

# fantastic

## ADVENTURES

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# Contents

## STORIES



The Priestess Who Rebelled returns next month in another thrilling fantasy laid in the future when women rule the world and few men retain their self respect



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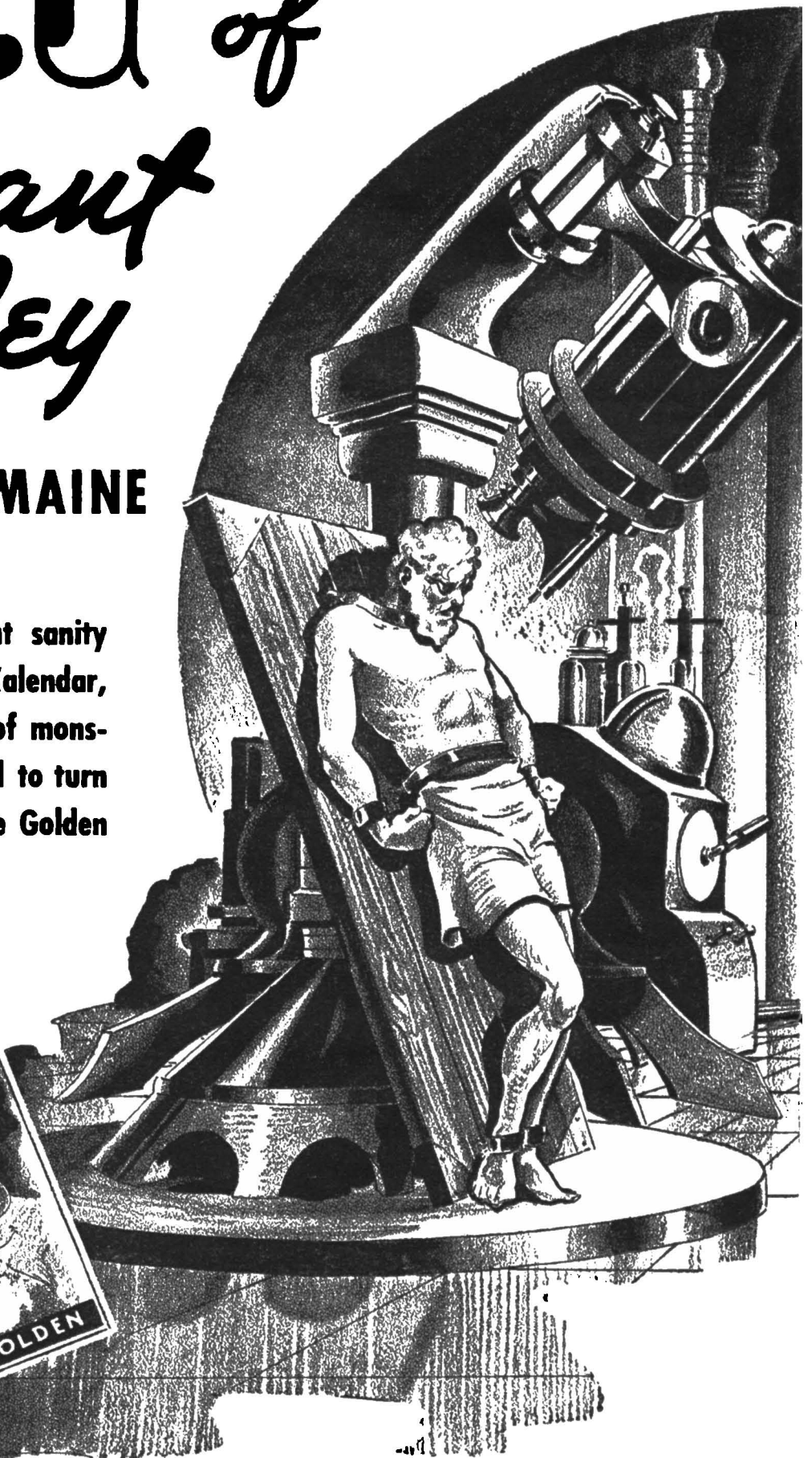
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Back cover painting by Frank R. Paul

Illustrations by Robert Fuqua, H.R. Hammond, Julian S. Krupa, Leo Morey, Jay Jackson, Joe Sewell.

# JALU *of* *Radiant* *Valley*

By ORLIN TREMAINE

◆  
When John Kalen brought sanity to the seven madmen of Kalendar, he loosed a hellish flood of monsters on the valley he hoped to turn into a Utopia for Jalu, The Golden



John Kalen pulled the lever down slowly and generators whined and crackled. The madman writhed beneath the beam that flooded down on his head



“OUT there,” said John Kalen, waving an arm toward the valley that lay below the towering balcony of the palace, “is Utopia—turned Hell!”

He whirled to the old man who stood beside him. “Gared Dulon, something must be done!” he exclaimed.

The Primate laid a hand on the younger man’s arm. “You are not happy, my son? What is it you wish to do? After all, you are Kalen of Kalendar, ruler of all this valley, of Okka, and of all your illustrious father founded many long years ago. Here in Okka we have Utopia. Out there, what can we do? The “breath” has made them mad.”

“First we must stamp out the Erzpa plants that surround the valley. The pollen must no longer pollute the air, to make men mad.”

“Granted. But that will not help those who have already breathed of it.”

John Kalen turned once more to view the valley. “No,” he said slowly. “But there are other ways to help them. There are scientific means—”

“What means?”

“Listen, Gared Dulon,” Kalen went on swiftly. “Nearly fifty years ago my father came to this valley, bringing his scientific knowledge, and he succeeded in setting up a Utopia. Then he died, and you sent Jalu, your daughter to New Yerk to find me. But when we arrived, we became separated, and the council failed to recognize me as the Kalen’s son. I was exiled, out there, among the renegades, the victims of Erzpa, and I fought with them, lived with them, learned about them.\* While they exist, there

\*See “Golden Girl of Kalendar,” published in the September, 1939 issue of FANTASTIC ADVENTURES.—Ed.



can be no Utopia in Kalendar."

"No Utopia—with me?" came a clear voice from the doorway leading to the balcony.

"Jalu!" exclaimed Kalen, clasping her to him as she ran forward.

"No Utopia?" she repeated coquettishly after he had kissed her lips.

He took her soft hand in his. "You are my wife," he whispered, "and that is more than Utopia; it is heaven. But I have dreamed of a perfect land, a perfect place for us to live. A place of understanding, and happiness, and equality. Not just we two, but for all in the valley. And I *must* make that dream come true."

Her face shone. "How like your father you are; good, wise, strong . . . How thankful I am that I became the first woman to leave Kalendar\* for the world outside, to find you, and that I should love you. I too, dreamed, and my dreams came true. Now your dreams must come true too; and I will not rest until you have succeeded. Do it, my Kalen, and begin today!"

Gazing down into the radiant face of the Golden Girl, John Kalen felt like the king he had become.

He turned to the Primate, father of Jalu, and said to him, "Send me a few at a time, the mad ones! The insane renegades of Tagoland. Then I will show you the means at my command."

Gared Dulon looked surprised, a little frightened, but he did not hesitate for so much as a second—and Kalen knew that through all the generations of Kalendar, to hesitate had been for the one who hesitated to die.

**N**EXT morning in the audience hall of the palace\* of Kalendar, John Kalen, garbed like a Caesar in

\*The palace of the Kalen is a building constructed of the native white marble which also occurs in the ruins at Lake Tahi and at Lake Tago. Jacob Kalen, first supreme ruler of the civilized area of Kalendar, added the wings at either end; installed the semi-private porches, the swimming pool, conservatory, and other modern relaxation media which make the palace a self-contained world of all around convenience. He installed the motion picture theatre in an upper gallery, and the gymnasium. And he completed the sanitary system by adding nearly a score of bathrooms, the fixtures for which were hewn of solid blocks of marble in accordance with his drawings, by the artisans of OKKA.

(Following his lead the houses of the entire area of walled Kalendar were similarly equipped.)

