



# DEAD MEN LIVE

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## CHAPTER I. A MAN WITH A MESSAGE

THE glaring headlight of the big locomotive came to a slow stop as the West Shore Express pulled into the Weehawken Terminal. A station attendant pulled open the exit gate. Dim figures of alighting passengers appeared upon the platform and became an advancing throng. The attendant idly watched the approaching group.

Two men were standing a short distance from the gate. Away from the glimmer of the locomotive headlight, they were obscure and unnoticed. Like the attendant, they were watching the people coming down the platform.

"He'll be here in half a minute, Jake," said one in an undertone. "We've got to spot him the second he shows up. Right on the ferry with him."

"I got you, Biff," was Jake's reply.

The two men waited. Although they were tense, neither one appeared excited. This was not surprising. Watching for a passenger coming from a train was no great task for "Biff" Towley and his fellow watcher, Jake Bosch. For Biff Towley was one of the craftiest mobsmen in all New York, and his companion was his counterpart.

A tall, youthful man came through the gate with the last of the passengers leaving the Express. Biff Towley nudged his companion.

Both men seemed to be disinterested bystanders as the tall passenger glanced nervously in their direction. But as the young man continued toward the ferry, the two self-effacing gangsters swung along behind him.

"It's Louis Steffan, all right," whispered Biff Towley. "Separate when we reach the boat. You stay ahead of him. I'll be in back."

Jake Bosch grunted his agreement.

In the ferryboat, Louis Steffan continued through to the front deck. There, he leaned against the rail and stared across the light-studded waters of the Hudson.

He fumbled in his pocket and drew forth a cigarette. He lighted it with trembling hand. As he raised the match toward his face, Steffan did not notice another man who leaned upon the rail close beside him. It was Jake Bosch.

THE gangster threw a sidelong glance toward Steffan. He could see the pallor of the young man's face; the twitching of his lips, the blinking of his eyelids. Then the match dropped over the rail and Steffan's face became a white blur in the darkness as the ferry slid from its slip.

Jake Bosch drew back as Louis Steffan nervously threw the cigarette into the river and started toward the front gate of the ferry. As Steffan paused there, Jake turned and sauntered idly into the cabin where he stood within the door. Biff Towley was seated close at hand. No one else was near.

"He looks nervous, Biff," said Jake, in a low tone.

"He ought to," came the reply, with an easy, ugly laugh. "Keep ahead of him on the other side. I'm sticking close with him. Remember one of us has got to point him out!"

Jake nodded and went back on deck.

The water was churning as the ferry approached the slip on the New York side. The myriad lights of Manhattan were blotted as the boat came close to the roof of the ferryhouse.

When the gate was opened, Louis Steffan was one of the first to leave. He saw nothing suspicious in the form of Jake Bosch, walking swiftly ahead. Nor did he notice the idling shape of Biff Towley, who was strolling on behind him.

Louis Steffan stopped at a row of phone booths. He fumbled nervously through the pages of the Manhattan directory. Biff Towley, a few feet away, smiled grimly. He stepped into one of the telephone booths and held a nickel poised above the slot.

Louis Steffan's finger was checking a name. He had found what he desired - the telephone number of Clark Murdock. He moved toward the phone booths.

As he approached, Towley's nickel clicked and the gangster dialed Barmont 4-9356.

A strange coincident! That was the very number that Steffan had noted in the book.

Biff Towley was talking in a low, quiet voice when Louis Steffan began to dial. Listening at the receiver, Steffan heard the clang-clang of the busy signal. He hung up the telephone and waited.

Biff Towley was still talking when Steffan dialed again. Once more, he caught the busy signal.

Louis Steffan stepped from his phone booth and glanced nervously at his watch. He walked hurriedly away.

Biff Towley, seeing him through the window of the booth, quietly ended his conversation and stepped from the compartment. He saw Steffan's tall form going through the door to a taxi stand. When Biff reached the spot, two cabs were drawing away. Neither Louis Steffan nor Jake Bosch were in sight.

Biff Towley grinned and walked eastward on Forty-second Street.

LOUIS STEFFAN had taken the first cab he had seen at the stand. He had given the address of Clark Murdock - which he had noted in the phone book. Now riding uptown, the young man was highly perturbed.

He had come to New York with a definite purpose - to communicate with Clark Murdock. Until he had reached the Manhattan ferry terminal, he had gained no opportunity. That phone call with the busy signal, had been a waste of time. Steffan was waiting no longer. He was going directly to the man who he wished to see.

As the cab stopped at a traffic light, Steffan pulled a notebook from his coat pocket. He scanned the pages of shorthand notations that he had made.

The recollection of the risk he had run to get them made him shudder. He pictured himself listening at the door of the room where two men had been talking; and to Steffan's blinking eyes came a vivid portrait of one of the speakers.

Ivan Orlinov! The name was inscribed among the notes. Steffan shut his eyes as the cab jerked forward. In fancy he saw a shrewd, bearded face - the countenance of a demon!

Steffan clenched his fists. Ivan Orlinov was everywhere, it seemed! He opened his eyes and blinked at the lights of the avenue, as the vision faded.

He laughed a hoarse, nervous laugh. He was safe, here, with all these lights. Safe in New York, with Orlinov miles away. He tried to feel at ease and gradually his qualms ended. Reason told him that there was no danger for the present. The immediate task was to deliver his message to Clark Murdock.

Steffan glanced at his watch. It was ten minutes after nine. There was menace here in New York - but it threatened another man. Steffan alone could thwart it - for he, alone, knew the secret.

He was sure that nothing could happen until ten o'clock. Fifty minutes yet - and now the cab was swerving from the avenue. One block - two blocks - the taxi stopped in the center of the third. Steffan was ready with the fare.

Thrusting his notebook in his pocket, the young man alighted and stood upon the sidewalk while the cab rolled away.

It was a somber neighborhood. The night was gloomy with overcasting clouds, and in this obscure part of Manhattan, the old buildings seemed like tombs. The number of this old house reflected by the light

behind the transom, showed dimly above the door.

Louis Steffan had reached the home of Clark Murdock.

STEFFAN glanced up and down the street before he went toward the steps. He saw a car parked half a block away. Its lights were off and he gave it no second thought. Impulsively, he turned to approach the steps. As he did, he sensed a man beside him.

