

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

by Maxwell Grant

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CHAPTER I. CRIME'S CHANCE

THE banquet was over. Affable men in evening clothes were strolling out into the hotel lobby, shaking hands as they said good night. Not a large crowd, but they represented wealth. That was one reason why they had banqueted at this hotel, the swankiest in Denver.

A little group remained at the door of the banquet room. Center of the cluster was a wheezy, stoopish man whose frail body seemed ill-proportioned, especially to the old-fashioned dress suit that he was wearing.

He had the eye, the air of a fanatic. His voice rose to a hoarse pitch, as quiet-mannered men tried to humor him.

“You are all crazy, here in Denver!” wheezed the frail man. “I tell you that my invention was not at fault! Atmospheric conditions ruined the demonstration!”

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“We understand, Lanyon.” Someone clapped a friendly hand upon the frail man's shoulders. “But you'd better try it elsewhere. Afterward, we may be interested.”

“That's right,” urged another of the group. “You're tired, Lanyon. Over–strained. You'd better go up to your room. Don't forget that you're leaving on the midnight limited.”

They conducted the frail man to an elevator. Once he was aboard, with the door shut behind him, the members of the group showed relief. Their handshakes were a form of congratulation, as they parted in the lobby.

A hotel guest, standing near the desk, had observed the scene. He turned to question the clerk:

“Who was the old nut?”

“Harvey Lanyon,” replied the clerk, with a grin. “Calls himself the Rainmaker. Thinks that a machine he's invented will end droughts. But he hasn't been able to sell the idea.”

Four men were lugging a bulky burden from the banquet room, out through a side door of the lobby. The object looked like a large aquarium, for it was oblong–shaped and its sides were large panes of glass.

The clerk pointed out that the glass walls were misty on the inside. “That's all old Lanyon ever gets,” he chuckled. “A lot of fog. No wonder he's foggy in the bean! Unless he's a fake, which some people claim he is.”

“If he gets fog, though,” remarked the guest, “maybe he can bring rain. What's his system, anyway?”

“He explodes some little puffballs inside the glass box,” explained the clerk. “He says that if an aviator dropped a lot of big ones a couple of miles up, they would produce clouds, and that would mean rain.”

A tall man, immaculate in well–fitted evening clothes, had strolled from the banquet room. He paused to light a cigarette, while he watched a crew put Lanyon's rain demonstrator aboard a truck.

There was something hawklike about the tall man's features, that went with the keenness of his gaze. His face, however, was impassive as he stepped toward an elevator. It had the inflexible mold of a stony Aztec god. “Kent Allard,” identified the clerk, in a whisper. “The famous aviator! They say he just happened to stop off in Denver during a transcontinental hop. But I've got a hunch he wanted to get a look at Lanyon's goofy invention.”

HIGH in a tenth–floor room, frail Harvey Lanyon was staring from a window, glowering at the famous “mile–high” tower patterned after the campanile in Venice. That sight didn't make Lanyon feel any better. It simply made him mutter again his argument regarding atmospheric pressure. After all, Denver had an altitude of approximately one mile above sea level. Maybe that was why his tiny puffballs had produced nothing more than mist inside the glass box.

Lanyon was forgetting arguments that he had used in other cities. In Galveston, he had blamed salt air from the Gulf of Mexico. In Tulsa, he had said that the experiment had been made too soon after a settling dust storm.

Why couldn't these Denver financiers recognize the truth? Lanyon's device certainly produced fog. In turn, fog meant clouds. From clouds would come rain.

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Still scowling, Lanyon remembered the midnight limited. He began to pack his suitcase. In it, he placed a metal box large enough that it could have held three volumes of an encyclopedia. That box was loaded with a few dozen of the inventor's precious puffballs.

There was a sucking sound from a corner of the room. Lanyon didn't notice it, nor did he observe what happened along the floor. Particles of dust stirring; they whisked into a hole drilled in the baseboard.

Nor did Lanyon recognize that this room was tight—closed, the locks of the windows jammed in place; edges of carpet were poked tight beneath two doors—one leading to the corridor, the other to a connecting room.

A vacuum device was sucking away air. Its suction was strong enough to overcome any air that might enter through keyholes and smaller apertures.

As Lanyon started to close the suitcase, he felt his head swim. He steadied himself against a chair. He thought it was just another of the sickening spells that he had experienced, like many persons unused to the high altitude of Denver.

This time, there was an added cause. The suction pipe was thinning atmosphere that was already too rare to suit Harvey Lanyon.

The "Rainmaker's" ears were thrumming, but his hearing remained acute. Despite the vertigo that gripped him, he suddenly tilted his head. He was hearing a sound that he could actually notice, for he remembered it from twice before.

Once in Galveston; again in Tulsa; the muffled buzz of a wireless set, some where close by; signals coming through in a code that made no sense. Lanyon knew Morse, and he recognized that the call must be a secret message, like the others had been.

Head tilted lower, Lanyon listened for the signature. There it was! The same that he had previously heard, but quite as mysterious as the message. For the signature wasn't even a name. It was just a curious succession of dashes and dots, that came in uniform procession.

Two dashes—three dots—two dashes—three dots—two dashes—three dots—two dashes.

Harvey Lanyon lifted his head, gripped by instinctive alarm. Crawly wiggles of black came before his eyes. The room was spinning; so were the lights of Denver, shining, through the window. Then came a click; a puff of reviving air. Viselike arms caught Lanyon, settled him in a chair.

Lanyon steadied, to recognize Kent Allard. The tall, hawk-faced rescuer had come through the connecting doorway. He had unlocked the door just in time to give Lanyon needed air.

NODDING in response to Lanyon's grateful mutters, Allard located the sound of the vacuum pipe. He stepped across the room, stooped beside it. He waited, timing the sucking sound by the long hand of a stop watch.

Five minutes ticked by. Allard's left hand showed an odd shake. His right went to his forehead. Somehow, the air was thinning again, although he had left the door open from the adjoining room, with a window raised beyond it.

The stop watch slid into Allard's pocket as he came to his feet. His head swam as he whirled about. His eyes seemed to catch mere snatches of the grotesque scene before him.

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There, on hands and knees beside the suitcase, was Harvey Lanyon, a wild light in his dull-gray eyes. The Rainmaker's lips were parted in a crazy grin, but his extended tongue stopped the hiss that should have come from the panting breaths that he sucked between his teeth.

Beyond Lanyon was the connecting door, tight shut. Lanyon, himself, had closed it, less than a minute after Allard had placed him in the chair.

Mistrust had replaced gratitude, the moment that Lanyon revived. The crack-brained inventor hadn't guessed that Allard was here to help him. Befuddled over the radio message with its mysterious dash-dot signature, Lanyon had done the worst thing possible.

Shutting off needed air, the Rainmaker had done more than nullify Allard's work. Steady minutes had cut down the air pressure to a point below where it had been when Allard entered.

Not only that; Lanyon, in his half-demented state, was blocking Allard further. From the suitcase, the Rainmaker had tugged a small revolver. With sheer nerve sustaining him, he was keeping Allard covered.

Lanyon mouthed an order. It was to the effect that a move by Allard would mean immediate death. Despite his own dizziness, Allard waited coolly. The suck of the vacuum pipe had suddenly become the factor on which he depended.

It was plain that Lanyon didn't know the situation. Soon, the Rainmaker would do a fade-out, while Allard, accustomed to high altitudes, could certainly outlast him.

Timing his breathing, Allard became steadier. His hawkish gaze was fixed upon Lanyon's wild eyes. The inventor's tongue was drawn in again; his wheezy breathing was as loud as the sucking of the vacuum pipe, but Lanyon was satisfied, so long as Allard did not stir.

Lanyon's head swayed. His hand, too, was wavering. Seeing those symptoms, Allard gave a sudden lunge from the wall. Lanyon saw it, tried to steady. The very effort floored him. He coiled; in flattening, he tried to tug the gun trigger.

Allard stopped that effort. Rolling the frail Rainmaker a dozen feet across the floor, he saw the revolver scud from Lanyon's grasp. Rising, Allard clutched the chair where the suitcase lay. All he needed was a few moments to shake off the exhaustion from his hard charge.

Those moments were not given.

There was a muffled puff from the chair. The suitcase ripped apart. Bursting open, the steel box flung its heavy lid straight to Allard's jaw. Taking a long sprawl backward, the hawk-faced aviator stretched senseless near the window.

The decreased air pressure had exploded the thin-shelled puffballs. The lot had gone in a single puff.

A CURIOUS, smoky mist enveloped the room above the motionless forms of Allard and Lanyon. It thinned as the vacuum pipe sucked the atmosphere. Wisps of man-made fog remained, however, when the harsh suck of the pipe came to an abrupt halt.

The door from the corridor opened cautiously. Two husky men poked into sight, adjusting handkerchief masks across their eyes. They exchanged mutters when they saw two bodies instead of one.

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Drawing a revolver, one of the invader's leveled it toward Allard. The other stopped him with a harsh snarl.

“Whatta you want to do?” he demanded. “Make more noise? There was enough already, from that funny puff we heard!”

The first man pocketed his gun. His companion saw the connecting door, tried it and discovered that it was unlocked. He nudged his thumb toward Allard, with the comment:

“The guy belongs in the next room. That's where we'll leave him.”

They hoisted Allard's senseless form, carried it to a bed in the adjoining room. Returning, the pair locked the connecting door. While one was gathering up the debris from Lanyon's suitcase, the other screwed a perfect-fitting plug into the vacuum pipe.

Lanyon's frail body was nothing of a burden for those huskies. They lugged the unconscious Rainmaker out through the corridor and down an obscure stairway, that brought them to an alley.

A truck was waiting there, its motor throbbing. The men put Lanyon in it, stretching him on a mattress. The Rainmaker's huge, coffin-shaped tank was already in the truck. Lanyon's captors opened the lid and lowered the Rainmaker inside, mattress with him.

“A setup!” chuckled one of Lanyon's captors, as the pair clambered into the front of the truck. “Just like the chief said it would be. They'll think that Lanyon took the midnight limited, like he was supposed to.”

“Except for the guy we left upstairs,” gruffed the other husky, as he pocketed his mask. “Suppose he makes a squawk?”

“They'll think he's goofy, if he does. The chief has fixed things to make it look like Lanyon is still hopping around trying to peddle his invention. So we can forget the guy—”

The rest was drowned by the truck's rumble. Abductors were on their way, their job completed. Crime's chance, postponed in Galveston and Tulsa, had come at last in Denver.

None the less, these lesser lights of crime had missed an opportunity that their chief would have regarded as far more important than the capture of the Rainmaker, Harvey Lanyon.

With a single well-placed bullet, they could have disposed of crimeland's greatest foe, a mysterious being known as The Shadow, who alone was capable of gaining the trail of Harvey Lanyon and whatever lay beyond it.

For Kent Allard, regarded by those crooks as unimportant, was none other than The Shadow!

CHAPTER II. CALL OF CRIME

THE pilot of the transcontinental plane was feeling rather proud. He had flown many notables over the Sierras, but the fact had never impressed him as anything to talk about.

They were passengers; that was all. But the man who was on the ship tonight was more than a passenger.

He was Kent Allard.

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The pilot turned his head away to hide a pleased grin, for Allard was seated beside him, enjoying special privileges. Maybe Allard was thinking it funny, watching someone else handle the controls.

Funny, even, to have anyone else in the same plane with him, for Kent Allard was noted as an intrepid master of long, lone hops.

What also impressed the pilot was the odd accident that Allard had experienced, back in Denver. Entering his hotel room, he had tripped over a telephone cord in the dark and cracked his jaw against a radiator. He'd been unconscious when they found him, and a physician had advised him to finish his trip to the coast in a passenger plane, instead of flying his own ship.

That was the way it went. A real ace like Allard could crack up half a dozen ships and come out without a scratch. But a place like a hotel room was different. It offered chances of really getting hurt.

Bad weather tonight. Coming into San Francisco wasn't much fun, during this season. The beam was working, though, and the pilot would soon be following it right into the airport. Meanwhile, there would be radio reports.

Suddenly, the pilot nudged Allard. "Listen! There it is again!"

The same signal that had come before. The sort that the pilot had heard a few days ago, over Denver. Last night, also and tonight, only a half hour ago.

The stuff that the government wanted pilots to pick up and report: those crazy calls that always started with the same dash-dot identification.

Allard was jotting it down, in dashes and dots. There it stood, in a single line:

—...—...—...—

More was coming through in curious, irregular code, that seemed to register some fanciful thoughts on the part of the dispatcher. It was tricky, the sort of stuff that no one could decipher.

Allard was copying it, the pilot observed, and that was something of a help. It wouldn't matter, though, if a thousand people put those messages on paper.

They were always garbled, always varied. Sometimes words had been made out of them, but even then, the messages had no sense. Sort of a code within a code, as the pilot had been told.

The message ended. Following it, the identification arrived—the same as before, with its doubles of dashes, its triplets of dots. This time, the pilot wasn't watching Allard. Thereby, he missed the unusual.

As he marked those dashes and dots, Kent Allard let spaces come at intervals between them:

—.. .—... —. . .—

Thus broken into letters, the line spelled a name, which Allard's pencil wrote in capital letters, almost as though his hand inscribed the name from habit:

ZANIGEW

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Those letters represented the usual international code. The name, at least, was translatable, although no one but The Shadow had cracked it apart. Everyone else had simply regarded it as a mere identification, because of the regularity in which the dashes and dots occurred. Then, again, they had been most concerned with trying to decode the actual messages.

ZANIGEW!

There were times, in the past, when The Shadow had heard the name spoken. Certain crooks had mentioned it, in the same hushed tone that they used when referring to The Shadow. To them, Zanigew was also a mysterious being.

There had been periods, during The Shadow's many campaigns against crime, when an unseen hand had seemingly stirred from far beneath the surface. There were depths below the underworld and it was there that Zanigew began his machinations.

One question, however, had always remained unanswered. Even The Shadow had been unable to learn if such a person as Zanigew existed. That name, spoken by the lips of dying crooks, could have been no more than a myth.

Until one week ago.

That marked the beginning of the strange wireless signals with the label that The Shadow knew for Zanigew's. The government had tried to locate the unlicensed senders, but without success. Direction finders had led investigators to barren spots.

Zanigew's broadcasting apparatus, though powerful, was evidently of a portable sort. He, or his agents, had ways of decamping without a trace.

The Shadow had left that quest to others, while he took a different trail.

Right now, unnoticed by the pilot of the big plane, Allard's hand was building a complicated pyramid of letters that looked like a mystic abracadabra. Zigzagging lines between those letters, he gave potential meanings to dots and dashes in the body of Zanigew's message.

There were other portions of the message that The Shadow crossed off, for a definite reason. He had detected a slight change of speed in their transmission, a common characteristic in all of Zanigew's messages.

That had been a clue for Zanigew's own listeners, and The Shadow had caught its significance. Those speedier transmission, the parts that most persons would regard as highly important, were dummy letters introduced to complicate the code.

Another pyramid was building up from Allard's pencil. This message would soon be cracked to perfection. In the first that he had deciphered, The Shadow had made out the name of Galveston. The second had given him Tulsa, and a date.

By that time, The Shadow had seen a link to Harvey Lanyon. In solving a third message, he had worked with that name and had gained Denver, the day, and the hour. Ill luck had allowed Lanyon's abduction, but The Shadow intended to remedy that misfortune.

The new message stood decoded. Out of its many jumbled letters, The Shadow had the kernel:

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DANSELL FRISCO FOURTH TWENTY TWO HQ

The name “Dansell” meant much to The Shadow. He had heard of James Dansell, a chemist and inventor, who rated highly within the war department. Dansell posed as a retired manufacturer, but his actual work was creating improvements in various forms of armament.

Dansell traveled much along the Pacific coast, hence “Frisco” indicated that Zanigew had located him in San Francisco, where the inventor had a penthouse residence. From “fourth”, The Shadow knew that Zanigew had reference to this very day—not the fourth of the month, but Wednesday, the fourth day of the present week.

The word “twenty–two” was an hour, figured on a scale of twenty–four; namely ten o'clock. Looking for the significance in the letters “HQ”, The Shadow could interpret only the abbreviation “headquarters”, signifying that Zanigew had himself dispatched the message. The symbol “HQ” had been in previous messages.

The transport plane was looming down toward the San Francisco airport, which cast its brilliant lights high through a slight drizzle. The clock on the broad instrument panel showed half past eight, Pacific Time.

The Shadow calculated a forty–minute trip to Dansell's penthouse. He could arrive there almost a full hour before the time mentioned in Zanigew's message.

Busy with his landing, the pilot did not hear the whispered tone that came from the unmoving lips of Kent Allard. It was like an echo, that sibilant throb of mirth; a mere shadow of a laugh, if such could be.

The laugh of The Shadow!

CHAPTER III. FOG COMES TO FRISCO

A BEEFY man was standing in a tiny entry thumbing a nickel–plated watch that showed five minutes of nine. Behind him was the open door of a small elevator. Glowing distant in the drizzle, the man could see the twenty–two–foot dial of the great clock in the Ferry Building tower.

Five minutes of nine. The elevator man snorted. For once, his old watch was right. That wouldn't save the old turnip, though. Tomorrow, he was going to chuck it in the Bay and buy himself a swell gold ticker, with a chain to match.

After tomorrow, he wouldn't be running this private elevator on an all–night shift between the street and the penthouse. His pocket was full of cash; he could feel it crunch every time he poked it.

Five hundred dollars, with a duplicate amount to come. All he had to do was to ignore calls from the penthouse, and swear, if questioned later, that there had been no signals. There was another duty, also; but that was part of his regular job.

The operator was to admit no one to the elevator, except those persons who belonged in the penthouse. At present, all such persons were up there.

Poking his nose out from the entry, the operator looked upward toward the penthouse lights. Odd, he couldn't see them; odder still, the reason why. Fog was shrouding in from the roof of the building next door, wrapping all about penthouse. That wasn't the case with other tall buildings, close by, nor the Ferry tower.

Shrugging, the elevator man went back into his entry. Maybe fogs didn't come with drizzles; maybe they did. Anyway, he'd keep his trap shut regarding it, the same as with anything else that happened here tonight.

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HIGH up in the penthouse, a sallow, rat-eyed man was crouched on the window seat of a living room, watching that fog wreathe closer. It was thicker than ordinary fog, and already it had formed an impenetrable blanket.

That pleased the rat-eyed croucher. Too many buildings loomed close to this one: skyscrapers with windows that remained lighted at night, spots from which people could see what happened in the penthouse.

There was a radio close by. Eagerly, the man thumbed to the lowest number on the dial. He tuned the instrument to a slight pitch. Faintly, a wireless call came through, a series of double dashes and triple dots. The sallow man's leer became a perfect match for his ugly eyes.

Zanigew's call.

A voice boomed from somewhere in the penthouse. It roared a name in an angry tone:

“Querlon! Where are you?”

Instantly, the sallow man changed manner. His eyes opened into a simple, placid stare. His lips dropped their leer, becoming solemn, almost nervous. His voice had a plaintive tone as he called back:

“Yes, Mr. Dansell! I'm here, in the living room! I'm coming out there right away—”

Heavy footsteps interrupted. Into the living room strode James Dansell, a burly man with a heavy, thickset face. He was brandishing a big envelope. It crinkled as he shoved his fist inside, to show that the envelope was empty.

“Who got into my private files?” demanded Dansell. “Who even had a right inside the room where they are kept?”

“Why I—I—” Querlon's stammer was almost a give-away. “How should I know sir?”

“Because you, as my secretary, knew what this envelope contained!” stormed Dansell. “My formulas, my correspondence! All are items that meant nothing when separated, but everything when together.

“And you, Querlon”—Dansell was closer—“are the only man who even knew the purpose of my latest experiments. You have known it for weeks, for months! And now!”

Dansell flung the envelope to the floor, to grab Querlon by the shoulder. Dragging the sallow secretary to the wall, the burly man began to shove the button that would bring the elevator, while he shouted:

“Freeman! Jerome! I want both of you!”

There were other buttons, to signal the servants, and Dansell began to jab them, in case his shouts were not heard. A very bull in strength, he had Querlon's arms pinned in back of him, toward the left, so that the fellow could hardly budge.

A clock on the mantel was striking nine, its tinkles scarcely audible through Dansell's shouting and the clatter of the arriving servants.

Querlon, however, caught the tone. With a gasp, he twisted his head and managed to dart a look at a watch that was on his wrist. Despite his predicament, his eyes took on their rattish squint.

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The wrist watch also showed the hour, but not the same as Dansell's clock. Querlon's timepiece pointed to exactly ten o'clock.

THE servants had arrived. Jerome and Freeman were brawny fellows, of Dansell's own type. They were the sort who could worry an admission of guilt from a human rat like Querlon. Whatever glee the secretary felt, he temporarily forgot it when Dansell pitched him hard across the floor into the clutches of the servants.

Querlon spilled so violently that his wrist watch ripped loose and sailed ahead of him, while loose change, keys, pencils, and other articles clattered from his pockets. Hauled to his feet, Querlon was twisted about in Dansell's direction, to answer accusations.

Despite that first taste of rough treatment, Querlon managed to gather his wits. Staring past Dansell, the secretary saw something that pleased him. Head tilting back, he emitted a snarling chuckle.

The utterance was no signal, but it produced the same result. French windows flung open. A wave of fog poured inward, like thick soup from an over-tilted bowl. With that swirl came sweated figures, revolvers glittering from their fists.

They overwhelmed Dansell, clubbed him to submission with short-slugged blows. Past those attackers came others, surging for the servants. Flinging Querlon aside, Freeman and Jerome grabbed chairs to use as cudgels.

There was no chance to use those improvised weapons. Their foemen were upon them, pushing them back against the wall with gun muzzles, growling threats that savored of death. The servants let the chairs drop, raised their hands submissively, to stare stolidly at the stunned form of James Dansell.

From a corner crawled Querlon, drawing a stubby revolver that had been shoved tightly into his hip pocket. With an apish grin, the crooked secretary was taking matters over in behalf of the master that he really served.

That master was Zanigew!

CHAPTER IV. UNFINISHED CRIME

MERE minutes had given victory to criminals. Men from the fog were in full control, awaiting Querlon's orders. The briskness with which the secretary gave them was proof that the present situation had been foreseen.

Querlon ordered Dansell's prompt removal. The burly man was carried to the roof-terrace edge; there, he was shoved out into space. The carriers followed him, managing in some strange fashion to bridge the space to the roof of the building opposite.

Looking at Jerome and Freeman, Querlon saw perplexity on their faces. It was nothing to the expressions that they soon would show. As yet, the secretary was not quite ready.

He swung the windows shut to hold out the heavy fog. There was another reason also, as Querlon's grimace told. Closed windows would prevent certain sounds from reaching the outdoor world that was so completely lost from sight.

Querlon tuned the radio higher. Still carrying his gun, he used his left hand to pick up various articles that had spilled from his pocket. He had gathered some of them, when he heard an expected sound.

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It was Zanigew's call, flashing again, rapid and imperative, over the air. Querlon faced promptly toward the center of the room.

Four men were covering Freeman and Jerome. The gunners knew what Zanigew's signal meant; they were waiting for Querlon to corroborate it. The rattish man pointed his gun hand upward, preparing for the downward sweep that would order the squad to fire.

