## The Second Fu-Manchu Story

## The Clue of the Pigtail

## By Sax Rohmer

The most promising lad at the yard," said Inspector Weymouth; and his usually gruff voice had softened strangely.

Nayland Smith struck his right fist into

the palm of his left hand and swore under his breath, striding up and down the neat little room. No one spoke for a moment, and in the silence I could hear the whispering of the Thames outside—of the Thames which had so many strange secrets to tell and now was burdened with

He lay prone upon the deal table—this latest of th river's dead—dressed in rough sailor garb, and, to all outward seeming, a seaman of nondescript nationality—such as is no stranger in Wapping and Shadwell. His dark, curly hair clung clammily about the brown forehead; his sidn was stained, filey told me. He wore a gold ring in one ear, and three fingers of the left hand were missing.

"It was almost the same with Mason." The river police inspector was greating.

police inspector was speaking. "Three weeks ago, on a Wednesday, he went off in his own time on some funny business down St. George's way—and Thursday night the 10 o'clock boat got the grapnel on him off Hanover Hole. His first two fingers on the right hand were clean gone and his left hand was mutilated frightfully."

He paused, and glanced at Smith.
"That lascar, too," he continued, "that you came down
to see, sir—you remember his bands?".

"He was not a lastar," he said shortly. "He was a

I turned to the array of objects lying on the tablewhich had been found in the dead man's clothing. None of them were noteworthy, except that which had been found thrust into the loose neck of his shirt. This last it was which had led the police to send for Nayland light pointing to the authors of these mysterious tragedies.

It was a Chinese pigtail. That alone was sufficiently remarkable; but it was rendered more so by the fact that

the plaited queue was a false one, being attached to a most ingenious baid wig. "You're sure it wasn't part of a Chinese make-up?" estioned Weymouth, his eye on the strange relic. "Poor

Cadby was clever at disguise." Smith snatched the wig from my hands, with a certain irritation, and tried to fit it on the dead detective.

"Too small by inches!" he jerked; "and look how it's padded in the crown. This thing was made for a most abnormal head." He threw it down and fell to pacing the room again.
"Where did you find him—exactly?" he asked.
"Limehouse Reach—under Commercial Dock Pier—ag-

"And you last saw him at 8 o'clock last night?"-to

"Right to a quarter past." "You think he has been dead nearly twenty-four hours, Petrie?"

"Roughly-twenty-four hours," I replied. "Then, we know that Cadby was on the track of the Fu-Manchu group; that he followed up some clue which led him to the neighborhood of old Retoliffe Highway; and that he died the same might. You are sure that is

where to was going?" 'Yes," said Waymouth "He was jeale anything away, poor chap; it meant a big lift for him if he pulled the case off; but he gave me to underwand that he expected to spend last night in that d'etrict. He left the yard about 5, as I've said, to go to his rooms and dress for the job."

"Did he keep any record of his cases?" "Of course! He was most particular. Cadby was a man with ambitions, siri You'll want to see his book. Wait while I get his address. It's somewhere in Britt He went to the telephone, and Inspector Ryman cov-

ered up the dead man's face.

Nayland Smith was palpably excited.

"He almost succeeded where we have failed, Petrie!"
he said. "There is no doubt in my mind that he was
het on the track of Fu-Manchu! Poor Mason had prob-

"God knows! Cadby's death was from drowning, you say?"

"There are no other marks of violence."

"But he was a very strong swimmer, doctor!" interrupted Inspector Ryman, "Why, he pulled off the quarter-mile championship at the Crystal Palace last rear! Cadby wasn't a man easy to drown. And as for Mason, he was an R. N. R. and like a fish in the water!"

Smith shrugged his shoulders heplessiy.

"Let us hope that one day we shall know how they died." he said, simply.

Weymouth returned from the telephone.

"The address is No. — Cold Harbor Lane," he reported.

"I shall not be able to come along, but you can't miss it —it's down beside the Brixton Police Station. There's no family, fortunately; he was quite alone in the world. His case book isn't in the American desk, which you'll find in his sitting room; it's in the cupboard in the corner—top shelf. Here are his keys, all intact. I think this is the cupboard key."

"Come on, Petrie!" he said. "We haven't a second

cupboard key."

Smith nodded.
"Come on, Petrie!" he said. "We haven't a second to waste!"

Our cab was waiting, and in a few seconds we were apseding along Wapping High street. We had gone no more than a few hundred yards. I think, when Smith suddenly stapped his open hand down on his knee.

