

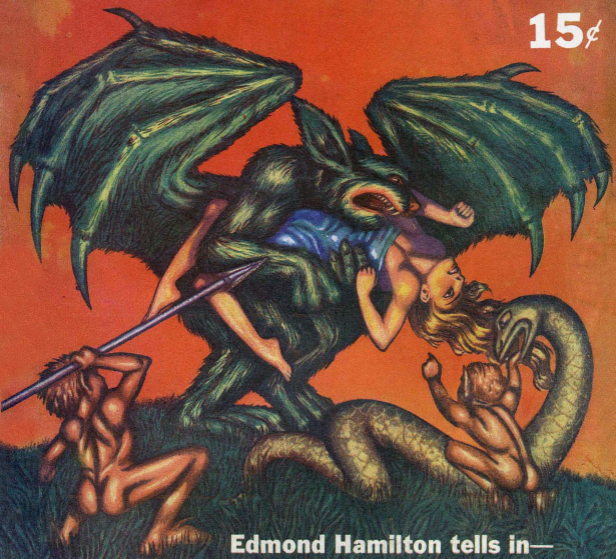
A tale of eternal Spring—and Vengeance—E. HOFFMANN PRICE

Wind in the Moonlight—GRETCHEN RUEDIGER

MAY

Weird Tales

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Edmond Hamilton tells in—

THE CITY FROM THE SEA

how a lost continent gives up its secrets

WEIRD TALES

MAY

1940



Cover by Hannes Bok

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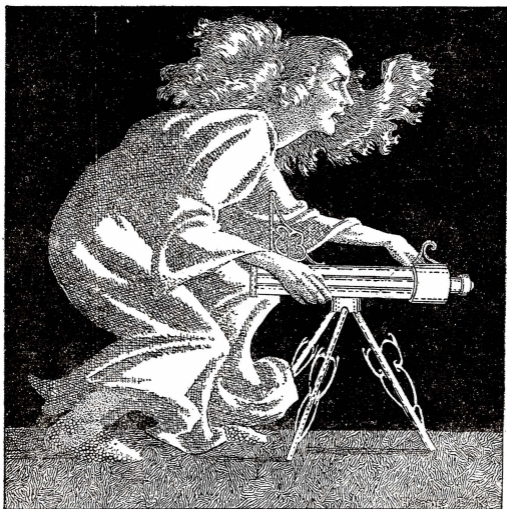
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L. McILWRAITH, Editor

H. A. PERKINS, Associate Editor



"Asam's terrific gaze was withdrawn for an instant, Lanac's hand darted toward the silver tripod and tube."

City from the Sea

BY EDMOND HAMILTON

The tale of a lost continent cast up by the sea, and the dread menace it held for the people of our world—a thrill-tale of startling perils and very events

KIRK WILSON came back to consciousness slowly. He was lying on the fore companionway of the yacht, drenched to the skin with sea-water,

and a litter of miscellaneous debris had washed down the steps onto him. He lay for a moment dazed, his head throbbing with pain, trying to remember what had

happened. The catastrophe had come so suddenly that everything was still mixed up in his mind.

The motor yacht *Estrella*, of which he was first mate, had been sailing smoothly over the glassy South Pacific when it had happened. There had been no warning at all.

A towering blue wall of water had appeared in the southeast, a mountainous mass of sea that rolled with incredible swiftness toward the yacht. Kirk Wilson had been racing up from the companionway to the deck, when that advancing wall of water hit the *Estrella* and flung it like a toy. Then he had known nothing more.

"Head must have hit the steps," Kirk muttered thickly, wincing from pain.

Then as he clambered painfully to his feet, he became aware that the yacht was tossing on big waves.

"Didn't sink yet, anyway," he told himself grimly, as he struggled up the swaying companionway.

When Kirk emerged onto the deck, he stopped for a moment, appalled by the sight that met his eyes. The ordinarily trim white decks of the *Estrella* were now a litter of wreckage. Canopies and deck-chairs had been washed away, boats had been smashed to flinders, and the wireless masts and the whole deckhouse containing the radio apparatus had been swept away.

The sea was running in high, leaden waves under a heavily overcast sky. The *Estrella's* Diesels were still throbbing, however, and the yacht was limping southeastward at reduced speed, bucking the heavy sea.

Kirk staggered toward the bridge. Its windows had been smashed out, but otherwise it remained intact. He met Sven Halsen, the big Norwegian engineer, stumbling toward him along the deck.

"Half the crew were swept away, sir!" cried the big man, his massive face aghast. "I don't know what——"

"How about Mr. Wade and his guests?" Kirk snapped.

Halsen jerked a thumb toward the stern of the yacht, where lay the owner's quarters.

"They're all safe, I think," the Norwegian said huskily. "They were all down in the saloon when it hit us."

Kirk hurried on toward the bridge where he found Captain Ross Whieldon and a scared-looking helmsman.

"Good God, sir, what hit us?" Kirk cried as he burst in. "A tidal wave?"

Captain Whieldon slowly turned toward him. The round, ordinarily genial red face of the captain was pale and stiff and strange, now. And his blue eyes had a queer, opaque quality.

"Yes, Mr. Wilson," he said in a thick, slow voice. "It was a tidal wave, caused, I believe, by some great subterranean disturbance."

Kirk stared at the captain. There was something queer about Whieldon—about the strange, stiff manner of his speaking, the set and staring expression on his face. Those cold, opaque blue eyes—they didn't seem to Kirk like Whieldon's eyes at all. They had something odd peeping out of them, something alien and chilling.

"Stunned yet, by the shock," Kirk told himself. Aloud he said, "Shall I take over for the time being, sir? You look rather done up."

"No, Mr. Wilson, I shall retain command," Whieldon answered in the same stiff, slow accents.

KIRK frowned uncertainly. Then as he glanced at the compass, the frown on his virile blond face deepened.

"Why, we're heading southeastward, sir!" he exclaimed, astonished.

"Yes, I just gave Trask the order," Whieldon said heavily.

"But we should be heading north, toward Hawaii!" Kirk cried. "There's noth-

ing southeastward but two thousand miles of empty ocean."

"That's what I told him, sir!" squeaked Trask, the scared-looking little helmsman at the wheel.

"I am commanding here, Mr. Wilson," answered Captain Whieldon stonily, his colorless face mask-like.

"But it's suicide to head that way!" Kirk protested. "We've no radio now to call for help, our plates may be strained, and we've lost half our crew! We should make straight for Hawaii."

"I say we head southeast," Whieldon repeated tonelessly. "If you continue to act in this insubordinate manner, I shall have you put in irons."

Kirk bit his lip to repress the boiling retort that sprang up inside him. The little helmsman, Trask, was looking at him in scared appeal. He felt like ordering Trask to steer north, and taking the consequences. But ingrained habits of discipline and obedience made Kirk control his impulse.

"Go aft and see to Mr. Wade and his guests," Whieldon was ordering in the same slow, stiff voice.

"Very well, sir," Kirk rasped, and then turned to leave the bridge.

At that moment, a queer and unnerving thing happened. Captain Whieldon's stiff, mask-like face suddenly quivered, worked, came alive! For just an instant, the un-human, alien mask dropped from his countenance, and the tortured face and eyes were those of Whieldon himself.

"Wilson, for God's sake don't——" he gasped hoarsely, then stopped.

"What is it, sir?" Kirk cried quickly.

But, swiftly as it had come, that change vanished. Whieldon's face became again the stiff, colorless mask. And his voice, when he continued, was again slow, heavy and dead.

"Nothing," he said tonelessly. "Go aft and see to the owner's party."

Kirk hesitated, his nerves quivering like

harp-strings. There had been something vaguely horrible about that brief resurgence of Whieldon's normal personality. But the captain's opaque blue eyes were now regarding him with that stony, alien expression. Baffled, Kirk turned and went down from the bridge onto the deck.