An exclamation froze on Steffan's lips. The stranger who had closed upon him was a short, stocky man; and in his hand was the glimmer of steel. The muzzle of a revolver pressed against Louis Steffan's ribs.

"Move along," came a harsh, cold voice. "One peep out of you and you get the works. Savvy?"

Trembling, Louis Steffan allowed himself to be forced along the street - away from the house he had sought - away from the one place that offered safety. The parked car was moving slowly toward him. Shivering, with the pressure of the gun against his back, the young man faltered forward at his captor's bidding.

The low-lying car met them, twenty yards from the house. It was a sedan and the rear door opened as the automobile arrived beside Steffan and the man who guarded him.

Within the sedan, Louis Steffan saw the vague form of another enemy. There, as before, he caught the glimmer of a revolver.

A nudge from his captor and Steffan stepped into the car. He huddled back upon the cushions, his hands raised piteously as his frightened, staring eyes saw the second revolver covering him.

"Get going," said the man on the curb.

"Right, Jake," came the growl of Louis Steffan's new guard.

The first captor closed the door. The car pulled away. Louis Steffan was going for a ride.

JAKE BOSCH laughed as he saw the sedan disappear around the nearest corner. He gave his revolver a twirl and pocketed it in a leisurely manner.

He strolled along the street to the corner in the opposite direction. There, he walked calmly past a uniformed policeman and turned down the avenue. He reached a drug store on the next corner and entered a phone booth. A minute later, he was talking to Biff Towley.

"O.K., Biff," said Jake, tersely. "The boys were waiting. They've gone away - with a passenger."

"You were there first?" came the voice of Biff.

"I was near there first," replied Jake. "Made good time in my cab. Got out a block away. Walked down to the house and dropped out of sight when our friend came along."

"Good work, Jake. See you later. I've got another call to make."

Leaving the drug store, Jake Bosch returned along the block past Clark Murdock's home. He grinned as he passed the house where he had made his capture. He continued on at a leisurely gait. His job was finished.

Hardened underling of a calloused gang leader, it was Jake Bosch's duty to obey orders, without knowing why. Tonight's business was a mystery to him.

Biff Towley had stationed mobsmen in the car near Murdock's home and had taken Jake with him to Weehawken to intercept Louis Steffan - a man of whom Jake had never before heard.

Jake had done other jobs like this one. He was the skilled pilot who steered victims to waiting automobiles. Where they went or what happened to them was a matter of no concern to Jake Bosch.

He felt no interest or sympathy for Louis Steffan. That young man was merely another on the list of those whom Biff Towley had chosen to obliterate.

So Jake forgot the entire matter as he headed for his favorite nightclub, a haunt where bright lights and gaudy women lured. He did not realize that tonight he had played a vital part in the schemes of men craftier than Biff Towley.

For Louis Steffan had brought a singular message to New York. Had he delivered it, he might have frustrated the progress of strange and incredible crime. But he had failed - he who alone had gained an inkling of a fiendish plot.

Up in the Bronx, the death car was stopped beside a deserted lot. A muffled shot - a dying gasp - and all was over. The door opened and the body of Louis Steffan tumbled from the sedan. The car traveled on its way.

Then from the lowered window fluttered fragments of paper, which scattered widely in the breeze as the car swept homeward toward Manhattan. Louis Steffan's shorthand notes were meeting with destruction.

The man with the message was dead - and his message was gone forever. To the police, it would be another gangland killing. By the time that Louis Steffan's body was found and his empty pockets searched, the unknown crime would be accomplished!

## **CHAPTER II. A STRANGE DISCOVERY**

"Step into the laboratory, gentlemen. My demonstration is ready."

The speaker was a stoop-shouldered, gray-haired man of fifty years. He was garbed in a white gown. He was addressing a group of keen, intelligent-looking men who were seated in a little living room.

This man, to whom the others gave close and respectful attention, was Clark Murdock, whose chemical experiments had gained him an envied reputation

The men arose and followed the chemist into his laboratory. It was the rear room on the second floor of Murdock's old house. He had chosen this secluded spot, away from the main arteries of Manhattan, that he might conduct his experiments without disturbance.

Murdock's laboratory was a remarkable place. It contained shelves of bottles, long tables strewn with appliances and pieces of oddly assorted machinery. His guests looked about them with interest, and the chemist smiled as he saw their wondering glances.

These men had come to see a practical demonstration of his new experiments in atomic disintegration. Clark Murdock had made some remarkable discoveries, but he realized that few of his visitors would understand their full significance.

Motioning the men to chairs, Murdock gazed about him with the air of an instructor about to address a class. He waited until silence had been obtained; then stared at his solemn-faced assistant in the corner.

"You may go, Stevens," he said, brusquely.

"Yes, sir," said the man, with a slight bow. "Do you wish me to wait until the truckmen come, sir?"

"That's right," declared Murdock, with a nod. "They were to return for that box they brought here by mistake. I shall attend to that, Stevens. You left it by the elevator, did you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well. I shall answer their ring. Good night, Stevens."

The solemn assistant left the laboratory and Murdock again smiled at his guests.

"Stevens is a good assistant, gentlemen," he said, quietly. "He knows nothing. That is much better than knowing too much - as some assistants do."

The others laughed at the chemist's witticism. Murdock looked about the group. He noted two men who impressed him more than any others. They were seated side by side.

One was Doctor Gerald Savette, a keen-visaged man who stood high in his profession. The other was Lamont Cranston, a wealthy millionaire, who was a likely investor in promising inventions.

CLARK MURDOCK, despite his querulous disposition, had an eye to business. He was looking for financial aid in his present experiments, and it had occurred to him that Savette's approval would bring Cranston's interest. Hence it was upon these two that he centered his discourse.

"It is nearly ten o'clock," he said. "For two hours I have been discussing the value of atomic disintegration as a source of tremendous power. In that time, I have endeavored to fully outline the principles that are involved in this great subject. You have been patient, gentlemen - now I shall reward you with the actual demonstration."

Murdock went to a covered table near the center of the room. He drew aside the cloth to disclose a hollow sphere of glass. This globe, which measured more than a foot in diameter, was mounted upon a base of metal.

"Watch," said Murdock, quietly.