"That pigtail" he cried. "I have left it behind! We must have it, Petrie! Stop! Stop!"

The cab was pulled up, and Bmith alighted.
"Don't wait for me!" he directed hurriedly. "Here-take Weymouth's Card. Remember where he said the book was? It's all we want. Come straight on to footland Yard and meet me there."

"Bat, Smith." I protested, "a few minutes can make no difference!"

"Can't it!" he snapped. "Do you suppose Fu-Manchin is going to leave evidence like that lying about? It's a thousand to one he has it already, but there is just a bare chance!"

Of my drive that night I remember nothing, for so lost in thought was I that the cah was outside the house for which I was bound ere I realised that we had quitted the purileus of Wapping. Yet I had had leaving to review the whole troop of events which had crowded my life since the return of Nayland Smith rhom Burma. Mentally I had looked again upon the dead Sir Crichton Davey, and with Smith had waited in the dark for the freadful hing that had killed him. Now, with those remoresless memories jostling in my mind, I was entering the house of Fu-Manchi's last victim; and the shadow of that giant evil seemed to lie upon it like a palpable cloud.

Cadby's old iandlady greated me with a queer mixture of fear and embarrassment in her manner.

"I am Doctor Fetrie," I said, "and I regret that I bring bad news respecting Mr. Cadby."

"Oh stirl" she cried, "don't tell me with a queer mixture of fear and embarrassment in her manner.

"I am Doctor Fetrie," I said, "and I regret that I bring bad news respecting Mr. Cadby."

"Oh stril" she cried, "don't tell we had a queer mixture of fear and embarrassment in her manner.

"There was a terrible waifing at the back of the house has night, d

"So I came in time!" I said grimly, and turned the key in the lock.
"Oh!" she panted at that, and stood facing me, leaning back with her jewel-laden hands clutching the deak

Give me whatever you have removed from here," I said sternly, "and then prepare to accompany me."
She took a step forward, her eyes wide with fear, her

"I have taken nothing!" she said. Her breast was heaving tumultuously. "Oh! let me go! please let me go!" and impulsively she threw herself forward, pressing clasped hands against my shoulder and looking up into my face with passionate pleading.

It is with some shame that I confess how her charm enveloped me like a magic cloud. Unfamiliar with the complex oriental temperament, I had laughed at Nayland Smith when he had spoken of this girl's infatuation. "Love in the east," he had said, "is like the conjuror's mango tree; it is born, grows, and flowers at the touch of a hand." Now in her face I read confirmation of his words. Her clothes or her hair exhaled a faint perfume. Like all Fu-Manchu's servants, she was perfectly chosen

But I thrust her away. "You have no claim to mercy!" I said. "Do not count upon any. What have you taken

She grasped the lapels of my coat. I felt

"I will tell you all I can all I dare!" she panted, eagerly, fearfully. "I should know how to deal with your friend, but with you am lost! If you could only understand—you would not be so cruel!" Her slight accent added charm to the musical voice. "I am not free, as your English women are. What I do I must do, for it is the will of my master—and I am only a slave! Ah! you are not a man if you can give me to the police! You have no heart if you can forget that I tried to save you

I had feared that plea; for, in her own oriental fashion, she certainly had tried to save me from a deadly peril—at the expense of my friend. But I had feared the plea-for I did not know how to meet it. How could I give her up, perhaps to stand her trial for murder? And now I fell silent, and she saw why I was

. "I may deserve no mercy—I may be even as bed as you think; but what have you to do with the police? It is not your work to hound a woman to death! Could you ever look another woman in the eyes-one that you loved, and know that she trusted you-if you had done such a thing! Ah! I have no friend in all the enemy, my judge, and make me worse than I be my friend, and save me-from him!" The beautiful face was close to mine; har breath fanned my cheek. "Have mercy on me!" At that moment I beneatly would have given half of my worldly possessions to have been spared the decision which I knew I must come to. After all, what proof had I that she was a willing accomplice of Dr. Fu-Mancha! Furthermore, she was an oriental, and her code must necessarily be different from mine. Irreconcilable as the thing may be with western ideas. Nayland Smith had really told me that he believed the girl to be a slave. Then there remained that other reason why I loathed the idea of becoming her captor. It was almost tantamount to betrayall Must I soil my hands

with such work now?

Thus—I suppose—her seductive beauty arguing against my sense of right. The jeweled fingers grasped my shoulders nervously, and her slim body quivered against mine as she watched me with all her soul in her eyes—in an abandonment of pleading despair. Then I remembered the fats of the man in whose room

an abandonment of pleading despair. Then I remembered the fate of the man in whose room we stood.

