Karamaneh

The net is closing in." said Mayland Smith.

"Let us bope upon a big entch." I replied with a lough.

Beyond where the Thames tided sinusers around above the roofs of Royal Windse, the in press denoing in the autumn hase. The peace of suitful Thames side was about us.

Ests was one of the few tanginis cluss upon which is the war narrewing the resources of that enemy of white troe who was writing his hame over England characters of blood. To capture Dotter We Manchu did not hope, but at least there was every promise destroying one of the enemy's strongholds.

We had circled upon the map a trace of country out the Thames, with Windser for its center. Within a circle was a house used by the most highly expanised out in the history of criminology. So much we knew on if we found the house, and this was likely enough, and it was respected by Pu-Manchu and his mysterious services we were prepared. But it would be a base de-

The series working upon a methodical plan, and, although our co-operators were invisible, these numbered no fewer than twelve-all of them experienced men. Thus far we had drawn blank, but the place for which Smith and I were making new came clearly into view an old mansion althated in extensive walled grounds. Leaving the steer bahind us, we turned sharply to the right along a lane flanked by a high wall. On an open patch of ground as we passed I noted a gipsy caravan. An old woman was seated on the steps, her wrinkled face bent, her chin resting in the pains of her hand.

I coarcely glanced at her, but pressed on, nor did I sourcely glanced at her, but pressed on, nor did I notice that my friend no longer was beside me. I was all anxiety to come to some point whence I might obtain a view of the house; all anxiety to know if this was the abode of our mysterious enemy—the place where he worked, amid his waird company, where he bred his leadly scorpions and his bacilli, reared his poisonous rangi, whome he dispatched his murder ministers. Above all, perhape, I wondered it this would prove to be the hidding place of the heautiful slave girl who was such a potent factor in the doctor's plans, but a two-edged seared which, yet, we hoped to turn upon Yu-Mansha. Even in the hands of a master a woman's beauty is a dangerous weapon.

A cry rang out behind me. I turned quickly. And a my rang out behind me. I turned quickly. And a my dar sight met my gase.

Mayland Smith was engaged in a furious struggle ith the old gipsy woman! His long arms clasped about it, he was roughly dragging her out into the roadway, as fighting like a wild thing-aliently, farcely.

Smith often surprised me, but at that sight frankly I sought that he was become bereft of reason. I ran back and I had almost reached the scene of this incredible gift, and Smith now was evidently hard put to it to be his own, when a man, swarthy, with hig rings in tars, leaped from the caravan.

The quick glance he threw in our direction, and made

quick glance he threw in our direction, and made and the river. all twisted round upon me, never releasing his

tior him, Petriel" he cried. "After him! Don't a cocape: He's a dacoit!"

y brain in a confused whirl; my mind yet disposed belief that my friend had lost his senges, the word

I started down the road after the fleetly running man-tever and did he giance behind him, so that he evi-ently had occasion to fear pursuit. The dusty road rans seconth my flying footsteps. That some of fantally which claimed me often enough in those days of our truegle with the tittanic genius, whose victory meant the istory of the yellow race over the white, now had me act in its grip again. I was actor in one of those dream comes of the grim Fu-Manchu drams.

Out over the grans and down to the giver's brink ran ister brotherhood, the daceits. I was close upon his cis. But I was not prepared for him to leap in among prushes at the margin of the stream; and seeing him this, I pulled up quickly. Straight into the water he mayed, and I saw that he held some object in his hand. Waded out; he dived, and as I gained the hank and hed to right and teft he had vanished completely. Only arwidening rings showed where he had been.

I had him!
For directly he rose to the surface he would be visible on either bank, and, with the police whistle which I rried, I could, if necessary, summon one of the men in ding across the stream. I waited. A wild fowl floated renely past, untroubled by this strange invasion of his ecinots. A full minute I waited. From the lane behind

recincia. A full minute I waited. From the lane behind me came Smith's voice:

"Don't lot him escape, Petriel"

Never lifting my eyas from the water, I waved my tand reagaintagly. But still the dacoit did not rise. I searched the surface in all directions as far as my eyes stild reach; but no swimmer showed above it. Then it may that I concluded he had dived too deeply, become miningsed in the weeds and was drowned. With a final state I concluded he had dived too deeply, become miningsed in the weeds and was drowned. With a final state to right and left and some feeling of awe at this sudden transpoy—this grim going out of life at glorious conday—I turned away. Smith had the woman securely; set I had not taken five steps forward him when a faint life it lowed my life. For, as I rapidly lowered my head, smathing hummed past me—something that glittered in he stainfabl, that flew out over the grass bank, and felt turned and hounded back to the river's brink. I said a faint cry behind me, which could only have come the glapy woman. Nothing disturbed the calm surface of the water. The reach was lously of rowers. Out y the fairlier bank a girl was polling a punt along, and her wints-clad figure was the only living thing that seed upon the river within the range of the most except the water. The reach was lously of rowers. Out y the fairlier bank a girl was polling a punt along, and her wints-clad figure was the only living thing that seed upon the river within the range of the most except the water. The reach was lously of rowers. Out y the fairlier bank a girl was polling a punt along, and her wints-clad figure was the only living thing that seed upon the river within the range of the most except that my surface, containing was not above, was not upon the surface, containing was not above, was not upon the surface, containing was not above, was not upon the surface, containing was not above, was not upon the surface, contained among the vector of the ward that it urapid away and hastened toward many passession.

