

THE DEVIL MASTER

Maxwell Grant

Table of Contents

<u>THE DEVIL MASTER.....</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Maxwell Grant.....</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>CHAPTER I. CHINATOWN TRAIL.....</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>CHAPTER II. THE SHADOW SEEKS TROUBLE.....</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>CHAPTER III. THE OTHER CAMP.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>CHAPTER IV. MISTAKES WILL HAPPEN.....</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>CHAPTER V. WHERE MENACE THREATENED.....</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>CHAPTER VI. COURTESIES EXCHANGED.....</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>CHAPTER VII. TRAILS TO COME.....</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>CHAPTER VIII. THE SHADOW'S EMISSARY.....</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>CHAPTER IX. THE MAGIC OF SU YENG.....</u>	<u>31</u>
<u>CHAPTER X. THE MAN WHO RETURNED.....</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>CHAPTER XI. MASTERS MEET.....</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>CHAPTER XII. DIVIDED ODDS.....</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>CHAPTER XIII. A QUESTION OF MURDER.....</u>	<u>46</u>
<u>CHAPTER XIV. ONE DOLL MORE.....</u>	<u>50</u>
<u>CHAPTER XV. THE OPEN WAY.....</u>	<u>53</u>
<u>CHAPTER XVI. EIGHT O'CLOCK.....</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>CHAPTER XVII. BATTLE IN MINIATURE.....</u>	<u>62</u>
<u>CHAPTER XVIII. A QUESTION OF POWER.....</u>	<u>66</u>
<u>CHAPTER XIX. TRICKS OF DEATH.....</u>	<u>70</u>
<u>CHAPTER XX. BATTLE'S END.....</u>	<u>74</u>

THE DEVIL MASTER

Maxwell Grant

This page copyright © 2001 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

- [CHAPTER I. CHINATOWN TRAIL](#)
 - [CHAPTER II. THE SHADOW SEEKS TROUBLE](#)
 - [CHAPTER III. THE OTHER CAMP](#)
 - [CHAPTER IV. MISTAKES WILL HAPPEN](#)
 - [CHAPTER V. WHERE MENACE THREATENED](#)
 - [CHAPTER VI. COURTESIES EXCHANGED](#)
 - [CHAPTER VII. TRAILS TO COME](#)
 - [CHAPTER VIII. THE SHADOW'S EMISSARY](#)
 - [CHAPTER IX. THE MAGIC OF SU YENG](#)
 - [CHAPTER X. THE MAN WHO RETURNED](#)
 - [CHAPTER XI. MASTERS MEET](#)
 - [CHAPTER XII. DIVIDED ODDS](#)
 - [CHAPTER XIII. A QUESTION OF MURDER](#)
 - [CHAPTER XIV. ONE DOLL MORE](#)
 - [CHAPTER XV. THE OPEN WAY](#)
 - [CHAPTER XVI. EIGHT O'CLOCK](#)
 - [CHAPTER XVII. BATTLE IN MINIATURE](#)
 - [CHAPTER XVIII. A QUESTION OF POWER](#)
 - [CHAPTER XIX. TRICKS OF DEATH](#)
 - [CHAPTER XX. BATTLE'S END](#)
-

CHAPTER I. CHINATOWN TRAIL

THE doorman at the Cobalt Club wasn't prepared for the surprise that popped from the limousine. He'd helped many people out of limousines: crotchety old club members, smiling debutantes, and even solemn-faced butlers bringing luggage to their masters. But never before had the doorman helped a Chinese out of a limousine.

In fact, he didn't actually help this one.

As the door swung open, the Chinese took a long leap across the sidewalk. Stumbling to hands and knees, he found his feet again; without bothering to brush off the baggy American suit he was wearing, he scooted straight up the steps and into the foyer of the swanky Cobalt Club as if a flock of Chinese devils were after him.

The mad dash of the wild-eyed Chinaman surprised the attendants and startled the members of the Cobalt Club who were clustered in the foyer – with one exception. Languidly turning a page of the newspaper that he was reading, Lamont Cranston eased farther down into his chair and stretched one leg out toward the center of the narrow foyer.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Tripping over Cranston's extended foot, the frantic Chinaman took a long, skiddy sprawl along the marble tiling. It was fortunate for him that he took that spill, though only Cranston saw why.

Cranston's eyes, peering idly from a maskish face, had drifted toward the door when the Chinaman made the noisy entry. Beyond the halted limousine, Cranston saw another yellow-faced figure rising through the open top of a passing taxicab.

It was the face of a vicious-looking Mongol, whose clawish hand, swinging from his shoulder, provided a brighter flash than did his gleaming, grinning teeth. There was a whir as a long-bladed knife scintillated in through the doorway. Meant for the fleeing Chinaman, it would have found its target if Cranston hadn't tripped the fugitive.

So sudden was it all, that the sluggish attendants and the stupefied club members failed to see where the knife came from. Not even the doorman, shouting after the Chinaman who had so precipitously intruded upon the privacy of the Cobalt Club, could realize that the speeding blade had been hurled from a passing taxicab.

Skimming past the Chinaman's shoulders, the knife struck the floor and clattered on ahead, as though the stumbling man himself had lost the weapon.

Cranston's preliminary part passed unnoticed. So did his next action. While attendants, coming to life, were bounding after the Chinaman, who now was regarded as an armed invader, Cranston was rising from his chair, his right hand going beneath his evening jacket to a well-fitted holster.

He was reaching for an automatic, intending to spring to the doorway and blaze shots after the departing Mongol. But the flood of excited attendants blocked his way.

Relapsing into a leisurely pose, Cranston dropped his plan of overtaking the unsuccessful assassin. He stepped over to the spot where attendants were picking up the breathless Chinaman. The fellow showed fight, until Cranston, with an effort so easy that its deftness passed unnoticed, took a neat grip on the Celestial's wrist and twisted it behind the fellow.

It wasn't necessary for Cranston to wheel the Chinaman full about in order to hold him prisoner; but he did so, for another reason. Poking from the Chinaman's pocket was the end of an envelope. With his other hand, Cranston plucked the envelope and transferred it to his own inside pocket while the Chinaman was twisted around.

His fighting spirit gone, the Chinaman subsided into the clutch of the attendants, where Cranston thrust him. Attendants nodded when the hawk-faced club member told them to take charge of the prisoner.

"I am expecting Commissioner Weston shortly," remarked Cranston. "I suggest that you hold this fellow until he arrives. Don't treat him roughly; the commissioner wouldn't approve."

Inasmuch as Cranston was taking charge of the knife, which all thought belonged to the Chinaman, his order was heeded to the letter. A member of long-standing at the Cobalt Club, as well as a close friend of the police commissioner, Cranston's suggestions were usually respected upon occasions of emergency. But the attendants found that their wait was not to be a long one.

A BURLY man came striding in from the street. His square face, crowned with a derby hat, gave him the appearance of a headquarters man, and he flashed a badge for the benefit of Cranston and the club attendants.

"I'm Detective Grendy," he gruffed. "Chinatown squad. I was on this fellow's trail. I'll take charge of him."

THE DEVIL MASTER

The captive Chinese gave a quick, close-slitted look at Grendy, and tightened. Those slitted eyes turned to the attendants, as they told the burly man that Commissioner Weston was soon to arrive.

Grendy decided to call the commissioner's office and find out if Weston had actually started. As he passed a cluster of club members, he gave his badge another officious flash. The darty-eyed Chinaman watched Grendy enter a phone booth.

Detaching himself from the group of talkative club members, Lamont Cranston strolled over past the phone booths. From his angle, he could see the Chinaman making quick glances in another direction. The prisoner was looking for possible exits that might serve him if he tried a break. Ignoring the Chinaman, Cranston stepped closer to the phone booths and sidled up to the one Grendy was in.

The door of the booth was a trifle open, but Cranston overheard nothing, for Grendy wasn't using the telephone. Instead, the burly man had his back turned and was peering through the crack of the folding door at the hinged side. He, too, was very much concerned with the Chinaman's intentions, watching for the quick break that the captured intruder seemed about to make.

Easing his hand through the open side of the door, Cranston coolly lifted the hand telephone from its shelf and raised it higher. Timing his move to a shift by Grendy, Cranston let the instrument sledge downward under its own weight.

The blow landed squarely on the left side of Grendy's head, beneath the uptilted brim of the canted derby.

Without a groan, Grendy sagged deep in the booth.

Replacing the telephone, Cranston swung into sight just as commotion again broke loose in the foyer. Once more, the Chinaman was providing the excitement. Breaking loose from the attendants, the slippery Celestial was making for a rear door. He reached it ahead of his pursuers and slammed it in their faces. The muffled clash of breaking glass told that he had dived through a window, to reach an alley outside.

Confusion was still rife when Commissioner Weston, a brisk man of military bearing, strode in from the street door. The commissioner was accompanied by a stocky man with swarthy features: Inspector Joe Cardona.

Together, they heard the story of the mysterious Chinaman who had gone as suddenly as he had come. What riled Weston most was the fact that a headquarters detective had let the prisoner escape.

"Check with the Chinatown squad," snapped Weston to Cardona. "Tell them to put Detective Grendy back on a beat!"

"Why not handle that detail personally, commissioner?" queried Cranston, who was standing by. "He is still in the telephone booth, calling your office."

Angrily, the commissioner strode to the booth and yanked the door open. Grendy came rolling out, and his flop to the floor awakened him sufficiently for him to sit up and rub his head.

Cardona took a look at the burly man's face; then, with a quick move, the swarthy inspector scooped up a revolver that was lying at the rear of the booth. He used the gun to cover Grendy as he hauled the fellow to his feet.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"Take a look at this mug, commissioner," Cardona suggested. "He's a phony, even though his name is Greindy! Remember him? He's Bull Greindy, the guy that was sent up for pulling shakedowns by claiming he was a detective."

Greindy's coat lapel was twisted, showing the badge that the fake dick had previously flashed. Fingering the badge, Cranston shook his head regretfully.

"I should have noticed this, commissioner," he said. "It's one of those badges they sell in pawnshops."

NODDING, Weston didn't notice the slight smile that traced itself on Cranston's lips, a proof that the leisurely clubman had spotted Greindy as a fake the moment the crook had entered the Cobalt Club.

There was more, however, that Cranston knew: namely, that Greindy was a killer, like the Mongol in the taxicab. But Cranston left that little detail to the quick mind of Inspector Cardona. Joe caught the idea from Greindy's gun.

"So you were going to plug the chink!" Cardona told Greindy. "The old stuff, of letting a guy try to get away, then dosing him with bullets. Then you'd have beat it, claiming you were going to call the wagon."

"O.K., copper," grumbled Greindy. "I'll come clean. Some bird called me up at my hangout, and offered me half a grand if I'd knock off a Chinee who was due here at the Cobalt Club. Don't ask me who called, because I don't know. Only remember – I didn't croak the chink."

"Why didn't you?"

"Somebody put the slug on me when I was taking a bead out from the booth. But don't ask me who. I don't know that, either."

Cardona slapped a pair of handcuffs on Bull Greindy and steered the sullen man out of the Cobalt Club, leaving Commissioner Weston to quiz the witnesses regarding the mysterious Chinaman. The commissioner began to hear a variety of stories, all of them inaccurate. The one man he wanted to talk to, was gone – his friend Lamont Cranston.

Claiming that he had another appointment, Cranston had left word at the desk that he couldn't dine with the commissioner that evening.

Outside the club, Cranston was stepping into the very limousine that had brought the Chinaman earlier! That, in itself, was singular, but more was to follow. As the chauffeur piloted the big car away, at Cranston's order, the hawk-faced passenger reached into his pocket and drew out the envelope he had plucked from the frightened Chinaman.

The envelope was addressed to Lamont Cranston!

Opening it, Cranston scanned the note that it contained. A whispered laugh came from his lips, a tone quite different from Cranston's own. It was the mirth of The Shadow, master fighter who tracked down men of crime.

Pocketing the note, Cranston slid a drawer from beneath the rear seat of the limousine. Out of it he took a slouch hat, a cloak, and a pair of thin gloves, all garments of black.

Cranston's figure blotted itself within the car as he donned the garb of black. Seemingly, the limousine was empty, but it still had a passenger in the person of The Shadow. But The Shadow's tone was Cranston's, as he reached for the speaking tube and spoke two words to the chauffeur:

"Chinatown, Stanley!"

CHAPTER II. THE SHADOW SEEKS TROUBLE

DR. ROY TAM lived in Chinatown, and, at present, he regretted it.

The fact was strange, considering that Tam had been born and bred in that quarter, and had won much esteem among Americanized Chinese. But Dr. Tam, of late, had met with a most difficult problem.

He could see the problem from the windows of his upstairs office and the apartment which adjoined it. Keeping the lights dim, Tam glanced out at intervals. Always, he spied lurking figures along the streets and in alleyways below. Tam knew what those figures signified.

Seated at his office desk, Tam perched his chin in his hand. The lamplight showed his solemn, rounded face, with eyes that were troubled as they stared through glasses toward the telephone. Tam shook his head; the telephone was useless. Even worse, it was dangerous.

One of the office windows opened on a low, dark roof. While Tam was blinking solemnly through his glasses, the window began to open upward as of its own accord. The thing that attracted Tam's attention was the faint breeze that drifted his way. He blinked toward the window, and watched its motion in a fascinated manner.

Seemingly, a man in deep difficulty should have been worried further at sight of that phenomenon. Not so with Dr. Tam. His rounded face expressed joy, which increased as the blackness from without the window began to penetrate inward.

Uncannily, it became a solid form; that gradually developed into a cloaked figure, entering with absolute silence. The visitor paused to lower the window; then turned and approached the desk.

"Ying Ko!" exclaimed Tam in lowered tone. "You received the message that I sent you. I had to use Lee Lum, a man that you had never met. Is he safe?"

The Shadow took a chair opposite Tam. He removed his slouch hat and placed it on the desk; then dropped his cloak collar, to reveal Cranston's features. Dr. Tam smiled anew, for he knew that Ying Ko, as the Chinese termed The Shadow, often used the guise of Lamont Cranston.

"Lee Lum is safe," informed The Shadow. "Fortunately, he escaped two assassins who dogged him to the Cobalt Club. He delivered the message, and went his way."

"Two assassins," mused Tam, seriously. "I am not surprised. Professor Su Yeng would use a multitude, if necessary. Look from my windows, Ying Ko, and view the constant parade of Su Yeng's men."

"I saw a portion of it when I entered," returned The Shadow. "Tell me more about Su Yeng. I take it that this professor, as you term him, has recently arrived from China."

Dr. Tam gave a sober nod.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"Professor Su Yeng is very wise," said Tam. "So wise that he plays with dolls."

To an ordinary hearer, Tam's words would have indicated that worry had caused his mind to crack. But to The Shadow, familiar with Chinese terms, the statement was more than plain. Su Yeng had recently arrived from China, and the "dolls" of that country were the puppet rulers, installed in occupied provinces by the conquering Japanese.

From that preface, Dr. Tam went on.

Professor Su Yeng, he explained, was a man with a vast idea, that he was broaching to the Chinese in America. It was Su Yeng's plan to stir up insurrections in Manchukuo and other puppet states. Once under way, such revolts would drive the Japanese from occupied soil and restore the land to China.

"A remarkable scheme," expressed The Shadow, "provided it would work."

"It will work," returned Tam. "Too well!"

Eying his visitor, Tam observed something quite rare, a quizzical expression on the features of Cranston.

"Through such a stroke, delivered at the most opportune time," declared Tam, "Professor Su Yeng can make himself master of all China. He is of the old regime. He wishes to restore the empire, with himself as its imperial head."

THERE was no need for Tam to say more. The Shadow could completely grasp the magnitude of Su Yeng's scheme. Closely familiar with conditions in the Orient, The Shadow recognized, despite reports to the contrary, that long years of war between Japan and China were resulting in an absolute deadlock that meant the exhaustion of both sides.

Meanwhile, the puppet states were fattening, remote from the scene of war. Japan was depending upon the proxy rulers to keep the people inactive. China was hoping that the populace would overthrow those heads of the local governments.

The thing was in the balance, and outwardly seemed destined to remain so. Roy Tam, in his mention of a wise conniver called Professor Su Yeng, had touched a vital point.

"It could happen, Tam," The Shadow agreed. "Yes, if a new hand pulled the string, those puppets would begin a different dance. They could not desert Japan and serve the present Chinese government. But they might advocate the old rule."

"Exactly," returned Tam. "Because the restoration of imperial ideas was the pretext that Japan used to install the puppet rulers. All they need is an overlord in the person of Professor Su Yeng. He will raise the flag of the old Chinese Empire."

"You remember that flag, Ying Ko – the banner of the dragon swallowing the rising sun. The prophetic standard that signified the final conquest of Japan by China. If Su Yeng becomes the leader of the northern provinces, his fame will sweep through China. The present government will weaken. Su Yeng's call for conquest will make him China's strong man."

Well could The Shadow understand how popular Emperor Su Yeng would become. Even his hope of conquering Japan would not be entirely fantastic. But the restoration of the Empire would turn China into a world-wide menace, defeating every principle for which the modern Chinese stood. It was something to be

THE DEVIL MASTER

dreaded, not commended.

"Su Yeng has already gathered forces in Northern China," declared Dr. Tam. "Mongol hordes are at his command. He brought some of his followers to America with him. From his headquarters, which, so far, I have been unable to locate, he intends to enlist adventurers and take them back to China with him."

The Shadow had seen a Mongol killer in the cab that passed the Cobalt Club. The later arrival of Bull Greedy fitted with Tam's claim that Su Yeng intended to add Americans to his murderous fold. But The Shadow, at present, was more interested in the plight of Dr. Roy Tam, who had evidently incurred the displeasure of Professor Su Yeng. Knowing this, Tam gave the details.

"Su Yeng seeks money, first," Tam explained. "Soon will come the great New Year parade through Chinatown, when the lions will dance and the great banner will be carried through the streets. Thousands upon thousands of dollars will be tossed upon that banner, all meant to go for war supplies to help China.

"It is Su Yeng's intent to devote those funds to his cause of revolt. He has told no one of his greater scheme to become emperor. Too many of my friends" – Tam shook his head, sadly – "have listened to the wily half-promises of Su Yeng. I fear that the committee will turn over all the funds to Su Yeng."

There was something in Tam's tone that told more. The Shadow caught it, and took up the theme.

"Those of your friends who did not listen –" put The Shadow. "Tell me, Tam, what has become of them?"

"I do not know, Ying Ko. They have disappeared, I know not where. Su Yeng is too wise to touch me. Instead, he has decreed oblivion for those who come to see me, or even speak to me. Those men outside are waiting to spirit away anyone who visits these premises.

"As for the telephone" – Tam gave a despairing gesture – "its wires have been tapped. Learning of my friends through my conversations, Su Yeng has not only seized them, but has spread the rumor that I am responsible for their disappearance. The rumor adds that they had begun to disagree with me, which is why they vanished."

The Shadow arose as Tam finished. Drawing off his black gloves, he tossed them on the desk. He slid his cloak from his shoulders, bundled it and added it to the gloves and hat. Tam blinked in amazed style as he saw his visitor, now in the guise of Cranston, step toward the door of the office.

"What do you intend, Ying Ko?" exclaimed Tam. "Surely you will be seen if you venture forth without the attire that makes you as invisible as night itself?"

"Quite right, Tam." The Shadow's tone had become Cranston's casual drawl. "I wish to be seen."

"By those who represent Su Yeng? They will seize you and carry you to their master. Perhaps" – Tam brightened – "you wish to go there as a prisoner, Ying Ko!"

As he finished, Tam lost his eagerness and shook his head warningly. He feared that such a process would be too dangerous, even for The Shadow.

"Have no fear, Tam," spoke The Shadow coolly. "It is I who shall do the seizing. One of Su Yeng's men will be enough. I shall bring the prisoner here, later, and we can quiz him. Between us, I am sure that we can make him speak."

THE DEVIL MASTER

STEPPING through the door, The Shadow closed it after him. Tam's smile returned as he noticed the quick fade of Cranston's footfalls on the stairs. Though garbed as Cranston, The Shadow was employing some of his usual stealth. It was well. In fact, Tam would have been more pleased had he seen his visitor leaving the door below.

Coat collar folded to cover the white of his evening shirt, The Shadow was practically garbed in black as he glided out through a narrow passage. He didn't want to run into a crew of Su Yeng's men. His game was to acquire a single trailer.

Working toward the rear street, The Shadow paused while two patrollers passed. With a quick stride, he crossed the street and slid into an alleyway on the other side. There, he let his coat collar drop. His footfalls became evident.

Halfway through the alley, The Shadow knew that the bait had worked. He could hear creeping sounds behind him. Near the outlet at the next street, a deft glance rearward gave him sight of a huddly follower. Calmly pausing to light a cigarette and let his Cranston visage show, The Shadow flicked the match away and turned, as if to stroll along.

He glimpsed the huddly man springing from the alley's mouth. Despite the darkness, The Shadow caught the impression of a yellowish Oriental face. The attacker's hands were buried close to his body, but The Shadow did not expect him to draw a gun. A knife would be more probable, considering that the Mongol at the Cobalt Club had thrown one.

No sort of weapon could matter to The Shadow in a case like this. Spinning with his glimpse, he no longer had the sauntering poise of Cranston. He was a human arrow, unleashed straight for the crouching man at the alley's entrance.

His opponent hadn't a chance to dodge away; The Shadow's hands were plucking the fellow's wrists, sweeping them together for a single clamp, so that The Shadow's other hand would be free to clutch his adversary's throat. This swift style of overpowering an enemy was The Shadow's specialty.

It was in the moment when he actually gained the double grip that The Shadow caught a better look at his opponent's face, as it bobbed back into the glow of a nearby street lamp. Instantly, The Shadow tried to change his style of attack; but it was too late.

Yielding like a dummy figure, the man from the alley went tumbling backward, but his hand, too, had clamped one of The Shadow's wrists. Carrying the tall fighter with him, the tumbler drove a foot straight upward from the midst of a back somersault.

Planted squarely in The Shadow's stomach, that foot propelled him on a long lurch, so swift and hard that his hands, though shooting ahead of him, could not break the fall. Cranston's flying figure struck the sidewalk, described a somersault of its own, and brought up with a hard impact against a wall.

The tricky tumbler came bounding to his feet. Grinning, he beckoned as he hopped over to inspect the limp and senseless form of Cranston. A car wheeled up from the corner; other crouched men slid from it to give their comrade a hand. Three in all, they bundled the unconscious Mr. Cranston into their car and drove away.

In seeking a trail to Professor Su Yeng, Chinatown's new man of mystery, The Shadow had deliberately looked for trouble.

The Shadow had found it!

CHAPTER III. THE OTHER CAMP

THE big easy-chair was very comfortable, its cushions deep. The lights were soothing, much like those in the lounge of the Cobalt Club, where The Shadow thought he was, as his senses gradually returned. He was reaching for an imaginary cigarette on an ash tray that wasn't there; while his other hand, fingering the lapel of his evening jacket, added to the illusion that he still was Cranston and in his favorite habitat, the Cobalt Club.

Something jarred those recollections.

It was the mental picture of chaos in the Cobalt Club – excitement raised by a racing Chinaman who had escaped a Mongol's knife and a fake detective's bullet. As The Shadow recalled it, those events had caused him to discard the role of Cranston and become a rover in black.

He had gone to see Dr. Roy Tam.

That point cleared the rest. It brought back the name of Professor Su Yeng, future emperor of China, lord-to-be of the entire Orient. Su Yeng, at present a hidden dweller in New York's chintown, whose secret abode The Shadow had sought to uncover by resuming the appearance of Cranston and going out to capture one of the secretive professor's men.

The Shadow had found a lurker whose face, glimpsed in the gloom, appeared to be Chinese. But that assumption had been a bad mistake. The Shadow could recall the error, very clearly. Before his slowly opening eyes rose the closer, clearer image of the antagonist near the lamplight.

The face of a Japanese!

Too late had The Shadow recognized the fellow's true nationality. By then, the Jap had been in action, but not with a weapon as The Shadow had expected. The Jap had used jujitsu tactics, applied in skillful style, which The Shadow couldn't offset at such short notice. The incongruous thing was that Su Yeng, whose ambitions, though shady, were purely Chinese, should have been employing Japanese to aid him.

Wide open, The Shadow's eyes were viewing the very face that his recollection pictured. Grinning from the doorway of the room was the Japanese jujitsu expert. He was studying the slumped form of Cranston rather contemptuously, as though considering any future set-to with the clubman as something too trifling to be worthy of his expert effort.

Letting his eyes rove in Cranston's idle way, The Shadow surveyed the remainder of the room. It was the living room of an apartment, filled with elegant furniture that appeared to be of light construction.

The master of the place was seated behind a flimsy writing desk. Like the guard at the door, the man behind the desk was a Japanese, but his features showed no grin.

Thin features, withery of complexion, looked very solemn above a wing-tipped collar. The Japanese at the desk had a dignity that marked him as a man of importance. He was watching The Shadow's gradual awakening. When it was complete, the seated Japanese spoke.

"Good evening, Mr. Cranston." The tone came in a short-clipped fashion that seemed to leave each sentence unfinished. "I am Prince Fuji Yeddo. Very sorry about my servant, Ishi." A slow motion of Yeddo's hand ended with a finger pointing toward the guard at the door. "He was told to bring anyone who came from Dr. Tam's. You were the person who came."