"You lived Cadby to his death!" I said—bing and shook her off.

"No! I swear by the holy name I did not! sight I did not! I watched him—wpied upon him—night yea! But disten—it was because he would not be warned that he met his death! I could not save him! Ah! I am not so bad as that! I will tell you—I have taken his notebook and torn out the last pages and burned them! Look! In the grate. The book was too big to steal away. I came twice and could not find it!

Thurel will you ist me go?"

"If you will tall me where and how to selze Dr. Publianchu—yes!"

Her hands dropped and she took a backward step. A new terror was upon her.

"I dare not! I dare not!"

"Then you would—ir you dared?"
She was watching me intently.

"Not if you would go to find him!" she said.
And with all that I thought her to be, and stern servant of justice that I would have had myself, I felt the bot blood leap to my cheek at all which the words implied. She grasped my arm.

"Could you hide me from him if I came to you—end told, you all I know?"

"The authorities—"

"Ah!" Her eyes finshed. "They can put me on the rack if they choose, but never one word would I speak!

"The authorities—"
"Ah!" Her eyes finshed. "They can put me on the rack if they choose, but never one word would I speak! Never one little word!"
She threw up her deed scornfully. Then the proud giance softened again.
"But I will speak for you!"
Closer she came, and closer, until she could whisper in my ear
"Hide me from your police—from him—from everybody; and I will no longer be his slave!"
My heart was beating with painful rapidity: I had not counted on this warring with a woman; moreover, it was harder than I could have dreamed of. For some time I had been aware that by the charm on her personality and the art of her pleading she had brought me down from my judgment seat—flad made it all but impossible for me to give her up to justice. Now, I was disarmed—but in a quandary. What should I do? What could I do? I turned away from her and walked to the hearth, in which some paper sah lay and yet emitted a faint smell.

Not more than ten seconds elapsed, I am confident from the time that I stepped across the room until I glanced back. But she had gons!

As I leaped to the door, the key turned gently from the outsids.

"Ma 'aleshi" came her soft whisper; "but I am afraid

As I leaded to the door, the key
the outside.

"Ma 'aleah!" came her soft whisper; "but I am afraid
to trust you—yet! Be comforted, for there is one near
who would have killed you had I wished it! Remember—
I will come to you whenever you will take me and
hide me!"

Light footsteps pattered down the stairs. I heard a
stifled cry from Mrs. Dolan as the mysterious visitor ran
past her. The front door opened and closed.

to spend an hour in the company of Shen-Yan's optum

faring ruffians entered a waiting cab, accompanied by Inspector Weymouth, and were driven off into the wilderness of London's night. In this theatrical business there was, to my mind, something ridiculous almost childien; and I could have laughed heartily had it not been that grim tragedy lurked so near to farce.

my reflections. Fu-Manchu, who, with all the powers epresented by Nayland Smith pitted against him, pur-ued his dark schemes triumphantly and lurked in hiding within this very area which was so sedulously patrolled! Fu-Manchu, whom I had never seen, but whose name stood for horrors indefinable! Perhaps I was destined to meet the terrible Chinese doctor tonight!

I ceased to pursue a train of thought which promised to lead to morbid depths, and directed my attention to

what Smith was saying.

"We will drop down from Wapping and reconnoite, as you say the place is close to the riverside. Then you can put us ashore somewhere below. Ryman can keep the launch close to the back of the premises and you fellows will be hanging about near the front—near enough

"Yes," assented Weymouth; "Twe arranged for that If you are suspected, you shall give the alarm?"

"I don't know," said Smith, thoughtfully, "Even in"
that event I might wait a while."

We stood in a bare and very dirty room, which could only claim kinship with a civilised shaving saloon by virtue of the grimy towel thrown across the back of the solkary chair. A Yiddish theatrical bill of some kind. illustrated, adorned one of the walls, and another bill, in what may have been Chinese, completed the decora-tions. From behind a curtain heavily brocaded with hith a little Chinaman appeared, dressed in a loose smock, black trousers and thick-soled slippers, and ad-

vancing, shook his head vigorously.
"No shavee—no shavee!" he chattered, similar fashion, squinting from one to the other of us with his twinkling eyes. "Too late! Shuttee shop!"

