nothing.

"You know what it is," Doc said. "That was obvious. Now, what is it?"

"I won't tell you!" the girl said.

Ham and Pat Savage came back then with the news of Monk's seizure.

PAT SAVAGE'S eyes were bright, and a flush of excitement had climbed into her cheeks.

"Doc," she exclaimed, "That . . . that Thing I saw grab Monk was incredible. You should have seen its size. I was standing there on the roof when--"

Ham cut in with, "And it jumped right off the roof with Monk gripped in its arms, Doc! I heard Monk yell, and tried to reach him--"

"Jumped?"

Doc Savage was at alert attention.

Obviously the bronze giant was thinking of the height of the Motors Building; that death could be the only end for anyone leaping from its roof.

But Pat quickly put in, "They landed in one of those two big pools beside the building. You know, those pools around on the side. There's a lot of shrubbery and gardens surrounding the spot, and by the time I got there that Thing had disappeared."

"And Monk?" Doc queried.

"Gone, too," Ham said. He explained. "The spot that Thing jumped from was directly over one of the pools. By the time I got down there--by the time anyone could get there, both Monk and the Thing were gone. You could see the wet tracks where the Thing had pulled Monk out of the water."

For once, the smooth-talking, dapper lawyer was upset. He was deeply worried about Monk. Though the hairy chemist and Ham liked nothing better than an argument or fight, either would have gladly forfeited his life for the other in time of danger.

Doc Savage was thoughtful for a moment, saying nothing.

Then with a brief, "Wait here," he went out to where he had left the Fair cop at the outer door.

Doc Savage questioned the man about the blond girl arriving here.

"She was followed," the cop said.

"Followed?"

"I saw the mug who was trailin' her. I started for him. He ran."

"Can you describe him?"

"Well, now"—the officer was thoughtful—"Yes and no. He had some sort of scar on his face. And the bloke was grinning like he was happy as hell about something."

Doc Savage said, "Thanks," and went back to the laboratory.

Someone was really trailing the girl. Doc had thought she was lying about that.

As Doc looked at the girl's small oval face, back in Uppercue's laboratory, he was certain that she was terrified. It was in her blue eyes. She sat in a chair near the workbench, her small hands twisting a lace handkerchief in her lap.

Pat Savage moved around to the blond girl's side, placed an arm around her shoulder and said, "I wish you would let us help."

The girl began shaking. "Just get . . . get me to some place where I'll be . . . safe. That's all you can do."

Doc Savage said, "We'll take you to a safe place. Ham, escort both girls over to that small building near where my car is parked. They'll be safe there."

Pat would have objected, but Doc got her aside and said, "Gives you a chance to question her." Pat was satisfied.

Later, Doc said something in an aside to the well-dressed lawyer, and Ham smiled. The place the bronze man had referred to was a small lockup—a jail on the grounds used in case of emergency. Doc Savage knew that a guard was on constant duty there. Thus the girls would be safe.

When Ham had gone out with the girls, Doc Savage stepped through the vault like door into the large laboratory, the room with all the machinery that obviously was in readiness to operate something above.

The bronze man stared upward. Across the room, iron steps like those in a ship's engine room, led to a catwalk near the high dome of the room. From there, still another iron ladder led to an opening in the ceiling, a trapdoor of some sort.

Power lines, cables, different kinds of wiring also led up to somewhere above. Doc decided that he would later go up and investigate.

The tall dark man who stepped out from behind the vault like door Doc had just cleared, said quietly, "Maybe you better stay right here, mister."

There was a lot of gun in the man's fist.

DOC SAVAGE'S right hand was in his coat pocket. He didn't move, but looked quietly at the tall young man who moved around to a position in front of him.

About thirty would catch his age, and he had pleasant brown eyes, darker brown hair, and was wearing pin-striped trousers and a dark, semiformal coat. He reminded one of the alert young men who were members of the diplomatic service in Washington. An embassy attaché.

He looked nothing like a gunman; yet the heavy automatic in his hand was steady on Doc's chest, and the young man's face was quite grim.

The stranger said, "You aren't fooling me. What's the idea of sending that nice kid to jail? I heard what you said—and don't act like a toad, either!"

This last was an exasperated command when the stranger saw what Doc was doing.

The bronze man had taken a deep breath, like a person who is going to be obstinate. Doc was holding his breath and moving slowly back from the black hole of the gun barrel.

The tall man stepped forward, his face flushed with anger as he glared at Doc Savage. "See here," he shouted, "you either start talking or this gun starts blasting!"

Ordinarily, the bronze man would have been wearing a bulletproof vest. He had left it off because of the operation he had been asked to perform this afternoon. If that gun went off, nothing would stop the heavy slugs.

And the young man holding it looked mad enough to fire at any second.

Doc had been holding his breath for fully two minutes. He had backed away from the spot where he first stood.

The brown-eyed man reached that spot now, choked, started to yank at his collar, and suddenly collapsed. His fingers went slack around the gun butt.

Doc Savage caught the man as he fell, picked up the gun, dropped it into his pocket and, lifting the tall man easily into his arms, hurried him out of the room. On the way out, the bronze man reached back with one hand to close the heavy vault door behind him.

Then Doc let out his breath.

He propped the man in a chair and in a few moments the brown eyes opened.

"I-ugh— Say, what the—" the man started to bluster. He climbed to his feet, swung a steaming right fist at the bronze man's head.

Doc Savage, in a swift movement, caught that fist in his right hand and the young man stopped in his forward plunge as though he had run into a brick wall. His eyes looked startled.

Doc said quietly, "Now let's be sensible? That harmless gas has made you light-headed. It will

pass in a moment."

WHILE the bronze man's hand had been in his right pocket, he had broken a small bulb that contained a quick-acting anaesthetic gas. Doc had held his breath, thus inhaling none of the colorless, odorless gas. The effectiveness of the gas wore off in a few moments. But as a matter of precaution, Doc Savage had closed the door behind him.

Doc explained about Professor Uppercue; about how he had placed the blond girl with his cousin Pat in a place where they would be safe for the moment. He asked:

"You were upset about Uppercue's daughter, weren't you?"

The young man's face had flushed when he learned that the speaker was Doc Savage. He talked. He was Adam Ash, a public relations consul at the World's Fair. His job was that of diplomat dealing with various representatives of foreign powers with buildings at the Fair. Doc was impressed by Adam Ash's background, his training.

He queried, "Then this girl is Uppercue's daughter? What is she afraid of?"

Adam Ash's brown eyes looked worried. "Uppercue was readying some great experiment," he said.

"Publicity on the thing was being kept from the newspapers until everything was all set."

"What kind of an experiment?"

"I don't know. But something terrific."

"There is some connection between Uppercue's disappearance and this so-called goblin that has been seen, and has seized two of my men. Any idea what the connection might be?"

"No."

The bronze man did not comment further. Often when Doc Savage did not wish to explain an idea that was shaping up in his mind, he maintained silence.

Unexpectedly, he asked, "Who has charge of the attendance records here at the Fair?"

Ash mentioned an official's name, told where he could be located.

Seeing that Adam Ash—who was apparently quite fond of Uppercue's daughter, Kay—was willing to help, the bronze man suggested that he go over and see that the girls were all right. Ash agreed, and then departed.

Doc Savage went to the Administration Building, learned from the gate-keeper about the actual figures on the attendance record sheets.

The masses of figures did not interest Doc Savage, but what did particularly interest him was the two-less-went-out-than-came-in angle.

"Oh, we noticed that," they told him. "But one of the machines must have made a mistake."

As Doc left the official's office, he paused in the open doorway a moment as the gatekeeper again repeated the information. The bronze man's eyes were thoughtful, and he did not see the figure of a man lurking in an L of the corridor.

Doc was thinking as he left the building and walked through a darkened area where cars were parked. The bronze man disliked publicity, and he was taking a route that was away from the wide, well-lighted malls.

Again he did not see the man who was following him, the corridor lurker—an individual with a peculiar scar on his face.

Chapter VI. THE THING CHUCKLES

DOC SAVAGE'S route took him back toward the Court of Communications. This consisted of the broad twin malls that paralleled a landscaped green built between. Evening World's Fair visitors jammed the walks now and it was impossible for the bronze man to avoid the crowds at this point.

Yet there was little possibility of recognition, for everyone was dazzled by the splendor of the long, varicolored-lighted promenade walk. There were too many things for people to stare at.

The crowd was unusually close-packed down near the huge Perisphere. The great white-covered ball looked like a giant round egg in the powerful floodlights.

Someone tugged at the bronze man's arm as he quietly made his way through the crush of human beings. Doc turned.

And just as he did so, Doc Savage felt another jerk at his coat sleeve, near the shoulder.

But it was no one trying to gain his attention.

Instead, Doc Savage had a brief glimpse of a man whirling away from him, of a face that seemed to be drawn into a hell-let's-have-some-fun sort of grin and beaded eyes that were as cold as death. The man elbowed his way swiftly through the crowd.

Doc Savage saw his own torn coat sleeve, and something else.

The object was a long, nickel-plated instrument that was in the man's hand; it gleamed for a brief second in the light. Then the man had ducked through the crowd.

The bronze man did not have to examine his torn coat to know what that tug had meant. The grinning man with the scar near his mouth had tried to jab him with some sort of hypodermic needle. Doc took out after him.

This wasn't too difficult, for even on the jammed walks, the man's high silk hat bobbed up above heads frequently. The assailant's attire was hardly in keeping with the hard, icy stare in his pig like eyes. For, wearing "tails" and the high silk hat, he appeared, at a brief glance, like one of

the many visiting foreign diplomats!

THE chase continued across the wide mall, through the throngs and to a bypath that wound beneath thick foliage near bordering trees. It was not the sort of chase that draws attention, for there were too many people to make running possible.

It was really a case of quick footwork in slipping in and out of holes in the jam of people. The man with the grinning face proved to be quite adept at moving swiftly without drawing any attention. But when he got away from the walks and beneath the enshrouding trees, he got his legs pumping and looked like an open-field runner going places.

Doc Savage ran just as swiftly, but with no apparent effort.

Doc knew that the running man must have trailed him from the Administration Building. For some reason, the stranger had followed him there, must have overheard the questions Doc had asked of the gatekeeper.

The chase was leading toward the spot where Doc's big sedan was parked near the Hall of Medicine. The man in the silk hat reached another crowded mall again—one of the streets that led toward the Theme Center like the spoke of a wheel—slowed his steps, got into the crowd and disappeared momentarily.

But his high hat bobbed up again over near the long yellow-walled building; he cut around toward the rear.

Doc decided that this had lasted long enough and quickened his stride. Obviously, the stranger ahead could answer important questions. He was involved in this mystery somehow; otherwise, why the attack?

Beneath the bronze man's coat was one of the special machine pistols that he had picked up when he went back to his car. Like an oversized automatic, the pistol could fire the "mercy" bullets that Doc's aids used. The bullets could bring down a crook, make him unconscious without doing any specific harm.

But there was a possibility of the bullets traveling beyond the darkened parking space back here and striking one of the Fair visitors. Doc Savage figured it would be just as easy to catch the man by hand.

They were now running close to the high walls behind the Hall of Medicine. It was dark back here, after the brilliant lights of the mall behind. But in the gloom, the bronze man's unusual gold eyes held to the streaking figure ahead.

Doc Savage closed in. In three more strides he would be able to bring the stranger down in a flying tackle. The bronze man's powerful legs started to close that gap—

And a man who came out of the rear exit of the Hall of Medicine at that moment opened the door outward right in Doc Savage's path.

THE heavy door was ripped half from its hinges as the bronze giant's form plowed into it. Doc went down.

He was on his feet in a fraction of a second. Doc Savage's quick mind had prepared his trained body for that crash in the heartbeat of time before he had hit the opening door. Muscles had set for the impact. He was unhurt.

But the tall man who gasped with dismay, and who moved forward quickly to aid Doc Savage, said, "I say, but I'm sorry! Da. I had no idea anyone was so near this door—"

And then he paused, peered at the bronze man's face and exclaimed, "Doc Savage! What—what's wrong? May I help?"

It was good-looking Dr. Alexis Mandroff, the personable young doctor who had assisted Doc Savage in the brain operation this very afternoon.

It was not necessary for Doc to explain. Ahead, the running man had skidded to a halt in the gravel. His path had taken him toward the huge Perisphere, and he perhaps surmised that there he might be trapped. It would be difficult to circle the mammoth globe with its throng-packed walks. The grinning man cut across the parking lot, ducked behind a line of machines on the far side of the yard. He was out of sight, but there was the sound of his feet kicking up cinders.

Doc Savage said, "I'm trying to catch him."

Doctor Mandroff, hatless, his straw-blond hair rumpling as he dropped his black medical bag and started running, yelled, "Come on, then! Between us, we'll fool him!"

He went to the left; while the bronze man cut off to the right of their trapped mouse. The victim was somewhere behind the parked machines.

But fifteen minutes later, it was tall Dr. Mandroff who panted, "I guess we've lost him. Da?"

"Yes," Doc agreed.

They went back to the bronze man's car.

Doc Savage unlocked the door, leaned inside the car and turned on a switch on his short-wave radio. He waited a moment until the set warmed up, then said quietly, "Ham, you might come over to the Hall of Medicine. Bring the man named Adam Ash who was sent to meet you."

Dr. Mandroff, leaning over to stare at the radio inside the bronze giant's sedan said "How in the world—" His gray eyes were wide.

"That," Doc said, "is quite a simple device. My men all carry small, portable earphones with them. We use a special wave length and Ham is expecting to hear from me. You know him, I believe." Dr. Mandroff nodded, suggested that they wait inside in his office, which he had just left. Mandroff again made apologies for opening the door so quickly in the bronze man's path. "I'm so sorry, but it was an accident that could not be helped," he said miserably. Inside the building, Mandroff moved on ahead, and flicked on a light in a modernistically furnished office that was more of a consultation room than anything else. An open doorway on the far side of the room showed a more practical, white case-lined office beyond. A few moments later cane-swinging Ham arrived with Adam Ash. It seemed that Ash was already acquainted with Dr. Mandroff. It was Adam Ash who said: "I think this is entirely concerned with his mysterious experiment that Uppercue planned. The thing he was keeping secret."

THEY were all seated in Mandroff's consultation room.

Ham, the smooth-talking lawyer, put in, "But I saw the Thing—this—whatever it was. I saw it grab Monk and leap from the Motors Building!" Ham's grip was white-knuckled on the handle of his innocent-looking cane—it was really a sword cane.

The lawyer's voice lowered and trembled slightly. "And it got Long Tom, another of our associates."

"How do you account for the seizure of Monk and Long Tom?" Dr. Mandroff asked curiously. "What was the motive?"

"They were investigating Professor Uppercue's disappearance. Somebody didn't want that."

"That might be," Dr. Mandroff said thoughtfully.

Doc said, "Two other persons have disappeared on these Fair Grounds, too."

"Who?"

"As yet unidentified. Attendance records merely show two persons came in and didn't leave."

"That," Dr. Mandroff said gravely, "is mysterious."

"Apparently as important as the disappearance of Professor Uppercue, also."

"Eh?"

"An attempt was made to kill me after I found out that two of the crowd apparently had never left the Fair Grounds."

Ham thought about it for a moment, then rubbed his forehead in an exasperated way.

"The girls are safe, anyway," he said.

"You're sure?" Doc said grimly.

The well-dressed lawyer nodded. "Safe in the Fair jail, with a guard outside the door. Pat is fit to be tied."

Doc Savage looked at Adam Ash. "You look as if something was on your mind."

The pleasant-faced public relations consul nodded.

"I just thought of something that might be important."

"Let us have it."

"It strikes me that part of this mystery has to do with a special metal cylinder that Professor Uppercue was always closely guarding. In it, he had something that he once told me meant the success or failure of an experiment greater than any known invention."

Doc mentioned the cylinder he had opened in Uppercue's laboratory, the tube he had found empty.

"If it was empty, that wasn't the one," Adam Ash said. "He had several other fake ones in case someone tried to steal the real cylinder. Precaution, I guess. He was almost nuts about the whole business."

For several moments, everyone in the room was silent. Through the open windows came the constant soft hum of voices of thousands of people on the Fair Grounds. Each man was thinking to himself that any one of those innocent persons might be seized by the weird creature that was the goblin.

It was stiffly quiet inside the room, until Ham said, "Doc, I called the headquarters of the Fair police. Told them to tell any excited visitors that the leap of Monk and that—that Thing from the Motors Building roof was a publicity stunt or something. Otherwise, there might be a panic."

Doc nodded. "That was an excellent idea," he said.

The bronze man stood up, indicating that the talk was finished.

From outside, on the warm night air, came a sound that held every other occupant of the room rigid. A sound like nothing human.

It was a guttural chuckling, and the volume of the sound was enough to vibrate through the whole room.

Ham yelled, "That—that— It's the same sound I heard that goblin of a Thing make!"

Chapter VII. MONK'S MEMORY IMPROVES

OUTSIDE, they found no one. Whatever strange being had been out in the darkness behind the building, had disappeared as easily as its weird throat sound had come through the window.

Ham said, "It might have been a trick."

"Trick?"

"To get us all steamed up on the mysterious monster theory."

Doc Savage did not comment. The bronze man removed some gadgets from special compartments built into the inside of his big sedan, and these he tucked away in a vest he wore beneath his coat. He also thought it wise to put on one of his bulletproof vests.

Ham asked one more question.

"Doc—about Long Tom? Is he really—"

The lawyer couldn't get the word out. He had been going to say "dead."