Halsen, the big engineer, had been peering into the bridge and had seen and heard. The Norwegian's massive face was knotted in a puzzled, fearful expression.

"Mr. Wilson, something's happened to the captain!" he burst out. "Why does he want to steer southeast? We ought to make a port as fast as we can."

Inwardly, Kirk agreed. But the age-old discipline of the sea kept him from voicing what he felt.

"Get back down to your Diesels, Halsen," he snapped. "I'll be down for inspection as soon as I see to the passengers."

But as Kirk hurried aft along the wreckage-littered deck, barking sharp orders to the stunned-looking half-dozen seamen who had emerged from below, he was still feeling the queer horror that had oppressed him during that moment when Whieldon had changed.

The wild, desperate appeal in the captain's voice for that one instant had been deeply disturbing. And there had been something dimly terrifying about the swiftness with which that appeal had been smothered by the return of Whieldon's new, strange personality.

Something had happened to Whieldon's mind—some deep and dreadful change brought about, in some fashion, by the sudden catastrophe. For just a moment, the normal man had triumphed in the captain's brain, and then had been smothered again.

KIRK reached the aft companionway and hurried down into the luxurious saloon, the living and dining quarters of the yacht's owner and his guests. Here

wicker chairs and tables had been flung crazily about, and soda siphons and high-ball glasses lay smashed on the floor.

Tony Wade, the young millionaire owner of the *Estrella*, came stumbling toward him. He had a nasty cut on his forehead, and his dark, handsome face was dazed.

"What was it?" he stammered to Kirk. "A hurricane?"

"Tidal wave of some kind," Kirk rapped. "Are your guests all right?"

"I—guess so," Wade mumbled.

Kay Marlin came running toward them. The girl's dark hair was in disarray, and her small, lovely face was pale, her brown eyes wide with anxiety.

"My aunt and uncle!" she cried. "Tony, they were going back to their cabin when it happened——"

Kirk started back with her toward the cabin corridor. But Wallace Marlin's aggressive, middle-aged face appeared ahead, coming to meet them.

The financier was half dragging and half carrying the unconscious figure of his wife.

"Aunt Edith?" cried Kay, alarmed.

"She's all right—just fainted," her uncle told her gruffly. "Get me some water."

Kirk Wilson turned. Now he located the other two of Wade's five guests.

Berty Merton, pudgy young heir of a great industrialist, was clambering to his feet from a pile of overturned chairs. His round, kewpie face was pasty with fear.

"Is it the end of the world?" he cried.

"Hell, no," snapped Kirk disgustedly.

He went to the corner where the fifth of Tony Wade's guests was sitting.

This was Linda Lee, whose golden beauty flashed from a thousand motion picture screens every night. She didn't look beautiful at the moment. She sat stiffly in the corner like a doll that had been flung there, and kept screaming monotonously in a thin, mechanical voice.

"Stop that!" Kirk ordered harshly.

She kept screaming, her dilated blue eyes not even seeming to see him.

He stooped and slapped her face hard. The action was effective in halting her hysteria. She stared unbelievably up at him, and then burst into a shower of tears.

"Are we going to sink?" Berty Merton was crying in panic. "Shall we take to the boats?"

Kirk ignored the pudgy, terrified youth. He turned to Tony Wade.

Wade seemed to be getting a grip on himself, and had bound his cut forehead with a handkerchief.

"Is the yacht hurt bad, Wilson?" he asked Kirk anxiously. "Can we make Hawaii?"

Kirk shrugged. "We could make Hawaii all right, I think. But Captain Whieldon is steering southeast."

"Southeast?" Wade stared uncomprehendingly. "But there's no land in that direction. Why should he steer there?"

"You'll have to ask him," Kirk said, tightly.

"I'll ask him," Wade declared. "Why, he must have gone crazy!"

Kirk followed the young millionaire back up on deck, Kay Marlin coming with them. Wade headed straight for the bridge.

WHIELDON was still there, staring stonily ahead across the leaden, heaving sea. And Trask, the little helmsman, was still holding the craft southeastward.

"Captain Whieldon, why the devil are we going southeast?" Wade demanded. "Turn around and head for Hawaii, at once."

Whieldon's stiff, strange mask of a face did not change. There was not even a flicker in his cold, opaque blue eyes as he faced the young millionaire.

"I am commanding this craft, Mr. Wade," he said heavily. "It is up to me to lay our course."

"Then I dismiss you as captain!" Tony Wade declared angrily. "Wilson, I am putting you in command. Lay a course for Honolulu at once."

Kirk Wilson, frowning, stepped forward. But he stopped, almost at once, for Whieldon had drawn a revolver from his pocket and was covering them all with it.

"Get off this bridge," the stiff-faced captain ordered tonelessly, "or I'll shoot."

Looking into the alien, opaque eyes of the man, Kirk knew that he meant it. Whieldon, the ordinarily genial, good-humored captain, had somehow become a cold, strange being who held their lives at no worth whatever.

"You're stark mad!" Tony Wade declared heatedly. "I'll——"

Whieldon's cold eyes were deadly in their complete lack of emotion. His finger tightened on the trigger.

"Out of here," he repeated stonily, "unless you want a bullet."

Appalled, Tony Wade backed out of the bridge and down the steps. Whieldon's gun swung on Kirk, and the young first mate slowly followed the owner. Trask, the frightened little helmsman, looked after Kirk with desperate appeal in his eyes.

Halsen and the half-dozen seamen had gathered together on deck and were staring worriedly up at the bridge. And Wallace Marlin and his fluttery, terrified wife, with Berty Merton and Linda Lee, were joining the group.

"Whieldon's gone stark, staring mad," Wade gritted furiously. "Only a madman would steer into the southeast, where there is not even a speck of land for two thousand miles."

"It's something worse than just madness," Kirk declared, frowning. "Something weird has happened to him. It's as though another personality had taken possession of him."

Halsen, the big engineer, nodded agreement, his massive face blanched by superstitious fear.

"Aye, he is a man possessed by a devil!" whispered the Norwegian. "A warlock has gripped his body——"

"Stuff and nonsense!" barked Wallace Marlin. The financier's gruff face showed disgust. "This talk of devils and warlocks is wasting time—I want to know what we're going to do."

"Wilson, it's up to you," Tony Wade declared. "I've put you in command."

Kirk spoke swiftly. "Halsen, go down and stop the Diesels. That'll keep us from being carried further on this crazy course, at least. Mr. Wade, will you get two pistols from the gun-locker in Whieldon's cabin?"

Tony Wade hurried off. Halsen was making toward the engine-room hatchway, when he was halted by a hail from the bridge.

Captain Whieldon, gun in hand, was looking down from the bridge door at them. His stiff, dead voice reached them.

"If you are thinking of stopping the motors—don't," he warned tonelessly. "If you do, I'll kill Trask."

"What shall I do, sir?" asked Halsen horrified, looking toward Kirk.

"Please, Mr. Wilson, don't stop the motors!" came Trask's pleading, frightened voice. "He'll do it!"

Kirk's blond face tightened. "We'll have to let the Diesels run. We can't sacrifice Trask's life."

Tony Wade came hurrying back from his mission.

"The gun-locker in Whieldon's cabin—it's empty!" he exclaimed. "And there isn't another weapon on the yacht."

"Whieldon must have thrown all the other firearms overboard, before the rest of us regained consciousness," Kirk muttered. "It's going to be a tough business overpowering him, without a gun."

"Count me out of it," quavered Berty Merton, his pudgy face pale. "I don't want to commit suicide."

"Why, Berty, wouldn't you fight to save my life?" Linda Lee asked the tubby young heir, astonished.

"Sure, let's rush the bridge now!" Wade suggested excitedly. "There's nine or ten of us to his one."

"This isn't a movie, Mr. Wade," Kirk snapped. "We'd half of us lose our lives if we tried such a stunt. We'll have to wait until night, then try it. Under cover of darkness, we'll have a chance."