THE DEVIL MASTER

Like each sentence, Prince Yeddo's entire statement had an unfinished touch. The Shadow waited, as if expecting to hear more. Prince Yeddo obliged.

"I presume that you expected to meet Professor Su Yeng," declared the Japanese. "Of course, Dr. Tam would have told you of Su Yeng. A very ambitious man, Su Yeng. He hopes to be Emperor of China. I am ambitious, also, Mr. Cranston. Some day, I shall be Shogun of Japan!"

IT was evident that Prince Fuji Yeddo was drawing a very fine distinction between his own ambition and that of Professor Su Yeng. His eyes fixed on the impassive face of Cranston, the Japanese was seeking to catch his guest's reaction; but The Shadow gave no clue to it.

Other things were concerning The Shadow at that moment. Foremost was the matter of his automatics. They were gone from the holsters beneath his evening jacket, as he could tell by imperceptible nudges with his elbows.

"A wrong ambition, to be Emperor of China," explained Prince Yeddo. "One that might cause difficulty for your country, Mr. Cranston. I am not like Su Yeng. My ambition is legitimate. As shogun, I would be much like prime minister. I could control the policy of Japan.

"Perhaps I would be very friendly. Especially, Mr. Cranston, if some American should help me with the problem of Su Yeng. I have come here because he is a menace to your country and mine. Let our relations be friendly, Mr. Cranston. Tell me, first, why Dr. Tam sent a messenger to you this evening."

The words were simply put, but, with them, Prince Yeddo gave himself away. The Shadow caught the answer to the matter of two killers at the Cobalt Club. Only one had come from Su Yeng: namely, the Mongol in the passing cab. The other, Bull Greedy, had been bribed for murder by Fuji Yeddo!

No need for Su Yeng to use American crooks. Chinatown was full of duped Chinese who would do anything that the future emperor requested. But Fuji Yeddo wouldn't care to send his Japanese servants far afield.

Yes, it was he who had used Bull Greedy, and the fact tarred the smug Japanese with the same brush as Su Yeng. Unquestionably, Prince Fuji Yeddo was in America for some purpose deeper than the one he stated.

His ambition to become Shogun, or real ruler, of Japan hinged on more than the trapping of Su Yeng. To indicate knowledge of that fact could prove disastrous. Even now, in those gimlet eyes of Fuji Yeddo, The Shadow could discern a marked suspicion.

It wasn't odd, from Yeddo's viewpoint, that Cranston should be a friend of Dr. Tam; but it was peculiar that a New York clubman should pack a brace of automatics when he traveled around town.

Probably Prince Yeddo had heard of The Shadow. If he identified Cranston as the human scourge of crime, he might fear for the success of his secret mission to America. In that case, his guest would become a full-fledged prisoner, condemned to prompt death.

For such a link would prove to Yeddo that his presence in New York had escaped The Shadow's notice until tonight, and by that token, Yeddo would know that such knowledge could not have reached the law.

Tired of fishing for an imaginary cigarette, The Shadow brought a real one from his cigarette case, which was still in his pocket. This situation rather intrigued him, and he intended to make the most of it by playing the Cranston part to perfection. He was every inch the leisurely clubman as he gave an approving nod that seemed to accept all of Yeddo's statements.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"Tam and I are old friends," The Shadow stated. "He did mention Su Yeng, in much the same terms that you have. He wanted me to pass the facts along to my friend, the police commissioner.

"You see" – Cranston's smile was indulgent – "Commissioner Weston is chary about accepting rumors from Chinatown. Tam believed that if I assured him –"

Politely, The Shadow broke off his speech. The telephone bell was ringing an interruption. The telephone was on Yeddo's desk. With a bow that acknowledged Cranston's courtesy, the smug prince reached for the instrument. When he spoke, it was in Japanese.

Fortunately, The Shadow understood that language. If he hadn't, his remaining life span would have proven brief.

It was immediately evident from Yeddo's haughty tone that the prince was speaking to another underling like Ishi. His words, likewise, indicated that the man in question had also been on watch outside of Tam's.

"We have captured the man who came out by the back," Yeddo was saying in his native tongue. "He was not seen to go in that way. Therefore, he must have used the front, where you were on duty. You should have reported when he entered."

BEFORE Yeddo's statement was finished, The Shadow knew that the man at the other end would swear that no one had entered Tam's. If Yeddo believed him, as was more than likely, he would link the facts too well. He would know that only The Shadow could have entered, unseen, through the cordon of Su Yeng's patrollers and his own watchers.

From that, Prince Yeddo would establish the fact that he already suspected. He would know that Cranston was The Shadow, too formidable a personage to be duped into an alliance.

Prince Yeddo wasn't yet sure. Even more important at the moment was the fact that Ishi hadn't a glimmer of the truth. The Shadow's weakness of awhile before, the ease with which he had succumbed to the jujitsu tactics, was his present strength. Thinking that Cranston could be simply handled by Ishi, Prince Yeddo was relying solely on that expert guard to keep his guest a prisoner.

With a quick spring from his chair, The Shadow dived for the door. Ishi sprang to meet him, pleased by Cranston's foolhardy effort at flight.

Wheeling from the telephone, Prince Yeddo had neither time to draw a gun nor voice a warning to his servitor before the antagonists locked. This time, the combat took a swift reverse twist.

Ishi was the one who made first clutch, intending to send Cranston on an overhead circle throw. The Shadow broke that hold with an outward wrist twist. As Ishi lunged in to gain a different hold, The Shadow showed that he really knew jujitsu, by driving his knuckles into the Jap's ribs and forcing an immediate release.

Then, before Ishi could recover, The Shadow hooked him with an arm, levered a foot against the fellow's knee and sent him away with a swift hip spin.

Whirling headlong, Ishi bowled straight against Prince Yeddo who was coming from the writing desk, hoping to get in a gunshot when the grapplers untangled. He was taken off his feet by Ishi's sprawl.

Hitting on hands and knees, Yeddo bounded up with the alacrity of a rubber ball, to aim for Cranston. By then, The Shadow was through the doorway, and the door itself, was slamming behind him.

Yeddo's bullets chewed chunks from the woodwork; nothing more. Back from the hallway, trailing through the splintered opening, came a token of departure that The Shadow no longer had need to conceal.

Far different from the tone of Cranston was the mocking peal that Prince Yeddo heard. The laugh of The Shadow!

CHAPTER IV. MISTAKES WILL HAPPEN

ONCE out of Yeddo's fancy apartment, The Shadow did not find the way as clear as he had hoped. The future shogun's policy of keeping his Japanese subordinates under cover did not apply so close to his own preserves.

As The Shadow neared the head of a stairway, a door popped open and from it sprang another Jap whose crouch indicated that he knew jujitsu quite as well as did Ishi.

Fortunately, this Jap saw The Shadow in Cranston's guise and still mistook him for a set-up. Remembering Ishi's tactics back in Chinatown, The Shadow used the same method on his present blocker. He did a backward tumble, starting it rather clumsily to deceive the Jap. Getting a quick hold, he used the up-jabbing foot to send his surprised foe on a long hurdle.

It proved doubly useful, considering that The Shadow chose the head of the stairs for the throw. The Jap scaled over the top step and sailed downward in a long flight, his arms spread out like wings. In his turn, The Shadow made a short backward somersault as a follow-through, and thus gained the stairs himself just as Prince Yeddo, coming from the apartment, blazed a shot toward the spot where The Shadow had been.

Down below, The Shadow heard a crash, mingled with a howl that couldn't have come from the man who took the dive. With long bounds, The Shadow arrived at the bottom of the steps, to meet another Japanese who had broken the diving man's fall.

Good judgment, sending the first man on that lengthy spill, for it gave The Shadow opportunity to suppress the second without wasted time. He let his fists do the work before the second Jap could take a grab at him.

This was the ground floor. There was an exit straight ahead. The Shadow reached it, seeking outer darkness. He could hear more shots from the top of the stairway, indicating that other sharpshooters had joined Prince Yeddo. Being gunless, The Shadow was not yet in position to cope with them.

He expected to meet more outside. Given a patch of darkness and a Japanese in it, The Shadow intended to demonstrate his version of the jujitsu trick that enabled one to wind up with an opponent's unfired gun. Even as Cranston, he'd be shady enough in gloom to stage the stunt too quickly to become a target for other marksmen. But the moment he reached the sidewalk, The Shadow changed that plan.

A cab was swerving up toward the apartment house, and its manner of approach told who its driver was. Among the Shadow's agents was a cabby named Moe Shrevnitz, and one of Shrevvy's duties was to follow after Cranston's limousine when occasion called.

Moe had been on the job this evening. Earlier, he had spotted Tam's emissary, Lee Lum, when the trailed Chinaman had spotted Cranston's limousine and jumped into it, begging Stanley to rush him to the Cobalt Club.

Later, Moe had followed the limousine to Chinatown and cruised around there after Stanley had gone. Though off duty, he had luckily seen the Jap-manned car that carried Cranston away. Moe hadn't known that The Shadow was a prisoner, but the car's actions had been suspicious. Having trailed it to the neighborhood

THE DEVIL MASTER

of this apartment house, Moe had stayed around, hoping to learn more.

Sight of Cranston dashing out, with guns furnishing an obbligato from the apartment house, was quite enough for Moe. He had the rear door swinging wide by the time he whisked the curb. He could feel the step give as Cranston sprang inside. The cab door slammed, and Moe, hesitating for an order that he did not hear, decided to pull away.

The Shadow was too busy to deliver a command. As he slammed the door with one hand, he reached for the rear seat with the other.

From beneath the seat, he pulled a slide much like the one in the limousine.

With a single move, he flung a cloak over his shoulders and clamped a slouch hat on his head. Grabbing a brace of ready automatics, he kneeed the drawer shut as he twisted in crouched position. His elbow jarred the far door open.

By then, the cab was in motion, and the whine of bullets coming from the apartment house spurred Moe to rapid departure. The cab took a jolt forward, but with it, The Shadow went through the far door, slashing it shut as he completed his whirl to the street.

Off like a scared rabbit, the cab was whipping around the corner ahead of the aiming Japanese, when bigger guns began to talk from across the street.

AMID the alternate blasts of each .45 came the same strident mockery that Prince Yeddo and his followers had heard before. The Shadow was shooting at windows from which he saw revolvers spurt, clipping bewildered marksmen who were aiming after the cab in which they thought their foe had gone. The thing was incredible to the sharpshooting Nipponese.

One moment, Cranston; the next, The Shadow. It was so strange, that it actually made them doubt that the two could be one, which was a point of The Shadow's strategy. He wanted to keep Prince Yeddo puzzled for the future, in the event that he couldn't trap the wily prince on this present occasion.

Shots were spasmodic from the apartment house, as though the marksmen at the windows had all been nicked by The Shadow's fire and were making feeble, wary efforts to hold him off, the sort that could be attributed to wounded men.

However, in typical Japanese style, the pretense was overdone. Some of the painful shooting came from windows that The Shadow had not sprayed with bullets. Those chaps were certainly bluffing, hoping to draw The Shadow out from shelter.

The Shadow came out, but managed it unseen. He took a long, circling glide that brought him across the street, through a pathway of darkness. Under the looming apartment building, he found a cellar window and eased it open. Sliding through, The Shadow picked a route with a tiny flashlight and found a stairway up to the ground floor.

It was a trip of only a few minutes, accomplished before the wail of distant sirens indicated that police were coming to the scene of gunfire. Poking out from a doorway, The Shadow listened, but heard no sounds on the ground floor. Moving to the next stairway, he glided up to the second floor, where the same silence greeted him. The bullet-ripped door of Yeddo's apartment was wide open; beyond it, darkness.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Close to the wall, The Shadow reached the doorway. Planting his tiny flashlight on top of a revolver barrel, with the aid of tiny clamps, he thrust the weapon in through the doorway and used his thumb to produce the flashlight's gleam. Finger on trigger, The Shadow could have found any human target that came across the slicing flashlight's sweeping path.

There were no targets.

Prince Fuji Yeddo and his tribe of Japanese were gone. Even more remarkable was the fact that they had removed every piece of the lightly constructed furniture! Oriental rugs had been rolled and removed in a matter of mere minutes. Lamps had been carried off, and when The Shadow turned his flashlight toward the ceiling fixtures, he discovered that the nimble Japanese had even removed the ceiling bulbs!

Not a trace of Prince Yeddo and his underlings remained in this deserted apartment. The police would be allowed to puzzle over a bullet-shattered door; nothing more.

Maybe Prince Yeddo hoped that The Shadow would do some puzzling, too; but that was hoping for too much. Knowing that the Japanese must have taken a rear route, The Shadow looked for it, keeping his flashlight below window level.

He found a kitchen exit, leading to a rear hall that ended in a fire tower. Instead of using the steps, where enemies might still be lurking, The Shadow went back through the apartment, extinguished his flashlight, and dropped through a side window.

He struck, noiselessly, in a little passage beside the apartment house. It led toward a small paved court connected with the rear street.

A lightweight truck started from the courtyard as The Shadow neared it. A corner of the building intervened, cutting off The Shadow's chance to fire.

Prince Yeddo, his furnishings, and most of his followers were already on the truck, but The Shadow glimpsed a few figures ducking around the corner. They looked as if they were intending to board the truck, but it might be that Prince Yeddo had ordered them to lurk here and watch for The Shadow.

REACHING the building edge, The Shadow saw the truck wheel the corner to another street. In that glance, however, he also spotted one man who hadn't gone along.

Sideling off in huddled fashion, the lone man had the crouch of a skilled assassin. He was moving quickly toward a doorway that offered excellent shelter. The Shadow did not intend to let an extra Japanese get placed where he could spring out to deliver a surprise attack.

The man might be Ishi, best of the jujitsu crew. Forewarned against The Shadow, Ishi would use special tricks if occasion called. The way to nullify such danger was to defeat it before it came.

Thrusting his guns away, The Shadow made a long spring across the sidewalk, purposely providing a clatter just before he reached the skulker. He wanted the man to turn short of the doorway. The ruse succeeded.

Hands crossed, a fact unnoticed against the blackness of his cloak, The Shadow was prepared to spring a surprise hold that even Ishi wouldn't suspect. But the ruse was useless.

The thing that saved The Shadow from sudden disaster was his footwork. He caught a brief glimpse of his foeman's saffron face as the man spun about. Purposely, The Shadow tripped, going backward on his elbows.

THE DEVIL MASTER

A knife slashed through the darkness. Slicing The Shadow's hat brim, it slicked downward through a fold of The Shadow's cloak. Striking the sidewalk, the blade clattered just as The Shadow's feet shot forward.

The Shadow's side-roll, away from the skimming knife, helped him avoid the weapon. It was also useful when his ankles hooked his foeman's legs.

Before the snarling enemy could grip The Shadow, or recover the lost knife, he was levered by the crossover clamp of quick-moving feet. The Shadow's enlarged demonstration of a scissors clip hurled the man into a sidewise somersault, landing him in the doorway that he originally sought. Striking head on, The Shadow's opponent received a jarring blow that stunned him.

Rising, The Shadow approached his prisoner and turned the flashlight on the man's face: A low, whispered laugh came from the darkness. Mistakes could happen, even with The Shadow. Rarely, if ever, did he make the same mistake twice. In a way, this couldn't be called the same mistake; it was actually a mistake in reverse.

Earlier, The Shadow had grappled for a Chinaman and found a Japanese. This time, he had made the opposite error. The stunned captive in the doorway wasn't Ishi. He wasn't even a Japanese.

Out of a truckload of Japs, The shadow had grabbed a Chinaman!

CHAPTER V. WHERE MENACE THREATENED

STRANGE were the ways of Chinatown.

Dr. Roy Tam pondered on that fact as he sat behind his desk staring at a sullen prisoner who sat in a chair across the office, his hands bound behind him.

Tam's present guest had been a captive for nearly twenty-four hours. He was a gift from Ying Ko. He was the Chinese that The Shadow had captured while pursuing a flock of Japs far outside the borders of Chinatown.

So far, Dr. Tam hadn't been able to make the prisoner talk, beyond the point where the man gave his name as Holgo and admitted that he was in the service of Professor Su Yeng, the hidden octopus whose tentacles were tightening their grip on Chinatown.

Obviously, Holgo had been set to spy on Prince Fuji Yeddo, the menace from Japan. But the prisoner wasn't in a mood to give Tam any details along that line.

Tam gave an expectant glance toward the window. He had seen it rise twice, the night before. The first time, was when The Shadow made his original visit, to depart without cloak and hat. On the second occasion; Tam had been quite worried. Having The Shadow's hat and cloak on his own desk, Tam couldn't believe that the rising window meant another visit from Ying Ko.

Not until The Shadow, clad in duplicate attire of black, had removed his hat and dropped his cloak collar, to reveal the features of Lamont Cranston, did Tam believe.

One Shadow, with two outfits that made him so! The recollection pleased Tam. How well the duplicate attire had served! Taking the discarded cloak and hat with him, The Shadow had used them to conceal the stumbly companion that he brought back with him: the prisoner, Holgo!

THE DEVIL MASTER

The thought caused Tam to make a new scrutiny of Holgo. He was sure that the prisoner didn't remember much of what had happened the night before.

While Tam still watched Holgo, a faint breeze stirred the room. Without glancing at the window again, Tam knew that The Shadow had arrived. Indeed, Holgo's face, as Tam viewed it, was a proof of Ying Ko's coming.

The prisoner's jaundiced features were becoming a livid yellow. His slitted eyes were wide with fright. A mouth that was wont to deliver a fangish snarl was now opening with a horrified gasp.

Out of that gasp, Holgo mouthed the dread name:

"Ying Ko!"

Looming blackness, in from the window, was approaching the terrified prisoner. Tam, out from behind the desk, was stepping to The Shadow's side. He was stating the prisoner's name, announcing that Holgo had admitted that he belonged to Professor Su Yeng. When Dr. Tam added that Holgo would say nothing regarding Prince Fuji Yeddo, The Shadow laughed.

There was a world of significance in that tone. It told the cowering prisoner that The Shadow already knew much about Fuji Yeddo. Realizing that it was The Shadow who had snatched him from among the Japanese, Holgo began to weaken.

Transformed from a vicious-looking rascal to a plaintive, whining prisoner, Holgo seemed more than anxious to admit everything he knew. He wanted to tell Ying Ko the facts that he had refused to give to Dr. Tam.

The Shadow was not deceived. He knew the ways and wiles of men like Holgo.

Their game was to admit certain facts, in order to keep mum on others. They had to be handled step-by-step, with a new type of threat each time. Often, craft would succeed where threat did not. At this moment, threat was preferable.

Dr. Tam had made one step with Holgo, a very simple one, that of learning the prisoner's connection with Professor Su Yeng; a thing which Holgo had admitted because it was quite obvious. The Shadow was taking the second step, seeking facts concerning the vanished Japanese, Prince Fuji Yeddo.

Later, there would be a third step, that of finding out what Holgo knew about his own master, Professor Su Yeng.

CONFRONTED by The Shadow, Holgo became garrulous on the Yeddo question. He was telling how Prince Yeddo bobbed in and out of places, setting up housekeeping in one empty apartment, only to abandon it for another. But he never returned to an old location, according to Holgo.

Where Yeddo's new abode was, Holgo could not even guess. It was Holgo's job to track Yeddo to the next stopping place and then inform his master, Su Yeng. Unfortunately, The Shadow had prevented Holgo from getting the very data that was required.

All during Holgo's whiny outburst, The Shadow received the increasing impression that the fellow was holding back some vital fact. Something that Holgo knew about Prince Yeddo, but preferred to reserve for the ear of Su Yeng. Craft, rather than threat, was the way to coax it out of him. If Holgo could be induced to

THE DEVIL MASTER

believe that he would gain something through informing on Prince Yeddo, he would do so.

Affecting satisfaction with Holgo's story, The Shadow turned to Dr. Tam and started to speak in Chinese. Halting, as if anxious that Holgo shouldn't understand the conversation, The Shadow switched to another language. Since Holgo had already shown some knowledge of English, The Shadow did not use it. The language that he chose was Japanese.

"If the prisoner could tell us some new fact regarding Yeddo," declared The Shadow to Tam, "it would help immensely. First, I could put an end to Yeddo's schemes. Then, having assured myself that our prisoner tells the truth, I would believe anything that he might tell me later, when I question him about his own master, Su Yeng."

It happened that Tam knew very little Japanese, and scarcely gathered what The Shadow said. Nevertheless, Tam was bland enough to nod agreement.

Actually, The Shadow was speaking for the benefit of Holgo. Knowing that the fellow had moved in and out among Yeddo's men, as only a competent spy could have done, he took it for granted that Holgo understood Japanese.

The Shadow was right.

With a side glance, The Shadow saw the first trickle of a grin appear upon Holgo's ill-shaped lips. Though quickly suppressed, the grin was proof that the prisoner had formed the very idea that The Shadow wanted.

While Tam still nodded, The Shadow turned to Holgo. Speaking, in Chinese, he resumed his quiz. He argued that Prince Yeddo was no friend to Professor Su Yeng. It would not mean betrayal of a master if Holgo could help The Shadow's campaign against Prince Yeddo.

Contrarily, it would be something that Su Yeng would indorse. Since Holgo did not know where Prince Yeddo had gone, his one way to help would be to tell anything he could remember about persons in any way connected with the missing Japanese.

Holgo pondered; then spoke jerkily in English, evidently to give the impression that he was a very poor linguist.

"Prince Yeddo, he talkee of man named Frame," said Holgo. "This man Frame" – tripping over the name, he repeated it correctly, with effort – "Frame, he velly important. Yeddo see him tonight, sure. He say so."

The Shadow recognized the name. He quizzed:

"You mean Langford Frame –"

As with all The Shadow's questions, this one sounded like a statement. Holgo nodded that it was correct.

"Langford Frame is an important manufacturer," The Shadow told Tam. "He is a controlling figure in certain key industries. This fits with the very obvious theory that Prince Yeddo is in America for other purposes than a duel with Professor Su Yeng."

"You know where to reach Frame?" Tam asked.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"Yes," The Shadow replied. "He lives in the Avondale Apartments, near Park Avenue, and what is more, he knows me personally. Not as The Shadow –"

Dr. Tam smiled. It wasn't necessary for The Shadow to add "– but as Lamont Cranston." Such statement of dual identity would be unwise in the presence of the prisoner, Holgo.

It was unfortunate that Prince Yeddo should have learned the link between Cranston and The Shadow. The fact had thus far been kept from Professor Su Yeng, and should Holgo later be released, it would be better to have him ignorant of something that his master might find valuable.

LEAVING Tam's office by the window, The Shadow made another departure through the loose cordon of skulky patrollers who roved the streets of Chinatown at the bidding of Su Yeng.

So far, there had been no attempt to invade Tam's premises, and The Shadow doubted that there would be. Holgo's disappearance, reported to Professor Su Yeng, would simply indicate that the spy had fallen into the power of Prince Fuji Yeddo, rather than The Shadow.

Garbed in his black regalia, The Shadow was an invisible shape along the gloomy streets and darkened alleys of Chinatown, with plenty of doorways conveniently at hand to aid his unseen progress. Outside Chinatown, he entered Moe's cab and rode to the Avondale Apartments.

It was Lamont Cranston who stepped from the cab. The only jarring note in his evening attire was the briefcase that he carried. However, it gave the impression that Cranston was coming to Frame's on business; which, indeed, he was.

Taking an elevator, The Shadow rode to the twenty-fourth floor, which happened to be the penthouse where Langford Frame lived.

Ushered into the penthouse, Cranston was recognized by the servant who admitted him. Leading the way to Frame's study, which was in a remote corner of the premises, the servant remarked:

"Mr. Frame is expecting you, Mr. Cranston. He told us there would be a visitor, coming in regard to a business matter, but he neglected to mention your name."

By "us" the servant referred to other servants, noticed by The Shadow as he passed them. Frame had three servants, all honest-looking men, and The Shadow recalled them from previous visits here.

The briefcase was proving itself useful, since it was the reason why the servants mistook Cranston for the visitor mentioned by Frame. Meanwhile, The Shadow was speculating as to the identity of the visitor that Frame actually expected. One guess was enough: Prince Fuji Yeddo.

Cranston's lips had an inward smile. What a surprise it would be for Yeddo when he arrived, to find The Shadow here ahead of him, calmly waiting in the guise of Cranston. Prospects of that coming meeting were paramount in The Shadow's mind, when he and the servant reached Frame's study. With a bow, the servant gestured toward the door.

"Since Mr. Frame expects you," said the servant, "you may step right in, Mr. Cranston. It won't be necessary to announce you. Just a knock" – he tapped the door – "and you may enter."

The Shadow opened the door as the servant stepped away. Crossing the threshold, he saw Frame behind a desk, turned toward a filing cabinet. Closing the door, The Shadow strolled forward, prepared to witness

Frame's surprise at viewing Cranston. But the surprise was to be the other way about.

Revolving suddenly, the swivel chair brought its occupant full about. Straightening, the man in the chair raised his smiling face, as he declared dryly:

"Good evening, Mr. Cranston."

The Shadow, himself, could not have devised a climax more astounding than this one. The man behind the desk was not Langford Frame, the person who was threatened by a menace. Instead, The Shadow had found the menace himself.

The man at the desk was Prince Fuji Yeddo!

CHAPTER VI. COURTESIES EXCHANGED

ON this, his second meeting with Prince Yeddo, The Shadow was actually surprised, though he did not show it. The impassivity of Cranston was something that stood The Shadow in good stead, for it was his way, as Cranston, to register facial expressions in exact reverse of his inward impressions.