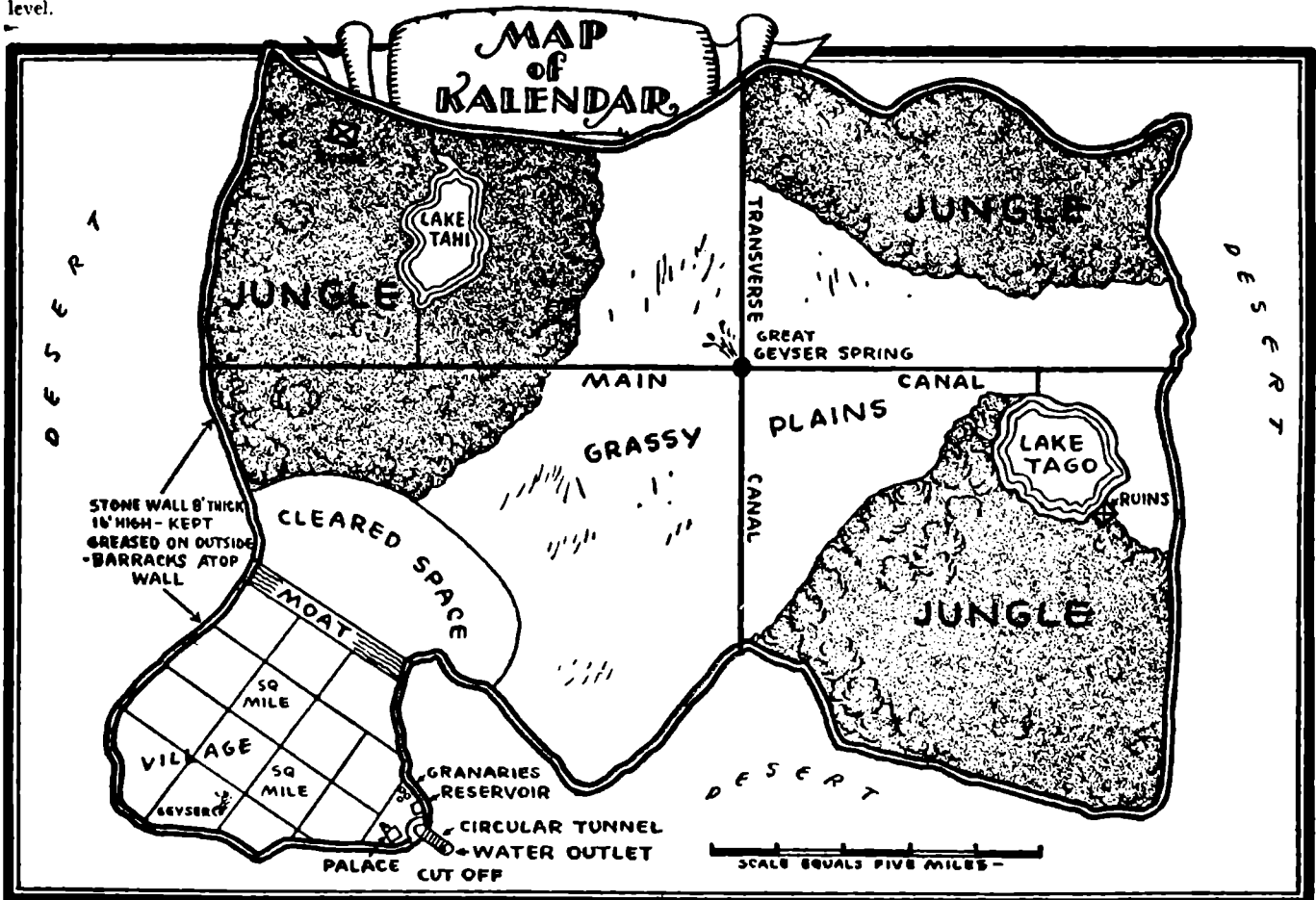
On the topmost floor of the palace, he installed an astrological laboratory with a telescope which enabled him to set down many astute observations on the planets of the system.

\*KALENDAR is a plateau valley in the Andes Mountains, in South America. It cannot be discovered from the air because dangerous air currents make airplane flight impossible at this point. The peaks and ranges which surround it run from 17,000 to 19,000 feet altitude.

Thirty miles to the South, aircraft can cross the Andes at 11,000 feet altitude. Twenty-two miles to the North there's a 13,000 foot level.

Therefore the existence of the country and of the valley has remained a secret to the outside world, except for its penetration by Captain Jacob Kalen (1869-1938) who managed to gain ingress in 1893 but who held his secret inviolate.

The valley level is 5,600 feet altitude. Surrounding walls are smooth for 200 feet upward, then rise in jagged lines for 12,000 feet more. The sun only touches the valley 3 or 4 hours a day. But



the days of Rome's greatest glory, awaited the coming of the mad ones. The folk of Tagoland, the renegades who were not mad, brought the mad ones. Dewar, who had once befriended Kalen when the latter had been exiled from Kalendar proper, commanded the guards who brought the mad ones. Kalen could see in the eyes of all of them, that they thought him a little mad himself, that he thus bade mad renegades to enter the very palace.

There were two score of the insane, and as they came cringing and staggering into the audience hall, the bowmen of Dewar stood aside, arrows nocked, to shoot them down if they attempted to do anything to the Kalen and his Queen. Strange mewling sounds came from the lips of the mad ones. Most of them had not shaved for years, nor had their hair been cut. Most of them were in rags. Most were bony skeletons, with deep, sunken eyes. But Kalen thought he could see remnants of the men they had once been. He could even make a guess at the origins of some of them.

He lifted a hand and pointed to one, and said:

"What is your name? Where did you come from? What brought you to Kalendar?"

The man began to chatter like an ape. His mouthings set the others to chattering, too. Some of them barked like dogs. One man uttered a sound like a prowling panther in the jungles. They all made strange sounds, but none emitted a sound that was like human speech. The minions of Dewar moved forward. Kalen turned to Jalu, said:

"Tell Dewar that these men are not to be molested. They are mad, yes, but madness is curable if the brain itself is not injured. I almost went mad when I had my first experience with Erzpa,\* the 'breath'."

Jalu spoke rapidly in Kalendish, which John had not yet mastered. There was something in the tones of her voice, no matter the language she spoke (she

\*Erzpa is the native name for a species of plant (*nicotine gentian*) which flourishes in a prescribed area of not more than 300 square miles of plain outside of Kalendar. Its so-called "breath" is a pollen so fine that it floats in the air with the slightest breeze.

The pollen, inhaled, attacks the sinus sac in a violent manner leading to temporary insanity. Continued exposure brings about a permanent obsessive insanity; a form of dementia praecox which leads its victim to unite in seeking the destruction of any living man or woman not so afflicted.

The so-called "outer renegades" are comprised of men who have strayed inside the deadly area of the Erzpa pollinated air. There is little doubt that many of the missing exploration parties of the last five decades are among these insane.—Ed.

the peculiarly radio-active soil produces crops, and the reflected light of the sun is intensified and prolonged by the radium qualities of the smooth rock walls which provide a dim, twilight emanation even at midnight.

Kalendar is never *dark*. It gets deep dusk. But no black night. Thus the growing season is FAST.

Snowfall in winter is sometimes very deep. Five to seven feet of snow is common. But there is *no wind*, and no drifting.

Fuel for heat, is wood from the forests, cut and hauled during the summer. Seasons are the reverse of what we in the north temperate zone experience. July and August are the worst months of winter. February is the hottest month of the year.

When the winter is severe (July and August) the farmers all live in OKKA except a skeleton force which remains on the farms to feed stock. In OKKA the snow is melted with live steam. The streets are kept open, and the canals free of ice.

The enclosed, organized nation of Kalendar contains about 18 square miles of extremely fertile land. The territory is intersected into square mile plots, by canals 12 feet wide and six feet deep. There are twelve farms on each normal sector. Three of the sectors contain additional farms because of their slightly larger area. One sector is occupied by the city of OKKA with its homes, manufactures, parks and shops. And one sector is occupied by the King's Palace, granaries, government building, and the homes of the nobles.

The city of OKKA is the trading center. It maintains cobblers, weavers, tailors, boat-builders, carpenters, plumbers, bakers, butchers, grocers, and artisans in hereditary lines. A system exists whereby a boy showing aptitude for painting or sculpture, may be "traded" for the son of an artist who shows no such aptitude. He still lives with his own family. The "trade" merely concerns his occupation, and involves the transfer of the hereditary lines in one generation cycle.

The families of the soldiers also live in OKKA.

The city is sanitary, self-governed, efficient. The "Ogdon" (mayor) is a member of the Kalen's Council of Nobles, appointed by the Kalen every second winter. School is mandatory for all children between ages of six and sixteen years.

The total population of OKKA is 16,000 people, of whom 8,000 are of the "unmarried" generation. Each of the 160 farms has an average population of 5, the farmer, his wife, two children, and a man to help in the fields.

Thus the total population of organized Kalendar is about 17,000 people. It never falls below that figure—and hasn't exceeded 18,000

in more than a century.

The renegade population of the outer valley has been estimated all the way from 3,000 to 10,000 people. Actually each estimate has been a blind guess.

The average farm production of the countryside is about 60,000 bushels of wheat; 30,000 bushels of corn; 30,000 bushels of oats; 30,000 bushels of rye; 30,000 bushels of beans. 2,000 acres are devoted to lush pasturage for cattle and sheep. Another 1,000 acres is devoted to gardens, truck, green corn, etc., which is abundant. Milk is supplied to the entire population through the small herds kept on each farm.

All deliveries are made by flatboat, through the canals.

Sugar is unknown in Kalendar (except that it is supplied to the Kalen's table from the outer world. Supplies being brought in by each rare expedition).

\*Twenty Noble Families, the heads of which comprise the Kalen's Council of Nobles, have beautiful mansions facing the canals and walls on both sides of the sector.

One of the twenty is named "Primate" and lives in a sumptuous palace to the left of the Kalen's own palace.

These nobles comprise the Kalen's escort on his hunting trip, etc. . . . except that the Kalen and Primate may never leave the sector at the same time as these two alone hold the secret of exit from the valley.\*

The sons of the nobles make up the Kalen's Guard. 20 young men.

There are 3 servants in the home of each noble; 10 in the palace of the Primate; 50 in the Kalen's Palace and Gardens; 30 servants are assigned to caring for the sector, keeping the canals clean, the grounds in order, repairing the Kalen's sporting goods.\*\*

Fifty clerks of various ranks, live and work in the government building—which is open at all times to all free citizens of Kalendar.\*\*\*

Athletic games are played by most of the populace, and there is an annual tournament, sort of a local "Olympic Games" on the tournament ground in the Kalen's Sector. This is the big annual event of the nation.

\*It is notable that a serious breach of the law had occurred when John Kalen arrived in Kalendar. The Primata had entrusted his secret to another and had gone hunting. It was fortunate for him that he was Jalu's father. He speaks English and is a master of hypnosis.