He pressed a switch and a motor began to hum. Tiny sparks appeared within the globe. Then came quick soundless bursts of flame as invisible particles broke asunder.

"Atomic action," spoke the white-haired chemist.

The activity within the hollow sphere seemed like warfare in miniature. The onlookers stared in fascination, while Clark Murdock stood aside, watching the expressions on their faces.

When the chaos had reached its height and the globe seemed ready to break apart, Murdock again pressed the switch. The terrific commotion continued for a few minutes, then gradually ceased. The witnesses gazed at one another in amazement.

"That," declared Clark Murdock, "is a perfect demonstration of my discovery. You have seen the results of atomic disintegration conducted in a vacuum. Now imagine, gentlemen" - the chemist's face took on a visionary stare - "the same activity on a much larger scale - within a steel-walled chamber. There is power here that surpasses all dreams -"

He stopped suddenly as he heard the sound of a telephone bell in another room. Carefully, Murdock disconnected the apparatus and went from the laboratory. He returned in a few minutes and spoke to

Doctor Savette.

"You are wanted on the telephone, doctor," he said.

The physician went into the other room. When he returned a short while afterward he found Murdock again explaining the important points of his discovery.

"I have learned the secrets of the atom," the chemist was saying. "More than that, I have discovered a method of atomic control. Within a few months, I shall have complete success.

"As some of you have remarked, I do run a risk in my experiments; but that risk is in the interests of science. Often, I have been tempted to let the electric charge continue until the last possible moment; but I have always resisted that temptation."

He paused and smiled wanly at his listeners.

"Here, in this laboratory," he said, "a bursting of the crystal sphere would prove disastrous. The atomic energy would be quickly dispelled, but it might start explosions among certain of the chemicals you see upon these shelves and benches.

"Twice I have barely prevented fires, here. I have never been able to obtain insurance, and I have chosen this obscure place because there are comparatively few neighbors who could be harmed should things go wrong."

"It would mean a great loss to science," someone remarked. "You should be careful -"

"I must be careful of myself, yes," replied Murdock. "All the apparatus which you see here could all be replaced with ease - under my supervision. I carry all my plans here" - he tapped his forehead significantly - "and while my brain exists, these results can always be obtained.

"But it is a fact, gentlemen, that should I die, my discoveries would be lost. I do not say forever - for what one has learned, another may learn. But I do say that there is no other man alive who could duplicate what you have seen tonight!"

There was no braggadocio in Murdock's manner as he looked about the group. He had the air of a man who has stated a simple fact. This was not lost upon the visitors. They knew that they had heard the truth.

Doctor Savette advanced with out-stretched hand. Clark Murdock received his clasp.

"Let me congratulate you, Mr. Murdock," said the physician. "This is the most remarkable demonstration that I have ever witnessed. I predict the highest success. You have proven the value of your discoveries."

The man who had harnessed the atom beamed at these words of approval. The others of the group were visibly impressed by Doctor Savette's enthusiasm.

"My only regret," declared Doctor Savette, "is that I must leave you now. This second telephone call was more urgent than the first that I received tonight. I shall look forward to your next demonstration with eagerness, Mr. Murdock."

Good night, doctor," said Murdock warmly. "It has been a privilege to have you here. Upon your next visit, I shall show you how atomic energy works. By then I expect to have a globe of steel in which the atoms will explode to furnish driving power which can be utilized."

Doctor Savette shook hands with the other men in the group and left the laboratory. Murdock continued with his discussion; then evidenced that his demonstrations were finished for the night. He ushered his guests from the laboratory.

"I shall continue to work tonight," he said as the visitors departed. "I work best when I am alone."

BACK in his laboratory, Clark Murdock sat down and smiled thoughtfully. He was pleased with tonight's results. Doctor Savette had been commending. Lamont Cranston and the others who had gone with him had also expressed their approval.

The chemist looked about the laboratory and gazed at the crystal sphere. Then his thoughts changed and he arose suddenly to step toward a door at the far corner of the room.

He had remembered that two truckmen were coming to remove a huge box that they had left that afternoon. They had called up immediately afterward to state that there had been a mistake. Another box should have been brought instead. It would be delivered later; in the meantime, the men would come to take away the original box.

Murdock wondered why the men had not yet arrived. He reached a small room outside his laboratory. On one side was a flight of stairs leading to the ground floor. Straight ahead was the elevator which had been installed for the lifting of heavy apparatus. The box was pushed in a corner near the elevator.

The chemist shouted down the stairway. There was no response. Evidently the expected men were still on their way.

Murdock started back toward the laboratory. Then, suddenly curious, he stopped to look at the box. It was a large, oblong contrivance. It was set on end, and the front of the box was hinged, like a door.

Murdock studied the box. He could see no address upon it. He wondered if the truckmen had actually made a mistake. This box was twice as large as the one he had expected, nevertheless, it might contain the apparatus that was coming.

The chemist saw a heavy hammer hanging on the wall. His curiosity increased. He suddenly decided to open the box and view its contents.

Prying the front of the box with the hammer, Murdock gradually loosened the side which was securely nailed. He gained an opening for his fingers and tried to pull open the front.

It was not an easy task, for the nails were still partly in position. But Murdock kept on at the work, resolved to complete it.

The box tilted forward as the chemist pulled at it. Then, at an unexpected moment, the door-like front yielded. Clark Murdock staggered backward and caught himself before he fell

Then, leaning against the wall, he stared in utter bewilderment at an object that tumbled from the box and flattened upon the floor.

It was the form of a man - a lifeless, inert shape, that lay in a twisted, huddled pose. It was a man clad in white - a man with gray hair - whose shoulders were hunched up against his neck.

Clark Murdock plucked his own coat with his hands. His garb and that of the dead man were identical. More than that, the size and shape of that body were the same as the chemist's own form!

Stepping slowly forward, Murdock bent down and-lifted the body back toward the box. He noted that



the interior of the wooden case was thickly padded to prevent its contents from being tossed about.

But the chemist gave no second thought to that matter. He was interested in this form on the floor, with its bent-down head.

He turned the body sideways to get a glimpse of the face. The light was dim, here in the landing of the stairway. Yet even in the gloom, Clark Murdock saw a sight that startled him

His hands were holding the lifeless head. He was staring at the features of this person who had been the victim of some foul play. The sight of the features filled him with amazement.