"I'm afraid," said Kay Marlin unexpectedly, her small face pale. "There's something horrible and strange about the captain. He doesn't even seem human, any more."

HOUR followed hour, and the *Estrella* forged on southeastward into the vast Pacific. The high seas had steadily quieted, but it was still a leaden, desolate ocean over which they sailed. As the afternoon drew to an end, the overcast sky began slowly to clear.

Kirk watched the murky, blood-dabbed sunset that smoldered in the western heavens. Up in the bridge, he could discern the small form of Trask at the wheel, and the stiff, alertly watchful figure of Captain Whieldon.

What horrible thing *had* happened to the captain? he wondered again. There had been something in his eyes and voice that had chilled Kirk to the core of his spine—something alien and loathsome, the very proximity of which had sent cold ripples down the young mate's back.

He tried to shake off his dark oppression, and went down into the saloon where Tony Wade and his guests had gathered. The chairs and tables had been righted. Wallace Marlin was soothing his sobbing, fluttery wife, Berty Merton was drinking Scotch and soda with the moving-picture

star, while Wade talked in a low voice to Kay Marlin.

"It'll be dark in another hour," Kirk told the young millionaire. "We'll try rushing the bridge then."

Wade nodded nervously. "I wish to God I'd never thought of this cruise," he exclaimed. "If we get out of this safely, I'll confine my yachting to Newport and Palm Beach."

Linda Lee came up to them and asked Kirk anxiously, "We'll reach Hawaii before next week, won't we? I have to be back in Hollywood in two weeks, to start my new picture."

"Don't talk like a fool, Linda," Kay told her indignantly. "We may be lucky to be living two weeks from now, let alone——"

She was stricken to silence by the hoarse, excited yell that came from above-decks.

"Land ho!" Halsen was shouting.

"Land?" cried Kirk. "Why, there's no land within a thousand miles of here!"

He leaped to the companionway and ran up on deck, the others following excitedly.

Halsen and the excited seamen came running along the deck toward him. The big Norwegian pointed a shaking finger ahead across the sunset-lit ocean.

"Look, Mr. Wilson!" he cried.

Kirk stared. And he felt his brain stagger at what he saw. It was land, a long, low coast stretching squarely across their path, extending roughly north and south for many miles, as far as the eye could reach; a low, gray-green, steaming land from which heavy vapors were rising into the lurid sunset, and which was guarded by rocks and shoals on which breakers dashed ghost-white.

"Good Lord, we can't be seeing this!" Kirk cried wildly. "It's a continent—a whole continent here where there ought to be nothing but empty sea!"

"Maybe a mistake in navigation——"

Tony Wade started to say, but Kirk shook his head fiercely.

"No! I knew our position exactly, and the nearest land of that size is a thousand miles or more away!"

In the blood-red, murky sunset, the *Estrella* was moving straight on with Diesels throbbing toward the mysterious shore. Then the incredible explanation came suddenly to Kirk.

"This is a *new* land—a land that has just risen from the sea!" he exclaimed. "Some vast subterranean convulsion forced it up, and its emergence caused the tidal wave that nearly wrecked us!"

They stared incredulously at the low coast steaming in the sunset.

"That's impossible," Tony Wade said. Then his eyes widened. "But haven't I read somewhere that there was once a continent in the South Pacific, that sank into the sea thousands of years ago?"

Kirk nodded. "Geologists say there was such a land—the continent Mu, legendary seat of a great civilization."

"Then Mu has risen again, after thousands of years?" Kay Marlin whispered, her face white.

"I don't believe it!" snapped her uncle. "This is some land or island marked on maps. If it isn't, how would Captain Whieldon have known to steer straight toward it?"

The question struck like a cold whip across Kirk's excited thoughts. Its implications brought him a strange feeling of dread. Why *had* Whieldon chanced to steer straight toward this newly-risen land? Had it just been chance, or had Whieldon somehow known. . . .

THEY were sweeping closer toward the gray-green, steaming coast. Kirk saw that the yacht was heading toward a small cove that indented the shore, outside which lay a veritable maze of rocks and shoals, white with foaming breakers.

"Whieldon's going to take us into that cove," Tony Wade muttered, amazed.

"He'll never make it!" Kirk declared, his blond face grim. "No pilot could steer through those uncharted banks and rocks. Unless we stop him, he'll pile the yacht up!"

And Kirk started determinedly toward the bridge. He could see Whieldon up there, holding the wheel himself now and steering the *Estrella* straight toward the cove. Trask was crouching in a corner, terrified.

Kirk had gone but two steps upward before Whieldon glimpsed him coming. The captain turned and shot in a single movement.

The cracking report of the revolver was simultaneous with a white-hot pain that burned along Kirk's right shoulder.

"Stay back, or I'll shoot to kill," warned Whieldon's toneless voice. "And I'll kill Trask first!"

Kirk reeled back down the steps, holding his grazed, bleeding shoulder.

"We can't stop him," he rasped. "God help us when we hit those shoals!"

The roar of breakers was growing ominously louder as the *Estrella* plunged on toward the maze of rocks and banks outside the cove. The yacht, caught by swift currents, seemed to quicken its forward pace as though eager to rush to its own destruction.

In the crimson, smoldering sunset, the scene was appalling. The roaring white hell of foam ahead; the low, steaming, oozy land beyond, whose veils of vapor went solemnly upward like sacrificial smokes; and up in the bridge, the devil possessed, masked madman who was piloting them toward destruction.

Kirk gripped the rail and waited grimly for the catastrophe. Over the thunderous roar of breakers he could hear Linda Lee's screams. He was aware that Kay Marlin was holding tightly to his arm, and he

glimpsed young Merton's pudgy face, drained of all color, his eyes popping.

The *Estrella* pitched and plunged sickeningly as it was swept into the white hell of tumbling waters. Rushing waves screamed over rocks and exploded into white foam that hung in the air like smoke. Spray dashed and stung their faces.

But the shock of collision did not come. Somehow, by sheer miracle it seemed, the yacht drove on between the fanged rocks and shoals, almost scraping between them.

And suddenly it was through the breakers, gliding smoothly and serenely into the calm waters of the sheltered cove.

"My God!" cried Halsen hoarsely. "Only a devil from hell could have piloted us through that!"

"Shut off the Diesels!" Kirk ordered him. "The yacht's safe in here, for the time being."

Tony Wade was gazing westward, across the oozy, vaporent land that now lay on three sides of them.

"Look there!" the young millionaire cried wildly, pointing west. "A city!"

"You're seeing things!" Kirk exclaimed. "You're——"

His jaw sagged, his voice trailed to silence, as he stared westward where Wade was pointing.

Miles away, black against the smoldering sunset, stood out a cluster of strange towers; cyclopean pylons like slender, upright cylinders, crowned by flat cupolas. Distant and vague and unreal they looked, through the shifting vapors.

THERE was something so grotesque, so other-worldly about the appearance of those far, monstrous towers, that it struck them all to silence. Their faces wild in the red rays of the murky sunset, they stared and stared.

"A city!" whispered Halsen thickly. The Norwegian's eyes were dilated. "A city

that has come up from the sea with this ancient land!"

"Yes, a city of lost Mu!" cried Tony Wade excitedly. "Buried beneath the sea for thousands on thousands of years! Good Lord, we're seeing a place no human eye has looked on for millenniums!"

"I don't like it," faltered Kay Marlin, her brown eyes very wide, her small hand gripping Kirk's sleeve. "It looks unhuman, alien——"

"It can't be anything more than a heap of slimy ruins," Kirk assured her. He fought down the vague repulsion that he felt at sight of those distant towers, and added, "This will drive the archeologists crazy when they hear about it. And if——"

Bump! The shock was not a heavy one, but it almost threw them from their feet.