Something clanged from beyond the living room's wide door. Querlon's hand remained poised, his eyes took on a startled glaze. Gunners shifted to look with him. They saw the opened door of an elevator, a bulky operator moving clumsily from it.

Halfway to the living room; that figure took a forward sprawl. The man's thud told that he had been senseless all the while. Someone had been supporting him, shoving the stunned man forward. Above the flopped form stood a shape in black.

Diving for cover, Querlon yelled as he pumped his gun toward the cloaked foeman who had materialized as amazingly as the fog. It was his own excitement that caused Querlon to fire wide, but the fellow thought that he was shooting through a substanceless target.

So did the four men who composed the gun squad, until they heard the chill challenge of a mocking laugh. With it arrived a cloaked fighter, who had no regard for the scattered bullets that sprayed from Querlon's shaky gun.

Crooks knew those eyes that blazed from beneath a slouch hat brim.

The eyes of The Shadow!

The black-cloaked fighter was almost in their midst. They flung themselves upon him, two taking hurried aim, the other pair resorting to the slugging tactics that had served so well with Dansell. Guns roared from the milling cluster, while gun hands slashed downward.

Perhaps that concerted effort would have floored The Shadow, had no aid come with it. He was supported, however, by two allies who acted as rapidly as his opponents. Jerome from one corner, Freeman from another—the two were flinging themselves upon the gunners, hoping to impede their attack.

Querlon scrambled for the windows to yank them inward. Over his shoulder, he saw figures fling apart. One sweated man was prone and silent, dead; two others were grappling individually with Freeman and Jerome. The last had lost his gun, but he was clutching for The Shadow's throat.

Headlong, Querlon went straight through the window. Shots sounded from beyond, whistling inward above the secretary's head. Jerome and Freeman tried to drag their opponents toward the sides of the room. The Shadow flung his adversary to the floor.

Amid the gunshots came a sharp zinging from the radio. Double-dash—triple dot—double-dash—Zanigew's signal!

Maddened thugs broke from Dansell's servants, making for the window as the outside gunshots ceased. The Shadow sent his own opponent rolling; from hands and knees, he tongued shots at the escaping crooks.

One man blocked those bullets and lost his life. As he flattened short of the window, the other rushed across the terrace, and leaped into space like Querlon!

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Up like a wild rabbit came the thug who had battled The Shadow. He didn't seem to realize that Zanigew's call had ended. The servants tried to halt him; closing behind the fellow, they prevented The Shadow's fire. With a sweep, The Shadow reached them, thrusting a long arm forward to club the last crook's skull.

Just then, the fugitive squirmed free with the lurch of a leaping fish. Out from clutching fists, away from beneath The Shadow's sledging gun hand, over the terrace's low wall, into—nothingness!

Whatever had saved Querlon and the others, it was no longer there when the last crook dived. His elated shout turned to a trailing shriek, as he plunged between the wide-spaced buildings.

From the window, The Shadow heard the sharp crack of a skull upon cement, muffled partly by the distance. That last fugitive had overtimed his stay.

Fog was vanishing, as the swift drizzle flayed it. The Shadow caught one glimpse of a dangling object whipping over the parapet of the opposite roof. It was a rod supporting the end of a double-wire track.

That told how the invaders had arrived. They had thrust a long, thin pole across from the other roof, to hook the cross-rod on two studs that projected from the terrace. Querlon, probably, had first placed those studs as future supports for the wire track.

Fog, provided by Harvey Lanyon's mist-producing puffballs, had been the cover for that action as well as the passage of the men who had come later. At Zanigew's bidding, crooks had used one man's invention to abduct another captive that Zanigew needed.

A truck was rumbling far below, out of sight beyond the next building. Pursuit was useless. Dansell's captors had made a quick trip downward and were on their way. The Shadow turned to the servants, and shot quick-hissed questions that they answered as best they could.

They knew that James Dansell had developed some new and valuable creation, but they had no idea what it might be. All that they could furnish were the details of Querlon's treachery. They told how Dansell had ordered them to seize the fellow.

SPYING Querlon's wrist watch, The Shadow picked it up. It was still ticking, and the time it gave brought a reflective laugh from The Shadow's lips. He found a new interpretation for the term "HQ" in Zanigew's message.

It had reference to the time of the attack. It meant that Zanigew's followers were to operate on the same time as headquarters. Evidently, Zanigew's headquarters lay east of the Sierras, in the zone of Mountain Time, not Pacific. That time was an hour earlier. Ten o'clock, to Zanigew and Querlon, was only nine o'clock in San Francisco. The careful secretary had kept his own watch an hour ahead, to avoid any mistake.

Another object glimmered from the floor. It was a key, that neither Jerome nor Freeman recognized. A key from Querlon's pocket; a large, flat key bearing the number 308.

Pocketing the clue, The Shadow told Jerome to try the telephone. Jerome did, only to find it out of order. It was a simple matter, however, for him to summon the police. The Shadow pointed him to the window. Looking out, Jerome saw lights below.

Persons had heard the landing of the last thug. Officers had found the body. They were wondering, too, about reported gunfire, for they were flashing their lights up into the fog-cleared space.

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Ordering Jerome to hold his call for one full minute, The Shadow beckoned Freeman to the elevator. They rode down to the entry; there, The Shadow told the servant to wait. Hardly had The Shadow stepped from the entry, before Freeman heard shouts.

Officers arrived, blinking flashlights as they came, to find Freeman staring dumbly toward the street. It took them half a dozen seconds to rouse the servant into speech. Even then, the fellow blinked.

To Freeman, it seemed that The Shadow had vanished like a ghost into the San Francisco drizzle!

CHAPTER V. ZANIGEW REWARDS

A LARGE, flat key bearing the number 308. A hand tapping that key against a window sill, while a face peered through the pane into the darkness of another Frisco night.

That hand was not The Shadow's, nor was the face. The key was not the one that he had found at Dansell's. It was a duplicate of that key.

The man at the window was Querlon.

The rat-faced traitor had much to grin about. He was in a secure hide-out—a room in a small, obscure San Francisco hotel. He was registered under another name; there didn't seem a chance that anyone could trace him.

A two-day hunt had been under way for Querlon. He was wanted for complicity in the abduction of James Dansell.

Querlon knew all about the search, although he hadn't once ventured from the room to buy a newspaper. His information had come from the radio set, which, at this moment, was supplying soft music from a corner of the squalid room.

To all appearances, the place was just a plain room. Even the proprietor of the hotel considered it as such, except for the fact that it was taken on a permanent lease which stipulated that no one should visit it, except when requested.

The original occupant had been Zanigew, himself. That accounted for the way the room was tricked.

The door, for instance, looked like a battered thing of wood. It was wood, on its two surfaces, but between those layers was a sheet of steel. Windows, too, had metal beneath their frames. It was impossible to open them, and they were fitted with bulletproof glass.

The room had other secrets, which an ordinary visitor would never suspect. That was why Querlon, in using it rather frequently, had treated the place in a matter-of-fact fashion.

For instance, the room had two keys, and it was Querlon's practice to leave both of them at the hotel desk, where they were placed in a box numbered "308."

Two keys had been there the other night. So Querlon had asked for one and left the other. The second key didn't matter. No one could open the door with it, once Querlon was inside the room, because there were bolts as well as a keyhole in which he could keep his key.

There was a fact, however, that Querlon did not remember, and another that he did not know.

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Several days ago, he had carried away one of those downstairs keys and it had remained, forgotten, in his vest pocket. Meanwhile, the hotel clerk, noting only one key in the box, had ordered a duplicate, which had been placed in the box before Querlon's return.

Which meant that there were three such keys in existence, although Querlon supposed that there were only two. The third key was in the possession of The Shadow, as a clue that might eventually enable him to find the hideout.

NEWS was coming over the radio, from a local station. News that was no news. James Dansell was still untraced. Federal men were scouring the Pacific coast. But to no avail.

They had asked a famous aviator, Kent Allard, to fly one of the scouting seaplanes, carrying Feds with him. So far, Allard had not agreed to do so. Querlon snorted a laugh. It wouldn't matter if they brought in all the navy planes from present maneuvers in the Pacific.

Zanigew could never be located by air.

There was something, though, along the coast that was important to Zanigew; but no one, not even The Shadow, would ever suspect it, until too late.

Querlon was one of the privileged few who knew about it. Leaving the window and stooping in the center of the dimly lighted room, he lifted a trap that was perfectly fitted in the floor.

There was a cubical cavity beneath. From it, Querlon drew a chart that showed a large-scale stretch of shore line. On a promontory stood a large dot. The map was also marked with various names.

There was a pleased snicker from Querlon's lips, as they formed an avid smile. Querlon knew all the answers concerning Zanigew. That was one of the terms that he had asked in taking service with the master crook. Zanigew had granted the request.

First, Querlon knew why Zanigew had snatched Harvey Lanyon, the Rainmaker, along with the man's invention that could produce fog, if not rain. The device had, of course, been used in the capture of Dansell, but that was only a preliminary matter.

Thought of Lanyon brought another chuckle to Querlon, because the public had not yet learned that the Rainmaker was missing.

Next, Querlon knew why Zanigew abducted James Dansell. That was to acquire another invention, along with the originator; to use both, later. It was a known fact that Dansell had been kidnapped, but even the war department had no idea what his new invention was.

Outside of Dansell, only two persons did know all about it. One was Zanigew; the other, Querlon.

As for Zanigew's next move, Querlon was again the only privileged person who knew what it would be. To keep his agreement with Querlon, Zanigew had left the chart in the secret cavity, with a message explaining it.

The message had said to destroy both. Querlon had destroyed the message, but not the chart. He was too wise to do both deeds. While he held the chart, Querlon had evidence regarding Zanigew. That, in his opinion, made him smarter than his chief.

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It wouldn't be long before Querlon would leave this hide-out. Zanigew had ordered him to stay in Frisco in case he happened to be needed for special duty. When Zanigew knew the way was clear, he would order Querlon on the move.

Meanwhile, Querlon was entirely safe.

As he folded the chart and pocketed it, Querlon observed a small switch in the floor cavity. He had pressed that switch when he arrived at the hide-out. Zanigew had ordered it, as a final precaution.

“It will mean death”—Querlon could remember Zanigew's own words —“to anyone who attempts to open door or window, once you are within the room.”

Buzzing sounds were coming from the radio. Querlon's intent ear heard Zanigew's dash-dot call. The first signal from the master crook since the affray at Dansell's penthouse!

It was for Querlon, that summons, though it carried no message. It meant that the way was clear; that Querlon could start out to join his chief.

More than that, it meant reward. Zanigew had promised Querlon that he would receive his proper due for the services that he had rendered!

Closing the floor cavity, Querlon turned off the radio. He sneaked to the door; pausing there, he worked a rod that controlled the transom. It looked like battered wood, that transom, but it split into two halves when Querlon pressed the rod.

Each half was hinged at the top. They spread like an inverted V, revealing metal plates as linings for each section. Those sheets were polished, bright as mirrors. One inward, the other outward, Querlon used them as reflectors to view the hall.

He was safe here even with the transom sections open, for between them remained a vertical sheet of bulletproof glass, fixed permanently above the door.

The gloomy hallway looked deserted; nevertheless, Querlon cocked his head in wary fashion, utilizing the mirrors above him to get angled views of every doorway along the line. He saw streaks of blackness; one seemed longer than the others. Stretched across the floor, it came up against the wall and ended in a grotesque silhouette.

That shaded patch did not waver, it was nothing but a shadow. It reminded Querlon, though, of a living Shadow that he had met not long ago. Nervously, the crook closed the halves of the transom.

He decided to take no chances going through that hall. It was the only stretch where he could not count upon Zanigew's protection. Once outside, Querlon expected men to cover his journey.

Drawing a revolver with his right hand, Querlon slid back the bolts with his left. He steadied as he turned the key in the lock. Tightening his grip upon his revolver, he leveled it straight ahead.

Turning the knob, Querlon gave the door a hard, quick yank inward.

Things happened with split-second speed, so rapidly that three occurrences could well have been classed as one, except that results showed otherwise. A black-cloaked figure, looming in the hallway, turned its approach into an amazing spin that carried it into a side doorway. It was The Shadow taking cover in his rapid

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style, as prelude to a coming gun thrust.

Querlon's revolver spoke, zinging a bullet through emptiness that should have contained a black-cloaked target. But Querlon's gunshot was a puny thing amid the horrendous roar that drowned it.

The floor of the hide-out blasted upward with a spreading sheet of flame. The explosion shook the whole hotel, as it hurled away the top of the little third-floor wing that housed Room 308. Even the steel window frames were twisted, the bulletproof panes puffed outward.

For old masonry and the roof above it had given with the blast.

AIR piled along the hallway in hurricane style. Walls and doorways shuddered as from an earthquake. The Shadow was flattened, with chunks of brick tumbling about him, but the top of the doorway diverted falling debris.

Along with the driven air went a scorching sweep of flame, carrying a fire-clad figure with it. The flame sucked backward, vanished, but chunks of blaze remained along the hallway.

The Shadow sniffed the odor of seared flesh. It came from the human torch that had whizzed past him. The floor had steadied when The Shadow reached the thing that had once been alive. He saw the limbless remains of Querlon's body.

Among the few patches of a much-burned clothing, The Shadow saw a burning paper. He snuffed the flame, but most of the sheet crumpled into ashes. What remained was a mere corner, upon which The Shadow traced a few inches of charted coast line.

The promontory, with its dot, was missing. But the unburned fragment bore a name that The Shadow recognized as that of a small bay far north of San Francisco. Keeping that clue, The Shadow moved toward the blast-tilted stairway at the other end of the hall.

Zanigew's promises to Querlon had been kept. Death had come to the person who opened the hide-out door once the switch was set. Zanigew, too, had given suitable reward to a double-dyed traitor who knew too much.

Had Querlon known that the switch produced a current that made the door control a hidden bomb, he would have tried his best to give out facts regarding Zanigew. What he had failed to do in life, Querlon had managed partially through death.

The Shadow had gained a further trail. Tomorrow, Kent Allard would join the sea patrol!

CHAPTER VI. CRIME MOVES AHEAD

THE old lighthouse formed a giant finger shafting eighty feet upward from the low rocks of Point Sonola. When viewed from the sea, dawn gave the structure a reddened tinge, matching the beauty of an Oriental minaret.

Behind the lighthouse was the stretch where the point narrowed and flattened into sandy ground no better than shoal. Then came the tiny houses of the little fishing village, against a background of tree-studded cliffs.

Only from the sky itself did the lighthouse look as it appeared upon a map—a large dot centered in the curlicued shore line of the point.

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Without the lighthouse, the scene was quite different. It was the view that Fay Tretter gained, when she leaned her bare elbows upon the sill and looked out from one of the wide windows that surrounded her. She was looking from beneath the dome of the lighthouse; from a room that had once contained a beacon, but which had been transformed to an observation post.

Fay lived here with her father, Glade Tretter; but he wasn't a lighthouse keeper. Tretter was an inventor who had chosen the abandoned lighthouse for certain scientific experiments.

Turning from the window, Fay looked about and shook her head. She had thought it fun when she first came here, but lighthouse-keeping wasn't the light housekeeping that she had expected.

Thought of the pun made her laugh, however. She had considered it a good one when she first made it, and it still seemed a real jest, even if her father had failed to smile when he heard it.

Fay's dad had always been too serious. He was stubborn, too. That was why he kept the living quarters at the bottom of the lighthouse, along with his equipment, but insisted on making the beacon room his office.

When Tretter came to the top, he stayed there, and sometimes demanded that lunch be brought to him. He seemed to think that running from top to bottom of a lighthouse and back again, was no more of a trip than going down to the cellar.

Worst of all, he kept the office untidy. Things were as bad as ever this morning. That was why Fay forgot the dawn view and began to clear papers from the flimsy table that served as Tretter's desk.

Fay didn't realize how charming she looked in her simple half-sleeved house dress, with the morning sunlight filtering through her ruffled auburn hair.

There was another person, also, who failed to appreciate the girl's beauty. Glade Tretter bobbed his head into sight from the lighthouse steps, uttering a crackling cry of anger.

Spry despite his huddled frame, white hair and wizened face, Tretter sprang across the room and wrested the papers from Fay's hands. The moment that he had clutched them to his chest, the old man's anger faded.

"I am sorry, Fay," he wheezed. "But those letters—"

"I know," nodded the girl—"the ones from Professor Barreau. But I didn't read them."

"That is good," approved Tretter. He began to sort the papers, to find the letters that were among them. "Fay, I believe that Barreau is a schemer."

Wearily, Fay shook her head. Her father had often argued that point before. Yet Barreau, as she remembered, had advanced funds that enabled Tretter to conduct his present experiments.

"Barreau thinks that he can frighten me!" Tretter mumbled, as he pushed the letters into the drawer of the table. "Yes, frighten me, by the things he writes in his letters!"

"That is because he is like the others. A pretended friend! A man who has loaned me money, with no security to lull me, he is like the rest of them! He wants my invention!"

Fay had turned away. She was fluffing the pillow in the easy-chair beside the window. Her father's talk worried her. Everyone seemed to want Tretter's invention, but no one ever came to take it. She was wondering

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the best way to humor her father when Tretter suddenly solved the difficulty himself.

“Fog!” he screeched happily, “Fine fog! Thick fog! Look at it, Fay!”

THE girl looked from a window that fronted on the ocean. She saw deep blue, with clear sky above it. She was alarmed for the moment, thinking that her father had become crazed. Hurriedly, she turned toward him.

Tretter gave the last letter a thrust that slid it away out of sight into the table. He slammed the drawer shut and pointed shoreward. Staring from the window on that side, Fay saw the fog that he had mentioned.

It was a thick, smoky mist that smothered the trees upon the cliff. It had a yellowish tinge among its cloudy billows, but that wasn't all that struck Fay as strange.

“Look, dad!” exclaimed the girl, half-awed. “That fog is coming from the land against a sea breeze! It can't be fog! It must be smoke from a forest fire!”

“At this season?” queried Tretter. “Bah! It's fog, I tell you! The finest fog that I have ever seen!”

Moving toward the stairs, Tretter stated that he was going below. He told Fay to watch, and to call down to him as soon as the fog completely enveloped the lighthouse.

Leaning on the stout metal rail beyond the window ledge, Fay watched the fog, entranced. It must be fog, for she could not sniff the odor of smoke. Its behavior, though, was as curious as its appearance.

The fog was moving above the fishing hamlet as if some controlling power forced it to avoid those few shacks. The creeping mist settled, however, when it reached the sands halfway out the point.

Despite the wind, the thick mass crawled toward the lighthouse, and pouring over it came new floods of soupish-yellow, like a Niagara of mist. From the shore, Fay saw a circling flank of haze that settled to the water, girding the fishing village.

Beyond was the clear blue of distant Marbu Bay, entirely unshrouded. Fay couldn't understand why the fog was keeping itself to such narrow bounds. She felt a shuddery sensation when she saw the eerie mist surround the lighthouse.

More was coming, like a slow-motion cascade. It was piling up, higher, higher, almost to the window from which Fay gazed. Yet Marbu Bay was as blue as ever, except for tints of white. Those whitish streaks weren't fog; they were choppy waves. A squall had lashed the bay.

That sharp breeze produced another effect, when it arrived closer. It jolted the fog that covered the water beside the fishing village, making it writhe like a yellow monster. The fog wallowed, seemed to buckle. Much of it caved downward and was driven against the cliffs.

The squall was gone. The monstrous mass billowed anew. It was writhing all about the lighthouse, up to the windows themselves. All seemed unreal to Fay; she could hear a harsh, chugging sound out in the fog.

It was coming closer, that sound, like a motor launch. It halted; Fay heard splashing sounds below. She was startled, suddenly, to see the fog above the windows forming a solid blanket that isolated her in the tower.

Coils of fog writhed through the windows, wavering about Fay like monstrous tentacles. Billows followed, engulfing the observation room, hiding even the table from Fay's sight.

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The girl shrilled a call down the stairs. There was no answer from her father.

GRIPPED by a panic, Fay took to the stairs and followed the spiral descent that traced the inner wall of the lighthouse. Looking up through the narrow central circle, she could see fog drifting downward. It had become a grimy brown instead of yellow, for the thick mass had partly blotted the sun's rays.

Hideous gloom was present at the bottom of the stairs. Gasping, Fay looked for her father. She saw a squattish machine: her father's invention. It was a fog-breaker, the apparatus with which Tretter experimented. He hadn't started the motors, but a hose ran out through the open door, indicating that Tretter had gone outside the lighthouse.

Groping through the fog, Fay found the end of the hose. It was attached to another device that had long pipes poking up into the air, like the arms of a water sprinkler. Once that device began to revolve, it could dispel the fog.

Tretter had waited for Fay's call, because he wanted the fog as thick and high as possible. But he hadn't heard his daughter's shout. He was lying beside the bug-like sprinkler, as motionless as the thing's long air pipes.

Fay didn't realize what had overcome her father. She thought that her own gasps came from her hard run down the steps. She turned to go back into the lighthouse and start the fog-clearer. Just inside the door, she stumbled.

There was no scent noticeable in the air. Fay's sensation was more like suffocation, though she still could breathe. She seemed to be slowly fainting, her thoughts drifting far away.

Eyes still open, the girl saw the shapes that appeared suddenly from the fog. They were things like men, but with bulky long-snouted heads. Grotesque creatures that might have been created by the fog itself.

Her head tilted sideways, Fay saw the creatures lift her father from the ground. Then, other hands jarred her shoulders. She rolled as she was lifted, to stare straight into one of those gargoylish faces.

With that, Fay's senses faded. Like her father, the girl had become an unconscious victim that weird abductors were carrying away through thick brown fog!

CHAPTER VII. FORGOTTEN VICTIMS

KENT ALLARD banked his seaplane above Marbu bay, to swing back southward along the coast. His action brought puzzlement from a man who sat in the open cockpit beside him.

That man was Vic Marquette, a Federal agent, who had been sent along as Allard's observer. The F.B.I. man had thought that they were going farther up the coast. Then, suddenly, understanding showed upon Vic's mustached face.

Allard had kept along the cliff line, and had therefore cut in behind a long promontory that had a lighthouse at the end of it. The aviator was going back to take a look at Point Sonola.

It never occurred to Marquette that Marbu Bay had been Allard's actual objective, as indicated by the corner of a charred map. The Fed thought that they were simply another scouting party, hoping for some slight trace of the captors of James Dansell.

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As the plane sped low above the point, Marquette noted a tiny fishing village just beneath. They went past the lighthouse; it looked totally deserted. As a result, Marquette expected Allard to continue on his way.

Instead, the aviator banked around the lighthouse and dipped toward a cove beside the fishing shacks.

Marquette wanted to put in an objection. Fishermen would know nothing. Certainly no kidnapper would be foolish enough to keep Dansell in so open a place as a lighthouse. But Vic's manner took a sudden change when he saw Allard reach out and make pointing stabs with his forefinger.

From the dipping plane, Marquette saw odd sights that he hadn't noted before. Clothes were flapping wildly from a line, like signal flags. The woman who should be tending them was hunched on the steps of her shack.