For Clark Murdock was looking at a countenance which he could not fail to recognize. The face of the dead man was almost an exact counterpart of his own!

### **CHAPTER III. A VISITOR RETURNS**

WHEN Clark Murdock recovered from his bewilderment that followed his strange discovery, he stood with his chin resting in one hand and surveyed the body on the floor before him.

A keen analyst, Murdock sought to fathom the mystery that lay here. But his mind was schooled to chemistry, not crime. The longer he surveyed the gruesome form, the more did he become perplexed.

He was tempted at first to replace the body in the box and inclose it so that it could be taken away when the truckmen came. Then the thought occurred to him that the men were long overdue, that in all probability they had been instructed not to come back for the box.

The upshot was that Clark Murdock had in his possession the dead body of an unknown man, whose garb and features were characteristic of his own. This was something that seemed too amazing to be merely coincidence.

What should he do? Call the police? That would be the proper course, yet Murdock hesitated to take it. He realized that he would be subjected to a most undesirable cross-examination, and that it would be difficult for him to explain matters in a satisfactory way.

He had not seen the box come in. Stevens had been here, but Murdock knew the stupidity of his assistant. He doubted that either he or Stevens could give the police any information that would enable them to trace the owner of the box.

Nevertheless, the whole matter was a source of great annoyance to the chemist, and he felt that he must summon someone competent to handle it. He had planned extensive experiments tonight. These would be interrupted. Murdock did not like it.

Then it occurred to him that if the truckmen should return - even though that chance was remote - it would be advisable to apprehend them.

That left only one choice. He must call the police. Delay would be unwise. Nodding to himself, the stoop-shouldered chemist went back into his laboratory and continued into his living room. There he seated himself at the telephone table and began to consult the directory, to find the number of detective headquarters.

WHILE he was thus engaged, he heard a slight sound near by and looked up suddenly to see Doctor Gerald Savette. The physician had just entered the room from the hallway and was bowing courteously.

"I trust I am not intruding?" The physician's tone was smooth and easy. "I found that I could return

immediately after I reached my office. I had hopes that your guests would still be here."

"How did you get in?" questioned Murdock, testily.

"Through the front door," replied Doctor Savette suavely. "I rang the bell and there was no response. Then I remembered that your man had gone for the night. I also recalled that you and the others had been in the laboratory when I left. So I took the liberty of opening the door and coming upstairs."

"But the door was locked," declared Murdock. "I haven't any objection to your entering, Doctor Savette. You are always welcome here. But I cannot understand how you came in through a locked door."

"I found it unlocked," returned the physician, with a smile. "Otherwise I could not have entered."

"I must have forgotten to lock it," observed Clark Murdock, thoughtfully. "Strange - I felt sure that I had pushed the bolts on the door. An oversight on my part, doctor, but a fortunate one. I am glad that you are here."

"I am pleased to hear that," said Savette. "I should like to talk with you further in reference to your experiments -"

"There is something more important for the moment, doctor. Something that demands immediate attention."

"Something more important than your experiments?" Doctor Savette's tone showed his puzzlement. "I can scarcely believe that, Mr. Murdock."

The chemist arose and placed the phone book to one side. He beckoned to his visitor and led the way through the laboratory. Murdock was speaking as they walked along.

"I was just about to telephone the police," he explained. "Your arrival was a timely one. I needed advice, immediately, and I could think of no one who could help me."

"My advice on what?" questioned Savette, as they reached the far door. "Why should you need the police?"

"Here is the reason," declared Murdock, calmly.

He opened the door to the landing and pointed to the body on the floor. Doctor Savette drew back with an exclamation of surprise. Then he stepped forward and examined the body.

"The man is dead," he declared. "He appears to have been strangled."

He stared silently at the still face; then looked up at Murdock. He stepped back and surveyed the body; then gazed at his living companion.

"Amazing!" he exclaimed. "Amazing, Murdock! The man bears a remarkable resemblance to you!"

"That is what puzzles me," declared the chemist.

"When did this box come here?" questioned Savette.

"Today," said Murdock. "Delivered by mistake. That, at least, is what Stevens told me. The truckmen are supposed to come for it at any time."

"Hm-m-m," responded the physician. "This is perplexing, Murdock. Yet it seems to have a strange

significance. It is not likely that the sender of such a box would let it go to the wrong place. Frankly, I don't think that those men will return. I think the box was intended to be left here."

"But why?"

"So that you would open it - and make the discovery, exactly as you have done."

"I had the same idea," admitted Murdock, "but I can't understand the purpose."

"It might be the work of some enemy," said Doctor Savette, slowly. "Some one may wish to hamper your experiments. You were about to call the police. If they should come here, it would mean a great deal of trouble and annoyance to you - enough, perhaps, to delay your work for some time."

"That is true," responded Murdock, "but I can not understand why the body should be specially dressed in working clothes like mine."

"I have another theory," resumed the physician, thoughtfully. "This may be a threat - a plan to frighten you. The person who sent this box could not have expected you to open it tonight. You were expecting men to take it away."

"That's right," agreed the chemist. "I can't explain exactly why I did open it. I suppose that I would ordinarily have allowed it to remain for several days, before investigating its contents."

"Correct," declared Savette. "Now let us suppose that a message is on its way, that you are to receive a threat - in which the box is mentioned. Opening the box, you find a dead body that resembles yourself. That would certainly make the threat emphatic, would it not? Particularly if the threat were directed against your life."

Clark Murdock nodded in accord. Then he showed a sudden response to Doctor Savette's statement:

"I think you have struck the right theory, doctor," he exclaimed. "That makes it imperative for me to call the police. I do not intend to lose another moment."

The chemist was turning to the door that led into the laboratory. His hand was already on the knob.

"Wait!"

THERE was a command in Doctor Savette's exclamation. Clark Murdock turned in surprise. He stared at the physician and noted a peculiar expression on the man's face.

Stocky and sallow, with shrewd eyes, Doctor Savette appeared as a menacing figure instead of the suave, polite professional man that he had been a moment before. It was Murdock's sudden turn that enabled him to catch his companion off poise.

While the chemist stared in consternation, Savette's masklike affability was resumed. Again he became the suave physician and his persuasive voice sought to regain the confidence of Murdock.