\*\*The servants, 147 in number, are slaves captured as children from the renegade population of the outer valley. They are kindly treated and are happy because their lot as slaves in Kalendar is far better than that of the unfortunate renegade population.

\*\*\*The clerks are free subjects of the Kalen.

spoke, fluently, at least five tongues) which went right to his heart. Dewar nodded when Jalu had finished. She spoke sharply at his nod, and Dewar dropped to his knees, touched his forehead to the marble floor.

The mad ones stared unwinkingly at John Kalen. Slowly he looked them over, one by one. Then he did something that brought gasps of consternation from the lips of all who saw. He rose from his throne, strode to stare intently at the nearest of the mad ones. Then he nodded, as though to himself, and strode to the next one. He stared at this one for a long moment, shook his head, moved on. As he did so the second man spat at him. Instantly every arrow in the place was drawn to its head. If Kalen had not held up his hand, the man who spat would have been filled with arrows as though he were a pin-cushion.

Kalen studied each man in turn, as though they were troops, he an inspecting officer. Then he came back to the throne, pointed out seven of the mad ones, had them taken aside.

"I know them. It's hard to pick them out with all the hair on their faces, but there are some I can't mistake."

"But I don't understand, John. How do you happen to recognize them?"

"Since I was a small boy I have been crazy about the exploits of explorers. My father, you know, was like a god to me. He visited the unknown places of the earth—like this one. He was a strange man who could not live where people did the routine, ordinary, civilized things. So, I studied the lives and works of other explorers, when he denied me complete knowledge of his. I know those seven men from pictures of them I have seen at various times. Fortunately, besides being deeply interested, I have an excellent memory. Now, your father will take these seven to the shower spray,\* see that they are scrubbed until they are clean, shaved, and properly dressed. Then, bring the seven back to me."

**N**EXT morning the seven were back. There was something new, radiant about them. They were clean-shaven; their matted hair had been trimmed. Clean clothing had been given them. But for their madness, which gleamed from their eyes, they might have been the explorers they had once been. Kalen studied their faces intently. Then while Jalu remained on the second throne, he took one of the seven into a chamber behind the throne.

Set up in the room was a maze of intricate ma-

chinery, a panel set with switches and dials, and an inclined board fitted with clamps and bands obviously intended to secure a human being.

Selecting one of the madmen, he directed several of the bowmen to strap him on the inclined board, then trained a large projector upon his head. Stepping to the machinery controls he pressed a switch and a high pitched whine came from some hidden generator.

As an afterthought he sent the bowmen from the room, and only Gared Dulon remained. For several minutes the projector beat down on the writhing form of the madman. Then, abruptly, he quieted and stared about dully. Kalen switched off the machine, stepped forward, and while the Primate watched anxiously, released the madman. He addressed him:

"You are Sven Pedin," he said calmly. "Seven years ago you vanished in the jungles, at the headwaters of the Amazon. The world gave you up as lost."

The man simply stared at him. His eyes were blazing with the madness of the "breath." Kalen caught the man by the shoulders, shook him savagely, said,

"Are you Sven Pedin?"

In a low voice came the man's answer, the first words he had uttered, perhaps, in several years—that even remotely resembled words.

"I am Red Eric, the Viking!"\*

Kalen shook him again. "You are not Eric the Red," he stated. "You are Sven Pedin. You are a greater man than Red Eric. You are twice as great as Red Eric. There is nothing, with your vast scientific knowledge, that you may not do. I shall see that you do it. I shall put scientific knowledge and equipment at your disposal. You have no further cause for fear of any kind. You are not mad; you have simply hidden away from terror. Now, the terror has gone, and you must come from hiding. I, Kalen of Kalendar, command it! Say after me, 'I am Sven Pedin! I am Sven Pedin!'"

The man licked his parched lips. His eyes showed the strain under which he labored as he sought to obey.

"I am Sven Pedin! I am Sven Pedin!" he managed to croak.

"I am a great scientist!" urged Kalen. "I am a great scientist!"

A light began to break in the face of the mad one.

"I am Sven Pedin!" he repeated. "I am Sven Pedin! I am a great scientist. I am a great scientist! It's true, I am a great scientist! But who are you? I have never seen you before! And what is this regalia you wear? Where am I?"

"I am the new ruler of Kalendar, a lost world in the high ramparts of the Andes, Mr. Pedin," said John

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\*The shower spray is a radio-active spray situated in the cavern which is the only entrance to Kalendar. To those entering the valley, the shower spray is the means of rendering the tissues of their body immune to the burning effect of the radium saturated walls of the valley, and the inevitable serious burns that would result from even touching one of the Okkarians. John Kalen himself suffered such a burn upon first touching the Golden Girl, before he underwent the radio-active bath under the shower spray. This spray, coming from the cliffs, is impregnated with radium salts of a peculiar nature found only in the Kalendar mountains.—Ed.

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\*This man has one of the common hallucinations of madmen who, fleeing from their own terrors, imagine themselves some great man of the past, behind whose greatness they try to hide from fear. Sven Pedin, experiencing the terrors through which he must have passed before he somehow sneaked up the tunnel into Kalendar, and became one of the renegades, had made himself believe he was a man who had been dead for nine hundred years.—Ed.

Kalen quietly. "And you are never again to flee from yourself, from your terrors. I have made you sane and, sane, you are one of the world's great scientists. Here in Kalen I have work for you that will fulfill your destiny. Work that will fully bear out the promise of your genius."

"You cured me . . .?"

"Yes," said Kalen, "your brain was inflamed by the pollen of a certain plant. I removed that inflammation with infra red rays. Now, I wish you to do the same thing with six of your scientific compatriots. They are Viljalmir Larson, Michael Verdier, Lucifer Cadget, Vincent Precio, Frank Racine and Pierson Riegel. . . ."

**S**LOWLY Sven Pedin spoke those names, rolling them over his tongue as though they were some precious food. His eyes, fixed on those of John Kalen, were now the eyes of a sane man—though Kalen gave most of the credit to the superb intelligence of Sven Pedin himself.

"Those six great men *here?*" said Pedin.

"Yes. They are mad, as you were. They have been here for all of the time since the world gave them up for lost. You, for instance, Mr. Pedin. Do you know the date?"

"Not exactly, but it must be about the middle of January, 1932."

"Correct, except that it is 1940!"

"1940! And, Pierson Riegel, for one! I was hunting news of him when I . . . when something . . . I don't just know what . . . but I was in the jungles of the Amazon. I had mastered several Indian dialects, and heard some talk of a white man. By the descriptions I knew Pierson Riegel, and began hunting him. He had been lost then for eight years. Now, if *I've* been lost for eight years, Pierson has been mad, or what the world calls mad, for . . ."

"Sixteen years!" said Kalen. "Now, I wish you to repeat what I have done to you on the brains of those other six men. But before you do it, Pedin, I must exact a promise from you. Bear in mind that I believe it is right and proper that your best place is here in Kalendar, that here is your destiny to be worked out, regardless of what your plans may have been when you . . . when you . . . stepped into darkness, because of 'the breath . . .'"

"Erzpa! I've been trying to remember! The 'breath!' Yes, I remember talk of it, and how it drove men mad. But you wished to exact a promise . . ."

"That you will make no attempt to leave Kalendar without my permission! That you will exact a promise from each of the men whom you will make whole, that he will not attempt to leave Kalendar, ever, without my permission."

Sven Pedin straightened. There was a quiet dignity in him. His eyes were frank, open, wholly untroubled.

"I can make no such promise," he said. "I know

nothing of Kalendar, though it seems clear that I must have suffered horrible things here. My work should be for the betterment of the world, to increase its knowledge. I shall go if it appears right, in my own judgment, for me to do so. But I shall ask the others to promise, and inform you if they agree or refuse."

John Kalen bowed. "I appreciate your sincerity. I shall see that you do not want to leave. For here is perfection, or a basis on which it can be built—from which it may be sent out to the world in a manner you and your brother scientists, after discussion with me, may decide upon. I shall fight for what I believe to be right, and you must keep in mind that my power here is that of life and death."

Sven Pedin bowed.

"If it seems proper to me to oppose you, I shall do so, then. I can see that you will be a worthy antagonist. If, in the end, we are to disagree, so be it."

Kalen put out his hand to Sven Pedin. The two men, sizing each other up, shook hands. Even as they did so, Kalen realized what tremendous potential opposition to himself he was creating, if Pedin, with a brain eight years disordered, turned against him. But great excitement was in him, for he knew that in the seven men he had selected—and in the others who also would be cured, and set as helpers to the seven—he had endowed Kalendar with the best intellects of modern man.

How would their great knowledge be used? Would it be to make Kalendar the perfect place he knew it could be? Or would it, through madness, be turned against John Kalen and his golden Queen? What would these strong men, so many years pariahs, mad pariahs who had known no contact with the world, say and think and feel when they first met the people of Kalendar and Tagoland socially?

A vague terror began to grow in him, and he almost wished he had left Sven Pedin a madman. He could still leave the other six, and lift no obstacles before his own happiness. But John Kalen was a *man*.

"The other six will be sent to you, Pedin," he said. "Dulon, here, will see that part of my palace is set aside for you. I trust that the future will not make it necessary for me to tear down what I have just built. For I will slay you, and all your fellows, to protect Kalendar from the rest of the world."

"If," said Pedin, smiling a little, "you are not yourself destroyed!"

"It's a bargain!" said Kalen grimly, going back to Jalu, his face grave, thoughtful.