There was another person in an oddly huddled position—a man whose boat was half pushed from the shore. His boots were to the water; he was flopped across the gunwale. Near him, Marquette saw a dog lying with its feet up in the air.

The plane hit the surface and taxied into shallow, unruffled water. Soon, Allard and Marquette were studying the victims that they had seen from the air.

Man, woman and dog were either unconscious or dead. Moreover, they proved to be merely the visible victims. Moving from shack to shack, Allard and Marquette rapped on doors. When no answers came, they shoved inside.

The twenty-odd inhabitants of the fishing village all had that same death-like appearance. There were animals—dogs and cats—in the same condition. Parrots and canaries were also stretched claws upward in their cages.

The only life that could be seen was in a fish globe, where melancholy goldfish stared vacantly from the glass.

RETURNING to the plane, Allard sent out a radio report, then rejoined Marquette on the shore. While they discussed their strange discovery, Allard glanced occasionally toward the cliffs, then off along the water past the lighthouse.

From this low level, his keen eye noted traces of a dispelled haze. Its yellowish tinge might have passed unnoticed, except for the fact that the ocean had a sea-green color. On a clear day like this, the ocean's proper trend was blue.

Within an hour, planes arrived bringing physicians. After first examinations of the victims, the doctors were inclined to judge them dead—until they came upon a child who showed distinct traces of life.

By the time the child was resuscitated, hope was found for others. All through that afternoon the recovery continued. By sunset, weak-eyed victims were telling a story that for a while showed no variance.

The way that most of them put it was that they had awakened to find themselves asleep. By that they meant that they had been overcome by something soon after they opened their eyes.

The witness who finally cracked the enigma was the fisherman who had been crouched across his boat.

He had more to tell. The trouble had come with fog. There had been fog above him and along the water when he had gone to his boat; but none by the shore itself. He had been slow pushing off, because he waited for the fog to lift. Instead, it had rolled in on him from the direction of Marbu Bay.

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He had seen the fog cover the shacks. While he was watching it, he went to sleep.

Physicians belittled the fog theory. They had a better one. There had been a recent epidemic of dead fish off the Pacific coast, not an uncommon occurrence with certain species. When questioned, the villagers admitted that they had eaten fish that might have been tainted with the disease.

That could have accounted for their own malady. None of them had suffered serious effects from their strange sleep. One physician remained to keep the patients under observation. The other doctors flew ashore.

Marquette was anxious to be on his way and told Allard so. The aviator reminded him that it was nearly dark; that tomorrow they could resume their journey from the point. The Fed agreed with the idea.

“By the way”—Allard was speaking in the even, quiet tone that had impressed Marquette—“I understand that persons are living in the lighthouse.”

“They were,” corrected Marquette. “Some old chap and his daughter. But the fishermen think they must have left yesterday.”

“You have been over to the lighthouse?”

“Yes. The place is nailed up tight. Whoever picked it as a spot for a vacation must have given it up as a bad idea.”

NIGHT settled, illumined by starlight. Seen from the fishing hamlet, the lighthouse became a tall, vague-shaped sentinel against the sea. Planning another start at dawn, Allard and Marquette retired early, using an empty shack as their bunkhouse, sleeping in blankets that they had brought from the plane.

Marquette was drowsing, when a sudden thought occurred to him. He questioned in the darkness:

“Say—do canaries eat fish?”

Allard doubted that they did.

“Maybe the doctors missed something then,” grunted Vic, “The canaries were knocked out, too. Remember?”

Allard remembered. He decided that they could talk it over in the morning. Marquette agreed, and went to sleep.

A soft laugh stirred the darkness. Perhaps Vic had caught that thought from Allard. He had been considering that factor ever since the doctors propounded their theory of toxic poisoning.

Other sounds followed the whispered laugh. A bag clicked open. A cloak swished in darkness. There was motion toward the door of the shack. Slight noises that Marquette would not have noted, had he been awake.

Close against the night-hidden rocks, a blackened figure moved from the shack. No one could have seen that cloaked form. Nor was its progress heard, for the muffled beat of the surf made a louder noise.

Kent Allard had become The Shadow. He had donned his guise of black so if seen, no one would recognize him as Allard.

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There were times when a flashlight blinked, but its beam was always close the ground, its sparkle obscured by folds of The Shadow's cloak. The only twinkles in the night were those that came from distant stars.

Crossing the connecting neck of land, The Shadow arrived at the lighthouse.

From his gloved fist, the flash slicked a beam no larger than the nail heads which it illuminated, one by one.

The door was boarded shut, as Marquette had said; but the nails were rusted, except for tiny edges. It hadn't occurred to Marquette what those signs meant. Rusty nails had been used to give the false impression to any casual visitor, that the lighthouse had been long closed; but the scratches showed that the nailing was recent.

Finding a slight space between the door and its frame, The Shadow inserted a small jimmy. Working in complete darkness, he pried the boarding, muffling the screech of nails by keeping his body close to the door.

There was a smothered rip as a board gave. Later, another yielded. Pried partly outward, the boarded door was reluctant to budge farther. That was unnecessary. The space, several inches when fully forced, was sufficient.

A rubbing sound occurred; released, the door jolted shut, to be stopped before it thumped. Blackness was less apparent against the outside surface.

The Shadow had entered the old lighthouse, scene of Zanigew's most recent crime.

CHAPTER VIII. THE THIRD TRAIL

SLOW, silent minutes proved the lighthouse to be empty. That high, hollow interior was an elongated sound box. The slightest stir, below or above, would certainly produce some sort of echo.

No longer obscured, The Shadow's flashlight darted long, thin licks along the lower level.

Discoveries were immediate.

The floor had been used as living quarters, as articles of old furniture proved, although many belongings had been removed. There was a space, too, that had served another purpose.

Approaching that spot, The Shadow saw floor bolts long enough to have clamped some heavy object. He assumed that some machine had been fitted to the lighthouse floor.

There were crates and boxes stacked in the corner. One crate, by itself, had a partly padded interior, as though some other piece of equipment had been stowed in it. Everything pointed to a rapid removal, wherein persons had wasted no time in extra packing.

None of the boxes offered identification, until The Shadow came upon one express company's label. The box lacked a lid. Looking for the missing portion, The Shadow happened to notice the heavy-boarded door.

Three braces were nailed across the inside of that barrier, to reinforce it. Each looked like a board from the box lid, put to a new purpose. The nails that held those braces were short and actually rusted. It was an easy task to pry them loose.

As The Shadow expected, portions of dim letters appeared on sides that had been against the door. Piecing the three boards, he read the name: "Glade Tretter". The address was that of a small town a few miles in from the coast.

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Glade Tretter!

Acquainted with every phase of aviation, The Shadow promptly remembered the name. Tretter was an inventor who for many years had talked of fog control. He had ridiculed the fog-breaking devices that others had designed for airports.

Those, Tretter said, could merely thin the fogs in a small area. His idea had been to dispel fog entirely. He had called his own invention by the grandiose title of the "fog-destroyer", but—like Lanyon's rainmaking device, its tests had not come up to specifications.

Tretter had disappeared after that failure. This was where he had come, to make new experiments. From Tretter's present disappearance, a complete one, The Shadow reasoned that he must have perfected the fog-destroyer.

The links in the chain were obvious. This was Zanigew's work.

Zanigew had captured Harvey Lanyon, taking over a device that created fog. He had used Lanyon's invention to abduct James Dansell.

It followed that Dansell's secret invention must be a form of gas that produced stupor instead of death; a vapor particularly potent when induced into a moisture-laden atmosphere. Lanyon's fog. Dansell's gas had been coupled to overpower Glade Tretter and seize his invention, also.

Today's fog had probably been dispelled by breezes whipping in from the Pacific; but in the future, such mist could be dispersed by using the fog-breaker. Moreover, Zanigew had deeper purpose for acquiring the last-named invention.

Tretter's fog-breaker was the only device that could serve as a weapon against the double-barreled power that Zanigew had gained through Lanyon and Dansell!

MORE clues were needed. None were on the ground level. The Shadow focused the flashlight toward the stairs. He followed the spiral ascent, hoping that he might make new discoveries at the top.

Reaching the tower, The Shadow kept the flashlight low. It was beaming on a scarred table, when it suddenly flicked off. The Shadow's keen ears had detected an evasive sound, different from the murmur of the surf.

Listening at the stairs, The Shadow could catch no further echoes. He had barricaded the door from within; there was no likelihood that anyone could have entered. Turning about, The Shadow again played the flashlight toward the table.

This time, the beam was spotted.

Two hands had grasped the metal rail on the sill of the sea window. Over the ledge loomed the wide shoulders of an apish being, with a block-like head between them.

The creature had scaled the tapering outside wall of the lighthouse!

Again The Shadow heard a sound; this time, he located its direction. He wheeled, just as a massive dripping shape lunged across the sill. Ham-like hands at the end of long arms were quick and powerful in their grip.

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Those hands clamped The Shadow before he could pull a gun. Flung clear across the observation room, he was clutched by a grappler who had the strength of a gorilla.

That fight was the most terrific hand-to-hand conflict The Shadow had ever experienced.

The advantage of darkness, his skill at trick jujutsu holds, seemed nothing compared to the power of this human monstrosity that Zanigew had sent here. The apish man had made a two-mile swim from the mainland; he had scaled an eighty-foot tower with a steady climb.

Those feats had merely whetted his appetite for battle. He was flinging The Shadow from wall to wall, bounding upon him before he could recover.

The black-cloaked fighter's only counter was to break those falls; to wriggle partly clear of the hands that threw him. Otherwise, a single fling could have splattered The Shadow's brains upon a window ledge.

Hurled into another sprawl, The Shadow took the table with him. Though half-numbed, his hands clutched a table leg as he passed. Hitting the wall back first, The Shadow sledged a terrific overhand stroke.

The table clouted the ape-man's chest. The force drove his massive bulk against a window.

Though human, the monster used gorilla tactics. The Shadow had a bludgeon, so he wanted one too. Clutching the window rail, the creature ripped it from its stone fastenings as easily as a child might pluck a buttercup.

Flaying the rod in The Shadow's direction, the ape-man made another mighty lunge. Not trusting the frail table, The Shadow flung it as a temporary stop, while he took a sidelong dive through the darkness.

His opponent brushed away the table as it came. He lashed the rod hard for The Shadow's head. It wasn't luck that saved the skull beneath the cloaked hat. The Shadow had used strategy in his dive.

Making for the stairway, he had dropped below the floor level to avoid the swinging rod. Its end slashed a scant half inch above The Shadow's head.

The ape-man must have known why he missed. Recovering, he started a swing straight downward. A muffled roar came from The Shadow's cloak; an upward tongue of fire with it. The Shadow had brought an automatic into action.

THE bullet jarred the ape-man's arm, wavering his blow sideward. Stung by the wound, he flung his whole bulk upon The Shadow, flattening the latter's gun hand.

The two were wrestling on the steep spiral steps, The Shadow trying to use the automatic, the ape-man attempting a new swing with the arm that had been deflected, unweakened, by the bullet.

Heaving shoulders betrayed the start of a vicious side stroke. From beside the rail, The Shadow ducked inward, burrowing upward beneath the monster's half-raised, lurching form. The steel rod smote the slender iron rail, ripping its posts from their fastenings. Carried by his own impetus, the ape-man rolled across The Shadow, halfway into the space that he had broken.

Wasting no time with his gun, The Shadow threw his whole weight against the teetering monster. The "thing" grabbed for posts and caught them as it went over the edge. This time, the monster's own huge weight was against it.

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The posts ripped loose. Sliding over the edge, The Shadow met a void. His hands caught an unloosened post above. Thanks to his lesser weight, the upright held. Swinging like a human pendulum, The Shadow heard a smashing thud eighty feet below.

Echoes were still reverberating, hollow in the darkness when The Shadow rolled safely upon the stairs. Final silence told that Zanigew's superhuman emissary had not survived the hideous plunge.

Crawling up to the tower, The Shadow found his flashlight, glowing beside the wall. His hand was shaky at first, but it steadied as he played the beam. He knew that Zanigew had sent the monstrous climber to search for something that Tretter's abductors had overlooked; to destroy some final shred of evidence that might provide a newer trail.

The flashlight found the overturned table. One leg was broken from it, the drawer was halfway out. Pulling the drawer clear, The Shadow saw that it was completely empty; but his ears caught the crinkle of paper.

Reaching into the space where the drawer had been, he drew out a crumpled letter. He read scrawled, blotty penmanship:

Dear Tretter: This is my last warning. Come to Topoma, as I ordered, or I shall take measures to bring you there. Obey at once!

Barreau

Topoma was a town in eastern Idaho. The name Barreau was familiar to The Shadow. It could only be Eugene Barreau, of whom the world had heard much but knew little.

Barreau was an electrical wizard long believed dead. Rumor, though unproven, had labeled him a person who held disdain toward all mankind. Whatever the case, Barreau was certainly an amazing genius, whose enmity might be unpleasant to experience.

A low laugh drew whispered echoes from the tower, mingling with the moan of the incessant surf below. That mirth was almost prophecy.

Through a visit to Eugene Barreau, The Shadow could foresee a meeting with Zanigew, master brain of scientific crime!

CHAPTER IX. BANISHED BARRIERS

THE town of Topoma wasn't far from beaten paths of travel. Nor was it difficult for strangers to lead the natives into conversation. The Shadow learned that the next evening, when he sat in the old-fashioned lobby of the frame-built Topoma Hotel.

He bore little resemblance to Kent Allard, this chance visitor. Although his features had a hawkish aspect, they were of fuller mold. He looked the part that he was playing. The Shadow was posing as an adventurous Easterner who wanted wide-open life in surroundings more rugged than those of the usual dude ranch.

Discussion of that problem produced the very fact The Shadow wanted. Another Easterner had taken over a ranch close to Topoma. Unfortunately, it was a ranch no longer.

"There's an old professor owns it," explained a native, "but he's dug himself in like a prairie dog! Tain't a ranch no more, the way he's rigged it."

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

The Shadow was interested. More details came. The old professor—that was the only name the natives knew him by—had fitted up the ranch with a lot of wireless equipment. He had posted the premises, warning off all trespassers; but even that had not been sufficient.

“Sheep dogs are smart,” observed a native, “but they can't read. That's why a couple of 'em ran afoul of trouble. There was Carter's big dog, the one with the silver-mounted collar. He was fried, when we saw him through the fence.

“Yes, stranger. He was fried, with all the hair burned offn him! Layin' between a couple o' them posts a few rods inside the fence. Wa'n't no wires there, though, as fur as we could see. The professor sent a chap to settle up with Carter, like he had with the others who had like complaints.”

Gabfests ended early in Topoma. It was only nine o'clock by the lobby clock when the hawk-faced stranger found himself alone. The Shadow's watch showed eight, for it was on Pacific Time, whereas Topoma was in the zone of Mountain Time.

Correcting his watch as he strolled out from the lobby, The Shadow strolled to the deserted railway station. That, perhaps, was the last that the natives would see of the stranger who asked few questions, but who learned much.

Bringing a brief case from beneath the station platform, The Shadow enveloped himself in a black cloak. Slouch hat upon his head, flexible brief case girded beneath his cloak, he shifted a brace of automatics as he set out for Barreau's ranch.

AN hour later, The Shadow was looking through the fence that the natives had mentioned. It was high, with a sharp-picketed top, but it was not electrified. Scaling it, The Shadow advanced a short distance, then used his flashlight.

The low-focused beam showed one of the posts that the informant had mentioned. It looked like a robot, squatty, with rounded top for a head. Shifting to the left, The Shadow came upon another similar contrivance some fifty feet away.

These posts, set amid the trees, formed a cordon around the ranch house. Closer, probably, than any other person had ventured, The Shadow could hear a faint hum. The purpose of the posts was plain. They were an invention of Barreau's; sending posts that sent an actual current through the air.

Widening the flashlight's beam, The Shadow held the torch in his left hand. Taking a half dollar, he flipped it on a long toss between the posts, following it with the flashlight. The light wasn't necessary. The coin, itself, showed the result.

Sparks flew, turning the half dollar into a tiny meteorite as it scaled through that stretch of space. Current enough to kill a man instantly, as it had finished the sheep dogs.

Pointing the flashlight to the ground, The Shadow had the ray half narrowed when a snarling creature sprang from a hollow beside him. With an odd yelp, it dashed away in the direction of the posts.

It was a startled coyote, heading for the doom that had overtaken the sheep dogs. The Shadow expected its fur to burst with sparks. Instead, the coyote loped through the invisible barrier. Soon, its howl came back faintly from the dark.

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Silence; then the stir of The Shadow's repressed laugh. Crouching beside the hollow, he began to stow his guns, his flashlight and other objects into the flexible brief case. That process done, he buried the case beneath a rock.

Dead sheep dogs—live coyotes.

No riddle to The Shadow. The sheep dogs had worn collars. The electric barrier operated only when something metallic came within its path. That was why The Shadow was ridding himself of all metal, from belt buckle to tips of shoe laces.

He made no attempt to toss guns and flashlight past the posts. It was preferable to risk an unarmed excursion. There might be hidden posts, many of them, closer to the ranch house.

INVISIBLE in the darkness, The Shadow took a devious route forward. Soon, he reached a clearing, to see the dim lights of a sprawling ranch house. There were other buildings about the premises; they looked like tool-houses except for one larger structure that had windows.

That building was squatty; from it, The Shadow could hear the whir of dynamos. From high above, he could detect another buzz. Looking upward, he saw four metal towers that formed the corners of an imaginary square. Steel needles, fifty feet in height, constructed like wireless towers. Their hum told that they were sheltering Barreau's ranch house with a roof-like current as potent as the invisible ground barrier.

Reaching the sprawling central structure, The Shadow saw a reason for its dim lights. Windows were open, but they were equipped with heavy hinged screens, laid between double sets of bars. It was apparent that those screens must be electrified. Insulated hinges indicated that wires ran through from the wall. To touch any screen would mean death—except for one proviso.

Electrified in ordinary fashion, a screen could not kill, unless the person who encountered it also contacted another object. That fact urged The Shadow to a daring move.

With a short dash, he neared a window, ending his run with a high, upward leap. His hands caught outer bars near the top of the screen. His rubber-tipped canvas shoes found a toe hold just below. Clinging in cat-like fashion, The Shadow jerked his shoulders backward, again and again.

A fastening gave. The barred frame swung outward on its heavy hinge. The Shadow loosed his hold, taking a long, hard tumble outward and away. Sweeping above his sprawling form, the screened frame thwacked the house wall.

The Shadow had launched clear of that fatal contact, missing death by less than half a foot.

The frame swung halfway back, wavered in leisurely fashion above The Shadow's head. Crouched in darkness, the cloaked invader waited to make sure that the screen's thump had not been heard. Satisfied on that point, he essayed the entry of the open window—a ticklish problem in itself, within the menace of the frame beside his shoulder. The thing seemed undecided whether to flap open or shut. It was perfectly hinged; despite its weight, it could respond to the trifling breezes that stirred about the ranch house.

Picking an instant when the frame wavered outward, The Shadow vaulted for the sill. He sensed that the fickle frame had reversed its course, but he ignored it, for an instant of hesitancy would be positive death.

Diving across the sill, The Shadow rolled as he hit the floor, doubling his feet beneath him. Face upward, he saw the screen clack shut, as if drawn by the suction of his own whizzing flight. The fastening caught, holding

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the frame as it had originally been placed.

RISING, The Shadow saw that he had landed in a small bedroom, dimly lighted by a glow that came through an open door at the rear. There was another door, straight across the room but it was closed.

Easing that door open, The Shadow looked into a living room, saw a tall dark-haired man bending over a drafting board that rested on a broad table.

The man's back was toward The Shadow; beside him was an open drawer, from which his hand brought drafting instruments. The man was Eugene Barreau, the human spider who occupied the center of an electrified web.

Perhaps it was chance that caused Barreau to turn suddenly about. The Shadow glimpsed an elongated face, with hooked nose, tiny eyes that betrayed a suspicious glitter. Though he did not see The Shadow, Barreau noted that the door was ajar.

With a sharp ejaculation, Barreau came to his feet, whipping his hand from the table drawer. His fist displayed a stubby revolver.

The Shadow might have beaten the shot, by making a prompt surge. Instead, he wheeled farther into the darkened bedroom, for he had sensed a purpose in Barreau's exclamation. The Shadow's hunch was right: Barreau expected aid, and it was on its way.

A husky man in a white jacket was pouncing into the bedroom from a rear room, in answer to Barreau's call. He did no more than glimpse The Shadow as a vague shape in black that faded, smoke-like, into the bedroom's gloom. Charging blindly, the fellow placed himself at instant disadvantage. Marking the white jacket in the darkness, The Shadow caught the attacker with strangle hold.

From the living room doorway, Barreau saw the lash of the white shoulders; thought for the moment that his man had the upper hand. The professor hissed encouragement:

“Excellent, Cresham! Hold him until I—”

Jabbing across the threshold as he spoke, Barreau was met suddenly by the hurtling body of Cresham. Hoisting the husky like a sack of feathers, The Shadow had flung him straight for Barreau. Only a spinning dive saved the professor; his hurried twist carried him out into the living room.

With a speedy whip that only a rattlesnake could have matched, Barreau was aiming for the doorway; but the moments that he had lost were too many. Across the senseless form of Cresham came an avalanche of black, with gloved hands shooting forward.

One fist took Barreau's gun wrist, bending it with a force that numbed the professor's trigger finger. The other caught Barreau's throat in a clutch that prevented outcry.

Backed half across the drawing board, Barreau could see a face above him, for The Shadow's slouch hat had tipped back. Barreau caught the bore of eyes that drilled him with their burn. Madly, he rallied, writhing like a serpent in an effort to loosen from The Shadow's clutch.

That struggle failed. Barreau sprawled limp upon the table. As The Shadow's fingers relaxed from the professor's throat, Barreau gasped a breath; then, before the hand could grip again he gulped a single word.

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Though his tome was no louder than a gargle, he mouthed that word with defiant fury. It was a name—one that The Shadow had heard in long-stringed dots and dashes, but never before from human lips:

“Zanigew!”

CHAPTER X. THE UNKNOWN SHADOW

UTTERANCE of the name “Zanigew” might have been Barreau's proclamation of his own identity; but The Shadow sensed a different significance. Shifting the professor into a chair, The Shadow waited until Barreau's eyes had opened.

Staring into the muzzle of his own revolver, the professor knew that fight was useless. He began to eye The Shadow as a figure, rather than a face. A slow enlightenment dawned on Barreau.

“I thought you were Zanigew,” he said, apologetically—“the one man that I have learned to fear—”

Someone was knocking at the front door of the room. The Shadow whispered for Barreau to answer. The professor called:

“Who is it?”

“Hilgard,” replied a muffled voice. “Ready for duty in the dynamo room.”

“Very well. Go on duty.”

By the time that Hilgard's footsteps had faded, The Shadow was spreading the crinkled note that he had found in the lighthouse. He showed it to Barreau, who gave a solemn nod.

“This places me in a bad light,” declared the professor. “From reading it, you might have believed me to be Zanigew. It looks like an actual threat.

“This is merely the final note that I sent to Tretter. The others were pleas. I wanted him to come here, to be safe from Zanigew. But Tretter was too stubborn. I had no way to bring him here; such was mere pretense on my part. But it is plain that Zanigew had a way to seize him.”