"Don't you come none of it wi me!" roared Smith in a voice of amazing gruffness, and shook an artificially dirtied fist under the Chinaman's nose. "Get inside and gimme an' my mate a couple o' pipes! Smokes pipe, you

My friend bent forward and glared into the other's eyes with a vindictiveness that amazed me, unfamiliar as I was with this form of gentle persuasion. "Kop 'old o' that!" he said, and thrust a coin into the Chinaman's yellow paw. "Keep me waitin' an' I'll pull the dam' shop down, Charlie! You can lay to it!"
"No hab got pipee—" began the other.
Smith raised his fist, and Yan capitulated.

"Allee lightee!" he said. "Full up-no loom. You

He dived behind the dirty curtain, Smith and I following, and ran up a dark stair. The next moment I found myself in an atmosphere which fairly got me by the throat. It was all but unbearable, being loaded with optum tumes. Never before had I experienced anything like it. Every breath was an agony. A tin oil lamp on a box in the middle of the floor dimly illuminated the horrible place about the waits of which ten or twelve bunks were ranged and all of them occupied. Most of the occupants were lying motionless, but one or two were squatting in their bunks noisily sucking at the little metal pipes. These had not yet attained to the optum smoker's Nirvana.

"No loom-sames tella you," said Shen-Tan, emplacently testing Smith's shilling with his Smith walked to a corner and dropped

cross-legged on the floor, pulling me down "Two pipe quick!" he said, "Plenty room!

Two pieces pipe—or plenty heap trouble!"

Yan handed him the pipe, which he promptly
put to his lips, and prepared another for me. "Whatever you do, don't inhale any!" came

Smith's whispered injunction.

It was with a sense of nauses greater even than that occasioned by the disgusting atmosphere of the den that I took the pipe and pretended to smoke it. Taking my one from my friend, I allowed my head gradually to sink lower and lower, until, within a few minutes, I sprawled sideways on the floor, Smith lying close beside me.

"The ship's sinkin'," droned a voice from one of the bunks. "Look at the rats."

Yan had noiselessly withdrawn and I experienced a curious sense of isolation from my fellows—from the whole of the western world. My throat was parched with the fumes; my head ached. The vicious atmosphere seemed contaminating.

I was as one dropped somewhere east of Sues, where the best is like the worst.
 where there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can raise a thirst.

Smith began to whisper softly.

"We have carried it through successfully so far," he said. "I don't know if you have observed it, but there is a stair just behind you, half concealed by a ragged curtain. We are near that and well in the dark. I have seen nothing suspicious so far—or nothing

The shadow materialized as the figure moved forward into the room with a curiously lithe movement.

So close to us stood the newcomer that I was able to make out a ghastly parchment face, with small oblique eyes, and a misshapen head crowned with a colled pigiall, surmounting a slight, hunched body. There was something unnatural, inhuman, about that mashike face, and something repulsive in the bent shape of the long, yellow hands clasped one upon the other.

Fu-Manchiu, from Smith's account, in no way resambled this crouching apparition, with the death's head countenance and lithe movements; but an instinct of some kind told me that we were on the right scent—that this was one of the doctor's servants. How I came to that conclusion I cannot explain; but with no doubt in my mind that this was a member of the formidable murder group. I watched the yellow man creep nearer—nearer—slently—bent, and paering.

He was watching us.

Of another circumstance I became awars—and a disquieting circumstance. There were fewer murmurings and sighings from the surrounding bunks. The presence of the crouching figure had created a sudden semisience in the den which could only mean that some of the supposed opium smokers had merely feigned come and the approach of come.

Nayland Smith lay like a dead man, and trusting to the darkness, I, too, lay prone and still, and watched the evil face bending lower and lower—until it came within a few inches of my own. I completely closed my eyes.

Delicate fingers touched my right cyclid. Divining

Delicate fingers touched my right eyelid. Divining what was coming, I rolled my eyes up as the lid was adroitly lifted and lowered again. The man moved away.
"Good!" whispered Smith at my side. "I don't think
I could have done it! He took me on trust after that!
My God! what an awful face! Petrie, it's the hunchback of Cadby's notes! Ah! I thought so! Do you see

I could have done it! He took me on trust after final! My God what an awant face! Fetrie, it's the hunchback of Cachy's notes! Ah! I thought so! Do you see that!"

I turned my eyes round as far as was possible. A man had scrambled down from one of the bunks and was following the bent figure across the room!

They passed around us quietly, the little yellow man leading with his curious, lithe gait, and the other, an impassive Chinaman, following. The curtain was raised, and I heard their footsteps receding on the stair.

Footsteps on the stair, and the Chinaman reappeared, recrossed the foor and passed out. The little, beat man went over to another bunk—this time leading up the stair one who looked like a laccar.