The *Estrella*, its motors dead, had drifted to the shore of the cove and buried its bow in the soft, oozy green mud there. The yacht now lay motionless.

They could look down over the rail onto the oozy muck surface of this new-risen land. Green, drying slime covered everything, and from it heavy vapors still rose silently into the deepening twilight.

Bodies of fishes and small sea-creatures lay in hollows where they had been trapped by the rising of the land. The heavy stink of slime from the oozy shore was rank and overpowering.

"Aground!" muttered Halsen. "Aground here on a new devil's-land from the sea, with no radio, no boats——"

"Here comes the captain," cried Bertie Merton suddenly, his pudgy face fearful as he shrank back.

Kirk stiffened. Captain Whieldon was coming down from the bridge onto the deck.

The captain advanced with stiff, heavy tread toward them. As he neared them, through the dusk Kirk saw that his face was still the weirdly stiff, colorless mask, that his eyes were still opaque and expres-

sionless. Yet Captain Whieldon's words, when he spoke to Wade, were placating.

"I'm sorry I acted as I did, Mr. Wade," he said tonclessly. "I guess I must have been out of my head from the shock."

Tony Wade seemed to breathe more easily, but his voice was angry.

"You certainly picked a fine time to go off your head, Whieldon!" he declared. "You've run us ashore on the coast of this God-forsaken land—have got us into a hell of a fix."

"I'm sorry," Whieldon repeated stonily.

"Well, Wilson is in command now," Tony Wade snapped. "And suppose you hand over that pistol."

Silently, without protest, Whieldon extended the pistol. Wade took it. Then the captain turned and without a word stalked heavily off to his cabin. They were all dumb, peering after him through the dusk until he vanished.

"Thank God he's come to his wits, anyway!" said Wade relieved.

"He's still — queer," Kirk declared tightly. "Something's still the matter with him. I wish I knew what."

"The warlock who gripped his body still masters him!" muttered Halsen in a fearful whisper.

Trask, the little helmsman who had been prisoned in the bridge with Whieldon, came stumbling toward them. His wizened face was deathly with terror.

"He—he ain't a man any longer!" Trask babbled incoherently. "I saw it in his face up there! We ought to kill him, to kill the devil in him!"

"You can count on me. I'd be for it," muttered Halsen.

"Are you two crazy — proposing murder?" rasped Kirk. "You're letting your superstitions run away with you."

"How are we going to get out of this cursed hole, Wilson?" Tony Wade wanted to know.

"Can't we get out of here tonight?" Kay

Marlin asked breathlessly. "I—I don't like this place."

"No chance of leaving here tonight," Kirk answered crisply. "In the morning, we'll get the Diesels going, reverse out of this mud, and if we're lucky, we'll be able to scrape back out through those shoals and steer for Hawaii. Meanwhile," he added, "I suggest you people get some sleep. We'll stand regular watches. I'll take the first, till midnight, and you, Halsen, the second."

Complete darkness had fallen. Passengers and seamen began to move silently toward their quarters.

"I don't feel like sleeping," Kay told Kirk, her face a pale, strained blur in the darkness. She gazed westward into the night. "Those monstrous towers——"

"Forget about them," Kirk advised. "There's nothing in a lot of old stones to harm you."

But when the others had gone, leaving him alone on deck, Kirk peered westward himself through the steamy darkness, his heart beating with increased rapidity. He felt engulfed by strange, swirling mysteries.

What could explain Whieldon's strange appearance and conduct? How came it that, as soon as the new land had risen from the ocean, Whieldon had suddenly become a stony-faced automaton who had guided the *Estrella* straight toward the newly-risen land, straight toward this cove, toward the dead city?

Kirk tried to force these things from his mind, to concentrate his thoughts upon the problem of getting away from here in the morning. But an hour later, when the moon rose and cast a pale white light upon the oozy plain, he was still staring westward toward the dim, distant towers, wondering and wondering. . . .

HALSEN appeared so promptly at midnight that Kirk guessed the big Norwegian had not slept at all.

"Is everything all right?" the engineer asked in an apprehensive whisper, glancing west through the unreal moonlight.

"Of course," Kirk answered. "Keep your eyes open, Halsen—but I don't think we've anything to fear."

He left Halsen peering fixedly west, where vague and distant cupola-crowned towers rose misty in the moonlight.

Kirk found it hard to get to sleep. He tossed in his bunk, listening to the slow, restless tread of Halsen, up on deck. The rank stink of slime from the oozy shore filled his cabin, was heavy in his nostrils.

He gradually drifted into a troubled sleep. And in his slumber, the feeling of oppression that had gripped him ever since the catastrophe deepened until it was like a dark, dank fog enclosing him. Out of that veiling darkness, there emerged to Kirk's slumbering brain a shape that swept toward him as though from remote spaces of dream. A human shape—or was it human?

It was a girl he saw in his dream—but not any girl such as he had ever seen before. She was subtly unhuman—yet beautiful. Silky, sea-green hair poured back from a face of elfin beauty. Not white, but pale green, was her skin. And out of that hauntingly lovely, hauntingly alien green face, two great, dark, purple eyes looked into Kirk's soul with vibrant appeal.

"Let me possess your body," she seemed whispering to Kirk. "I am Lanae—Lanae of the Firstborn. And unless I can possess a human body quickly, Arn will win!"

Softly, her mind seemed taking possession of his slumbering body. And frantically, in his dream, he fought that silent, subtle invasion.

"You must not resist!" Lanae's anguished, urgent thought beat upon him. "You *must* let me have your body——"

He felt his mental defenses going down before her. He felt his own mind, his own

personality, being crowded aside in his body by the throbbing, eager mind of Lanae. Then, on the verge of complete surrender, Kirk heard a shrill, distant cry. He sensed a frantic intensifying of Lanae's mental attack—but too late for her! For as that shrill cry was repeated, Kirk woke from his nightmare dream.

He sat up in his bunk, trembling violently, bathed in cold sweat.

"God above!" he whispered hoarsely. "Was it a dream?"

Then he remembered the cries that had awakened him. They had come from up on deck.

Still trembling from his weird experience, Kirk sprang out of his bunk. Unsteadily, he ran up the companionway onto the deck.

The moon was ascending toward the zenith. In its vague white light, the oozy plain of the newly-risen land stretched away in dim unreality from the cove where the *Estrella* was grounded.

Tony Wade was bending in the moonlight over a man who lay prostrate on the deck. Kirk ran to them. The prone figure was Halsen, and he was unconscious. There was a bruise on the Norwegian's temple.

Kirk's rough restorative measures soon caused Halsen to open his eyes. There was dread in them as he looked wildly up into their faces.

"What happened?" Kirk cried.

"Whieldon — Captain Whieldon," answered the Norwegian hoarsely. "He's gone— toward that city."

"To that city?" Kirk repeated. "Why did you let him go?"

"I couldn't stop him!" Halsen cried. "He came up on deck, his face still stiff and queer, his eyes still cold and strange. He started toward the rail. I ran to stop him, and he hit me with a crowbar he carried."

"I found Halsen unconscious, and yelled for help," Tony Wade added. "I couldn't sleep—came up for air."

THE others on the yacht had gathered hastily on deck while Halsen had told his brief story. And a gasp of horror went up from them.

"The devil that's got hold of the captain—it *made* him go out there, to that hell-city!" Trask cried fearfully.

"Nonsense," muttered Wallace Marlin, but the word seemed to stick in his throat.

Kirk's mouth was dry with sudden dread. He was remembering his own experience in sleep—the strange apparition of the girl who had called herself Lanae of the Firstborn, who he had dreamed, had tried to seize his body.

What if that dream had been reality? And what if that alienly lovely girl had seized control of Whieldon's body as she had tried to possess his? Was it she who had for some dark purpose forced Whieldon to steer toward this newly-risen land, and had caused him to go toward the distant city of towers?