Nevertheless, the thing was baffling. Prince Yeddo couldn't be Langford Frame in disguise – if anyone could conceive so ridiculous a thing as Frame trying to impersonate a Japanese.

Frame happened to be a big, bulky man, with a broad, bluff face that would be difficult to change. Whereas, the physiognomy of Prince Yeddo could be likened to a brownish coconut, decorated with narrow eyes, a sharp-etched nose, and lips that looked like a painted line.

A simpler solution was that Yeddo could have bribed Frame's servants to help him spring this surprise. But that was out of the question. Coming through the penthouse, The Shadow had observed the servants closely, in order to form some estimate of their ability in case a pitched fight should occur when Yeddo arrived.

He'd seen enough of the servants, The Shadow had, to credit them with honesty. If they had lacked that quality, they wouldn't have been able to bluff The Shadow under the scrutiny he had given them.

Yeddo's arrival in Frame's study was taking on the proportions of a mystery, since it was quite evident that Yeddo, in his turn, wasn't qualified to impersonate Frame.

The eyes from the coconut face were watching The Shadow sharply. Though unable to trace any show of astonishment on Cranston's countenance, Yeddo knew that it must, to some degree, exist. In his smug style, Yeddo announced:

"I was expecting you, Mr. Cranston. When Holgo disappeared, I knew that he must have met you, or shall we say" – the beady eyes seemed to speak words, themselves, as Yeddo paused – "shall we say that Holgo met The Shadow."

Choppy words, breaking off as they did, gave no indication of a question, even when Yeddo asked one. At that art, Yeddo's ability was very close to The Shadow's own. But The Shadow's eyes, in their turn, were capable of delivering unspoken words. Having no further reason to maintain the listless pose of Cranston, The Shadow was knifing responses with his gaze.

He was warning Yeddo that trickery would be useless. If it came to a sudden duel, The Shadow would show the future shogun some action even more rapid than that of the evening previous. If there were others here

THE DEVIL MASTER

with Yeddo, there was only one place where they could be: namely, behind a closet door in a corner past the desk. That door was tight closed; if it began to open, The Shadow would see it.

Imperceptibly, The Shadow had let his briefcase drop to a chair close by. His hands were resting carelessly on the lapels of his coat.

Having relieved Cranston of two automatics the evening before, Yeddo knew where he carried his present brace of guns. One .45 would be ready for Yeddo, the other for any assisting lurker, like Ishi, who might be in the closet.

There were windows in the penthouse study: one behind the desk, the other in the side wall. They were both within The Shadow's range of view, and they caught the night glow of Manhattan so plainly that anyone outside would show himself the moment he poked his head near a pane.

With Frame's trustworthy servants as a cordon between himself and any Japanese invaders who might come from the elevators, The Shadow had a perfect edge on Prince Fuji Yeddo. The words from Yeddo's eyes admitted it.

Then, suddenly, the same eyes spoke challenge. Yeddo's empty hands, resting on the desk, had moved. One pushed aside a small desk clock belonging to Frame. The other touched an object that was more likely Yeddo's.

It was a Japanese puzzle box, about six inches square, that had a pattern of trick panels like a checkerboard gone awry.

From the way Yeddo toyed with the box, The Shadow recognized that it had potential adjuncts as a weapon. It was also evident, from a gingerly action on Yeddo's part, that the smug conniver wasn't anxious to employ the device unless he had no other choice.

"Holgo is quite stupid," went on Yeddo, while he handled the puzzle box. "We tolerated him among us purely because he was harmless. He had learned a few things that mattered, but we intended to take care of him when the time came.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Cranston – or should I say fortunately? – Holgo fell into your control. That is why I partly expected you here. But I admit" – Yeddo's black eyes widened enough to flash with snakish venom – "that I hoped you would not come so soon."

THE poison was gone from that flashed gaze as rapidly as it had come. Smugger than ever, Prince Yeddo was rising from his chair, carrying the squarish box loosely in his hand. Again he pushed the desk clock aside, and The Shadow noted the look he darted at it. Yeddo was thinking in terms of time.

"Holgo told you where to find me," declared Yeddo, "because he knew that any trouble he could turn my way would be beneficial to his master, Professor Su Yeng. Suppose, Mr. Cranston, that I should exchange the courtesy by telling you how to find Su Yeng."

"I should be very pleased to meet Su Yeng," returned The Shadow, in the even tone of Cranston, "after I have first settled matters with you, Prince Yeddo."

"Ah! But I expect a courtesy in return. I want you to see Su Yeng while our business remains unfinished."

"Suppose I refuse?"

THE DEVIL MASTER

"It would be very unwise." Yeddo spoke emphatically, yet still in choppy style. "There are others in Japan who could take the place of Prince Fuji Yeddo; but none in America who could fill a gap left by The Shadow, who calls himself Lamont Cranston."

The implication was direct. Well did The Shadow know the minds of the Japanese, those of the old school to which Prince Yeddo belonged. Any man ambitious enough to be shogun, would also commend the art of hara-kiri, the form of suicide which the Japanese recognized as the proper self-reward for failure.

Unless The Shadow would accept the present stalemate, Yeddo intended to turn it into a double death by means of the squarish box which he held in his hand. His thumb was on a corner of the box, where he could press it quicker than The Shadow could draw a gun and fire. He was waiting for an answer, so The Shadow gave it.

"I have found you twice, Prince Yeddo," declared The Shadow. "A third quest should prove quite as easy. So far, I have not found Professor Su Yeng, at all. No one could reject so liberal exchange as yourself for Su Yeng."

Prince Yeddo glared. He couldn't relish the way in which The Shadow had turned the situation from a triumph on Yeddo's part, to a gain on his own. It was difficult to dent the smugness of a man like Yeddo, but The Shadow had accomplished it. Nevertheless, Yeddo accepted the implication of inferiority to Su Yeng.

"You will go to the White Dragon Tea Shop, in Chinatown," declared Yeddo. "There, you will state in Chinese: 'It is night upon the Yangtze.' The countersign will admit you to the presence of Professor Su Yeng."

As he spoke, Prince Yeddo looked toward the door, expecting The Shadow to turn in that direction. The Shadow did, in the slow style of Cranston, but the manner of his turn included a purpose that Yeddo did not recognize. The Shadow swung toward a wall mirror, which gave him an angled reflection of Prince Yeddo.

He saw Yeddo's eyes still on the little clock. The Jap's thumb had moved from the corner of the six-inch box. It was pressing panels instead, and The Shadow observed that the shifting thumb applied that pressure three times.

Yeddo was laying the box aside when The Shadow made a quick turn at the door, one hand holding his briefcase, the other actually beneath his coat lapel.

Hands extending, palms up to show them empty, Prince Yeddo gave a polite farewell bow. The Shadow stepped through the door and closed it. He heard Yeddo come bounding to the other side, to turn the key.

By then, The Shadow was also busy. He had opened his briefcase and was whipping out his black cloak and hat.

THREE Minutes!

Such was the time period that Yeddo required for his own departure, however he intended to accomplish it. His glance at the clock was one give-away; his triple pressure on the Japanese box, the other. The Shadow intended to clip those three minutes.

He was counting the seconds, mentally, which he had trained himself to do with absolute accuracy, as he whisked across a deserted living room, slid open the window and reached a ledge outside.

THE DEVIL MASTER

From there, it was a dangerous course to the side window of Frame's study, a window which The Shadow had noticed was unlocked.

On minute was up before The Shadow reached the halfway point. The second minute was gone as he arrived at the window on his slow journey, where mere inches separated him from a two-hundred-foot plunge to the street.

At the window, The Shadow found it still unlocked. Pressing his body inward, he lunged up, thrusting the window ahead of him, while his other hand drove a gun in through the opening.

Letting his body follow, The Shadow caught the ledge with his free hand as it came down. Using that hand as a pivot, he was revolving like a turret as he swept his gun about the room.

The study was empty. Prince Yeddo hadn't gone through the other window, for it was locked from the inside. If in the closet, which was doubtful, Yeddo couldn't be dangerous, for the closet door was still tight shut. But on Frame's desk Prince Yeddo, had left the Japanese box!

Significantly, the box lay beside the little clock, which corroborated The Shadow's own time estimate.

Two minutes and twenty seconds of the period had passed. Dropping across the window sill, The Shadow picked up the box and listened. Faintly, he could hear it tick, four quick clicks to the second.

In his course along the ledge, The Shadow had noticed heavy traffic on the street below. In back of the Avondale Apartments was a court, with an outlet to the next street. It would serve better for The Shadow's coming experiment.

Reaching the rear window, The Shadow had several seconds of difficulty with the lock, which was tightly wedged; but it gave at last. Shoving the window upward, The Shadow looked below.

There was a cab in the courtyard, and it was taking on a passenger in the person of Prince Yeddo. The driver who was closing the door preparatory to taking the wheel, was also a Japanese; probably The Shadow's old friend Ishi.

Like the cab that Professor Su Yeng had supplied for the use of murderous Mongols, this vehicle of Yeddo's also had an open top. It was just beginning to move away.

Too bad that Prince Yeddo should have forgotten his precious box! Perhaps he had left it as a gift for The Shadow, should he return. But, since courtesies were the mode this evening, it was only proper that The Shadow should deliver a final one.

With a few seconds of his three minutes remaining, The Shadow tossed the square box from the window.

Only a perfected bomb sight could have matched the precision of that toss. Gauging the distance, together with the increasing speed of Yeddo's cab, The Shadow made an absolute calculation.

From its course, it seemed apparent that the falling box was due to go through the cab's open top and land practically in Yeddo's lap. The only flaw was the time element. The few remaining seconds were not enough.

With about forty more feet to go, the descending box exploded like a bombshell at an angle above Yeddo's cab, crashing windows in the apartment house and the building next to it with such force that even the walls quivered. The effect on the cab was visible, though not serious.

Hearing the blast, Ishi must have let his foot jab the accelerator, for the cab rocketed out of the alley, veered into the street, and almost overturned. Its driver righted it out of a skid, and it was gone, past the corner of the next building, before The Shadow could draw a gun and shoot after it.

Prince Fuji Yeddo had escaped The Shadow's final courtesy; one that would have been final, in all senses of the word, had its delivery been completed!

CHAPTER VII. TRAILS TO COME

IN departure, Prince Fuji Yeddo had left a train of mysteries behind him, which The Shadow decided to clean up, though he hadn't quite applied the process to Yeddo, personally.

One mystery was how Yeddo had left the penthouse study. The door was still locked, with the key dangling from the inside, and The Shadow had entered by the only window that could have afforded exit.

More important, however, was the mystery of Langford Frame. His servants believed him to be in the study waiting for a visitor, but The Shadow hadn't found him there. The most obvious place to look for Frame was in the study closet, and The Shadow lost no time in doing it.

The moment he opened the door, he was rewarded. Frame's bulky body came toppling out and flattened on the floor.

Frame wasn't dead, but he was nearly so. His hands, tied behind him, rendered it impossible for him to get at the thing which twined his neck. The thing was a garrote of Japanese invention, quite as ingenious as any of the slow-strangling devices found in medieval torture chambers.

A thin rope embraced Frame's bullish neck. It was knotted at the back, and at each side of the main knot were two smaller ones. Prince Yeddo had simply thrust a small stick of wood through the main knot and used it as a clamp to tighten the strangle cord.

Half as long as a pencil, and less in thickness, the stick could be stopped at any half turn by the simple process of tucking its ends beneath the little side knots, which prevented it from slipping loose.

He hadn't left Frame much leeway. A few minutes longer and Frame's neck, from its own swelling, would have made further breathing impossible.

As The Shadow untwisted the garrote, Frame rolled over with a moan so heartfelt, that his cloaked rescuer felt new regrets that the surprise package hadn't reached Yeddo's departing cab. Slow death of the sort that Yeddo had planned for Frame gave The Shadow merciless inclinations toward those who perpetrated it, regardless of the why and wherefore.

There was a why in this case.

When Frame came back to full consciousness, to press his freed hands against his sore neck, he found that his revival was due in part to a jigger of brandy supplied by his friend Lamont Cranston, who had singularly arrived in the penthouse.

Frame couldn't recall Cranston as his rescuer. He had the impression of a weird being in black, undoing the evil that Yeddo had begun. Nor did he notice Cranston's briefcase, wherein The Shadow had packed the garb of black.

THE DEVIL MASTER

But Cranston was a friend, and his calm gaze indicated that he knew much about the case. So Frame hoarsely poured out the remainder of the story. It fitted with The Shadow's analysis of Prince Yeddo and his motives.

"Yeddo is in this country to get war materials," declared Frame, "and he figured I was the man to help him. He was going to protect me on the deal, and he didn't mind telling me why. Useful once, I'd still be useful. The shipments were to go to Russia, under the present international agreement, and Yeddo would take care of them at the other end.

"Yeddo insisted that relations between America and Japan were becoming friendlier; that I need never fear that any such equipment would be used against us. He argued that the war supplies, including planes and munitions, would be kept in Northern China for suppressing rebellions. When I remarked that it would help the Japanese military machine just the same, Yeddo acted hurt."

Frame was coming to the reasons why Yeddo had decided to do away with him. But The Shadow knew there must be more, to account for the mode of murder that Yeddo had attempted. He gave Frame another taste of brandy, to stimulate more facts.

"I couldn't prove anything against Yeddo," Frame continued. "All of our transactions were verbal, and there were times when I couldn't even locate the chap. So I put a private investigator on the case, a man named Mark Orvel. Somehow, Yeddo got wind of it. He made an appointment to meet me this evening.

"When Yeddo came, he popped out of nowhere, like the devil he is! I mean it, Cranston. The thing amazed me! He gave me a jujitsu treatment, and next I knew that rope was around my neck.

"Our deal was off, and all he wanted was to know the name of the man that I'd put on his trail. I wouldn't tell him. I figured if I did, he'd twist the noose tighter and have done with me."

THE SHADOW was visualizing facts that Frame didn't recognize. Unquestionably, Yeddo had rolled Frame into the closet just before The Shadow's arrival, and intended to let him die there under a strangling torture. The Japanese bomb box, Yeddo's plaything, was to have blasted the room and Frame's body with it.

There would have been an investigation of a mysterious explosion, but no trace of Prince Yeddo, inasmuch as no one had seen the murderous Japanese arrive. The matter of Yeddo's appearance from nowhere was still something of a baffler, until The Shadow remembered that this apartment was the top floor of a duplex penthouse.

Looking behind Frame's desk, The Shadow discovered the outline of a trapdoor in the flooring, distinguishable only by faint cracks. He pointed it out to Frame, who suddenly realized what it meant.

"Why, yes!" Frame exclaimed. "These floors were connected once, to form a two-story penthouse. It was altered when I took the place. A new tenant rented the lower floor a month ago. He must have been Prince Yeddo!"

The Shadow knew that a search of the lower apartment would prove fruitless. He suggested, instead, that Frame leave with him and take quarters elsewhere, without mentioning the fact to his servants. Frame agreed, and the proposition offered little difficulty.

Going out together, The Shadow and Frame found the servants busy gabbling over a mysterious explosion that had occurred outside the apartment house. When Frame stated that he and Cranston were going out of town, the servants took it as something comparatively unimportant.

THE DEVIL MASTER

One hour later, The Shadow arrived at Dr. Tam's. His Chinese friend was greatly intrigued when he heard the details of events at Frame's. Tam had placed Holgo in another room, hence the discussion was a private one.

"What about Mark Orvel, the investigator?" Tam inquired. "How will he communicate with Langford Frame?"

"That is all provided for," The Shadow explained. "Frame's meetings with Orvel were secret, because Frame feared Prince Yeddo. Orvel knows where to find Frame, in an emergency. I shall await their meeting, inasmuch as Orvel may bring us a new lead to Yeddo. Our proposition is to find Professor Su Yeng."

Dr. Tam stared, unbelieving. Then:

"You can't believe that Prince Yeddo told you the real way to find Professor Su Yeng!"

"I do," replied The Shadow. "Yeddo's mind is something like a machine. It rejects anything that may not bring results. He believed that I might return to Frame's study, hence he set the time bomb."

"But in case I did not return, he wanted me to prove useful. A meeting, on my part, with Su Yeng would be very useful to Yeddo. It might lead to the elimination of either myself, or Su Yeng."

"More probably you, Ying Ko," argued Tam, solemnly. "Yeddo may have been guiding you into one of Su Yeng's traps."

"I intend to test that point," said The Shadow, calmly. "Come. Let us have a chat with Holgo."

They found the prisoner in his usual sullen mood, and from Holgo's stare, the fellow seemed to think that The Shadow's early return meant that he had not met Prince Yeddo. Nevertheless, The Shadow expressed satisfaction over the information that Holgo had preciously given him.

"You were right, Holgo," The Shadow declared. "Frame regards Yeddo as a threat. Since you have spoken the truth once, I should like to hear it again. Tell me how to find Su Yeng."

Holgo faked a hesitant air. It wasn't until The Shadow promised him freedom for the information that the fellow suddenly decided to babble.

"Go to the old joss house," he said. "Speak to Amnok, the man that you will find there. He will welcome you, Ying Ko, and tell you how to reach Su Yeng."

THE SHADOW ordered Tam to release the prisoner. While Tam was doing so, The Shadow removed his cloak and hat. In this dimmer room, his features, those of Cranston, were not readily discernible, for The Shadow kept his back to the light. Besides, Holgo's eyes were not looking toward The Shadow's face.

What held Holgo's attention were the garments of black that The Shadow thrust into his hands.

"Wear these, Holgo," The Shadow ordered. "I shall conduct you to the old joss house, where you say I shall be welcome. You can meet Amnok as Ying Ko, while I go to the White Dragon to speak the countersign that will actually take me to Su Yeng."

Dropping the cloak and hat, Holgo fell cringing to his knees. It was proof that Holgo had given The Shadow false information, whereas Yeddo had supplied the real route to Su Yeng's. The fact that The Shadow knew the true way made Holgo sure that he had recognized the lie.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"No, no!" Holgo pleaded. "I shall die! I spoke false, Ying Ko, but only because Su Yeng ordered it. There is death to all who go to the old joss house seeking Su Yeng!"

"While the way through the White Dragon is safe –"

"Yes, yes! To all who give the countersign: 'It is night upon the Yangtze.' Believe me, Ying Ko, and let me remain a prisoner. I can never face Su Yeng again. I shall tell you what would happen, Ying Ko.

"Su Yeng would clutch me! Like this" – Holgo raised a, shaky, clawish hand to squeeze an imaginary object – "like I have seen him do with others!"

"Holgo means the dolls," sidetoned Tam. "They are very lifelike; so real, that Su Yeng's ignorant followers fancy them to be alive."

Holgo, meanwhile, was raising his hands, begging to have them bound again, appealing to The Shadow to let him remain in the secure custody of Dr. Tam. Between those spasms, the prisoner was doing his utmost to give more facts concerning Su Yeng, but none were of great consequence. He simply knew that the old joss house held death whereas the White Dragon offered access to Su Yeng's preserves through long and twisted passages. But just where Su Yeng's lair was located, in distance and direction from the White Dragon, Holgo was unable to estimate.

Tam bound the prisoner again, and Holgo sank to the corner with a sound that very much resembled a grateful sob. Returning to the office with Tam, The Shadow found his Chinese friend quite in agreement on the fact that Holgo had spoken the full truth.

"It was excellent, Ying Ko," declared Tam, "the way you prepared Holgo before you saw Prince Yeddo. It enabled you to check on Yeddo's information perfectly. But you cannot go to Su Yeng's, Ying Ko."

"Not at present," agreed The Shadow. "It would mean a Chinese disguise, and I would have to pretend that I was interested in aiding his cause. Su Yeng might insist that I remain –"

"And thus cause complications in regard to Prince Yeddo," nodded Tam. "You must certainly be prepared to meet the investigator, Orvel, when he reports to Frame."

The Shadow eyed Tam steadily, and saw what was troubling him.

"Your own friends are marked," he told Tam. "Therefore, you are afraid to risk sending any of them to see Su Yeng."

Again, Tam nodded.

"If I might," Tam began, "I would suggest –"

He halted, apologetically, as if loath to broach a proposal that might jeopardize someone connected with The Shadow. Understanding Tam's hesitation, The Shadow completed the unfinished statement:

"You would suggest that I send Ming Dwan."

Tam gave a slow nod, which indicated that he left the matter entirely to The Shadow. There was a low laugh from hidden lips; then, with a note of finality, The Shadow announced:

"Ming Dwan shall go!"

CHAPTER VIII. THE SHADOW'S EMISSARY

UNIQUE among persons who had served The Shadow in the past was a girl named Myra Reldon, otherwise known as Ming Dwan. The reason for her dual identity was very simple.

Though an American, Myra had been born in Shanghai and lived there most of her life. She knew the ways of Chinese, as well as their language, and when she put on Chinese make-up, even Orientals were deceived.

Nor was it asking too much of Myra to have her confront so crafty a personage as Su Yeng and meet him on his own grounds. Myra had handled such assignments in the past.

Originally, she had worked with the F.B.I., later with The Shadow, who had corrected the few faults in Myra's Chinese impersonations. When Myra went Chinese, she dropped her own personality absolutely and became, in practical reality, the alluring Ming Dwan, maid of old China.

As such, she was the very sort to be welcomed by Su Yeng, who doubtless would recognize the merits of having women help the cause of gaining new recruits in his plan of restoring the Empire.

There was only one problem in The Shadow's path, and a very trivial one, it seemed. Myra was absent from New York and wouldn't be back until the next evening. Therefore, a wait was needed before she could undertake the task of emissary.

That delay of one day meant little in itself. The trouble came from complications that the day produced, so slight in their beginnings, that The Shadow was to overlook them.

It happened that The Shadow had two people on his mind: Myra Reldon and Langford Frame. Meanwhile, it was advisable for him to appear publicly as Lamont Cranston, yet be quite wary where he went, considering that he was definitely marked by Prince Yeddo, and possibly by Professor Su Yeng. As Cranston, he had a third problem, and three were to prove too many.

The third problem was Margo Lane.

She was a girl who liked adventure and found it in the company of Lamont Cranston. In fact, Margo had progressed to the point where she could definitely link Cranston with The Shadow.

Since Margo had proven herself helpful on various occasions, The Shadow counted her in on plans whenever he could. But there were other times when she had to be eased out. This happened to be one of them.

The Shadow had several picked men who helped him in hard-hitting campaigns, and he was even keeping them out of this one. His own experience with Ishi, the jujitsu expert, was sufficient. He didn't want any of his workers finding themselves bounced into taxicabs and carried away prisoner; least of all, Margo Lane.

The Shadow's way of easing Margo out was both simple and effective. He dined with her, as Cranston, and showed so indolent a mood that she began to doubt that he could possibly be planning schemes of action.

But Margo had begun to suspect those quiet dinners of having a special purpose, and this one, on the evening following The Shadow's adventure in the penthouse, gave Margo a few things extra to think about.

THE DEVIL MASTER

They were dining in a new, and secluded, restaurant, which indicated that Cranston was shunning the public eye. Moreover, Cranston mentioned a rather vague appointment, an early one, that wouldn't keep him long. But it was just enough to give Margo an idea.

She decided not to wait until Cranston returned to the restaurant; instead, she broached some plans for the next evening. Cranston made a date for dinner at seven the next night, and therewith departed. But Margo stayed.

Ticking in the back of the attractive brunette's head was the notion that Cranston had been expecting a phone call. Perhaps, if she stayed, it would come in and she could take it as a favor to Lamont; and also as a satisfaction for her own curiosity.

Riding from the restaurant, The Shadow smiled. He hadn't missed the thought in Margo's mind, and he was on his way to spike the very thing she hoped for.

Stopping at the apartment house where Myra Reldon lived, The Shadow placed a note under her door, then continued on to his meeting with Langford Frame.

The note countermanded a telegram The Shadow had sent to Myra that afternoon, asking her to telephone the restaurant if she arrived back in New York before a given time.

It chanced that Myra called the restaurant, anyway. Still at the place, Margo heard the head waiter paging Mr. Cranston and said that she would take the call.

When she spoke across the telephone and heard Myra's voice, in return, Margo was considerably intrigued and somewhat piqued.

Jealousy wasn't large in Margo's mind; at least, not the sort that might have been expected. Thinking Margo was someone connected with the restaurant, Myra, gave her name and asked if there was any message.

Something in her tone told Margo that the other girl, a total stranger, was also interested in adventure. Whoever Myra Reldon was, it didn't seem logical that she could qualify if Margo Lane couldn't. So Margo coolly faked the operator business, with a few embellishments.

"Sorry, Miss Reldon," she said, "but Mr. Cranston just left. I am quite sure that he would have left a message, had the matter been urgent. He always does."

Margo was hoping that Myra would suppose that Cranston often came to this restaurant. Myra evidently did, which pleased Margo doubly. Her bluff was working, and she was also learning that Myra didn't know much about Cranston and the places that he frequented.

There was one thing, however, that impressed Margo as an oddity. It was the peculiar lilt of Myra's voice. It came in singsong fashion:

"Perhaps Mr. Cranston left a message at my apartment. I am going there —"

"It would be better if you came here, Miss Reldon," put in Margo briskly. "Mr. Cranston said that he might return within an hour."

The call finished, Margo thought it over. Just why she had manufactured fabrications to go along with a thin basis of truth, she couldn't entirely understand. It seemed that one step was leading her to another; that out of

THE DEVIL MASTER

her unruly mood, she was creating mild adventure for herself.