"Did you see his right band?" whispared Smith. "A desoit! They come here to report and to take orders! Petrie! Dr. Fu-Manchu is up there!"

"What shall we do?"—sortly.

"Watt. Then we must try to rush the stairs! It would be fulle to bring in the police first. He is sure to have some other exit. I will give the word while the little yellow devil is down here. You are nearer and will have to go first, but if the hunchback follows! can then deal with him. I shall be directly at your sibow."

Our whispared colloquy was interrupted by the return of the dacoit, who recrossed the room as the Chinaman had done and immediately took his departure. A third man, whom Smith identified as a Malay, ascended the mysterious stairs, descended, and went out; and a fourth, whose nationality it was impossible to determine, followed. Then, as the softly moving usher crossed to a bunk on the right of the outer door—

"Up you go, Petrie!" cried Smith—for further delay was dangerous and further dissimulation useless.

I leaped to my feet. Snatching my revolver from the spoket of the rough jacket I were, I bounded to the stair and went blundering up in complete darkness. A chorus of bruitsh cries clamored from behind, with a multide servam rising above them all; but Nayland Smith was close behind as I raced slongs a covered ga

(Copyright by The North American Company.) wide the door, seemed to lift as I actually person threshold, revealing the eyes in all their brills

I know that I stopped dead, one foot within the re-for the malignant force of the man was something a passing my experience. He was surprised by this a den intrusion—yes; but no trace of fear showed up that wonderful face—only a sort of pitying centers And, as I paused, he rose slowly to his feet, never

moving his gaze from mine.

"It's Fu-Manchu!" cried Smith, over my shoulded in a voice that almost was a scream. "It's Fu-Manchu!" Cover him! Shoot him dead if " " "

The conclusion of that sentence I never heard.

Dr. Fu-Manchu reached down beside the table—an

the floor slipped from under me! One last glimpse I had of the fixed, green eyes, with a scream I was unable to repress I dropped-dropped " " and plunged into icy water, which closed over my head!

Vaguely, I had seen a spurt of flame—had heard as other cry following upon my own—a booming sound (the trap)—the flat note of a police whistle. But when I res to the surface, impenetrable darkness enveloped me, was spitting filthy, oily liquid from my mouth, and fight down the black terror that had me by the the terror of the darkness about me, of the unknown depth beneath me, of the pit into which I was cast amin stifling stenches and the lapping of tidal water. "Emith!" I cried . . "Help! Help!"

My voice seemed to beat back upon me, yet I was about to cry out again, when, mustering all my presence what and all my failing courage, I recognised that I of mind and all my failing courage, I recognised that had better employment for my energies, and began swim straight ahead, desperately determined to face the harrors of this place—to die hard if die I must. A drop of liquid fire fell through the darkness

pissed into the water beside mel I felt that, despite my resolution, I was going me Another flery drop-and another!

I touched a rotting wooden post and silmy timber I had reached one bound of my watery prison. Mos fire fell from above, and the scream of hystoria quivere unuttered, in my throat, Keeping myself affoat with increasing difficulty in heavy garments. I throw my head back and raised

No more drops fell, and no more drops would fall:

No more drops fell, and no more drops would fall; but it was merely a question of time for the floor to collapse. For it was beginning to emit a dull, red glow. The room above me was in flames!

It was drops of burning oil from the hamp finding passage through the cracks in the crasy flooring, which had fallen about me-for the death trap had reclosed. I suppose mechanically.

My saturated garments were dragging me down, and now I could hear the flames hungrily eating into the ancient rottenness overhead. Shortly mat caldron would be lossed upon my head. The glow of the flames grew brighter. \* \* and showed me the half-rotten plies upholding the building, showed me that there was no escape!

no escape!

By some subterranean dust the foul place was fed from the Thames. By that dust, with the outgoing tide my body would pass, in the wake of Mason, Cadby and many anothe, victimi

Rusty iron rungs were affixed to one of the walls communicating with a trap—but the bottom firee were

I managed to turn, to raise my throbbing head; and I saw the strangest sight which that night yet had offered.

Nayland Smith stood appen the lowest fron rung \* a supported by the hideous, crook-backed Chinsman, who stood upon the rung above!

"I can't reach him!"

It was as Smith hissed the words despairingly that I looked up-and saw the Chinaman shatch at his collect plystall and pull it off! With it came the wire to which it was attached; and the ghastly yellow mask, deprived of its fastenings, fell from position!