The Shadow suggested that Barreau tell his entire story. The professor willingly agreed. He launched into a tale that was simple, but awesome in its truth.

For years, Barreau had been regarded as a misanthropist who hated the entire world. That was untrue. Barreau's only contempt was for the ways wherein men fought with one another, bringing misery to millions.

He had retired, resolved to create some invention that would protect innocent persons against the horrors of warfare. Barreau had found success, through creating powerful sending apparatus that dispatched electrical currents through the air.

“Those towers,” he explained, “are like the ground posts, but tremendously amplified. They protect me against air attacks. Any plane striking that force would crash.”

“And its occupants?” inquired The Shadow. “Would they be electrocuted?”

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“Not immediately,” replied Barreau. “The current would first stifle the motor. Diving toward the center of the electrical field, increased amperage would be encountered. That would mean electrocution, unless the gasoline tanks exploded first.

“In that case”—Barreau was solemn, for the horror of the thing was to his dislike—“there would be nothing left of the plane's occupants.”

RESUMING his narration, Barreau told of a message he had received from Zanigew. In it, the master mind had openly declared his ambitions. He intended to become an emperor of crime. He had gotten facts regarding Barreau's invention, and saw that he could use it for his own protection.

Believing Barreau to be a kindred spirit because of the false stories circulated regarding the professor, Zanigew had considered a direct offer to be the best procedure. There, Zanigew had guessed wrong.

Barreau's answer had been to put his electrical barriers in immediate operation as his own protection against Zanigew. Since then, the dynamos had never once been halted. For months, Barreau had kept Zanigew at bay.

Not forgetting the human element, Barreau kept tabs on the dozen men who served him, shifting them frequently so that each could watch the others. Any treachery would be immediately discovered. Even the dynamos were sealed so that no one could harm them.

“The dynamos could be stopped,” admitted Barreau, “but only for a few minutes. The man on duty is searched by others, and he remains unarmed while they guard outside.”

“Meanwhile,” questioned The Shadow, “have you heard any more from Zanigew?”

“No word at all,” replied Barreau. “Yet I am positive that he is hereabouts, although the men that I sent to the town have reported nothing suspicious.”

The Shadow mentioned Harvey Lanyon. Professor Barreau had never heard of the Rainmaker. He had read accounts, however, concerning the abduction of James Dansell. Those had increased his fears for Glade Tretter, with whom he had regularly corresponded.

Zanigew must have known of those letters, but had let them pass. Finding one letter missing among the papers brought from the lighthouse, Zanigew had sent the ape-man to look for it.

The theory that Zanigew was near by seemed a sound one to The Shadow. He already knew that Zanigew's headquarters were east of the belt that used Pacific Time. Probably Zanigew, on the move, had circled close to this Idaho ranch. His next thrust would be here. The thing to do was to provide a stroke against Zanigew before he could find a flaw in Barreau's armor.

Deciding to start at once, The Shadow returned the revolver to Barreau. Together, they carried Cresham into the bedroom and placed him on the bed. Barreau's servant was groggy from his jolt, but otherwise unhurt.

Back in the study, Barreau reached for a telephone.

“I shall tell Hilgard to stop the dynamos,” he said, “for a five-minute test. That will be ample for your departure—”

He stopped, his head tilted. His keen ear had noted something; it wasn't a sound, but the absence of one.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

“The dynamos!” exclaimed Barreau, hoarsely. “They have already stopped!”

THE SHADOW swung toward a window. He saw a screen that had been an inky-black against the background of night. But it was black no longer; it was a muggy-brown, tinged with yellow.

Fancifully, the screen seemed to shift with the swirl of jaundiced outside air. The creeping mass was Lanyon's fog, laden with Dansell's poison gas, pouring in past the electrical barriers. Zanigew had already started his thrust to capture Eugene Barreau!

The swirl was proof that the master crook had found a subtle use for Tretter's fog-breaker. He was using that machine at low speed, making it serve as a slow driving force behind the fog; not as an eliminator of the artificial mist.

With his snaring of Barreau, Zanigew had promise of capturing another victim; one whose presence here he did not suspect. His snare was closing in upon The Shadow!

Before The Shadow could proclaim the menace to Barreau, the long-faced professor had reached the door, he was thinking of the dynamos, not the fog, which he hadn't noticed. Speeding after Barreau, The Shadow saw him press a button beside a screened door. Operating from the house current, the door opened.

Once past the thick-meshed screen, Barreau was engulfed by the soupish fog. Heedless of danger, The Shadow dashed to overtake him. Barreau took a sprawl over a prone guard, who lay senseless, his rifle beside him.

From hands and knees, Barreau jabbed his revolver toward the squat building that housed the dynamo plant. Hilgard was stepping from the open door wearing a gas mask that marked him as the traitor. He was reaching for a rifle that another unconscious guard had dropped.

Seeing Barreau, Hilgard ducked back. The professor's revolver popped in rapid fashion, its spurts taking an orange tinge within the fog.

The range was too long for that stumpy weapon, and Barreau spoiled his own aim by trying to bound forward as he fired. Hilgard hopped into the dynamo house, yanking the pine door shut behind him.

A rifle crackled.

That shot was The Shadow's. He had picked up the rifle dropped by the guard at the front door. His aim was perfect. The pine door splintered, then heaved outward, flung by the weight of a body that came twisting to the ground.

The Shadow had picked off Hilgard, through the slight opening of the door before it had closed completely. The man was a grotesque sight as he kicked the ground, clawing at his gas mask. His writhing ended a moment later.

Vengeance on the traitor was not The Shadow's only purpose. The black-cloaked marksman had hoped to reach the dynamo plant, obtain the gas mask, and start the power. That move was impossible, for a reason that The Shadow now saw.

Professor Barreau had fallen, about overcome by the sleep-producing fog. Such a quick result proved that The Shadow could not cover the hundred yards to the dynamo plant without succumbing also.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

There was some life in Barreau, for he tried to rise on hands and knees. Acting on another inspiration, The Shadow sprang for the professor and hauled him back into the ranch house. Once inside, The Shadow pressed the button that shut the screen door.

Fog was oozing through the mesh windows, the screens yielding gas to which The Shadow must soon succumb. His plight would be worse than Barreau's, who was wanted by Zanigew as a consulting expert to team with Lanyon, Dansell and Tretter. The verdict for The Shadow would be death, once he was recognized.

DROPPING Barreau into a chair, The Shadow stumbled to a fireplace that was stuffed with paper and kindling. Fumbling with his cloak, he pulled it loose, along with the slouch hat and gloves. Lighting the paper in the fireplace, he flung his garments upon the blaze.

In the hems of the cloak were separate powders that could be mixed into an explosive. Hardly had the cloak caught fire, when it took a sudden puff. It was gone into smoke, the slouch hat with it, while the kindling continued a short-lived blaze.

Remembering Cresham, by this time gassed in the bedroom, The Shadow looked for another white coat. He found one in a closet. Peeling off Barreau's smoking jacket, The Shadow placed the white coat on the professor.

Barreau's eyes opened feebly. He saw The Shadow donning the smoking jacket. Barreau understood. The Shadow was staging a double-edged ruse. He was going to pass himself as Barreau, letting the professor appear to be just another prisoner.

Zanigew had never met Barreau. The only man who could later expose the deception would be Hilgard; but the traitor was dead. None of Barreau's faithful men, like Cresham, would talk. As Barreau, The Shadow might produce results when all became prisoners in Zanigew's domain.

The gas took Barreau. To The Shadow, the next few minutes were a nightmarish strain. Facing a mirror in the closet, he swayed as he clawed away the putty-like make-up that was on his face. Out from the built-up guise came the gaunt countenance of Kent Allard, a face that Zanigew could believe to be that of Eugene Barreau.

There were clumping sounds outside the ranch house. Monstrous men broke through the screen door, their gas-masked faces giving them the appearance of creatures from another planet. They saw Allard toppling toward them, screeching like a madman:

“Out of here! Away from my premises!”

They took him for Barreau, as he tumbled into their arms. The last victim had taken the gas sleep.

Soon, Zanigew's hordes had dismantled Barreau's equipment, including the sectional towers. They hauled the apparatus to trucks that awaited on a dirt road. In those same trucks they piled their prisoners, including the white-coated figure of the real Professor Barreau.

One prisoner, however, was treated with more care. The Shadow, his identity unguessed, was placed in the rear of a large sedan.

The Shadow had become Professor Eugene Barreau.

CHAPTER XI. ZANIGEW

“THIS way, professor—”

The words droned like a monotone from space. They drilled deep into the whirl that formed The Shadow's thoughts. His senses began to snap into place.

Hearing had come first. Sight was next. The Shadow saw that he was in a square room with a low ceiling, facing a man whose drab, expressionless face marked him as a servant.

His sense of touch returning, The Shadow felt himself supported by arms on each side. He could move his head; by shifting his gaze, he saw that his supporters were drab men like the one who faced him.

Human machines, long-trained to obedience by their master, Zanigew!

In one rush, The Shadow's memory had come back. He knew these men for captors who had previously worn snoutish gas masks. He realized that his deception had worked.

They believed The Shadow to be Eugene Barreau.

Numbly, as though fighting off the restraining clutches of many cobwebs, The Shadow moved forward through a door that was pointed out to him. He paused long enough to sweep his hand across his forehead, fighting off the last trend of dizziness.

During that short halt, The Shadow's one thought concerned time. He was trying to estimate how long he had been prisoner.

“Two days, professor—”

It was the drab-faced man who spoke in answer to The Shadow's unworded question. The effect was startling; despite himself, The Shadow stared at the fellow.

Could Zanigew have learned the secret of reading thoughts, and passed it to his followers? If so, all chance for pretense was gone, unless The Shadow could gather his scattered impressions and control them!

Then reason came suddenly to The Shadow's assistance. It wasn't a matter of telepathy. The fellow had simply watched the prisoner's expression and had given an answer to a probable question. It was likely that everyone who came out of the gas-induced sleep would first wonder how long they had been under.

The procession was moving along a vaulted, rough-hewn corridor, a veritable burrow driven through solid rock. As they made turns and went by side corridors, The Shadow could hear the occasional beating of waves.

Zanigew's stronghold was on the Pacific coast.

Evidently, crime's overlord had abandoned his more easterly headquarters, no longer needing it after his capture of Professor Barreau.

All along the route, The Shadow observed that the passages were lighted by evenly spaced bulbs screwed in the rock above. Set deep, those incandescents produced an indirect lighting that made the corridors seem a line of glowing patches.

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Had The Shadow come here as an unsuspected visitant, he could have found many lurking spots, with or without his garb of black. Those places were useless, at present. The Shadow's only course was to continue his bold pretense of being Barreau.

Stopping at a metal door, The Shadow's captors pounded for entry. The door slid aside, actuated by a concealed mechanism. The prisoner was pushed into a roundish grotto that seemed like the interior of a half-dome. There was a grind as the door slid shut, cutting off any retreat.

Alone, The Shadow advanced toward a figure seated at a table. Dim light improved as he approached. He saw that the figure faced him and there could be no question regarding the man's identity.

The supposed Eugene Barreau had been brought for an audience with Zanigew!

IGNORING the prisoner's arrival. Zanigew kept studying a chart that was spread upon a table in front of him. Despite that down-turned gaze, The Shadow was able to form some impression of the master crook's appearance.

At present, Zanigew's face seemed all forehead, wide, bulky, as if crammed with an oversized brain. Forming a mental picture of what lay beneath the forehead, The Shadow found his visualization almost exact, when Zanigew suddenly tilted his head upward to look at the prisoner.

From the forehead, The Shadow had gauged overhanging brows. Zanigew had them. His eyebrows were thin streaks along a bony protuberance; so extended that he was forced to put his head backward to get a full view of the captive.

Zanigew's temples were wide, but below them, his face tapered sharply into concave cheeks that made skull-like hollows. The curves broadened at the line of his straight, tight lips, to produce a square jaw as bony as his forehead, though not quite so wide.

Piercing eyes were the only portion of his face that showed life, but their brilliance was not human. They appeared as ruddy garnets set in the eye sockets of a skull. There was no blink of eyelids to prove their reality; but the intensity of their stare declared the existence of an evil brain behind them.

Otherwise, Zanigew's face could have been described only as a Napoleonic death's-head!

Listlessly, The Shadow met Zanigew's stare, then let his own gaze drift away. He wanted to give the impression that he could not bear the hypnotic glint, and he succeeded. From the corner of his eye, The Shadow saw a contemptuous smile come to Zanigew's lips.

Strange, that smile; as inhuman as the man himself: a downward grimace at the corners of the mouth, produced entirely by a tightening of Zanigew's lower lip.

Zanigew was pleased. He believed that he had gained another prisoner who feared him, he regarded the submission of Professor Barreau as a thing accomplished.

Rising from the table, Zanigew revealed a tall, muscular frame. Its solidity produced an appearance of thinness that was incorrect. With his unusual height aiding the illusion, Zanigew looked at least thirty pounds less than his actual weight.

Others might have regarded him as a creature of nerve, rather than power. Not so The Shadow. In Zanigew, he saw a latent strength that would render him formidable in combat. He could picture him outmatching a

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creature as dangerous as the ape–man that Zanigew had sent to the lighthouse.

Zanigew was superhuman: an evil master who could force obedience by brain or brawn. In producing submission from others, he apparently used whichever was their own specialty, to prove himself completely superior.

Mentality had been Zanigew's choice with the pretended Eugene Barreau. He pointed a commanding finger toward The Shadow, who let his eyes focus dully upon it. As Zanigew's hand swung slowly, The Shadow's gaze followed, to a door at the side of the grotto.

Words grated from Zanigew's lips:

“Go there!”

The Shadow obeyed. Reaching the door, he stopped stupidly. There was a gritted laugh from Zanigew, as the skull–faced man arrived to open the door. His finger pointed The Shadow through.

Three hapless men were seated at tables. The Shadow recognized Harvey Lanyon; knew that the others must be James Dansell and Glade Tretter. There was a fourth space, to which Zanigew pointed. Silently, The Shadow seated himself, to find papers and plans that concerned Barreau's electrical devices.

“We need improvements, professor,” rasped Zanigew. “The list on the table states what I require. Begin your work!”

ZANIGEW'S eyes glared about the room. The others went back to their own tasks. Stepping about, Zanigew looked over their shoulders. He passed Tretter and Dansell, came to Lanyon.

The Rainmaker must have sensed Zanigew's scowl. Springing about, Lanyon screeched wildly:

“I won't go ahead! You are asking what I cannot do—the impossible! I cannot do it!”

“You mean,” grated Zanigew, “that you will not do it! We shall change all that!”

Long fingers gave a sharp snap. Figures sprang from dark niches in the wall. Three huskies seized Lanyon, suppressing his wild struggles. Zanigew rasped orders, the Rainmaker was hauled away.

“There will be torture,” remarked Zanigew, dryly. “Perhaps Lanyon can stand it; perhaps not. It will change his mind; possibly his body also. Sometimes men work better when crippled physically. We shall see, tomorrow.”

Zanigew waited until the guards returned. When they had taken their posts again, the skull–faced overlord turned toward his grotto. From the doorway, the ruby eyes surveyed the submissive prisoners working steadily at their desks.

The sound that came from Zanigew's lips could not have been called a laugh. It was a metallic utterance that blended with the clang of the closing door.

CHAPTER XII. THE TORTURE CELL

IN assigning work to Professor Barreau, Zanigew had tossed himself a boomerang. The Napoleonic crook had given The Shadow the one opportunity he needed to completely play time part of the electrical wizard.

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During the hours that followed, The Shadow familiarized himself with every detail of Barreau's plans; and with that knowledge gained, he fulfilled Zanigew's requirements as well.

The master crook simply wanted ways to set up the electrical barrier over an oval area, instead of a circle. Any technician could work out those details, after studying Barreau's diagrams.

There was significance in the specifications given by Zanigew. He wanted an oval barrier five hundred and fifty feet in length, with a cross measurement of seventy feet. He also required two high sending posts, instead of four, spaced three hundred feet apart.

One question was: Could two such towers transmit an effectual barrier against air attacks?

The Shadow found out that they could. Barreau's four-tower arrangement had been an optional one.

While The Shadow worked, he was conscious of furtive stares that came from Glade Tretter. The man from the lighthouse knew the real Eugene Barreau and was puzzled by the presence of a substitute.

Tretter's silence, his evasion of the return glances, gave indication of his final opinion. He decided that the fake Barreau was a spy placed here by Zanigew to learn if Tretter had ever actually met the electrical wizard. That suited The Shadow.

It was curious, how things could be understood in this tense atmosphere without expressing them in words.

Besides divining Tretter's thoughts, The Shadow realized that Zanigew must have talked with the other inventors, as he would probably do with The Shadow, later. It was plain, too, what Zanigew must have told them.

Many lives depended upon these important prisoners. Zanigew was sparing others, as long as the inventors behaved. The Shadow had caught a flash of that, from rebuking looks that Dansell and Tretter had given Lanyon at the time the Rainmaker kicked over the traces.

A dull gong brought an end to labors. It was evident that The Shadow had been conducted here during the middle of working hours, for his toil had been comparatively short. Marched back to his cell, he found a meal awaiting him. When he had completed it, a guard closed the door from the outside. Bolts grated; the cell's lone light was extinguished.

DURING his dinner, The Shadow had studied what little there was to see in the small room. It had a window that opened onto complete darkness. The window was about three feet high, two feet in width. It had two upright bars, dividing it into three spaces, each about seven inches across.

Groping to the window, The Shadow tested the bars. They were solid steel, firmly fixed, so strong that even Zanigew's dead ape-man could not have bent them. That fact did not deter The Shadow. He had another procedure in mind.

Thrusting one arm through the central sector, The Shadow turned his head sideways and poked it through. Bars grazed his ears; when he turned his head, they became a sort of collar. He was wedging outward, drawing his other shoulder.

Below, his hand gripped rock. The Shadow tugged. It was a tight squeeze for his body, but he seemed to elongate as he drew his chest in. His hips slid past. His tall form teetered outward.

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There was deep space below. That was one reason why Zanigew had probably regarded the bars as sufficient. To The Shadow, those depths were no menace. The wrench that his hands gave brought his legs through with a force that might have pitched him headlong, had he not been prepared for it. His feet turned, hooking the bars.

Doubling, The Shadow clutched rock with his lower hand, reached his upper hand to a bar. His feet wiggled clear. Probing the darkness, he worked his way downward, gaining finger and toe grips in the rock.

This space was a deep fissure in the ground. From above, The Shadow could feel cold air filtering down into the subterranean stronghold. Probably the surface was camouflaged, to keep out daylight and to escape the notice of chance observers.

At least, The Shadow was free within Zanigew's domain. He intended to make the most of that temporary liberty.

From his limited observations of Zanigew's honeycombed citadel, The Shadow knew that it had several levels, with numerous air passages. He was seeking one of the unbarred outlets that must certainly be along this fissure. During his descent, he probed to left and right, occasionally encountering barred openings that seemed like cell windows.

Not wanting those, The Shadow worked along the rocky wall until he finally came to a crevice, set at an angle. Squeezing through, he worked past rough rock, until he saw a corridor light gleaming ahead.

Then began a prolonged journey through a maze of passages that always seemed to trend downward. Doorways were few. The Shadow was away from the level of the cell rooms. Nevertheless, he continued the downward route.

The Shadow had chosen a special goal: Lanyon's torture room.

Again obeying a subtle impulse, The Shadow was confident that the torture chamber must be the deepest of these man-chiseled caverns. Something in Zanigew's manner—a gesture of his motioning hand, at the time of Lanyon's seizure—had indicated that.

Of all prisoners who needed aid, Lanyon's demand was the most imperative.

Turning a sharp corner, The Shadow saw a final slope ahead. It was a curious passage, this one, for although its sides widened, its path did not. The reason was a huge split in the rock, at the left. Where the passage leveled, that crevasse widened like a letter "V", until the path on the right became nothing more than a catwalk.

Where the path narrowed to a mere two-foot ledge, The Shadow saw a solitary doorway. The door itself was open, as the last light showed. Beyond the walk blended into absolute darkness, for the rest of the passage was unusable.

Reaching the doorway, The Shadow heard the mutter of an ugly voice. Peering down a short decline, he saw a cell infused by a ghastly greenish light. There, stretched on a crude-shaped rack, lay Harvey Lanyon.

THE Rainmaker's ankles and wrists were bound with fetters attached to chains that ran over pulleys. All led to a metal drum beyond the rack. Above the drum was a crude clock, with swinging pendulum. As The Shadow watched, the clock's long hand—its only hand—marked a quarter hour.

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With a sharp click, the chains tightened one link farther. There was a harsh chuckle from beside the rack. The Shadow noted the man who gave it—a rough-clad fellow with a bulldog jaw, who was obviously one of Zanigew's henchmen.

“Remember me, Lanyon?” gloated the tormentor, staring at the Rainmaker's scared face. “I'm Elthar, the fellow you fired. I'm the guy that sold your crackpot invention for you, to Zanigew!”

“I never did like you, Lanyon! That's why I came down to see how you were making out. Not hurt much, just yet, huh? Don't worry, you will be, after a few more hours on this rack!”

A few more hours—and every fifteen minutes meant a click of the chain. That thought told The Shadow that Elthar was correct. The man gave a thrust of his bulldog chin, turned about to come from the torture cell. Needing immediate concealment, The Shadow found it by working farther along the catwalk. The ledge became so narrow, that he could only keep his balance by clutching the rocky wall.

At that moment, The Shadow's left foot dislodged a tiny fragment of stone. It dropped into the abyss; after a prolonged fall it struck the bottom, sending up a faint clatter from rocks beneath. Elthar heard that sound as he shouldered through the doorway.

A frightened look swept the fellow's rough face, proof that he had made this trip without orders. He glanced in The Shadow's direction, saw nothing in the blackness.

Looking the opposite way, Elthar saw no one in the rising passage. He was hasty, however, when he closed the door. His fingers fumbled the bolt, failing to shove it tight.

Hurriedly, Elthar took to the passage. Meanwhile, The Shadow was moving out from hiding. Once at the door, he found it unnecessary to touch the bolt. The Shadow merely shoved the door inward, closing it behind him.

A few seconds later, the haunted face of Harvey Lanyon was staring upward at a countenance that showed sympathy, instead of gloating. His eyes had a trace of disbelief, that suddenly faded.

In one glad gasp, Lanyon gave greeting to The Shadow.

CHAPTER XIII. DOUBLE DEATH

RECOGNITION gripped Harvey Lanyon.

That night in Denver—the man from the other room—his own mistake; all flashed to his tormented brain. With those thoughts came the rattle of a ratchet. The Shadow had found the device that loosened the chains.

Lanyon sat up. The chains clattered as he rubbed his numbed limbs. So far, his torture had been mental. He had felt the strain from the stretched chains, but the physical effects had not been serious. Dawn was the coming time when his joints would have begun to crack.

Doubly apologetic, Lanyon spoke regrets of his actions in Denver, also the stupidity with which he had today defied Zanigew. But Lanyon had real excuses for his latter action.