"Th

The second se cotumn of black vapor rising beyond the way atraight to heaven as the smake of a welcom

"Curse it!" rapped Smith. "So this time we we right! But, of course, he has had ample opportunity remove his effects. I knew that. The man's daring incredible. He has given himself till the very hat ment, and we blundered upon two of the outposts!"

"No matter. We have the other, I expect no further arrests, and the house will have been so well died by the destor's servants that nothing can save it. I fear its askes will afford us no clue, Petrie; but we have secured a lever which should serve to disturb Fu-Manchu's

He glanbed at the queer figure that hung su in his arms. She looked up proudly, "You need not hold me so tight," she cald in her som

roice. "I will come with you." Of the many curious scenes in that race drams where in Nayland Smith and Doctor Fu-Manchu played the leading parts, I remember none more bisarre than the one at my rooms that afternoon.

Without delay, and without taking the Scotland Turd men into our confidence, we had hurried our priso back to London; for my friend's authority was supra A strange trie we were, and one which excited no it comment; but the journey came to an end at last. N

we were in my unpretentious sitting recon-the rect wherein Smith first had unfolded to me the story of Dec tor Fu-Manchu and of the great secret society which sought to upset the balance of the world to place Elurop sought to upset the balance of the world to place Elurope and America beneath the acepter of Cathay.

I sat with my elbows upon the writing table, my chin in my hands. Smith, restlessly, paced the floor, relighting his blackened briar a down times in as many minutes. In the big armchair the pseudo gipsy was curied up. A brief tollet bad converted the wisened old woman's face into that of a faccinatingly pretty girl. Wildly picturesque she looked in her ragged Romany gark. She held a cigarette in her fingers and watched to through lowered lashes.

Seemingly, with true oriental fatalism, she was quite

lowered lashes.

Seemingly, with true oriental fafallem, she was gutte reconciled to her fate; and ever and anen she would bestow upon-me a glanes from her beautiful eyes which few men, I say with confidence, could have sustained unmoved. Though I could not be blind to the emetions of that passionate eastern soul, yet I strove not to think of them. Accomplice of an archaeurderer she might be; but she was dangerously lovely.

"That man who was with you," said Smith, suddenly turning upon her, "was in Burms up till quite recently. He murdered a fisherman thirty miles above Frome only a month before I left. The D. S. P. had placed a thep-sand rupees on his head. Am I right?

The girl shrugged her shoulders.

"Suppose—what then?" she asked.

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"Suppose—what then?" she asked.

"Suppose—what then?" she saked.

"The girl shrugged her shoulders.

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"Suppose—what then?" she saked.

"The girl shrugged her shoulders.

"That he to both had owed our lives to this girl.

"As you ploked," she replied. "The police would learn nothing from me."

"You do not belong to the far east," my friend said abruptly, "You may have eastern blood in your voing but you are no him of Fu-Manchu."

"That its true," she admitted, and knocked the east from her eignrette.

"Will you tell me where to find Pu-Manchu?"
She shrugged her shoulders again, giancing eloquently my direction.

Smith walked to the door. "I must make out my report, Petrie," he said. "Look

And as the door closed softly behind him, I knew what was expected of me; but, honselly, I shirked my responsibility. What attitude should I adopt? How should I go about my delicate task? In a quandary, I stood watching the girl whom singular droumstances as we see that the property is the stood watching the girl whom singular droumstances as we see that the property is the stood watching the girl whom singular droumstances as we see that the stood watching the girl whom singular droumstances as we have the stood watching the singular droumstances as we have the stood watching the singular droumstances.

"You do not think we would harm you?" I began awkwardly. "No harm shall come to you. Why will you

"Of what svall has your protection been to some of those others," she said—"those others whom he has

Alasi it had been of none, and I knew it well, I thought as I grasped the drift of her words. "You mean that if you speak, Fu-Manchu will find a "Of killing me!" she flashed, scorafully. "De I seem

one to fear myself?" "Then what do you dear?" I asked, in surprise

"Then what do you fear?" I asked, in surprise.

She looked at me eddly.