Bringing Myra to the restaurant was a delightful inspiration. It would give Margo a chance to look over Cranston's other girl friend without being recognized in her own turn.

However, adventure would therewith end. What was more, Margo was quite sure that Lamont's interest in Myra was impersonal. Something important was at stake, in which Cranston preferred Myra's aid to any that Margo might furnish. That was the real cause for Margo's annoyance.

Maybe Lamont had actually left an important message at Myra's apartment. If so, Margo's meddling might have serious consequences.

The thought led Margo to another step. Thumbing through the telephone book, she found Myra's name and learned the address of the other girl's apartment. It was a case, now, of making amends for a capricious mistake; that, at least, was Margo's excuse for continuing her escapade.

Arguing that lost time might be costly, and that to wait and explain things to Myra would therefore be a blunder, Margo left the restaurant, took a cab and started for the other girl's apartment.

It proved to be on the second floor, and there was a convenient kitchen window right by the fire exit. Margo reached the window without any of the dangerous ledge travel in which The Shadow specialized.

Creeping through the apartment she found the doorway to the hall and pressed a light switch. What Margo saw, intrigued her anew. On the floor within the door was an envelope that she was sure Lamont must have thrust there!

CERTAINLY there could be no harm in reading the note, now that the whirl of events had carried Margo this far. She'd read it, and call the restaurant and tell Myra that she had a message from Cranston.

At least, it would be something that would surprise Lamont later, when Margo related it by degrees. She'd always wanted to jar her leisurely friend out of his self-sufficient mood. So Margo opened the note and read it.

It was written in a hand that resembled Cranston's, and Margo read the blue-inked statements slowly, because they were somewhat cryptic. The note told Myra to be ready for a trip to Chinatown, in order to meet a certain Professor Su Yeng. It stated that the mission would prove quite simple, if handled carefully. Myra was to await at her apartment for a telephone call that would add certain details.

There was a postscript to the note. It said: "You will go as Ming Dwan." But Margo did not manage to read that far.

Amazingly, the blue-inked writing began to efface itself, so rapidly that it overtook Margo just before she reached the final line. The invisible process swept past and erased the postscript while Margo was staring, rather dazed. Mechanically, the girl crumpled the blank sheet that had once been a note.

From The Shadow!

Due to her close association with Cranston, Margo was accustomed to verbal messages that concerned The Shadow. This was her first experience with the mysterious device that he used in communicating with certain persons.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Of course, the purpose of the vanishing note was evident; in a way, too evident. It was designed to balk meddlers, and therefore had a chiding touch where Margo, herself, was concerned.

Should Myra return and find a blank sheet of paper, she would know that the note had been opened, and would tell Cranston so when he telephoned. The fact irked Margo. She could almost fancy Cranston speaking to her, laughing lightly at the trick that she had played upon herself.

There was nothing to do but call the restaurant and ask for Myra Reldon, who was probably there by this time. In introducing herself, Margo would have to follow with a complete confession of her snooper, and tell Myra what the note had said.

Margo could remain here at the apartment until Myra arrived, just in case Cranston called up. Then Margo would have to bow herself out of the picture, very ungracefully. Probably, in the future, Lamont would be less inclined to trust Margo with important work, considering this prankish demonstration.

If only she could finish what she had started!

That, at least, would impress Lamont Cranston, otherwise The Shadow. He admired cleverness, even at his own expense. He would place this to the credit side of Margo's ledger, if she showed the ability to see the game through. But there was no way out; at least, Margo Lane could think of none while she was dejectedly picking up the telephone to make her call of apology to Myra Reldon.

The inspiration came from the telephone, itself. Before Margo could lift the receiver, the bell began to ring.

Momentarily, Margo hesitated, flustered. She didn't mind calling from here and stating where she was; but being caught on the premises was another matter. Remembering Myra's tone, Margo decided to imitate it. She used the exact words with which the other girl had begun a conversation:

"Hello. This is Miss Reldon speaking –"

"Hello, Myra." The responding tone was Cranston's! "You have read the note, of course?"

The pause called for an answer, and Margo was elated by the fact that she had actually fooled Lamont. This was her way out of a dilemma! She'd keep on with the Myra pretext, and as soon as Lamont caught on, she'd jolly him. At least, it would make the climax graceful.

"Yes, I have read the note." Margo duplicated Myra's lilt beautifully. "I am ready for further instructions, Mr. Cranston."

THE instructions came. Cranston explained briefly that Professor Su Yeng was the mystery man of Chinatown; dangerous, yet anxious to make friends. Myra could reach him by going to the White Dragon Tea Shop and giving the countersign, which Cranston therewith supplied.

She was to show interest in his plan for aiding beleaguered China, and offer her services toward raising funds among her friends. At no time was she to indicate that she suspected a hidden motive behind Su Yeng's plans. Such was The Shadow's warning.

During those instructions, Margo listened breathless, unable to insert a response. When Cranston concluded, his words were:

THE DEVIL MASTER

"You have heard?" To which Margo, spontaneously using Myra's singsong, could only respond: "Yes, I have heard." Whereupon, an abrupt click of the receiver signified the end of Cranston's call.

Staring dumfounded at the dead telephone, Margo realized that her bluff had worked too well. Or had it? The question intrigued her. The Shadow wanted someone to call on Professor Su Yeng and put up a bluff.

As Margo saw it, he had chosen Myra only because he thought the other girl was well-qualified to handle it. But Margo, herself, had demonstrated the needed ability, by bluffing The Shadow himself!

Certainly, she could do the same with Professor Su Yeng. Turning this adventure into such a climax would mean real triumph. Excuses wouldn't have to be apologies when Margo met Lamont and gave him the very facts that he wanted, as The Shadow.

Confidence swept indecision front Margo's mind. Leaving Myra's apartment, she called the first cab that she saw and ordered the driver to take her to Chinatown. She was bound on real adventure, of greater proportions than any that The Shadow, as the indulgent Mr. Cranston, had ever assigned her before.

Had Margo Lane foreseen the strange proportions that this adventure was actually to produce, she would gladly have transferred the duty back to Myra Reldon!

CHAPTER IX. THE MAGIC OF SU YENG

THE slant-eyed keeper of the White Dragon Tea Shop stroked his droopy mustache as he gazed at the American girl who had come into his old, musty store.

There were customers about; like the shopkeeper, they were Chinese, and they also gave Margo Lane the slanty eye. It wasn't often that Americans, particularly women, came into the White Dragon, for this basement shop was obscure and its portals forbidding.

Whenever they did appear, such customers were allowed to sample tea and buy it, if they so chose. Usually, they didn't stay long. The slit-eyed stares of the Chinese gallery weren't the sort to extend the welcome very far. People who thought the White Dragon an interesting place to enter, soon began to regard the street as much more inviting.

Margo Lane was a definite exception. Sipping one brand of tea that the proprietor offered, she decided to try another. She was tasting her fourth sample from a tiny cup, when she managed to corner the mustached Chinaman away from the group of customers. In a low tone, Margo repeated the words that Cranston had meant for Myra Reldon.

"It is night upon the Yangtze."

Instantly, the atmosphere cleared. The Chinese customers didn't hear the countersign, but they saw the lift of the proprietor's eyebrows. Chinese shifted, like a boat crew clearing for action.

Two went to the outer door, to make sure that no newcomers entered. A third folded back a large golden screen that stood at the rear of the shop, while a fourth, stepping past a stack of tea chests thus revealed, gave quick, light taps against the wall.

The proprietor was bowing Margo past the counter, to a blank wall in a corner beside the stacked tea chests. Margo expected the solid wall to open, but it didn't. Instead, the proprietor rested his fingers on the knob of a tea-chest drawer.

THE DEVIL MASTER

A muffled click came from within. He swung the door to one side, and the fronts of the other tea chests came with it, all together. Stooping, as the proprietor urged her forward, Margo went through the strange doorway.

It led to a dimly lighted passage, where a bowing Chinese waited. He was clad in native costume – dark in hue, except for a gold-embroidered dragon so extensive that it seemed to hold him in its coils. Turning, the dragon man led Margo through the passage, which soon converged with another.

From then on, Margo lost all sense of direction. Sliding doors, twisty passages, steps that led up and down to other levels, were all quite prevalent in Su Yeng's under-ground domain.

Sometimes Margo thought that the course had reversed itself; but always, there were other turns. Still, she might have been back at the starting point, or very close to it, when her guide knocked at a smooth door which blocked the final passage.

The door slid aside. Margo saw a Chinese folding back a screen. But this wasn't the White Dragon again. Instead, Margo was viewing a reception hall decorated lavishly with Chinese tapestries and furnished with teakwood chairs, antique tables and inlaid taborets.

The hall was underground, that much was certain, for its ceiling was low and spaces between the tapestries disclosed walls of smooth concrete. That it was only a small part of Su Yeng's premises was evidenced by several golden screens along the walls. These obviously marked doorways leading elsewhere.

Ceremoniously, a Celestial removed another screen. A door slid wide and Margo was bowed through. She heard the door glide shut in back of her; but scarcely noticed it.

She was too intrigued by the appearance of the man who faced her, as he sat in a large teakwood chair, smoking a long, odd-shaped pipe that he supported with one hand, while his other gestured Margo to a chair much like his own.

He could be none other than Professor Su Yeng.

IF the singular man in the teakwood chair had avowed himself to be a hundred years of age, the statement would not have astonished Margo Lane. His manila-hued face was lined with as many wrinkles, large and small, as the palm of one's hand. It seemed that age, alone, could have so dyed Su Yeng's complexion, and that its many marks were those of time.

Yet, those very factors rendered Su Yen ageless.

As a human century plant, he was in full bloom. His eyes were piercing in their gaze. His lips had a smile of mysterious understanding. The very motion of his thin hands, with their long-nailed fingers, showed that he possessed a delicacy of manner. In this one personality was embodied the full wisdom of the Orient.

Such was Professor Su Yeng, the Devil Master.

Devilish, indeed, was his cunning, in that it lulled those who encountered it. When Su Yeng spoke, his tone, though slightly on the crackly side, had the emphasis of a chime. His penetrating eyes probed Margo's face and seemingly grasped her thoughts, though his gaze was not unkindly.

"You have come to aid my cause," chimed Su Yeng. "May I ask your name, kind visitor?"

THE DEVIL MASTER

Margo's hesitation was very brief. She'd thought of naming herself as Myra Reldon; but, during the trip to Su Yeng's hidden abode, she had decided that it would be unfair. The place was more ominous than she expected, and if she came out safely, it would not be right to pin the visit on someone else, who might suffer for it, later.

Moreover, having met Su Yeng, Margo doubted that she could deceive him as much as she had hoped, if at all. It was better to win his confidence with a straight start.

She gave her right name: Margo Lane.

"Tell me, Miss Lane," questioned Su Yeng. "How did you learn of my mission in America?"

Margo was ready for that question.

"Through a friend," she answered. "One who also told me the countersign that I used at the White Dragon."

Su Yeng did not inquire the identity of the friend, much to Margo's relief. It didn't occur to Margo, however, that Su Yeng already saw a hidden motive behind her visit.

Wisely had The Shadow advised Myra Reldon to come here in the character of Ming Dwan. It happened that none of Su Yeng's own friends were authorized to bring Americans into the fold of those who hoped to restore Imperial China.

There was much that Su Yeng would have liked to ask, but he sagely chose to wait. When Su Yeng unloosed tongues, he learned all that they could possibly say. He ruled his Chinese followers through threat, for they believed him to possess the magical powers that he claimed. Americans were different. They required a demonstration, first.

Solemnly, Su Yeng clapped his hands. From behind a screen, a Chinese girl appeared. She was about Margo's age, and very beautiful. Her skin had the color of old ivory, her eyes the hue of jet. The ruby tint of her lips matched the poppy that was in her glossy hair, and those lips gave Margo a friendly, reassuring smile.

Margo couldn't help but picture the girl as a Chinese princess, which, indeed, she was some day to be, if the schemes of Su Yeng materialized.

"This is Satsu," introduced Su, Yeng. "My great-great-granddaughter."

He motioned toward a cabinet in the corner. Satsu went there and brought out an oblong box, about twelve inches in length, which might have held a set of large chessmen. Margo, meanwhile, was intrigued by Satsu's costume.

The future princess was wearing black pajamas, of the loveliest silk that Margo had ever imagined. It was decorated with an embroidered silver dragon, and the black slippers that accompanied it had tiny dragon's claws for buckles.

Receiving the oblong box, Su Yeng opened it, and Margo had new reason to exclaim with delight. From the box, Su Yeng brought out dolls that stood about a foot high. They represented Chinese princelings and mandarins in native costumes.

When Su Yen stood them on a taboret, they looked actually lifelike. Nor was that all. Without winding the figures, merely by touching them, Su Yeng brought them to life!

THE DEVIL MASTER

Tiny hands folded in front of them, the figurines bowed to each other as they bobbed about. Turning to the sides of the taboret, they bowed again to the giant-sized humans who watched them.

Never had Margo seen such mechanical marvels as these. They intrigued her more and more, until the startling thought gripped her that they might truly be alive!

WITH a suppressed exclamation, Margo closed her eyes and placed her hands across them. When she recovered from that spell and looked again, Professor Su Yeng was putting away the dolls.

"They are tired." His chime-like tone was indulgent. "I believe that you are, too, Miss Lane. Soon, I must depart upon an important appointment. It may be very late before I return. You must remain here, so that we can talk together tomorrow."

Kindly though the tone, Margo sensed that it carried a command. She was hoping for some way to decline the invitation, when Su Yeng spoke again.

"Satsu will see that you are comfortable," he said. "I note that you were admiring her costume. She will provide you with one like it, except for the silver dragon. Later, after you have shown your loyalty to our cause, you, too, may wear the dragon symbol."

There was nothing for Margo to do but accompany Satsu, who led the way past the screen, into another apartment. This room was furnished quite simply. It had a few chairs and a table; on the latter was a mah-jongg cabinet, against the wall. There was an electric lamp upon the table, and a floor lamp in the corner. On a small desk nearby was a typewriter.

Beside the floor lamp, Margo saw something that made her forget her predicament, if her present situation could be called such. She saw a doll's house, beautifully furnished in Chinese style. It had two stories, and it so captivated Margo that she dropped on her knees beside it, to study the interior.

Looking up to see Satsu standing, smiling, beside her, Margo exclaimed:

"Why, it's wonderful! Does it belong to you, Satsu?"

"It belongs to my great-great-grandfather," returned Satsu. "It is where he lets the dolls stay when they are good. Of late; they have not behaved. That is why they have been put away."

Satsu's smile faded amid that speech. She eyed Margo seriously, then extended a costume that she had brought.

"Here are your pajamas and slippers, Miss Lane. I shall return presently and put away your other things."

With that, Satsu departed, and Margo felt suddenly afraid, particularly when a panel slithered shut across the door by which the Chinese girl left. Margo wanted to batter at that door and demand to be let out; then, she realized that probably Su Yeng was putting her to that very test.

She was in deep – very deep, she feared – and the only way out would be to show full willingness to remain as guest in the lost abode of Professor Su Yeng.

Deciding that acceptance of the Chinese costume would help the situation, Margo began to discard her American attire. While she undressed, she kept looking at the Chinese doll house. Satsu's curious statement kept ringing through Margo's mind, and when she reached for the black pajamas, the very smoothness of the

THE DEVIL MASTER

soft silk frightened her. She was seized with the impulse to scramble back into her own clothes and attempt the earlier flight that she had rejected as impossible.

Then, gaining a momentary return of nerve, Margo fought off silly notions and slid into the pajamas.

They were really comfortable, once she was inside them. The slippers were soft, too, and very pretty, even though their silver buckles were plain, like the trimmings on the pajamas. On the table, Margo found a cigarette box. She extracted a cigarette, lighted it, and sat down in a chair to enjoy a quieting smoke. She had half finished the cigarette when Satsu returned.

Smiling, the girl who wore the emblem of the silver dragon picked up Margo's clothes, to take them from the room. The only things she forgot were Margo's shoes. They were beside a taboret on which Margo's wrist watch rested.

Reaching for the shoes, Margo turned to call Satsu, but the Chinese girl had left. At that moment, Margo became suddenly dizzy.

She forgot the shoes and reached for the watch instead. Even that effort was too much. Margo sank back in the chair and her arm slid against the table, knocking off a Chinese book that flattened on the floor, showing outspread pages of thin rice paper, adorned with Chinese characters.

Too shaky to stoop and recover the book, Margo took another puff on the cigarette, hoping it would help her.

Through the cloud of smoke that trickled from her lips, she saw the panel leading to the other room. It was open, and on the threshold stood Professor Su Yeng, wearing a crimson robe encircled by a great golden dragon.

To Margo's whirling gaze, it seemed that the dragon lived, and writhed; but that horrible impression was mild, compared to her view of Su Yeng's face.

The Chinese professor wore a leer that would have suited the devils over which he claimed mastery. His chimed tone was crackly, like the harsh ringing of a broken, discordant bell. The words he spoke dripped accusation.

"You have come here as an enemy," Su Yeng told Margo. "Your effort to deceive me was puny. I shall therefore treat you as you deserve. I shall render you as puny and as helpless as those living dolls you saw tonight!"

THERE was a small jade elephant on the table beside Margo. She reached for the object, hoping that she could throw it at the vicious face she saw before her. The effort was useless. The magic of Su Yeng had already begun to work.

Manila features, with coal-black eyes, loomed closer to Margo's vision, growing larger, larger, until the face of the devilish professor seemed a giant's visage, its open mouth gulping to engulf a human morsel.

Loosing the carved elephant with one-hand, the finished cigarette with the other, Margo slid from the chair. She was dwindling, dwindling, amid the horror of the whirling room. It was like dropping into an abyss without the sensation of an actual fall, a nightmarish experience beyond the realm of imagination.

The room blackened as Margo's senses left her. Tuned to her fadeout came the ill-chimed crackle of Su Yeng's ugly laugh – a farewell that Margo Lane was to remember when her consciousness returned!

CHAPTER X. THE MAN WHO RETURNED

THE office was in an obscure, forgotten building, and its door bore a number, but no name. The office, though small, was divided into two sections – an outer one, and an inner room, marked "Private." Even the furniture was poor; purposely so. For this was the office where Langford Frame, man of millions, chose to hold meetings, incognito, with Mark Orvel, the private investigator in his employ.

Frame was seated in the inner office. He had a visitor: his friend, Lamont Cranston. Despite the assurance that he gained from Cranston's presence, Frame was worried, and his pudgy face showed it.

"Orvel ought to be here, Cranston," argued Frame. "At least, he should have telephoned. Something has happened to him. I am sure of it."

"Be patient, Frame," The Shadow insisted, in Cranston's quiet way. "Give Orvel time. Perhaps he hasn't uncovered anything important. If so, he wouldn't be in a hurry to meet you."

Frame tried to be patient, but his worryment increased, to the startling point where he suddenly began to suspect Cranston as an enemy.

"That call you made a while ago!" Frame exclaimed. "Why did you go into the other office? What were you trying to put over, Cranston?"

"Absolutely nothing." Cranston's calm eyes met Frame's excited face, which the bulky man was thrusting half across the desk. "If you'd like me to put something over, I can oblige you with this!" He let his fist jab upward and stop, an inch short of Frame's chin. "It might help you to relax."

Frame sagged back into his chair as though the punch had really landed home.

"I'm sorry, Cranston. About that call –"

"It was merely to a friend," inserted The Shadow. "One who is concerned with something quite foreign to Prince Fuji Yeddo."

The Shadow was referring to his call to Myra Reldon. Actually, he had failed to catch on to Margo's bit of telephone deception, and therefore supposed that Myra was the girl who had gone to visit Professor Su Yeng.

In classing Su Yeng as something quite foreign to Prince Yeddo, The Shadow was speaking accurately. No two men could have been more foreign to each other than those who sought leadership over the Chinese and Japanese races, each with the hope of conquering the other.

Though he had never met Su Yeng, the man of imperial ambition, The Shadow could well picture him and was confident that he would harken to the offer of service made by Ming Dwan. It was fortunate, indeed, that Myra could assume that Chinese personality, for The Shadow could equally visualize the trouble that an American visitor might encounter.

Always, the adherents of Imperial China had been hostile to the "foreign devils," a category under which Americans had come during the Boxer Uprising, early in the century.

Su Yeng, the master of mythical Chinese devils, would not hesitate to loose them as real, and not imaginary threats, should occasion so demand. Hence The Shadow held qualms for Myra Reldon, should she be identified as such.

THE DEVIL MASTER

What went for Myra Reldon would certainly go for Margo Lane, but in Margo's case, there wouldn't be a chance of escaping detection. Therefore, The Shadow congratulated himself upon having handled Margo tactfully. Chinatown was no place for her, under present conditions.

Margo, it so happened, had found that out!

At least, The Shadow had dismissed the problem of Su Yeng for the time being, but it wasn't helping him with Prince Yeddo.

Though he didn't express it, The Shadow felt agreement with Frame on the possibility that Orvel had run into trouble. Hence, both were relieved when the telephone began to ring from the outer office. Hopefully, Frame looked at his friend Cranston. The Shadow told him to answer the call.

Frame did. Orvel's name was the first thing he uttered, but from then on, Frame's words were stuttery. The call ending abruptly, he turned to Cranston.

"It was Orvel," said Frame, "but something was wrong with him. He talked like he was drunk. I can't understand it."

"Did he say he would come he?"

"Yes." Frame nodded, slowly. "Still, I can't understand it. Orvel is reliable. He shouldn't be drunk."

Mentally debating the point, The Shadow decided to have a look outside. Someone might have faked the call, talking like a drunk to cover the deception better. Similarly, if the call had really come from Orvel, it would be better to let him meet Frame alone and chat until he sobered up. Sight of a stranger, like Cranston, might render Orvel less talkative.

The streets around the office building were well patrolled by some of The Shadow's agents. As he left the building, The Shadow picked up cloak and hat, joined his men, and told them to be watchful. It was possible that Orvel had met with Prince Fuji and had a few rounds of sake, the powerful Japanese drink that made men talk too much. Even if Orvel arrived safely, there might be chaps like Ishi on his trail.

Near the front of the building, The Shadow waited in a space that provided absolute gloom. He saw a cab wheel up and watched a tall, stoop shouldered man step from it.

The man was Orvel; his posture, as well as his sharp-pointed face, tallied with Frame's description of the investigator. What was more, Orvel actually had a tipsy look. He paid the driver mechanically; then turned and tumbled into the building toward the stairs leading up to Frame's little office.

Satisfied that Frame could handle the unsteady visitor, The Shadow watched the cab pull away; then scanned the street for any trailers.

Little blinks of light came from corners; all were green. The Shadow's agents were signaling with special flashlights, to indicate that all looked clear from their observation posts. Stepping into the building, The Shadow started to remove his hat and cloak.

Muffled screams halted him. They came from upstairs, where Frame's office was located. Taking the steps three at a stride, The Shadow arrived, still attired in black.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Orvel's office door was locked from the inside, but, fortunately, it was very flimsy. The Shadow met it with a shoulder drive that ripped the door half off its hinges. Lunging through, he came upon a scene that promised murder.

Prone on the floor, Langford Frame was no longer screeching. His face was purple, from the clutch that Mark Orvel had upon his throat. Crouched upon Frame's writhing form, Orvel was choking him with one hand; with the other, the stoopish man was reaching for a heavy metal ash stand by the wall. As he grabbed the stand, he swung it straight for Frame's skull.

At that moment, Frame was closer to death than he had been from Yeddo's garrote. It was speed that saved him; speed that only The Shadow could provide. A human arrow, the black-cloaked rescuer dived straight across the room, shoving a gloved hand ahead in a long, earnest grab for the descending metal bludgeon.

Nabbing it with his fingertips, The Shadow supplied a twist with his body roll. His grip upon the rod of the metal stand was viselike. It had to be. Orvel's downstroke carried tremendous power.

By inches only, the smashing missile escaped Frame's skull, impelled away by The Shadow's mighty wrench. Then Orvel was grappling with The Shadow, and both fighters were reeling far from the spot where Frame lay, still moaning.

Orvel's terrific effort proved he wasn't drunk. So did his features, distorted into a hideous glare toward the fighter who had prevented him from murdering Frame. The Shadow was dealing with the most dangerous of all fighters: a madman!

USING jujitsu twists that would have bothered Yeddo's men, The Shadow found them insufficient against this homicidal maniac. He drove hard punches to Orvel's jaw, but they failed to find the button.

Orvel had become the sort of lunatic who wouldn't quit until he was killed, and had The Shadow brought a gun into the fray, the deed would have been justifiable. But The Shadow intended to suppress his foe alive, and he managed it.

He did it by meeting grapple for grapple, seeking holds that had the effect of a straitjacket. Insane men had a tendency to wear themselves out when under restraint, and Orvel was no exception. Playing the human straitjacket was just as tough on The Shadow, but his endurance proved to be the greater.

When Orvel finally gave up, he dropped, limp as a rag, exhausted to a point where a resumption of the struggle was impossible.

Peeling off cloak and hat, The Shadow tossed them behind the half-hinged door. He yanked Frame to his feet and shook him, until he stared, somewhat surprised to see Cranston back again.

Quite calmly, The Shadow ordered Frame to help him get Orvel into the inner office, which Frame did, though with some protest. Orvel, however, offered no fight. They propped him on an old couch, and The Shadow took a look at him.

There was something very odd about Orvel's glassy gaze. His eyes enlarged, then dwindled, as he stared at Cranston's face. Pressing Frame into the outer office, The Shadow undertoned instructions.