But Doc Savage shook his head. He told about the trouble at the mine exhibit. "We examined that pit beneath the mine cave-in. There was water and fallen earth. But no sign of Long Tom."

"Then how in the devil—" Ham started to ask.

"Perhaps we'll have that answer shortly," Doc finished and left.

A few moments later the bronze man was passing over the Bridge of Wheels, a futuristic structure that crossed a busy Long Island parkway separating part of the World's Fair Grounds from the central portion where the Theme Center was located.

Over here was the Motors Building and the two big pools into one of which the Thing had plunged with Monk in its huge arms.

The pools were surrounded by landscaped gardens, and what Doc Savage next did was unobserved. He took from his special vest a queer-looking object. It looked like an old-fashioned lantern. Then he carefully circled one of the pools.

The water marks that the Thing had left when it dragged Monk from a pool had disappeared now, yet in a few moments the bronze man had picked up the trail. The lantern device Doc carried employed an ultraviolet light, but it would have been useless for trailing purposes, except for one thing—the chemicals which Monk always carried about his person.

If Monk was conscious, it was a good bet that he had managed to open one of these bottles of chemicals and pour the contents on his captor, where the chemical would mingle with water that dripped—and leave a trail.

Sure enough, there were footprints which fluoresced—glowed as do aspirin and Vaseline and other substances—when exposed to an ultraviolet light.

The prints of huge feet glowed with an uncanny luminance at the pool edge. They led off across a sweep of green lawn, cut behind Fair buildings and down a long slope toward an artificial lake that had been especially constructed at the Fair.

The lake looked like any real lake, and was over a mile in length.

The tracks swerved away from the lake and avoided any buildings. Doc Savage finally found himself in a field that was a leftover part of the vast Flushing Meadows, on which the World's Fair had been erected.

The big prints ended at an iron manhole cover in the center of the field.

The ultraviolet lantern showed something else now. Hand prints on the manhole cover. Big prints that no ordinary man could make. They were smudged, useless as a clue—but Doc Savage realized that the creature must have gone below ground here.

The bronze man lifted the heavy iron cover—it was all of four feet in diameter and two inches thick—raised it as easily as though it were a pot lid.

Inside, an iron ladder led downward into a damp-smelling cavern. Heat, a steaming odor floated up and struck Doc Savage's metallic features.

The place was obviously an opening to the underground pipe lines that carried steam from a central heating plant to the various Fair buildings. Electrical conduits were probably under here also, since there was no wiring visible anywhere about the modern grounds.

Deep down in the black pit a squeaky voice grumbled, "Goshamighty! How am I gonna get outta this danged Turkish bath?"

It was Monk.

Doc Savage removed a powerful flashlight from his pocket and went down the iron ladder swiftly. The ladder ended in a small circular room whose walls were a maze of valves and skinny and fat pipes. The pipes were insulated, but still the thick, choking heat caused by steam made the place like an oven.

Monk was banging his hairy bulk about the place, trying to find a way out. The apelike chemist looked as though he had tangled with a dozen wild cats.

"Doc!" Monk squealed delightedly. "Blazes! I thought I was a gonner sure! I been tryin' to get outta this damned place for half an hour!"

Monk's little eyes were red and inflamed in his homely face. He squinted at Doc Savage through the glare of the flashlight ray. He asked seriously, "Look, Doc, this ain't one of them short-cuts to hell, is it?"

The bronze man's eyes looked slightly worried at the sight of Monk's condition.

Clothes had been half torn from the hairy chemist's powerful torso. He was bruised and scratched.

Monk liked nothing better than a good fight, but this time it looked as though he had been set upon by half a dozen thugs.

Fighting his way blindly through the underground pipe lines with their intense, choking heat, it

was quite obvious that Monk was almost done for.

Doc said, "We'd better get out of here."

He gave the chemist a boost up the ladder, and a moment later they were out in the fresh night air again. In the distance, the pink-red glow of the many Fair buildings made the heavens bright as day.

Monk straightened out rapidly. The fresh air soon cleared his fogged brain, and Doc Savage had made his aid take a special capsule that quickly brought back renewed strength, after which Monk seemed all right.

Briefly, he told the bronze man what had happened.

"Doc!" the burly chemist piped. "You oughta see that Thing! It's at least eight feet tall and strong as a bull. We landed in that danged pool and I tried to drown the Thing, but it rapped me over the head and I woke up down there some place."

Monk indicated the manhole which Doc now had covered again.

"Does it have red hair?" Doc Savage asked quietly.

Monk almost jumped. "Then, you . . . you've seen it, too?"

Doc Savage shook his head.

He said, "But we found some of the hairs mixed with bloodstains in Uppercue's laboratory."

"Uppercue!" Monk got the name out in a surprised squeak. "You mean, it . . . that Thing has Uppercue?"

"And Long Tom," the bronze man added.

The broad-bodied chemist was suddenly trembling with fury. "Doc," he exclaimed, "there's somethin' I should remember! I got a hazy recollection of comin' to for a couple moments down there."

To help him, Doc Savage said, "The Thing had red hair, and was over eight feet high. What else?"

"It's got the funniest face, Doc. Like a guy who can't think. The eyes look right through you, as though they don't even see you."

Monk shuddered. "And it's dressed in some kind of a cheap gray suit like a . . . well, like a convict."

"And the features?" the bronze man prodded.

Both men were walking back toward the Fair buildings now.

Monk's forehead wrinkled as he tried to remember through the nightmare. "Well, Doc, you just can't describe them. They . . . they're blank, is all. And there's something else. It seems there should be somethin' I should remember. I—"

Monk's words trailed off, as though he were slipping back into the fog again.

"Yes?" Doc prompted.

Suddenly the hairy chemist gave a whoop and started jumping up and down.

"Doc, we've got to hurry!" he piped.

"Hurry?"

Monk looked as though he had swallowed a grapefruit whole. Startled.

"I remember a little now," Monk raced on. "Someone was talking to this Thing—this what-you-call-it. You know, like a person trying to tell a dog to do something. He was saying it over and over, and—"

"Saying what?" Doc Savage prodded patiently.

"It was something about that Thing was to go and kidnap the two girls!"

THE point at which Doc Savage had located Monk was a good two miles from where the bronze man had left his car. But Doc and his assistant had now reached one of the express highways that circled the World's Fair Grounds.

These roads were also used by the special Fair police in patrolling the various routes that skirted the fringe of the many buildings and smaller crossroads.

Doc hailed a cruising radio car, spoke to the man in trooper's uniform at the wheel. The driver was one of the regular Fair police.

The bronze man identified himself, then asked, "Is this a two-way radio, officer?" Doc indicated a box beneath the dashboard and a microphone hanging from a hook nearby.

The man in the patrol car nodded. The car was painted the color of an army car, and the top was lowered.

Doc asked, "Then call your headquarters and have someone find out if the two girls who were left guarded in that small holdover tank are all right."

While the officer contacted his dispatcher, Doc Savage explained to Monk about Pat Savage and the blond girl.

In a moment the loud-speaker in the police car crackled, and then a voice said, "Car 15 . . . Calling car 15 . . . We've phoned the officer on guard at the place you mentioned and he informs us that the two young ladies are O. K. That is all—"

Monk let out his breath.

"Whew!" he sighed. "If anything ever happened to Pat—"

His tone said that Pat Savage was just about the grandest girl living. Monk liked all the girls,

but the bronze man's cousin rated far above anyone the homely chemist had ever met. The police car had been cruising the Fair highway while the call had been made to headquarters. Doc thanked the officer, directed, "Drop us here." The spot at which they left the patrol car was not far from where Doc's own sedan was parked. It was not very late in the evening, and there were still throngs of Fair visitors on the grounds. Cars were not permitted to use the roads inside, in the more congested part of the Fair, while so many people were everywhere. Avoiding the main thoroughfares, Doc again questioned Monk as they headed toward the medical building parking lot. Doc Savage had told Monk about leaving Ham there with good-looking Adam Ash and Dr. Mandroff. "Try to remember something else about that place where the Thing took you," the bronze man suggested. Monk's scarred face was thoughtful. "I've tried to, Doc," he said apologetically, "but I only came to for a few seconds and everything was blurry. But I'm gonna find my way back to that damned steam-hole an'—" "You didn't see the speaker—the one who gave the Thing the orders?" the bronze man prodded. "No," Monk stated in his squeaky voice. "It was dark down there, and the place they dumped me must have been off from some kind of larger room. I just heard the voice—" Monk stopped in his rolling stride. His massive arms, which trailed to his knees at times, came up to clutch the bronze man's own. His face was worried again. "Doc!" Monk exclaimed. "That voice!" "What voice?" "The dispatcher's voice just now on the police short wave. The guy that said Pat and that other dame was O. K. It—" "Well?" "Blazes!" Monk squealed in his childlike tone. "It just came to me. It sounded like the voice that told that goblin—or whatever it is—to grab the girls!" Doc Savage had continued forward swiftly at Monk's startling announcement. They had been close to Doc's big car. In a moment, the bronze man was working with the short-wave radio, a two-way set itself. He got the wave length of the Fair police. "Hello?" the bronze man said. An excited voice replied. "Hello? Who is it?" Doc Savage identified himself. And the voice—a different one than they had heard over the police car radio—said breathlessly, "There's been trouble over here, Mr. Savage. We found our regular dispatcher knocked out a few moments ago! He is still unconscious and we can't learn what the trouble was—" Doc interrupted with, "Can you contact the small jail where the two girls are being guarded?" The voice answered: "Just a moment. We have an intercommunications system here. I'll get the guard—" The radio in Doc Savage's car hummed for a few moments. Then the voice came back, and it was excited. "We can't get any reply from that place!" the police dispatcher said.

Chapter VIII. LONESOME

WHEN Doc Savage had left his very attractive cousin, Pat, along with the equally as pretty blond-haired girl, Kay Uppercue, Pat had at first been furious. She had figured that for at least once in her life, she was going to be right in the midst of trouble. But the bronze man had decided differently. Pat Savage, her unusual gold eyes flaming, had sat stiffly on the edge of an iron cot within the single cell and glared. After a while she became aware of the tenseness of the slender, blue-eyed girl beside her. Pat's inquisitive nature got to work. "You are Kay Uppercue, aren't you?" Doc's attractive cousin asked. The small girl seated so rigidly beside Pat Savage nodded. She looked too frightened to do otherwise. "Yes," she said tremulously. "Then why not tell me what this is all about?" Pat suggested. "I . . . that is . . . ah—" the girl stammered. Pat's arm went around the small blond girl's shoulders. "Please let me help," Pat offered. The girl looked up at Pat Savage, at the frankness in lovely eyes that were like Doc Savage's own. She murmured, "I really ought to. But I . . . I'm terrified! If that . . . that Thing ever catches me—" Pat indicated the heavy bars of their solitary cell. She pointed to the policeman who was on

guard in the doorway of the small building. The cop was working on his teeth with a toothpick.

"Doc Savage certainly couldn't have left us in a safer place," Pat said cheerfully.

"Well, maybe I'd better tell you," Kay Uppercue finally admitted with a sigh.

But just then they were interrupted by the arrival of someone at the outer door, where the guard was seated.

The man who stepped inside the small jail room just outside the girls' cell door, looked like someone of importance. Pat could not get a good look at the arrival, for his back was partly toward them as he talked to the guard.

But she heard the man say, "It ees quite important, monsieur. Le Docteur Savage has send these message to his cousin. It ees ver-ry important, non!"

The broad-faced guard looked quizzical for a moment, cocking an eye at the man who was talking to him. Then he shrugged. Perhaps he was afraid to offend this messenger from Doc Savage, who wore a high silk hat and tails. These Frenchmen were pretty touchy, the guard knew.

He shuffled across the room, unlocked the heavy iron-barred door that protected Pat and the blond girl, and said, "O. K., mister. Talk to 'em. But make it snappy."

The guard started to go back to his post.

The visiting "diplomat" pulled a long-barreled gun from beneath his coat, stuck it against the guard's back, and snarled, "O. K., copper, push your face inside this cage and don't try tricks!" The long gun dug into the guard's back. The cop raised his hands. As he moved past the gunman, the stranger quickly lifted the guard's service gun from a hip pocket. Then he brought his own gun barrel down on the policeman's skull.

The guard tumbled face-first into the small cell.

Kay Uppercue leaped to her feet and started to scream.

But Pat Savage put in swiftly, "Stop it! I don't think this guy is fooling!"

For Pat had seen the odd look on the arrival's peculiar face. There was an old scar near the mouth, and it twisted the whole face out of shape, so that the gunman seemed to be grinning happily about something. But the small, fishy eyes were as cold as death itself.

Over his shoulder, the gunman called, "All right, you guys—come and get 'em!" The grinning-faced man then took an apple from his pocket, polished it on his sleeve, and calmly took a bite.

Six more "diplomats" jumped into the cell room from just outside the doorway. Like their leader, they were arrayed in tails and high silk hats. They could have been easily mistaken in a crowd for a committee of visiting representatives of a foreign power.

Close to, they had faces that would have terrified babies.

The men grabbed Pat Savage and the girl with her, quickly placed gags in the girls' mouths, and pushed them ungently toward the door. One thug asked, "Take them to the regular place, Lonesome?" "Yeah," said the leader, pausing a moment in his apple chewing, and the girls were bundled into a car parked just around the corner of the building.

Lonesome followed, after locking the cell door on the unconscious guard.

Lonesome was the leader whose twisted mouth made him appear like he was tickled pink about something. But there was nothing cheerful about his harsh voice.

"This," he said flatly, "will sure get Doc Savage's goat."

He took another bite of the apple.

THE bronze man and Monk were still standing near Doc's short-wave car radio when the police emergency dispatcher made his startling announcement.

The apelike chemist got excited. "I'm goin' over there, Doc!" he yelled in his squeaky voice.

"Maybe that dame has played a trick on Pat—"

"Wait!" the bronze man said swiftly.

There was a buzzing in the loudspeaker; the police announcer's voice came on the air again.

"Mr. Savage,"

the voice said, "we have the intercommunications system switched onto that jail lockup. We should have the guard in a moment . . . We're sending a man over there to investigate—"

Just then another sound faded in behind the announcer's voice. Doc Savage surmised that it was coming from the communications speaker, most likely on the dispatcher's desk.

The sound was Kay Uppercue's screams as the apple-eating kidnap leader named Lonesome knocked out the guard.

The announcer's voice got excited as he started to repeat the information for the bronze man's benefit.

But Doc had heard enough. He flicked off the radio in his sedan. Voices spoke excitedly behind him.

Ham and young Adam Ash had returned, and both had heard the startling news. Monk was almost going crazy.

He leaped at the fastidiously-dressed lawyer and squealed. "You blasted shyster! Doc says you were gonna watch the girls. I ought to bounce you so hard on that thing you call a head that it'll take—"

Well-dressed Ham drew himself up stiffly. His eyes gleamed.

"Listen, you hairy gossoon," he snapped. "If it hadn't been for you going native and starting to climb on roofs, we wouldn't have had this trouble. Doc should be looking for Uppercue and Long Tom, but he had to get you out of a jam first. Furthermore--"

The battle got off to a nice start.

Quietly, Doc Savage said, "Perhaps it would be a good idea if you tried to find the girls."

That settled that.

Ham and Monk took out in a hurry in the direction of the building where the girls had been left under guard.

Doc started to turn toward Adam Ash, and he saw then that the brown-eyed tall man's eyes were blazing.

Adam Ash said stiffly, "I don't like to be hasty, Mr. Savage, but I must say I'm disappointed in you. You said the girls would be all right. And now"--the young public relations consul's usually pleasant voice rose shrilly--"well, I think I'd better handle this in my own way!"

Adam Ash stalked off furiously.

For a long moment the bronze man merely stood and watched Adam Ash disappear in the gloom behind the Hall of Medicine. Doc's metallic features were thoughtful.

Something in Adam Ash's words had not rung quite true.

Doc Savage decided to follow Ash, for he wondered if the dark-haired young man's feelings for Uppercue's pretty daughter were as sincere as Ash had pretended.

IT was getting late now, and the extensive World's Fair Grounds were practically empty of weary visitors. Display floodlights had been switched off. Many of the brightly-painted exhibit buildings were darkened. The glamour, the thousand-and-one sights that held a staring visitor's attention, were now gloomy-looking structures in the quiet night.

Across the sweeping Flushing Meadows, a chill, dank mist was rolling in from nearby Long Island Sound.

Curiously, Adam Ash's steps took him in a direction away from those of Doc Savage's wrangling aids. Ash seemed to be headed for the Lagoon of Nations, the entrance point to building colonies of foreign countries. It was like being carried on a magic carpet to far-off lands.

Doc Savage found himself trailing along a narrow, cobbled street in the French Quarter. Building doorways were dark now; the vague form of Adam Ash, some distance ahead, was like that of a Dr. Jekyll stalking the Paris underworld.

Adam Ash made no stops. He seemed to have a definite goal in view. He left the French quarter, crossed a white bridge that led across a creek into the more sedate section that was Great Britain's exhibit.

The bronze man's steps were soundless as he followed. He was fairly close behind Adam Ash, yet so quietly could Doc Savage move his powerful form, that not the barest foot scuff could be heard. Ash swung around a corner and disappeared.

Doc Savage moved silently up to the building corner and stood listening. His trained ears told him that Adam Ash had paused.

Then there was a new sound: the click of a car door being unlocked and opened. A moment later a car motor sputtered into life, gears clashed and Adam Ash took off as though the devil himself were after him.