## CHAPTER II

### Cradle of Science

**K**ANDU and Jastro and Wherl had been the Kalendish Council when Kalen had first come to his kingdom. And because they had not known him they

had exiled him, into the jungles outside the village of Kalendar. There he had met Dewar, enemy of the Kalendish people, and had been befriended by him, had befriended him in turn. Reinstated in Kalendar, Kalen had sent Kandu, Jastro and Wherl to Tagoland, to cement friendly relations between the Kalendish and the renegades. That the three were his enemies, because he had thus humiliated them, he knew full well.

But perhaps, when the two alien groups had become one, they would forget, and be thankful to him that he had united Kalendar, and made it the best place in all the world where men might live. And it was for this reason that he restored sanity to the scientists among the renegades, and set aside for them a great wing of the palace, where they were to do whatever seemed proper to them, to make Kalen's own dreams for Kalendar come true.

And then, to estimate the situation, and after Sven Pedin had easily built more graceful boats to ply the canals of Kalendar, with as especially beautiful boat for the royal pair, Kalen and Jalu—the king and queen set forth on a voyage of exploration, guarded by Orkus, the commander of the royal guard, and his loyal henchmen.

"I always wished," said Kalen, when they first set out in their royal barge, "that I had lived in Cleopatra's time, and had been one of her favorites, so that I could ride with her in one of her royal houseboats, on the Nile. Now I know why I was not a contemporary of her's, for nothing could be better than this."

"No, John," Jalu answered softly, "nothing could be better. This is utterly perfect."

As they left the palace sector, they could see across the valley of rich level farms to the wall of the little nation. Along the sheer granite cliff the barge moved, weaving in and out, past the last of the Noble's houses, past farm, and meadow, cattle and country houses, to the great wall with pacing sentries on its top. The great grilled iron gate lifted at their approach and the barge slid through to the outer valley where they could glimpse, miles away, the jungles around Lake Tahi. And in between a grassy, beautiful plain. Far off toward the right was the great geyser, larger even than the geyser in the village of Kalendar. That these geysers had something to do with the perfect climate of Kalendar, Kalen knew. The radio-active elements in the walls that—in some places almost three sheer miles high—surrounded Kalendar, and Tagoland, even beyond Lake Tahi, played their part in the lost world's perfection. They covered the whole strange land, at night, with dim, ethereal glow. Only human beings immunized to radium could live in such a place for any great length of time. The waters of Kalendar were nectar, in which the most delicious of fish swam—thanks to the foresight of Captain Jacob Kalen, father of John. Nature had combined most of her miracles to make of the Lost World of Kalendar a Paradise.

Now and again, as the royal barge took them along

the great canals, Jalu looked toward the jungle areas, and John Kalen could feel her shudder. For three nights of his exile Kalen had struggled through the jungles of Tagoland, and time after time had frozen to immobility, his heart in his throat, as the heavy tread of beasts that must have been monsters, came toward him, hesitated, passed on.

What were those beasts? Panthers? Jaguars? Ocelots? Bears? Wolves? Or unearthly combinations of them? Who could say what this inner world might not show the startled eyes of men, if the men who hunted in the jungles were lucky enough to find them? The fact that they were unknown was what filled John Kalen with misgivings. He read through all the records his father had left—and the old man had kept a diary for the fifty years of his reign here—and found no descriptions of the creatures he knew must inhabit the jungles.

AS the barge touched at small fishing villages along the canals where the executive skill of the erstwhile council was being put to its best use, men came down and smiled at them. At such moments, Jalu, the Golden, was at her best. If she had been an angel, her light could not have shone more brightly. Cleopatra, in her days of greatest glory, could not have been lovelier, more regal. With each passing second she became more dear to John Kalen. He could not think of a time before he had known her without an empty feeling in his heart and a lonely aching in the depth of his soul.

Then he would remember things—how the seven scientists he had rescued from madness had looked at her, when they had been granted audience, just before the beginning of the lazy inspection tour. Their eyes had made Jalu straighten and look away.

The light of Jalu was over all the great amphitheater of the valley. She was the queen of the sunken land, brighter to all its denizens even than the sun—whose light struck straight down into the great pit for less than four hours each day. But when the sun had struck down, and passed the towering ramparts, it left its warmth behind it in the ageless rocks. That warmth gave life to everything in Kalendar—even the hideous, unknown beasts. Life was rampant, lush. Grass grew greener and more luxuriantly—John thought he could almost hear it growing, even above the gentle lapping of the water against the prow of the royal barge—than anywhere John Kalen had ever been in the world.

Paradise!—except for the secrets that all Kalendar knew the jungles must hide.

When night came the barge was moored wherever it might be, and the lovers, while their guard erased itself, so that even the murmuring of their voices could not be heard, sat side by side and gloried in the eerie radiance which possessed Kalendar after "dark."

Now and again, as they sat side by side, Jalu would stiffen. But she would not speak of what was in her



mind, and Kalen would not ask her. For he, too, would usually see. . . .

Formless piles of what appeared at times to be black smoke, or gray smoke, or drifting fog, against the walls of the jungles. Sometimes the piles took shapes like elephants, or tapirs, or wolves—or anything one might care to imagine. Their feet in the leaves made sound, but from their mouths came no sound at all. It was as though the monsters had been struck dumb by the miracle of Kalendar. Now and again beady discs of flame showed fleetingly in the midst of the formless blobs.

Steadily they came out from all three great patches of jungles. And Orkus, the commander, did an unheard-of thing. He approached his sovereigns without waiting to be sent for. There was terror in his face as he looked at Jalu, and spoke in Kalendish.

"Something dreadful is happening tonight," he said. "I feel it. The men feel it. And now, the beasts of the jungles feel it. For they are coming. And note, my queen, that the eyes of the beasts converge upon the royal barge? My life is forfeit, I know, if I offer suggestions, but there is danger here!"

Kalen, who had picked up Kalendish rapidly, understood every word.

"Cast off, Orkus," he said. "Make haste, back to Kalendar and the palace. Station bowmen all around the gunwales of the barge. Your life is forfeit only if anything happens to your queen!"

AS the barge, propelled by a water-wheel contrived by Sven Pedin, got under way, the formless creatures broke into crazy, nightmarish gallops. They started closing in on the barge. They were huge things, and the canal was narrow. Kalen knew, watching them come, that the very least of them could leap onto the boat from either bank.

Orkus' bowmen stood to await the attack. They held their arrows until there was no possibility of missing. Then, they released them, while the barge sped on along the canal that had suddenly become a way of death. No sound came from the pursuing nightmares. The grassy plain seemed only to be a great bed of protoplasm, in ghastly ferment, dotted with eyes of many colors.

Kalen heard the arrows strike into the soft flesh of the charging, silent creatures. But he saw not one of them go down! He saw a gray patch of life, with what appeared to be the rudiments of feet below it, receive one of the longest arrows, and come right on, as though it had not even felt the blow that would have downed an elephant.

"Faster! Faster, Orkus!" he said. "Faster the boat, faster the firing!"

"The arrows, sire," said Orkus. "Soon we shall have shot them all away!"

"Then you must win your way to Kalendar with speed."

How they ever made it, pursued by nightmares, the Kalen was never afterward to remember. But when

they had jumped from the boat, and the Kalen had bidden Jalu, with two guardsmen, to make for the palace, while he remained behind to help Orkus fight off the silently horrible pursuit, he knew that something was happening in Kalendar that had never happened anywhere, in all the world, before. And he knew it had been *planned*, and *ordered* though he, the Kalen, the only one with authority to plan and order anything in Kalendar, knew nothing of the plan or order!

The beasts gave back before the increased fire of Orkus and his men, now augmented by rifle-fire from the rest of the palace guard, and the Kalen whirled back to the palace. He would not leave her now until he knew exactly why this strange unearthly thing had happened.

But though he searched the palace from top to bottom, calling Jalu's name as he went, he could not find her, and she did not answer!

Grimly, he turned toward that part of the palace set aside for the use of the scientists. No sooner had he done so than all that part of the palace became a wall of white-hot flame, through which not even John Kalen's power could help him go! Out of the heart of the flame came the voice of Sven Pedin, grim but triumphant.

"The rulership of Kalendar has passed into new hands, John Kalen! Too bad, but we feel that such a perfect place should be exploited by men with superior knowledge. It is quite impossible for you to thwart us!"

"Where is Jalu, Pedin? Where is my wife?"

"Safe, Kalen! She will be freed—*perhaps*—when we have perfected our control of the beasts, and the beasts have destroyed such Kalendish folk as may oppose us. You doubt our power, Kalen, developed in your absence? Then listen, for at my whim I give voice to the beasts of Kalendar!"

The voice of Sven Pedin ceased. But no sooner had it stopped than a bedlam of sound broke out in Kalendar—sounds such as mankind had never before heard on this earth, because in the days when there had been such sounds, man had not yet been evolved to hear them!

### CHAPTER III

#### Rebels of Kalendar

THE eerie light which possessed the wing of the palace assigned to the scientists, became itself a moving entity. It spread rapidly from a scientists' section, into the adjoining rooms. It passed through the marble as though it had not been there, flowing as easily through it as if it had been ether. And the force of it drove the guardsmen from the palace.

The light literally drove John Kalen out into his own courtyard, whence he looked back to see all his palace a blazing pile of light, in which the palace stood

in hot relief, as though it were all aflame.