"Call Dr. Rupert Sayre," he said. "He's a friend of mine, and he understands these cases. Get him over here, and meanwhile, stay out of Orvel's sight. His mania seems to concern you, chiefly. I shall stay with him."

Stay with Orvel, The Shadow did. He was right regarding Orvel's insane desire to kill Frame. For the glassy-eyed man showed no rage at sight of Cranston; merely expressions that varied from a contemptuous smile to one of abject horror. But all the while, his eyes alternately dilated and shrank in that same curious fashion.

Behind this singular case of killer madness The Shadow could sense the power of a hidden hand that had started Mark Orvel on his berserk career. For Orvel had the look of a man who had returned from a realm where demons ruled!

CHAPTER XI. MASTERS MEET

DR. RUPERT SAYRE classed Orvel's case as a very strange one. By the time the physician arrived at Frame's office, the patient had passed from homicidal phases into new stages of insanity.

Of course, The shadow had insisted that Frame remain in the other room, where Orvel couldn't see him, and that could account for the change. But Orvel's condition could not be regarded as improved.

He was still staring at Cranston, and he gave Sayre similar looks when the physician entered. Cranston's calm manner and Sayre's professional air should have impressed Orvel, but they didn't. Their faces made him either gloat or wince; a thing which even Sayre could not understand, until Orvel suddenly applied the process to himself.

His strength returned, Orvel lifted his hands itchily, as though they, of themselves, were recalling a task they had failed to perform. Conscious of his hands, Orvel looked at them. He gave a sharp outcry and bobbed his head away, as though fearing the power of his own fists. Then, eyes shut, Orvel clamped those same hands to his head and moaned, as his fingers moved about, gingerly pressing his own features.

"I have it, Cranston!" exclaimed Sayre. "It is a case of macromania, wherein everything appears overlarge to the patient, particularly parts of his own body."

"An interesting diagnosis," agreed The Shadow. "Orvel certainly stared at us as though we were huge monsters, and at present he feels the same way about himself. But keep watching him, Sayre."

Sayre watched. He saw the strange change that came over Orvel. Opening his eyes, the man stared at the faces in front of him and gave a contemptuous chuckle. He actually seemed to swell with pride, until he glanced at his own hands.

Sight of them made him laugh.

He leaned closer to watch his fingers work. Closing his eyes, he rubbed his face, tweaking his own nose, still chuckling.

"Micromania!" declared Sayre. "I had it the wrong way about. In micromania, the patient thinks that everything is small, including himself."

"In this case," inserted The Shadow, "it appears that the patient is suffering from both macromania and micromania."

"Impossible!" returned Sayre. "Such alteration would mean that neither was a fixation. Every psychosis is the development of a single fixed idea. It is a rule –"

THE DEVIL MASTER

"To which you have discovered the exception, Sayre. Keep watching Orvel, and you will agree."

Sayre watched Orvel. He did agree. In fact, the man's crazy gyrations almost had the physician copying them, as Sayre tried to analyze which belonged to which type of mania. It was certain that Orvel was imagining things all out of proportion, but he couldn't seem to gain the balance point of normalcy.

"We must get this patient to a hospital, Cranston," insisted Sayre. "A series of insulin treatments might jolt him out of this."

"That would take days, perhaps weeks," declared The Shadow. "A quicker process, would be preferable."

"Hypnotism could work," began Sayre. Then, with a shake of his head. "No, Cranston, not in this case. I have seen you give some excellent demonstrations of hypnotism, but you must first capture the subject's full attention. It would be impossible with this man."

"There is a simpler means than hypnotism, Sayre."

Stepping to the outer office, The Shadow returned with a mirror from the wall. He held it in front of Orvel's face. The man stared at his own reflection, then clutched the mirror.

"Considering that Orvel lacks a positive fixation," said The Shadow quietly, "he may not be an insane case at all. Let us see if the mirror will conquer his optical delusions."

The mirror did. Sight of his own face, constant in the glass, caused Orvel to forget the things about him. Steadily calming, he finally laid the mirror aside and looked intelligently at the two men who faced him.

A trifle worried when he didn't recognize them, Orvel lost his qualms as soon as Frame entered the room at Cranston's beckon. Finding that both Sayre and Cranston were friends of his employer, Orvel talked.

"I CAN tell you why the mirror worked," Orvel said, "even though I didn't think of it myself. The only thing I hadn't seen was my own face; that is, while I was small."

"While you were small!" exclaimed Frame. He rubbed his neck. "Say – you were large enough when you tried to choke me!"

Orvel looked surprised. They had to explain all that had happened after his arrival. Something dawned on Orvel. He started to speak; then halted, to question:

"Will you give my story a fair hearing, no matter how absurd it sounds?"

Nods were the replies.

"I'll start from the beginning," declared Orvel. "As Mr. Frame has probably told you, I was looking for persons who might be interested in the deal that Prince Yeddo offered. I found one down in Washington. Gifford Wendyke."

"The exporter!" exclaimed Frame. "Why was he down in Washington?"

"He was looking for some nice juicy subsidies," returned Orvel, "and not getting them. You know Wendyke's reputation, if it can be called such. He profited on European shipments during the last war. This time, he wants to clean up with shipments to South America and the Orient. But the government didn't like his

THE DEVIL MASTER

figures."

Frame looked toward Cranston and saw his friend nod. Gifford Wendyke could certainly be classed as a candidate for partnership with Prince Fuji Yeddo. By taking shipments at normal rates, he would be in position to gain the excess profits through the deal that Yeddo offered.

"Wendyke started back to New York;" continued Frame, "so I came, too. I had a couple of leads that didn't amount to much, but I went after them. One concerned a warehouse where Wendyke stores heavy shipments. I went there, and was grabbed –"

"By Japanese!" exclaimed Frame.

"No!" retorted Orvel, annoyed at the interruption. "By a batch of Chinamen! They weren't working for Prince Yeddo. They were working against him. Their big boss was a Chinaman, too –"

"Professor Su Yeng," put in The Shadow. "Your captors probably took you through a tea shop called the White Dragon."

This time, Orvel accepted the interruption with a grateful nod. Finding that Cranston knew about Su Yeng gave him hope that the rest of his story would be believed.

"Su Yeng made me talk," declared Orvel steadily. "The way he did it was to make me small, like a lot of living dolls he had. I swear he did it! He turned me into a thing so small that he could have squeezed me like that" – he clutched his hand in air – "if he'd wanted to. But he didn't have to. I told him all I knew."

Frame's head was wagging disbelief. Sayre's face showed new doubt as to Orvel's sanity. Only Cranston's countenance remained impassive. It seemed that he was willing to believe. Thus encouraged, Orvel resumed his story.

"Su Yeng promised to make me my right size again," he declared, "and he did. But he threatened to put me back in the ant–hill league if I didn't go after Frame. He wanted me to murder you" – Orvel swung to Frame – "and I said I would. But I didn't expect to go through with it, even though Su Yeng said I would."

"He knew why. By the time I arrived here, I was nuts. You spend ten hours crawling in and out of your own vest pocket, and you'll be the same way. I could only remember something that Su Yeng had said: that if I did go crazy, I'd get over it after I took it out on the man who was responsible. He meant you, Frame."

Frame looked as though he would like to dwindle to watch–charm proportions and seek a crack in the floor. Being hounded by Prince Yeddo was bad enough; with the monstrous Professor Su Yeng as a second enemy, Frame was anything but happy.

"Things were getting big, then small," continued Orvel. "I couldn't stand it. I tried to kill Frame, just as Su Yeng said I would. You people looked like giants one minute, and pygmies the next. But I'm over it now, and I'll do what I can to make amends."

It was The Shadow who proposed what Orvel could do.

"Go along with Dr. Sayre," he told Orvel. "He will keep you safely out of circulation, until your recovery is fully established."

Sayre left, taking Orvel with him. Glumly, Frame turned to The Shadow.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"What do I do, Cranston? Go back to the dog house?"

"It's better than a doll house," returned The Shadow. "Yes, Frame, I think you had better return to that little hotel where you have been staying. There is a cab outside that will take you. I know the driver. He will get you there safely."

"But what about Prince Yeddo and this Professor Su Yeng?"

"Let me take care of them." The Shadow clapped Frame on the back. "On your way, and don't worry."

FOR a while after Frame's departure, The Shadow remained in deep thought. He was planning an immediate campaign, one that might bring results, and he was picturing the battleground.

At last, having gauged the time of Moe's return, he went to the outer office, recovered his black garb and put on the garments.

As The Shadow, he was bound on an expedition of singular importance, one of the strangest that he had ever undertaken. Gliding into Moe's cab, The Shadow gave the address of the office building where the Wendyke Exporting Co., was located. Nearing that destination, he saw lights on the fifth floor; the one he wanted.

There was an elevator in the old building, but it had no operator. Instead of ringing the bell that would have summoned the night watchman, The Shadow took the elevator up to the fifth floor. There, he tried the door to Wendyke's suite of offices. It opened, and peering through, The Shadow saw a few sleepy-looking clerks at their desks.

Wendyke's private office was in the far corner. Instead of passing through the larger room, The Shadow went back around the hall. Past the corner, he found another door, which led into the private office. It had an arrow pointing to the main door, which showed it wasn't ordinarily used.

Probing with a tiny pick-like instrument, The Shadow encountered a key in the lock. Using a pair of special tweezers, he gave the key a silent turn and opened the door inward. At that very moment he was conscious of buzzing voices, that paused abruptly. Someone must have noted the key's final twist.

Whipping across the threshold, The Shadow flipped the door shut with one hand and produced an automatic with the other. He halted, the gun poised ready, to gaze toward a desk where Gifford Wendyke, gray-haired and pompous, sat glaring because of the intrusion. But Wendyke, though the center of the scene, was very unimportant.

He was flanked by two men, one at each side of the desk, who had also swung toward the door. One was Prince Fuji Yeddo, smug as ever, but with the glint that represented evil cunning flashing from his darting eyes. The other was a man that The Shadow had never met, but who needed no introduction.

He was an old Chinaman whose ageless countenance was no index to his real ability. Two black dots for eyes; twisty lips that held a crafty smile against the tawny background of a deep-lined face, marked this human product of Old China as the notorious Professor Su Yeng.

Masters had met. Two men of evil, Prince Yeddo and Su Yeng, were confronting one who stood for justice, The Shadow. Smiles were the answers of these evil masters to The Shadow's whispered laugh.

Whether The Shadow could efface those smirks, or their owners could silence his laugh forever, was a question that this meeting might decide!

CHAPTER XII. DIVIDED ODDS

WITH a careless flip, wherein his automatic seemed to begin an aim toward Yeddo and then Su Yeng, The Shadow finished by sliding the weapon beneath his cloak. The action produced an effect upon both of the menacing watchers. Each relaxed in his own peculiar style.

Prince Yeddo, at The Shadow's left, was turned about in his chair, to look at the door where the black-cloaked visitor had entered. Yeddo was wearing a Tuxedo, and his right hand was in the jacket pocket. Unquestionably, it gripped a small revolver, and Yeddo was no trifler with such a weapon.

But The Shadow could see an easing motion of the Jap's wrist muscles, coming at the moment when The Shadow started to cloak his own gun. Yeddo's hand came from the jacket pocket, bringing a pack of cigarettes.

Knowing The Shadow to be Cranston, Yeddo was duplicating the nonchalance of his erstwhile prisoner. It was the type of imitative action for which Japanese were noted. It gave The Shadow an index to what he could expect from Prince Yeddo – for a while.

Meanwhile, Professor Su Yeng, on The Shadow's right, was demonstrating his acceptance of what appeared to be an invitation to a three-way conference. Arms folded, Su Yeng was leaning forward to the desk as though the position was normal. It wasn't.

Those loose sleeves of Su Yeng's Chinese garb were the give-away. His right hand, dipped slightly in the left sleeve, was fingering a knife that he kept there. Knowing the skill of the knife tossers in Su Yeng's employ, The Shadow was quite convinced that Su Yeng was also adept with the blade.

It was the slight motion of Su Yeng's shoulders that gave a key to his coming behavior. They were lifting as The Shadow's gun went from sight. The motion meant that Su Yeng intended to lean back in his chair, his logical position for a quiet conference. With his own gun completely away, The Shadow saw Su Yeng's arms unfold. Hands with long-nailed fingers placed themselves openly upon the desk.

Sweeping a chair along with him, The Shadow planted it in front of the desk and sat down. Ignoring both Yeddo and Su Yeng, he studied the startled man who faced him: Gifford Wendyke. All semblance of the pompous had gone from Wendyke's bearing. He was haggard; his glare had become a frightened stare.

"These two are trying to outbid each other." As he spoke, The Shadow gestured from Yeddo to Su Yeng. "They want your services, Wendyke" – the sinister whisper was strong with accusation – "and you will give them to whichever makes the better offer."

"No, no!" gasped Wendyke. "I didn't know –"

"That I was coming here," The Shadow interposed. "But you did know what these two represent, because they told you."

The words left Wendyke speechless. Managing to shake his gaze from The Shadow, he looked appealingly to his other visitors. The Shadow had struck the truth in a fashion that Wendyke regarded as uncanny.

It couldn't just be guesswork. No one, not even a black-shrouded visitor who came in like a cloud of smoke, could afford chance speculation when flanked by men like Yeddo and Su Yeng. Indeed, The Shadow could afford it less than anyone. If wrong, he would have dispelled the mystery that marked him as a power.

THE DEVIL MASTER

It wasn't guesswork.

Singly, The Shadow knew, Yeddo or Su Yeng might talk of their respective ambitions in sugar-coated style, when dealing with a man like Wendyke. As bargainers, however, one or the other would surely release the truth. It would be the only way to halt the bidding when it went too high.

The promise of protection was the reason.

Protection because of questionable shipments was one thing; protection following an act of outright treason, another. The former would be merely part of a price paid for a bill of goods; the latter was worth money in itself.

It had reached the point where if Wendyke took one monster's offer, he would have to buy the other's silence. Which, in the ultimate, meant that Wendyke's services would go to Yeddo or Su Yeng with the silencing of the other as part of the bargain.

If he couldn't feel that one stood paramount, Wendyke would deal with neither. This was one of those rare cases where only a middle course was safe, if too much pressure came to bear.

The Shadow intended to apply that pressure.

UNLIKE Wendyke, Yeddo and Su Yeng were not surprised by The Shadow's statement. They recognized his purpose, and admitted it. Yeddo spoke first.

"Quite correct," he said, in his most mechanical tone. "We have told Mr. Wendyke everything. We have our ambitions, and he has his. Therefore, we esteem him, Su Yeng and I."

"As Prince Yeddo and I esteem each other," added Su Yeng, introducing his harsh-chimed tone to The Shadow's ear. "We seek power, while Wendyke seeks money. The two go hand in hand, Ying Ko, though I understand that you have blinded yourself to the fact."

One note rang false.

It was the expression of mutual accord advanced by both Yeddo and Su Yeng. Subtle though it was, it did not deceive The Shadow. He checked it by a keen, passing glance at Wendyke's face; and he let his probing eyes sweep back and forth from Yeddo to Su Yeng. The evil countenance at left and right were covering the subterfuge, but Wendyke's flash of astonishment gave it away.

They were not in accord, Yeddo and Su Yeng. That was why Wendyke couldn't understand. He didn't see the thing that was happening in front of him.

Right across the board, in The Shadow's very presence, Yeddo and Su Yeng were forming an alliance! Their statements, directed to The Shadow, were meant for each other!

Together, they intended to get rid of The Shadow, a pick up their own feud afterward. Gleaning that fact, The Shadow added another that he knew must have occurred to each of his monstrous enemies. It concerned Wendyke.

He was washed up, too. Already, Yeddo and Su Yeng had separately tried to dispose of one man – Langford Frame – when he became a problem. Since Gifford Wendyke was entering the problem class, he could best be eliminated along with The Shadow.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Actually, Yeddo and Su Yeng were giving The Shadow an ally in the struggle soon to come. But there was guile in that mutual choice regarding Wendyke. They meant him as a handicap for The Shadow. Such Wendyke would be, if The Shadow undertook to save him in the coming fray, and both Yeddo and Su Yeng believed that The Shadow would.

He was a fool, The Shadow, with his ideas of justice. If he regarded Wendyke as innocent of crime, he'd have to save him for his own sake. Whereas, if The Shadow placed Wendyke in the guilty class, he'd still try to save him as a trophy for the law.

Odd, how confidential Prince Yeddo and Professor Su Yen had become!

The future shogun was blandly dropping his cigarette pack back into his pocket, while he rested his other hand upon the desk. Fair though the motions looked, his real thought was quick access to his gun, while his free hand could go for Wendyke and pluck him as a shield against The Shadow.

As for the would-be Emperor of China, he had leaned forward once more. Hands toward his sleeves, he was prepared to pluck a knife and fling it The Shadow's way, while his slight lean toward the right showed that Su Yeng, like Yeddo, saw the advantages of Wendyke as a buffer.

The Shadow waited no longer. He came to his feet with a whirl that both enemies thought would carry him toward the open space between the desk and the door. Instead, The Shadow completed a full spin and drove straight forward, hurling the desk ahead of him.

Yeddo's gun barked through the cloth of his pocket, the shot missing The Shadow by two feet. Likewise, Su Yeng's knife traveled wide. The Shadow had gone from the path of their cross-angled aim, not into it!

The drive of the desk did more. It jolted Wendyke as he was coming to his feet, and hurled him into a corner beyond the reach of both the men who wanted him.

With the smash of the overturning desk came the shatter of the lamp that provided the only illumination within the room itself. Though there was glow from the windows and the transoms, The Shadow had gained a setting of partial gloom.

Both enemies lunged for him as he was drawing his automatic. Su Yeng's amazingly swift claw snatched at the weapon, and The Shadow let him take it. The thing was a surprise, about the only sort that could have amazed the famous Su Yeng, and it made him change his whole course of action.

Before Su Yeng could turn about and take a correct hold on the gun, The Shadow was handing Yeddo a separate surprise.

Twisting weaponless, The Shadow clutched Yeddo with two hands, when the Jap expected only one. It gave The Shadow a double hold in the jujitsu game, defeating Yeddo's attempt to shoot and try a tricky throw at the same time.

Forced to drop the revolver, Yeddo squirmed beneath The Shadow's grip and tried to clutch him with an over-shoulder throw.

The Shadow smothered it with a stunt unknown to jujitsu. He peeled his cloak right over his own head and on to Yeddo's. Tangled in the folds, Yeddo only snarled himself further as he made the throw. The Shadow went with it, purposely.

THE DEVIL MASTER

The fling wasn't forceful enough to damage him. He landed in a corner by a filing cabinet, and twisted, cloakless, in back of it, to produce his second gun.

The laugh that The Shadow gave could have come from anywhere, but most specifically from the cloak-enveloped figure that was actually Prince Yeddo. It was meant for the ears of Professor Su Yeng, and the laugh's purpose was to produce divided odds.

For Su Yeng, seeing the hazy form in the cloak and hearing the laugh from its direction, could only suppose that The Shadow had conquered Yeddo and was the figure still at large!

Such was The Shadow's strategy, that Su Yeng was actually aiming at Yeddo with a gun that The Shadow himself had loaned for the occasion; while, from his corner, The Shadow was waiting for the gunburst that would make Su Yeng an absolute target, the moment that he finished Yeddo!

CHAPTER XIII. A QUESTION OF MURDER

CLOSE to perfect was The Shadow's remarkable ruse toward the elimination of two evil rivals; but it didn't quite suffice. The first flaw in the process was of The Shadow's own making. The big gun didn't blast when Su Yeng tugged the trigger, because The Shadow, in yielding it, had shoved the safety catch.

Good policy, considering that The Shadow had needed time to handle Yeddo before Su Yeng fired. It was The Shadow's own swiftness that produced the present delay. In itself, it didn't matter, for The Shadow had been thorough, too.

Yeddo was still wrapped up, and couldn't be out of the tangle within the next few seconds. As for Su Yeng, he certainly should be able to flip the safety catch in less time than that. It wasn't enough of a problem to delay a mastermind.

Nor did it. Su Yeng's long thumbnail hooked the catch as quickly as The Shadow hoped. But the interval, though slight, was enough to bring new trouble, in the person of Wendyke.

The jolt from the desk had failed to flatten him. He heard The Shadow's laugh and also thought it signified the end of Yeddo. Seeing Su Yeng turn the other way, Wendyke sprang for him.

It wasn't a case of Wendyke seeking the side of right. He was as crooked as they came, and the very fact was his urge. He wanted a share of The Shadow's triumph only to appease the cloaked invader.

Certainly, The Shadow couldn't hold anything against the man who helped him. Wendyke didn't realize that he wasn't helping, but was doing just the opposite. He was proving the very handicap that Yeddo and Su Yeng wanted him to be.

Clearing the overturned desk, Wendyke grabbed Su Yeng and tried to get the automatic from him. The borrowed gun spouted twice, like a miniature volcano. Su Yeng broke a fingernail when he fired the second upward shot; then, managing to twist the gun muzzle against Wendyke's chest, he tried to fire a third time and make it count.

Even without the delay caused by the fingernail, Su Yeng couldn't have delivered. By then, a human hurricane was upon him. Out from the corner, sweeping past the stumbly Prince Yeddo, The Shadow was swooping to Wendyke's aid. His own gun, slashing upward, hooked the borrowed one that Su Yeng held and sent it flying to the ceiling, unfired.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Finishing the upward stroke, The Shadow let his gun-weighted fist reach Wendyke's chin in ungentle reminder that he didn't belong in the fray.

That emphasis carried Wendyke out of the big league. He went backward across the desk, into his corner, where he finally came to hands and knees, his hand clapped to his chin. The room was revolving, as Wendyke viewed it.

Perhaps the reverse spin of two figures was responsible for the illusion. Those two were The Shadow and Su Yeng.

The diabolic Chinaman had gained a clutch on the uncloaked fighter and was keeping it, thanks to the dig provided by his nine long nails. Along with his ageless personality, Su Yeng had the vigor of youth. He actually seemed stronger than The Shadow, as he swung his antagonist toward the nearest window.

Glass shattered as they lurched across the sill. The Shadow was under the weight of Su Yeng's bulk, and he went outward first. It was then that Su Yeng learned The Shadow's purpose, in a very sudden way.

The Shadow hadn't forgotten that Yeddo was due back in the battle. Therefore, he had let Su Yeng carry this fray, so long as the Chinaman blocked off the Japanese.

Past Su Yeng's pressing form, The Shadow saw whiteness bobbing in the dark. It was Yeddo's Tuxedo jacket. The Japanese was free of the cloak, but he hadn't found his lost gun. Half over the sill, The Shadow hooked it with his knees, putting the brakes on Su Yeng's pressure.

A look outside the window showed a narrow ledge just beneath. Suddenly relaxing, The Shadow let himself plop outward, downward, to stop with his knees still on the sill, his free hand giving a stiff-arm push to the ledge.

It wasn't even necessary to take an upward shot at Su Yeng's chest as the Chinaman lunged across. Indeed, The Shadow had no time to do so. Su Yeng, his whole strength unleashed in an effort to end The Shadow's first resisting jerk, went hurtling outward as if catapulted. He was off on a headlong trip to a rear alley, four stories below.

REVERSING his gun with a deft toss, The Shadow used the handle to hook the window sill and draw himself up from his rather precarious position.

A glimpse showed that Yeddo was still frantically trying to regain his gun, so The Shadow rolled over on the sill to witness the finish of Su Yeng's fall. With all his boasted wizardry, Su Yeng shouldn't be worried about hitting head-on against concrete.

In fact, Su Yeng wasn't.

He didn't even make the test. Below the ledge over which The Shadow peered was a parked automobile, an old relic of a touring car, with the top up. Su Yeng, demonstrated that one man could at least demolish that top without assistance.

He struck it shoulder first, and caved in the canvas, amid an upward splash of struts and braces. As though impelled by the shock, the car scooted away. It was around the corner of the building while The Shadow was reversing his .45 to take a shot at it.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Su Yeng was alive and practically unhurt, for he was wallowing out of the ruined top, waving his arms at the driver, who happened to be a Mongol. The old car was the one in which Su Yeng had come; he'd left it out back, to await his return.

Placed just below the window of Wendyke's private office, the car had broken the force of Su Yeng's precipitous arrival, and was serving its other purpose of carrying him away!

Great luck for Su Yeng. Turning in from the window, The Shadow decided that Prince Yeddo wouldn't fare as well. Decisions weren't breaking well for The Shadow. Though Yeddo had finally found his gun; he was hopelessly trapped when The Shadow turned to find him. Yeddo's good luck arrived when a door bashed inward before The Shadow could fire.

It was the door connecting from the outer office. Wendyke's clerks, petrified by the shooting, had found courage, once the firing ended. They slapped the door so it hid Yeddo, and they surged past him, across The Shadow's path of aim.

Moreover, they brought a flood of light that almost reached The Shadow. He had to drop low beside the window. He knew that Yeddo would try to duck out through the other office; then would be the opportunity to clip him.

Yeddo came in sight, obscured by the surge of clerks. Before The Shadow could pick an opening, a hoarse shout came from behind the tumbled desk. It was Wendyke who gave it; he saw Yeddo, too, and wanted his clerks to turn around. They didn't know what Wendyke wanted, so Yeddo explained it.

His explanation took the form of two quick revolver shots, both close to Wendyke's heart. As the pompous man toppled, the clerks reversed their course. More than before, they were a barrier to The Shadow's aim.