Hearing the motor, the bronze man had leaped silently forward, planning to swing onto a rear bumper of Adam Ash's car. But the young man's actions had been too surprising. The car got away before Doc reached the spot where it had been parked.

The public relations consul's car reached one of the express highways that circled the Fair Grounds, and Doc Savage knew that there was no exit from that highway until one reached the far side of the Fair.

Behind Doc, some place, another car was moving in the quiet night.

Doc hastened back to the corner in time to see one of the World's Fair police prowl cars cruising toward him. An officer in the regulation trooper like uniform was at the wheel.

The car was the open model, two-seated type of khaki color.

The bronze man hailed the driver, identified himself and indicated Adam Ash's coupé in the distance. Doc said, "If you go straight back this road, we can intercept that other car halfway around the bordering highway. Hurry."

Doc Savage climbed in the front seat, the driver got the car in gear again and almost pulled the wheels off getting away from there like mad.

Doc looked suddenly cautious. "This is the wrong way--"he started to protest.

The man beside him raised his right hand higher, to show the gun in his steady fist, and said, "But this roscoe shoots one way, bronze guy!"

Two heads rose up from the rear compartment--the men had obviously been hunkered down there out of sight--and one of the two snarled, "These gats work the same way, too, friend!"

His gunman partner chuckled. "Now we're gonna learn about that metal cylinder!"

MONK and Ham were standing outside the small lockup where the girls had been kidnapped. Other police officers had arrived now, and were inside questioning the dazed guard. Doc Savage's two aids had remained long enough to hear a vague description of the crook leader with the grinning face. Then they had hurried out.

Monk's keg-sized arms hung dejectedly at his sides. His little eyes in their pits of gristle were dull.

The hairy chemist looked at waspish Ham and said, "The only reason I don't tear you apart for letting this happen, is on account of the testimonial."

"The testimonial?"

The quick-thinking lawyer was wary.

"Yep. I've sent a testimonial to the company that makes that marcel machine, sayin' how well you liked your permanent. They might want a picture of you!"

Ham snorted, and his fists knotted.

The astute lawyer had a thick shock of dark hair, and was proud of it—but furious at the very pretty wave that was in that hair now.

"You hairy oaf!" he said. He looked at Monk's tattered figure and sniffed. "At least, I'm an attraction to the ladies. But you look like something out of a lost civilization!"

The endless bickering that was forever taking place between the two, got under way again.

But the weird sound that came out of the night cut the near-brawl short.

It seemed to come from nearby, and yet the only things in the vicinity of Monk and Ham were the deserted streets that bordered the long, rectangular Administration Building, a parking lot that was now empty of cars, and vacant rest benches that were placed about for weary sightseers.

The lawyer lowered his sword cane, which had been raised over the hairy chemist's head, and looked startled.

"What was that?" he asked cautiously.

The night air was again stiffly silent.

But Monk was leaning forward strangely, his bullet like head straining outward. "It sounds like—" he started to say, and then the sound came again.

IT was a throaty chuckling, and it came from a bridge some distance away from them. The bridge was a walk for visitors going from the Administration Building to the Annex, behind, and it was shaped not unlike a yacht's sleek hull.

The chuckling came from up there on the bridge. It was an uncanny thing, deep, far-reaching. Any other person would have been frozen in tense horror.

But hairy Monk suddenly let out a howl and leaped forward. "That's it!" he squealed. "What I'm gonna do to that Thing this time is tragic!"

It was said that Monk would probably fight a gorilla, given the chance.

But Ham's black, alert eyes had seen the vague figure on the bridge. It was a hulking form that loomed massively in the dark night. Forgotten was the argument. Crazy Monk was headed right for destruction, and it was the lawyer's job to stop him. For when Death stepped close, Ham would have gladly laid down his life to protect the man with whom he argued so frequently.

Calling, "Wait, you missing link!" Ham took out after his partner.

The Thing on the bridge turned, swung into a long-strided gait and disappeared toward the wide, darkened Court of Communications. Its chilling throat sound floated back on the damp air.

The chase continued some distance down the wide mall, and then Monk swerved to the left as the huge figure ducked beneath shrubs nearby.

By the time Ham came running up, Monk was tearing his way recklessly through thorn bushes and rare, imported plants.

"Lost it!" he said grimly.

Ham's face was thoughtful.

Then he asked abruptly, "Listen, where did we leave Habeas and Chemistry this afternoon? We parked the car some place—"

Monk let out a whoop.

"Blazes!" he squealed. "I forgot about poor Habeas. They're locked in our car back at that Cosmetics Hall. Say! Maybe Habeas could pick up the—"

"—scent of this—this goblin," Ham finished. "That's why I asked about the pets. Only, that scrawny pig couldn't smell its own dinner. I meant Chemistry!"

Monk scowled.

They hurried back to where their limousine had been left early this afternoon. The two pets—after Ham unlocked the car—leaped out in joyful glee at the sight of their masters.

Then they backed off suddenly and glared at one another. Like Monk and Ham, the pets, too, enjoyed a fight.

THE two pets were remarkable-looking creatures. Habeas Corpus, the pig, had long ears like a jackass, stilt like legs, and a snout made for boring into gopher holes. Chemistry was a pint-sized model of an ape and, strangely, looked greatly like hairy Monk. The pig belonged to Monk; Chemistry

to the dapper lawyer. Sarcastic remarks by either of Doc Savage's aids toward the other's pet were sufficient to start a small war.

The pets were quickly separated before a fight started and taken back to where Monk had lost the dim trail of the man-creature Thing. Surprisingly, both Chemistry and Habeas Corpus picked up the trail about the same instant.

The pig scrambled off with its long snout to the ground; Chemistry went bouncing along on hands and feet.

The two aids of the bronze man raced after them.

The chase led far across the World's Fair Grounds, back to a spot somewhat near the lake where Doc Savage had found Monk in the manhole. The pets cut across to a landscaped stretch of gardens that curved down to a huge, semicircular building.

Ham recognized the structure as the great Marine Amphitheater, built at one end of the long, artificial lake. The side of the white building they were approaching looked like the high wall of a stadium, and on the ground level were entrances leading to the tiers of seats above.

The two pets went scrambling into an open gate, and were heard prancing up steps to balconies overhead.

Monk and Ham were close behind.

Suddenly, as both aids emerged at the head of a long aisle that led downward between the tiers of seats, they saw the pets stopped tensely some rows ahead.

Monk and Ham were in a balcony high above the lake. Like a playhouse theater built on a mammoth scale, the amphitheater faced a huge, circular stage, constructed right out in the lake. The aisle at which they had emerged led downward to shadowy gloom. But the pets were close enough ahead to be seen. They had not moved.

Chemistry was chattering like an excited monkey. The pig snorted.

Monk whispered in his squeaky voice, "They've found it, Ham!"

He started down the steps.

"Careful!" Ham warned.

There was a figure down there, vague in the night light. It was seated in a balcony seat close to the aisle.

Monk again whispered. "You got a flashlight, Ham?"

The lawyer nodded.

"Flick it on the minute I get close to that Thing."

Monk kept moving cautiously forward.

But Ham slipped Monk a machine pistol. He rapped softly, "Use this, stupid--and if you can't stop it, I've got my sword ready."

They stalked forward, stealthily approached the seated figure. Then Monk said, "Now!"

The little, loudly-dressed man who leaped to his feet as the light ray hit him, exclaimed, "Douse that light you fools! You're going to spoil everything. I'm telling you!"

The small man was holding binoculars in his hands.

MONK slowly lowered the machine pistol in his hand and stared at what he had expected to be the terrible Thing.

He piped, "I . . . ah . . . that is--Goshamighty, who in blazes are you?"

Habeas the pig bristled his back and gawked likewise.

The man they had pounced upon was no taller than the thickset Monk, and thin. His clothes were so loud they almost shrieked. He had bright, dark eyes, white hair and eyebrows that were black. Gold rings with large stones flashed on several of his fingers.

The stranger drew himself up haughtily and asked, "I don't believe I know you two, either, friends. But never let it be said that Shill Burns was one to be highbrow. You gentlemen are now talking to the one and only Burns, who knows everybody and has seen everything. Why, like I always say, gentlemen, like I always say--when better skills are born, Shill Burns will first have to be consulted. Ha!"

The man laughed at his own remark.

Ham said coolly, "He sounds like a side-show spieler--"

"Ah!" cut in the flashy little man. "My friend, you have hit on only one of the accomplishments of the great Shill Burns. But now I have been called to this mammoth, gigantic, stupendous World's Fair as a special consultant. Like I'm telling you, friends, like I'm telling you. There is nothing--do you hear?--nothing that the great Shill Burns does not know--"

"Maybe this mug knows about goblins," Monk said.

At the remark, the voluble little man went tense. His voice dropped to a stage whisper.

"Say!" he said cautiously. "You gentlemen look somehow familiar! Would it be possible that you are two of the well-known assistants of the bronze man known as Doc Savage--"

"That about hits it," Ham said.

"Ah!"

Little Shill Burns was suddenly passing the binoculars to Ham.

"Then I can help you," he announced with confidence. "Consider it fate that has brought you two

friends to me."

Shill Burns indicated the huge stage out in the lake.

"Look!" he directed.

Ham peered through the binoculars. He saw a dark hole that was the stage proper. It was too dark to make out anything else.

He passed back the glasses and said frostily, "I don't see a thing."

Monk took the glasses and squinted his apelike eyes. Habeas and Chemistry climbed up on the back of two seats and gawked also.

"Blazes!" Monk ejaculated. "What is this?"

Shill Burns took the glasses from Monk and also looked.

He announced, "It's gone!"

He swung to look at Ham. "But it's there. It's out there on the big stage. Fate has brought you two gentlemen to me. Come!"

Flashy little Shill Burns started down the balcony toward a stairway that led to the lake edge.

Monk gave the lawyer a sidelong look.

"I can't savvy that mug, Ham. I wonder—"

The two aids of Doc Savage were trailing along.

"He knows something," said Ham.

"But—"

"He's a shrewd cuss. Perhaps he can help us."

Hairy Monk relaxed a little. "Yep. As much as I hate to admit it, I think you're right. Now maybe we'll find that Uppercue and Long Tom. Daggonit, Ham, this mystery is gettin' me."

For once, Ham was quiet and thoughtful.

At the lake edge, they climbed into a rowboat. The pets tumbled in after them.

Shill Burns wrinkled his nose at the sight of Habeas and Chemistry. He started to pick up the oars, but Monk took the rower's seat and went to work with bulging muscles.

Once Ham commented, "Those oars bend, useless!"

But they safely reached a landing ladder for the great stage, climbed to the footlights, stared at the vastness of the structure, and started moving toward the background of scenery.

Monk grumbled, "Dang it! I don't see no signs of anyone, or any goblin—"

Curtains parted backstage and six men with submachine guns cradled in their arms covered Monk and the lawyer.

The grinning-faced leader said sadly, "Here's one play that closes before the curtain goes up, dopes!"

Then he calmly went on taking bites at the apple which he held in his left hand.

Chapter X. DEATH WITHOUT MUSIC

THE dapper lawyer and Monk were caught off guard.

There had been no one on the stage upon their arrival. Both aids of Doc Savage had been staring at the magnitude of this unusual large stage built right out in the lake, and at the looming vastness of the circular amphitheater across the water.

The six ugly black mouths of the machine-gun barrels took their minds off anything theatrical.

Monk exploded, "Say!"

He then jerked his little head around to ask Shill Burns what this was all about. "You dang well better explain this, you double-crosser—" the hairy chemist started to exclaim. But he stopped, stared.

Shill Burns had vanished.

At some point where the three of them had climbed up to the stage proper, Monk and Ham in the lead with the two pets, the overdressed Shill Burns had taken a silent departure.

Ham stared at the menacing gun barrels and commented, "Neat trick, wasn't it?"

Monk grumbled, "Ah!" and started to bellow.

Monk was ready to fight, guns or not. The apelike chemist liked to fight, and when he got into a scrap his squeaky voice always changed to a bull roar and he howled and bellowed.

He was getting worked up to a fight now.

Ham advised quietly, "That won't help any, you dunce. Those guns will rip you apart."

But Monk howled, "Dang it—them Tommies are fakes!" and dived forward.

When the Tommy guns did not start their chatter of death, the thin-waisted lawyer leaped forward, too. The six gunmen dropped their weapons, grinned out of evil faces and started slugging at the two Doc Savage men.

One thug commented, "Hell, a lotta damage these two birds can do against six!"

The speaker was in error.

Like a cyclone released without warning, the hairy chemist grabbed two of the men, banged their tough heads together three times in quick succession and dropped the dazed figures to the floor. He reached for two more figures.

Ham had whipped his sword from his black cane handle and was using it deftly. That sword point contained a mild anaesthetic drug that, when the point flicked an opponent's body, quickly put him

to sleep.

The dapper lawyer put two more of the thugs to sleep.

The "guns" that had been dropped to the stage floor, were merely show "props," and were wooden. Monk had seen this in the moment before he had barged into the mêlée.

But Lonesome, the leader of the gang, had leaped clear at the first signs of Monk's fury. He had discarded the apple. He came up behind the two scrapping aids now and snarled, "This one isn't a fake!"

There was a roar, and lead slugs tore holes through the flooring at Monk's feet.

The heavy weapon in the grinning-faced leader's big hands was a riot gun of latest design.

Monk and his smooth-looking partner decided that maybe the leader meant business. They drew up short.

The long-eared pig and Chemistry had been scurrying around taking nips out of some of the prone gunmen. But now they, too, sensed danger for their masters. They likewise halted stiffly.

Monk scooped up Habeas and stood squinting at the crook leader's oddly-grinning face. He said blandly, "For a guy that looks like he's gonna bust out laughing, you sure sound gloomy."

Lonesome, the leader, said, "This face fooled the others, too."

"What others?"

"The ones that croaked."

"But who—"

"You two guys won't like the pit either," said Lonesome sadly.

A LITTLE later, the two aids learned what Lonesome had meant when he had spoken about the "pit."

The five dazed thugs were on their feet again—each was that degree of toughness that he had only been knocked out for a moment or two—and now they were in charge of Ham and the hairy-fisted chemist. Real guns taken from shoulder holsters covered Monk and Ham now.

The cut lips and swollen knobs on the heads of the five added none to their hard features.

Expressions in the men's fishy eyes said that it was going to be fun rubbing out the two Doc Savage men.

Ham, trailed by Monk with Habeas held in his arms, was pushed down a flight of stairs backstage.

There were numerous dressing rooms beneath the large circular stage; but Monk and the lawyer were directed away from these.

One captor said, "You guys get a special room."

The tone of the man's words caused Ham to give his partner a guarded, sidelong look.

But Monk was calmly scratching the porker's back, and looking as unconcerned as a toastmaster being escorted into another banquet room.

The route ended at a small trapdoor built into a wall. Monk had a time squeezing his broad form through the opening.

He put down Habeas, said something in a mumble to the pig and finally got his squat figure through. Ham followed with Chemistry at his heels.

Lonesome's men came in and grinned.

The place was a deep pit—an orchestra pit that was now far below the stage above. The lawyer had seen such places before.

Built along modern lines, the pit was really like a long, narrow room that could be lowered out of sight when the orchestra was not needed. All musical equipment had been removed from the orchestra pit, and now the space reminded Ham of a sleek-sided bear pit at a zoo.

It was fifteen feet up the smooth walls to the stage above, and there was not a single thing that could have been used as a foothold to climb those walls.

One gunman said, "Lie down on your backs."

Monk and Ham lay down.

Another of Lonesome's men said, "That's the right position to die in anyway!"

He backed out of the wall trap opening, which was of heavy steel, and the others backed out one at a time also. Their leader, Lonesome, had not come down here with his henchmen.

Monk heard the door slam; then some sort of heavy bolt was shot home. Though the muscular chemist could look over his head and see night sky high above, he knew that they were just as effectively trapped as though they had been in a black dungeon.

Monk grinned, "They think they got us fooled!"

Ham looked at his partner sharply, scowled. "Listen, chump, just what else would you call it?"

The lawyer had walked around the room once, inspecting the trap briefly. He figured that these orchestra pits were raised by hydraulic water pressure. When he saw something—a small round opening—at one end of the room, his face looked worried.

Ham walked back and faced Monk. The hairy chemist was grinning cheerfully. He added to his statement.

"Yep," Monk said. "Those guys sure were dumb. I worked it right under their noses."

"Worked what, you missing link?"

"I wasn't scratching Habeas' back," continued Monk. "I was writing the words."

Ham scowled. "What words?"

"The message to Doc," grinned Monk. "I told him just where we were and to hurry over here. I whispered to Habeas to hurry back and find Doc. He'll use that powder on the pig's back, and my writing will fl-flour--"

"You mean fluoresce," explained the dapper lawyer.

"Yep. That's it. And now Doc will see the message and get us out of here!"

Ham looked relieved. "Sometimes," he said, "I think you're almost intelligent. You know what?"

Ham was indicating an opening, a small pipeline opening in one wall.

"What?" Monk queried.

"This platform is lifted by hydraulic water pressure," the lawyer explained. "Only now I have a hunch they've connected a water supply to this inlet here. Lonesome and his men plan to flood this pit and watch us drown like rats."

Monk looked undisturbed. "I sure was smart to send Habeas with that message then, wasn't I?" he said loftily.

Before Ham could reply, the bolt slid back in the wall trapdoor, and the grinning-faced Lonesome stuck his head inside for just an instant.