"Here! Here! Be quick! Oh, he quick! Tou can lower this to him! Be quick! Be quick!"

A cloud of hair came falling about the stim shoulders as the speaker bent to pass this strange lifeline to Smith; and I think it was my wonder at knowing her for the girl whom that day I had surprised in Cadby's rooms which saved my life.

For I not only kept affect, but kept my gaze unturned to that beautiful, flushed face, and my eyes fixed upon here—which were wild with fair \* \* for me!

Bmith, by some contortion, got the false queue into my grasp, and I, with the strength of desperation, by that means seized hold upon the lowest rung. With my friends arm around me, I realized that exhaustion was even nearer than I had supposed. My last distinct memory is of the bursting of the floor above and the bid burning joist hissing into the pool beneath us. Its fifty passage, striated with light, disclosed two sword blades riveted, edges up, along the top of the beam which had striven to reach.

"The severed fingers—" I said; and swoomed.

How Smith got me through the trap I do not know for the narrow passage it opened upon. My next recollection is of sitting up, with my friend's arm supporting me and Inspector Ryman holding a glass to my lips.

A bright glare dazzled my eyes, A crowd surge about us, and a clanger and shouting drew momentarily nearer.

"It's the enginee coming!" explained Smith, sections.

about us, and a changer and shouting drew momentaries nearer.

"It's the engines coming!" explained Smith, seeked my bewilderment. "Shen-Yan's is in flames! It was you shot, as you fell through the trap, that breke the cilliamp—"

"Is everybody out?"

"So far as we know."

"Fu-Manchu—"

Smith shrugged his shoulders.

"No one has seen him. There was some door at the back—"

"Do you think he may—"
"No," he said tensely. "Not until I see him ly
dead before me shall I believe it!"
Then memory resumed its sway. I struggled to



"Don't wait too long!" advised the inspector. "We shouldn't be much wiser is your next appearance was on the end of a grapnel, somewhere down Gasenwich Reach!—with half your fingers missing!"

The cab pulled up outside the river police depot, and Smith and I entered without delay, four shabby-looking fellows who had been seated in the office springing up to salute the inspector, who followed us in. He needed.

"Guthrie and Lisie," he said briskly, "get along and find a dark corner which commands the door of Singapore Charile's off the old Highway. You look the dirtiest of the troupe Guthrie; you might drop salesp on the pavement, and Lisie can argue with you about getting home. Don't move till you hear the whistie inside or have my orders, and note everybody that goes in and comes out. You other two belong to this division."

The C. I. D. men having departed, the remaining pair saluted again.

"Well, you're on special duty tonight. You've been prompt, but don't stick you'r cheests out so much! De you know of a back way to Shen-Yan's?"

The men looked at one another and both shock their heads.

prompt, but don't stick your chests out so much! Do you know of a back way to Shen-Tan's".

The men looked at one another and both shock their heads.

"There's an empty shop nearly opposite, sir" replied one of them. "I know a broken window at the back where we could climb in. Then we could get through to the front and watch from there."

"Good!" cried the inspector. "See you are not spotted, though; and if you hear the whistle dea't mind doing a bit of damage, but be inside Shen-Yan's like lightning! Otherwise, wait for orders."

Inspector Ryman came in, giancing at the clock.

"Launch is waiting," he said.

"Right!" replied Smith thoughtfully. "I am half afraid, though, that the recent alarms may have scared our quarry—your man. Mason, and then Chdby. Against which we have this, that, so far as he is likely to know, there has been no clue pointing to this opium den. Remember, he thinks Cadby's notes are destroyed."

"The whole business is an utter mystery to me?" coniessed Ryman. "Tm told that there's some dangerous Chinese devil hiding somewhere in London, and that you expect to find him at Been-Yan's. Buppouls he uses that place, which is possible, how do you know he's there tonight?"

"I don't!" said Smith; "but it is the first clue we have had pointing to one of his haunts, and time means precious lives where Dr. Fu-Manchu is concerned!"

"Who is he, air, exactly, this Dr. Fu-Manchu?"

"I have only the vaguest idea, inspector; but he is no ordinary criminal. He is the greatest genius which the powers of evil have put on earth for centuries! He has the backing of a political group whose wealth is enormous—and his mission in Europe is to pave the way! De you follow me? He is the greatest genius which the powers of evil have put on earth for centuries! He has the backing of a political group whose wealth is enormous—and his mission in Europe is to pave the way! De you follow me? He is the greatest genius which the poon, and clearing the put of the source of the manual process of the manual process of the man