Remembering the pure, subtly unhuman beauty of Lanae's elfin face, the eager, urgent agony of anxiety in her great purple eyes, Kirk could not believe that any dark purpose was hers. And what had she cried in his dream—that unless she possessed a human body soon, Arn would win? Who—what—was Arn?

"There's something horrible in that city," Kay Marlin was saying fearfully, gazing westward with terror-fascinated eyes into the pale moonlight. "Something that called the captain——"

"Can't we start the Diesels and try to get away from this devil's land now?" Halsen appealed hoarsely to Kirk. "Before we're all seized by warlocks like the captain?"

Kirk felt an almost irresistible desire to accede, to flee this haunted, mysterious land from the deep as a place accursed. But he forced himself to withstand the impulse.

"We can't do that," he rasped. "We

can't desert one of our party—can't leave Whieldon here to die."

"I tell you, he's not a man like us any more!" Halsen cried. "He's a devil!"

"Stow that talk!" Kirk snapped. "Whieldon was still out of his head from the shock today. He wandered off without knowing what he was doing—and we've got to go after him."

A murmur of dread went around the group of seamen. Kirk's hard face tightened.

"You're letting your superstitions run away with you," he rapped. "Our duty's plain. I'm going after Whieldon. Who'll go with me?"

Not one of the seamen answered. Their fear, as they peered through the moonlight over the oozy plain, was manifest.

"I'll go along, Wilson," Tony Wade said after a moment.

"Thanks, Mr. Wade," Kirk replied. "But I think you'd better stay aboard, with that pistol, just to make sure that these superstitious blockheads don't start the motors and sail off without me, while I'm gone."

The seamen dropped their heads sullenly at the lash of contempt in his voice. But none offered to accompany him as he stepped toward the rail.

Then Halsen seemed to come to a resolution.

The big Norwegian's massive face worked in the moonlight, and he stepped to Kirk's side.

"I'll go with you, sir," he said huskily. "I think it's suicide—or worse—but nobody can ever say I shirked my duty to my officers."

"Good man, Sven!" Kirk said, his tight face lighting in approval. He turned to the others, watching silently in the moonlight. "We'll be back in an hour with Whieldon, if all goes well. Whatever you do, don't follow us."

"I'm darned sure I won't follow you!"

declared Bertie Merton emphatically. "I'm going back to sleep."

"You'd better try to sleep too, Kay—Miss Marlin," Kirk told the pale, staring girl. "Everything's going to be all right, and we'll be out of here in the morning."

A ROPE was hanging from the rail at the bow of the yacht. Obviously, Whieldon had descended by it. Kirk used it now to slide down to the surface of the slimy shore against which the yacht was aground.

His legs sank into oozy, sucking muck to his knees. As Halsen followed him, he wallowed forward, following the deep tracks left in the ooze by Captain Whieldon. The trail led straight toward the west. As Kirk followed it, he found that Whieldon had gone with uncanny sureness along a path that avoided the deeper pockets of ooze. The muck was only up to their shoe-tops in most places as he and Halsen trudged silently ahead.

The scene about them was weird in the moonlight: the rolling, undulating plain of ooze, gray-green in the pale light, extending far away; the thin veils of vapor that still steamed solemnly upward around them; and the stench of the drying muck, malodorous in their nostrils, a rank, heavy exhalation.

Kirk glimpsed the bodies of larger sea-creatures, dead and drying where they had been trapped by the rising of the land. A giant squid, its ghostly white tentacles coiled around a slimy hillock; a long, black, white-bellied bulk lying in an ooze gully, which might have been a whale.

The lights of the yacht were no longer visible behind them. And soon, standing out vague and distorted in the white moonlight, they perceived the towers of the city close ahead.

A taut silence held Kirk and the big Norwegian as they followed Whieldon's trail into the city. Death and decay seemed

a tangible, brooding presence in this grotesque metropolis that had risen from the sea.

The cupola-crowned towers that looked solemnly down upon them were from forty to sixty feet in height. They seemed to have been built of huge stone blocks, but their dripping sides were still covered by green slime and trailing festoons of dank weeds. There were doors, ooze-choked entrances, in the sides of these gaunt structures, but the two men could see nothing in the dark interiors. They passed on, and Kirk became aware that they were following what had once been a long, wide avenue through the metropolis of towers.

"This place—it doesn't look as though it was ever built by men," whispered Halsen thickly.

"It is mighty queer architecture," Kirk muttered. "But it must be old—thousands of years old."

At the end of the avenue, a huge, slime-smearred stone dome rose squatly amid the grotesque towers. At its side, apparently attacking the dome's stone wall with a heavy steel bar, a man was visible in the moonlight.

"Whieldon!" Kirk exclaimed, with a little relief. "Come on, Sven."

"Look," whispered Halsen hoarsely, his massive face blanching in the pale light. "He's trying to get *inside* that dome."

Kirk saw, as he advanced, that the Norwegian was right. Whieldon was chipping away the stone wall around a circular metal door in the side of the domed structure.

"Whieldon, what are you doing?" Kirk cried as he and Halsen approached.

Whieldon whirled around. Intent on his work, he had not heard Kirk and his companion advancing.

He did not answer Kirk's question. But as he met their gaze in the moonlight, Kirk felt an icy horripilation of utter, gruesome dread run up his spine to his brain. Whiel-

don's face was now *completely* unhuman. That stiff, demonic mask out of which two distended black eyes swirling with malign shadows glared at them—no human face since the world began had ever looked like that!

In those glaring, alien orbs, Kirk Wilson read superhuman power whose hypnotic force made his mind stagger, and contempt and hatred that withered his courage like a killing frost.

"I told you he wasn't human!" yelled Halsen hoarsely. "Look—look at the devil in his eyes——"

"Look out!" screamed Kirk in warning.

Whieldon—or the thing that had been Whieldon — had suddenly produced a gleaming pistol, a second pistol, that he had retained when he had given the other to Tony Wade. He fired as Kirk yelled warning—and Halsen tumbled forward, dead.

With a choking cry, Kirk plunged sideways as Whieldon shot again. The bullet sang past his head. And he glimpsed the captain's demonic face, unhumanly distended eyes glaring as he sighted the pistol in deliberate aim for his next shot.

Kirk stumbled away in frantic, zigzag flight. Two bullets smacked into the muck beside him. And then he was around the curve of the dome, shielded for the moment from Whieldon's fire, his feet plunging madly through the sucking ooze.

IN a few moments, Kirk's mind cleared a little of the horror that had seized him. He slowed to a trot, gasping for breath. He was, he found, a quarter-mile now from the dome, stumbling between the brooding, solemn towers in the bright moonlight. Only when he reached the edge of the dead city, with the open ooze-plain before him, did Kirk halt, panting.

"My God!" he husked hoarsely, breathing in great, shuddering gasps. His soul was shaking from impact of black horror.

For he *knew* now that it was no mere madness that possessed Whieldon, but some black and unhuman entity that was using the captain's body as a tool.

Those terrific, glaring eyes, hell-pools of swirling, alien shadows — they had been devil's eyes, eyes of some being utterly alien to humanity. The dead Norwegian had been right—Whieldon was possessed by a demon!

Kirk looked wildly around him at the brooding towers of the oozy city, looming in the moonlight.

"A city of demons!" he whispered thickly to himself. "A city of demons from the sea!"

Kirk could no longer doubt the truth. Someone—*something*—had come up from the sea with this long-dead city of ancient Mu, something that had gripped Whieldon from afar and had through him brought the yacht to this risen land.

"The yacht!" Kirk muttered hoarsely, stumbling forward again. "Get away from here——"

That was the only thought in his horror-shaken mind as he ran unsteadily eastward, to get to the *Estrella*, to leave this hell-city from the deeps before they all succumbed to dark, malign attack.