Grabbing the door that led out through the hall, The Shadow sped to cut off Yeddo's flight. But the Nipponese prince didn't make for the elevator. Through the outer office, he dived for a stairway before The Shadow came around the corner.

The clerks flooded after Yeddo. Taking the elevator, The Shadow started to the ground. The car was slow, but he reached the ground floor as soon as Yeddo. This time, it was the missing elevator man who got in the way. The Shadow blasted wide shots past the fellow, which finally caused him to take a dive and clear the path.

By then, Yeddo was out through the door, and the purr of a much smoother car than Su Yeng's told that Ishi and others of Yeddo's band had picked up their fleeing leader.

Stepping back in the elevator, The Shadow went up while the watchman was firing away at the corner that Yeddo's car had turned. Reaching Wendyke's office, he saw that the shipping man was dead. Reclaiming his cloak and the gun that Su Yeng had borrowed, only to drop, The Shadow left by the shattered window.

Ledges formed a succession, floor by floor, down to the ground, and it was no trick for The Shadow, long-limbed and agile, to hang from one and take a short drop to the next below. With each drop, he spread his arms to clamp the sides of the window on that particular floor, thus preserving his balance.

GONE before the police cars arrived, The Shadow returned an hour later, to find a flock of them, including the police commissioner's official car. Of course, The Shadow returned in Cranston's guise, coming by limousine from the Cobalt Club.

THE DEVIL MASTER

During a stop-off there, he had learned where Commissioner Weston had gone. With Weston, The Shadow found Inspector Joe Cardona. Between them, the police commissioner and his ace inspector had a surprisingly large fund of information.

"It's a question of murder, Cranston," the commissioner declared, "and we know who killed Gifford Wendyke. The murderer is a Japanese who calls himself Prince Yeddo."

"The clerks saw him," put in Cardona, "and one of them knew who he was. The clerk overheard Wendyke talking to Prince Yeddo on the telephone, saying he'd expect him this evening."

"We were already investigating Yeddo," added Weston, quite proudly. "We linked him with a shooting in an empty apartment house. He got away that time, but he had actually rented an apartment there, through an obscure real-estate agent who thought it best to call us up."

"And there's something more, commissioner," asserted Cardona, not to be outdone. "You know that call Bull Grendy got? He was right; he didn't know who it came from, but I traced it. The call came from the apartment that Prince Yeddo rented!"

The police were pinning it on Yeddo, thick and fast. Nor were they content to stop. Cardona was playing hunches, all logical enough for Weston to approve them. Correct hunches, too.

Joe was arguing that Yeddo had probably rented other places, and that by questioning all real-estate men, the location of those hide-outs could be learned. Yeddo's regular crew, Cardona insisted, must consist of Japanese.

It wouldn't be easy for a flock of Japs to stay under cover in New York. A general search for Yeddo and his band would bring positive results, unless the whole tribe cleared Manhattan.

Quite in accord, Weston ordered Cardona to set the machinery in motion. Then Weston presented an idea of his own.

"Since Wendyke dealt in international trade," declared the commissioner, "this case must have international angles. You know how polite the Japanese are about such matters, Cranston. We shall learn all we need about Prince Fuji Yeddo. I wouldn't be surprised if his own government had blacklisted him. In any event, his failure ruins him."

How far it ruined Prince Yeddo was something of a question; nevertheless, The Shadow knew that Yeddo, wily as he was, would have his hands full dodging the law. Moreover, Yeddo would need a long while to recoup his plans, if he could do it. All in all, the situation was very pleasing, for it freed The Shadow from immediate bother over Yeddo.

While the police pursued their search for the hunted Japanese, The Shadow would be able to follow his original quest without interference: namely, to concentrate upon hunting down Professor Su Yeng. With the public stirred by the hunt for a notorious Japanese, the last person in the popular mind would be a Chinaman of equal ill fame!

Back in the limousine, The Shadow laughed. His mirth was whispered, even though it came from Cranston's lips. Confident that Myra Reldon would bring him a complete report, The Shadow anticipated results on the Su Yeng question.

THE DEVIL MASTER

As Cranston, The Shadow should properly have thought in terms of Margo Lane. Had he given her a call, her absence could have produced an inkling to her present plight and started The Shadow immediately upon his chosen trail. It would not, however, have eased the quest for The Shadow.

Thanks to Margo, and her mistake, The Shadow's task was heavily increased. Strange adventures were to pave his path when he would go to meet Professor Su Yeng!

CHAPTER XIV. ONE DOLL MORE

WHEN Margo Lane awakened, she did not, at first, take in her surroundings. Her sleep had been a very strange one – long and deep, it seemed, but with recollections of distant dreams.

Groping to recall them, Margo felt a sense of horror as they became very real. So real, that they couldn't have been imagination, for they fitted perfectly with an experience that she knew was actual.

She remembered going to the White Dragon in place of Myra Reldon. Next her interview with Professor Su Yeng and his great–great–granddaughter, Satsu. She recalled the silver–trimmed pajamas and the slippers to match that Satsu had given her. Glancing at herself, Margo saw that she was wearing those very garments, instead of her own clothes.

The fact was almost comforting, until the next experience sprang to Margo's mind. It involved Su Yeng in person. She remembered him in the doorway, a demoniac leer on his face. The sudden way in which his countenance had loomed larger wasn't pleasant to recall.

It had given Margo the sensation of having actually dwindled under the magic of Su Yeng; an impression that awakening did not shake.

Reasoning that such things couldn't happen, Margo looked around her. The sight she saw was a lovely one, but it jolted her with horror, for it made Su Yeng's magic real. Margo was standing right in front of a doorway, but it wasn't the one that led out of this room.

The doorway, ample enough for Margo to walk through, was the entrance to the Chinese doll house.

The fearful dwindling had been real, and by actual measurement, Margo Lane was less than one foot tall! The Chinese costume had shrunk with her; perhaps that was the reason why Su Yeng had insisted that she wear it. But such trivial matters as attire were out of the present picture. Margo had larger things to think about.

Those larger things were the furnishings of the room, more evidence that Margo had been reduced to Lilliputian proportions. Near the doll house stood a curious structure, which consisted of a flat roof on four upright posts that had the girth of telegraph poles. Connecting those poles were other shafts that looked like fence rails. The roofed structure was a chair; the posts, its legs; the shafts, the rungs!

Farther off, Margo saw a Chinese taboret. Last night, it hadn't been much higher than a footstool. Today, she couldn't see the top of it.

Margo spied the table; it was clear across the room, a considerable journey away, considering Margo's present dimensions. Atop the table, like a building set on a small plateau, was the mah–jongg cabinet, as large as a bungalow as Margo now viewed it.

Walking shakily toward the mammoth table, Margo passed the floor lamp. It had the height of a telegraph pole, as well as the girth. From way up, beneath a great dome that represented the lamp shade, came the glow

THE DEVIL MASTER

of a bulb the size of a huge arc light.

Blinking because of the brilliance, Margo walked farther ahead and stumbled across something on the floor. Something very flat and wide.

It was the Chinese book that she had knocked from the table when her senses faded. The rice–paper pages were the size of bedspreads, and the Chinese characters were larger than the printing on a bill poster.

Something else was on the floor. It looked like a large, round table top, but it was made of metal, its color a slightly tarnished gilt. Curiosity regarding the object made Margo temporarily forget her plight, until she realized that the article was her compact, which must have dropped from the table with the book. Such realization brought home the horror.

Being tiny was serious enough, but when it made Margo compare herself with trifles that she carried in her own handbag, she felt weak as well as small. She sank to the floor, scarcely noting that the rug, which had seemed silken last night, was now as rough as burlap.

Looking across the room, Margo saw the door, its knob so high above her that she couldn't possibly reach it without the aid of a pyramid of acrobats.

MARGO LANE was undergoing the same horrendous mental torture that Mark Orvel had described to doubting listeners. This experience was a madness that reality increased. Margo felt the mania grip her.

If she could only regain her strength, perhaps she would rise in stature, too! It would, at least, enable her to fight off the terror that the spell of Su Yeng had cast.

Of all the colossal objects in the room, the taboret was the one that she might scale. Taking one edge of the book, Margo shoved it upward. The thing was as large as a garage door, but it was very light. By closing the book, Margo gained a couple of inches – to her, a couple of feet – in her plan to reach the platform represented by the taboret.

She looked for something else, and saw the jade elephant that she had dropped when she tried to throw it at Professor Su Yen. It now had the size of a Shetland pony, and normally, Margo wouldn't have tried to lift so bulky an object.

But Margo was by no means in a normal mood. Tugging at the elephant, she found that she could lift it, and she managed to stand it on the closed book. The jade ornament was evidently hollow, therefore comparatively light.

From the book, Margo reached the top of the elephant and found it wide enough to stand upon. She stretched for the top edge of the two–foot taboret and just managed to reach it.

The taboret had round brass nails, with heads the size of cymbals, and Margo managed to get a foothold on them, though she lost one of the Chinese slippers as she was working over the top edge of the taboret. The slipper fell down to the floor, but Margo didn't worry about it. She was too interested in something else.

She had found her wrist watch.

It was lying on the taboret, where she had left it, and from a tiny, delicate timepiece, it had become as huge as a grandfather's clock. Its mechanism, usually so silent, wheezed and clattered most outrageously. Nevertheless, the watch was still running, and it showed the time to be half past three.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Near the watch was a white object that Margo mistook for a tablecloth, until she saw the embroidered initials "M. L." on its corner. It was Margo's own handkerchief, that she had laid aside with the watch.

Seated on the taboret, between the wrist watch and the handkerchief, Margo surveyed the room from the higher altitude and felt a little better. Half aloud, she kept asking herself the question, "What next?" until an idea struck her. It wasn't the question that produced the answer; it was the fact that she had only one slipper.

Kicking off the other, Margo sent it over the edge to join the one below. She couldn't shake the notion that the Chinese costume had played some part in the black magic that had reduced her to the approximate stature of eleven and three–sixteenth inches.

At least, the Chinese garb was part of her present plight, and she wanted to be rid of it. The trouble, so far, had been finding something to replace it. Margo decided that the handkerchief would do. She could wear it like a Grecian costume, with the corners knotted over her shoulders.

Starting to slip off the pajama, Margo slid back into them as she heard a huge clatter from across the room. She was half crouched at the far edge of the taboret when the clatter explained itself.

A wicket swung open in the great door. Margo remembered the wicket; it was about a foot across, but at present it seemed six times that large.

The opened wicket revealed the nightmarish visage of Professor Su Yeng as Margo had seen him during those fading moments when the spell took hold!

His face was gigantic, its leer more monstrous than an ogre's. His complexion had lost its ageless texture. Margo recalled a camera picture of a spider, seen from the viewpoint of a fly, and felt the same effect in real life. Su Yeng's countenance was livid; his saffron lips, when they widened, showed teeth as great as a mastodon's tusks.

Su Yeng spoke. His voice was a monstrous jangle. It could only be likened to the discordance of a huge curfew bell clanging directly into a person's ears. Margo clapped her hands over her own ears, but could still hear the thunderous clash of the giant professor's words.

"So! I have one more doll for my collection!" Great tusks champed, and Margo could hear their grind. "Come, pretty doll. I shall add you to the others in the ivory casket!"

WITH that, Su Yeng raised a massive hand to the wicket, as if to reach through. Too petrified to budge, Margo could only shrink from the fearful clutch, not realizing that it could only be a gesture, since the taboret was too far from the door for Su Yeng to reach it.

The hand was almost as large as Margo herself, and its great nails looked like broad spear–points, except for one, on the forefinger. That nail was broken off blunt, which gave it a very ugly appearance. The poised hand waited, just in front of Su Yeng's great, glaring visage; then it withdrew. The clanging voice spoke lower.

"No need to frighten you, my little doll," said Su Yeng. "You might fall off the taboret, and then Satsu would be sorry. I forgot that the dolls really belong to her. Satsu will find you a very pretty plaything. Of course, little doll, I shall ask you a few questions – among them, why you really came to see me.

"Those can wait until Satsu returns, at eight o'clock. Meanwhile, if you do not like your costume, you will find others in the doll house. Let me assure you" – Su Yeng's eyes were the size of two great red–dish harvest moons – "that my magic does not rest in those garments.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"You are a living doll, and will remain as one until I lift the spell. When I have questioned you, this evening, I shall decide which you are to be: your former self, or the doll that you are now!"

The rising voice was too much for Margo. Creeping toward the side of the taboret, she slid over it. Her feet touched the elephant, but she lost her balance as she dropped.

Briefly, she was ridiculously astride the jade statue, grabbing frantically for its slippery trunk, while Su Yeng gave a mighty thunderclap of laughter that fairly shook the room.

Sprawling as she landed on the book, Margo looked for refuge. The doll house was too far away, and its open front made it useless as a hiding place. Starting for the back of the taboret, she saw a black slope ahead of her, with an opening at the top. She clambered up and tried to squeeze inside the hiding place, but couldn't.

Looking back at the wicket, she saw Su Yeng's face, high above, convulsed with the laughter that he was throating. He was retiring from sight like some fabled giant going back into a castle. The wicket clashed shut like a mighty portcullis.

It was then that Margo realized why Su Yeng had laughed. The thing she had been trying to crawl inside was one of her own shoes; the other one was standing right beside it! The shoes that Satsu had forgotten to take last night.

Crawling from the insufficient hiding place, Margo picked up the tiny Chinese slippers, sat down on the edge of the great book and put them on. Her former horror had changed to a slow, deadly fear.

Until eight o'clock!

That thrumming thought alone enabled Margo to fight off the greater madness that the visit of Su Yeng had induced. For Margo did remember that this was another day, and that she had an appointment at seven o'clock, which was earlier than the hour of Su Yeng's threatened return.

A dinner date at seven with Lamont Cranston, who, as The Shadow, wreaked vengeance on such insidious monsters as Professor Su Yeng. There would be one hour in which The Shadow might learn of Margo's horrible plight and come to her immediate aid.

A huge assignment, even for The Shadow; yet Margo clung to the hope that he would arrive.

Her only hope – The Shadow!

CHAPTER XV. THE OPEN WAY

IT was not quite seven o'clock when Lamont Cranston raised a pair of unsurprised eyebrows toward the girl who approached his table in the little cafe where he had chosen to dine. The girl was Myra Reldon, not Margo Lane.

Though a brunette, like Margo, Myra was smaller and more pert. That is, Myra was smaller than the Margo that Cranston had known before the magic of Su Yeng had put itself to work. There was a reason, of course, why Cranston showed surprise at Myra's arrival.

As Ming Dwan, Myra should have reported back to Dr. Roy Tam. The fact that she hadn't, indicated that she was still at Su Yeng's. Therefore, as Cranston, The Shadow had been contemplating new excuses to give to Margo Lane, so he could get away to Chinatown. Instead, it looked as though there would be explanations

from Myra.

There was an explanation.

It was so direct that, for the moment, it actually had The Shadow puzzled. Myra wanted to know if Cranston still needed her for some mission that he hadn't as yet broached. When The Shadow calmly queried why Myra hadn't gone to Su Yeng's, it was her turn to look puzzled.

Instead of starting his version of the story, The Shadow heard Myra's first. The moment she mentioned a conversation with someone at this very cafe, The Shadow had the answer. He shook his head, and said in Cranston's calm style:

"Margo Lane."

Myra looked startled.

"You can't mean –"

"Exactly that!" The Shadow inserted. "You've heard of Margo, though she's never heard of you. She decided she could see Su Yeng as easily as could you."

"But the disguise!" exclaimed Myra "Surely, Margo couldn't get away with it. Even if she can talk Chinese –"

"She can't even talk Chinese. Come on, Myra. We'll stop at your apartment, but you won't have time to change there. You'll have to bring your things along. We're going to see Dr. Tam."

IT wasn't far to Chinatown, even with the brief stop–off at Myra's. The Shadow regarded the proximity fortunate, because he could picture Margo's plight as serious. Nevertheless, he ordered Moe Shrevnitz to swing the cab in from a new direction as they approached the outskirts of the Chinese quarter.

There was a building that The Shadow wanted specially to see. Though only a few stories high, it was a comparatively new structure.

It was called the Glenwood Building, and was one of the type termed "taxpayer," erected to bring sufficient revenue to pay the current taxes. There were many such buildings up near Times Square, but they were unusually close to Chinatown. The Shadow had some thoughts regarding that building.

He expressed those thoughts when he talked to Dr. Tam. Myra had gone into Tam's apartment, which connected with the office, to change from herself to Ming Dwan.

Cloaked in black, The Shadow was no longer Cranston. He had the appearance of a general planning a military campaign, as he studied a map of Chinatown that he spread on Tam's desk.

"We know of two routes to reach Su Yeng," declared The Shadow. "One, through the joss house; the other, through the White Dragon. Both must lead to the same place, and you will notice, Tam, that the Glenwood Building lies between."

"But it is not in Chinatown –"

"It is on the outskirts, which is near enough. It could be reached by some of the old, forgotten underground passages used in the old days of the tong wars."

THE DEVIL MASTER

Tam nodded. He remembered.

"Furthermore," declared The Shadow emphatically, "the Glenwood building was originally planned as a skyscraper. It has three stories of underground foundations. The present building is merely a temporary substitute, built upon those unneeded cellars, carrying expenses until real estate goes up in value."

Tam had forgotten that the skyscraper had been started a dozen years before. The fact electrified the usually calm Chinaman. He realized that The Shadow had uncovered the location of Su Yeng's underground lair. Nevertheless, Tam's enthusiasm died as he shook his head.

"You will never reach Su Yeng through the Glenwood Building," declared Tam. "You may be more than sure, Ying Ko, that Su Yeng has blockaded any connections from the present building to the forgotten cellars."

"And you have forgotten, Tam, that there are two ways to Su Yeng's, the two that I mentioned. The joss-house route is dangerous, but the way through the White Dragon –"

"Is dangerous, too, Ying Ko. No longer can strangers enter merely by the password."

THIS required explanation, so Tam elaborated it. He had learned the new status of the White Dragon through Holgo. Instead of keeping Su Yeng's tool a prisoner, Tam had sent him out through Chinatown.

"Holgo fears Su Yeng," expressed Tam, blandly. "So much, that he begged me to keep him here, where he would be under your protection. I told him that Ying Ko protected only those who showed themselves worthy. So Holgo agreed to spy on Professor Su Yeng, as far as he dared.

"He met some of his old friends and talked to them. He came back, of course, before his old master could learn that he was again at large. He learned that a dangerous spy entered by the White Dragon last night. Unquestionably, the dangerous spy was Miss Lane. Su Yeng has turned the White Dragon into a trap – probably for you, Ying Ko."

The Shadow gave a low-toned laugh.

"I shall not use the White Dragon," he said. "That route will still be safe – for another."

Before Tam could inquire who "another" was, she appeared in the person of Ming Dwan. Stepping from Tam's apartment, the former Myra Reldon was unrecognizable.

Her complexion was yellowed with a special dye; her eyes, craftily made up, were almond-shaped. The poppy in her hair suited a daughter of Old Cathay, and her words to Tam, spoken in fluent Chinese, utterly amazed him by their perfect Shanghai accent.

"Of one thing, we are certain," spoke The Shadow. "Professor Su Yeng is curious because a girl came as a spy. He wants an answer to the riddle of Margo Lane. He shall have his answer: Ming Dwan. It will look as though Margo found out that someone friendly to Su Yeng's cause was coming there, and tried some spy work earlier."

The logic appealed to Tam. He nodded.

"So we may be sure," The Shadow added, "that no harm will come to Ming Dwan at the White Dragon. She, of all persons, will obtain an audience with Su Yeng."

THE DEVIL MASTER

"But the guards will be more wary," argued Tam. "They will watch for followers, particularly you, Ying Ko. Alone, Ming Dwan can accomplish nothing."

"She will not be alone." The Shadow's tone carried a prophetic laugh. "I shall be at Su Yeng's, too. Ming Dwan's purpose is to hold his attention, while I search the premises."

"Still, the guards at the White Dragon –"

"Will suspect nothing, Tam. I shall use the other route, through the joss house. A known danger can always be overcome."

The truth convinced Tam. He could see the merit of The Shadow's strategy. Ming Dwan's arrival at the White Dragon would draw even more attention to that route.

Properly timed, The Shadow's trip through the joss house would be in the nature of a surprise. Though Tam was not sure that a known danger could always be overcome, he felt that the case held, where The Shadow was concerned.

The Shadow and Myra left Tam's, the girl wearing the spare cloak, which was hardly necessary, for none of Su Yeng's prowlers were in evidence – another proof that the wizard professor was practically inviting persons to visit the White Dragon. Nor were there any Japanese about near the fringe of Chinatown. With the law hard after Prince Fuji Yeddo, that unworthy and his followers had made themselves one hundred percent scarce. Stationed in Moe's cab, The Shadow watched Ming Dwan approach the portals of the White Dragon. The shop was closed, but her insistent taps at the door were answered. The darkness of the place suddenly swallowed the girl. Knowing that she would fare well, for a while, The Shadow told Moe to drive along.

The next stop was the old joss house, where Amnok was in charge. The Shadow knew the place, an almost forgotten spot in Chinatown.

It was on the third floor of an old four-story building, and had once been a visiting place for tourists. Riders in the sightseeing busses had begun to complain about walking two flights up, so the old joss house had lost the business and had closed.

Forgotten for years, its revival wasn't singular, considering that Su Yeng, the empire builder, was gaining adherents by establishing interest in old Chinese customs. Su Yeng would be just the person to restore a joss house, not as a commercial proposition; but as a meeting place for members of his clan.

As for Amnok, however, The Shadow had never heard of him. The name signified that he was a Korean. Probably Su Yeng had worked on natives in that country, so long a pawn of Japan, and was trying to stir them to a state of rebellion.

FROM a tiny alley, The Shadow glided to the boarded entrance of the old joss house, found the door loose, and began a trip up two flights of rickety stairs. The steps weren't creaky under The Shadow's tread. Such steps never were, but these would certainly have given away the approach of any other visitor.

On the third floor, The Shadow saw a screen. It was to be expected, for screens were the ancient Chinese barrier against fabled devils, that supposedly moved in straight lines, only. So The Shadow tried the devil system.

Peering through the crack of the screen, he saw a squatty man facing a grotesque idol and supposed that he was Amnok. Lifting the light screen, The Shadow moved it silently ahead of him.

THE DEVIL MASTER

To the right, where a fanciful statue loomed; to the left, where a passage led to another upward flight of steps, The Shadow saw the possibility of traps, and wanted none of them. His plan was to reach Amnok and make the fellow talk.

Amnok was already talking.

He was speaking to the misshapen idol, telling it something in Chinese. He was repeating the same thing over; curious words, indeed. For Amnok was speaking of The Shadow!

"Ying Ko will come," Amnok kept saying. "He must know that I am his friend. Ying Ko will come. Ying Ko knows all –"

With a sweep, The Shadow closed the screen over his left arm, performing the move with his right hand, which held a gun.

Turning at the clatter, Amnok showed a roundish face that was very much a surprised yellow blank. He exclaimed the name eagerly:

"Ying Ko!"

"Speak, Amnok," ordered The Shadow. "Tell why you expected me, and what you wish."

"Because of Holgo," expressed Amnok, eagerly. "He is safe from the power of Su Yeng. I wish to be free of that same power. I fear Su Yeng. He is the devil master!"

"You can show me the way to find Su Yeng –"

"The safe way, Ying Ko! Allow me."

Under the burn of The Shadow's eyes and the muzzle of the leveled gun, Amnok reached to the side of the grotesque idol and pressed a hidden spring. The wall swung, the idol with it, revealing a narrow opening, with a flight of downward steps.

"This is no trap," assured Amnok. "It is not meant that anyone should travel this far. Those steps lead to Su Yeng's own abode."

The Shadow stepped past Amnok, then swung suddenly, to catch the Korean unawares. Still wearing his blank, steady expression, Amnok met the burning eyes without a flinch. He had spoken the truth, and his whole bearing showed it. He wanted The Shadow to find and end the menace of the devil master, Su Yeng.

The Shadow gave a gesture that Amnok understood. The keeper of the joss house swung the great idol shut. As it closed, a weird laugh came from the gloom of the darkened steps beyond; mirth that trickled, with a hollow echo, through the cracks of the closing wall.

It was as if the distorted idol, Amnok's confidant in a welcome to The Shadow, had delivered the quivering laugh from its frozen lips!

The illusion of that mirth was fitting. Had the twisty idol lived, it would have laughed. The fame of Ying Ko, The Shadow, had traveled ahead of the black-cloaked master himself. Thus had the portal opened to the domain of Professor Su Yeng!

CHAPTER XVI. EIGHT O'CLOCK

LESS than an hour after his meeting with Myra Reldon, The Shadow was penetrating into Su Yeng's lair, where Myra, as Ming Dwan, had gone ahead.

Despite the sincerity of Amnok, the Korean, The Shadow was not taking it for granted that the inner route lacked traps. Nevertheless, the farther he progressed, the safer the way became.

Traps were in evidence, but they were unmanned. Every barrier that The Shadow encountered opened easily when its catch, or spring, was found. Steps that had a shaky feel, failed to drop when The Shadow tested them. Side passages, that had a dangerous look, were totally unguarded.

All this was proof that Amnok had positively deserted Su Yeng's cause – a most fortunate happening, considering The Shadow's present desire to reach the devilish professor without delay.

Unquestionably, Amnok could have sent some signal flash, had he so chosen. In turn, such a signal would have brought men to block The Shadow's way, had snares in the joss house failed.