But inside, he knew, were Jalu and the scientists. They had, by some miracle of science, he decided, compelled the radium waves to their will, and were using them now, combined into sheets of flame, to wall themselves about. Not even the ramparts of Kalendar could have been more effective.

Fleeing before the light at which human eyes could not possibly look for more than a heart-beat of time, the guardsmen moved away from the palace. Kalen himself must also break ground before the impalpable, grim might of the cold, radio-active fire.

And all the time a devil's chorus was going in the great pit that was Kalendar. The roaring as of lions, the coughing of great cats, the bellowing of bulls—all the sounds that great beasts made, including the drumming sound of the alligator when it slams its jaws shut upon its prey—rocketed and rolled back and forth between the endless sounding boards that were the walls of Kalendar.

"Orkus," shouted Kalen. "Around me, with all your men. Signal the people of Kalendar to meet us in the village square at Okka. We are shut off from the palace, the beasts of the jungles have been brought under control by our enemies—and will be forced to destroy us! We must fight for our lives! To Okka, everyone!"

There was a half smile on the face of Orkus as he listened. Here was a Kalen to his liking, one who commanded his men in person, who himself liked a fight against odds. And there was a tremendous, haunting sorrow in the Kalen's eyes, too, as now and again he looked back toward his palace where Jalu was held prisoner. Yet the Kalen never faltered in his flight with the migration to Okka where within the hour, 17,000 people, men, women and children, were mobilizing for battle with the unknown.

The great pile of light in which the palace stood, like a great electric beacon in the far distance, began to grow dim. The sound of the beasts increased in volume, until it made the flesh crawl, and was an assault upon the ears that was almost unbearable.

"Somehow, Orkus," he cried, "they rule the beasts with the rays. When the rays dim at the palace, when the fire seems to burn lower, the sounds of the beasts grow louder. Here they come!"

The great beasts, as though urged forward by the senselessness bred of hydrophobia, flooded into the village streets. Great red tongues were lolling. The light which was the palace was projected over the square as if by a giant magic lantern. Balls of white fire seemed to float like clouds over the village.

The air was suddenly, grimly, filled with poisoned arrows.

A three-inch cannon roared. Kalen saw the shrapnel smash into the wall-to-wall ranks of the formless beasts. He saw red blood, like crimson fire, burst from the shapeless bodies. The sounds the beasts made rose into a mighty crescendo of frenzy—which became mightier than mighty when the precipice walls

hurled back the echoes. Away to his left Kalen heard his command passed along. A machine-gun from the arsenal began to chatter.

ORKUS stood beside the Kalen, panting, trying to tell him something.

"I left word, when you went on your tour, sire," he said, "that our three tractors be brought into the city, piece by piece. They have been reassembled. Perhaps, when we have done our best with machine-guns, and arrows. . . ."

"I'll tell you when, Orkus," said Kalen. "Look toward the palace intermittently, and tell me when anything new transpires, if you can see that far."

The sound of battle filled all Kalendar. The sound of bestial roarings, of rifle shots, of cannon explosion, was like the end of the world, because of the echoes that sounded as though they would never die down in a human lifetime. Still, though the walls of houses on either side of the street—and of all streets—were smeared red with the blood of the beasts, the beasts kept coming. They screamed in rage and fear, yet seemed incapable of retreating. They were like robots, which, set in motion to the front, could not retreat or change their direction. The control of the scientists over them was complete—while the creatures lasted.

"Sire!" said Orkus. "The beasts! I have never dreamed of such a thing. . . ."

"Well?" Kalen shouted at the top of his lungs, with his mouth against Orkus' ear, to make himself audible.

"Strange things have been done. But these are not creatures of the jungles, sire! I see a rabbit, larger than a tail. . . ."

A rabbit as big as a cow! Its squeal of terror magnified in the same proportions!

"And mice, sire!" said Orkus. "And rats! All of them enlarged beyond anything the mind of Kalendar could conceive!"

So, the sounds he heard were the sounds of ordinary creatures—most of them—magnified as their bodies had been magnified by the mad knowledge of Sven Pedin and his associates! But a mouse or a rat as big as a cow, and driven mad with fear, could be a dreadful enemy, a dreadful attacker!

"We'll try the tractors on them shortly, Orkus," said Kalen. "Where are they?"

Orkus pointed. The tractors had driven into the middle of the square, the roaring of their motors lost in the screams of the beasts of Kalendar. Beasts that were piled deeply along all the streets leading off the square. The men and women of Kalendar were fighting with all the courage they had to keep from losing their village to the beasts—and Sven Pedin's men.

"Sire," said Orkus, "notice what drives the beasts to us? While the light is focused over the square, the rays that keep Kalendar aglow at night, throughout the whole area of the valley, are missing!"

"I know," said Kalen. "Mad scientists have har-

nessed and confined the rays to their own purpose. The beasts simply do the natural thing, and charge blindly at the source of light, because they have never learned the meaning of the dark! There has never been real darkness in Kalendar, until tonight. Look, the geyser!"

Orkus whirled to look at the geyser in the village, the beautiful geyser which, at night, reflected the prismatic colors of the radiations from the walls of Kalendar. No water spouted from it! They both knew, then, that the waters of the great geyser had also fallen away to a trickle or less—and Kalen's heart sank. Heaven only knew—and perhaps Sven Pedin did—what the failure of the geysers would do to the climate and the water supply of Kalendar.

If the husbandry failed, and there was no food, there could be no life, for very long, in Kalendar. If the granaries were not fully stocked. . . .

"Look, sire!" said Orkus. The cupola of the palace!"

**K**ALEN whirled and looked up. The cupola of the palace seemed to hang above the square of Okra, though it was five miles away! It looked like the calyx of a great white flower—with white flame for the petals. In the midst of it, like a priestess out of some olden time, when the world was very young, and gods and men mingled with one another, stood Jalu the Golden One, her arms uplifted, her face raised as though she prayed.

Angel Gabriel, Kalen thought, must look as Jalu's image looked at this moment. So distinct, in the midst of the glare, was she that Kalen could see every gorgeous curve of her, the lithe perfection of her limbs, the glory of her golden hair.

Her voice cut through the sounds the beast made, and the sounds of the Kalendish battle to survive.

"Parley with the rebels, sire! Parley and save our people! They only wish to be escorted beyond the rim, and beyond the deserts back of the rim, so that they may return to their homes—safe after they have passed the areas where the 'breath' might strike them down again!"

Kalen's heart sank. Jalu, prisoner of Sven Pedin, was begging him to let the rebels go—when the rebels had plainly tried to destroy ever living thing in Kalendar. But what was this? Jalu, completing her speech, continued, contradicting it:

"I have said these words because I promised. I promised because, if I did not, Sven Pedin and his rebels swore to destroy all the village, and every living thing in it, with the same power they have imposed upon the beasts! But here me, Sire! If you capitulate to the rebels, I shall cast myself down from this high place, into the heart of the flames! I would rather die than that Kalendar be less than what we both desire!"

Kalen, his face a mask of grim composure, snapped at Orkus:

"You heard? Set the tractors in motion. Cover

them with every sort of fire we command. Have the people of Kalendar attack behind the tractors, and the fire of our guns, rifles and arrows. Never a backward step for any man or woman, while he or she is alive, and can stand. Let there be no end until the danger from the beasts is ended! After that I shall have other commands for you!"

Kalen turned and looked at the angelic figure in the light-projected cupola of the palace. He kissed the tips of his fingers to her image as the tractors began to roll.

## CHAPTER IV

### Counterattack

**J**OHAN KALEN had read of mythical lands where the tiniest of creatures could become, in a split second, great monsters. Of lands where the greatest of beasts could be reduced to invisibility for very smallness. That such things were possible by mechanical means he had never believed. But now he had no choice. And he understood why the cries of the charging creatures were so outlandish. A flea, for example, blown up by mechanical magic to the size of a donkey, would at least make a sound that a man could hear—but which he had never heard before, because the noise the creature ordinarily made was above the human range of hearing.

It was a horrible thing to contemplate. In this luxurious fairyland, protected by the mighty ramparts of the Andes, all sorts of crawling creatures could be found—all the bugs, and worms, and grubs, and snakes, and bees, and butterflies. For the science of Sven Pedin and his associates to make them grow to tremendous proportions with the aid of the radioactive properties of Kalendar itself, not only did not now seem unreasonable, or impossible, but the proof was here before his eyes.

And so he took active command of the counter-attack, as the men and women of Kalendar, and even the sturdiest children, understood that they must fight to the end, or the very weight of numbers, the monstrous size of the attackers, would smother them, and they would die.

Kalen jumped to one of the tractors, driven by a Kalen guardsman who appeared to be thoroughly enjoying the task laid out for him. The tractor, in effect, was a tank of murderous power.

It headed into one of the streets which was filled from side to side with a nightmare horde of creatures. Great insects from the soft loam, and from under the rocks of Kalendar. They piled one atop the other in the rush to reach the lights of Okka. It was better that it happened like this, that the creatures come to light to be destroyed, than that they simply remain motionless in the dark—growing out of all conceivable bounds, until the valley was a horror of nightmare growths.

Out of the night, into the glow of the headlights

of the tractors, came eyes that were like fire, like emeralds, like diamonds—and that were as big as dinner plates. Eyes blazing with the madness of abysmal terror which the creatures themselves could not understand. To those creatures the tractors, the people who drove them, were simply other creatures that, like themselves, sought the light for a reason none could comprehend.