"It would be inadvisable to call the police," purred the doctor. "That is exactly what the sender of this box would expect you to do -"

Murdock's voice sounded an interruption.

"You speak," he said coldly, "as though you are acquainted with the perpetrator of this outrage! It was very timely - your arrival - while I was at the telephone. Suppose" - Murdock's eyes were gleaming furiously - "that I should accuse you of complicity in the crime that lies evidenced there before us? What

would you say to that, Doctor Savette?"

The stinging words had their effect. Savette's lips spread in an ugly leer. His sallow face became tense and a vein swelled in his forehead. No longer attempting to play his part of friendliness, he gave full rein to his fury as he moved slowly forward.

Murdock released his hold upon the doorknob and raised his clenched hands. Though light of build and older than his antagonist, the stoop-shouldered chemist was a wiry man, capable of putting up a battle. He met Savette's advance and the two men stood with their eyes no more than a foot apart, each meeting the other's gaze.

There was no fear in Murdock's stare and Savette, though he had become a veritable demon, hesitated as he saw the firm, unyielding glare in Murdock's determined eyes. It was the chemist who spoke first; and his words were ironical with bitter condemnation.

"So you returned," he said. "You passed through a double-bolted door. Anxious to reach here before the others had gone, eh? You lied, Savette! You never left this house! You waited in one of my empty rooms until the others had gone.

"You are here for an evil purpose. That body in the box is your doing. You are not my friend; you are my enemy! I do not know your scheme, but I can tell you this" - his voice hardened with emphasis - "I can tell you that you will not leave here tonight until I have learned your designs and placed you where you belong!

"I know what you are. Murderer!"

A HIDEOUS change had come over the physician's face. His clenched teeth were grinning like the fangs of a monster.

Murdock's accusation had done its work. Gerald Savette stood revealed as a fiend. Now, his voice, like his manner, betrayed his true character as he answered Murdock's words of scorn.

"You call me a murderer," he snarled. "I am a murderer! I killed the man whose body lies here on the floor! You accuse me of complicity. I am more than an accomplice. I sent that box here, Murdock. You blundered into it and learned what it contained. That is something you should never have discovered.

"But it makes no difference now. You think that I am thwarted" - a vicious laugh spattered from Savette's ugly lips - "and that I shall let you call the police. You are wrong, Murdock. Wrong, as you shall learn -"

Savette's hands were stealing toward his pocket. He was trying to hold Murdock's gaze so that the chemist would not see the action.

Scarcely had Savette's fingers disappeared from view before Murdock leaped forward upon him. Savette twisted away as his attacker struck. But he was too late. The wiry chemist seized his right wrist as the hand came forth with an automatic.

A sharp twist and Savette was weaponless as the gun fell to the floor beside the dead body that lay there.

Then the men were locked in a ferocious struggle. Savette, though heavier and more powerful, had met an antagonist of unexpected strength. They hurtled back and forth in the narrow confines of the landing, each man grim and determined.

Clark Murdock was gaining the advantage. He gripped his opponent's arms and held them pinioned. He

drove Savette backward until the snarling fiend stumbled over the body on the floor and fell, with Murdock pounding down upon him.

For a moment, Savette's left arm was free. His hand once more gained his pocket. Murdock, suspecting another pistol, tugged at the wrist until the hand came into view.

Savette's fist was clenched tightly. It held no visible weapon. But Murdock, with grim determination, sought to pin the physician's arm underneath his body.

It was then that Savette made a wild, desperate motion. He struggled fiercely and clambered upward, clawing with his right hand at Murdock's eyes. The chemist dodged the sudden attack and wrapped his right arm about Savette's neck. He had turned the twist to his advantage. He was choking his foe into submission.

Savette's head went back and Murdock stared into the leering face as it purpled visibly. Savette's arms swept free and stretched upon the floor. Then his left hand swung upward, unseen by the man who was conquering him.

A tiny object flashed in Savette's fist as he drove it toward Murdock's shoulder. A sharp grunt came from Murdock as the needle of a hypodermic pierced his flesh. Savette's arms dropped and his head thumped back against the floor. The hypodermic syringe clattered upon the floor. Savette was choking, gasping, helpless; but his needle had done its work.

Murdock's hold relaxed. The fighting chemist swayed backward and forward. His body flopped suddenly to one side and rolled upon the floor.

Three men lay motionless. Gerald Savette was scarcely breathing. Clark Murdock was slumped in a heap. Beside them was the stiffened form of the unknown dead man.

SOON Savette moved. Wearily, he raised his head and drew himself to a sitting position by gripping the side of the big box.

The fiendish leer glowered on his face. Then, as he raised himself to his feet, he took on his normal pose. He carefully dusted his clothes and stood, with folded arms, smiling serenely at the scene before him.

Two motionless men - Clark Murdock and another. Two men, garbed alike, similar in features and appearance. A casual observer could not have told which was the famous chemist and which the body from the box.

Calmly, Savette picked up his automatic and pocketed it. He found the hypodermic near a corner of the box and examined it to make sure that it had done its full work. Then he inspected the form of Clark Murdock, as his face continued to wear its knowing smile.

To outward appearances, the famous chemist was dead. His wrinkled face had gained a chalk-like pallor. His body was stiffened as Doctor Savette lifted it and thrust it unmercifully into the box. Assuring himself that Murdock was well wedged among the cushions, Savette replaced the front of the box and carefully hammered it into place.

He pressed the button at the elevator shaft and brought the car to the second floor. Then he gradually edged the box into the lift and rode downstairs with it. He pushed it from the elevator.

Then Doctor Savette opened an outer door and peered into the darkness of an alley. A flashlight glimmered in his hand. It was a signal.

A truck moved along the alley. It stopped by the open door and two husky, dark-clad men entered. They lifted the box and carried it away. They saw no sign of Doctor Savette. They heard only the mechanism of the elevator ascending.

The truck rolled from the alley, carrying its newly obtained baggage. All was silent at the old house. Upstairs, Doctor Gerald Savette was working quietly and with precision.

He lifted the body of the dead man - that form that looked so much like Clark Murdock - and carried it into the chemist's laboratory. There he placed it in front of the table that bore the huge, hollow crystal.