Kirk suddenly stopped. A small figure was approaching him from ahead, coming rapidly across the moonlit plain. He waited, fists clenched, eyes wild. Then he gasped with relief as he recognized the newcomer.

It was Kay Marlin. The girl had dressed in breeches and high boots, and was running swiftly straight toward him, her face white and set in the moonlight.

"Kay!" he cried hoarsely as she approached. "What are you doing here? You've got to go back with me—we've got to get the yacht away from here, at once!"

"No, Kirk Wilson!" she answered quickly as she reached him. "We must not leave here yet."

Her voice was strangely changed. It was

no longer with her own accents that she spoke, but with a silver, clear voice as urgent as the peal of a challenging bugle.

Kirk stared at her face. It was Kay's face, but like her voice, it was—changed. Her nostrils were flaring, her features set with superhuman purpose, her whole small body rigid, determined. And her eyes were not Kay's warm, friendly brown eyes. They were dark, wide, purplish eyes astir with electric forces, eyes that met his and communicated to him the tangible shock of an imperious, blazing personality.

"Kay," he whispered incoherently, his heart growing icy cold. "You've changed—you're possessed too—"

He was shrinking from her now, shrinking with reawakened horror, with raw panic.

"No, Kirk Wilson!" she cried in that silver-stabbing voice, grasping his arm. "I who possess this girl's body am nothing evil to fear. I am Lanae!"

"Lanae?" he repeated wildly.

Then remembrance came to him, remembrance of that strange apparition in his dream, of the unhumanly beautiful girl who had endeavored to seize control of his body, and who had called herself Lanae of the Firstborn.

He remembered now that dream-image of her—the silky sea-green hair, the pale green, elfinly beautiful face, the enormous, dark purple eyes. It was Lanae's eyes that were looking at him out of Kay Marlin's face now! Eyes wide and throbbing, filled with a pulsing power, frantic with anxiety.

There was something ghastly about the thing, that Kirk shrank back with an incoherent cry. But Kay—or Lanae—held to his arm.

"You must not fear, Kirk Wilson!" she cried. "I mean no harm to you, nor to this girl whose body I seized as she slept. I *had* to have a body to use, if I am to defeat the evil purposes of Arn."

"Arn?" he stammered hoarsely, remem-

bering how she had spoken that name in his dream. "Who is Arn? And who are you?"

"I am Lanae of the Firstborn." It was Kay's lips speaking, but the tragic undertone of haunting memory in that silver voice was not Kay's. "My body lies sleeping in that great dome at the center of this city—sleeping beside the body of Arn. For he and I are the last of the Firstborn."

"But who were the Firstborn?" Kirk asked hoarsely. "You are not human—"

"Not human, no," Lanae answered swiftly. "Arn and I are the last members of a race that dwelt in the dawn-ages of Earth, before ever man appeared. That race, the Firstborn, attained to power and knowledge far surpassing any that man has won. For ages unthinkable to you, the Firstborn were lords of this Earth.

"**T**HEN evolved and appeared the races of man. They increased rapidly in numbers. They painfully won some measure of knowledge and civilization, and they established on this land the country of Mu. By that time, nearly all of my own people, the ancient Firstborn, had wearied of life and passed willingly to death. Only Arn and I remained of our race.

"Arn and I, because of our vast powers and illimitable wisdom, were looked upon as gods by the people of Mu. That great dome was our temple, in which we dwelt. And from it, Arn ruled the land of Mu with a rod of iron, for he thought these humans no more than groveling animals to serve his purposes. Yes, and Arn *still* thinks that, Kirk Wilson, and seeks to fasten his merciless tyranny again upon the race of man!"

Kirk gasped at the startling assertion, but Lanae continued quickly before he could speak.

"But I, Lanae, liked and pitied the struggling races of humanity. I taught the people of Mu many things, so that their

scientific power and knowledge became very great—far greater, indeed, than any human race possesses today. And I tried to persuade Arn to moderate the harsh severity of his rule, but he mocked and derided me because of my sympathy for our human subjects.

"Finally Arn's rule of the Murians became so tyrannically merciless that they would endure it no longer. They rose against us—yes, all the people of Mu came and attacked us, seeking to destroy Arn.

"I pleaded with Arn, 'Soften the harshness of your rule, and let us be the teachers and not the tyrants of this new race of men, and live with them in friendship.'

"But Arn answered my plea with a cold, disdainful smile.

"You were always soft-hearted toward these half-apes, Lanae,' he told me. 'They are fit only to serve us, and I shall never allow them to cast off my yoke.'

"What, then, will you do?' I demanded. 'They will never cease rebelling against you, now.'

"Arn smiled icily. 'These Murians have gleaned too much power from your teaching, Lanae,' he declared. 'I am going to shatter their civilization once and for all, so that men hereafter will not have power enough to rebel against me.'

"Then he unfolded his dreadful plan. He meant to loose vast geogonic forces beneath the land of Mu, that would cause the whole continent to sink into the sea, and thus destroy the civilization of the rebellious Murians for ever.

"And then we too shall perish, if you carry out that ghastly plan!' I cried. 'Or is it your idea that we should leave this, the ancient homeland of the Firstborn, and take up life in the other, savage lands?'

"We will not leave this land, and neither shall we die,' Arn answered me. 'We two shall lie down here to sleep in our temple, as the land sinks, and we shall sleep away a few thousand years in suspended

animation, beneath the sea. At the end of ten millenniums, I have calculated, the land will rise again, and then we shall rule the new human races, who will not have the powers and science to resist us which, thanks to your folly, these Murians possess.'

"Your plan is black and sinful!' I cried. 'We of the Firstborn have lived out our day, and the Earth belongs of right to these new human races. It were better that we two passed to death, than to slay all this people. I will not allow you to do it, Arn!'

"You cannot prevent me, Lanae,' Arn answered coldly. 'I still possess powers greater than yours.'

"And with those powers, Arn held me a helpless prisoner in the temple, while he made preparations for his dark scheme.

"Then, on a day that is terrible in my memory, Arn loosed the forces he had prepared. And the land of Mu began to shake and quiver, and slip downward into the sea. And as that subsidence began, Arn closed the door of the temple, and forced me to lie down in one of the two sepulchers he had prepared.

"THE land was shaking and sinking, as he closed the lid of my sepulcher. And then the gas inside it that suspends all vital processes overcame me, and my body slept. And for ten thousand years since then, my body has slept like Arn's, in the city beneath the sea. But my mind was free in that time—free to roam the wide universe.

"At last, after that vast space of time that to me seemed but brief, this land rose again as Arn had foreseen. But our bodies did not wake, for they could not wake until our sepulchers were opened, and that could only be done by someone from outside.

"Arn cast his mind forth and grasped the captain of your craft, and forced him to come hither, and to come alone to this city, so that he might force open the temple

and the sepulcher and revive Arn's body. And if he does that, Arn himself, in his own body, will come forth from that sepulcher, living and powerful, ready to impose his relentless tyranny upon your races, who have not the power to rebel that the Murians had.

"Yes, if Arn's sepulcher is opened to-night, nothing can save your world from that awful tyranny. And to prevent that black evil from happening, I, Lanac, in desperation tried to seize your body tonight as you slept. For only a sleeping man or woman, whose mind temporarily relaxes its rule, can be seized mentally by Arn or myself.

"You, Kirk Wilson, resisted and escaped my mental attack. So, but now, I seized the body of this girl as she slept. For I—we—must prevent your possessed captain from opening the sepulcher of Arn, or your world is lost!"

Kirk felt as though he were caught in a hideous nightmare, as he heard that dreadful warning from the girl's lips. Lanac of the Firstborn, daughter of a race preceding man, speaking to him through the lips of Kay Marlin, warning him of ghastly peril!

She caught his arm. "We must be quick!" she cried. "Even now, the man Whieldon whom Arn possesses may have opened the temple."