"When I was seized and sold for a slave," she answared slowly, "my sister was taken, too, and my brother—a child." She spoke the word with a tender intunation, and her slight accent rendered it the more soft. "My sister died in the desert. My brother lived. Better—far better—that he had died, too."

Her words impressed me intensely.

"Of what are you speaking?" I questioned, "You speak of slave raids, of the desert. Where did these things take place? Of what country are you?

"Does it matter?" she questioned in return. "Of wase country am 1? A slave has ne country, he name."

"No name?" I cried.

"You may call me Karamaneh." she said. "As Exramaneh I was sold to Doctor Pu-Manchu, and my brother also he purchased. We were cheap at the price he paid!" she laughed shortly, wildly. "But he has spent a lot of money to educate me! My brother is all that is left to me in the world to love, and he is in the power of Doctor Pu-Manchu. You understand? It is upon him the blow will fail! You ask me to fight against Pu-Manchu! You talk of protection. Did your protection save Bir Crichion Davey?"

I shook my head sadly.

"You understand, now, why I cannot disobey my manual ter's orders. Why, if I would, I dare not betray him."

I walked to the window and looked out. How could I answer her arguments? What could I say? I heard the rustie of nex ragged skirts and she, who called herself Karamaneh, stood beside me. She laid her hand upon my arm."

"Let me go," she pleaded. "He will kill him! He will

A light came into view far ahead of us.

"That's the light, Petric," said Smith. "If we keep tricks." His voice quivered with excitement. "The gather than the force us, according to our information, we up, Fu-Manchu. Find something to its aim up that strike the hulk."

I grasped the revolver in my pocket, and the presence.

I move forward to Smith's side, and was shown.

shall strike the hulk."

I grasped the revolver in my pucket, and the presence of the little weapon was curiously reassuring. I have endeavored, perhaps in extenuation of my own fears, to explain how about Doctor Pu-Manchu there rested an atmosphere of horror, peculiar, unique. He was not as other men. The dread that he inspired in all with whom he came in contact, the terrors which he controlled and huried at whomsoever cumbered his path, rendered him an object supremely sinleter. I despair of conveying to these who may read this account any but the coldest conception of the man's evil power.

Smith stopped suddenly and grasped my arm. We stood listening.

"What?" I soked.

"Tou heard nothing?"

I shock my head.

I shook my head.
Smith was peering back ever the marshes in his oddly ert way. He turned to me, and his tanned face were



guidance.

"Bear to the right," directed Smith. "We must reconnoties before making our attack."

We took a path that led directly to the river bank. Before us lay the gray expanse of water, and out upon it moved the busy shipping of the great mercantile city. But this life of the river seemed widely removed from us. The lonely spet where we stood had no kinship with human activity. Its dreariness, illuminated by the brilliant moon, it locoked, indeed, a fit setting for an act in such a drama as that wherein we played our parts. When I had lain in the east end opium den, when upon such asother night as this I had looked out upon a pendaful Norfelk countryside, the same knowledge of alcomess, of uter detachment from the world of living men, had come to me.

Bilently Smith stared out at the distant moving lights.

which the moon threw far out upon the softly addring water. Only one dim light was visible amid this darkness.

"That will be the cabin," said Smith.

Acting upon the prearranged plan, we turned and walked up on to the staging above the hulk. A wooden ladder led out and down to the deck below, and was loosely isshed to a ring on the pler. With every metical of the tidal waters the ladder rose and fell, its rings creaking harshly against the creaty railing.

"How are we going to get down without being detected," whispered Smith.

"We've got to risk it." I said grimly.

Without further words my friend climbed around to the ladder and commenced to descend. I waited until his head disappeared below the level, and alumnily snough, prepared to follow him.

The hulk at that moment, giving an unusually heavy heave, I stumbled, and for one breathless mainent looked down upon the gittering surface streaking the darkness between upon the tog rung, that instant, ment probably, had marked the end of my share in the fight with Fudhanchu. As it was, I had a larrow escape. I felt something sip from my hip pocket, but the waird creaking of the ladder, the groans of the laboring hulk, and the lapping of the waves about the stagling, drowned the sound of the splash as my revolver drapped into the river.

Rather white-taced, I think, I joined Smith on the deck. He had witnessed my academi, but—

"We must risk it." he whispered in my car, "We dark not turn hack now."

He plunged into the semidarkness, making for the cabin, I, perforce, following.

At the bottom of the ladder we came fully into the light streaming out from the singular apartment at the ontrance to which we found otherwork it was fitted up as a laboratory. A slimpse I had of shelves tonded with jars and bottless of a table strewn with accoming paraphernalia, with retorts, with tubes of extraordinary shapes, botding living organisms, and with instruments—some of them of a form unknown to my experience. I have you covered, Dowtor Fu-Manchu!"