Doctor Savette laughed as he gazed at the face of the dead man. It looked amazingly like the countenance of Clark Murdock. It bore thin, close-knit scars that Savette stroked carefully with his forefinger. That face was the artifice of plastic surgery - a craft in which Doctor Gerald excelled.

Leaving the body, the physician selected several bottles from the shelf. He poured a mixture of liquids into a shallow bowl and left it close beside the crystal sphere. He pressed the switch. A humming sound began and sparks flickered back and forth within the crystal.

Savette laughed as the weird activity increased. In a few minutes, the display of the atomic energy would be more evident. Then it would become forceful, bursting with increased fury until at last the walls of the crystal globe could not withstand it!

But Doctor Savette did not choose to wait for that tremendous moment. He walked quickly across the laboratory, latched the door behind him and went downstairs by the elevator. He left the house by the exit to the dark alley.

Only the silence of death remained in the home of Clark Murdock. Up in the laboratory, the atomic power was surging soundless within the crystal sphere. Before it, stooped as though in thought, was the body of the dead man.

Dynamic, bursting particles were smashing against the sides of the crystal prison. It was a mighty spectacle in miniature. But the eyes that stared toward the weird display were sightless!

## **CHAPTER IV. MANN ASSEMBLES DATA**

THE 'Morning Sphere' carried a sensational story of the holocaust at Clark Murdock's. Its sweeping headlines told New Yorkers of the fierce fire in which the celebrated chemist had died.

Murdock's experiments in atomic disintegration had long been a subject of news interest. It was known that he had made progress in the harnessing of the atom, and his demonstration of the preceding evening had been but one of many.

Now, by misadventure, the chemist had encountered trouble in one of his solitary experiments, and the resultant disaster had cost him his life. Shortly before midnight, there had been an explosion in his laboratory. Experts agreed that his crystal container must have burst through an overcharge of imprisoned energy.

Whether or not this had killed Clark Murdock was purely a matter of speculation. Had the crystal burst in an empty room, results might have been different. But Murdock's laboratory was stocked with dangerous chemicals. The freed atomic energy had evidently acted over a wide area, for other explosions had resulted.

When firemen arrived, the laboratory was the center of a mighty blaze. Heroic work had brought the

flames under control, and in the wreckage of the place were found the mutilated remains of Clark Murdock. The body was not past recognition by those who had known the famous chemist.

Among those who read the story with keen interest was a quiet-faced gentleman named Rutledge Mann. He was an investment broker who had his office in an upper story of one of Manhattan's new skyscrapers.

Secluded in his private office, Mann not only perused the account with deliberate care, but he concluded his study by clipping the story from the newspaper.

Mann opened a drawer in his desk and added the clipping to a mass of others. He sat with folded hands and stared in silence from the window. There was a rap at the door. In answer to Mann's response, a stenographer came in and placed an envelope upon her employer's desk.

When the girl had gone, Mann opened the envelope and took out a folded sheet of paper. This proved to be a note inscribed in coded characters, which the investment broker read as easily as if it had been written in ordinary letters. He nodded as he read and when he had finished, Mann laid the paper on his desk. He picked up the telephone and gave a number.

While Mann was telephoning, the inscription on the letter began to fade. It disappeared completely, as if an invisible hand had stretched from nowhere to eradicate the writing. Concluding a brief telephone conversation Mann picked up the blank sheet as though nothing had happened and tore the paper to fragments.

AN hour later, a young man called at the office of Rutledge Mann. This was Clyde Burke, a newspaper reporter on the staff of the New York 'Classic'. He and Mann immediately engaged in a short, confidential conversation. It concerned a paragraph in the story of Clark Murdock's death

"Notice these names," said Mann quietly, pointing to the paragraph. "These men were at Murdock's home last night. They witnessed a demonstration of his atomic disintegration and then left. See what you can get me on each of them."

Burke nodded and left. Rutledge Mann turned his attention from newspaper clippings to investments.

It was late in the afternoon when Clyde Burke returned. The reporter laid an envelope on Mann's desk and made an immediate departure.

Mann opened the envelope. Within he discovered typewritten sheets discussing each of the individuals who had been at Murdock's home.

The investment broker studied each sheet and laid them aside one by one until he came to a paper that bore the name of Lamont Cranston.

Mann read this page with interest. He knew Lamont Cranston by sight and by reputation. The man was an eccentric multimillionaire, who lived on an estate in New Jersey.

He spent most of his time while in New York at his favorite clubs. But Cranston was seldom in New York. He had a habit of going on long journeys. The world was his playground.

Cranston, according to Burke's report, had financed a number of successful scientific projects, and it was likely that he had gone to Murdock's with some such plan in mind for the new process of harnessing the atom.

Cranston's sheet was laid aside and Rutledge Mann observed another page that bore the name of Doctor

Gerald Savette. He had heard of this prominent physician, but until now there had been no occasion to go into his past history.

According to the report, Doctor Savette had experienced a varied medical career. At one time he had conducted a small sanitarium on Long Island. There had been a fire there nearly three years ago.

Savette's heroic efforts had saved the lives of all his patients except one. Austin Bellamy, a retired manufacturer had perished in the blaze. His charred body had been recovered from the ruins.

Since then, Savette had resided in New York, where he had gained considerable repute as a plastic surgeon, although this field represented but one of his many medical accomplishments. Recently, Savette had traveled occasionally from New York, but Burke had found no record of the physician's journeys.

At the end of the sheets, Mann found a page which Burke had voluntarily supplied. It listed brief reports on persons indirectly concerned with those who had been at Murdock's home. Mann clipped these short paragraphs apart and pasted them to the pages where they belonged.

He folded the papers, added clippings from the newspapers and put them all in a large envelope. In order to obtain clippings, Mann had opened the desk drawer. He now began an examination of other clippings which he had assembled on various cases.

One of these caused a perplexed frown to appear upon the broad forehead of the investment broker. It pertained to the strange disappearance of Professor Pierre Rachaud, a radio technician who was considered an expert on television.

There were many supplementary reports concerning Professor Rachaud; for his loss had created a great stir in the radio industry.

But most important were the actual circumstances that surrounded the accredited death of the eminent professor. Mann studied the clipping which referred to it - a recent article which had summarized the entire case.