In Kirk's mind rose a wild desire to flee this hideous place and peril, to get to the yacht, to escape from this haunted land. But he fought it down.

"All right," he said hoarsely. "I'll help you, Kay—Lanac—"

Without further words, she grasped his arm, and started back through the slime-smeared city.

When they came into sight of the great dome, squat and brooding in the moonlight, she clutched his arm with fierce quickness.

"See—he opens the temple now!" she hissed.

Kirk stiffened. For ahead, he could perceive Whieldon, working like a madman, clearing away broken stone from around the circular metal door in the temple's side.

"In a moment he will have opened it!" whispered Lanac's urgent voice from Kay's lips. "He must be stopped—now!"

THEY moved stealthily forward. And as they did so, they saw Whieldon tugging at something beside the door. The door swung solemnly aside, with a grating rasp.

There was a shout of triumph from Whieldon—or from the creature who possessed Whieldon's body.

"Now—seize him!" came Kirk's companion's frantic whisper.

But at that moment, as though warned by more than human senses, Whieldon whirled around, snatching out his pistol.

The stiff, set face and devil-haunted eyes of the possessed captain widened in amazement as he looked into the frantic, purplish eyes of Kay Marlin.

"Lanac!" shouted Whieldon. And then hell-flames seemed to leap in his eyes. "So you seized a body also—you thought to thwart me even now?"

"I did, Arn—and I will thwart your evil plans." Kay's silver, unhuman voice flamed. "You shall not go forth to fasten your black rule again upon the races of men."

"Ho-ho!" laughed Arn in Whieldon's voice. "You are too late, Lanac! For I need only to slay this body you possess, and this human fool whom you have allied yourself with, and then your mind must return to your own sleeping body, inside your sepulcher."

The gun in his hand swept up, leveled at Kay's figure. And in that moment, Kirk dived wildly forward.

Arn, in his scorn for everything human, had underestimated Kirk's potentialities. He swung his gun toward the charging first mate—but too late. The bullet that spat

from it tore over Kirk's head, and in the next moment, Kirk had struck Whieldon's body and knocked him sprawling into the ooze. Whieldon struggled like a wildcat, driven by the unhuman creature who controlled him. It was not Whieldon he was fighting, Kirk knew, but Arn of the First-born!

But Kirk was stronger, younger, than the captain. He smashed in one wild blow after another, until one connected with Whieldon's chin. The captain's struggles ceased, his head lolled back senseless.

Kay came running up to where Kirk crouched panting on his unconscious antagonist.

"Bind him, quickly!" she ordered in Lanae's silver voice.

Clumsily, Kirk bound Whieldon's hands behind him with his own belt. He had hardly done so, when Whieldon opened his eyes. The black devil-flames in them were appalling as he stared ragingly up at Kay.

"So you think you have beaten me, Lanae!" he hissed. "You fool, you shall soon see!"

And then, before Kirk's eyes, a change came over Whieldon's face, an abrupt metamorphosis.

The captain's face lost that stiff, unhuman expression, his raging eyes lost their alien, dreadful expression. He was, suddenly, just the genial mariner Kirk had always known, lying and staring up at them, bewildered.

"What—what's happened?" he asked incoherently, staring wildly around the oozy, moonlit city.

"Where am I?"

"Whieldon, don't you remember anything?" Kirk said.

The captain shook his head dazedly. "All I remember is that big wave that hit the yacht. It knocked me cold, and I've had a nightmare—something about someone else inside my body——"

Kay's set face twisted in sharp alarm, her unhuman, purplish eyes widened.

"Arn has left this man's body!" she cried. "He knows we have this body a helpless prisoner now, and so he will try to seize another body! If anyone on your craft is sleeping, Arn can seize him——"

"What shall we do?" Kirk cried wildly.

"We must awake my own body, inside the temple!" she cried. "Once my own body is awake, in it I can destroy Arn's own body before he can grip another human, and his life will then be ended for ever."

"Why am I tied up like this?" Whieldon was asking dazedly.

Kirk bent to untie him, but Kay's small hands pulled him fiercely back.

"No!" she cried. "If you release him, Arn might be able to seize control of him again, even now that he is awake. Leave him here!"

She dragged Kirk to his feet, and through the now open door of the great dome-temple.

IT WAS absolutely lightless inside the structure. But as Kirk stood, unable to see anything, he heard Kay fumbling at the wall near by. There was a soft clicking sound, and strange, sourceless white light sprang into being inside the dome, illuminating its whole interior.

Kirk stared. The whole interior of the dome was a single vast chamber. In it was no ooze or slime, no trace of the waters that had for so long covered the city outside. The floor and curving walls were of smooth, pale stone, and around the edges of the room were stone chests of great size.

At the center of the enormous chamber was a low stone dais, and on it lay two big objects that flashed and glittered in the light—two oblong caskets of a glass-like, transparent substance.

Kay's hand drew him swiftly toward these. And as they stepped upon the dais,

as Kirk looked down into the transparent sepulchers, he uttered a strangled cry.

"It is *me* you see—my body, and in that other sepulcher lies Arn!" Kay exclaimed, in Lanae's voice.

In one of the sepulchers, indeed, lay the body of—Lanae! She was as Kirk had seen her in his dream, her slim and sinuously unhuman body wrapped in a silken robe of white, her pale green, elfin face composed and still in sleep, sea-green hair flowing back from her broad, low forehead.

Lanae of the Firstborn, sleeping as she had slept since the day Mu had sunk beneath the waves ten thousand years ago! But only Lanae's sleeping *body*, Kirk knew—her mind possessed and activated the girl who stood beside him.

In the other transparent sepulcher lay Arn. And Kirk shuddered as he looked at last upon the true face of the tyrant of ancient Mu, who had for so many hours possessed Whieldon's body.

The pale green face of Arn was dreadful; not hideous in outline, for its features were long, regular, almost handsome, but the thinness of those lips, the high, arched nose, the harsh outlines of chin and cheeks, the stamp of remorseless and merciless power on that long, thin face, were appalling. Arn, too, slept wrapped in a long white robe.

Kay's small figure had leaped to the coffin of Lanae, toward the head of it, where little metal studs jutted from the transparent material.

"Now shall I awake my own body," she declared. "And once in it, I shall destroy Arn's body before he can wreak more evil upon Earth."

She touched one of the metal studs, and a strange, rosy light began to glow inside the casket of the sleeping Lanae.

She touched another stud. With a thin hiss, air began to filter into the casket.

"In a moment," she cried, "my own body will awake! I shall leave this girl's

body now, and return to my own. Wait, and touch nothing."

"I'll wait," Kirk said shakently.

And then, swiftly, he saw a change come over Kay—a change as strange and unnerving, as that which had metamorphosed Whieldon.

KAY'S set white face softened, relaxed in outline. Her enormous purplish eyes contracted, changed color and expression. And abruptly, her face was the familiar, normal face of Kay herself.

Dazed, utterly uncomprehending, she stared from Kirk Wilson around the vast, white-lit dome.

"Kirk!" she screamed. "What's happened to me? How did I get to this place?"

"Quiet, Kay," he answered tensely, his arm around her quivering shoulders.

He was looking into the sepulcher of Lanae. And Kay's shuddering figure stiffened as she too perceived the incredibly beautiful and alien green girl sleeping in that casket. But Lanae's sinuous body was stirring, inside the sepulcher. Her arms moved in rippling little gestures, and then her eyes opened. Those great, purple orbs looked up immediately toward Kirk.

"Kirk!" screamed Kay horrifiedly, clinging wildly to him.

"It's all right, Kay," he told her tensely. And swiftly, in few words, he related what had happened. "Lanae is in her own body now, and she is going to destroy Arn before his mind can seize another human tool."

Lanae, in the casket, had stretched out her hand toward a stud on the inside of the transparent substance. As she turned it, the whole top of the casket suddenly vanished in a flash of light.