Yes, Amnok's desertion was definitely an aid in The Shadow's quest to rescue Margo Lane. Instead of having to outfight or outguess any Mongols along the way, The Shadow was getting straight to the goal. None the less, he did not discount facts.

One was that his own strategy had helped. Diverting attention to the White Dragon route, by sending Myra through there, was responsible, in part, for this open way. The second fact concerned the future. This route, back through the joss house, might be unusable after The Shadow appeared, in person, on the premises of Professor Su Yeng. A good point to remember.

Lacking opposition, The Shadow had no difficulty in keeping his exact bearings. He had counted the steps up to the joss house, and he was checking on the number that he descended, in various stages, along the hidden route to Su Yeng's. The way was constantly downward; at some places, by short spiral stairways.

After negotiating those, The Shadow checked direction by a small compass set in the end of the tiny flashlight whose narrow, licking beam aided along the darkened stretches.

Not only did The Shadow know that he had passed beneath a street, he knew which street it was. The passage that he was treading came up against a solid steel door, set in concrete, and was unquestionably the entrance to the lowest of the three cellars beneath the Glenwood Building.

The smooth barrier offered a troublesome obstacle. When The Shadow drew an automatic from beneath his cloak, the big .45 looked puny, compared to the obstacle ahead.

Bullets couldn't dent a barrier of steel. Evidently The Shadow knew it, for he reversed the gun, holding it by the barrel. As a hacking weapon, however, the automatic would be even less useful; but it became evident that The Shadow didn't intend to use it that way.

He tested the door with a light tap of the gun butt, that gave an odd, metallic click.

A soft laugh trickled from The Shadow's lips.

Such taps, at proper intervals, would rouse curiosity on the other side of the door. They needed to be slightly louder, since this one probably hadn't been heard. The idea was to make them sound as if they issued from the

THE DEVIL MASTER

door itself. These Chinese who served Su Yeng, believing in devils as they did, would be alarmed by any uncanny sound from an unscreened door.

Before The Shadow could start the louder taps, the door slid open. Instantly, The Shadow slid with it; traveling a split-second ahead, toward the side of the passage.

As he made that twisty fade, he gave his .45 the quick juggle in which he specialized. An ordinary toss wasn't enough; this had to be a flip-around at the same time. The gun settled perfectly in The Shadow's fist, his finger on the trigger.

SHOTS weren't needed. The two men who came through the doorway took a long step down, and went right past The Shadow as he lengthened in the corner of the passage. They were Chinese, both, and their figures blocked off the dim light of the passage, thus darkening The Shadow's corner.

Given blackness, The Shadow had the qualities of a chameleon. His cloaked form was next to invisible.

The Chinese were evidently escorts who had brought Ming Dwan from the White Dragon and were returning there. Past the edge of the door, The Shadow saw another face, which happened to belong to the man in dragon costume who had admitted Margo the night before.

He looked very tall, but that was because he stood on the higher step. Watching the departing Chinese, the dragon man didn't see The Shadow.

When the dragon-man's face withdrew, The Shadow wheeled out from the corner. The door was starting to shut before he reached its edge, but his impetus was faster. Past the slithery barrier that could have crushed him, The Shadow whipped through the narrowing space, finishing with a spin that carried his cloak free from the door's slash.

The twist also brought him face-to-face with the man in dragon costume, who was starting to replace a screen that belonged inside the door. Cleverly, the fellow shoved the folded screen as a warding shield to knock aside The Shadow's aiming gun. With his other hand, the guard produced a knife and made a swift lunge for The Shadow's body.

It happened that The Shadow was not relying on his gun; his aim was simply a feint. His free hand hooked the guard's wrist, and his other shoulder, swinging in beside the screen, dipped hard into the foeman's stomach. The very power of the dragon man's knife lunge aided the long jujitsu throw that The Shadow delivered.

Headlong, the guard bashed into the steel door and collapsed, motionless. The toss would have stunned him, even had he landed free. With the door stopping him in the middle of his dive, he was really out to stay.

So swiftly did it happen, that The Shadow, turning from the crumpled figure of his foeman, was able to catch the big screen before it struck the floor. He opened it to the position it was supposed to be, and therewith, the screen took on a new purpose. Perhaps it didn't fill the bill of keeping out imaginary devils, but it served excellently to hide the stunned figure of the dragon-costumed guard.

Thus had The Shadow reached the reception hall of Su Yeng's headquarters without giving away his arrival by sounds of gunfire. He saw the screened door to the devil master's conference room. Stepping past it, The Shadow found another sliding barrier, but it wasn't heavy like the main door.

THE DEVIL MASTER

This one inched open under pressure of The Shadow's gloved fingers, and he peered through a narrow crack, to see Professor Su Yeng in earnest discussion with Ming Dwan. Standing by was Satsu.

Probing Satsu's face, The Shadow looked for any suspicion, knowing that the Chinese girl, rather than Su Yeng, would be the one most likely to see through the disguise of Ming Dwan and recognize Myra Reldon beneath.

There wasn't a trace of suspicion upon Satsu's countenance. Myra's make-up was standing the test. Letting the door ease shut, The Shadow moved away.

With Myra playing the Ming Dwan role to perfection, this was The Shadow's chance to find Margo. He looked into other rooms, and finding them empty, took an obscure staircase that led to the floor above. This was the second story of the three that formed the foundations of the unbuilt skyscraper.

On the second floor, The Shadow heard voices from a room that simply had a screen for its door. The deep mumbles indicated at least half a dozen men, perhaps more. This was evidently the barracks of Su Yeng's Mongol guards.

Not wanting an encounter until he could first release Margo, The Shadow continued up another flight, to see what he could find there.

Directly above the barracks room The Shadow found an empty room, that had an odd-shaped frame in the wall. Whether this represented a window, or a picture, he could not tell, for beyond the frame was a smooth surface that looked like a shutter, though it could have been a wall.

There was a lever beside the frame, and The Shadow drew it down slowly. The action caused the shutter gradually to open.

LOOKING through, The Shadow saw one of the strangest sights he had ever viewed.

He observed a room furnished with chairs and table. He saw a taboret on which lay a wrist watch and a handkerchief. On the floor, a small jade elephant was standing on a book.

Beyond, The Shadow saw a two-story doll house that looked about three feet high. The most curious feature of the scene was the Chinese doll that sat on the threshold of the open-fronted doll house.

The doll was alive!

As The Shadow watched, the doll arose. She was a very pretty doll, even though her face was tearstained and her eyes closed, as though she wanted to shut out the sights about her. However, she wasn't a Chinese doll, at all, even though her black-and-silver costume was an Oriental one.

The doll was Margo Lane!

Slowly pressing the lever, The Shadow worked the barrier shut without letting Margo hear it. As Cranston, The Shadow had given credence to Orvel's claim that Su Yeng could make people small. In observing Margo, The Shadow understood what had happened to Orvel, earlier.

Truly, Professor Su Yeng deserved the title of Devil Master. But the magic of Su Yeng did not perturb The Shadow. It merely gave him the urge to meet the renowned Devil Master in his own preserves, below.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Starting downstairs, The Shadow was past the screened barracks and on the lower staircase, when he heard a door slide open. It was Su Yeng's own door, and had The Shadow hesitated, he would have been spotted on the stairs.

With a quick stride, The Shadow reached one of the side screens in the reception hall, and was just out of sight when Su Yeng appeared, accompanied by Myra and Satsu. That Myra's make-up was still holding good was proven by Su Yeng's words in Chinese.

"Come, Ming Dwan," declaimed Su Yeng in clangy style, "and I shall show you what has happened to the foolish impostor who came here in your stead, last night."

They started up the stairs, but The Shadow did not follow. Instead, he hurried to Su Yeng's own apartment, entered it and looked around. He saw exactly what he wanted – another screen, which, when removed, revealed a door with a wicket.

Opening the door, The Shadow stepped into the room with the doll house.

The wrist watch was on the taboret, and other objects were about, including Margo's compact. However, there was no sign of Margo herself, not even by the doll house. The Shadow gave scant attention to any of these items. He was more interested in a dragon tapestry that was hanging on one wall.

Ripping it away, he found what he expected – a circular opening about two feet in diameter that tunneled straight into the wall.

Shoulder first, The Shadow went through that opening with a swift squirm.

THOSE moments had been fateful ones for Margo Lane. She hadn't heard The Shadow open the wicket, because he had done it quietly. She knew that eight o'clock was very close; indeed, too close. Again seated on the doll-house steps, Margo heard the clatter that she feared.

She looked up.

The huge, hideous face of Su Yeng was peering down at her, and beside that visage, two others. Margo recognized one as Satsu; the other face was also that of a Chinese girl. Enlarged, like Su Yeng, those feminine faces likewise seemed to leer. It seemed that Satsu had found some playmate who was also interested in living dolls.

Margo's nerves were at the breaking point. She was ready to shriek when she heard another clatter, near the level of the floor. Staring across the room, she saw a motion from the baseboard, which was about the height of her shoulders. In the baseboard was a floor plug for an electric outlet, approximately four feet across; one that wasn't in use.

It was the floor plug that produced the clatter. It was flopping open on a hinge. Blackness writhed from it, to land on the floor and take a living shape as it came erect to the stature of twelve inches. Another living doll had joined Margo: a tiny figure cloaked in black.

The doll from the floor plug was The Shadow!

Horror gripped Margo when she realized that her only rescuer had been transformed into a creature as diminutive as herself. She heard The Shadow's laugh, and it was very trivial. Its tiny whisper was drowned instantly by the clangy snarl that came from the giant lips of Su Yeng.

Nevertheless, The Shadow wheeled to look up at the wicket where the huge face glared. Amid the discordant echoes of Su Yeng's snarl, Margo heard The Shadow's laugh again. The black-cloaked pygmy was aiming an automatic toward Su Yeng, and the gun, like its owner, was shrunken. Margo couldn't believe that a puny pellet from such a microscopic weapon could harm the giant Su Yeng and the others with him.

Yet Su Yeng had pushed Satsu and her companion back, and with The Shadow's aim, the face of the Chinese wizard was also bobbing in reverse. This time, the sound that interrupted The Shadow's rising laugh was the spurt of his own automatic!

CHAPTER XVII. BATTLE IN MINIATURE

THE direct result of The Shadow's shot was a great crash of glass. It came tumbling from high above, as though the bullet had struck a skylight. But the glass wasn't frosted; it was plate glass, that scattered in great chunks upon the floor.

Looking up, Margo saw a great, jagged streak across the opening in the wicket. It marked where the glass had broken. The Shadow fired again and brought down the remaining chunks.

Su Yeng and the others were gone, of course, and Margo stared, rather bewildered, at a small, tiny square beyond the larger opening where the observers had been.

The Shadow's firm hand was gripping Margo. He was trying to shake her into a comprehending mood.

"This isn't the room where you were last night," The Shadow told her. "This is another room, three stories high, with all the furniture built oversize!"

Margo couldn't understand. She didn't realize that The Shadow had come through the other room he mentioned, the one that connected directly with Su Yeng's apartment, and had thereby compared it with this one.

Piecing together what happened to Margo had not been difficult for The Shadow, nor did this huge room surprise him. He knew that it must be a portion of the three-story foundation that had not been divided into floors. Convincing Margo of such matters was a difficult proposition, however.

The Shadow pointed up to the tiny opening in the huge, fake door at one side of the giant room.

"Su Yeng was looking through those plates of glass," explained The Shadow, "from a room on the third floor. Curved glass that made you look reduced in size, but when you saw him and people with him, they were enlarged."

Margo nodded, a bit dumbly.

"That's it," she said. "Su Yeng made me little. So very little, that I'm afraid. And you" – she was staring at The Shadow, doubtfully – "you're little, too!"

Argument couldn't persuade Margo otherwise. Her ordeal had been too much. Confusedly, she was talking about "other little dolls" that Su Yeng had handled. The Shadow knew that they must have been mechanical figures. Also, Margo was babbling that Su Yeng had reached through the wicket to clutch her after she became a doll, something which The Shadow knew could not have happened.

THE DEVIL MASTER

He had to snap Margo out of her daze. There was trouble to come, and her co-operation would be needed. Remembering the antidote he had supplied in Orvel's case, The Shadow looked for a mirror.

There was none in the doll house; probably there never had been, otherwise Su Yeng would have known that a mirror could kill the effect of the illusion that he created in the minds of victims.

A sudden laugh came from The Shadow's lips.

Over by the giant taboret lay the over-sized edition of Margo's compact, which Su Yeng had faked, like the huge wrist watch and giant pair of shoes. If Su Yeng didn't know that ordinary mirrors would break his spell, there would be one in the mammoth compact, in case Margo happened to open it.

Hauling Margo with him, The Shadow reached the great round object and found that it had a catch, which yielded when he hammered it with a gun butt. The case popped open on huge springs, revealing a round mirror in the cover. The Shadow urged Margo forward.

She slid to her knees on a powder puff the size of an eiderdown quilt, to stare into a circular mirror as large as the one on the dressing table in her own apartment. Sight of herself made the girl forget her surroundings.

From Margo's raptured look, The Shadow knew that she was coming back to size. Leaving her at the mirror, he turned to be ready for whatever happened next. He did not have to wait. There was a clatter from the top of the twenty-foot table at the side wall of the room. Getting a longer view, The Shadow saw what it meant.

The mah-jongg cabinet was opening. It was on a level with the barracks, and the cabinet itself was nearly six feet high. It was disgorging a squad of Mongols, who deployed across the table top like toy soldiers come to life. They were armed with revolvers which they aimed at The Shadow.

Two automatics drawn, The Shadow beat the Mongols to the first shots. As he clipped them, he dodged to avoid their return fire, which was scarcely necessary, for they were bad shots.

With Margo shielded behind the compact lid, The Shadow was free to draw the wild fire where he liked, so he cut in toward the table itself, to gain its shelter.

One Mongol immediately swung over the edge, to hurl a knife. The Shadow's quick shot hooked the fellow and brought him headlong to the floor.

With the shot, The Shadow took to longer range, which was wise. His foemen were abandoning revolvers, to use knives instead, and The Shadow's dart for other shelter was more than advisable.

The move had double value.

Thinking they had The Shadow actually on the run, Su Yeng's fighters began leaping from table to taboret, to take another jump from there to the floor. They wanted to box in The Shadow, at close quarters, where they could use their knives.

A snarly shout came from the mah-jongg cabinet: Su Yeng's. Though it lacked the huge clamor given by an amplifier that he had used when playing giant in the third-floor observation room, Su Yeng's cry was loud enough for his followers to hear. The Shadow heard it, too. Su Yeng was calling them back. He regarded their foray as folly.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Su Yeng's squad totaled nearly a dozen; more men than The Shadow had supposed. Steady fire was their proper policy to make The Shadow exhaust his ammunition. Those men jumping down to the floor would make themselves easier targets, should The Shadow turn on them. It was too late, however, for them to heed the Devil Master's call.

Halted beside the two-story house, The Shadow delivered a defiant laugh that carried more than challenge. It promised disaster to Su Yeng and his followers. Hesitating jumpers had gone too far; they couldn't get back with Su Yeng and the few still on the wooden plateau beside the mah-jongg citadel.

Into that open-fronted house, past its full-sized furniture, raced The Shadow. Up the interior stairway; he was on the second floor, where he had a better angle toward the great wooden structure that looked like a table.

The Shadow's shots were for Su Yeng and the Mongols beside him; not for those below. His blistering fire sent the Devil Master and his bodyguards back into the huge box from which they had come.

Once again, The Shadow was forcing Su Yeng to retire; again, the demoniac professor was lucky to escape alive.

As for the forgotten fighters who had failed to heed Su Yeng's call, they had no chance to rally. Their hesitation had enabled The Shadow to gain a higher elevation, where he could blast at will from a range beyond the limit of their knife tosses.

One blade did skim close to The Shadow, to bury deep in the wall, but the handle of the quivering knife was a give-away to the direction from which it had come.

Spotting the hurler as he tried to duck behind one of the big posts that Margo had mistaken for giant chair legs, The Shadow sprawled him in his tracks.

The others scattered, with one exception. A Mongol was close to Margo, who, by this time, had sought shelter near the huge doll house. Thinking he could dive from The Shadow's sight and trap Margo at the same time, the Mongol tried it. The moment he began his lunge, he became another example of The Shadow's sharpshooting prowess.

Swinging out through the open front of the house, The Shadow hung to the edge with one hand, while his other fist jabbed a shot that changed the Mongol's lunge into a lurch. Knife flying from his hand, the would-be killer sprawled near Margo's feet.

Dropping down from the house, The Shadow beckoned to Margo. He hadn't forgotten her amid the fray; he had simply been waiting the right opportunity to assure her escape.

With Su Yeng's tribe divided – one half fled, the other half scattered – The Shadow's chance was ripe. He was hurrying Margo across the room, to the outlet which she had once mistaken for a floor socket; but which was actually a two-foot pipe.

Starting Margo through the opening, The Shadow followed, reversing his previous process. This time, he went feet first, working his way through, with one gun poking back to jab away at any enemies who might try to knife him.

He was counting upon Margo to warn of any danger that awaited in the adjoining room. She did give warning, the moment she emerged. The words called back were:

THE DEVIL MASTER

"Come quickly!"

TUMBLING headfirst into the normal-sized room that matched the giant fake, Margo saw two Chinese girls engaged in a stout grapple. One was Satsu; the other, Ming Dwan, otherwise Myra Reldon.

Not having seen them with Su Yeng, The Shadow assumed that they had hurried below, and he knew that he could depend on Myra, since her real identity was unknown.

In fact, Myra did have the upper hand, for she had taken Satsu by surprise. The object of their contention was a revolver which Satsu tried to aim at Margo when the latter appeared.

Fighting furiously, Satsu was working free, but Myra clung grimly to the gun, to keep the Chinese girl from aiming it. That gave Margo time to join the fray; she had a score to settle with Satsu, and she showed it.

The illusion that she had grown back to normal size furnished Margo with surprising strength. She took Satsu right out of Myra's clutch, bowled her against the table and overturned it.

Grabbing the real mah-jongg cabinet, Margo flung it at Satsu as she tried to rise. It smashed past Satsu's arm and struck her in the head. Su Yeng's great-great-granddaughter subsided very promptly, amid the debris of the table.

By then, The Shadow was through the opening. He led the way out through Su Yeng's apartment, into the reception hall, with Myra and Margo close behind him. Su Yeng and his picked men were down the stairs, driving forward with their knives.

Margo tried to drag Myra back, too late; flashing blades were already on their way. Matching the silvery glints came a sweep of gold. The Shadow had plucked up the screen and was twisting it as a shield. Its broad surface, swung to the horizontal, received the skimming blades.

Flinging the shield at the attackers, The Shadow rushed his companions to the exit, where he repeated the process with the other screen. Margo saw the switch and pressed it; the steel door slid open and they sprang across the stunned form of the dragon man.

From the outer passage, The Shadow staved off Su Yeng and his followers with a last few shots. Then began to dash for freedom.

Great gongs were clanging a message from Su Yeng to his outside followers. It meant for them to bar the way, and again, The Shadow showed quick strategy.

Divining the message of the gongs, he translated it in terms of scurrying footsteps up ahead. Su Yeng was sending word to bar the joss-house route. The quick thinkers among his outside crew were obeying the mandate. Preferring to deal with the slower wits, The Shadow told Margo and Myra to point him toward the White Dragon.

Between them, they remembered it, and The Shadow cleared the path, using the little gun that Myra had taken from Satsu. The moments he would have needed to reload his own automatics were therefore saved, and they proved very precious.

Su Yeng and his maddened Mongols were close behind when The Shadow and his two companions reached the tea shop. Other guards were cutting back into passages, too, for the big gongs had begun to bang a different cadence.

THE DEVIL MASTER

The little gun was empty. Its shots had sent blockaders ducking, all along the route. There were two men in the tea shop, and both sprang for The Shadow. His left hand was free; his right had an automatic as a bludgeon. He warded off one attacker and sledged a blow to the other's skull, at the same time snapping an order to Myra and Margo, telling them to keep on through.

They did. Behind them, The Shadow was grappling with the last guard, and the girls were tormented by the thought that the lone adversary might prove a stumbling block. Somehow, The Shadow couldn't seem to shake him loose.

Looking back from the doorway, Margo gave a horrified cry as she saw the two figures reel apart. One, twisted in a black cloak, his hat jammed down over his head, went headlong back into the arms of Su Yeng and two Mongols as they arrived.

Margo saw blades bury deep into the victim, but her shudder ended as Myra pointed. Another figure was diving their way, that of a long, lithe man in evening clothes, who looked much like Lamont Cranston, though Margo couldn't see his face.

THE SHADOW had turned the trick on Su Yeng again; this time, more deliberately. He had slugged his last opponent, wrapped him in the cloak, and added the hat for good measure. He was leaving those souvenirs for Su Yeng to pluck from the knifed body of one of his murderous dupes.

There was no time for congratulations. Shoving Myra and Margo ahead of him, The Shadow carried them right out to the street, where Moe's cab shot up, its door wide open. The girls were inside and the cab away before Margo could catch her breath.

Margo, herself, was still clad in Chinese costume, as was the girl beside her; but the other looked Chinese, as well. As the cab wheeled the corner, the other girl explained that she was called Ming Dwan but that she was really Myra Reldon.

Margo scarcely heard. She was looking back as the cab made the turn. The Shadow wasn't with them, and Margo hoped that she could see him. This time it should have been easy, since The Shadow was uncloaked; but the streets of Chinatown in this particular sector were dark enough for The Shadow to perform a complete fade-out, even in the guise of Cranston.

The only token of the rescuer's departure was a peal of parting mirth that certainly wasn't Cranston's tone. It was as untraceable as the strange being who uttered it: the laugh of The Shadow!

CHAPTER XVIII. A QUESTION OF POWER

DR. ROY TAM looked very solemn as he sat behind his desk in the waning light of afternoon. He had a visitor in the person of a calm-mannered American named Lamont Cranston. Tam, however, was not deceived by his visitor's leisurely pose. He knew that Cranston's guise was one adopted by The Shadow.

"The power of Su Yeng is halted," declared Tam, "but it is not broken. It can never be, until we have invaded his lair and brought the Devil Master to task."

"Which will prove difficult," returned Cranston, "considering that the police have disregarded last night's trouble as unimportant."

Tam shook his head.

THE DEVIL MASTER

"The police! It is so often their way. They think the trouble at the White Dragon was merely a trifling brawl. They have never even heard of Professor Su Yeng. If they did" – Tam's tone was emphatic – "I really believe they would still consider Prince Fuji Yeddo to be more important, and more powerful!"

The faintest flicker of a smile was momentarily upon Cranston's lips. He spoke.

"In that case, Tam," he said quietly, "the police would, for once, be quite correct."

Tam's amazement was complete.

"Which is the more powerful?" queried Cranston. "One who burrows deep into the ground, or one who vanishes off into the air? Which is the more dangerous: the beast that growls from its den, or the creature that lurks where it may stalk its prey?"

Tam's almond eyes were actually round.

"Both Su Yeng and Prince Yeddo have similar designs," expressed The Shadow. "Each can recuperate, and begin a new campaign. Both will menace you, Tam, because they know you are my friend."

Something in the tone erased the troubled look that formed on Tam's brow. It was The Shadow speaking, rather than Cranston. Though still leisurely, the visitor had adopted a firmer speech.

"The great parade begins this evening," Tam rubbed his chin as he spoke. "The lions will dance, and forty men will carry the great flag through the streets of Chinatown, that hundreds, from their windows, may toss offerings of money to aid the arms of China."

He paused and looked out into the dusk, listening to the bursts of firecrackers that were beginning with sundown. This was a night of celebration among the Chinese. Tam wondered what menace might hang over it.

"Su Yeng covets those funds," Tam declared. "As I said, his power is halted, but it will revive. You are right, Ying Ko, when you say that Prince Yeddo is more powerful. He will attempt to nullify what the money will accomplish – whether my loyal friends retain it, or Su Yeng steals it."

Another pause. Tam returned to his desk and turned on the lamp. His face was very weary.

"It is hopeless," he said at last. "Attacking Su Yeng is beyond me. Finding Prince Yeddo is utterly impossible. The law has searched everywhere –"

"Except one place."

Tam shrugged at The Shadow's tone.

"You may know the one place, Ying Ko," Tam said. "But how can it concern me?"

"Because that place is here in Chinatown!"

Tam was drawing the cord of another lamp. He couldn't have jumped higher if the thing had shocked him.

"Prince Yeddo – here!"

THE DEVIL MASTER

"Precisely!" The tone was Cranston's, but his forward–stooping figure cast a strange, silhouetted profile across Tam's desk. "That is why the police have not traced him. They would not expect a Japanese to be hidden in Chinatown. Nor did you, Tam."

"Frankly, I did not. But where, in Chinatown, could Yeddo be?"

The Shadow's whispered laugh was reminiscent.

"It was curious that Amnok, the Korean, should have opened the way for me to reach Su Yeng. So curious, that I suspect another brain behind it. Once before, Prince Yeddo tried to match me against Professor Su Yeng. Assuming that Yeddo did buy out Amnok, we can then place Yeddo's present headquarters –"

"On the floor above the joss house!" interrupted Tam excitedly. "You are right, Ying Ko! That is where Prince Yeddo would certainly be."

AWAY from Tam's desk, The Shadow was Cranston no longer. He had taken a cloak and hat from a rack in the corner, the spare garments that he had used in this campaign. Tam could scarcely see his friend amid the swirl of those garments, until The Shadow stepped forward.