“I have been here long,” he explained. “Zanigew has told me more than the others. He plans crime such as has never before been known; and empire of evil that will stretch throughout the world!”

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When The Shadow asked for more details, Lanyon couldn't supply them. Zanigew had been hazy on most matters. One point, however, had impressed the Rainmaker.

“There was a word,” he recalled, “that I had never heard before. Zanigew mentioned it, and I took it for a name. The word was 'Unaga' —yes, I am sure that was it.”

A quick sparkle came to The Shadow's eyes, but he wasted no time in commenting on the name. He wanted to learn what else Lanyon knew. He asked if the Rainmaker had learned the location of this headquarters. Lanyon had.

“We are near Puget Sound,” he declared. “I was awake when I was brought here in a boat that was low-built, like an old rumrunner.”

The Shadow asked for details of the stronghold. Lanyon was able to supply a few. The honeycombs were high in a cliff above the Sound. There were several levels, and the highest one housed Zanigew's radio sending station.

“No calls have gone out from here, though,” stated Lanyon. “Zanigew said so. He wanted me to feel less hopeful, so that I would accede to the request he made today.”

“Which was—”

“That I design special mist bombs, to operate from rockets. He wants to project them in more rapid sequence.”

“You will design them.”

Lanyon didn't oppose The Shadow's quiet statement. The Rainmaker had previously realized his folly. In a pinch, Zanigew could design such bombs himself. It was preferable for Lanyon to submit, and thus avoid torture.

Furthermore, Lanyon admitted a fact that The Shadow had already guessed; namely, that Zanigew was holding many prisoners upon whom he could show wrath, since they were not as necessary as the inventors.

“He plans to use them, though,” asserted Lanyon. “As slaves, perhaps, for he is merciless. At least he has spared their lives, and intends to continue that policy.”

That fitted with The Shadow's own analysis of Zanigew. Crime's emperor had huge ambitions, that would require many followers. It would be easier for him to sign up prisoners few by few, than to depend upon the lengthy process of finding recruits.

Nevertheless, a criminal Napoleon would need generals. Just where and how Zanigew intended to obtain men of that caliber, was another problem. The Shadow, however, could foresee the answer. It meant definitely that the sooner Zanigew could be crushed, the better it would be for the world.

The one-handed clock clicked another quarter hour. The Shadow ended his chat with Lanyon by motioning the Rainmaker back on the rack. Slackening the chains, The Shadow curled the extra links beneath Lanyon's legs and arms.

“The chains will be taut by dawn,” he told the victim, “but not enough to mean torture. Zanigew will believe that you have borne up well. Continue the deceit—”

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There was an abrupt finish to his statement, as The Shadow whipped toward the door. His twist was too late. A man stood there, leveling a revolver. It was Elthar; he had remembered the unshoved bolt.

MURDEROUS desire flickered on the man's bulldog features. Had The Shadow budged, Elthar would have gladly pumped away. But The Shadow forestalled gunfire, by going immediately into a part that suited Barreau.

He acted as the professor might have—cowering, raising his arms. His eyes looked hunted, fearful—enough so to suit Elthar. The fellow saw a better chance than murder. He took The Shadow for Barreau and decided that he could win favor by bringing this prisoner back to Zanigew. That prospect had an added touch that pleased Elthar. It would mean torture for a second victim.

In guttural tone, Elthar ordered The Shadow to approach. Still cowering, the prisoner came up the rough steps; Elthar could see him tremble. Shifting within the doorway, Elthar motioned The Shadow through. Shakily, the prisoner went past.

Then, it came: a stroke produced with whippet speed.

With a whirl about, The Shadow took Elthar, gun and all. He flung the fellow in a somersault half through the doorway keeping the gun for himself. Flattening, Elthar hit the narrow ledge and came to his feet wild-eyed.

A choking hand took his throat, shook him with the fierce play of a terrier's teeth. All the while, The Shadow kept Elthar covered, but did not fire. There were ways in which the fellow could be useful; contrarily, his disappearance might bring complications.

The Shadow's hand relaxed. Elthar subsided on the ledge. His snarling manner was gone; he raised his head hopelessly, as he looked along the passage. Then, before The Shadow could spy his face, Elthar shouted a name:

“Jollian!”

The Shadow wheeled. He saw a man dashing down the sloping corridor in response to Elthar's shout. Another of Zanigew's crew, aiming a gun as he came. Knowing the alarm that gunshots could produce, The Shadow didn't accept the duel.

Instead, he hauled Elthar upward, as a shield. Jollian slackened, crept closer, with a dart-eyed method of watching for signs of The Shadow's gun. Closer still, he tensed for a spring. The Shadow was ready for it. As Jollian lunged, Elthar's figure, pushed by The Shadow, took a forward plunge to flatten the rescuer.

Jollian didn't lose his gun. He pumped away as he sprawled. The side step that The Shadow made along the very fringe of the ledge was dangerous. It saved him from the shots, however, and a quick-footed twist brought him inward toward the wall.

He wouldn't quite reach Jollian. Recovering, Elthar blocked him. Shoved back toward the abyss, The Shadow had to take a sideward dive. As he went, he stabbed a shot at Jollian, attempting to halt the fellow's regained aim.

Jollian slumped. It was up to Elthar. Leering, he lunged upon The Shadow, expecting to batter the prone fighter's head against the rock. No time to aim—The Shadow's gun had doubled beneath him. But his feet were free.

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Strong legs supplied a scissors motion that clipped Elthar's lurch. That crisis didn't allow for subtle tactics. The Shadow gave all the power he had. Elthar took a sideways hurtle over the edge of the cleft.

A wail sickened into the distance. Up came the hollow sound of a splashing crash. Rocks, in shallow water, had received Elthar for his final lodging, sixty-odd feet below.

RISING, The Shadow took a look at Jollian.

The fellow was in a bad way, coughing inarticulate words. He was trying to call for aid, and it was coming. The Shadow could hear the clatter of men arriving from above. Visualizing a certain possibility, The Shadow took to his hiding spot at the deep end of the catwalk.

Three brutish men arrived. They lifted Jollian, heard the words he gulped. As The Shadow hoped, Jollian began with Elthar, gesturing toward the pit as he spoke.

"I found Elthar!" gasped Jollian, "He—he was—here—"

A final cough—Jollian slumped dead. Listeners constructed their own version of the story; false, but logical.

"Elthar, huh?" grunted one. "Used to work for Lanyon. Come to help the guy. I guess. It was good that Jollian got him."

They entered the cell, found that Lanyon's chains were loose. Tightening them, the crew came out. One bolted the door, while the others picked up Jollian's body again.

When they were gone, The Shadow drew the bolt. Lanyon breathed gratefully at his return. Again the chains were loosened; then The Shadow continued on his way, leaving a bolted door behind him.

The wrong story had gone back to Zanigew: the right one for The Shadow. Enough had been accomplished for tonight. Retracing his precarious course, The Shadow scaled the inside of the rocky fissure and squeezed back into his cell.

Prying a loose stone from a lower corner, The Shadow buried Elthar's gun beneath it. Stretching upon the cell's frail cot, he was again Eugene Barreau, asleep until the morrow.

CHAPTER XIV. THE SHADOW'S MESSAGE

THE next day, Zanigew held a short chat with The Shadow, alias Eugene Barreau. The skull-faced overlord was tight-lipped; the few facts that he mentioned were generalities that The Shadow had heard from Harvey Lanyon.

Zanigew intended tremendous conquests. He expected cooperation. Those who supplied it would be favored. Those who refused it would find torture. That applied to the many prisoners who had been taken along with the inventors.

"Such persons," remarked Zanigew, casually, "as Tretter's daughter. Have you ever met her, Barreau?"

The Shadow shifted uneasily, pulling his gaze away from Zanigew's. Apparently, Barreau didn't want to answer, and Zanigew did not insist. His grated laugh showed that he was pleased enough to see how his presence gave Barreau the jitters.

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All day, the inventors continued the tasks ordered by Zanigew. Lanyon kept hunched at his desk, feigning the effects of pain from his overnight ordeal. Tretter, warier than ever, made no glances toward the pretended Barreau.

Most of the work was mere routine, except for a task that Zanigew had given Dansell. The burly chemist didn't like the assignment but he went through with it, remembering what had happened to Lanyon.

By to-night, The Shadow felt sure, something important would be due. These rocky caves on the shores of Puget Sound could not possibly represent the center of Zanigew's coming domain. The Shadow had a definite idea regarding the master mind's next step; and the word "Unaga" was concerned in it.

When the inventors were put away for the night, The Shadow promptly started a new expedition from his window, taking Elthar's captured revolver with him. This time, he picked an upward course, seeking some higher opening in the rocky fissure.

He found one—a tighter squeeze—but it brought him to a level thirty feet above the cell rooms. Nearing a passage, The Shadow watched a pacing guard go by, then took an upward slope. As on the night before, he came to a final door; but this one was not a torture chamber, nor did it have an abyss beside it.

The door was a heavy barrier that completely blocked the passage. The Shadow knew that it must mean Zanigew's broadcasting room.

Despite its weight, the door yielded easily. The Shadow looked into a room fitted with wireless equipment. There were large crates, ready to receive the apparatus should Zanigew order it packed.

A squatty operator was seated at table, earphones clamped to his head. He was receiving messages, not sending them.

Stacked on a filing pin beside him were previous messages that he had sent for Zanigew. Dust streaked the surface of the top paper. Those messages were ones that had been dispatched from the old headquarters, which had moved about in several states east of the Sierra Mountains.

Behind the operator's back, The Shadow reached a large packing box that was tilted on its side. Stepping past it, he eased inside and kept watch through a crack in the bottom.

THINGS happened soon. A metal-covered trapdoor opened in the ceiling. A man pushed a ladder downward and descended. The light showed his face: big-jawed, with a cheek marked by a scar.

The newcomer gave a grunt when he saw that the radio operator had not noticed his arrival. He poked the operator's shoulder. The fellow spun from the table, yanking off the earphones.

"You ought not to be listenin' when you're alone," growled 'Scar-face', "Any guy could do a sneak in here!"

"Yeah?" snapped the operator. "Who for instance?"

"Some mug like that bird Elthar, who got his last night. Maybe there's more of 'em in the outfit."

A telephone buzzed; with it, a light glowed. The radio man answered the call.

"From the chief," he told Scar-face. "A message is coming up."

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“Which means we'll probably have to get goin',” snapped the other. “Give me a lift with them batteries.”

The two ascended the ladder, jogging the trapdoor as they dragged the batteries through. The trapdoor fell into place. Alone in the room, The Shadow could have made for the table, but he waited in his hiding place. He remembered that a message was coming up.

It came. A stupid-faced man brought it. Seeing no sign of the operator, he left the message on the table and departed. Once the door was shut, The Shadow edged out to the table.

The message was brief. It consisted of three jumbled words, each of five letters. There were two five-letter spaces in between:

DJVKA——HGBWQ——RVYJS

Those words, The Shadow knew could only be deciphered by a complicated process of pyramided letters, linking code with code. The spaces—as with Zanigew's other messages—were to be filled with dummy letters, which would be ignored by those who received the message.

Plucking a pencil from the desk, The Shadow introduced letters of his own, copying the exact style of the others. The completed message read:

DJVKA XXUNA HGBWQ GAXSX RVYJS

Below the message was written notation, evidently in Zanigew's hand. It stated:

Hold for six hours. Send from new location.

Creasing the lower edge, The Shadow tore it cleanly. Copying the ornate style of Zanigew's penmanship, he wrote:

Urgent! Send at once!

The trapdoor was opening. The Shadow slid out of sight behind the packing box as the radio operator reappeared with his scar-faced pal. The operator saw the message.

“Funny!” he remarked. “The chief filled in the dummy words. He must be in a hurry. He wants me to broadcast this from here.”

“Better phone him,” urged Scar-face. “If you shoot the thing from here, we may get spotted.”

“What if they do put direction finders on us? The chief sent word we're leaving here tonight.”

“Yeah. But it's high tide right now. The chief don't want to get started until it's low tide.”

The wireless operator snorted.

“The chief figures things for himself,” he reminded. “That leaves you out. Why should I call him, and get called down? These are his orders, aren't they?”

TURNING to the table, the operator clicked his key. Zanigew's message, plus The Shadow's additions, was flashed across the air. Scar-face waited, while the message was sent. At the finish came the double-dashes

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and triple-dots that identified Zanigew to his absent followers.

Hardly had the final call been sent, when the telephone buzzed. The operator answered, began to stammer answers to fast-put questions. In the middle of the conversation, an alarm bell clanged.

The trapdoor yanked open. Men poked their heads into sight. Scar-face yanked a gun, looking about as if he expected trouble at his elbow. The door from the lower passage whipped wide. Armed guards were on the threshold.

Zanigew must have heard the message through a special hookup. He knew that something was wrong in the broadcast room. This was the first spot that would be searched; but The Shadow didn't allow time for a hunt to begin.

Coming up like a figure on a spring, he hurled the packing box straight for the scar-faced man. The fellow staggered backward with a howl, shooting everywhere except where The Shadow was.

The men at the trapdoor spotted what happened. Before they could fire, they were ducking for cover, The Shadow's revolver spitting bullets in their direction. Hard upon those quick shots, The Shadow whirled to meet the guards from the lower door.

They hadn't time to fire, before he was with them, slugging crisscrossed blows that sent them to the corners of the room. When they managed to shoot, their only target was the door that he had slammed behind him.

Bullets clanged steel. With snarls, the thwarted crooks yanked the door open, to begin pursuit.

The Shadow had reached a turn in the passage; but though foemen failed to see him, there was something that they heard. That was the taunt of a trailing laugh, that worried them almost to a point of indecision.

Dropping the part of Barreau, The Shadow was declaring himself to Zanigew's hordes. He knew that his battle challenge would aid him in the coming fray. Against tremendous odds, The Shadow had only one sure course.

That was to become The Shadow! The fact that he, the greatest of all crime's foes, had penetrated to this stronghold, could shatter the trust that crooks gave to Zanigew.

His gun half-emptied, that fierce laugh might become The Shadow's only weapon, in the lair where Zanigew ruled!

CHAPTER XV. THE BLACK TOMB

SWIFT in his driving tactics, The Shadow had given opponents but little time to glimpse his face. There was still a chance that he could reach the outlet that afforded a route to his cell.

That accomplished, Zanigew's men would scour the stronghold, only to find that The Shadow had vanished as evasively as his laugh. Again, the intrepid fighter could pass himself as Eugene Barreau.

Ill chance prevented that move.

Rounding a turn, The Shadow saw the fissure that led to the outlet. Between him and the cloven side passage were four of Zanigew's men. The fire that The Shadow opened proved more effective than he planned.

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When one of the motley blockers tumbled, the others didn't trust their heels. Instead of running down the main passage, they dived into the obscure splits that The Shadow wanted as his own route!

Behind rough-hewn walls, deep in darkness, the foemen had a fort that they could use to good advantage. It would take long battle to suppress them, and by that time, Zanigew's entire horde would be present. The Shadow had to deviate from his original plan.

Snatching the fresh revolver that the crippled foeman had dropped, The Shadow continued a downward route, following the lighted passages. He paused at the next turn to jab back warning shots at pursuers who had come from the wireless room.

Speeding ahead, The Shadow looked for possible ways to get back to his cell. None was available. He was on the very level of the cell rooms, but that did not help. To unbolt the door of his own cell would be a give-away.

In that moment, he seized upon another plan: to yank open other cell doors and release prisoners who could aid him. An excellent process, had he found time to accomplish it. But it chanced that this corridor was strongly guarded.

Someone barked a harsh order. There was a clatter at the end of the passage. The Shadow saw a metal shield swing into position, a machine gun muzzle poking from its center. Men were behind that shelter, ready to put the gun in action. Using the few remaining seconds, The Shadow reached a side passage and hurdled from sight, just as the machine gun began to rip.

Away from the direction that he wanted, The Shadow was deep in the underground maze. The few doorways were strange ones. There were many passages to choose, but most of them rang with the shouts of arriving foemen. The Shadow had reached a crossroads; only one passage was available. He took it.

Sighted as he hurried up a slope, The Shadow became a target for a dozen guns. Hurried shots were wide; the greatest danger was from bullets that ricocheted off the walls. One slug struck The Shadow's neck; but its strength was spent. He brushed away the hot, mushroomed metal as it slid toward his collar.

Then the sloped ceiling intervened. Shots were muffled, far behind, when The Shadow reached a fork where two passages curved in opposite directions. Not wasting time in choice, The Shadow took the channel to the left.

Passing a bend, he came to the end of the passage. It stopped at a big door that was wide open, a pair of armed men coming from the room beyond. Their guns roared with The Shadow's, but his shots were the only ones aimed accurately. The gunners slumped away as The Shadow emptied his gun.

ON the threshold, The Shadow was met by a huge guard who launched from the room, aiming a revolver. The gun tongued, but The Shadow was past it, slugging for its owner. The giant didn't mind the slashing gun blow that glanced from his head. Dropping his own weapon, he clamped mammoth paws for The Shadow's throat.

Twin of the ape-man in the lighthouse, this fellow intended to bash The Shadow into submission. In this setting, under these circumstances, The Shadow was better able to size his foe. He gained a throat hold first, twisting as he made it. Soon, he was lashing about the room, flaying his big adversary like a puppet.

This was the storeroom where Zanigew kept the captured inventions. The fighters rolled against a table where Lanyon's mist bombs were stacked in a box that looked like an egg crate. They nearly overturned a tank containing Dansell's sleep gas.

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They wallowed finally against a pedestal on which Barreau's electrical projector was mounted. It was there that The Shadow sent the giant in a long fling across the storeroom. Panting, The Shadow clutched for the apparatus beside him. His hand encountered a loose lever.

Ripping the rod loose, he whacked the apparatus itself. He was smashing coils, tubes that would be impossible to replace for weeks to come. Even from Barreau's plans, Zanigew would not be able to repair this damage.

One of the captured inventions—probably the machine that Zanigew regarded most important—would no longer be useful to the thief who had acquired it!

Given a few minutes more, The Shadow would have completely demolished the device. He was forced to stint his damage, because pursuers were shouting from the final passage. The Shadow sprang for the door, to close it. He was blocked suddenly by the giant guard, who shoved up from the floor with a snarl that told he was ready for more action.

The Shadow settled him with a long swing of the steel lever; but the brief delay was costly. Enemies were at the doorway. It was too late to keep them out. Ducking to an inner corner, The Shadow was away from aiming guns long enough to provide a counter-thrust.

Grabbing the crate of fog bombs, he chucked it for the guns and faces that poked suddenly from beside the door.

The scattering missiles didn't explode; they needed lessened air pressure to go off in that sudden fashion. Some of them cracked however, and gave fizzy puffs that literally spurted mist about the room. Men were dropping back, hands across their eyes, before they realized that the stuff wouldn't hurt.

By that time, the room was clouded. In the haze, The Shadow scooped the guard's gun from the floor and broke through the throng at the doorway.

Shooting ahead of him, he saw foemen duck as he came from the shroud of mist. Small wonder, for they couldn't tell whether one man or a battalion was headed for them.

Clear again, The Shadow reached the forked junction and took the passage to the right. Zanigew's reserves were coming; there was a whole horde at The Shadow's heels. New passages were few, but all led downward, giving hope that The Shadow might find a lower exit that would enable him to reach his cell.

Such hope was over when he came suddenly upon the lowermost passage in the stronghold, the burrow that ended in a deep abyss outside the torture room!

A run along the level—The Shadow was at the pit itself. Yells came in a deluge behind him. Guns were spurting, telling that he was spotted. No time to reach the torture chamber and use it as a fort. The place for The Shadow's stand was the edge of the abyss.

He flung about. Mighty mockery shivered from his lips. With that defiance The Shadow leveled his revolver. Sight of it, coupled with the fierce, unearthly mirth, put fear into their rat-sized souls. Though ten against one, they didn't care to battle. Each felt that the first who fired would be a prompt recipient of a bullet.

Not one of the band realized that The Shadow's gun had been emptied in that final fusillade outside the storeroom!

HOLDING his ground, The Shadow motioned for the tribe to drop their guns.

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They began to obey, one by one, until a repetition of the laugh produced a panic in which weapons clattered like hailstones. The Shadow was motioning them back, and they were obeying his order to retreat!

At last, The Shadow moved. Boldly, coolly, he intended to approach those scattered guns and arm himself. After that, he could march Zanigew's own men ahead of him, as shields against other attackers. Only The Shadow could have managed such a daring ruse!

But there was another person in this subterranean den, whose keen brain could guess that strategy.

There was a sudden shift among the retreating crew. Shaky men were flung aside by powerful impatient hands. Out from the group came a solitary foe to challenge The Shadow's path.

Zanigew!

In his fist the master crook held a revolver, and the gun was fully loaded. Evil glared from his ruby eyes, deep in their skullish sockets. Again, his tight lips had the grimace that was Zanigew's closest effort to a smile.

Zanigew knew that if The Shadow had a single bullet, he would use it. This was the trapped fighter's chance to win the struggle, by rendering his opponents leaderless.

But The Shadow did not fire.

Steadily, Zanigew moved forward, until he had the range he wanted. His men were over their fright; they were crouching up behind him, reaching for their guns. The Shadow, in turn, had retreated close to the fringe of the crevasse.

Zanigew's finger tightened on its trigger.

Death seemed a certainty for The Shadow. Rather than accept it from Zanigew's gun, he took a desperate course. Spinning, he clamped his hands above his head and dived into the abyss!

Zanigew zinged a bullet through the space where The Shadow had been.

Other revolvers added a belated tumult, drowning the echoes that came from the depths. With the cessation of gunfire, Zanigew supplied his metallic laugh.

What matter, if The Shadow had managed to prolong his life for a few seconds?

That pit had been sounded. At no spot had it shown water more than a foot in depth. Zanigew remembered Elthar's fate: Death on the shallow rocks that filled the entire bottom of the abyss.

The same fate for The Shadow. The pit was a blackened tomb that held a new, and more important, victim. That thought pleased Zanigew. His men, too, showed their relish of the situation.

Zanigew saw many grins as he ordered his men to march above and prepare for prompt departure from the stronghold.

CHAPTER XVI. THE BROKEN TRAIL

A MAN was seated at a table, his back to the door of a small, square room. Beside him was a radio set; at the wall in front of him, a switchboard. On the table, a sheet of paper, which the man was studying beneath a

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lamplight.

From a maze of letters, the man picked two words separated by one that he disregarded. They were odd words, that other persons had supposed to be in code:

XXUNA GAXSX

Writing those words as one, the man crossed out every letter X. His result was the simple statement of a single word, with a letter for its signature:

UNAGA S.

Putting the earphones to his head, the man pressed a plug into the switch board. He dialed a number, waited for the reply, then said in a matter-of-fact tone:

“Burbank speaking.”

A voice came across the wire. Burbank gave methodical information, the word “Unaga” forming part of his discourse. When he had finished, he hung up the earphones and went back to other duties.

Elsewhere, a young man soon made a hurried exit from a hotel lobby and hailed a cab. Soon, he was riding posthaste along the steep streets of San Francisco. Reaching a big building, he went up to an office and spoke to the girl at an information desk.

“My name is Vincent,” he announced. “I must see Mr. Marquette at once! Tell him it's Harry Vincent.”