Professor Pierre Rachaud had departed from New York on a weekend cruise. He had made a regular hobby of such cruises and his familiar face, with its huge, bushy black beard, had been seen by passengers on the cruising ship Albania when it had sailed from New York harbor.

On the first night out, Professor Rachaud had visited the smoking room and had been observed in a secluded corner, enjoying a bottle of his favorite French wine. Shortly after he had left, a radiogram had been received for him. It was an urgent message from New York.

Professor Rachaud, being neither in his stateroom nor in the smoking room, a search was instituted for him. He was nowhere on the ship. In a period of not more than fifteen minutes, the radio technician had disappeared!

Rachaud's luggage had been discovered in his stateroom. But there was no sign of the man. He had not, of course, expected the radiogram.

The logical assumption was that the professor had gone overboard. Yet the sea was calm and there were many passengers on deck. It seemed incredible that the man could have been lost at sea under such circumstances - either through suicide or murder.

The case had developed into an international mystery. Professor Rachaud was a Frenchman, living in New York, and he had taken passage on a British ship. Dozens of eminent detectives were working on the case, with no success.



TO Rutledge Mann, this strange affair was of great interest. Beside it, the death of Clark Murdock, which had been declared an accident, seemed trivial.

Nevertheless, it was Mann's duty to assemble data on the Murdock case alone. So he regretfully replaced the Rachaud clippings in the desk drawer.

Pocketing the envelope which dealt with Murdock's demise, Rutledge Mann glanced at his watch and noted that it was after five o'clock. He went into the outer office, told the girl that she could leave for the day; then descended in an elevator.

Taking the subway, he rode downtown to Twenty-third Street. There, Mann strolled along until he came to an old, squalid building that was virtually deserted. He entered and made his way upstairs to the door of a dingy office.

Upon the dirty glass panel appeared, in faded letters, the name:

**B. JONAS**

The investment broker dropped the envelope through the mail chute in the door. He heard it plunk behind the barrier. Then he went down the dimly lighted stairs and reached the street. He hailed a taxicab and rode to his club.

It was a strange business for an investment broker, this task of going over newspaper clippings and obtaining unprinted information through a reporter on the 'Classic'. Even more strange was the visit of Rutledge Mann to the squalid building on Twenty-third Street.

What dealings did the fastidious investment broker have with a man named Jonas, who inhabited one of the most obscure and decrepit offices in New York?

That was a fact known to a very few. Those who understood were sworn to secrecy. For Rutledge Mann and Clyde Burke were members of a small and obscure company. They were agents of the mysterious man called The Shadow - that strange figure whose name had become the terror of the underworld.

Clyde Burke had assembled material for Rutledge Mann. The investment broker had revised the data which the reporter had given him. Now the final reports were waiting in the mail chute for the man who had ordered them.

To all New York, the death of Clark Murdock might have been accepted as a misadventure. But to The Shadow, it must have a greater significance. For he had instructed Mann, through a mysterious message, to obtain information from Clyde Burke.

The calm activities of The Shadow's agents were the forerunners of approaching storm. When The Shadow began such work, it meant doom to fiends of crime!

## **CHAPTER V. THE SHADOW BEGINS**

A circle of light upon the smooth surface of a polished table. Long, slender fingers, moving like detached creatures of life. A resplendent fire opal, glimmering from its golden setting.

The hands of The Shadow were at work!

Who was The Shadow?

That was a question none could answer.

Unknown even to his own operatives, The Shadow was a man of mystery. His very identity was a subject of unanswered speculation. To the hordes of the underworld, the very mention of The Shadow brought apprehension and terror.

Time and again, this dread figure had arrived from nowhere, to strike the foes of justice. Brutal mobsters had died, with the name of The Shadow on their trembling lips. Men who called themselves masterminds of crime had quailed before an avenging figure clad in black, knowing him to be The Shadow.

The police, too, knew of The Shadow, although they tactfully avoided mention of his existence. The Shadow, when he struck, did not remain to claim the glory.

Time and again, some shrewd detective had received credit for the capture of a desperate crook, with no one to dispute the honor. Experienced sleuths seldom talked of The Shadow.

There was a definite reason why The Shadow ignored publicity. His strength lay in the shroud of mystery that enveloped him.

It was true that his voice was heard over the radio, in a program over a national broadcasting chain. That also served The Shadow's purpose. The tones of his mysterious voice were recognized by all who heard them. Yet all the efforts of the underworld to learn the identity of the broadcaster had come to no avail.

The Shadow spoke from a soundproof room, boxed with black curtains. His method of entrance and exit from the place was a mystery that had never been solved - not even by those connected with the broadcasting studio.

The Shadow's mission was war on crime. At night he stalked the streets of New York, ready to thwart the plans of evildoers. He was everywhere - yet nowhere. A champion of law and order, this man of the night hunted criminals as an explorer might scour the jungle in search of man-eating tigers.

When unsolved crimes occurred, The Shadow became a master of detection. His marvelous brain had developed the power of deduction to a miraculous degree. Clues bobbed up from nowhere, that the police might follow in the wake of The Shadow's findings.

Yet these faculties were not the greatest that The Shadow possessed. He had one power that was beyond all others. In this he surpassed all sleuths of fact or fiction.

The Shadow's greatest work was the discovery of crime. In cases which the police passed over; in instances where even the craftiest schemers of the underworld saw nothing amiss, The Shadow appeared to disclose deep designs beneath unruffled surfaces.

A MASTER of disguise, The Shadow could appear in any company unsuspected. But when he stepped from the night to appear as a power of vengeance, his chosen part was that of a tall figure garbed in black. His cry of triumph was a mocking laugh that chilled the ears of hearers.

The symbol of The Shadow was the gem upon his finger; that fire opal, known as a girasol - a stone unmatched in all the world. Few knew of its significance. But when The Shadow was at work, that sparkling jewel shone upon his hand, like a living eye.

Tonight, beneath the rays of a green shaded lamp, the girasol was glowing with ever-changing hues. From deep crimson it became rich purple; then it changed again to a shade of darkened blue.

The hands of The Shadow opened an envelope. Out fell the papers that Rutledge Mann had assembled

that afternoon. One by one, the pages fluttered aside, until only two of the reports remained.

One bore the name of Lamont Cranston; the other that of Doctor Gerald Savette.