Lonesome's brief words were in strange contrast to his gosh-but-I'm-happy features. He spoke gloomily.

"Sending that message to Doc Savage was a dumb idea," Lonesome said. Then he slammed and bolted the heavy steel door.

He had been holding the pig, Habeas, in his arms.

LONESOME locked the hound-eared pig in a small room beneath the stage and proceeded to another, larger room where his men were waiting. It looked like a miniature League of Nations meeting with the gunmen in their frock-tailed coats and stovepipe hats.

But the circle of grim, bruised faces seemed more like those of a conference of thugs after a prison break.

One man grinned, "Well, chief, that takes care of Doc Savage's crowd. Now we can go ahead, eh?"

The grinning Lonesome said harshly, "How about those dames? Are they still where we left them?"

A second gunman spoke, "Sure, Lonesome. Gagged, too. I gotta hand it to you for efficiency, chief. I--"

"And that skinny bird called Long Tom?" went on Lonesome.

A third henchman grinned. "He's with the . . . the goblin boss. And they're takin' them over to that room where the brains wants Doc Savage brought."

One of the five men facing Lonesome laughed loudly. "Nicky sure fooled that Doc Savage!" he said.

"Can you imagine a hood like Nicky posin' as one of them radio-car cops? He even--"

"Don't kid yourself about this bronze guy," Lonesome said icily. "You're never sure when you got him. Has anyone checked to make sure Doc Savage is in the operating room?"

The others shrugged. Apparently, no one had.

Lonesome growled a curse and stepped to a wall phone. He dialed a number and waited some time before there was an answer.

Then an obviously disguised voice said, "Yes?"

"Lonesome speaking," the happy-looking but grim crook said. "We got that Monk and Ham in the orchestra pit."

"Good!" the voice exclaimed. "That about makes it perfect."

"Then you got Doc Savage?"

A nasty laugh floated from the mouthpiece of the telephone. "I'll say we have. Right here in the operating room. The secret one. Those dumb doctors'll never find this place!"

"And Uppercue?" Lonesome continued.

There was a short, tense silence.

Then: "Never you mind about him any more. I'm taking care of that angle."

A second later the voice added: "Don't forget to fasten that big tarpaulin cover over the orchestra pit. That will trap that lawyer and Monk Mayfair when you fill the pit. Those birds can probably swim."

Lonesome asked, "Then we better drown 'em now, hunh?"

"You better wait a little," the man giving orders over the wire directed. "We want to make sure this operation works."

That ended the telephone conversation.

Chapter XI. STRANGE EYES

THE last thing Doc Savage recalled before being brought into the formidable-looking room he was in now, was something about an assailant saying, "Now we're gonna find out about that steel cylinder!"

After that, a sharp instrument had jabbed his back and he had remembered nothing. This had taken place in the police car driven by the phony Fair cop.

The bronze man's power of resistance to any kind of sleep-producing drug was unusual. Perhaps his great vitality accounted for this.

Thus he had soon thrown off the drowsiness, and now his senses were already alert as he was carried onto some kind of movable platform. The platform started rising in an eccentric arc. Doc Savage had the sensation of floating in endless space.

He tried to move, to stare about. But he was bound securely hand and foot. His eyes were covered with tape.

The thing he had been placed upon evidently was moving upward as near as Doc could deduce, and from unusual sounds that the bronze man caught with his sharp hearing, he knew that the platform was climbing inside some huge place.

It was a peculiar sensation.

The thing finally came to a stop, and Doc Savage recognized one of his captors' voices as the man said, "Carry the bronze guy into the secret room."

Doc Savage was lifted—it took all three men—and he caught the assorted odors of a hospital operating room. He felt himself dumped heavily on a long table. Immediately rough hands were fastening heavy straps about the bronze man's powerful legs and arms. Then the adhesive was yanked from Doc Savage's eyes.

For a moment, the intense light that struck Doc's unusual gold eyes was blinding. But slowly he managed to adjust his vision to that brilliant glare. Doc turned his head.

The room where he had been carried was some sort of laboratory. Doc saw racks of test tubes, retorts, dozens of shelves with bottles containing various drugs and chemicals. Directly over his head was a huge, convex window that now revealed the dark night above. The window was about twelve feet square and constructed of opaque block glass. But right now a cluster of blue-white colored lights were turned on beneath it, and it was this glare that had struck the bronze man's eyes.

Doc shifted his head again.

In one corner of the laboratory was a strange-appearing machine into which ran all sorts of wiring. The machine was built around a long operating-type table of white. Above the operating table were suspended big glass containers filled with odd-colored liquids. Rubber tubing went from the containers to massive-sized gadgets beside the table. These looked like giant hypodermic needles. All this weird apparatus surrounded the thin, anemic-looking figure strapped down on the tabletop.

Doc Savage's eyes widened. The bronze man seldom revealed his emotions, but his metallic features were tense now.

For the helpless figure bound to the operating table was that of the electrical wizard, Long Tom!

A DOOR opened across the room and a figure in white walked in.

Immediately, the three men close to the table where Doc Savage was held captive snapped to alert attention. These three were the two roughly dressed men from the police car rear seat, and the car driver himself—the one posing as a Fair prawl cop. All, from their talk, worked for the grinning-faced Lonesome.

The strong straps were holding the bronze giant across his chest, waist and ankles. But Doc could still lift his head a few inches from the table. He raised it now as one of his captors said, "Well, here's that Doc guy, professor. I guess gettin' him about cleans up the job, eh?"

The figure in white stood silently just inside the doorway. The effect was disturbing.

For the figure was clothed from head to foot in the garb of a surgeon ready to undertake an operation. There was the close-fitting white skull cap, a mask that covered the face, all but the eyes, and the white hospital gown tied in the back. From the elbows down, the arms were covered with long rubber gloves.

The eyes were the most chilling thing about the figure. This was because heavy goggles fitted close above the face mask, and behind the thick-lensed glasses the eyes appeared large and distorted.

Doc knew that the eyes could possibly be small. It was the goggles that gave the enlarged effect. The figure spoke, "Yes, as far as you men are concerned, the job is about done. But mine has just started. Release the bronze man!"

One guard looked scared. "But, boss! This guy's dynamite! Better we should keep him tied—"

The figure in white showed a large gun that he had been holding concealed in his folded arms. The gun was a big .45 automatic, and now it aimed directly at the bronze giant's prone figure.

"Release him," the masked one rapped. "I've got to use him."

Doc had been straining his ears to catch every tonal inflection of the speaker's voice. It was a voice that held the first rather shrill, falsetto pitch of a person with a twisted mind.

Doc Savage had made an intense study of the human mind. So he knew that the way this person spoke, the somewhat nervous, shrill pitch, was indicative of near-madness.

Either that, or—another, more startling thought hit the bronze man—the figure could be that of a woman!

Doc was untied.

THE guards moved back swiftly, cautiously, as the man of bronze swung his feet to the tile floor. Doc flexed his cable like muscles. In doing so, the insides of his arms felt for the special vest

that he wore beneath his coat. The equipment vest with the secreted gadgets. It was still there.

Apparently in their quick search of him for a gun, the guards had overlooked the vest. One thug was holding Doc's special machine pistol.

His gaze went to the strange eyes behind the goggles again. The figure was watching him closely, the .45 now shifted to train on Doc's head. The masked one addressed as "Professor," said, "I happen to know you use a bulletproof vest. But there isn't anything stopping a slug from entering your brain. So be careful!"

The speaker jerked his head toward another, smaller doorway across the room, and the three guards hurried out. A moment later Doc Savage heard the strange whirring sound of the movable platform. It seemed to be dropping away into a bottomless pit.

Across the room on the weird-looking operating table, Long Tom's thin figure moved. The masked one laughed.

"Your electrical wizard is drugged," the shrill voice said. "He hardly knows what this is about. That, however, makes it all the better for the experiment."

The bronze man's eyes were wary. The gun had not wavered a fraction of an inch from his head. "What experiment?" Doc asked.

"The Man of Tomorrow experiment," the masked surgeon said.

Doc immediately thought of the huge-sized, awesome figure—the goblin—that had seized Monk. His eyes narrowed imperceptibly, and then his gaze flicked to Long Tom, stirring restlessly on the operating table. Long Tom seemed to be slowly coming out of some sort of stupor. He was mumbling. Doc asked of the masked figure, "You mean—the goblin?"

"That," said the one behind the magnifying goggles, "is the general idea."

Doc Savage could not help but give a slight start.

The figure in white continued, "The goblin is called Maximus. But Maximus is a fool. He has no brain. The experiment ruined that. Maximus can only follow childlike directions. But—"

The shrill voice got thinner, more sharp. "But your electrical expert has a trained mind. His brain is far superior to most men's. It should withstand the terrific shock of the Man of Tomorrow power generation."

"Power?" Doc Savage asked vaguely.

The bronze man asked the question haltingly, as though slow to grasp what the other meant. But in reality, Doc's mind had never been more alert.

"Yes, power!" the masked speaker said. "Long Tom's brain in a body of giant size will produce the greatest man living—the Man of Tomorrow. I need one thing: the secret of producing a certain type of electricity—something that I'll call animal electricity, which is probably a by-product of processing tremendous voltages. This animal electricity will bring life into body cells of my giant man."

At the statement, Doc's lips showed the faintest trace of a smile. "And that's what has you stumped?" he said.

But the other shook his head.

"Scientist Martin Uppercue knows that secret," the garbed person jerked out shrilly.

"And Uppercue has disappeared," Doc finished.

The bronze giant sensed a feeling of relief. Perhaps, then, there was still a chance for Long Tom and—

Doc's guard laughed oddly. "No, Uppercue is not missing. I have him right here in the next room. I'll say this for him: he has a great scientific mind that cannot be swayed. He has refused to reveal that secret."

Doc Savage nodded. Relaxing slightly, he said, "And so you're stumped. Without that secret, you cannot—"

The figure in white started shaking its head slowly. The eyes looked strangely mad behind the magnifying goggles.

"No," the masked surgeon said slowly. "I was in that audience that watched you and Dr. Mandroff operate this afternoon. I understand your unusual powers, Doc Savage. So I know Martin Uppercue is going to reveal his secret!"

"Reveal—" Doc started to query.

The masked one held the .45 steady and motioned toward the doorway through which he had entered.

"Yes," he finished. "Because you're going to make him reveal it!"

THE power of Doc Savage's unusual eyes was not a mystery to many men of science. Those eyes had been known to hypnotize a man within a few seconds. The scientifically trained mind behind Doc's eyes held an amazing control over men of average intelligence.

If necessary, the bronze man could even sway the minds of men of almost equal intelligence to himself.

That seemed to be the white-garbed surgeon's idea in regard to Uppercue.

Doc was at last facing the missing scientist who had disappeared under such queer circumstances. Small, white-haired Martin Uppercue was tied in a straight-back chair in the room adjoining the

laboratory. His birdlike, wiry figure was no longer tense and active; instead, something of the brilliant man's intense energy had gone from his slumped figure.

"Uppercue!" the white-garbed figure rapped. "This is Doc Savage, remember? Look at him."

Martin Uppercue looked like a person who had been beaten until life was uninteresting to him further. He raised his white head slowly and stared at the bronze man out of bleak eyes. For a moment, there was no recognition.

The man in surgeon's garb was standing to one side of Doc, the gun still trained on the bronze giant's head. He said now, "You're going to talk, Uppercue. You're going to tell about that steel cylinder. Where is it? What is in that tube?"

At the words, Martin Uppercue stiffened.

His marvelous brain, the one part of him that had not been conquered by terror or threats, again rebelled.

"I'll never . . . talk!" Martin Uppercue managed to get out. He looked more directly at Doc Savage now. The eyes had lost a little of their dullness. It was possible that the little scientist recognized the bronze figure, though he said nothing to indicate it.

To one side of Doc, the masked figure snapped, "All right, hypnotize him. Make him talk. If you don't--"

The man broke off and wagged the .45 significantly.

Doc asked, "Have you got some bright object?"

In hypnotism, it is usually helpful to have the subject center his gaze upon some bright and shiny object.

Acting carefully, keeping well out of the bronze man's reach as he held the gun steady in one hand, the figure in the mask tossed over a ring taken from beneath the surgeon's gown. It was a small ring with a bright, clear stone, that held and reflected the light from a bulb overhead. Doc noticed that the fingers of the masked figure, though rubber-gloved, were long and slim like a woman's.

Doc took the ring, glanced at it, rubbed it on his sleeve.

"Careful!" his captor warned.

Doc's hands had been close to his coat. The white-garbed one was taking no chances on the physical giant's unusual capabilities.

Then Doc Savage started talking, holding the bright-stoned ring before Martin Uppercue's gaze.

The bronze man's words were soft-spoken, low, yet the tonal inflection of those words held a strange vibrancy. They were compelling, fascinating, gripping.

Slowly, the little scientist's eyes went to the ring and his gaze held there. This was the first step in hypnotism.

As Doc talked, and without an apparent movement of his head, he managed a sidelong glance at the masked figure, to one side of him.

Behind the disguising goggles, the strange eyes were shifting back and forth between Doc and the ring.

The bronze man talked on in a vibrant monotone.

Without a single pause, steadily, like the certain, throbbing beat of a jungle drum, Doc Savage's voice intoned words that would weaken Uppercue's resistance.

Once, the thin scientist shot a swift glance to the bronze man's flake-gold eyes. As though he read a message there, his gaze went back to the ring and its compelling attraction.

Doc was saying, "You are going to tell me of the metal cylinder, Martin Uppercue. Remember? The cylinder that you were carrying when you ran from your laboratory. Think. Think hard! What is the secret of that tube, Martin Uppercue? What is--"

As he spoke, Doc sent a quick glance from the corner of his eyes. The masked one's own gaze was intent upon the ring.

Doc said without a break in his vibrant flow of words, "Drop that gun!"

The deadly .45 in the hand of the surgeon slipped to the floor.

Martin Uppercue strained against his bindings, his words hardly those of a hypnotized man.

"You did it, Doc Savage!" Uppercue shouted. "You've hypnotized him!"

Chapter XII. ONE-WAY EXIT

MARTIN UPPERCUE'S exclamation was correct. For Doc Savage, instead of hypnotizing the helpless scientist himself, had been cleverly drawing the masked figure's eyes to the ring. The figure in white had, unknowingly, centered his gaze upon the bright stone.

The bronze man had not tried to hypnotize Martin Uppercue. Doc had revealed this in a quick, appealing message to the little scientist as he talked. The masked person had not perceived that glance.

But Uppercue had made one mistake. He had shouted. That was sufficient to break the spell the moment the white-gowned surgeon dropped the deadly .45.

Understanding of his error immediately leaped into the eyes behind the goggles. The masked one moved.

There was no chance to retrieve the fallen gun. Doc Savage was already leaping forward.

So the figure in white twisted, plunged toward a cabinet standing against one wall of the room. The cabinet contained many sharp-bladed operating instruments. The masked man's rubber-gloved hand plunged through glass door and all, then the figure whirled with a deadly-looking knife in his hand, leaped toward Doc.

Doc Savage had lost the machine pistol to one of the guards who had helped bring him here. To pause and pick up the masked man's fallen .45, would have been fatal. And Uppercue was tied helplessly in the chair.

Doc's agile fingers had gone beneath his coat.

They came out with a small object taken from his special equipment vest. Doc hurled the vial. The thing struck the masked figure's knife hand, burst, and a quick-acting anaesthetic gas enveloped the masked surgeon's face. The gas was a type that should easily penetrate the gauze mask that hid the figure's face.

Doc's assailant staggered, brushing at the air before his goggled eyes. He backed against a far wall, swayed there for an instant, and then started slowly collapsing to the floor.

The bronze man spun toward helpless Martin Uppercue. The scientist's small eyes were bright. "Gracious, now we'll find out who that devil is!" he exclaimed.

Doc quickly untied straps holding the scientist's wrists to the chair arms. He spoke rapidly, briefly.

"You can loosen your own ankles," Doc said. "Try to hold your breath. That gas will float over here shortly. It is harmless. I've got to--"

Doc Savage heard the humming sound of the movable platform. Outside the adjoining room, he could hear the strange object lifting again, coming up from some mysterious depth.

The guards were returning!

The bronze giant whirled toward the operating room and reached Long Tom's prone figure. The electrical expert's eyes were open, staring at Doc; but there was a vacant, stupefied look in their depths.

Doc Savage quickly loosened the table straps, then reached inside his coat. His bronzed hand came out with a shining hypodermic needle. He swiftly jabbed the hypo into Long Tom's arm.

Almost immediately, the aid started reacting to the injection. The hypo was a powerful stimulant that would counteract the drug in Long Tom's system. And though frail-looking, with a pallid color that made him look anemic, Long Tom had never known a sick day in his life. His little skinny form was tough, hard-whipcord and muscle.

Long Tom jerked up on the table and exclaimed, "Doc!"

The Man of Bronze nodded toward the door through which he'd been brought into the room, said, "Gunmen are on the way."

The hum of the strangely rising platform was quite loud now.

Long Tom had stooped, to remove something strapped inside his trousers leg. It was one of the special machine pistols that all the bronze man's aids carried.

"Cover the door," Doc directed, as he whipped back toward the adjacent small room. He had to tie up the masked figure, help Uppercue, return and aid Long Tom before the gunmen arrived.

As Doc neared the doorway, he tossed a small lozenge into his mouth. The lozenge contained a form of concentrated oxygen that would counteract the effects of the gas Doc had thrown in the vial. He took out another capsule to give Martin Uppercue. The gas might have reached the scientist-- Across the threshold, Doc Savage drew up with a jerk. His metallic features went grim. More than the gas had reached the slender little scientist.