Three minutes later, Vic Marquette was staring across a desk listening to the story that Harry Vincent gave him. To Marquette, this clean-cut visitor was an old friend, and an important one. For Vic Marquette had long connected Harry Vincent with that mysterious being known as The Shadow.

“It's an F.B.I. job, all right,” agreed Marquette. “Tracing those crazy messages with the dash-dot signature is important, because it may have something to do with the kidnapping of James Dansell. But according to direction finders, that last message came from Puget Sound, and not from out in the Pacific.”

“That doesn't hurt the facts,” declared Harry. “I don't say that the message was sent from the steamship Unaga. I'm simply stating that the ship was mentioned.”

Marquette had a copy of the message on his desk. The name Unaga was in it, right enough, and he noticed how the letter “X” had spaced it. He also saw the letter “S”, all by itself, and thought immediately of The Shadow.

The steamship Unaga, Marquette recalled, was a large coastwise vessel that had taken a shipload of settlers to Alaska. She was returning southward, and had last been reported at Seattle.

Vic got busy on the telephone. After a hectic thirty minutes, he had accomplished a great deal. He reached for his hat when he hung up.

“They picked up the Unaga,” he told Harry. “Everything's all right on board her, except that she got a short-wave call a while ago, asking her position. She's about four hundred miles north of Frisco, and I'm flying out to visit her. You can come along.”

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THREE hours later, a sleek seaplane dropped beside the long hull of the Unaga. The ocean was calm, so it was an easy matter for the plane's passengers to board the eighteen-thousand-ton steamer. After a short chat with the skipper, Marquette signaled for the seaplane to return to Frisco.

Harry Vincent watched the plane take off and disappear beyond a distant, low-lying mist that marked the California coast. He was still staring at the skyscape, when Marquette rejoined him.

“There's only one thing that's funny on this boat,” announced the Fed. “That's the cargo that was taken on at Seattle.”

“What was it?” queried Harry.

“That's the funniest part,” replied Marquette. “All sorts of fancy canned goods and bottled stuff. Particularly, the last part. Most of the bottled goods was champagne.”

It sounded odd to Harry. He remarked that champagne was produced in California, which made it superfluous as an import.

“This isn't domestic stuff,” stated Marquette. “It's French champagne—the real McCoy! Why it came by way of Seattle beats me! Let's go down and look it over.”

Vic didn't intend to sample the champagne. He merely wanted to learn if the cargo was as stated. He and Harry found the champagne, along with the fancy canned goods. There were other foodstuffs, staples that had also been loaded at Seattle.

A seaman had come with them. Marquette asked him about large stacks of boxes that were deep in the hold. They had also been loaded at Seattle and they were marked “FURNITURE,” a statement that roused Marquette's doubts.

He and Harry hefted a box. It was very heavy. Marquette pried it open, gave a sudden whoop.

“Look at this, Vincent! Rifles—dozens of them! Say—maybe those other boxes hold machine guns! They look big enough—”

There was a gruff voice that interrupted. Marquette gave Harry a shove that sent him sprawling between two crates. Turning, Vic raised his hands. So did the seaman with him.

Two rough-dressed men had crawled from the other side of the hold. They looked like stowaways, but they hadn't boarded the Unaga just for an ocean trip. Each man held a businesslike revolver.

One of the pair evidently recognized Marquette.

“Keep 'em up, Fed!” he said. “You and this sailor Vincent.”

The armed lurkers had heard Marquette speak to Harry, and had only seen the seaman with Vic. A bad slip on their part, for Harry overheard it. Creeping around behind the boxes, The Shadow's agent popped out suddenly.

His crisp words meant business: “Drop those guns!”

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The toughs obeyed. Vic and Harry marched their prisoners up to the deck, with the sailor bringing along the discarded hardware. Cross-examination brought no responses from the men. They didn't want to talk.

“One thing,” Marquette told the captain of the Unaga. “It means your crew is O.K., because if any of them had been approached and bribed, these stowaways wouldn't have been needed.”

The captain agreed. He excused himself, to return to the bridge. Fog had been creeping out from shore; the Unaga was heading into it. Harry, watching the prisoners, saw them exchange wise grins. Marquette was about to march the men to a cabin.

“Wait a minute,” suggested Harry, looking along the deck. “I've got an idea these fellows saw something they liked.”

Marquette stared blankly.

“What could they have looked at?” he queried. “Outside of the fog?”

“Take a look at the fog!”

HARRY made that suggestion suddenly. The fog bank had just caught his full attention. It was a thick swirl of mist, writhing like smoke, a monster rising from the surface of the deep.

That fog was yellow, its color insidious!

“Say, maybe”—Marquette gulped, as he remembered something—“maybe that's the same sort of fog that hit the fishing village! The place where I went with Kent Allard!”

The fog had blanketed the Unaga. Bells were clanging, men shouting along the deck. There was something choking in the mist, that made Marquette stagger toward the rail. He kept his gun on the prisoners. It wasn't necessary. They were coughing also, but they still had their grins.

Reaching the rail, Harry grabbed for Marquette just as the man slid helpless to the deck. It was hitting Harry too, that poison-laden fog, but he managed to hold out a little longer. The engines had stopped their thrumming; from spots that the fog obscured, Harry could hear men fall to the deck.

Then out from the dense mist came invaders. They were in small boats, men with gas masks over their faces. Through a chance swirl in the fog, Harry saw the ship they came from—a low rakish vessel that had lurked in waiting for the Unaga.

With that last glimpse, Harry Vincent rolled unconscious beside the overpowered figure of Vic Marquette.

CHAPTER XVII. HIGH TIDE

A SEAPLANE skimmed the waters of Puget Sound and taxied into the shelter of a cove flanked by high cliffs. Ahead, its occupants saw a stretch of steep beach. They landed.

Looking upward, they saw a path that wormed its way among the rocks.

“We'd better take it,” suggested the observer. “That shack we saw on the cliff is located about where the direction finders showed.”

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The pilot agreed. The two men started to scale the cliff. Halfway up the path, they paused. Plain against the rocks, they signaled to a small boat a mile away. Men in the boat had already seen the plane; they started chugging a course toward the cove.

Resuming their climb, the aviators failed to glance below. They were too eager to investigate the shack at the top. They expected results, and they were due to find them. That shack was the entrance to Zanigew's deserted stronghold.

There was a sight below that might have interested the climbers. Out from a crevice in the rock crawled a slow-moving figure. Painfully, the tall creeper drew himself across a ledge. His foot struck a loose stone, sent it bouncing down the route that he had used.

Clatter faded; finally, the stone gave a faint splash.

The man from the crevice was The Shadow. He blinked at sight of daylight, then looked toward the water's edge. It was high tide again, which meant that he had lain in darkness many hours.

For it had been high tide when The Shadow took his dive into the abyss. He had heard that fact mentioned; it was why he had made a move which Zanigew had regarded as suicide.

The pit, as The Shadow had hoped, was a tidal basin. Elthar's plunge had been at low tide, The Shadow's at high. His dive had ended in water deep enough to prevent a crush upon the submerged rocks.

Long hours of waiting; then, when the tide had lowered, The Shadow had sought an outlet with it. That had been his greatest ordeal. He had been sucked beneath rocks; had swum under water, through low-arched channels. At times, unruly currents had battered him against jagged surfaces.

Lost in a labyrinth worse than Zanigew's underground passages, The Shadow had been long delayed. The finish of his trip had been a battle against the incoming tide, until he had crawled up into a slanted fissure clear of the water.

There, his strength entirely spent, he had taken needed rest. After that, an upward crawl had brought sight of daylight; with it, a hum that The Shadow had recognized as coming from a plane.

He was looking now at that plane, silent in the cove. Yet he could still hear a chugging beyond a low-sloping point just past the cliff. It meant an approaching boat, summoned by a signal from the aviator.

Would that boat mean rescue?

The Shadow wasn't certain. It could mean rescue for the aviators, if they were marooned among the cliffs, for they had already signaled the boat. But it might mean otherwise to The Shadow, if these were persons who served Zanigew.

In his present dilemma, The Shadow was trusting no one but himself.

Weary, weaponless, he was at least confident that he still could fly a plane. The winged ship in the cove was like a magnet to him. Rising shakily, The Shadow steadied as he neared the water. Splashing into the tiny wavelets, he climbed onto the seaplane.

THE motor roared with a suddenness that riveted the men, on the heights.

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Their frantic shouts were puny against that drone. Men gawked from the motorboat, as it rounded the point. Then, a thing of speed and power, the seaplane was lifting out into the Sound. It took off like a creature released from bondage.

Easing up on the controls at an altitude of five thousand feet, The Shadow soon learned that this plane belonged to friends. He found written orders, regarding the search for the source of the mysterious wireless signals. He discovered that the ship had a two-way radio.

Under certain circumstances, The Shadow might have returned to pick up the men who belonged in the ship. There was a reason, however, that caused him to forgo that deed.

Among the latest orders were instructions to report any word from the steamship Unaga, mysteriously vanished off the coast of California.

The Shadow resolved that he would be doing the aviators the greatest possible favor, if he did not return for them. He had a mission to perform and preferred it to be a one-man expedition. Aids were superfluous in a meeting with Zanigew's hordes on their own ground. The Shadow had at least demonstrated that he could survive a lone battle against them.

The Shadow had definitely linked the Unaga with Zanigew's plans. As Barreau, The Shadow had been assigned the task of arranging electrical barriers for an area that resembled the lines of a steamship. Lanyon's mention of the Unaga made the whole thing definite.

Later, however, The Shadow had seen to it that Zanigew, no matter how he fared, would lack the protection of Barreau's electrical devices. The master crook had unquestionably captured the Unaga, but his only way to keep the ship out of trouble would be to hide it in an artificial fog.

Establishing radio contact with heads of the searching party, The Shadow coolly reported the plane by number and awaited a reply. He had found a small locker packed with sandwiches and a thermos bottle containing coffee. He was downing those supplies while he listened.

There were revolvers, too, in the plane. They would come handy against Zanigew. The Shadow was examining one of the weapons, when a return call came. He placed the gun down, while he took the message.

Instructions were to complete the search near Puget Sound. Other planes were scouting for the Unaga.

The Shadow asked for complete weather reports. He wanted specific details regarding fog in any area. Detailed word came back, with mention of a small but dense fog directly south of the spot where the Unaga had last been reported.

To The Shadow, that fog meant the Unaga itself. Probably other aviators had watched the mist, hoping that the steamer might poke its bow in sight. It wouldn't occur to them that the fog itself could be a veil that moved with the Unaga.

Rough calculation indicated that The Shadow's plane might overtake the creeping fog about a hundred miles northwest of San Francisco. Darkness, however, might prove a troublesome element when it came. Clear starlight could show the yellowish fog, when once The Shadow neared it; but he couldn't leave too much to chance.

Foreseeing certain moves by Zanigew, The Shadow decided upon added measures, for emergency.

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Coding words by one of his own intricate systems, The Shadow announced them as a message that he had picked up. He subtly added that they had been signed in the dash-dot fashion. He knew that such a message would be given to hundreds of experts who were trying to crack Zanigew's codes.

Burbank, The Shadow's contact man, had connections with certain of those code experts. Once The Shadow's agent saw the message, he would recognize its real origin. Burbank would decipher it, and follow its orders to the smallest detail.

As for the code experts, they would remain quite as puzzled as if the message had actually been dispatched by the unknown Zanigew.

One minor problem concerned The Shadow. It was the matter of Zanigew's rakish rumrunner that had taken crime's emperor to his capture of the Unaga. That craft had not been reported from any source. The obvious inference was that Zanigew had sunk it, since it was no longer needed.

Only the Unaga counted. That ship was the floating nucleus of Zanigew's rising empire. A Napoleon of crime, the master mind had plans which surpassed ordinary belief. Yet, to The Shadow, they were obvious; for he had analyzed the processes of Zanigew's gigantic brain.

Mere hours separated Zanigew from a long-sought goal that he would seek despite the lack of his electrical barrier. Risen from depths, The Shadow intended to drop from the sky, again the lone challenger who could thwart his super foe's great scheme.

The same fog that shrouded the Unaga would hide The Shadow, once he landed within its fringes. Then to deal with Zanigew!

It was high tide for The Shadow's hopes!

CHAPTER XVIII. CRIME RULES ANEW

THE steamship Unaga formed the exact center of a tiny fog working steadily south. That mist was yellowish, ominous, and other ships avoided it. The fog seemed ruled by the speed of a light but steady breeze, for off on the horizon, a small schooner was keeping pace with it.

That, however, was purely a chance occurrence. Zanigew was holding the Unaga to a speed of a few knots, simply to avoid attention. A fast-driving fog would be too peculiar to pass unreported by the occasional planes that droned overhead.

Those planes puzzled the crew of the little sailing ship; but they didn't perplex Zanigew. He knew that they were searching for the Unaga, and he didn't like it. In the best cabin that the steamer boasted, Zanigew was storming at the men who served him as electricians.

Fearfully, they had made final admission that they could not repair Barreau's electrical equipment.

Suddenly, Zanigew raised his massive head. Rage was gone from his ruddy eyes. He grated an order in a tone that promised solution of the problem.

“Bring Barreau's men!” Zanigew commanded. “All of them! Here, to this cabin!”

Dubious henchmen went to bring the prisoners. They could see no useful purpose in the mandate. It was common knowledge that none of Barreau's workers shared the inventor's secrets. Hilgard, the spy, had been

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unable, with all his treachery, to learn any such details.

In fact, Barreau had seemed so clever in the past, that none of Zanigew's men had been surprised when he proved to be The Shadow. Even Zanigew had accepted the obvious; but his mind had taken a sudden change.

When the prisoners stood lined up in the cabin, Zanigew moved from man to man, studying each face. All were silent, stolid. They had realized, soon after their capture, that Zanigew was practical as well as merciless. Their lives were safe as long as they might prove useful. It would be folly, therefore to be sullen or defiant. Resignation was their common attitude.

Without a word, Zanigew clamped a viselike grip on one man's shoulder. In metallic tone, he ordered his men to remove the others. When all were gone Zanigew pointed the lone prisoner to a chair. He eyed the man's longish features, tiny eyes, the conspicuous high-bridged nose. Then:

“You are clever!” declared Zanigew in clanging tone, “I admire cleverness, Professor Barreau.”

The hook-nosed man could not restrain a flinch.

“No fear.” Zanigew's voice lacked malice. “It does not matter whether you, or The Shadow, decided on the ruse. You worked together, and you did well.

“You even saved me trouble in disposing of Hilgard. I dislike traitors even when they serve me. Once, Barreau, I made you a fair offer. It still stands. Come!”

ZANIGEW led Barreau to a lower cabin, where the damaged electrical apparatus was on display. He asked the professor how soon it could be repaired. Barreau shook his head at sight of ruined tubes and coils.

“Impossible!” he said at last. “These cannot be replaced.”

“But, perhaps”—Zanigew's voice was harsh—“you may be able to adapt substitute materials? We have a great deal of electrical equipment on board.”

“I can try.”

Barreau's tone was almost hopeful, as though he had become suddenly willing to serve Zanigew. Ruddy eyes drew the professor's gaze in a powerful, hypnotic manner. Barreau stared despite himself, and he stared too long.

“As I thought!” came the clanging tone. “You are playing safe, professor. Clever of you, to say that you can try! When a man so speaks, it means that he can succeed!”

Barreau started to stammer his doubts. He was shaking off Zanigew's influence; but he had already botched matters. Barreau had almost admitted a fact that The Shadow had not known.

Though essential for long-range protection, Barreau's special devices were not needed in producing electrical barriers. He could do a good enough job to protect the area close about the Unaga with ordinary equipment.

There was a sharp snap from Zanigew's fingers. Two of his husky followers appeared. The skull-faced over-lord gave a three-word order:

“Bring the girl!”

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A few minutes later, Fay Tretter arrived in the cabin. Zanigew's sharp eyes spotted recognition between her and Barreau. Again his fingers snapped, this time in repetition. It was a coded signal.

Leering followers brought in a heavy chair fitted with clamps. Fay was placed in the device. Her ankles, wrists, and neck were shackled in the chair. Next came a box-like cover that fitted over the chair and its occupant, exactly to shape.

The cover was equipped with panes of glass set in square frames. Each panel was studded with round chunks of metal that looked like bolt heads. A cord was plugged into a socket; the chair began to hum.

You have heard of the 'Spanish Maiden,'" said Zanigew, to Barreau. "An old-fashioned torture device that brings death when it is closed, thanks to the spikes that line its interior.

"This is my adaptation of the Spanish Maiden: instead of spikes, it contains needle points set deep in the steel studs. The current" —Zanigew's tone clanged solemnly—"is pushing those needles inward. Their motion is slow, almost imperceptible.

"But in about two hours"—there was evil anticipation in the voice—"those needles will penetrate! The torture will be far more exquisite than that of the Spanish Maiden! You will hear screams, for there are air holes in the box. You will see the victim's agony—"

Barreau interrupted with a cry. He was gesticulating toward his own equipment. Zanigew waited. Barreau's words became coherent.

"More than two hours!" he pleaded. "Longer—say fifteen minutes longer—"

"Two hours only!"

BARREAU went feverish. He was shouting to Zanigew's men, telling them the things they needed. They moved briskly, for Zanigew's eyes commanded them. Barreau gulped that he could use assistants; his own men, preferably. Zanigew produced them promptly.

All the while that Barreau labored, he fought off two huge mental hazards. One was the buzz of the motor that controlled the needle-lined box. The other was a clock that ticked from the cabin wall, marking of the terrible minutes.

At the end of an hour and three quarters, crackles came from Barreau's machine. He turned to Zanigew, all the while a spectator, and gave an eager nod. Zanigew shook his head, pointed to the deck. Barreau turned off his apparatus, ordered the men outside with it.

Posts were already placed along the rail of the Unaga; two skeleton towers were planted in the deck. Barreau shouted for men to wire up the posts. He sent others scrambling like monkeys to the tops of the towers. It took ten minutes before the hookup was complete. Barreau yanked a lever.

Sharp crackles broke into a buzzing rhythm, from the towers as well as the posts. Barreau sank sobbing to the deck; then recovered, to stagger to the cabin. Zanigew was already there, pointing to the switch. A man tugged it.

Carefully, two others lifted the cover that incased the chair. Jutting needle points plucked Fay's dress, ripping long runners in it, as the girl shrank tightly in the chair. Her arm quivered as a line of needles scratched it. The result was slight, but Zanigew tongued a fierce-toned disapproval at his men.

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He was keeping his promise to Barreau and was anxious that it be entirely fulfilled. For Zanigew could give reward as well as punishment. He was elated, as he listened to the hum of the electrical barriers; further pleased, when he suddenly caught the drone of a plane somewhere beyond the cloud bank that covered the Unaga.

Had Zanigew known the identity of that plane's pilot, his lips, for once, might have shown a full smile.

High in the dark, The Shadow was turning down the sea plane's motors. He had sighted the mist he wanted; had finally identified its yellowness against the sea's darkened surface.

Distant, beneath the starlight, was a tiny patch of white, a schooner's sail, that formed a contrast to the fog's ocher hue. Banking around the fog area, The Shadow saw its oval shape. He knew that the Unaga was the core.

Cutting down the motor further, The Shadow dived the plane for the fog's fringe. A coasting finish along the mist-clad water would bring him alongside the hidden steamer. The fog's mass seemed to rise in greeting. The motor coughed in answer.

Instantly, The Shadow took the warning. He was flinging himself from the plane before he realized why he was bailing out. The motor was choking ahead of him, deeper into the fog. Here was an emergency unexpected; but The Shadow had instinctively prepared for it. He was girded with a harness that had a parachute attached to it.

AS The Shadow's hand tugged the cord, an explosion rocketed above the water, deep toward the center of the fog. Flames were tinged a dull orange, lost in the muddy mist. That was the finish of The Shadow's borrowed plane.

Water below. The Shadow had drifted from the moving fog. The ocean gripped him; he was flinging away the parachute's folds. He pulled the harness from his shoulders and floated free, sustained by a lifebelt tight about his waist.

Barreau was the answer. The Shadow could picture many possible ways by which Zanigew could have forced the professor to new feats of wizardry. For the plane's own fate told that the electrical barriers were in actual operation.

First the motors halt, as Barreau had described. Then the explosion of the gas tanks. Death for a hapless pilot either in the blast or by electrocution. Barreau had specified that climax. But The Shadow had avoided it. He had bailed out far enough from the current's strongest field.

Life for The Shadow: that, at least remained. But despite The Shadow's survival, Zanigew was continuing toward his goal. The creeping fog was gone, a low bank of yellow, far toward the horizon.

Left in the Unaga's wake, The Shadow was a speck in the Pacific!

CHAPTER XIX. ZANIGEW'S GOAL

A HALF-GLOOM filled Zanigew's palatial cabin. It was the effect of sunlight filtering through the fog. Though murky, the glow lacked being sickly yellow, for Zanigew was no longer pouring gas into the fog.

The master crook had a better protection: that steady wave of current that the towers flung forth into the air, making the fog a deadly hazard for any who approached.

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Before Zanigew stood two prisoners men who had been captured with the Unaga. Crime's overlord was interviewing Vic Marquette and Harry Vincent.

“You are fortunate,” announced the skull-faced criminal. “The sleep that I gave you was swift, but not prolonged. I needed this vessel's crew to work for me. Enough of them have been persuaded to do so.

“The rest have joined my other prisoners below. Since you two were passengers, I have decided that you shall be my guests, along with other privileged persons.”

There was something in Zanigew's tone that added a different reason for his leniency. The master crook was moving to some triumph. He wanted the appreciation of certain spectators. Marquette was one; as a member of the F.B.I., he would be properly awed by the magnitude of Zanigew's methods.

Harry Vincent was in the same class. Zanigew had identified him as Marquette's companion. However they had happened to fly out to the Unaga, both had come on the same mission. In his role of host, Zanigew was willing to allow them equal privilege.

The prisoners were marched out to the deck. They arrived at the vessel's stern, to join a small group of persons who gazed askance at Zanigew's approach. Politely, but with his unassuming smile, Zanigew introduced the new-comers to the company.

Harvey Lanyon, James Dansell—those names were instantly recognized by Harry and Vic. They had never heard of Glade Tretter and his daughter, Fay. But the name of Eugene Barreau awakened recollections.

“These gentlemen,” said Zanigew, indicating the inventors, “have collaborated with me. In justice to their integrity—or should I say their folly?—have helped me against their will. Nevertheless, the results are the same.”

He turned, pointing forward. Harry saw squatty, wide-mouthed objects that looked like trench mortars. As he watched, they gave mighty belchings. Bomblike missiles sped up into the grimy fog, to puff spreading clouds of white that added thickness to the mist.

“Lanyon's invention,” remarked Zanigew, “Those puffs induce moisture. They bring fog”—he looked contemptuously at Lanyon—“instead of rain. You have my gratitude, Fog-maker!”

Lanyon winced at the backhanded compliment uncut. Ignoring him, Zanigew pointed to large tanks beside the mortars.

“Dansell's contribution,” he rasped. “The sleep gas! Intended to make warfare less horrible. We tried the gas in Lanyon's bombs, but the process was wasteful. It works better with the fog-breakers supplied by my good friend Tretter.”