Bullets sprayed from the guns mounted on the tractors, straight into the midst of the countless eyes. Kalen saw some of the eyes go out like broken globes. He saw some of the creatures wilt like deflated balloons, and slither down among their fellows, or be carried on the backs of their fellows. Through the spaces between creatures that were in dreadful ferment he could see some of the fallen which were being trampled into bloody shapelessness by their own kind, or shot down by the defenders of Kalendar.

**T**HEN they made contact and Kalen was hanging on, holding his breath with the horror of it, as the tractor rode onto the squirming bodies.

Gory gouts of blood splashed right and left before the tractor Juggernaut. The odor of destruction was a grim and ghastly thing. Kalen, his face grim, noticed some of the creatures as they came. A beetle forced its way through the press to meet the tractor. Its mandibles were scythes, many feet in length, armed with spines that were like swords. The beetle attacked the tractor head on, and for a moment the motor of the tractor hammered and pounded and could not advance. Calmly the driver smashed at the beetle with leaden slugs from his machine gun.

One of the slashing mandibles neatly decapitated the driver. The tractor swerved to the right, would have smashed into a house-wall, had not John Kalen himself, swung her back into line, and driven her on, over the body of the smashed and broken and mephitic beetle.

A great, hairy creature suddenly possessed the street; filled it from side to side. It came forward with hideous undulations, rising in waves along its body . . .

"A caterpillar!" gasped Kalen. "It could crawl over a man and smother him, perhaps even crush him, with its weight!"

He speeded up the tractor to meet this new menace. It rocked and rolled and bucked as it slid over the dismembered parts of creatures Kalen had no time to catalogue in his mind. The countless eyes of the caterpillar were blazing as Kalen smashed headlong into it.

The tractor hesitated for just a moment. It was as though it had run into an invisible net, or its tractors had simply struck sand, or mud. Scarcely noticeable—and then the tractor was eating its way through the street, and through the Paracelsan incubus.

Street's end, and out of other streets the tractors were debouching, and the people of Kalendar. They were fighting as human beings had never fought be-

fore in Kalen's experience. Their battle-cries were cheering to a commander who needed the bravest his fighters could give him. They were attacking with everything—with the weapons of war, and with clubs, with pitch-forks, and shovels, and pick-axes, and scythes, and with swords and knives. The Kalendish had driven the creatures back from the village. Now that they seemed to have the situation in hand, or would have, as soon as they had cleared the canals beyond the village, through which the creatures had come on the bodies of one another—there was much to be done in Okka, to make it livable again.

While the Kalendish drove the creatures back, or slaughtered them as they charged, Kalen selected every fourth man, and all the women, and sent them back into the village.

The houses of the village were all of stone. He bade the natives bar their doors—and then put that which the horror had left in the streets to the torch. As he issued the command—which, because royally issued, became a "decree"—he smiled grimly to himself, trying not to think of danger all this might bring to Jalu the Golden.

For with fire raging in the streets of Okka, destroying the vestiges of the beasts, the scientists who had loosed the horror would be desperate.

Pedin's only chance of escape lay in the stoppage of the geysers which fed the canals. Once the canals emptied themselves down the circular tunnel he could walk down the steps to freedom—but that time was still many hours, perhaps days, distant. Meantime there was much to be done.

Thinking of winged creatures, Kalen's heart went cold. What sort of winged creatures were there in Kalendar? He had seen many small birds with gorgeous plumage, several varieties of hawks. Why had not the black magic of Sven Pedin done something with these? He was afraid even to think of them, lest his thoughts travel telepathically and the scientist rectify the apparent oversight.

**B**ACK in Okka, supervising the cleansing of the village, his ears became accustomed to the sounds of battle in the valley beyond the canals. The tractors had driven over canals on the hastily contrived causeways, and were racing and roaring and crashing back and forth in the fields beyond.

The Kalendish folk had the situation in hand at the moment, provided they did not grow so weary that fresh vanguards of the beasts might overthrow them.

Kalen now led his guard toward the palace. Five miles of weary trek before he looked up at the cupola in the projection of which he had last seen Jalu. For a moment he thought the strange fire the scientists had made, encompassing the palace, had devoured or was devouring her. For he saw her dimly through sheets of flame, like a white statue in the midst of a burning building. But she was looking right at him, and he knew that she lived.

"If anything happened to you," he directed silent



Bravely the warriors of Kalendar fought against the horde of incredible monsters that swarmed out of the darkness

words at her, "I would slay Sven Pedin and his associates as I have slain the beasts they created. I would do it if I had to smash my way through this fire, whatever it may be."

Even as he watched Jalu, and heard the sounds of battle in the valley miles away and the sound of flames increased within the palace, two masculine figures, dressed in what seemed to be golden armor, moved up out of the cold flames that enveloped the palace, to stand before Jalu. He could not, of course, hear what they said to his queen. But he could see the proud lift of her head, and sense her contempt for these men who were not hesitating to sacrifice lives for their own escape from the lost world of Kalendar. One of the men, Sven Pedin himself, Kalen saw when the man half-turned, grasped the wrist of Jalu.

Jalu thrust him back. There was tremendous power in Jalu by Nature, and now, in her fury, her power was greater than that of any man. Sven Pedin went down, out of sight of Kalen, from her thrust. Curses came out of the flame, and five more men appeared—all the men of Sven Pedin, unless he had taken as his assistants, during Kalen's absence from the palace, more of the erstwhile mad ones. There had been fully two score of one-time outside dwellers he might have used.

Violent hands were laid upon the golden one. Kalen, unthinking, cried out to her.

"Jalu! Jalu!"

She raised her head and saw him then, and he could feel her love for him flow out through the cold flame, and envelop him, and warm him with its steadfastness. But before Jalu could answer, Sven Pedin's voice spoke out of the fire.

"You have beaten us temporarily, Kalen," it said. "But we are determined. We are armed with knives. We are coming out of the palace, with your Queen as a hostage. There will be knives against her lovely body. If anything happens to any one of us, she will die, unless . . ."

"Unless what?" The Kalen's voice was heavy.

"Unless you give us your word that we will be allowed to go forth in safety from Kalendar."

"It is useless for you to give such word, John," came the voice of Jalu, strong with courage, "for I will die before I will allow them to so make use of me!"

"You heard, Pedin?" said Kalen. "I do not need to answer. You are staying to be punished. The brains that conceived of the beasts can do the things I wish done for Kalendar, under guard. The treason which caused their coming into being can bring the curious of the world to Kalendar, to destroy it, to overrun it, to make it less than the perfection I desire. So, you shall not go! And if anything happens to Jalu I shall destroy all of you, to the last man, with the slowest of slow tortures!"

There was a long pause before Pedin answered again.

"Then hear me, Kalen! What I have done to the

beasts I can do to the birds!"

"I know. It will make no difference. Birds as big as rocks will still have to come close to human beings to strike and slay—and can themselves be struck and slain!"

"And I can, Kalen," went on Pedin, "do the same thing to your people! Think of men, women and children so big that their feet would smash in the roofs of their own houses as they walk! Think of human monsters released in the valley—monsters so big they could not possibly squeeze through the tunnel by which escape is possible! What do you think of that, Kalen?"

"I do not change my answer—unless Jalu sees fit to change hers."

"Can you believe, John, that I would change?"

"Then, Pedin," said Kalen, "I shall capture you!"

No sooner had he spoken than the many hands snatched Jalu the golden one from sight, into the heart of the strange cold-hot flame. She went without protest, struggle, or a single cry.

## CHAPTER V

### Proof of the Pudding

JUST what scientific principle was back of what Pedin had done in Kalendar? And was planning to do to the inhabitants? And why hadn't the concentrated rays worked on men as well as animals from the beginning? That it was possible to divert the rays from human beings seemed certain. And Pedin must have made sure of that, not caring himself to be in Kalendar when and if it became filled with Gullivers. But now, he had promised to turn perfect Kalendar into a hell beyond imagining. Would he really go so far?

As though in answer to Kalen's thought, the voice of Pedin again came out of the light which surrounded, emanated from the palace.

"I warned you, Kalen. Now I'll prove that I can do it!"

Kalen's heart dropped into his boots. His mind had been bent on the task of somehow releasing Jalu, though he had so far not thought of a single possible way. The sound of struggle against the beasts had almost died out toward Tagoland, where the citizens of both Kalendar and Tagoland were mopping up on the Frankenstein monsters of Pedin.

In a matter of an hour or so, the struggle would be over.

But a strange, awesome tension was growing in the valley of Kalendar. The dim light which usually blazed was no longer in evidence, because Pedin's science had harnessed it to the palace of the Kalens. Thus the bottom of the valley was black as Erebus. A strange coldness was settling over the valley, too, and Kalen bethought himself of the two geysers that had subsided, and of their effect in turn upon the warm canals which bisected the valley, east and west,

north and south.

The settling coldness filled Kalen with dismay. Kalendar's floor was a mile above sea-level. Its surrounding peaks were sometimes as high as nineteen thousand feet above sea-level. The sun's rays, warming the walls, kept them warm until far into the dim-lighted night. They were cooling faster tonight than they had at any time since Kalen had come to his kingdom.

Kalen shivered, wondering if, by disrupting the routine of nature, Pedin and his associates had not already done her damage that might never be rectified. A cold wave would destroy the jungles of Kalendar, perhaps. It would destroy the fruits of the trees, the grains of the field. And whence could Kalendish folk then find food with which to survive?