Both Martin Uppercue and the masked figure had disappeared.

DOC peered swiftly around.

The only exit from this smaller room was the entranceway back into the operating room. There were no closets; nothing save a couple of chairs, a table and the broken glass instrument case. There was a telephone on the table.

There was a similar opaque glass skylight in the ceiling, as in the adjoining, larger room. Doc had noted a queer thing about those ceilings; they were convex and low.

The only manner in which the masked figure and Martin Uppercue could have escaped would be through a secret panel. Obviously, thought the bronze man, the goggled surgeon had not been completely knocked out by the gas. The gauze face mask must have saved him. Thus he had regained his strength long enough to seize Uppercue and escape.

There was no time to search, for at that moment a bull-fiddle roar cut loose back in the operating room.

Doc Savage hurried that way.

The door leading to the floating platform thing had crashed open and one roughly dressed man had leaped in with a gun in his hand.

But Long Tom had been ready. Mercy bullets from the special pistol in the electrical wizard's hand had caught the first arrival in the legs. The man went down mouthing oaths.

He would not die.

Doc Savage and his men never took a life needlessly. They preferred, when possible, to use

gadgets that made a fight bloodless. And Long Tom realized that Doc wanted to capture these men now, to question them.

A second gunman—the fake Fair trooper—swung into the room. His gun was blasting even before he saw the bronze man. The thug was aiming at skinny Long Tom.

The third guard was jumping into the room behind his fake cop partner and, with a snarl, he also yanked out a gun.

Long Tom's queer-looking pistol cut down the second thug. Again the mercy bullets had struck in the legs, and the man would recover, to talk. The special bullets only caused temporary unconsciousness.

But the twisted expression on the third gunman's face said that he would not go down until he had brought death to at least Doc or his assistant.

So the bronze man hurled the powder that brought temporary blindness to anyone in its path.

The gunman choked, batted at his eyes, started triggering his gun recklessly. But he was shooting too high, through the enveloping powder that brought the blindness.

Doc Savage called to Long Tom, "Hold it."

The aid of Doc Savage had been ready to bring down the third and last arrival. But Doc did not want the sound of Long Tom's pistol to draw the blinded thug's fire.

The man fired his last shot through the opaque glass skylight above. A pane of glass crashed downward; a gust of night air came into the room—and blew the powder directly into the faces of the bronze man and his assistant!

They staggered about blindly.

Doc called, "Careful, Long Tom! That gunman is over toward that entrance door."

Doc Savage, even with his unusual eyes temporarily blinded, had an uncanny sense of direction. He headed toward the thug.

Doc heard the door slam and a second later the whirring sound of the movable platform motor.

Doc announced grimly, "He's escaped. Can you see, Long Tom?"

The aid was making growling sounds somewhere nearby.

Both men were so blinded that they seemed to be fumbling around in pitch-black night, though lights were still on in the room.

Long Tom said, "Blazes! I'm kinda mixed up!"

The telephone in the adjoining smaller room started ringing.

MOVING carefully, hands stretched out before him, Doc reached the inner room and the phone.

Lifting the receiver, the bronze man imitated the missing masked surgeon's voice.

It was a call from Lonesome, beneath the amphitheater stage. The grinning henchman of the masked surgeon thought he was talking to his chief. He had called again to ask a question about Monk and the dapper lawyer.

Doc Savage thought quickly. He knew now where his two assistants were held captives. Lonesome also spoke vaguely about the girls being safely tied up in some other place.

Lonesome was taking it for granted that his chief knew the location of that hide-out. It would not be wise for Doc to ask questions about it. Better to hold Lonesome and his killers off until he and Long Tom could get to the amphitheater stage.

Thus, Doc Savage directed, in the masked figure's voice, that Monk and Ham be kept alive until they were certain the operation on Long Tom was a success.

Lonesome believed these were orders from his chief, the masked one.

Still moving in blind darkness. Doc Savage hung up the receiver. Somewhere behind him, Long Tom exclaimed:

"Say, Doc! I've found it!"

"Found what?"

"A way outa this danged place!"

Doc Savage moved cautiously forward, toward the source of Long Tom's voice. Doc knew that, in a few moments, the temporary blindness would wear off.

He said, "But there's no door."

"It's a panel," said Long Tom. "And it opens outward. I can feel it. Wish I could see, dang it! It swings outward and there's some sort of space behind—"

Suddenly, there was a sharp cry from Doc's assistant. Long Tom started to shout, "Hey, Doc! I'm falling—"

And the words died away as though the thin electrical expert had dropped like a plummet into a bottomless pit.

In his worry for Long Tom, perhaps Doc Savage moved a little too swiftly. Also, he had not realized he was so near the secret panel. Furthermore, the panel had swung open, and remained that way, thus leaving no wall for Doc's sensitive fingers to touch.

Doc stepped through the opening before he realized he had gained the wall.

He went plunging downward.

BECAUSE Doc Savage was a physical phenomenon who was practically fearless, and who had faced death in many forms, he did not cry out when he plunged into space. The sensation was doubly awful when it is considered that the bronze man was still blinded from the powder. But in that brief second before Doc's shoulders hit a slick surface and he went skidding downward at a furious pace, he had realized that the secret panel could not possibly lead to death. For certainly the masked surgeon and Professor Uppercue must have used this exit. Doc knew that he was hurtling down a long, steep slide, much like the chutes used in a fun house at Coney Island. Only this particular slide must have started at a great height, for the plunge downward was breath-taking, and at train speed. Finally, Doc felt a slackening in his terrific rush; the chute was flattening out. Built like a highly polished and waxed semi shell, there was not a single thing to grasp. But slowly the bronze man's form was coming to a stop. Ahead some place, Doc Savage heard a commotion. It was Long Tom, his aid, and he was growling oaths.

A moment later, Doc dropped down beside the thin electrical expert. The slide had ended, to dump the bronze giant man off its end and into some sort of small room. Doc Savage felt his body hit double trapdoors that swung quickly downward. They whipped back into place again as he cleared them. His large form brushed Long Tom's, and the aid exclaimed, "Whew! I sure thought I was a goner that time, Doc!"

Doc Savage asked, "Can you see yet?"

"I dunno," Long Tom said curiously. "Either I can't see, or this hole we're in is black as night."

Doc said, "Wait."

He took a flashlight from his special vest and flicked it on. Doc could see nothing.

To Long Tom, he said, "How about you?"

"How about me, what?"

"I have a light turned on," stated Doc.

"Then I'm still blind," announced the electrical wizard.

DOC removed a small vial containing a solution from his inner vest. He broke the vial, reached for his aid's hands in the dark and directed, "Here, rub some of this on your eyes." Both men wiped their eyes with the solution, and almost immediately they were able to see again. The liquid was a special preparation of the bronze man's invention, made by Doc to counteract the effects of the temporary blinding eye powder.

They stared around as Doc Savage directed the flashlight ray.

Long Tom said, "It's some sort of tunnel. There's pipes and all."

Doc nodded. He was directing the light overhead, pointing it at a thin, almost invisible line where the double trapdoors had swung back together. The spot was about eight feet over his head.

"That," Doc said, indicating the closed doors, "makes it impossible to ever reach the secret laboratory again. No one could possibly climb that steep slide. It must have been over two hundred feet long."

"Do you remember how you got into that room where they had me?" Long Tom asked.

Doc shook his head. "They used drugs. But there was the odd sensation of the way that platform moved. It didn't go straight up."

"Yet that room was at some high point," the electrical expert offered. "Remember that funny ceiling skylight?"

Doc nodded.

"What was that masked devil goin' to do to me, Doc?"

The bronze man did not answer. Often, when Doc Savage had hit upon some idea, some explanation of a mystery, he preferred to unravel the whole case before stating his findings. He was turning a clue over in his mind now, and a part of the conclusion he had reached was startling.

Doc said, "For the present, it will be impossible to know where we were just now. Uppercue knows the answers to this mystery. And so does that masked surgeon—or, at least, part of the solution. He is holding Uppercue until he learns more."

"Then we better trail them," suggested Long Tom. He was indicating tracks in the dust at their feet. Apparently the tunnel was one seldom used, and there were scuff marks in the dust.

But Doc Savage shook his head.

"If we don't hurry and find our way out of this place," he went on, "it might be too late to save Monk and Ham."

Long Tom started to say, "Then we better—"

The startling, guttural chuckling of the thing they knew as the "goblin"—the creature called Maximus—came from somewhere ahead in the underground cavern.

USING the light, Doc Savage plunged ahead through the dank tunnel. As Doc explained hastily to Long Tom, "I want to meet this Maximus. I want to see him." Running at Doc's heels, the electrical expert shuddered.

"Maybe you better not, Doc. That guy, that goblin's got the strength of ten men. Just lookin' at him almost scared me to death-like back there in the mine shaft."

Briefly Long Tom explained about that.

It seemed there had been a way into a basement cavern through the flooring beneath the mine. Maximus, the electrical expert said, had pulled a supporting timber loose inside the tunnel, then leaped with Long Tom into the trap opening.

Long Tom remembered, vaguely, of passing downward and into some underground room. There a masked man had met them and said something about turning on a water-main valve.

Prodded by Doc for further information, Long Tom stated that he had been knocked out by Maximus, and could recall nothing further until he came to on the operating table.

"Was it a place like this?" Doc asked.

Both men were still running through what seemed to be an endless maze of pipes. They had found no trace of the weird thing that had made the chuckling sound.

"Ye-es," Long Tom said thoughtfully. "It was like this."

"Then," Doc snapped, "that explains it."

"Explains what?"

Doc told about finding Monk in the manhole opening.

He continued: "There are fifteen miles of water mains, thirteen miles of gas mains, and another fifteen miles of electrical conduits beneath these grounds, besides thirty miles of sewers."

Long Tom whistled. "An army could hide down here, then."

"Or be hidden," Doc Savage put in significantly.

And he added: "Many of those ducts-like this one-will probably never be used. Thus it is simple for the villain to duck out of sight easily and appear elsewhere on the Fair Grounds."

The electric expert looked puzzled. "But how are we goin' to get out of this danged place, Doc?"

The bronze man had paused, to study a section they had just entered. They had been running stooped over. This part they were now in was higher, though, and was joined by a line coming in at right angles.

"This," Doc indicated, "looks like a way out."

It was.

There was a narrow steel ladder, leading to above.

Since they had found no trace of the goblin, Doc reminded his assistant of the predicament of Monk and Ham. Doc hurried up the ladder, Doc in the lead.

It took a man of the bronze man's great strength to raise the massive iron cover that sealed them below ground.

Then they were out in the night again. Both men stared silently around.

Suddenly, Long Tom said, "Listen, Doc!"

Voices were talking. One was sharp and clear. The speaker was rapping:

"Look, you hairy baboon, try to raise this side!"

Doc said, "That's Ham."

"And he could only be talking to one person that way!" Long Tom added.

Yet the only thing close by was the huge, deserted amphitheater and the lake, calm and fog-shrouded in the night.

THE bronze man and Long Tom had moved around to a point directly in front of the great amphitheater. They were standing near the lake edge.

Though the massive, open-air theater was apparently deserted, the squabbling voices of Monk and Ham sounded clearly. It seemed they were somewhere above, in one of the balconies.

Long Tom asked curiously, "Doc, what could those two guys be tryin' to escape from up there?"

There had been something about, "Trying to raise this danged covert" Monk's words echoed clearly in the night.

"Acoustics," the bronze man stated. He added: "But Monk and Ham aren't here."

"But where--"

"The amphitheater acts like a great sounding board for any speech out there on the island stage. The voices of Monk and Ham are carrying from there. We need a boat."

Long Tom looked puzzled, but quickly followed Doc as the bronze man moved toward a small dock at the lake side.

Soon they were silently rowing toward the dark stage.

When Doc and his assistant had, a few moments later, climbed the steps to the broad stage, they heard the splashing--a commotion beneath a heavy tarpaulin cover across the orchestra pit.

Monk was heard to squeal, "Hey, shyster! Get this danged Chemistry off my back! He's pullin' me under!"

Doc moved swiftly to the edge of the stage, at a point directly above the disappearing orchestra pit. Beside him, Long Tom could see where the heavy canvas cover was securely tied down. Apparently, Monk and Ham had no knives to slash the tough material, and water that was slowly filling the pit was trapping them like rats.

From his equipment vest, Doc quickly got a sharp-edged instrument. He worked fast with long,

sweeping movements. A section of canvas was opened up.

Doc directed, "Over here, Monk."

The bronze man directed the flashlight ray downward.

Shortly, the hairy chemist, with the pet ape clinging to his back, climbed out, helped by Doc Savage. Ham followed. Both aids looked half drowned.

Monk squealed, "Goshamighty, Doc! They filled that place with water, an' it was almost to the top!"

"You mean-Lonesome?" Doc asked.

Monk glared. "Yep. And that grinning devil has Habeas! I'm gonna--"

"Perhaps," Doc warned, "we might use a little caution. We might be able to trap Lonesome and his mob." The bronze man looked at Ham, who seemed to be the less excited. "You know where they are, Ham?"

The lawyer, looking much distraught, because of his wet, expensively tailored clothes, said, "We can reach their hideout from backstage."

He led the way.

But just as they reached the rear of the wide stage, Doc suddenly paused and raised his hand for silence. He said quietly, "Listen!"

The others stood silently.

Behind them, from out on the water, there was the sound of oars, squeaking in oarlocks. And voices. Voices that carried plainly between the massive backgrounds of stage and amphitheater. Doc Savage recognized Lonesome's voice, and the grinning-faced thug was saying:

"So we gotta find him. The chief says he must have the accumulator, and that's the one gadget stoppin' the experiment, now."

A second harsh voice floated across through the foggy night.

"What's an accumulator, Lonesome?"

"It's about the size of a suitcase, and if you birds find it, you better be careful how you handle it. The chief says that dingus could stop the Niagara Falls power plant itself!"

"But--"

The voices were fading. The boat was heard to scrape the side of a dock near the amphitheater.

Doc Savage's aids could hear nothing else.

But the bronze man's unusual hearing detected still further conversation.

The last words he caught were:

"So you guys look for Adam Ash!"

Chapter XIV. STORM CLOUDS GATHERING

APPARENTLY Lonesome's men had known of the arrival of Doc Savage and Long Tom at the island stage. Besides, the gunmen had left by some rear exit and their boat had not passed the front of the stage proper.

Monk was all for taking right out after Lonesome's gang in order to get Habeas. And another thought hit him.

"The girls, Doc!" Monk piped. "Daggonit, they've got Pat and that nifty little blonde hidden some place, and maybe--"

Ham said significantly, "The only reason that hairy mistake was worrying about being drowned just now, was because he hasn't had a chance to date that Kay Uppercue."

Monk grumbled, "There's somethin' subtle about that crack, shyster. I--"

Doc said, "Temporarily, I believe the girls--wherever they are--are safe. That masked surgeon figures Kay Uppercue knows something. He doesn't dare harm her. And Pat can take care of herself."

"But--" Monk started to query.

"Lonesome is perhaps on his way to meet the masked man and Uppercue."

Doc Savage looked at his aids, gave brief orders.

"Long Tom will look for the girls. Ham, you and Monk follow Lonesome and try to learn the way into that secret operating room. Uppercue will most likely be taken back there. Get equipment from my car and keep in touch with me."

Ham looked worried. "But Doc, whatever this experiment those guys are planning is--what if they start it--"

Doc and his aids had climbed down from the stage again and were preparing to shove off in the rowboat.

The bronze man interrupted the lawyer's query.

"Apparently they're stalemated," Doc said. "Because of one thing. Something called an accumulator. And the person who has that is missing."

Hairy Monk suddenly remembered the trick played upon him by the little, flashy Shill Burns. He told briefly of the voluble man who had brought them there, and ended with, "Dang it, Doc, I'm gonna find that guy. He's mixed up in this mystery some place!"

"It might be a good idea," offered Doc.

Back at the shore of the amphitheater, Doc Savage questioned Long Tom quietly. He mentioned the small model generator he had seen in Uppercue's laboratory. The electrical wizard's eyes widened,

and he said:

"Doc, Uppercue was secretive about that. I don't think it had anything to do with this Man of Tomorrow experiment on which the Fair people were getting ready to release publicity. It was something else."

"Correct," Doc said. "And in that generator model there was a tiny part missing. Enlarged from scale, that unit would be about the size of a suitcase. Did you ever hear of an atomic accumulator, Long Tom?"

The electrical expert's eyes went wide, and perhaps a little horrified. "Big electric companies have experimented with those accumulators!" he exclaimed. "Given perfect insulation, an atomic accumulator could store energy equaling millions of volts. Enough for that thing to drain the power of the largest electrical distributing plants. Why, it would even wreck—"

Doc nodded.

"That," the bronze man said, "is the general idea. And the missing metal cylinder that Uppercue was first carrying has something to do with it, also."

Long Tom was abruptly tense. He gripped the bronze man's arm. The electrical expert's scientific brain was swiftly fitting pieces of a gigantic idea together. He gasped:

"Doc, that place where we were taken, that trick, movable platform—I was thinking of that little model you saw in Uppercue's lab. Good Lord, could they be planning—"

The bronze man interrupted quietly, though he, too, was tense. "You're on the right track," he stated. "So, hurry. In the meantime I'm going to locate the man who seems to be holding the key to the whole thing."

"You mean—"

"That person seems to be Adam Ash," Doc finished.