The fog-breakers reminded Harry of huge grass sprinklers. They were revolving slowly, sending out jets of air, for the fog whipped away from them. Men were fixing pipes from the gas tanks to the sprinklers.

“When those pipes are opened,” stated Zanigew, “the gas will be carried with the air jets. That gas mixes readily with fog. You will not be troubled from it, here on deck. Its effects carry farther, off into the fog itself.”

Zanigew was starting forward. He paused, turned about to give a mock bow.

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“My final compliments to Barreau,” he declared. “The buzz you hear, about and above you, come from his electrical barriers. I find the sound quite pleasant.”

THEY watched Zanigew's great, rangy figure stride toward the bridge. His departure brought relief, but it was only temporary. In hushed tones, the spectators began to compare opinions.

Chances for escape were nil. Zanigew's guards patrolled the decks, heavily armed. Crew members were about, but Zanigew had carefully culled them from the lot that he had captured with the Unaga. The ones that he had chosen to man the vessel were a submissive-looking lot; and there were not many of them.

True, they might rally in case mutiny proved possible; but it would take a strong cause to urge them. As for the prisoners below, it would be a hard job to release them unless it could be accomplished without Zanigew's knowledge.

That, in turn, seemed quite impossible.

Silent, Harry Vincent thought of The Shadow. He felt that his chief could swing the tide. The Shadow was a human spark who could set off tremendous blasts, once he entered into action. But there had been no sign of The Shadow; no trace of him.

For once, Harry felt an overwhelming fear that The Shadow must be dead. In a fair duel with Zanigew, Harry would have staked anything on The Shadow's victory. But Zanigew was master of many competent followers. Trapped by such a horde, even The Shadow might have found no escape.

Whispers buzzed among the inventors. They were talking of ways to offset Zanigew's power. Guards drew closer, suspicion in their gaze. Marquette spoke suddenly, giving a cue to end the chatter. Changing the subject, Vic remarked:

“Guess we're heading west. Zanigew has got to be going somewhere. He likes trouble. Maybe he's picked China.”

Others disagreed. They thought the course was south. All were looking upward, hoping for some glimpse of the sun, when they heard the clang of a signal bell.

A moment later, they noticed the absence of the incessant buzz that had marked the progress of the Unaga. It was Lanyon who exclaimed, delightedly:

“The electrical barrier is ended!”

All glanced toward Barreau. He was very pale. His eyes went toward Fay, who smiled bravely. Chokingly, Barreau addressed the girl.

“It's not my fault,” he gasped. “I did my best! Nothing should have happened! Zanigew may listen—”

Something produced a twilight upon the deck. It was like a wide cloud, blocking the filtered sunlight. Harry looked upward; he thought he saw a blimp in the mist. Had some strange thing of the air descended to halt the protective current?

No. The buzz had resumed, in response to another signal bell. Barreau sighed relief. The halt of the current, its resumption, had been at Zanigew's order.

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“A test, perhaps,” muttered Barreau. “Like the ones I used to make.”

The brief incident produced silence.

All were wondering what it signified. The Unaga was nosing onward; men had suddenly become busy along the decks. There was a hiss, as the fog-breaking sprinklers began to revolve more rapidly. Zanigew's men yanked levers at the sides of pipes.

Yellowish gas jetted clear of the deck. The fog seemed to scoop the vapor greedily. The mortars were at work shooting puffy bombs in quick succession, thickening the mist, helping it to absorb the gas.

The deck had become an oasis in a vast desert of fog. The fog-breakers were working at full speed, to get the gas away. That, in turn, meant that the surrounding atmosphere was saturating rapidly with the sleep-bringing vapor.

Zanigew's men were donning gas masks. It looked as if they were ready for some raid upon the Unaga.

Harry wondered if he had seen a ship back there in the thickness. Maybe the fog produced reflected shapes. He looked at Vic Marquette, saw puzzlement as great as his own. Then both became as tense as those about them.

The Unaga was almost halted. A shiver shook the vessel, as the bow grazed some object that they could not see. It occurred to Harry that they must have reached a pier. His guess was right, as he learned a moment later when Fay Tretter gave a cry:

“Look!”

High in the fog, where the girl was pointing, reared a weird, unexpected sight. It was like some medieval castle, transported to modern times and planted in midocean. A mammoth citadel, yellowed by the gas-laden fog.

Then from Vic Marquette came the utterance that told them where they were. Vic's tone was hollowed by an awed recollection of a place that he had seen before.

One word was all Vic spoke:

“Alcatraz!”

CHAPTER XX. THE ROCK FALLS

OUT from the fog—“The Rock”!

Alcatraz, the fortress-prison in San Francisco Bay! A Gibraltar against attack—a Devil's Island which allowed no escape. Entombed alive within its walls were men whose criminal talents were the greatest in America, perhaps in all world.

Men that the government had segregated in one spot where they could be controlled; for, on Alcatraz, big-shot criminals became rank-and-file prisoners. Unable to stir up mutiny in such surroundings, even master minds became impotent in the confines of The Rock.

Yet that system had one flaw.

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Except for the few prisoners who had become "stir bugs", the occupants of Alcatraz still possessed their scheming brains. In effect, The Rock was more than a prison. It was a repository for criminal genius: the abode of public enemies.

Zanigew needed generals to aid him in Napoleonic achievements. He could have culled the country, finding only few. Big-shots, active and at large, might have scorned the chance to play second fiddle, even to Zanigew.

Here, in Alcatraz, Zanigew had found many instead of few. The law, itself, had gathered them, ready for the taking—men who would gladly accept Zanigew's own conditions, when they recognized him as their liberator.

Until this moment, the magnitude of Zanigew's dream had occurred to no one except The Shadow. He, by sheer deduction, had finally foreseen Zanigew's goal. That was the portent of The Shadow's message to Burbank: to see that The Rock was guarded.

The advice had not been followed. The authorities were to blame, not Burbank. They had ignored the warning that had reached them. Alcatraz, of all strongholds, could certainly protect itself.

Against ordinary onslaught, perhaps; but Zanigew's measures were irresistible.

Fog was burying the prison citadel; the mist had taken a curiously lopsided shape. Controlling the fog-breakers from the bridge, Zanigew was speeding their spurts on the port side of the steamer. On that side, around Alcatraz itself, the fog was yellow-dyed. It was seeping into the fortress.

Electrical barriers no longer crackled from the port rail. Those on the starboard side were buzzing amid whitish fog. So were the high towers, that laid their invisible cordon in a huge, inverted bowl above both Alcatraz and the Unaga.

Onto the pier poured Zanigew's shock troops, wearing their ghoulish gas masks. They had rifles but they did not need to use them. Harry and the other spectators could see stumbling defenders, who sagged before attackers reached them.

Dansell's sleep gas was doing its quick work.

Masked men reached the yellow-stained citadel. Alarms were clanging; rifles talked in answer. There was a chatter of machine guns; the wave of invaders suddenly receded toward the Unaga. Zanigew's reserves were lugging up their own machine guns, to offset those inside the fortress.

The clatter faded. Gas had reached the men who guarded the portals. Zanigew's horde surged forward. Again there were rifle shots, more and more muffled. Clanging alarms had faded. Zanigew ordered a telephone cable to be dragged into the fog, so that he could keep constant contact with his advancing warriors.

A whine, far overhead. Another, that ended in an explosion high above. At last, The Shadow's advice had been accepted. Alarms from Alcatraz had told that the place was beleaguered.

Big guns were shooting for The Rock, from Mare Island, in San Pablo Bay. Under that barrage, marines were coming from the navy yard. More bursts resounded; but Zanigew was not perturbed.

Those shells were shattering when they reached the invisible barrier. If motorboats arrived, they would find that their engines halted. Venturing marines would sizzle, should they approach too close.

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There was a chance, however, that the current might lack full intensity on the other side of Alcatraz Island. Zanigew had made allowance for that fact by planning his raid as a swift one. He was talking over the telephone, urging prompt reports. Expected word came back.

ZANIGEW clanged a signal. The poison gas was cut off. The fog began to whiten. Harry and the watchers beside him knew that the attackers must have subdued the few defenders who had not succumbed from the sleep gas.

Oblivious to the increasing burst of navy shells, Zanigew studied the color of the haze. It suited him. He rasped a command, then hung up the telephone. Arms folded, he gazed triumphantly from the bridge, as if surveying a field of conquest.

Out from the citadel came a few of the attackers, pulling the gas masks from their heads. They sniffed the air, felt no ill effects. They turned about and shouted. From within the walls came a long, exultant yell, throated by many voices.

Next, running men, a mass of them, poured for the pier, hailing the Unaga as they came. Men, all clad alike in prison costume. Invaders had unlocked the cells; the prisoners were free. On the bridge, they saw Zanigew. Hundreds of voices rose in tribute to the crime emperor.

Lifting one folded arm, Zanigew made pointing gestures with his forefinger. Certain prisoners understood; they grated orders at the others. Men shifted into squads, each with a commander. In turn, those groups clambered aboard the Unaga.

Vic Marquette gave an awed gasp close to Harry's ear.

“He must have gotten word inside!” voiced Vic, in reference to Zanigew. “It got to the ones he wanted! Look at the way they're organized!”

Harry nodded. He was thinking of the men left on Alcatraz. Fortunately the defenders had made only a brief resistance. Probably only a few of them had died. Zanigew, in his accustomed fashion, had spared the rest, because he regarded them as harmless.

That, at least, was a helpful factor. But Harry realized that there might be times when Zanigew would order wholesale slaughter, if convictions made it worth while. That thought was something of a premonition. Harry was about to see such a deed enacted.

Counting the squads, Marquette calculated the released prisoners at a total of three hundred, about seventy short the full quota imprisoned on Alcatraz. The invaders had probably rejected some, at Zanigew's order, leaving behind those who were ill or otherwise unfit for use.

All were aboard, and Zanigew's shock troops were following from the pier. Above, the bursting shells were producing a display of mighty pyrotechnics that sent visible brilliance through the thick fog.

Suddenly, the posts on the port side began to buzz. Zanigew was starting the full current, restoring the completed barrier. The Unaga had become immune to any flank attack. The ship was in motion, swinging from the pier.

The fog went with it, drawn closer, for the air-sprinklers had slowed their whirl. The ship swung about; from the stern, Harry and his companions could see the heights of Alcatraz fading in the fog.

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The screaming of shells no longer sounded overhead. Instead, it was coming from behind the Unaga, accompanied by thunderous crashes. No longer protected by the arched electrical barrier, Alcatraz was receiving the effects of the bombardment.

That soon would cease. When the moving fog had drawn clear with the Unaga, viewers of the silent citadel would know the truth. Impregnable Alcatraz had been conquered!

Zanigew had proven master of The Rock!

CHAPTER XXI. ZANIGEW DECREES

IT looked like Old Home Week aboard the Unaga, as the ship veered its five-hundred-and-fifty-foot length through San Francisco Bay. Prisoners upon the deck were dancing all about; whacking the backs of others and shaking hands with pals.

Some were starting up to the bridge to voice their thanks to Zanigew. He stopped them with a gesture. Leaning to a microphone, he rasped words that became a thunderous command, when amplified by a loud-speaker.

“Order!” commanded Zanigew. “Form your squads! Watch straight ahead!”

All obeyed, including the little group of actual prisoners huddled at the stern. Harry heard an awed voice—Fay’s—close beside him.

“What will be next?” inquired the girl. “What else can happen, after all that we have witnessed?”

Harry racked his brain. A recollection flashed: The thing that he had seen in the fog before reaching Alcatraz. Its bulk, he remembered, had reminded him of a blimp, but that was because he had believed that they were far out at sea.

“The Golden Gate Bridge!”

Harry voiced the words in an excited tone. Vic Marquette took up the theme.

“That’s why the barriers were cut off!” exclaimed Vic. “So nobody would know that we were sneaking up on The Rock! They took us for a fog; that was all. But now—”

A stray bomb burst above the Unaga. It was Fay Tretter who sighed a terrified understanding.

“Zanigew can’t afford to cut off the currents,” expressed the girl. “We shall have a sample of his ruthless ways. That is why he told us to look ahead.”

Despite herself, Fay could not turn away; nor could the others. They felt that they were about to see a cataclysm that would never be forgotten. While such thoughts were flashing in their minds, the horror came.

Something stretched across the fog bank. It was the bridge above the Golden Gate, two hundred feet above the channel, its long span spreading off into the mist. For a mere instant, the bridge was a darkish mass. Then it caught the barrier current.

With a horrendous crackle, the whole bridge became a mass of sparkling fireworks. Its cables seemed to quiver from the juice that whipped along the forty-two-hundred-foot span, climbing to the high towers that

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supported it.

An uncanny effect was produced by the increase of the current, as the Unaga came closer below. It seemed that the electricity crawled to the tops of those seven-hundred-and-forty-foot towers.

A few seconds later, the Unaga was squarely below the bridge. The current was at its full intensity. From all along the bridge came sharp explosions, accompanied by bursts of light. They looked like popping fire-crackers, when seen from the steamer's stern.

Fay's gasp was audible, despite the mammoth crackling, that still shook the bridge.

"Those can't be bombs!"

"No." Harry's tone was grim. "They were automobiles! Their gas tanks exploded!"

Fay's fists clenched. It was she who had said that Zanigew would prove ruthless. She hadn't realized how true her words would be. From the number of explosions, she could estimate deaths at hundreds.

THEY were past the bridge, now. The mighty structure had stood the test without harm. The sparks receded, the crackles faded down to their usual hum. For a few minutes, Harry and Fay could imagine that they saw a glowing shape back in the fog, representing the red-hot metal of the bridge.

That might have been imagination. But the voice that suddenly drilled their ears was no fantasy. Zanigew had come to join them.

"My thanks!" he told them, in his metallic tone. "You formed an appreciative group of spectators. Having witnessed my power, you may be more willing to continue in my service."

His words were addressed to the inventors, but he included Harry and Fay, along with Vic Marquette. For a while, there was silence; then Barreau questioned suddenly:

"The other prisoners?"

"They shall be treated well," assured Zanigew, "and given a chance to serve me, also. But let us consider your own status, since that of others depends upon it.

"Which will you be, professor? My prisoner or my guest?"

Barreau accepted the inevitable. He agreed to serve Zanigew. Tretter followed with the same decision, for he was concerned over Fay's safety. Lanyon capitulated, but Dansell shook his head.

"A majority is sufficient," decided Zanigew, indulgently. "You may all remain free, within reasonable limitations, except Dansell. Take him below"—this was to two guards—"and place him there with the other prisoners."

While Dansell was being led to the hold, Zanigew gave a parting bow to the others. He remarked that he could not neglect his new guests, three hundred in number. With that, he strode away.

Two groups separated at the stern. One included the three inventors, all trying to excuse themselves for having sworn fealty to Zanigew. In the other cluster were Harry, Vic and Fay.

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“Zanigew just about ignored us,” declared Harry. “We can still take a chance on some kind of attempt to escape, and argue ourselves out of it if we fluke.”

“Unless he comes back,” put in Vic, sourly, “and makes us give our oath. It will be curtains, if we try anything after that.”

“Whatever we do,” insisted Fay, in an undertone, “we've got to leave father and the others out of it. They've given their word to Zanigew.”

All agreed that prompt action would be needed. They could wait until dusk, but no later. Zanigew might remember them, before this night was over. There was another factor that occurred to Vic Marquette. He put it logically to the others.

“The shore authorities must be wise to Zanigew by this time,” declared Vic. “Which means that his fog is a give-away. But once he runs into a real fog, he can do a sneak. After that, he might bob up anywhere, with nobody to spot him.”

GRADUALLY, the three hatched their plan. There was only one point of suitable attack. That was the ship's bridge, where the controls were located. Once they were there, they could shut off most of Zanigew's devices.

Fog bombs could still be puffed into the atmosphere; but the poison gas could not be utilized, for Zanigew was using the air-sprinklers to pump it. Those sprinklers were controlled from the bridge.

The same applied to the electrical barriers. Whoever held the bridge could end them. But the capture of that vital spot would be no easy task. Every approach was held by Zanigew's guards, and their ample number was never lessened.

Behind the bridge was the superstructure, which boasted two large funnels. A few guards were lounging on the roof of the upper deck, covering the space around the funnels; but their main job seemed to be that of watching events below. As Harry gazed, he saw that one guard was looking at the people near the stern.

Turning, Harry leaned his elbows on the rail, whispering for the others to do the same. With Vic on one side, Fay on the other, and all three apparently staring at the sea, Harry undertoned his plan. His comrades agreed that it was feasible, although the hazards were so numerous that it seemed almost certain of failure.

“I'm for it, anyway,” decided Harry. “If we pass it up, we'll all regret it—worse than if we tried and took the consequences. How about it—are you game?”

Vic and Fay supplied affirmative responses. By mutual agreement, they decided to forget the matter until dusk. The less they thought about it, the better. Zanigew seemed to have an uncanny faculty for ferreting out persons who schemed against him.

Fay walked over to talk with her father regarding other subjects. Vic Marquette strolled forward with no apparent purpose. Harry Vincent alone remained at the stern, staring back into the following fog that seemed to rise from the Pacific's bosom.

Harry was thinking of The Shadow. Could his chief be present, any strategy might work; even the wild plan that Harry had himself propounded. As it stood, the coming attempt would be no more than a last defiant gesture against Zanigew.

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With The Shadow, anything was possible, could he but reach the spot where his hand was needed. But the Unaga was one place where arrival was impossible, while the electrical barriers functioned.

Such was Harry's complete conviction, and it eliminated any prospect of assistance from The Shadow.

Even if The Shadow still lived!

CHAPTER XXII. THE SHADOW RETURNS

A RATTLETRAP car stopped at the north end of the Golden Gate Bridge, flagged down before it could cross the span. A pair of marines looked over the hawk-faced driver, then made a search of the car's interior. The driver asked what was up. One marine was obliging enough to tell him.

"Some mystery ship came in and out with the fog," he explained. "It tried to demolish the bridge. The word went out though, quick enough to save the people."

"The people?"

"Yeah. The ones that stalled their cars on the bridge. They got excited, some of them. But the center lanes were clear. Other cars went through and picked them up."

The hawkish driver looked puzzled. The marine explained that the abandoned cars had gone up in smoke, from explosions of their gas tanks. As he motioned for the driver to be on his way, the marine pointed out to Alcatraz Island.

"Take a look at The Rock," he suggested. "That's where, the trouble started! They had a jail-break there—a big one!"

Crossing the bridge, The Shadow looked toward Alcatraz. Men were climbing about the fortress, piling up debris from shattered walls. From what the marine had told him, The Shadow could picture all the details.

The warning about Alcatraz had not been heeded. But when trouble actually swept the rocky island, the authorities had remembered the word they had received. There had been a second order: to clear all traffic from the Golden Gate Bridge. They had done that in a hurry.

A grim laugh trailed from The Shadow's lips. Zanigew had performed in the style that The Shadow expected. He had sneaked the Unaga under the bridge the first time, but had bombarded it with electric current while outward bound.

Somewhere off in the Pacific, crime's emperor was moving away in search of actual fog to absorb the oval-shaped shroud that represented the Unaga. A few hours of precious day remained. Time, even yet, to overtake the master foe before darkness aided him.

Getting back to Frisco had been a slow process for The Shadow. Dawn had brought him luck, for he had been sighted by a fishing schooner. The sailing craft had heard the seaplane explode and had heaved to for the night. Close by, it had picked up The Shadow.

Then had come delay as irksome as the long exposure in the water. Lacking breeze, the schooner had taken hours to come ashore in a little bay many miles north of the Golden Gate. The Shadow had taken a ten-mile hike before he reached a hamlet where a car could be hired.

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The Shadow made an incongruous sight, when he reached the hotel where he still was registered as Kent Allard. The doorman gaped at the ramshackle dust-streaked car and its occupant, attired in rough, ill-fitting clothes.

The desk clerk, however, smiled when he recognized Allard. He decided that the aviator must have made a forced landing, and experienced difficulty getting back to town.

Upon reaching his room, The Shadow called Burbank. He held an important conversation with his contact man. His first questions concerned an autogiro. Burbank replied that it was at the Frisco airport. He said that Miles Crofton, The Shadow's private pilot, was still busy with the alterations, but that they would be completed within an hour.

That news pleased The Shadow. He had other orders for Burbank. Stupendous orders that would have produced amazement from any other listener. Burbank received them in his usual manner. Methodically, he acknowledged with:

“Instructions received.”

HIS call finished, The Shadow had time to change his attire. When dressed, he still appeared as Kent Allard, but the bag that he packed carried evidence of The Shadow.

In that suitcase, Allard stowed a brace of automatics. He added a black cloak and slouch hat that he had brought in a secret compartment in a trunk. Carrying the bag, Allard went down to the street and had the doorman call a cab.

Southward past the city limits, the taxi followed the Bayshore Highway to Mills Field, the Municipal Airport. An autogiro was standing near a hangar, with a man who looked like a mechanic tinkering about it.

The giro was the newest style of ship, completely wingless, capable of making remarkable descents. There had been a curious throng about it a while ago, but they had left. Miles Crofton, who had flown the autogiro here, had given them to understand that the ship would not fly again that afternoon.

Allard's voice brought Crofton from the cockpit. A slight twinge of disappointment showed on Crofton's face. He was in The Shadow's service, and had hoped that his chief would fly the ship today. Instead, The Shadow had assigned the job to Kent Allard.

Acquainted with Allard, Crofton supposed that he was another of The Shadow's agents. Crofton always identified The Shadow as a globe-trotting, big-game-hunting millionaire named Lamont Cranston; never as Kent Allard. Preserving the secret of his actual identity was important to The Shadow, even with his most trusted agents.

Allard asked about the gas tank, Crofton indicated a lever.

“Greased to a fare-you-well!” he stated. “One yank, you could dump a hundred gallons in a jiffy!”

“And the cockpit?”

“Double insulated.” Crofton thwacked his hand on the thick-rubbered edge. “All set for the take-off.”

Allard was aboard. Stepping back, Crofton watched the giro's big blades spin. They were running slowly, when a man from a hangar arrived suddenly beside Crofton.

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“Say!” he exclaimed. “You ought to hear what just came over the radio! About a fog bank sighted off the coast! They’ve ordered the whole—”

The rest was drowned in a huge roar from the autogiro. Blades whirled like lashing arms of a maddened monster. The ship gave a forward, upward jolt; rose, as if hoisted by a spring, into a take-off that was almost vertical.

Heading due west, Allard saw the foam-lined shore of the Pacific. Reaching outside the cockpit, he drew in wires that he hooked to a radio. Soon, he was hearing the very news that the man had started to tell Crofton, but with further details. More reports were promised over the air. Allard would not need them.

Burbank had followed instructions. This time, the authorities did not doubt the value of the mysterious tip-off relayed to them from The Shadow. There had been a long-distance call to Washington, with a prompt reply.

There was only one place that the news could not possibly reach. That was aboard the steamship Unaga. With his electrical barriers keeping up their steady pulsations, Zanigew was unable to obtain any facts by wireless.

THE big-bladed autogiro was swift. The ability of such ships to throttle down gave a false idea that they lacked speed. Such wasn't the case with The Shadow's autogiro. It was whipping westward at a speed of one hundred and twenty miles an hour.