Reaching for the map of Chinatown that lay on Tam's desk, The Shadow spread it. His finger marked the location of the building whose third story held the joss house.

"See to it, Tam," he ordered, "that the lions cease their dance when they have passed this spot. Let the paraders cluster, and be ready. There may be work at hand for your loyal men."

"They will be ready," promised Tam. "As many as you may need, Ying Ko."

"A few may do, in Yeddo's case," The Shadow returned, "but we shall need many later. Remember: Amnok is the key to both the men we seek. This may be our chance to invade the premises of Su Yeng, also."

Leaving Tam's, The Shadow skirted Chinatown. Streets were alight tonight, giving the evening an unusual brilliance. Though The Shadow might have glided the thoroughfare unobserved, others could not do the same. Those others were his secret agents, stout fighters, picked for their ability. He wanted them to lead the van in the thrust through the joss house.

Bringing the agents in from the other end of the alley that led by the joss–house building, The Shadow stationed them in suitable lurking spots. Peering from the alley, he saw a stir along the streets and heard the strains of music. The parade had begun; soon the dancing lions would arrive, followed by the bearers of the great canvas flag.

Returning through the alley, The Shadow moved into the doorway that led up to the joss house. His watching agents saw a streak of vanishing blackness; that was all.

There were two rooms on the floor above the joss house. The rear room was oddly furnished, for an obscure apartment in Chinatown. Its furnishings were delicate, though they showed signs of having been moved about, quite often. Detail for detail, the furniture was the same that The Shadow had seen on his first, and enforced, visit with Prince Fuji Yeddo.

Even to the man behind the desk.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Calm and serene, that figure was Prince Yeddo in the flesh. Unperturbed by his location, unheeding the fanfare that marked the Chinese parade outside, the Japanese was writing a letter in a slow, painstaking hand, his eyes upon the page before him.

Indeed an image of calmness, Prince Yeddo fitted with The Shadow's claim. Compared with Professor Su Yeng, the silent Japanese was a symbol of greater power.

Slight were the sounds that came from the stairway outside of Yeddo's room. Engrossed as he was, it was not surprising that the Japanese did not hear them. Perhaps Prince Yeddo was mapping new plans for becoming shogun of all Nippon, a warlord whose future would be built upon the foundations of the present militaristic regime.

Nor did the eyes of Prince Yeddo raise as darkness glided in from the doorway. He couldn't have seen the approaching streak of black, for it didn't quite reach the desk. Its motion, however, was rapid, and it materialized quickly into the cloaked shape of The Shadow, master over darkness.

An advancing hand thrust from the cloak folds, to push an automatic ahead. Then, for the first time, darkness touched the desk.

Yeddo's fingers dropped their pen. With a swift, yet jerky motion, his hand shoved beneath the papers. It twisted upward, bringing a revolver straight for the invader in black. It was such a move as a striking snake would make, the sort that could have surprised even an unusual foe. But Yeddo's enemy was very unusual.

Quick though the lift of Yeddo's head, with its sharp black eyes that fairly flashed their venom, his cloaked opponent acted first. The automatic tongued before Yeddo's finger could tug its revolver trigger. The bash of a heavy caliber bullet lifted Yeddo right out of his chair. Like a figure of straw, he keeled backward and lay sprawled upon the floor.

EYES from beneath the hat brim looked across the desk and saw the stain of blood that grew upon Yeddo's Tuxedo jacket. The bullet had found its target, squarely in the heart.

There had been no time for parley; there could be none for regret. The one strange feature of this duel was the short, blunt manner of it. So soon had it ended, that the whole thing seemed unreal.

Only the echoes of the fatal shot persisted. There was no whispered laugh such as marked so many of The Shadow's triumphs. Motionless, the cloaked victor stood with eyes upon the vanquished, almost as if he expected Prince Yeddo to revive. Even with the evidence that stained the white shirt front, it was difficult to believe that the plotting Japanese was dead.

Especially difficult for Prince Fuji Yeddo to believe it!

Out from a curtained closet, stepped Prince Yeddo, the real Yeddo, twin to the sprawled form on the floor. He came from a most strategic spot, for the curtained door was behind the figure of The Shadow.

With cat's creep, Yeddo advanced, confident that his own murderer could not hear him. In his hand Yeddo held a revolver; he gave it a sudden thrust that planted the muzzle squarely between the cloaked shoulders.

Then spoke the choppy voice of the real Yeddo:

"I expected The Shadow, and he came here. He is puzzled because I was such easy prey. It is time that he found out why. Let him lay his gun upon the table, and he shall learn!"

There was a threat in that dry tone, telling that instant death would be The Shadow's due if he did not comply with the conditions of Prince Fuji Yeddo, the dead man who still lived!

CHAPTER XIX. TRICKS OF DEATH

THE clank of a heavy automatic, striking on the writing table, brought choppy approval from Prince Yeddo. Obliging, the Japanese withdrew his own gun, but kept it leveled toward his cloaked foe.

Stepping around the table, Yeddo was still a constant threat, even when he smugly indicated the sprawled figure on the floor.

Seen beside Yeddo himself, the dummy shape was all the more remarkable. To the last detail, it was the replica of Yeddo. In a sense, it was actually Yeddo – as he, the living man, explained.

"Surely, The Shadow has heard of our Japanese artisans," expressed Yeddo. "I refer to those who construct images of the living from living men themselves. Of course, it means sacrifices from the living.

"My case was no exception. My hair, my teeth, even my fingernails, went into the construction of this figure. More than that, portions of my flesh and a quantity of my blood.

"Bit by bit, month by month, year by year, this replica was made. Usually, such figures can deceive, even when motionless, but such did not satisfy me. I had a skilled craftsman add mechanical features, to make my twin seem alive. The hand that you saw writing was actuated by the mechanism.

"Its reach for the gun was my own idea. It needed a more recent invention. This!" Whipping out a table drawer, Yeddo showed the device in question, an electric eye. "One touch of darkness across the beam of light, and the dummy hand reached for a dummy gun!"

Stooping, Yeddo lifted the revolver from the figure's fist and flung it on the table beside the automatic. The revolver broke. It was a perfect imitation made of glass, necessarily light, to be lifted by the dummy hand.

"As for the blood," continued Yeddo, his tone quite serious, "it is my own. True, it is contained in a special chamber situated in the figure's heart, or where its heart should be. Not a large compartment, but such was unnecessary. I knew that The Shadow's aim would be very good."

Interested in his own discussion, the real Yeddo had become quite engrossed in his imitation twin. He was stooping lower, as if desirous that The Shadow should compare the faces, particularly the eyes. Those eyes, as jet-hued as Yeddo's own, fascinated the bowing Japanese. He let his head turn, so that his gaze actually met the glassy stare.

Yeddo's gun hand was slightly lowered. The opportunity was made to order for The Shadow. There was a quick swish from the cloak, as a hand sped for the discarded automatic and started an aim for the real Prince Yeddo.

Swift action, but not swift enough. Yeddo was rapid, too.

He was watching for such a move from The Shadow. Even though turned away, Yeddo could see the writing desk, reflected in the convex eyes of his own image. Nor was Yeddo's gun hand as careless as it looked. He had only a few inches to lift it, and he pressed the trigger at the finish of that jerk. His revolver talked, ahead of the automatic.

THE DEVIL MASTER

There was a slump from the front of the table as a cloaked form went to the floor, carrying a smoking automatic with it. Touching his ear lobe, Yeddo seemed disappointed that it hadn't been carried away by the bullet that whizzed so close to him. The ear lobe would have been a nice addition to Yeddo's dummy figure.

For an instant, Yeddo doubted that his own shot had scored. Coming around the table, he stared at the crumpled shape in blackness. Stooping, the Japanese smiled blandly as he lifted away the slouch hat, to see how the features of Cranston looked in death.

Maybe Yeddo thought they were going to look funny. It was the Jap's own face, however that held such an expression. His smile took a twist that froze.

He was looking at the dead face of Professor Su Yeng!

NO wonder there had been no laugh. This wasn't the Shadow! Glaring, Prince Yeddo realized that he should have known who his opponent really was. Yes, The Shadow would have laughed. In fancy, Prince Yeddo could hear the mirth that should have come.

Or was it fancy?

No! The creeping taunt was real. It was coming from the doorway, and Yeddo stiffened as he heard it change to words, that issued a command.

"Let your gun fall, Yeddo," spoke The Shadow. "Raise your hands, and turn toward me. No – the other way."

Responding, Yeddo saw how futile a quick shot would have been. The Shadow was no longer by the doorway; he had shifted to the closet, where the curtain had hidden Yeddo at the time when Su Yeng arrived. Early enough to listen in on Yeddo's story of the dummy figure, The Shadow obliged with an explanation of his own.

"Remember how I dealt with you at Wendyke's," The Shadow told Yeddo. "You didn't see yourself wrapped in my cloak. Professor Su Yeng did, and nearly fell for the trick. Last night, it deceived him even better. I left him a hat and cloak, so that he would not forget it.

"You have proven yourself craftier than Su Yeng, Yeddo, but he outguessed you on one point. He suspected the treachery of Amnok, and decided that you were behind the game. Independently, he made a plan like mine: to trap you, here above the joss house. Very clever of Su Yeng, to come here as The Shadow. Very clever of you, Yeddo, to have your imitation twin awaiting the visitor that you mistook for me."

Yeddo's leer was lipless, ugly. His lowering eyes saw the manila-hued face of Su Yeng, yellowing in death. He had wanted the death of the man who aspired to empire, but he had not wanted it so soon. Earlier, Yeddo and Su Yeng had agreed on one thing: that The Shadow should die first.

True, Yeddo had paved the way for The Shadow to reach Su Yeng, but only on the Chinaman's own preserves. Yeddo hadn't expected The Shadow to return alive, after visiting Su Yeng. It just hadn't occurred to Yeddo that Su Yeng might change his own ideas, after a visit from The Shadow.

Prince Yeddo had lost Su Yeng as an ally before he slew the cloaked Devil Master!

Eyes lifting, Yeddo met The Shadow's gaze. A choice was forming in the brain behind the blackish, beady eyes. It might be that The Shadow would erase Yeddo's crimes from the book, considering that the Japanese had disposed of the more murderous, though less crafty, Professor Su Yeng.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Either Yeddo must let his own case rest with The Shadow's judgment; or he would have to battle the cloaked arbiter on terms most difficult. Weighing the situation, Yeddo made his choice. He began with a hopeless shrug.

"I have done no murder," he pleaded. "I tried to kill Langford Frame, but I did not succeed. I did kill Gifford Wendyke, but it was in self-defense. You will recall" – those gimlet eyes were fixed upon The Shadow – "that Wendyke was a willing partner in something which, in his case, could be termed crime.

"So, what else can I say, or do?" Again, Yeddo shrugged. "I am helpless. I have no weapon. Not even darkness, in which I might hide. You have found darkness useful, Honorable Shadow. It could serve me quite as well as you, if I had it!"

There was significance to the pause amid Yeddo's choppy speech. Though his tone did not alter, his final words were a command. They brought the darkness that the wily Japanese wanted. It came with blanketing suddenness, very surprisingly, though the cause, itself, was simple.

Yeddo's words had carried through a flimsy door, into the front room, where Ishi and other followers were quartered. Knowing that such men would probably be about, The Shadow had stationed himself near the curtained corner, so that he could watch the door to the front room.

There was nothing, however, to indicate that the lights could be controlled from there. That was Yeddo's neatest trick, reserved for this very emergency.

WITH blotting blackness, The Shadow fired, his gunshot coming like a lurid knife stab. He didn't expect the bullet to wing Yeddo. The stab was just a feint in the darkness.

It would have found Yeddo, had the Japanese gone after his own gun, lying on the floor, a thing which The Shadow positively doubted. Still, the shot was wise, for if Yeddo did the unexpected and grabbed for the lost gun, he would be dangerous.

Otherwise, Yeddo was no menace. The Shadow, too, was skilled in emergency tactics.

With his shot, The Shadow wheeled to the stairway door. He was through it before Ishi and the other bodyguards could arrive. From the top of the stairs, The Shadow heard Prince Yeddo chop an order from somewhere off in the darkness, proving that the Jap had really dodged.

Yeddo wanted his small tribe of followers to go after The Shadow. Suicidal or not, Ishi and men like him were the sort who would attempt it.

From the stairway, The Shadow fired two quick shots. Enough to make Ishi and the others hesitate; also, the shots were a signal. Carrying down the stairs, they could be heard by waiting agents. The expected signal would bring enough men from The Shadow to deal directly with Yeddo and the jujitsu crew.

The response to The Shadow's shots came instantaneously. From the dimness of the joss house, one flight down, figures bobbed toward the stairs. The Shadow saw a flood of upturned yellow faces coming his way.

Those couldn't be Tam's men, fresh from the parade. The Shadow's own agents were supposed to lead the drive up to the joss house. These were invaders from another source. They belonged to the dead Devil Master, Professor Su Yeng!

THE DEVIL MASTER

Not only had Su Yeng anticipated The Shadow, in finding Yeddo's hide-away. The Chinese professor had also foreseen that Yeddo would have followers on hand. Therefore, Su Yeng had brought his own men along the passage from the underground lair. These remnants of his Mongol crew had filtered into the joss house after The Shadow had passed that key-spot!

They wouldn't mistake The Shadow for Su Yeng very long. They'd expect him to rip off his slouch hat, to show the face of their master, Su Yeng. If he didn't, their knives would flash his way.

Shots into that yellow surge would also be a give-away. They were too many to down with only a few shots. A more prolonged fire would be a fatal delay. It would give Yeddo's jujitsu crew their chance to pile upon The Shadow.

Again, a situation called for the unexpected, and The Shadow provided it. Wheeling before Su Yeng's crowd could find out who he really was, the intrepid fighter flung himself back into the room above, straight into the arms of Yeddo's crew!

So rapid was that drive, that few hands found The Shadow in the darkness. Even the hard-clutching Ishi lost his hold on the cloak that whisked through his fingers. The Shadow was breaking through toward the front room, where Yeddo's men had been quartered.

With the door open, vague light came from that room. It was the glow of Chinatown, cast through an open front window four floors above the street.

A choppy order sounded from near the writing desk. It was Yeddo's call for his followers to drop away and let The Shadow find the doorway. Yeddo had his gun again, and hoped to clip the black-cloaked fighter when his figure showed against the glow. But The Shadow heard the order, too.

Whirling like a human tornado, he plucked Yeddo's men and spun them through the doorway ahead of him. With that tumbling tribe went Ishi. Hard after them, The Shadow followed, his dive so low that Yeddo could not spot him.

Nevertheless, Yeddo fired. He punctuated his belated gun stabs with shouts for his men to grab The Shadow. Surging Chinese were at the top of the stairs, and Yeddo, too, was springing for the front room. Through the door, he slammed it after him, then whipped about to see how Ishi and the rest were faring.

YEDDO'S laugh was harsh.

His men had found The Shadow. They couldn't miss him, in this room where there was partial light. His guns were away, for The Shadow knew they would be useless in a cramped fight with jujitsu experts. If he survived this struggle, he would need his bullets against the arriving horde of Mongols. The question was: Could The Shadow survive that long?

Not in Prince Yeddo's estimate. Watching the rapid swirl, Yeddo waited for the moment that he wanted. A bad moment for The Shadow; one that he should have foreseen. It came when he had sprawled some of the jujitsu men between himself and the window and was twisting away from others, in a forward direction. A command, in quick-spoken Japanese, came from Prince Yeddo.

As one, three sprawled jujitsu fighters came up to meet The Shadow, all supplying the same throw, in unison. Singly, not one could have prevailed. Together, their efforts worked. All gripping The Shadow, they somersaulted backward, driving their feet straight upward.

Those half kicks provided a tremendous circular throw that sent The Shadow headlong, straight for the open window. His hands, flying ahead to break the fall, had no time to spread and grab the window frame.

Prince Fuji Yeddo had turned the final trick of death. His men had sent The Shadow on a long, arrowing dive to the street that lay forty feet below!

CHAPTER XX. BATTLE'S END

HALTED along the narrow Chinatown street, the dancing lions and the other paraders had heard the sound of gunfire from the floor above the joss house. All were looking up, as were hundreds of spectators who lined the sidewalks. Strange things could happen in Chinatown, but never had anything equaled this.

As they saw a black-cloaked figure hurtle from the window and take a long plunge toward the street, the watchers lifted their awed voices in one huge murmur:

"Ying Ko!"

Sight of The Shadow's dive toward doom was horrible. It seemed incredible that he, the champion of justice, should be flung to such an inglorious end before the eyes of those loyal Chinese who esteemed him. So incredible, that it couldn't happen. The few who suddenly saw what really lay below, were too late to shout the tidings.

Finishing his forty-foot dive with a speed that could have cracked the asphalt, The Shadow struck – and bounced!

Naturally, he didn't hit the street. The paving wouldn't have provided that startling rebound. What The Shadow did strike was the great contribution flag that was halted, with its forty bearers. Purposely wide, so that tossed money would not fail to land on it, the huge canvas stretched from curb to curb. The Shadow couldn't have missed it had he tried!

Ten feet, The Shadow bounced, along with a flurry of lifted paper money and a peppering hail of silver coin. He somersaulted like an acrobat, landed on his feet near the edge of the great outspread banner, and took another bounce, this one a spring across the heads of startled Chinese lined deeply along the sidewalk.

Turning, the spectators saw The Shadow dart for the alley that offered access to the joss house. There, Dr. Tam awaited.

"It was amazing, Ying Ko!" gasped Tam. "I, too, was startled when I saw you coming from that window. I should have guessed that you intended a quick exit, should emergency require!"

The Shadow interrupted further congratulations.

"Your men, Tam. They have gone up through the joss house –"

"A dozen of them, Ying Ko. Along with your own followers. They hope to find Prince Fuji Yeddo."

"They will, and more." The Shadow's tone was grim. "Professor Su Yeng was in it, too. He is dead, but his Mongols are out to avenge him. Send all the men you can, Tam."

Alone, The Shadow sped through the alley entrance, while Tam was shouting for reserves. Dashing up two flights, he reached the joss house. He could hear sounds of battle from the floor above.

THE DEVIL MASTER

Yeddo's faction had clashed with Su Yeng's, and a third group was attacking both. The Shadow's own agents, plus Tam's hand-picked Chinese. They needed leadership that only The Shadow could personally supply.

The cloaked leader turned toward the final staircase. As he did, he glimpsed the body of Amnok, lying on the floor of the deserted joss house. The Shadow had seen the dead Korean earlier – the sight had told him that Su Yeng must have come to deal with Prince Yeddo. Amnok was lying over by the grotesque idol that marked the passage leading to Su Yeng's lair.

It wasn't sight of Amnok that made The Shadow pause. The idol itself was moving outward. Knowing what the motion signified, The Shadow sprang across the floor. Before he could reach the idol, it swung wide. From out of the aperture came more of Su Yeng's fighters, headed by the man in dragon costume. Behind them was Satsu, pointing the tribe ahead!

The girl was following an order that her great-great-grandparent must have given her. Since Su Yeng had not returned, Satsu was sending the reserves. These added battlers, if they reached the floor above, would turn the tide the wrong way before Tam's loyal helpers could appear.

At least, The Shadow had headed them off, but that made it even worse. Seeing Ying Ko, archenemy of Su Yeng, the newcomers turned upon him. Most of them were half across the joss house when they spied The Shadow.

He had sprung past the body of Amnok, to reach the wall. At this moment, The Shadow was taking a blind chance, one more dangerous than his plunge to the street.

Directly above Amnok's upward staring face was a large knob on the wall. The Shadow had noted it before, and had also observed that Amnok's dead hand was formed into a loose fist. It indicated that Amnok had tried to grab the ornamental knob when attacked by Professor Su Yeng.

Chancing all, The Shadow tugged the knob.

THE result was a tremendous explosion. It proved that the old joss house was an even greater trap than The Shadow had suspected. Its walls caved in with a thunderous slam, hurling heavy idols ahead of them. The dragon man and his companions were buried by the crashing debris. Two persons, alone, remained unscathed.

One was The Shadow, standing at the safe spot by the wall, the place where Amnok would have remained had he ever loosed the trap himself. The other was Satsu; she was still in the passage behind the grotesque idol, which, of the many statues in the place, had been the only one to stay upright.

Amnok's body, of course, remained untouched, for it was at The Shadow's feet. Rising dust, sprinkling the joss-house keeper's dead face, traced a smile along Amnok's lips, a leer as grotesque as the expression of the lone idol that glared upon the scene.

Before Satsu could recover from her daze, The Shadow caught her wrist and drew her across the joss house, guiding her stumbling footsteps over the chunky idols and the men who lay beneath.

At the stairs, The Shadow saw Tam leading a group from below. Thrusting Satsu in Tam's direction, The Shadow made for the steps that led above.

He came upon pitched battle in Yeddo's apartment. Amid the wreckage of the furnishings, the trapped shogun and his men were in a death lock with the followers of Su Yeng. The Shadow's agents, with Tam's Chinese, were trying to take over. So far, they were doing well, but a sharp surprise was due.

THE DEVIL MASTER

With battle lost, the remaining followers of Yeddo and Su Yeng forgot their quarrel. Lunging from each other's clutch, they drove for the new invaders. Jujitsu men were grabbing The Shadow's agents and Tam's men, to toss them at the drawn knives of Mongols. It would have gone badly for the clean-up crew, had The Shadow not been in the doorway.

His guns supplied the deficiency. They showed no favors. Yeddo's tribe tasted bullets, as did Su Yeng's crew. Jujitsu experts lost their holds; knife hurlers wavered, unable to drive home their stabs.

Released, The Shadow's agents and Tam's men flung themselves upon the wounded remnants of two evil factions and smothered them to the floor.

Stepping forward, The Shadow reached the dead form of Professor Su Yeng, that had been lying underfoot all during the struggle. Picking up his spare cloak and hat, The Shadow threw the much-trampled garments across his arm. He turned to greet Dr. Tam, who had brought Satsu with him.

Subdued, the girl was staring at the body of Su Yeng. In death, she saw him as the monster that he was. Su Yeng's spell over his great-great-granddaughter was gone.

Dr. Tam spoke earnestly to The Shadow.

"Your men are to be congratulated, Ying Ko," said Tam. "See. They have found the body of Prince Fuji Yeddo."

The Shadow looked. He saw that Tam was mistaken. The figure that The Shadow's agents lifted was the dummy likeness of the Japanese prince. The Shadow gestured toward the doorway to the other room.

"Congratulate your own men, Tam. They are bringing us the real Prince Yeddo."

They were, and Yeddo was still alive, though feeble. His black eyes, oddly filmed, stared unbelievably at The Shadow. Choppily, Yeddo spat the words:

"You cannot be The Shadow!"

Whispery mirth responded. It jarred Yeddo's limp form upward between the Chinese who supported him.

"There was something else you did not see at Wendyke's," declared The Shadow calmly. "It was the way in which Su Yeng escaped. His plunge from the window was broken when he struck the top of a touring car.

"It was luck in Su Yeng's case, but not in mine. I had something better, waiting below your window, Yeddo. We can only credit Su Yeng with giving me the idea."

The sweep of The Shadow's hand carried Yeddo's gaze with it, toward the face of Su Yeng. Sighting the rival that he had slain, Yeddo gave a last grimace. With it, his body shuddered forward from the hands that held him.

Striking the floor, a dead weight, Prince Fuji Yeddo stretched half across the dead shape of Professor Su Yeng.

Projecting from the center of Yeddo's back was the blade of a Mongol knife, that had been thrust there earlier in the fray. The man who would be shogun was dead, like the emperor who would never rule. Prince Fuji Yeddo and Professor Su Yeng, planners of separate schemes to rule the Orient, had met again – in death!

THE DEVIL MASTER

Dr. Tam was thinking in terms of three. He included The Shadow in the trio, and knew him to be the greatest of the triple rivals. For The Shadow still lived, to proclaim the triumph of justice over two arch-plotters of evil.

SILENTLY, The Shadow turned toward the stairs, drawing Dr. Tam along. Obediently, Satsu came with them, down to the joss house, where The Shadow turned both companions toward the passage beyond the idol. He was taking them to Su Yeng's underground lair, where Satsu would have opportunity to amend the fact she had served in Su Yeng's cause.

The Shadow had not forgotten those friends of Tam's who had disappeared. He knew that they must be prisoners somewhere in the underground domain. Satsu would know where to find them. Once she had aided in their release, the Chinese girl would be free.

Understanding, Satsu was eager to aid. She went ahead with Tam; The Shadow swung the idol shut.

Coming down from the floor above, other men stopped to survey the wreckage of the joss house. It was a strange scene, that looked like the work of a giant hand. Stranger, however, was the sound the viewers heard.

Tam's men stared, in awe, at the solitary idol that was grinning its ownership of the premises. Even The Shadow's agents stood amazed. For the sound they heard came from the fantastic statue of discolored bronze, out of features that were graven from a nightmare.

A trailing laugh that marked the end of evil, the tone transformed the ugly idol's leer into an approving smile, as though the joss, itself, relished the small part that it had played in the victorious cause. Such was the illusion wrought by the fading mirth that marked the departure of The Shadow.

Two schemes of empire were gone, along with their authors, Professor Su Yeng and Prince Fuji Yeddo. By pitting evil against evil, The Shadow had brought triumph to the side of right, and thus preserved his rule over an empire of his own.

His, The Shadow's, was the realm of justice!

THE END