Shortly after this conversation with Long Tom, Doc disappeared on a mission of his own.

BUT by the following night, the mystery still had not been solved.

And a new mystery had developed at the great Perisphere. All during the day, visitors had been refused admittance to the giant globe of steel. The news spread; one stranger told another:

"They won't allow you in the Perisphere!"

"Why?"

"I dunno. But I heard some fellow talking about a goblin."

"What's a goblin—can it hurt you?"

"Danged if I know. But I'd sure like to know what is wrong in there!"

And so it continued. One telling another. People jamming up along the circular mall encircling the Perisphere and causing no end of trouble for the Fair cops. There was confusion, questions, wonderment.

The excitement increased throughout the day. There were two persons, though, who were unaffected by it.

Monk and Ham had followed seemingly endless miles of the tunnel like pipe line conduits that honeycombed the vast grounds. Lonesome and his men had completely eluded them.

From their car, they had obtained a sound-detector device to use in locating any secret byways in the underground mains. They were also carrying a portable short-wave transmitter and receiver with which to keep in touch with Doc Savage.

Both aids were grimy and tired from their trek through the gloomy, stuffy, narrow tunnels. But Monk never slackened in his rolling stride, as he said:

"They got Habeas. And that runt pig is smart. Maybe if Lonesome goes to where the girls are hidden, Habeas will get back with a message, somehow."

Ham snorted. Chemistry, the ape, trailing along at his side, the pet's face dust-smear'd from peering into dark places, bristled, too.

"That fool pig couldn't find his own way home," the lawyer said unkindly. "And all that's bothering you is shining up to that blonde, Kay Uppercue. I'll take Pat any day."

"I'll take 'em both," Monk said.

The bickering continued throughout the day.

IN the meantime, Long Tom was on a similar hunt. He had gone back to the manhole where he and the bronze man had left the underground pipe lines, traced his way back to where he and Doc had landed in a heap after tumbling down the long slide.

There seemed to be no way whatever of getting back up above, to the strange operating room where the masked one had held him captive.

The electrical wizard took time out to make careful calculations. He worked his way slowly back to an exit and as he did so, jotted down figures on a piece of paper.

He had also been using a compass.

When Long Tom was outside in the crowded Fair Grounds again—it was late in the afternoon now—he plotted his way back to a spot that should be almost over the point where he and Doc had piled up in a heap underground.

The electrical expert stared. Slowly, Doc's comments of the night before took on great

significance in this active mind.

Before Long Tom loomed the massive, round bulk of the Perisphere. He saw the excited crowds and elbowed his way through.

Tense with excitement, Long Tom hurried up to an entranceway to the huge sphere. He had to get inside now, had to—

A uniformed Fair policeman stopped the electrical genius at the door and said, "Sorry, sir, but the Perisphere is closed to all visitors."

"Closed?" skinny Long Tom said.

"There seems to be something out of order. No more visitors will be allowed inside."

The anemic-looking aid of Doc Savage turned hurriedly away. Perhaps he could locate the bronze man back at Doc's car, still in the parking lot behind the Hall of Medicine. Something told Long Tom that there was need for haste. The Perisphere was closed! Closed because— Long Tom started running through the crowds, he had to find Doc Savage!

UNLUCKILY, the bronze man had left his parked sedan only a few moments before Long Tom's arrival. Doc had spent the whole day trailing Adam Ash, the young public relations consul. The last clue had led back here to the Hall of Medicine. There, the trail ended.

Doc tried to raise Monk and Ham on the short-wave set in his car, and receiving no reply, took a few moments' time to visit the youngster he had operated on in the Hall of Medicine.

The boy was in a special hospital room that the bronze man had ordered for him. None would ever know that Doc Savage was paying all the lad's expenses here.

Doc found Dr. Alexis Mandroff in the private room with the patient. Mandroff reported cheerfully: "He's doing fine, Mr. Savage. But he just dropped off to sleep. Too bad you can't talk to him."

Doc gazed at the small, calm face in the white bed. Color had already returned to the thin features. Gone was the expression of pain and fear that had been on the lad's face such a short time ago.

Beside the bronze man, Dr. Mandroff said, "The nurse says he is picking up rapidly. Da—yes, you certainly performed a marvelous feat, sir."

They moved quietly outside to a corridor.

The bronze man told Dr. Mandroff that he was seeking Adam Ash. Doc did not state his purpose, but merely mentioned that the young public relations consul could not be located.

The tall doctor with the straw-blond hair was smoothing fawn-colored gloves over his hands. He picked up a medical bag from a nearby table, looked at Doc Savage out of keenly sharp eyes. "That's odd," Mandroff said. "I don't know why he should be keeping out of the way. He was here only a few moments ago, and said that he was going over to watch that moon-rocket experiment tonight as soon as it gets dark."

Both men were approaching an exit from the building.

Dr. Mandroff asked about the missing scientist, Professor Uppercue, about the mysterious way in which Uppercue had disappeared.

But Doc Savage did not mention the experience in the hidden operating room. He merely said, "The scientist cannot be found. I think it is more important to first locate Adam Ash."

Dr. Mandroff offered brief apologies for leaving.

"I wish I could help," he said. "But I have an urgent call into the city. Perhaps I could meet you tonight—"

Doc Savage nodded.

"I'll be looking for Adam Ash over by that moon-rocket tryout," he finished.

Mandroff shook hands and left.

But by nine that night, though the bronze man scrutinized hundreds of faces in the great crowd waiting to view the moon-rocket sensation, he had not located Adam Ash.

DR. MANDROFF had been correct in stating that Adam Ash was going to watch the moon-rocket experiment. Adam Ash was observing the fantastic event now. But he was not in the jam-packed crowds around the tower where the rocket was to be released.

Adam Ash was seated in his small coupé in a landscaped small lane some distance away.

There was a strained look on the slender, brown-eyed man's good-looking features. The place where he had chosen to park was well away from the Fair crowds. Adam Ash seemed greatly worried about something.

Once, he got out of the car to walk around to the rear and unlock the rumble seat. He peered inside. Looking reassured, he closed the rumble lid and relocked it.

The object he had checked upon was a flat, long case of suitcase size.

Some distance ahead, where practically every visitor at the World's Fair was gathered, a great roar suddenly went up.

They were releasing the rocket.

The moon rocket contained no human beings. It was merely a test flight of a torpedo-shaped, huge object of silver color. Inside the rocket had been placed the newest scientific devices for recording the moon rocket's flight. If the rocket ever returned to be gripped by the earth's pull of

gravity, special radio-controlled machines would guide it to a landing.

The strange thing left the Fair Grounds with a shrill whistling sound that could be heard for miles.

There was merely a silver streak—though huge floodlights had been rigged up to illuminate the rocket—and then floating down from the heavens came a stream of sparks, cascading like some multicolored comet.

Adam Ash stood beside his coupé, his head strained backward, and watched those trailing sparks with tense fascination. Almost at the same moment thunder rumbled far off, and a flash of lightning cut through the sky.

The grumble of the thunder perhaps covered the heavy step that sounded behind Adam Ash. Too late, the public relations consul sensed the feeling of some bulky object close to him, and whirled.

The thing was a towering giant of man size, and its hair was red. The facial features were set in a blank, chilling stare, the wide eyes apparently fastened on some distant object.

Adam Ash attempted to leap clear.

But powerful arms seized the young man's slender form, whirled him off his feet; from the giant's throat there came a guttural, weird chuckling.

Adam Ash choked out, "Maximus—the goblin!"

Overhead, as though angered by the invasion of the manmade rocket, the heavens loosened a thunderclap that drowned out Adam Ash's frantic cry.

Chapter XV. STAIRWAY TO DOOM

ANOTHER man had observed the trail of sparks from the moon rocket. And then, later, he again peered heavenward as the storm gave muttering warning of its approach.

Doc Savage was that observer, but he was no longer near the crowds gathered to watch the rocket's fantastic flight.

The bronze man had returned to his big sedan. He was able to contact Monk and Ham with the short-wave radio this time, and shortly they put in a bedraggled appearance. For once, the usually sartorially perfect lawyer was dust-smearred and grimy. Even the high polish of Ham's sword cane was dulled.

Chemistry, the ape, looked moth-eaten.

Monk reported complete failure in their search for Lonesome and his men. He spoke sadly about Habeas, still missing.

Doc told about trailing young Adam Ash.

"You found that crook, then?" Monk asked.

The bronze man shook his head. "No," he said. "And it seems apparent that he is not a crook, Monk."

"But—"

"I've been checking up on him," Doc went on quietly. "Adam Ash is Kay Uppercue's fiancé. He is a close friend of Professor Uppercue. Along with his public relations work here at the Fair, young Adam Ash has been helping Martin Uppercue in his experiments at night. Ash is somewhat of a scientist himself."

Monk got his scarred face screwed up in a knot. He looked puzzled.

"But Doc," he said, "I can't savvy why this Adam Ash is hiding out—"

"Because," the bronze man continued, "he was given something by Martin Uppercue to protect.

Uppercue was taking no chances. The metal cylinder, which has strangely disappeared, was part of the mystery. Something that resembles a suitcase is another part. I believe Adam Ash has it."

Weary-looking Ham put in suddenly, "Here he comes now!"

ADAM ASH, tall and smartly dressed in his pin-striped trousers and morning coat, walked up to Doc and his aids as though just meeting them casually while out for a walk. He hardly looked like a person who had been attempting to hide from some vague menace.

Adam Ash said quite calmly, "I was looking for you, Mr. Savage."

Doc Savage said nothing for a moment. But his flake-gold eyes were unusually sharp. Some slightest change in the good-looking public relations consul's voice had been only noticeable to the bronze man. That voice seemed just a trifle shrill.

Doc finally said, "I missed you at the moon rocket send-off. Dr. Mandroff told me you would be over there."

Adam Ash nodded. "That's right. I was watching that trail of sparks behind it. Did you ever see anything quite so marvelous?"

Doc Savage admitted that he had watched the show.

Monk, listening curiously, had to get out a question that was bothering him. Out it came with a rush.

"Say, Ash," Monk piped shrilly, "you sure been actin' funny. What's the idea?"

The calmness dropped from Adam Ash's dapper slender figure. He looked worried.

"I'm convinced I can trust you men," he said confidentially. "I have learned of Doc Savage's

worth-while work since I first met you. Yes, I've been keeping under cover. But now I think I need your help--your assistance to help save Martin Uppercue from something terrible about to happen."

"Yes?" prompted Doc Savage quietly.

Adam Ash cast a worried look at the dark sky overhead. The thunder was growing nearer. He said tensely, "If this storm breaks, the person behind this mystery will do everything in his power to work the test tonight."

"What test?" Ham prodded.

"The experiment in the Perisphere!" Adam Ash blurted fearfully. "But first, they'll need the metal cylinder. They've already stolen another necessary unit from my coupé. If we could get into the Perisphere, perhaps--"

The bronze man appeared uneasy. He said, "Monk, try to contact Long Tom from the car."

The hairy chemist leaped to obey Doc's order.

A second later, he returned, to report, "Long Tom's down in Uppercue's laboratory, Doc. Says he's located that real metal cylinder. Says to send somebody over there quick--"

Adam Ash seemed to reach a sudden conclusion. He addressed Doc Savage.

"I know a way into the Perisphere, even though it's closed," he put in quickly. "Monk and Ham, here, can go and meet your man named Long Tom. But right now, we've got to stop a fiend up there in the Perisphere!"

Doc Savage prepared to leave with Adam Ash. "You mean," he asked, "the Perisphere is the location of that secret operating room?"

Ash nodded jerkily. "And more!" he cried. "Tonight, if the storm breaks, a new Man of Tomorrow will be created!"

A moment later the bronze man was hurrying toward the huge, looming Perisphere with Adam Ash.

Monk and Ham had gone partway, to circle the globe in an opposite direction and enter Uppercue's laboratory near its base.

Neither Doc nor his assistants could have known of the appearance of Maximus, the goblin, as Adam Ash watched the moon rocket's blazing trail!

IT had started to rain. With the occasional flashes of lightning, the threat of the coming storm, the night Fair visitors were rapidly leaving the grounds. Besides, it was getting late now, and it appeared that the storm was going to be a bad one.

Doc Savage and trim-looking Adam Ash passed an entrance to the globular Perisphere that was guarded by a uniformed Fair officer. This was at the same door that Long Tom had tried to enter earlier today.

But now Adam Ash walked up to the man in uniform, spoke a few words, and the cop turned to unlock a heavy entrance door. He gave a friendly smile as Doc and the public relations consul stepped inside the mammoth globe.

They seemed to be in some sort of walled shell, much like the inner "skin" of a great ocean liner's hold. Within this double-walled shell was a curving ladder that snaked upward into gloom.

Adam Ash abruptly indicated the ladder and said sharply, "You won't walk up that, bronze guy.

You'll be carried up!"

He stepped aside and a half a dozen assorted gunmen leaped from dark corners of the arc-shaped room. The leader was the man of the beady eyes and the hell-let's-go-out-and-ring-doorbells grinning face. Lonesome! His voice was a harsh snarl.

Lonesome said, "Watch out this bronze mug doesn't go for one of his trick gadgets! Close in on him careful, you birds!" Then he continued eating the apple which he held in his hand.

Six menacing automatics cautiously closed in on Doc Savage. The weapons were in the steady hands of the hard faced men.

Doc was ordered to put his hands behind his back.

Strangely, the bronze man offered no resistance. And right beneath Doc's armpits, if he moved his arms in a certain way, were hidden small containers that would have sprayed an enveloping black gas into the faces of all.

But Doc Savage allowed himself to be tied hand and foot.

"Get Maximus!" Adam Ash ordered sharply. He referred to the goblin.

A moment later, the huge, shambling thing with the red hair came through a nearby door. It stood before tall Adam Ash, its staring, blank eyes fastened on the public relations consul in a fixed manner.

With a soothing, strange tone, Adam Ash directed, "Maximus, you are going to carry the bronze man to the operating room on top of the Perisphere. Understand?"

The giant creature made a queer throat sound. It moved close to Doc Savage.

DOC was tense, unmoving. His metallic features showed no expression, no indication of his thoughts as he studied the goblin known as Maximus. He saw the bloodshot eyes of the thing, the broad, vacant stare of the set face, the drab-gray, loose clothing that covered the massive body. Doc was lifted into the huge man-creature's arms. Slowly, monotonously, Maximus started the long climb up the curving ladder.

The bronze man knew that they were mounting the great arc of the Perisphere shell, going higher and higher toward that strange operating room in the very top of the globe. Outside, rain hammered down and beat against the sides of steel. The rumble of thunder increased, and the huge ball seemed to tremble.

Somewhere behind the bronze man, the voice of Adam Ash queried, "All exit doors are locked and barred?"

The gloomy voice of Lonesome replied, "The devil himself couldn't get in, boss. The only escape now is down the chute."

Adam Ash's voice seemed to be dropping back.

He said, "Then we'll go to meet that Long Tom and the others. We sent Monk and the lawyer to meet him." There was a shrill laugh, a satisfied sound from Adam Ash.

Someone said, "Jeez, boss, are you goin' to start the thing?"

"That," came Adam Ash's voice faintly, "is the main idea."

And high up on the upper half of the great globe, still gripped in the arms of the goblin as the creature climbed, Doc Savage recalled that small generator model in the laboratory of Martin Uppercue, beneath this very giant sphere.

The model represented a type of spherical generator which had been developed on a huge scale by various electric manufacturing companies. Its design was known to be more efficient than any other type. Millions of volts had been generated in tests with various ones built.

And now—

Doc Savage's thoughts leaped to different parts of the table model he had inspected briefly. Yet that inspection had been sufficient for the bronze man to retain an exact picture of the whole unit itself.

Martin Uppercue's spherical generator was an exact reproduction of the giant Perisphere!

Chapter XVI. MAD MENACE

ONE of the reasons for the success of Doc Savage's constant fight against evil-doers throughout the world, was the close unity between the Man of Bronze and his aids.

A spoken word from the giant bronze man, and any one of Doc's assistants could be depended upon to follow through with some particular assignment.

Doc Savage had mentioned to Long Tom, the electrical expert, something about the small model generator in Martin Uppercue's laboratory. Immediately the unhealthy-looking aid's quick mind had followed the bronze man's trend of thoughts.

As soon as possible, Long Tom had therefore returned to Uppercue's laboratory, somewhere beneath the great Perisphere.

It was here that he had contacted Monk, at the short-wave set in Dock's car, announcing that he had located the odd metal cylinder.

Long Tom had found the thin tube hidden in a cabinet near a workbench where the model generator was set up.

Placing the cylinder to one side, the quick hands of Long Tom had gone to work on the model itself. It was quickly dismantled. The electrical wizard's sharp eyes widened as he worked swiftly. He located the small missing part and, from quick calculations, saw that the unit which was needed fitted in at the very top of the spherical motor. In actual size, it would be the shape of a long suitcase.

Long Tom remembered the "accumulator" that the bronze man had mentioned.

Recently, Long Tom had lectured before a group of famous engineers on the possibilities of such an accumulator. The atomic machine was a unit capable of storing unlimited power. Hooked into a power transmission line, an accumulator would be capable of draining the current and putting out all lights in a large-sized city.

One thing had halted the perfection of such an invention. A perfect insulator was needed with which to protect the suitcase-sized unit, when in operation in connection with a huge, spherical generator.