Kalen gritted his teeth. If Pedin had done such a thing to Kalendar, then he would wish, before the end that he had never been born! Kalen imagined holding the man's neck between his palms, closing the hands, and slowly twisting, until Pedin died. He cursed himself for having given Pedin back his sanity. Yet he knew he would have done it all over again. Kalendar the perfect needed the brains of Pedin. Somehow or other Kalen had failed to impress upon Pedin the value of remaining in Kalendar, as against going into the selfish outside world.

All the best that outside world had to offer could, in time, be brought into Kalendar. Even motion pictures! The secret of the place had been kept for fifteen centuries, proof that it might be kept yet another fifteen centuries. And now, if Pedin, making free with the laws of nature, as written for Kalendar, destroyed the paradise, or made it less a paradise than it could be. . . .

**A** LONG-DRAWN cry of terror burst from the heart of the valley. It wasn't the cry of one person, or of a dozen, or of scores, but of all the people who were out there, destroying the beasts. The cry was one which, wordless, yet somehow described a cataclysmic happening, beyond the power of man's chosen words to relate.

Kalen, fear gripping his throat, half expecting to find men growing before his eyes, to gigantic proportions, or to find that he himself was shooting up like a rocket, raced across the palace sector, and out into the valley. As he ran he shouted:

"Orkus! Orkus! What's going on out here?"

But his voice could not be heard above the screaming of the Kalendish, and for several moments none of his subjects recognized their ruler. When those nearest him did, they flung themselves on their faces in terror, that they had not recognized him sooner. But even as they did so he could read a certain something in their eyes. . . .

His people were wondering if his own coming to power in Kalendar had not brought this on them. In effect, he knew it had. For had he not become the *Kalen*, and restored and caused to be restored, the

sanity of the principal scientists among the renegades, this ghastly thing which made them scream in terror would not be coming to pass.

There was a shout in answer to his call for Orkus, after his people had passed the word along:

"Orkus! The *Kalen* is calling for his commander!"

Kalen halted, frozen in his tracks, and knew the answer at once. Pedin had selected a victim for his proof of what he could do to mankind with his rays. He had selected the commander of the guard, Loyal Orkus himself!

Kalen heard the commander coming. Orkus had been leading the fighters against the beasts, and had driven them back across the wall toward Tagoland. Now, hearing his name, Orkus was coming back. But his voice came from high up!

In the pitch darkness Kalen could not see his commander, but he knew the truth. And the great voice of the commander was like thunder in the valley. It grew as the voice approached. And as it came it seemed to mount into the air, as though the sound itself were shot aloft. Orkus, returning to his master, was growing into the sky with ghastly speed!

The cry which Kalen had first heard had come from those nearest Orkus—who had seen him start growing. The cry had come from mouth to mouth, back to Kalen, traveling with the speed of which only bad news is always capable.

In heaven's name, what unimaginable horror was this? The sound of Orkus' voice, as he kept screaming madly, "Who calls Orkus to his master?" simply soared into the sky. The feeling that an invisible giant was rushing upon him took possession of Kalen. And his people, there in the dark ahead of him, were racing and screaming away from Orkus' shouting, as they had not fled from the beasts of Kalendar. What a horror it must have been for them, when one of their own number began to grow to Gargantuan proportions! It was enough to fill them with terror already, that the dim glow which always filled their valley by night had faded out, and that animals they had always trodden upon, unheeding, had become monsters they had been compelled to exterminate, with everything in their power.

Kalen began to feel the ground tremble underfoot. Orkus' voice, now high above the floor of the valley, broke into great booming laughter. And then, dimly, the monster began to appear out of the gloom. When Kalen hazarded a guess as to Orkus' height he could not believe it himself. Orkus was many times the normal height of Orkus, and many times his girth—and still growing. What such mad growth did to the human brain there was no way at all of knowing—yet.

But this thing that Pedin had done to Orkus, Kalen knew he could do to every human being in Kalendar if he wished—including *Jalu*! *Jalu*, the Golden, *Jalu* the perfect, could become a monster like Orkus. And if she retained her magic beauty the fact would but add to the horror of it.

**H**ORROR gripped Kalen as he saw Orkus marching. Orkus, looking down from his swiftly and constantly increasing height, used every possible care to keep from trampling his people underfoot, thus proving one thing more to Kalen: human consideration was not driven from human beings by the rays. Now and again Orkus stooped from his great height, and gathered up several people in his mighty hands, setting them aside in safety.

Now and again he moved this way or that, to keep from stepping into the canals and clogging them up completely. He moved through the edge of the fields of Kalendar, and smashed the trees flat with his great bare feet. His legs were vast columns, his arms were like trees from which limbs had been shorn—save that his arms were hairy, and the hair itself was almost like the limbs of trees.

“Ho! Ho!” cried Orkus. “Who calls Orkus to his master?”

“Orkus!” yelled Kalen. “Orkus! Do you realize what is happening to you? Listen to me! I, the Kalen of Kalendar, command you to listen. You are in deadly danger. There is nothing to stop your growth, save only the walls of Kalendar. If you grow until you fill the valley from side to side, and keep on growing, your own growth will catch you in the valley, like a great rat in a great trap, and you will die! It is your life that is at stake.”

Orkus paused, clearly hearing the voice of his master. His eyes gleamed as he looked down, and the gleaming eyes seemed actually to shoot up to greater height. Kalen could almost hear the fear in the ballooning body of Orkus. And now he had the ear of the giant Orkus, had made the monster afraid.

“What shall I do, sire?” he said. Perhaps he had not meant to speak loudly, but the result of Orkus’ voice, crashing against the great ramparts of the Andes, was a foregone conclusion. The walls themselves seemed to shake and tremble with the impact. Far down the valley a rock slid from the tipmost heights, crashed, into the valley, into the jungles beyond Lake Tahi.

“Go to the far end of the valley, Orkus,” said Kalen, desperately, his voice a squeak compared to that of Orkus, so that he wondered if the monster would even hear his voice, from among the rocketing, booming echoes of his own, “around the biggest bend in the walls, and stay there. If you continue to grow, try to see whether or not you can climb out of the valley. Not by the way that ordinary-sized people come in, but by the cliffs themselves. Perhaps, beyond the influence of the rays . . .”

Orkus waited to hear no more. The big man, understanding, and knowing that even seconds were precious, turned swiftly. Now, running away, he lost no time, wasted no precious seconds to guard against placing his tremendous feet upon the bodies of his own people. He simply ran to save his life, and his people made way for him, saving their lives if they could. Their screams of terror ranged and rolled and

echoed all through Kalendar.

And then, Orkus was gone, and Kalen, suspecting what might next happen, turned back to the village of Kalendar, his heart heavy in his breast, his fury against Pedin growing by leaps and bounds.

**T**HE Kalendar cleaners had worked wonders in the streets of Okka. Much of the mess of destruction had been cleared away, buried, burned, destroyed. Okka was livable again, or would be with a few more hours of work. Little in the nation seemed to have changed, except that the cold light still possessed the palace.

Standing before the palace, his face a mask of concentration, was Gared Dulon, the Primate, Jalu’s father. That the man loved his daughter Kalen knew. That his intelligence was worth calling into conference was unquestionable.

“The Kalendish folk,” said Kalen, “are swift, efficient workers. I am amazed that they completed the cleaning-up task so soon.”

“The beasts,” said Dulon, without turning his head, “dwindled to normal size after they died. A few minutes after. It took time for them to grow, time for them to dwindle. But dwindle they did—and all our people had to do was sweep up corpses with brooms. The corpses were thickly piled, that’s all, as though a horde of locusts had attacked the village of Kalendar. Now, sire, what shall we do? What do you think will be the next move of the foreigners you restored to sanity?”

Kalen winced, detecting reproach in the tone of Dulon’s voice.

“I am going to accede to the wishes of Pedin,” said Kalen. “He and his men have me beaten. And it means that the secret of Kalendar will be given to the world.”

Kalen raised his voice, calling to Pedin:

“I’ve had enough, Pedin! I’ll provide safe-conduct for you and your men, out of Kalendar, and beyond the reach of Erzpa, provided you will leave behind you all scientific observations you have made.”

No answer came from the palace. Not even Jalu made answer. That something was wrong was thus definitely and instantly proved.

“Answer me, Pedin!” bellowed Kalen. Dulon added his voice to that of Kalen. “Answer, Pedin! It is a fair compromise.”

But Pedin did not answer, nor did any of his associates, nor Jalu.

It was the palace itself which made an answer!

## CHAPTER VI

### Deep Aurora

**A**RROWS of light and pencils of light, speared out from the big globe of fire that hemmed the palace around. With them as they sped went a crackling sound, such as snow blink made against a cold and



starry night. Wierdly the pencils sped away, in all directions through Kalendar. As they went they made, each of them, and all of them together, the crackling sound, the most awe-inspiring Kalen had ever listened to.

They struck the jungles, like tiny streaks of lighting, and were gone. They struck the walls of Kalendar and seemed to stick there, like light-arrows driven deep into the stone by invisible bows in invisible hands.

Far down the valley sounded a shriek, as though a giant were dying in torment. It came to Kalen that it was the voice of Orkus, and he wondered how the giant died, and whether the shriek were the last the man would ever make. If Pedin caused the death of Orkus . . .

Kalen pressed forward, but the Primate, father of Jalu, would not approach the palace. Instead he turned and vanished in the direction of his own dwelling place, with little moans in his throat which seemed to Kalen to be moans of fear, and Kalen thought his Primate was running away to hide, because there had, tonight, been quite too many unbelievable things in Kalendar.