And Lanae rose swiftly out of the sepulcher, her white-robed body moving toward them with swift and sinuous grace.

Kay shrank from her terrified, and shuddering violently.

"Fear not, girl!" Lanae's own silver voice reassured her. And to Kirk she added quickly, "Now must I be swift. Follow me."

She led the way, with that quick, undulating graceful movement, toward the edge of the vast domed room, where the huge stone chests were ranged. Kirk followed numbly, his arm around the frightened Kay.

Lanae was raising the massive lid of one of the chests, as though it had no weight whatever. Inside the chest, Kirk Wilson saw a bewildering mass of grotesquely unfamiliar instruments and mechanisms.

"*This is what I need!*" pealed Lanae's triumphant accents, as she drew an object out of the chest.

It was a silver tripod a yard high, upon which was mounted a slender silver tube like a surveyor's transit. Quickly, her elfin face tense, Lanae turned the tube so that it pointed straight toward the dais where rested the sepulcher of Arn.

As her green, nailless fingers deftly adjusted control-screws upon the slender tube, she called a warning to the man and girl watching her.

"Now stand well off behind me," she warned, "for the forces I am about to loose are terrible ones. Yes, only in my own body, that can withstand the aura of such forces, would I dare use this instrument. If you humans are too near when I operate it, you will be withered and slain."

Kirk, dazedly obedient, drew Kay with him, away from Lanae, toward the rear of the vast chamber.

"A moment more," whispered Lanae tautly as she rapidly adjusted the control-screws, "a moment more, and Arn and his evil lust for power will be gone for ever—"

"Too late, traitress to the Firstborn!" yelled a hoarse, terrible voice from the entrance of the temple.

Kirk's gaze flashed toward the open

door. In it stood—Berty Merton, the pudgy, kewpie-faced richman's son whom he had left on the yacht. But it was not Merton's face that glared in unhuman, diabolical triumph at Lanae, as she stood frozen at her instrument. It was not Merton's eyes that flamed with demonic passion. That raging, alien face, those hell-haunted, flaming eyes . . .

"*Arn!*" cried Lanae, her elfin face wild and desperate.

"Yes, it is Arn, traitress!" thundered Merton, advancing. "You thought to slay me, destroy me, before I could find another body. But you are too late, for already I have seized the body of this sleeping human, and have rushed here in it to destroy you!"

Kirk's blood roared in his ears. He understood the incredible catastrophe to Lanae's plans.

Arn, releasing control of Whieldon's body when the captain was overpowered, had seized control of the sleeping Merton on the yacht, and had caused Merton's body to rush here to thwart Lanae's scheme.

Kirk plunged madly forward. If he could overpower Merton, as he had Whieldon . . .

Merton's chubby hand flashed up, and only then did Kirk see the knife the pudgy youth held. It flashed through the air like a beam of light, and Kirk felt a shock of blinding pain as the blade tore deep into him below his shoulder.

Kirk staggered, fell to his knees. Kay was screaming, bending over him. But Kirk raised his head, tried to gain his feet, and could not.

Merton and Lanae were facing each other. And the flaming eyes of Arn, in Merton's demonic face, were clashing with Lanae's purple eyes, holding her frozen with her hand rigid upon the silver tube of her deadly instrument.

Neither of the two moved a muscle. It was the deadliest of combats, silent, imma-

terial, a conflict to the death between two superhumanly powerful minds.

Kirk saw Lanae's blazing purple eyes *wavering* under the terrific mental attack of Arn—wavering, weakening, her hand dropping from the silver tripod.

INFERNAL triumph flamed up in Merton's distended eyes—triumph of Arn as he beat down Lanae's resistance.

Suddenly a hoarse cry stabbed from the door of the vast chamber. Tony Wade stood there, hatless, bleeding from a knife-slash on the cheek, his pistol raised toward Merton.

Merton's pudgy figure whirled sharply around at that cry from behind him. And as he turned, as Arn's terrific gaze was withdrawn from her for an instant, Lanae's hand darted instantly toward the silver tripod and tube.

A terrific bolt of blue lightning burst from the tube and hit Merton's chubby figure squarely, at the very moment that he was turning back, and his whole body disappeared in a flash of azure flame.

Kirk saw Lanae swiftly swing the silver tripod-tube toward the transparent casket in which the body of Arn himself lay sleeping. And another blue bolt leaped forth, and the sepulcher and body of Arn flamed and vanished.

"It is done," said Lanae in a strangely hushed silver voice. "The body of Arn and the mind of Arn are destroyed—for ever."

"My God!" choked Tony Wade, staring wildly. "What has happened here? I followed Bertie here—he'd suddenly waked up on the yacht and had gone crazy—had seized a knife and slashed me when I tried to keep him from coming to this city. But what——"

"A danger to humanity is gone," husked Kirk, swaying on his feet against Kay's trembling figure. "A hideous and awful danger."

Lanae spoke. She still stood beside the

silver tripod, and her elfin, alien face was strangely set, her purple eyes deep with unguessable emotion.

"I have destroyed the last of the First-born except myself," she whispered. "Yes, the last of the great race. It was well to do it, for Arn's purposes were evil. But now I am the final, solitary survivor of a vanished people."

She swung toward Kirk and Kay Marlin.

"Go, humans," she whispered to them. "Go from this city—swiftly. An end comes tonight to many things."

"But Lanae——" Kirk said hoarsely.

Her raised arm, pointing toward the door, silenced him.

"You have helped me loyally, man of the new race," she whispered to him. "If you would live—leave now."

Kay was urging him toward the door, supporting his reeling figure against herself.

As they reached the door, Kirk looked back. The white-robed figure of Lanae was still standing by the silver tripod. She was not looking after them, but was gazing at the dais that had borne the two sepulchers.

They stumbled out into the moonlight. Tony Wade hastily unbound the bewildered Whieldon, who still lay outside. And then all four of them hurried forward through the city of brooding towers, Kirk staggering between the two men.

They reached the end of the grotesque, slimed city, and stumbled on across the oozy plain. The moon was declining toward the west, now. In a few minutes they sighted the lights of the yacht.

And then a terrific light flared behind them, and a great burst of wind smote them. They turned. And Kirk cried out as he saw the whole city behind them wrapped in a blinding sheet of blue flame, like a sea of lightning.

The eye-aching blue flare throbbed for a moment, then vanished. And with it,

they saw when their dazzled eyes regained vision, had vanished the whole city from the sea, the towers and temple of dead Mu. There was only a great depression in the oozy plain, where the city had been.

"Lanae!" cried Kay. "She used that instrument to destroy the whole city—and herself——"

"Yes," whispered Kirk. "She was the last of her race, and she didn't want to live on in this new world. And she took with her into death the city where she and Arn ruled, ten thousand years ago."

The lights of the *Estrella* were bright, yellow, warm and friendly beacons ahead of them, as they stumbled on. And in the east, the sky was paling with dawn.

An hour later, its Diesels throbbing, the yacht had been reversed off of the muck shore. Tensely, Whieldon steered it out through the rocks and shoals outside the cove, Kirk sitting, his shoulder bandaged, calling bearings to him as he remembered them from the inward passage.

Then, after taut moments, they were clear of the shoals, heading northward across the open sea whose rippling surface stretched blue and peaceful to the horizon. The low, gray-green, oozy coast receded rapidly behind them.

"The whole world will be coming down here to look at this new land from the sea," Tony Wade declared. "But they'll never, any of them, believe when we tell what happened here."

"We won't ever tell them—it would be useless," Kirk Wilson answered. "We can only say that we ran aground here, and that Halsen and Merton lost their lives in an accident ashore. We'll have to forget all the rest."

Kay, sitting close beside Kirk, turned her wide eyes from the receding coast, and with a shiver, pressed her dark head against his unhurt shoulder.

And the yacht throbbed on toward the north, over a tranquil sea turned golden by the light of the rising sun.