Long Tom was intently studying the one tiny part of the model that was missing. He knew now that Martin Uppercue, fearful lest someone should steal his secret, had left something out of that small-scale model. He had also—

Abruptly, there was a commotion behind the electrical wizard. He whirled to face those who had come into the passageway from outside.

It was the waspish-looking Ham, arguing with hairy Monk as they hurried into the laboratory.

Behind them trailed Chemistry, the small chimp.

Monk squealed excitedly, "Long Tom, look! That guy Adam Ash is with Doc, an' he had a clue to somethin'. We're all to hurry and meet them. Maybe we'll find the girls there, too; and like I was tellin' Ham—"

Ham managed a pained sneer. "Wait till that Adam Ash learns you're on the make for his girl, you missing link! There's going to be trouble starting—"

From the vault like door leading to the larger laboratory beyond, well-dressed Adam Ash said coldly:

"Trouble has already started, friends!"

TALL Adam Ash stepped into the room with an object in his hand that had been taken from Doc Savage when he was brought, drugged, to the secret operating room. It was the machine pistol, a deadly weapon when the regular high-powered explosive bullets were used.

Long Tom saw, with a start, that the drum attached to the weapon was loaded.

Hairy Monk's small eyes had blinked rapidly at the sight of Adam Ash. He let out a bull roar.

"You tricked Doc!" the powerful chemist yelled. "You—"

Monk suddenly whipped a pistol from his torn clothing and started blazing away.

But Adam Ash had acted a split second before the gun cut loose. He had leaped back through the protecting, heavy vault door, to take up a position behind the steel casement.

From somewhere deeper in that room, came a shattering roar as one of the gunmen with Adam Ash loosened a hail of machine-gun lead.

Pellets spattered the walls near the heads of Monk and Ham. Long Tom had leaped for a corner of the room and switched off the ceiling lights.

Adam Ash was shouting orders above the roar of gunfire. Another death gun took up its nerve-racking chatter.

And then, from the only other passageway leading out of this underground room, Lonesome's sad-sounding voice yelled, "I'm lockin' the door, boss. Give 'em the gas!"

The door slammed to the passageway that could have been the only possible exit for the three aids of Doc Savage.

Immediately from the vault like opening through which an orange-red stream of gunfire was coming, there was the sinister hiss of gas.

Chemistry was squealing.

Monk howled, "Blast 'em! I'm goin' through that door and get that traitor Adam Ash! I'm gonna—"

"Wait, you fool!" Ham snapped in the darkness. "I've got something that will knock those devils out of their shoes. Here, give me a hand."

Monk located the lawyer's voice. Ham was crouched in a corner of the darkened room, out of range of the deadly machine-gun fire.

As Monk crept up to his side, Ham said, "I've got a hand grenade. Picked it up from Doc's car before we came over here. But the pin's stuck. Here, take a hold."

Monk reached out to help, bellowing happily, "For once, shyster, I got to admit you're smart. Wait'll we toss this pineapple at those birds—"

The chemist struggled with the jammed pin in the hand grenade. Luckily, it did not release.

For the knockout-gas fumes that enveloped the three aids and the pet, Chemistry, within the next two seconds put them swiftly to sleep.

DAPPER Adam Ash gave terse orders a few moments later as Monk, Ham, Long Tom and the pet were carried from Uppercue's laboratory.

An exhaust fan—located in one wall of the lab—had been turned on and the room quickly cleared of the gas fumes.

The public relations consul's eyes were cold, and there was a smirk on his thin lips. "This," he said to the grinning-faced thug beside him, "takes care of Doc Savage's crowd. Take them up to the operating room, Lonesome."

Lonesome looked incongruous with the heavy machine gun cradled in his arm. For he was still wearing the high silk hat and "tails." The fixed grin of his mouth hardly went with the menacing Tommy. "Hell, chief, let's give it to them right here."

The eyes of Adam Ash snapped. "You're forgetting the experiment, you fool. Take them above—up the catwalk." The queer, shrill tone that Doc Savage had noted, was now back in Adam's Ash's voice.

The three aids and the pet were carried through the big motor room where Doc had first found Kay Uppercue. The catwalk took the men high above the electrical equipment of massive size. Somewhere in the long, high-ceilinged room, there was the soft, steady purr of a small booster dynamo running. Gunmen reached the small opening in the ceiling, a direct opening into the huge Perisphere above. Iron steps led upward.

Adam Ash paused to see that everyone was out of the big motor room below. Then, with a twisted grin on his lips, he stepped to a heavily insulated control panel built near the catwalk.

Large contact switches of varying sizes were at his fingertips. Adam Ash started slapping the switches home—closing the electric circuits.

Immediately, the motor hum in the power room increased.

Like the shrill "winding up" of a big transport plane inertia starter, the motor hum increased to an ear-splitting howl.

Adam Ash laughed with almost insane glee. "And now," he grinned, "the real generator starts!"

Above him, waiting in the entranceway to the huge Perisphere, the grinning-faced Lonesome commented:

"That little dude, Shill Burns, didn't do bad when he led those guys our way, boss!"

They moved on into the place above.

THIS was the vast, awe-inspiring interior of the Perisphere itself. But now a strange transformation was taking place. Levers that Adam Ash had thrown had started a movement of giant-sized units in the two-hundred-foot-high globe.

Sections of a massive machine were swinging out into position overhead. The men carrying Doc's aids paused a moment and stared in wide-eyed wonder. One thug shivered slightly.

"Hell, boss," he gasped, "if this thing ever gets out of control—"

Adam Ash snapped an order. "Move!" he said shrilly. "Take those fools up the curved ladder. The movable platform has been dismantled. Others are guarding Doc Savage and the rest, above."

Lonesome, his own voice a trifle awed, remained behind, to query, "Say, chief, that storm is sure goin' to be a corker!"

Outside the great steel ball, the fury of the universe seemed to have been unleashed against the Perisphere. Thunder cracked ominously; a steady trembling took place beneath the sphere's very foundation.

Adam Ash laughed queerly.

Sounds of the storm seemed to remind him of one more thing to be done. He stepped toward a barred exit doorway near the base of the Perisphere.

Loosening a heavy steel bar, he opened the door to let in a burst of wind and rain. A lightning flash revealed his satanic face for an instant.

Adam Ash said, "I'll get back through the laboratory entrance. Bar this last exit. There's one thing I must do."

Lonesome stood there grinning, his voice gloomy. "But, chief, you better not—"

"That fool, Shill Burns, must be located," finished Ash. "He's just dumb enough to stumble onto something. I've got to get him also."

The queer laugh that Adam Ash gave as he disappeared into the night sent a chilly feather of ice racing down his henchman, Lonesome's, spine.

Lonesome had been standing polishing an apple on his sleeve. Ready to take a bite, he lowered the apple and stood with his mouth half open.

Chapter XVII. THE GENERATOR STARTS

SHILL BURNS was not a brave man. But the flashily dressed little talker was an opportunist. Any little racket in which he could collect his own ten cents' worth—while still keeping within the law—appealed to the gum-chewing little sharpshooter.

Burns had seen a chance to cash in on the Martin Uppercue disappearance, and the night he had followed the strange figure of the goblin—Maximus—to the Marine Amphitheater on the lake, he had really been sincere when directing Monk and Ham to the stage. Shill Burns had hoped for a nice retainer.

When Lonesome and his men had struck, Shill Burns got scared and ran for cover. He had hidden out throughout that night and the next day.

But now, moving like a little wet terrier in the rain and scary claps of thunder, he was stalking the deserted Fair Grounds, trying to bring himself to call the police. He knew, somehow, that Doc Savage was in trouble. Yet Shill Burns was afraid to contact the law. He had been mixed in shady dealings in the past.

Shill Burns spent an hour trying to make up his mind.

He went back to his little concession office with the determination that he would put through the phone call. And tall, gray-eyed Dr. Alexis Mandroff was there waiting for him.

Shill Burns had seen the doctor several times, knew him by reputation. He was surprised at this complimentary visit.

Dr. Mandroff smiled and asked, "You're Shill Burns, da?"

Shill's chest expanded.

"No other, friend, no other. To whom am I obligated for this—"

Dr. Alexis Mandroff's light features grew suddenly serious.

"Doc Savage, a friend of mine, once mentioned you," Mandroff hurried on. "Now he and some of his aids are missing. I thought you might be able to help me locate them. I'm afraid something has happened—"

Shill Burns suddenly decided that he had kept still long enough.

"My friend," he said confidentially, getting his gum out of the way, "that thought is mutual. I'm telling you, it's something beyond our grasp. And yet I have an idea—yes, an idea—"

"What?" interrupted Dr. Mandroff, trying not to appear impatient.

"Now you take that Perisphere," said Shill Burns. "There's something damned mysterious going on there—"

"Then we should investigate," suggested Mandroff. He was carrying a cane, and wearing the expensive fawn-colored gloves. He stepped toward the door. The doctor was also wearing a cape against the downpour outside.

Shill Burns grabbed a coat and quickly followed. He said worriedly, "Friend, I gotta hunch Doc Savage is somewhere in that damned globe."

WHEN Doc Savage was carried into the weird operating room atop the Perisphere globe, and untied to be guarded by the ponderous, red-haired Maximus, he had made no attempt to escape.

For the bronze man had permitted himself to be brought here. It was in this place that he had hoped to find the others—Martin Uppercue and the two girls.

For the bronze giant had suspected Adam Ash's trickery!

Martin Uppercue was there, tied again in a chair, and close by were also the bound, shapely figures of lovely Pat Savage and the pretty Kay Uppercue. The girls' faces were pallid, drawn from their dire experience, and yet Pat Savage managed a smile.

Doc, after being searched to make certain he was unarmed, had been permitted freedom by gunmen who stood guard in the room. Besides, the brute-sized Maximus stood towering nearby.

Doc had thought first of the girls.

They were all in the smaller room adjoining the operating room.

Pat Savage said cheerfully, "for once, my dear cousin, I looked for trouble and found it! Are you angry?"

The bronze man was silent. For Doc knew that only one ending awaited all of them now: death!

He turned to little white-haired Martin Uppercue.

The scientist said, "Thanks, Doc Savage, for almost rescuing me once before in this room. But I'm afraid there will be no chance at a rescue again." Uppercue looked significantly at the menacing guns in the hands of the guards close by.

His voice was weary, though no fear showed in the little bright-eyed man's face.

"You know what's in there?" Uppercue asked, nodding toward the adjoining, larger room.

Grinning, the gunmen permitted Doc Savage to look.

The bronze man saw more bound figures laid out on tables near the weird operating platform. Above the heads of the stupefied victims, rain slashed the opaque glass of the convex skylight. Lightning seemed to leap right out of the heavens above and smash against the glass covering. The broken pane had been patched.

Doc returned and spoke to the scientist. "Those are the missing Fair visitors who were jabbed with hypodermic needles in the crowds. I almost got the same treatment from Lonesome, myself. They were to be used to fake the Man of Tomorrow publicity surrounding your own experiment."

Uppercue nodded his bushy white head.

"Correct," he said. "No man can create a man. That poor devil, Maximus, was a Fair visitor himself, once. He was given injections of thyroxine and adrenalin—and changed rapidly into a pituitary giant. But, in the experiment, his will power was destroyed. Now he only follows the directions of that masked devil who has him hypnotized."

Doc mentioned that he was aware of the method used. He had figured something like this when he had checked with the gatekeeper about the missing persons, and when an attempt had been made to jab himself with a hypo near the Hall of Medicine.

He said, "The Man of Tomorrow stuff was merely publicity to draw the Fair crowds—and a shield to cover your own experiments. But the masked surgeon cashed in on it. Obviously he is mad enough to really believe a superman can be created."

Across the room, small Kay Uppercue and Pat Savage were staring in open-mouthed horror.

Doc's metallic features were tense. "Given the proper voltage, life might possibly be brought to body cells," he continued. "That is something of this masked one's idea, I believe."

Just then there was a disturbance at the door.

HAM and Monk, along with Long Tom and the pet ape, were carried into the room. The three aids had started to regain consciousness. Monk was struggling like a bull ape to break loose from several scar-faced captors.

Monk saw the two girls and let out a roar of protest.

"What the hell do you mean, tyin' them girls up like that?" he bellowed.

In the doorway behind them, Lonesome said gloomily, "I'm going to take pleasure in rubbing out that dish-faced guy!"

Before Monk could think of a suitable retort, everyone was held tense by the strange vibration that began to fill the room.

The bronze man's gaze flicked to the scientist, Uppercue, and he saw the look of utter horror in the little man's eyes.

Professor Uppercue stammered, "My God! He . . . he's started the Perisphere generator!"

The hum of some massive motor was slowly, inexorably increasing into a deep-throbbled whine.

Even several of Lonesome's gunmen looked nervous.

One said, "Say, Lonesome, where's the chief? I don't think it's goin' to be so damned healthy hangin' around here much longer!" The gunman was jittery about the electrical whine below them.

Lonesome rapped, "Shut up!"

As everyone listened in awe to the weird, slowly increasing speed of the mammoth generator in the massive ball beneath them, a guard suddenly appeared and shoved two more figures into the room. He said to Lonesome:

"I caught these two guys snoopin' around!"

The two newest captives were the loudly dressed Shill Burns and tall Dr. Alexis Mandroff.

Chapter XVIII. UNMASKED FIEND

EVERYONE stared at the last two captives brought in.

Shill Burns, protesting volubly, clutched regal-looking Dr. Alexis Mandroff's arm and cried: "Like I said, Doc, you're important! You got connections here at the Fair. Tell 'em they can't get away with this--"

The blond-haired, tall doctor shrugged his shoulders hopelessly.

"It looks," he said quietly, "as though you and I have nothing to say about that."

The masked fiend, through his chief henchman, Lonesome, now had captured everyone who might frustrate his plans.

It was hairy Monk, kicking up a fuss as he tried to wriggle out of his bonds, who croaked hollowly, "All right, where is he? Where's that yahoo behind all this trouble--that Adam Ash?" Petite Kay Uppercue, hearing Monk's words, stared out of horror-filled eyes. She stammered: "You . . . you said . . . Adam Ash--"

Doc Savage knew that the small blond girl had been engaged to the good-looking public relations consul, Adam Ash.

Monk realized his error. The way in which he looked at Kay Uppercue said that he thought she was swell, and now to have blurted that Adam Ash was the real fiend--

It was Dr. Mandroff who interjected with: "Do you mean to say that young Adam Ash is the one behind all this? Why, I never dreamed--" His voice broke off shrilly.

The well-known doctor looked at the bronze man, at others in the room.

Kay Uppercue was crying softly.

Pat Savage, stiffly erect in the chair in which she was tied, looked at Doc Savage.

Like Monk, Dr. Mandroff realized his error.

He said thoughtfully, "I'm sorry, Miss Uppercue. I . . . I didn't understand."

Only the bronze man himself had been acting strangely.

DOC SAVAGE appeared not to have heard the others. Instead, he had been intently regarding the massive figure of Maximus stationed near himself to act as guard.

Doc had caught the huge giant's starry eyes, was looking into their depths peculiarly with his own. The bronze man's compelling eyes were like unwavering, accusing pools of restless gold. Everyone stiffened as the bronze man spoke.

With great tonal inflection, Doc Savage ordered: "Maximus! You are listening to me now, understand? You are to obey me."

The increasing generator vibration that gripped the whole Perisphere seemed to lend power to the bronze man's words.

"Maximus--bring us Adam Ash!" rapped Doc Savage.

Slowly, eyes fixed ahead as though in a trance, huge Maximus shuffled step by step to the center of the room.

Fascinated, Lonesome's accomplices stepped aside, held spellbound. The gunmen had seemed to forget that the bronze man was unguarded, now that Maximus had moved away from his side.

In the middle of the room, Maximus paused. Close above his towering form, the smaller glass skylight of this inner room was within reach. The giant figure reached up, released a catch and slid the panel back on a groove.

Even Pat Savage shuddered slightly as the fury of the storm lashed into the room. Thunder rolled in great waves; jagged streaks of white lightning seemed to leap to the very opening above.

The huge hands of Maximus reached outward into the storm--and dragged from the roof of the massive steel ball a soaked, limp form.

The half-conscious figure of Adam Ash was dragged to the bronze man's feet!

Pat Savage gasped.

Kay Uppercue crowded her small knuckles against her teeth and tried to stifle a scream.

Monk's eyes almost bulged in their pits of gristle. He piped, "Now, how in hell--"

Maximus stood dumbly by, awaiting the bronze man's next order.

The mind of Doc Savage, his great will power, had conquered another sinister brain that controlled the one of the dumb brute!

LONG TOM had been roughly dumped in a corner of the room when dragged into the strange Perisphere hide-out. But he had twisted to one elbow now. He asked of Doc: "But . . . but if Adam Ash wasn't the masked man, then who--"

Others, too, were asking that question silently. Even the hard-faced thugs of Lonesome were staring at Doc Savage. Apparently none had ever known the true identity of the masked director of crime, and now--

One thug asked, "Then where is the masked guy?"

Through the room, even above the ever-increasing moan of the monstrous generator in this sphere

underneath them, an exotic trilling note floated. It was the identifying sound the Man of Bronze made in moments of mental stress—or perhaps approach to near danger.

And covered by the generator whine, no one had heard the stifled exclamation, the intake of breath of another person in that room.

Yet Doc Savage had heard—because he had been listening for that very thing.

It was Martin Uppercue who cried, "But the accumulator! It is priceless! Where is it, Doc Savage?"

Again the bronze man looked at Maximus. He said firmly, steadily, in that strangely compelling tone: "Maximus, now get the accumulator."