Kalen found that he could get closer to the palace than had hitherto been possible. If virtue continued to be lost by the light that globed the palace, and he could win through it . . .

"Jalu!" he called. "Jalu!"

But out of the palace came no sound whatever, save the crackling of the arrows of light as they sped here and there, and everywhere, through Kalendar. Kalen noted an odd thing as the light streaks sped away: they struck him, caromed off, or passed through him, yet they did him no harm. He could not even feel them.

Closer he pressed to the palace, when he discovered that he was somehow immune to the rays. Now he was mounting the steps of the palace of *Kalens*, calling out as he went to Jalu the Golden:

"What is happening? Are you all right, Jalu?"

And still no sound came from the palace, save the crackling of light. But near the great door that stood open, Kalen turned and looked back—to see a sea of faces as the Kalendish folk pressed forward behind him.

And over their heads, while he waited for the rays to diminish even further, so that he might fight through to the inside of his palace, he saw something that somehow struck hope into his heart. The geyser, miles away toward the village, erupted with a great roar. So much, at least, was returning to normal—though the geyser erupted to a greater height than he or anyone in Kalendar had ever seen it, as though it spouted its waters with all the force that had been dammed up since they had receded to nothing, through some necromancy of the scientists.

If the great geyser, out in the grassy plain, were also erupting, perhaps all Kalendar was returning to normal. But what of Jalu?

HE could stand the suspense no longer. He was going in, no matter what the rays did to him. The dome of light about the palace was growing slightly dimmer, but only slightly. It might take hours before the lights returned to normal, as the geysers were returning. He could not spend hours away from Jalu. The silence of the people within the palace was ominous.

He whirled, his back to them, to make the rush into the heart of the fire. In their eyes he had seen what he thought was accusation—accusation of him, that he was afraid, and he could not face it. Better to face the fires themselves. Into the thick of them, then, he plunged. Their heat seemed to rip the very flesh from his bones. Yet he did not fall, did not even stagger, as he felt the stones of the great hallway under his feet.

He swerved toward the door of the hallway that led to the wing that had been set aside for the scientists. As he did so, the bright glow went out in a room to his right, as light goes out when a switch is snapped off.

He hurried into that room, panting, looking about him for the glorious form of his beloved. But she was not there, and the room was empty. The fire seemed to have wrought no havoc on the divans, the tables. Everything was as he had last seen it.

Having lost Jalu to Pedin and his associates, because he had allowed her to walk to the palace ahead of him, to be captured, he was now intent, though his life be forfeit, on regaining her. There would be no life worth living without her.

"Jalu!" he called, his voice like a raven's croaking. "Jalu!"

But still there was no answer. Some of his breath regained, he tried again to breach the door, still guarded by the flames the scientists had spun around them as a fortress in which to make terms with Kalen. And here, for a minute or so, the fires held him back. Then with head bowed, as though he fought against a hurricane, he flung himself forward. It was as though he swam against a terrific current, fought a cyclone, or pushed against a mighty door that moved ever so slightly. The fact that he was not hurled back, that he did not drown, that the cyclone did not destroy him, was proof that he could win if he kept on fighting.

And keep on fighting he did, until he suddenly burst into a great room where there was no fighting, but only calm and peace—with all the sounds of Kalendar drowned out—and saw the machines, or some of them, that Pedin and his associates had made.

But only their wreckage, for Jalu the Golden, an angel of destruction in her fury at being held prisoner, had gone berserk among the machines. With a great club in her hand, a club that would have been heavy even for the hand of Orkus, she was laying about her. She brought the club down upon a domed, glass thing of huge proportions, in which tiny wheels were in motion—and in the instant the dome was smashed

asunder, and the wheels were ripped apart, and the delicate machinery was in ruins.

Kalen, seeing none of the others, whirled and looked back the way he had come. He could now see through the door of the palace, out of the wing of the scientists. Little by little, destroying the machines that Pedin had made, Jalu the Golden was releasing the power of the rays.

Kalen, smiling a little, did not interfere. Jalu, sensing his presence, turned and looked at him. But her eyes were filmed as though she did not see him. She turned back to her work of destruction, and Kalen followed her—from room to room as she moved, destroying the work of the hands and brains of Pedin and his associates.

**A**ND finally, when she was finished, and all the work of the scientists was in ruins; over all Kalendar everything was normal. The glow that came each night had come again. The geysers roared, as the great, hot, water-volcano erupted. Jalu, making an end, dropped the great club and ran to Kalen's arms.

He kissed, and was kissed by her.

"Where is Pedin?" he asked. "Where are Pedin and his men?"

"I happened to remember something," she said, "while they were holding me prisoner, and promising that dire things should happen to Kalendar and its people. There is a legend of Kalendar, a tale of a ruler of centuries ago—the very first chief. He discovered this place by accident, as he was hunting. And the place was guarded by monsters and great beasts. That the great pit was a place of gold, this ruler and all his people knew, because of the way it glowed at night. And so, it must be conquered. He caused a great cudgel to be hewn from the stoutest wood of the forest, and upon it he asked the blessing of all the priests of the time, the priests of his own people, the priests of the natives of this high land. And then he lowered himself into Kalendar, conquered it with his blessed cudgel, became the first chief, and named the place Tagoland. It simply occurred to me that whether or not there was any truth in the legend, a lot could be said for the persuasive qualities of a nice heavy club.\*

"So I got the club from the treasure room, and came to find Pedin and his associates. I am afraid I was

\*According to legend, fifteen centuries ago, an eagle left a baby boy in the valley of Tagoland. Later another eagle deposited a baby girl. This pair became the parents of the twenty noble families which comprise the ruling council.

Council replaced the Chief of the legend of the Cudgel. This chief, believing the radium to be gold, had lowered himself to the valley floor by ropes, fought off the jungle beasts and built a home. Some braves and squaws had followed him and from them descend the population of the nation.

The renegades of Tagoland are more obscure as to origin. Outcasts from the walled nation include explorers who have by chance climbed the tunnel during the one day each year that it can be freed of water. They also include convicted criminals, for Kalendar maintains no penal institution.

In addition the renegades of Tagoland include several thousand persons concerning whom nothing is known.—Ed.

a little coquettish, John! For one by one, I lured the men away from Pedin, and from one another—lured each one when the others did not notice. When each man came, I struck but once with the club."

"Jalu, you *didn't!* You didn't knock them out, one by one!"

"I did, John. I knew myself as the Queen of Kalendar. I also knew myself as a woman who wished to be back with her Kalen. And I couldn't be queen or wife while I was a prisoner of the rebels. I did what seemed to me to be the simplest thing. And when I had put the last one out of commission, I started work on their machines. The result you can see for yourself!"

Kalen kissed her again. Then, with Jalu as his guide he went, one after another, to the rooms where Jalu had outwitted the scientists. By the time they had been gathered together, Kalendar had returned to normal, so far as its nature was concerned.

Pedin, the only one of the scientists still alive, looked very sheepish and resigned.

"Pedin," said John Kalen, "I once asked you to make me a promise. I ask it again. Make it, and you may live and work again, though you'll be watched. I wish you to use the genius you displayed in enlarging the beasts, in harnessing the lightnings of Kalendar, to make Kalendar the Utopia men have sought since they realized that life, and the world, were far from perfect."

"The promise, Sire," said Pedin, bowing in all humility, "is freely given. But there is a condition . . ."

"And that?"

"That your Queen forgive me too, and try to forget the indignity imposed upon her. For I would be unhappy all my life if I knew that she could not forgive or forget. You see, Sire, even when I was sure that, with the experiment upon Orkus, we would force you to allow us to leave Kalendar, I was surer still of something else: that if I left Kalendar, never to come back, the eyes of Jalu would haunt me forever."

Jalu the Golden spoke, her voice like music.

"It is a glorious thing to be so appreciated by genius. I have already forgotten. I now forgive. . ."

The scientist dropped to his knees instantly, in obeisance to Jalu the Golden. Kalen, worshipping her as he did, awed as he would always be by her almost divine beauty, almost knelt to do her honor himself. But then he remembered that he was the *Kalen*, who did not accord honors, but received them. The thought made him grin. Jalu, sensing his delight, turned and looked at him. And perhaps she read his thoughts about honors given and received—and gave him the greatest within her power.

She rushed into his arms, that he might hold her close. The coming of Orkus—a puzzled Orkus, again of normal size—at the head of the palace guard, interrupted the silent embrace of the Kalen and Queen who, though they lived together until both were of a great ago, would always be lovers.

THE END.

# SHE'S COMING BACK...



## THE GOLDEN GIRL OF KALENDAR by Orlin Tremaine

The cupola of the palace seemed to hang above the square of Okka, though it was five miles away. It looked like the calyx of a great white flower—with white flame for petals. In the midst of it stood, like a priestess out of some olden time, when the world was very young, and gods mingled with men, Jalu, the Golden One, her arms uplifted, her face raised as though she prayed.

Angel Gabriel, Kalen thought, must look as Jalu's image looked at this moment. So distinct, in the midst of the glare, was Jalu, that Kalen could see every gorgeous curve of her, the lithe perfection of her limbs, the glory of her golden hair. . . . It was black magic!

Her voice cut through the sounds the beasts made, attacking Okka, even over the sounds of battle.

"Hear me, Sire! If you capitulate to the rebels, I shall cast myself down from this high place, into the heart of the flames! I would rather die than that Kalendar be less than what we both desire!"

Kalen, his face a mask of grim composure, turned to Orkus.

"You heard? Set the tractors in motion . . ."

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