For Fu-Manchu at at the tu

and jaundiced eyes squinting obliquely into mine, was within two indices of me. A lean brown hand and arm, the great thews standing up like cords, held a crescent-shaped knife a fraction of an inch above my jugular vein. A slight movement must have dispatched me; a sweep of the fearful weapon, I doubt not, would have severed my head from my body.

"Smith," I whispared hoursely, "don't look around. For God's cake keep him covered: A dacoit has his knife.

I move forward to Smith's side, and was about pass him in the narrow doorway. The hulk moved neath our feet like a living thing-groaning, creaking and the water lapped about the rotten woodwork with sound infinitely dreary.

"Fut up your hands!" ordered Smith, imperatively.

Fu-Manchy slowly raised his hands, and a smile flawned upon the impossive features—a smile that had no mirth in it, only menace, revealing, as it did, his even discolored teeth, but leaving the filmed eyes inanimate—duil, inhuman.

He spoke softly, sibilantly.
"I would advise Doctor Petrie to glance behind him

at my throat?"

Then, for the first time, Smith's hand trembled. But his glance never wavered from the malignant, emotioniess countenance of Dector Fu-Manchu. He clenched his teeth hard, so that the muscles stood out prominently upon his faw.

I suppose that silence which followed my awful discovery provalled but a few seconds. To me those seconds were each a lingering death. There below in that greatings with the murder group had brought to me before and through my brain throbbed a thought—the girl had betrayed us!

"You supposed I was alone?" suggested Fu-Manchu.

"You supposed I was alone?" suggested Fu-Manchu.

"I would advine Does."

are he moves."

Smith's keen eyes never for a moment quitter maker. The gleaning barrel moved not a hair's saker. The gleaning barrel moved not a hair's saker. But I glanced quickly over my shoulder and sadth. But I glanced quickly over my shoulder and sadth. But I glanced quickly over my shoulder and sadth.

our lives."

We live is a peaceful are, wherein it falls to the lot of few men to owe their survival to their flectness of foot. At Suith's words I realized in a flash that such was to be our fate tonight.

I have said that the hulk lay off a sort of promontery. East and west, then, we had nothing to hope for. To the south was Fu-blanchu, and even as, stripped of our heavier garments, we started to run northward, the weird signal of a dasoit rose on the night, and was answered. Was answered again.

"Three at least!" blosed Smith; "three armed dasests. Hopeless!"

Hopeless!"
"Take the revolver!" I cried. "Smith, it's-"
"No!" he rapped through clenched (seth. "A servant
of the crown in the east makes his motte: 'Keep your
word, though it break your neck.' I don't think we need
fear its being used against us. Pu-Manchu avoids nelay

methods."

Bo back we run, over the course by which earlier we had come. It was, roughly, a mile to the first building—a deserted cottage; and another quarter to any that was eccupied. Our chance of meeting a living soul, other than Fu-Manchu's dacoits, was practically nil.

At first we ran easily, for it was the second half mile that would decide our fate. The professional murderers who pursued us ran like panthers, I knew; and I dared not allow my mind to dwell upon those yellow figures with the curved, gleaming knives. For a long time neither of us looked back.

On we range and consideration describes

On we ran-and on silently doggedly.

Then a hissing breath from Smith warned me what to

Then a hissing breath from Smith warned me what to expect.

Should I, too, look back? You! It was impossible to resist the herrible fuscination.

I threw a quick glance over my shoulder.

And never while I live shall I forget what I saw.

Two of the pursuing descrits had outdistanced their fellow (or fellows), and were actually within 30k yards of us!

More like dreadful animals they looked than human beings, running bent forward, with their faces curiously uptilled. The brilliant mornlight gleamed upon bared teeth, as I-could see, even at that distance, even in that quick agonized glance; and it gleamed upon the cressent-shaped knives.

"As hard as you can so now!" panted fimith. "We must-make an attempt-to break into the empty cottage.

Only charice!"

I had never, in my younger days, been a motable runner; for Smith I cannot speak. But I am confident that the next half mile was done in time that would not have disgraced a crack man. Not once again did either of ut look back. Tard upon yard we reced forward together. My heart seemed to be bursting. My log muscles throbbod with pain. At last, with the empty cettage in sight, it came to that pass with me when another three yards looked as unattainable as three siles. Once I stumbled, "My God?" came from Smith weakly.

But I recovered myself. Bare fost pattered doos upon our heels, and panting breaths told how even Fu-Manchers bloodbounds were hard put to ft by the killing pace

words, crashed open the gate and huried himself blindly at the door.

It burst open before him with a resounding boom and he pitched forward into the interior darkness. Flat upon the floor he lay, for as, with a last effort, I gained the threshold and dragged myself within, I almost foll ever his recumbent body.

Madly I matched at the door. His foot held it open. I kicked the foot away and banged the door to. As I turned the leading daeoit, his eyes starting from their rockets, his face the face of a demon, leaped through the