The huge man-monster again moved toward the middle of the room, leaned one hand on the table and reached upward with the other into the rain that was hammering into the room.

The hand of Maximus paused. He turned uncertainly, his staring-eyed gaze going to Doc Savage, and then shifting away, as though pulled by some other force.

Doc Savage said tensely, "One man in this room has controlled Maximus. He is trying to overcome my power over this dumb servant now. Because that person also needs the metal cylinder—and someone in this room has it!"

The bronze man's words must have proved a startling shock to the real villain. For the moment, his control over Maximus was lost. The huge giant again looked at Doc Savage, seemed to nod in agreement—and reached again toward the roof opening.

There was a shrill cry of anger from a person near Doc Savage. A man plunged toward the table directly beneath the open roof skylight.

The well-tailored form of Dr. Alexis Mandroff, his wet cape billowing out behind him, mounted the table in a single swift bound. Agile, slender hands clawed the roof opening and the blond-haired man raised himself swiftly out of sight.

Alexis Mandroff's face had been twisted with maniacal fury.

DOC SAVAGE fired orders.

"Maximus! Help the hairy one. And the man with the sword cane by his side. Untie them. Hurry!"

Spellbound by the sudden exposure of a man they did not even know had employed them, the bulging-eyed gunmen were slow to move. The ropes were yanked from Monk Mayfair's wrists by Maximus, with one powerful twist, and the release of Ham followed.

The hairy chemist dived headfirst into a slow-moving thug, grabbed a gun and let out a whoop.

"I'm sure gonna raise havoc now!" Monk bawled.

Monk blasted away with the gun.

A thug returned the fire, but his aim was wild. Perhaps he, too, had been startled by the form of Dr. Mandroff leaping out onto the very top of the globe of steel.

Uppercue was screaming, "The accumulator! He's after the accumulator, Doc Savage."

But the bronze man had swung with powerful, cabled arms out to the slippery, rain-swept roof. Two hundred feet below lay the lightning-illuminated Fair Grounds. More than a dozen steps either way from that small opening atop the Perisphere, and the bronze man's form would skid to swift doom on the curved, slick surfaces of the sphere.

And towering over all, seemingly only a few feet away, rose the three-sided spire that was the Trylon. It lofted still another half thousand feet above the globe of steel—and from its sides now bombarded flashes of light.

The Trylon, during a storm, was constantly struck by lightning which harmlessly followed its tapered length into the earth.

Doctor Mandroff had whirled back toward the bronze man with an object in his hand. It was a long case, approximately the size of a large suitcase. He snarled shrilly:

"Even you cannot stop me now, Doc Savage. I'm going back down there into the room!"

With his free hand, he fired the .45 automatic.

Doc Savage had been in the act of hurtling at Alexis Mandroff. Weight had been thrown forward on the balls of the bronze man's feet. The heavy .45 slug caught him in the chest, and he pitched sideward, to roll toward the curve of the roof that dropped off sharply to the wide circular mall far below.

OUT here in the storm-lashed night, the weird roar of the Perisphere generator was a thing that penetrated far. It was like the combined bumblebee hum of a thousand bombing planes. It was not a deafening sound, but rather a vibration that sent a strange chill through all.

It was too late for Fair visitors now—yet many had gathered far below the spot where Doc Savage and Mandroff were fighting.

Those persons were the Fair police, attracted by the uncanny sound of the giant generator, and hundreds of late workers and exhibitors who had been on their way home for the night.

Prowl car sirens screamed like insignificant play horns, against the greater noise enveloping all. Armed coppers battered against the heavy, steel-barred doors that had been closed at the Perisphere base. No one could find a way inside.

And as Doc Savage was seen by Mandroff to slip toward a plunge of death, the mad-eyed doctor

leaped back into the roof room with the precious accumulator case in his hand. But Mandroff had not figured on the trained hands, the fingers of Doc Savage. Daily, the bronze man exercised various parts of his marvelous body. Those bronze-colored hands contained a grip of steel.

Doc's fingers had splayed as he struck the curved roof. Fingertips had flattened mightily against the wet steel surface. Like a vacuum-cup tire grips a slippery pavement, Doc's fingertips had stopped his slide.

Slowly, he pulled himself back to the roof opening. He had not been injured by the .45 slug. Doc's bulletproof vest had stopped that bullet.

But the force of the shot, catching the bronze man partially off balance as it did, had been enough to make him slip back on the sleek-surfaced globe.

Doc Savage leaped back toward the Perisphere room.

Chapter XIX. DEATH STRIKES HIGH UP

A TERRIFIC battle was taking place within the room of the Perisphere.

Hairy Monk had taken time out between pile-driver swings, at Lonesome's men, to leap to Long Tom's side. The skinny-looking electrical expert had been lying helplessly in the same corner of the room. Monk swiftly unbound his wrists.

Yet Long Tom made no attempt to get up and join the mêlée. One leg remained stiffly straight before him on the floor, as though broken.

But Long Tom picked up a crook's fallen gun and bopped heads as Monk and Ham sent dizzy victims flying his way.

And huge Maximus, apparently still obeying the will of the great bronze man, joined in to help Doc's aids.

One of Lonesome's henchmen saw the twisted face and figure of Dr. Mandroff plunge back into the room from the roof opening. He took one glimpse at the hurtling Mandroff, and bawled, "Me, I'm gettin' outa here! This damned Perisphere is goin' to shake itself apart any minute!"

The thug went diving through the secret panel wall opening that Doc and Long Tom had once before used. Another gunman followed, yelling in fear. The great sphere of steel was actually vibrating on its base. It appeared that over a hundred thousand tons of metal threatened to collapse at any second.

Monk let out a yell and raced to the wall opening where the thug had disappeared down the chute. He was holding something solid in his hairy fist, jerking at the object with his other hand. Then Monk bellowed, "I got it, Ham. I got that danged pin outa the grenade. Look it this, will ya!" He tossed the bomb, and a second later there was a tremendous roar somewhere below in the escape chute that led to the underground pipe lines.

It was Long Tom who cried shrilly, "Fool! That's the only way out of here. We're all doomed now!" Monk looked startled.

In the excitement, they saw Mandroff for the first time.

The doctor, with the heavy suitcase-shaped accumulator in his hand, had leaped past the fight to reach an outer wall of the room. This roof prison was built between two outer layers of the steel Perisphere, and in that outer wall was another four-foot-wide partition of thin steel.

MANDROFF had pushed a wall lever to raise a partition of that outer narrow room. He plunged inside and yanked something downward with his hand.

He turned, his eyes wild, his face contorted.

"Fools! No one can reach me now. There's an escape ladder in here. As soon as I charge this thing, I'll send you all to doom beneath tons of crushed steel-by letting the Perisphere generator run wild and tear itself loose!"

Monk and Ham drew up short, to stare. Apparently nothing separated them from the wild-eyed doctor.

Doc Savage came hurtling into the room from just above as Monk, with a howl, dived toward nearby Alexis Mandroff.

Monk said, "I'll get that guy--"

And then he gave a yip of pain. The hairy chemist had cracked his head against something that appeared to be only empty space between him and the doctor.

From where he was still tied, Professor Uppercue exclaimed, "It's a sheet of shatterproof, invisible glass. You can't reach him--"

The little scientist's alert eyes suddenly popped like round saucers. "Look! He's putting the accumulator into the slot! My God, we'll all be--"

The bronze man's brain had remembered the model generator construction in that fleeting, precious instant. He said, "But he needs the insulator--the steel cylinder."

Abruptly Doc went into whirlwind action. He started shoving everyone toward the adjoining operating room. He slammed orders at Monk and Ham.

"Get everyone out of here!" yelled Doc. "There's no time to untie anyone. Take them, chairs and all. Hurry!"

The bronze giant had already swung helpless Pat Savage and Kay Uppercue up by a chair in each arm. He plunged through the doorway.

The room was cleared in seconds. The bronze man was the only one to see the crazed Alexis Mandroff's last movements.

Behind the glass screen, the doctor had finally worked the heavy accumulator into a special groove made for it somewhere in the Perisphere generator outer wall.

There was a sudden peculiar humming. And then the ozone smell that electricity makes when burning.

Doc Savage himself moved back into the room with the others.

But from the large glass skylight of this larger room, everyone saw the weird arc of flaming lightning that came from the very heavens above, from the top-most point of the skyscraper-high Trylon that adjoined the great ball.

There was a horrible crash, and the Perisphere seemed to rock and sway. In the outer shell room where Alexis Mandroff was crouched, liquid fire split the thin steel wall at his back. Steel melted around that spot, melted like a thin scrap of tin caught in thousands of degrees heat. Molten steel splashed off the side of the Perisphere at that one concentrated point.

There was a single scream of horror from the doctor.

Then there was only the stench of flesh and the ozone smell.

Alexis Mandroff had died the death of white-hot fire.

BREATHLESS seconds passed. No one moved in the outer room that had been protected by the second inner wall of the great sphere.

Professor Martin Uppercue breathed finally, "We . . . we'd better not let the girls look!"

Doc Savage had gone into the small room close to the shell partition where Mandroff had sealed himself in. The bronze man said quietly, "There's nothing to see. Only dust!"

Dust was all that remained of the fiend who had been Mandroff.

Suddenly, Monk yelled, "Hey, Doc! The blasted thing's stoppin'. Listen! The Perisphere generator's dyin' down!"

It was true. The whine that had accompanied the awful trembling of the massive sphere was fading. Vibration slackened.

Doc said, "Perhaps Martin Uppercue can tell you the explanation of that—and of Mandroff's death."

The bronze man had released the small, bright-eyed scientist.

Uppercue said shakily: "The accumulator is my invention. It might be compared to a storage battery. Only it stores power—thousands and thousands of volts of energy. The Perisphere generator—the largest spherical generator ever designed—was needed to charge the accumulator. It would only take the massive generator below a matter of seconds to completely charge it."

"But how—" Ham started to ask curiously.

Uppercue went on swiftly, his keen eyes bright. "Mandroff had been to my laboratory often. He had seen that model of the Perisphere generator. I told him, and others, in order to cover my real work, that we were planning a Man of Tomorrow experiment and thus needed greater electrical generation than had ever before been produced."

Ham had to get the question out. "But why was he killed?"

Doc Savage answered the query.

"Because Mandroff failed to use the one thing needed to make the accumulator a success," he explained. "That is the insulator, which Uppercue, here, had in the metal cylinder—the cylinder he tried so valiantly to protect, and which Long Tom found hidden back in his laboratory. The insulator was needed while charging the accumulator, and to protect it after receiving that charge. Without it—"

The bronze man indicated the space where Dr. Alexis Mandroff had only a few moments before been.

"Instead," Doc went on, "when no insulation was there to hold that terrific Perisphere charge within the accumulator, the great voltage kicked back and drew the bolt of lightning from the Trylon—and at the same time, shorted the Perisphere generator and perhaps saved us all."

Uppercue nodded, said in an awed voice, "Yes. The generator below us, tons of steel and power, would have probably run wild and torn the Perisphere to pieces."

For once in his scrappy life, hairy Monk was silent for two full moments. Then he blurted,

"Say—gosh!"

DOC SAVAGE interrupted the questions to take care of Adam Ash. The young public relations consul was still dazed, and there might be a brain concussion. The bronze man showed Ham and Monk how to get back to the narrow steel ladder inside the Perisphere "skin." Unarmed thugs guarded by Monk and Ham were put to work carrying Adam Ash below.

Soon coppers who had been battering at the lower Perisphere locked exits had been admitted and were climbing up here to the secret room. It was not until much later that morning, in Uppercue's own laboratory, that Doc finished with explanations.

Someone had asked about the missing metal cylinder, the tube like thing that had caused pretty Kay Uppercue to act so suspiciously—as well as good-looking Adam Ash.

The scientist's daughter was there in the lab now, after learning from the hospital that her fiancé would be all right in a day or so. Her brilliant father gave her a warm smile.

"Tell them, Kay," Professor Uppercue said.

"That tube," the small blond girl said, "contained a monatomic film that was to have insulated the accumulator. It was thinner than the thinnest paper. I found the real tube, brought it back here to the lab--"

Ham asked, smiling fondly at the blue-eyed daughter of the scientist, "But where is it now?"

Long Tom looked sheepish. His anemic features, for once, flushed slightly as he looked at the girl. "I found it--before that Lonesome and his mob knocked out Monk and Ham and me, down here! Dang it, I had it hidden in my pants leg, but Monk got it up there in the Perisphere fight--"

Doc interrupted quietly with, "Well, where is it, Monk?"

Monk stammered, coughed, then got words out. "Goshamighty!" he piped. "That Lonesome had Habeas locked in a closet up there. So I took a swing at that grinning ranny with that tube thing. I guess--well, hell! I guess I busted it all to bits!"

Uppercue sighed. "It is just as well," he said. "I'm afraid the accumulator's possibilities were too great--and also too dangerous. With its unlimited, stored power, it would have always been a treasure sought by men like Mandroff."

Pat Savage was slightly holding well-dressed Ham's arm. She still looked a trifle frightened, though her lovely gold eyes were bright.

She queried, "But the Man of Tomorrow--what about him?"

Doc explained, "It was merely publicity to cover Professor Uppercue's work." The bronze man looked at the white-haired scientist and received a nod of agreement.

"Of course, that publicity would have helped the World's Fair. Later, it could have been announced that something went wrong. But Mandroff, having access to persons stricken on the grounds by the heat and so on, made a pituitary giant out of one man, to scare off everyone and cover his own search for Uppercue's invention, and to throw suspicion on kidnapped Professor Uppercue. Those other victims were being held in readiness should Maximus be killed--to make it appear Maximus was indestructible."

"And Mandroff even tried to get you!" Pat Savage said.

The bronze man smiled. "I suspected him first when he barged right out of the Hall of Medicine side door when I was chasing Lonesome, the man who tried to jab me with a needle. Mandroff's door-swinging was too nicely timed to be an accident. And further, up there in the secret room, and when he was masked, Mandroff cut his hand when he grabbed a scalpel from a glass case. I saw the cut on his right hand when he tried to quickly slip his gloves on at the hospital yesterday."

Queried about Maximus, Doc explained that he had given the giant man the first of treatments that would gradually bring him back to normal. Maximus would forever be of huge size, but in time--after a delicate brain operation--the man would forget his terrible experience and be a normal human.

The other captives, missing Fair visitors, had been given similar treatment by the bronze man at the hospital early this morning.

Doc also produced a set of paper-thin eye shells of brown shade. He told how Alexis Mandroff had disguised himself as young Adam Ash, using the eye caps to cover his own gray eyes. Mandroff had known about Adam Ash going to watch the moon-rocket show, and had quickly disguised himself and taken the public relations consul's place--after having Ash grabbed by Maximus. It was Mandroff who had appeared after the moon-rocket show, instead of Adam Ash.

It was Mandroff's shrill voice that Monk had recognized on the police radio when, disguised, Mandroff had knocked out the dispatcher and taken his place.

Doc produced the ring that had been used to make him try and hypnotize Martin Uppercue. The ring, Doc told, fitted Mandroff's thin, womanish finger exactly.

Behind the group, a familiar voice spoke.

A voice that said, "Well, well, well! I'm telling you, friends, it is a pleasure to be back with you again. As I told them over there at the hospital, I got in a little mess trying to help the famous bronze man. But it was worth it. Oh, yes, indeed, it was worth it! I--"

SHILL BURNS, in a new, screaming checkered suit and a patch over one eye, came like a little gamecock into the room with the long-eared pig, Habeas, and the runt ape trailing along behind. The voluble, former side-show spieler turned to Monk and Ham, and said with an expansive smile, "Friends, consider yourselves lucky to have ever met the great Shill Burns. I have just this past hour completed arrangements for an exhibit of the two most famous pets in the world--Habeas and Chemistry. Like I always say--"

Hairy Monk let out a howl of rage. He leaped toward Shill Burns, who, suddenly wide-eyed, backed swiftly toward the passageway exit.

Monk yelled, "Exhibit Habeas, will you? Listen, you over-dressed wart--"

Ham, too, had leaped after Shill Burns. But the fast-talking and fast-moving little opportunist had evaded both aids, to disappear madly through the corridor.

Monk and Ham hit the narrow doorway at the same time, and jammed there shoulder to shoulder and face to face.

Monk gave a big-mouthed grin, raised a hairy hand and lifted the hat that had been jammed over Ham's head ever since the hair-waving trick he, himself, had maneuvered. The lawyer's nicely waved, dark hair was revealed. Ham strived furiously to bring up his sword cane with which to bat Monk. The hairy chemist called to demure Kay Uppercue, "What do you think of a guy that waves his hair, Blue Eyes?" Small, shapely Kay Uppercue moved close to the two aids of Doc Savage. She smiled at both. "Well, I—" Monk was beaming, stepping aside at last to face the girl. "Now if you weren't engaged to that handsome Adam Ash—" Monk started in his childish voice. "Oh, that doesn't matter!" said Kay. "Adam told me not to be blue while he's laid up. He even suggested that I go to dinner and a show occasionally." Monk was ready to start at once. He reached for blonde Kay's arm, his eyes as hopeful as a young calf's. "That's fine!" he piped. "Too bad about Ham, here. Before he can have any dates, he'll have to grow out that wave—" "Oh!" Kay said. "But you didn't understand. I have a date with Ham already. You know, Ham is so mature-looking; thus people are less apt to talk about an engaged woman." Monk deflated. His shoulders slumped. Ham called back, "How about that testimonial, sweetheart?"

THE END