Two miles a minute was a pace that would soon overtake the slow-steaming Unaga. An hour passed; the sun was low against the horizon, where Allard could see streaks of smoke, at intervals. Nearer, however, was a sight that pleased him more:

An oval cloud of low, flattish fog upon the water. A darkish mass, for at that lower level, the sun had already set. That cloud bank was The Shadow's goal, its exact center the target for his autogiro.

Detaching the radio wires, Allard flung them from the cockpit. Setting the controls, he reached for the bag beside him. Out came garments of black; beneath his cloak he placed the automatics, tight in their holsters.

Kent Allard had become The Shadow. From his hidden lips issued a whispered laugh that spoke of challenge and adventure. Equipped for the coming test, The Shadow was again ready to meet Zanigew and his criminal horde.

Five thousand feet above the oval fog, The Shadow cut off the motor. He yanked the lever, dumping the entire contents of the gas tank. Crouched in the insulated cockpit, The Shadow guided the autogiro downward.

Big blades were doing their work above. Motorless, they served the ship as a wing, restraining it like a parachute. Silent as the approaching night, The Shadow was descending toward his goal.

CHAPTER XXIII. THE LONG CHANCE

CLOSE by the superstructure of the Unaga, three huddled persons crouched beneath lighted windows. The fog was dark about them, bringing a pall to the steamer's decks. This was the dusk that three venturers had awaited.

Early dusk, while strong daylight still flushed the surrounding surface of the Pacific. Dusk as good as night, so long as they kept clear of the lighted windows which marked the great dining saloon of the Unaga.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

Inside the merriment, fast turning into an orgy. Zanigew was entertaining three hundred guests. Caviar and other delicacies were quite to their taste, as was the champagne. In one grand banquet, the three hundred were forgetting the simple fare of Alcatraz.

Harry Vincent took a quick peek through a window, then turned suddenly to the two persons beside him.

“They're bringing in more iced champagne,” he whispered, “get started—quick!”

Fay Tretter stepped over toward the rail; her figure showed dimly against the fog. As she moved along, she hummed a tune that attracted the attention of a guard.

Vic Marquette was sneaking along below the level of the windows. The guard didn't see him. The fellow was too interested in Fay. He approached her.

“Whatta you doing here?” growled the guard. “You're supposed to be back at the stern!”

Fay laughed, lightly.

“The view's better here,” she remarked. “That's why I came forward.”

“The view?” demanded the guard. “There ain't no view! Say”—he poked his face close to Fay's—“maybe you came forward to say hello to me. Huh?”

“Maybe—”

As Fay spoke, Vic hurtled across the deck. He took the guard in a hand tackle as Fay whisked aside. Floundering, the fellow tried to pull his gun. He got it halfway from his pocket as Vic swung him beneath the windows. Harry Vincent piled in to aid.

From the dining saloon came the loud pops of champagne bottles, opening a dozen at a time. And that imitation barrage, the guard's gun went off. Its muffled shot sounded like part of the celebration.

The hand dropped, with its gun. The muzzle had been poked against the guard's own ribs. Marquette grabbed up the weapon, pointed Fay ahead of him. The girl met another guard further along the deck.

This time, Marquette supplied a hard slug with the captured gun. Popping bottles weren't needed to cover the only sound that occurred; the guard's slump to the deck.

Two such victories didn't mean that the rest would be easy. On the contrary, they foretold coming difficulties. More guards would be along; usually, they came in pairs. Once actual battle started, time would be short and precious.

Taking the second guard's gun, Harry started toward an upper deck. Marquette dropped to a companionway, ready in case of trouble. Fay went back toward the stern, to bring word if searchers came from that direction. By this time, there was a chance that the conspirators had been missed.

A LITTLE ladder gave Harry access to a space beside the funnels. He took that route; rising on hands and knees, he looked around. A shout came from below; it was answered almost at Harry's side. A flashlight glimmered. With a spring, two lurking men pounced for Harry.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

Never could he have stopped both of them, but he aimed for one, hoping that luck might halt the other. Harry fired; so did his adversary. Since both were side-stepping, the shots missed. As they locked, Harry expected a revolver jab from the second opponent.

Instead, he was conscious of a shot from below. He heard the fellow drop to the roof of the deck. Vic Marquette had seen the attackers and had dropped one—the right one.

Harry expected to win his grapple with the other. The fellow was stubborn, but Harry was bending him toward the roof edge. The flashlight lay on the planking between them; its glow showed their bending faces, as each strained for a finishing hold.

With a jerk, Harry started the man headlong. One foot moving forward, Harry made a false step on the flashlight. Losing his hold, he rolled frantically for cover. A gun flashed just above his ear. Harry groped for his own revolver and couldn't find it.

Shots came from below. Marquette was trapped; but he was holding off his attackers. He couldn't help Harry. In fact, Harry couldn't aid himself. For other men were piling upon him, all with guns and flashlights.

They recognized Harry as he tried to rise. Their snarls told that they had orders to kill in an emergency such as this. A pleasure, from their viewpoint. Gun muzzles jabbed toward Harry's face, a semicircle of steel that met him every way he looked. Shoving his chin up, Harry expected the death shots. Eyes toward the foggy sky, he gave an amazed gasp.

The foemen heard it, along with another sound; a crackle from the high current that the big towers sent into the air. It was roaring louder, downward. Killers couldn't miss this sight. Holding Harry pressed with their muzzles, they let him view what was about to happen.

Another plane, enmeshed in Zanigew's snare, was due to explode within the next few seconds. But that ship didn't burst. Crackles ripped louder; suddenly they supplied a flash of vivid light.

A mass of brilliance was shaped in the fog, so vaguely that Harry thought it must be a meteor dropping upon the Unaga. Then the thing took on the outline of an airplane—but with one curious feature. It seemed to be flinging away the blazing sparks that clustered it.

Settling straight between the two funnels, the plane resolved into an autogiro. The flayed sparks were explained; they had been whipped away by the revolving blades. The ship hadn't exploded, because its gas tank was empty.

The Shadow!

He, alone, could have brought that ship to this strange landing. Harry knew that, as the autogiro jolted squarely on its wheels. But Harry remembered the potency of the protective current. Barreau had admitted that it would electrify anyone whose plane did not explode.

Harry's captors knew it, also. They spat contemptuous snarls toward the contrivance that loomed beside them. Oddly, their tones were answered—by a laugh! A shivering challenge that awoke hope in Harry Vincent!

He saw The Shadow rising from the open cockpit protected by the rubber interior. That one spot had been immune to the crackling currents. The Shadow was here, prepared for battle!

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

HARRY dived, hoping to escape the muzzles about him, frantically trying to grab up his own gun, half a dozen feet away. Neither his sprawl nor his weapon were needed. Surrounding men had forgotten him. All were wheeling to fire at The Shadow.

It was impossible for Harry to get into the fight soon enough to halt their shots. But there was another battler already primed for action. That fighter was The Shadow himself. His big automatics poked over the cockpit's side; they spoke in alternate bursts, timed to split-second swiftness.

Hot lead poured into the clustered group of guards. Too late, did they try to spring apart. That attempt only injured the aim of the few who were able to scramble. Two seconds later, they were sprawling like the first men that The Shadow clipped.

Wild bullets from sagging guns rattled the sides of the autogiro, well distant from the occupant. With a vaulting spring, a black-cloaked figure came from the plane, to land beside Harry Vincent.

Instantly, that shape had blended with the dark background of a funnel. Ready, for new battle, The Shadow was in the shrouding gloom that he preferred.

Again, The Shadow's laugh! Sardonic, fierce in its weird crescendo, it was a challenge to all comers, Zanigew included!

CHAPTER XXIV. BROKEN BATTLE

BEFORE Harry had a chance to state facts to The Shadow, his cloaked chief turned in the direction of the bridge. The Shadow had picked it as the one logical spot where Zanigew would have the controls. Moreover, The Shadow remembered details of the plans that he had drawn up while passing as Barreau.

Those plans had indicated a control room placed approximately where a ship's bridge would be.

Shots brought The Shadow to a temporary halt. They were not close by; they were from below. He leaned from the edge to pick off marksmen who were after Vic Marquette. In that thick haze-formed dusk, the only visible targets were spurting guns, but they proved sufficient for The Shadow.

As his adversaries took to cover, Marquette found opportunity to reach the roof of the upper deck, bringing Fay with him. Glimmering a flashlight, The Shadow showed plenty of guns lying about. Eagerly, the others gathered them.

With a quick order to Harry, The Shadow started on his way, intending to reach the bridge alone. It was a crafty move, for when he passed the funnel, he ran the gamut of playing lights. By leaving the others behind him, The Shadow put them in a spot of comparative safety, where they could keep up a misleading fire.

Groping forward, The Shadow neared the bridge. Crouching low, he could see armed guards ahead of him. They were looking past the funnel, trying to gauge what was going on there. Firing was spasmodic. Harry and Vic were holding their ammunition in reserve, while Fay arranged other guns in readiness.

Men on the decks beneath had learned who the troublemakers were. They thought that they had the trio boxed. A cautious advance would be the easiest way to force them out. A few men had reported seeing the sparking autogiro when it descended, but they hadn't made out just what the plane was.

They agreed that no living person could have arrived in it; and that seemed sufficient. The only men who could have given an exact report were those who lay flat above the upper deck.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

There had been talk, though, of The Shadow's laugh!

That seemed incredible; too fantastic to report to Zanigew. It was bait that drew lurking men along the hunt, but to the wrong spot. Zanigew's murderous men were being drawn into the ambush that Harry and Vic controlled.

Something whimpered high above the Unaga, then exploded. The sound was repeated, but it was ignored by Zanigew's horde. They had become at ease beneath the sheltering electrical barriers. Their upward creep continued.

Their swift fury struck the guards close to the bridge. Out of their very midst rose blackness that launched into the glow of their flashlights. A two-fisted fury, with big guns in each hand. Slugging down the first men that blocked him, The Shadow made for the others, both guns at aim.

No quarter was asked or given. But The Shadow's guns were the ones that brought results. Each .45 delivered stabs like knife-thrusts, dropping men from rails and stairways. Some dived to miss those devastating shots. Others, waiting too long, made vain efforts to clip The Shadow as they fell.

His tactics were too swift for them, until one marksman, hanging to a rail, put a last-minute shot toward The Shadow's shoulder. The black-cloaked fighter staggered, just as the man lost his grip and tumbled to the deck beneath.

Mouthing that he had clipped The Shadow, the marksman breathed his last. There was no one close to learn the news; a fortunate fact, for it would have produced a renewed attack on the part of the crooks.

THOUGH his wound was not serious, The Shadow felt its crippling effect. He wavered as he yanked open the door to the bridge. Then, with a renewed burst of strength, he launched upon two men within. They had no guns, for Zanigew had copied Barreau's system of keeping all armed men outside the control room.

They had weapons, though, in the form of big wrenches; and The Shadow's guns were emptied. Dropping one automatic, he used the other as a cudgel, to fight back from a corner just inside the door.

Harry and Vic were too busy, sniping at sneaky foemen, to realize The Shadow's plight. It was Fay who noted the finish of the shooting near the bridge. Grabbing a loaded gun, she made her way forward. Nearing the bridge, she jabbed two shots at men who were creeping for the steps.

Fay's aim was good. The two men stumbled. Others dropped back, thinking the blasts were from The Shadow. Fay saw the swinging door of the bridge, snatched a glance inside.

The Shadow was locked with his last adversary. One man already lay on the floor. Fay gave a grateful gasp as The Shadow's weighty gun descended. His last opponent fell.

Then Fay turned about again, to send another warning shot below. She didn't look to see The Shadow, on the floor beside the men that he had felled. He came up, groping, crawling, fumbling for the levers that he wanted. It was a slow-motion process, in these last minutes when success seemed sure!

Above, new whimpers sounded from the fog. Whines, with occasional bursts.

THOSE sounds were heard by Zanigew, as he sat at the head table in the dining saloon, overlooking the food-gorging throng from Alcatraz. They were enjoying food in plenty, and drink with it. All of which pleased Zanigew.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

What did it matter if fools had learned that this fog held the secret of the missing Unaga?

None could harm Zanigew. He ruled supreme! When greater fog received the lesser, he would vanish. One by one, he would add new boats to his flotilla. His empire would be everywhere!

Zanigew arose. His metallic voice pierced the great room, as he called for silence.

Revelry ceased. Out of three hundred faces, Zanigew was picking men of his choice. He beckoned them; they came to his table, his future generals. All was silence when Zanigew spoke.

“Every man shall serve me,” declared crime’s emperor. “I have already proven my power as the world’s master of crime. They call you public enemies—” his lips took on their down-turned smile. “And the term is a good one. Public enemies are my private friends!”

Cheers that rose from the listeners drowned a few distant shots that Zanigew might otherwise have heard.

“London!” Zanigew held up a fist, clutching its fingers as though he had the British capital in his grasp. “A city of fog! Made to our order! We shall creep up the Thames, when time is ripe, and spread crime everywhere!

“The Bank of England will be ours, thanks to my poison gas that mingles with the fog. All of you will aid me in the sack of London. These men beside me”—he gestured toward the chosen henchmen—“will lead picked squadrons to the attack.”

Arms lifted, Zanigew quelled the new enthusiasm. He was coming closer home, in describing his globe-girdling tour of crime.

“New York has fog,” he reminded. “We shall wait longer, perhaps for our attack there; but it will be worth while. Another victory; more wealth to fill our coffers!

“And after that”—his tone rasped high with confidence—“I hope to make use of other new inventions. To plan crime unheard of on this planet. To use crime as the mighty weapon that shall rule the world!”

Zanigew halted, one fist raised. A man had staggered into the great room, a smoking revolver in his fist. He fell half across the table beside Zanigew. Lifting him, Zanigew heard the name that the man’s lips barely gasped:

“The Shadow!”

For a moment, Zanigew’s eyes flashed disbelief. His ears could hear a sound that told him all was well: the buzz of his electrical barriers. Then, as Zanigew listened to make sure the sound was undisturbed, he noted its absence.

The Shadow had just pulled the controls on the ship’s bridge!

Never had Zanigew been calmer. Letting the informant slump to the floor, he turned to the mighty band that faced him. Here were men who, singly, were worth a dozen of the followers upon whom he had so far depended.

Men who would rally to the battle cry that Zanigew intended to give; who were already armed with revolvers that their new master had brought from crates in the steamer’s hold.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

“There is one enemy,” Zanigew told them, “who has caused many of you great trouble. He, alone, has actually tried to interfere with my great plans. That is why I lured him here today.

“He is actually aboard this ship. He has seized the controls and believes himself triumphant. He has not guessed that I allowed all that, to give you, my chosen guests, the privilege of ending his career.”

Zanigew paused. Turning toward the door, he raised a pointing finger.

“Come!” he rasped. “I shall lead you to—The Shadow!”

THREE hundred men piled to their feet as one. Tables went spilling, bottles flung with them. Under the crystal chandeliers of the brilliantly lighted saloon, drawn revolvers flashed.

Springing to the curtained doorway, Zanigew waited for the yelling mass of murderous men to surge in his direction.

In that instant, Zanigew could picture The Shadow's fate: a crushed form of black, trampled beneath a vengeful stampede! He was glad that The Shadow had survived his former ordeal, to generously sacrifice himself to this occasion.

Amid the tumult, Zanigew did not hear the whine that came, with meteoric speed, in the direction of the Unaga.

A mighty crash took away a corner of the dining saloon.

The deluge of glass and woodwork was but an instantaneous prelude to the coming cataclysm. A titanic blast rocked the mammoth room, scattering men and furniture into a chaotic heap.

Every light was extinguished, but the effect of monstrous, scorching flames remained. Flattened among the curtains, Zanigew could hear howls and moans amid the air's reverberations. Eyes blinking, ears deafened, Zanigew could not realize what had happened.

Had he guessed the truth, his groans would have joined the others.

The thing that had struck the mid-structure of the Unaga was an explosive eight-inch shell!

CHAPTER XXV. THE FINAL TRIUMPH

ZANIGEW reached the deck, staggering until he struck the rail. Behind him were other men, masses of them, some reeling, others crawling. Quivering, plaintive creatures, many of them unscathed, but all rendered temporarily harmless by the effect of the mammoth concussion.

Men were struggling all along the deck. Crew members of the Unaga, called to sudden mutiny, were heaving Zanigew's followers down into the hold. Whirling fog-breakers had stopped, along with the electrical barriers. Coasting ahead of the fog, the Unaga was coming into the glow of sunset.

Zanigew turned toward the mortars, hoping to shoot more of the fog bombs. He saw crew members pitching the fragile missiles overboard, where they floated, useless. Then came the whine of a warning shell, just above the steamer's stern. Crew members scurried below.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

They were on their way to release the prisoners! There was only one way for Zanigew to halt them. That was to reach the bridge, to deal with The Shadow in person.

Oddly, the route was open. Battle had carried below. No one wanted to go near the spot where The Shadow held control—no one except Zanigew. He reached the steps, sprang upward. Fay Tretter tried to stop him at the open door. Her gun was empty; Zanigew brushed aside the blow she gave with the bulletless weapon.

A gun ready in his fist, Zanigew saw The Shadow. The cloaked fighter's arm was already on the swing, bringing down a lever that he had wrenched loose from apparatus on the bridge. The iron bar clanged Zanigew's gun; even his strong fist could not hold it, after the numbing stroke.

Swinging his arm wide, Zanigew brushed the lever aside before The Shadow could attempt another blow. Crime's dethroned emperor locked with the being in black.

Fay watched that conflict, unable to give aid. The Shadow, already crippled, was battling a maddened monster of superhuman strength. The glow in those eyes of Zanigew's was ruddier than ever, his face more skullish, in the half-light from the thinning fog.

But Zanigew had lost his calm. Once driven to fury, he used brute tactics only. Skillfully, The Shadow was breaking off his choking thrusts, using the lever to aid his one-armed maneuvers.

Swinging against a window, Zanigew saw the deck. He twisted The Shadow toward the scene, rattled the harsh word:

“Look!”

Men from Alcatraz were on their feet, rallying in half-stunned fashion. Once they recuperated, they would take over battle as their own.

Death to The Shadow!

Zanigew did not voice those words, but the grit of his teeth told that he meant them. Into his ear came a whispered tone, sinister from The Shadow's lips.

“Look, Zanigew—beyond!”

Instinctively, Zanigew stared. For once, those odd eyes of his took on a bulge. It was light on the Pacific, for the fog had at last drifted clear of the Unaga. The ship, no longer hidden, was in the center of a gray flotilla that spread to the horizons.

Those vessels were the Pacific battle fleet!

Returning from maneuvers, the navy had been ordered to surround the traveling fog. The facts that Burbank had revealed were sufficient to start the needed machinery. Observers had watched for a promised sight; an autogiro dropping into the fog bank.

To ascertain when the field was clear, they had fired test shots. Not while shells burst on the outskirts of the fog itself, but only when one landed, did they know the protective power was off. One shell had struck closer than intended. But its landing had been timely.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

Through spyglasses, observers saw the decks of the Unaga; they made out the drab prison uniforms of the rallying horde. Zanigew had omitted the detail of providing new clothes for the men from Alcatraz. Recognized as rioters from The Rock, they were destined to meet new opposition.

GUNS opened fire from navy ships. Shells bombarded the Unaga's superstructure, to send men staggering from the shocks above their heads. Other missiles ripped the bow and stern of the Unaga, crippling the steamer without harming those below.

"Hell-divers" zipped downward in their planes, dropping smoke bombs on the decks, stifling the Alcatraz mob. Boatloads of bluejackets were heading for the stricken Unaga. She was settling lower in the water, for Zanigew's men had opened the stop-cocks. Not knowing they were surrounded, they had decided to scuttle the ship and take to the small boats.

Amid all that, The Shadow took sudden advantage of Zanigew's doubled fury. He wrenched away, as the skull-faced fighter drove him toward the rear of the bridge. Clubbing cross-armed, he staggered Zanigew with a stroke of the steel rod that ended against his opponent's oversized head.

Then, locked again, the two reeled through the doorway. Zanigew was using all his massive strength in an attempt to hurl The Shadow down the steps. They were on the edge, The Shadow folding backward, when Fay sprang into the struggle.

She clutched The Shadow's cloak, pulling with all her strength. Her weight could not halt the coming fall, but it twisted the strugglers as they went. Instead of going backward, The Shadow was side by side with Zanigew.

Fay still gripped the cloak. It ripped from The Shadow's shoulders, and the last wrench was enough. The fighters were still turning as they cleared the ladder-like steps; they were plunging headlong. Zanigew beneath!

The massive head that had teemed with hopes of empire, was first to strike the deck. As The Shadow rolled clear, Zanigew's form stretched to its entire length and lay still. Fay looked down toward the skullish face. The deep-set eyes were closed. Upon the lips, Fay saw the fixed grimace that had once been Zanigew's smile.

Reaching The Shadow, the girl helped him halfway to his feet. He slid back, for the deck had taken a decided slope. Sinking steadily, the Unaga was almost awash. Fay looked up, hearing footsteps. Beside her arrived Harry Vincent and Vic Marquette.

They lifted The Shadow toward a boat that appeared near the lower rail, beckoning for Fay to follow.

She still held The Shadow's ripped cloak. Fay saw the slouch hat lying by the steps. She realized suddenly that The Shadow, whoever he was, had an identity to preserve. One last look at Zanigew's hideous face decided her next action. Fay spread the cloak over the crime emperor's stiffened form.

ACTUAL dusk had gathered as the little boat put off. It was the last from the Unaga, Fay learned. Bluejackets had gathered in the convicts from Alcatraz—some from the decks, others from the water, a few from the remnants of the wrecked dining saloon. Loaded aboard a cruiser, that drab throng were already headed back to the drabber walls of The Rock.

Fay's father and the other inventors were rescued, along with the many prisoners released by the rallied crew of the Unaga. If any live men remained aboard the sinking steamer, all were remnants of Zanigew's former force. Some of those shock troops were captured, others dead.

SHADOW OVER ALCATRAZ

But probably some were missing. Hidden deep in the Unaga, they were one breed of rat that preferred not to desert a sinking ship. Perhaps their choice was best; for all were murders who would pay due penalty, if taken by the law.

The small boat reached a waiting destroyer. In the darkness, Fay felt The Shadow raise himself as Harry and Vic began to help him from the boat. Once on the destroyer, he rested, leaning upon his unhurt arm.

Great searchlights were playing across the now-darkened waters. Those broad gleams showed the Unaga settling at the stern. With a shivering heave, the steamer thrust her bow above the surface; there was a surging gulp upon the ocean's surface as the Unaga sank from sight.

As the maelstrom ended its whirling, chunks of wreckage appeared amid the foam. Many eyes looked for human forms, but saw none. Those who had hidden deep in the hold were bound for the bottom with the vanished Unaga.

From the lips of a being beside her, Fay heard the solemn whisper of a mirthless laugh; a tone that spoke of justice, more than triumph. Its note, too, seemed to carry mention of a superfoe whose evil dreams were crushed.

Such was The Shadow's knell for Zanigew, whose empire of the future was buried with his vicious exploits of the past!

THE END