The laugh of The Shadow echoed softly through the shrouded room, and returned in ringing mockery, as though from the walls of a tomb. The long pointed fingers spread over the sheet that told the history of Doctor Savette. A hand moved into the darkness; it returned with a pencil, and checked this paragraph:

The only victim of the fire in Savette's sanitarium at Garland,

Long Island was Austin Bellamy, who perished in spite of Savette's

vain effort to reach the room where he lay helpless.

Now the hand progressed to a pasted strip at the bottom of the page. It checked these words:

Austin Bellamy's sole heir was his stepbrother, Harold Sharrock,

who is now living in Paris. Bellamy's estate was valued at

approximately three million dollars.

On the margin beside the pasted paragraph, the hand marked this notation:

Send Vincent

There was a long, silent pause, while invisible eyes from the dark scanned the other references concerning Doctor Savette. The fingers picked up a small envelope that had come within the large one, and drew forth a dozen small clippings that told of different crimes. These were spread across the table.

The left hand, with its gleaming gem, moved across them and poised above a single clipping. With uncanny precision, it picked that solitary item from the rest.

The clipping was a brief paragraph that told of the finding of a young man's body on a vacant lot in the Bronx. The hand placed the clipping upon the typed report.

Now another envelope came into view. From it the hands extracted a folded clipping. That item would have interested Rutledge Mann, for it concerned the strange disappearance of Professor Pierre Rachaud. Mann had supplied the clipping to The Shadow, but had received no further orders concerning the case.

With great precision, the hands set the Rachaud clipping in the center of the table. Below it, they placed the newspaper account of Clark Murdock's death. A space remained below. It was unfilled.

There was significance in that blank area of polished table surface. It indicated that something was to follow.

THE laugh of The Shadow was a whispered tone as the long right hand placed the tip of the pencil upon a sheet of blank paper. It wrote these words in column form, pausing momentarily between each one:

Money.

Television.

Atomic Energy.

Aeronautics.

Money.

After the word at the top of the column, the hand of The Shadow inscribed the name Bellamy. Next on the list came Rachaud. Third was Murdock. The two final words received no names.

The list and the clippings were pushed aside. Once more the hand ran over the report on Doctor Savette. It found the statement:

Doctor Savette has left New York on several occasions within the past year, but no information of his destinations is obtainable.

Once more The Shadow's laugh resounded. Beside the sentence that told of the physician's journeys, the hand wrote a single word:

Albania.

That was the name of the ship from which Professor Pierre Rachaud had disappeared!

Now came the summary of The Shadow's findings; brief, cryptic statements, written by the hand that held the pencil.

Austin Bellamy: Body found in ruins of sanitarium.

Pierre Rachaud: Last seen on board S. S. Albania.

Clark Murdock: Body found in demolished laboratory.

The hand poised; then with one sweeping gesture, it drove a penciled line through the entire list. Again and again, it repeated the operation, until the writing was riddled with canceling marks.

Then came a short, spasmodic burst of laughter; a sharp cry of mockery that stopped with amazing suddenness. The walls threw back the sound as though a host of hidden elves had answered the call of their master.

Papers and clippings were swept away. The top of the table shone uncovered. A click came from the darkness above. The spot of illumination disappeared.

Only impenetrable blackness remained - night-like gloom that murmured with the uncanny tones of a departing burst of eerie mirth.

The Shadow was gone!

## **CHAPTER VI. TWO MEN PLOT**

Doctor Gerald Savette was at home. Seated in an upstairs living room, the physician was smoking his pipe and reading the evening newspaper. His sallow face was placid, save for a slight smile that curled upon his lips. Evidently his reading was a source of pleasure.

A short, plainly dressed man stepped into the room. Doctor Savette turned toward him.

"What is it, Hughes?" he questioned.

"Mr. Tremont is here, sir."

"Very well. Ask him to come upstairs."

A few moments later, a gray-haired man entered. Savette rose to greet him.

The two men were of about the same height. Tremont was the elder, but except for his grayish hair, he did not appear to be Savette's senior. Like Savette, Tremont was smiling. The two men clasped hands, then sat opposite each other. Savette picked up the newspaper and turned it so that his visitor could read the headlines.

"What do you think of it, Glade?" he asked.

"Very good, Gerald," replied Tremont approvingly. "Very, very good. Only it was pretty close."

"What of it?" queried Savette. "You were ready for it, weren't you?"

"Only because I happened to be with Orlinov," answered Glade Tremont. "As soon as he learned that Steffan had skipped, he told me about it. I sent a hurry call to Biff Towley."

"Yes," said Savette, "I received both his calls over at Murdock's. I had to alibi it by saying they were from my office. That is the advantage of the physician. Unexpected calls are unsuspected calls. The second one helped a lot, too. It gave me an excuse to say I was leaving early."

"The phony body worked well," observed Tremont.

"Of course," responded Savette. "That bum that Biff Towley picked for a subject was a lot like Murdock right from the start. It didn't take long for me to remedy the few facial defects. Plastic surgery is a quick matter with a corpse."

Tremont responded with a laugh. Savette smiled knowingly. Both men were meditative for a few minutes; then Savette asked a question.

"What about Louis Steffan?" he inquired. "Did he find out very much?"

"Too much," replied Tremont. "It was a mistake for Orlinov to have him up there. I knew that all along. Orlinov wanted him because he could speak Russian. That was unnecessary. Orlinov talks English well enough to get along with anyone, now."

"Yes," agreed Savette. "Still, he has to have someone intelligent enough to be his secretary. He can't use one of the mob. They are all right for the other jobs, but -"

He paused suddenly and stared past Tremont toward a side window of the room. The shade was drawn, but it appeared to be moving as though set in motion by a breeze from outside.

"What's the matter?" asked Tremont looking in the direction of his companion's stare.

"That window," said Savette. "It is always shut and locked. Now it appears to be open. Wait a moment."

HE arose and went to the window. He raised the shade and revealed the sash open from the top. He stared at it in a puzzled manner; then raised both portions of the sash and put his head out into the dark.

Satisfied with a brief inspection, he lowered the bottom sash and latched the window. He pulled down the shade, strode across the room, and pressed a buzzer.

Hughes responded half a minute later. The servant looked inquiringly at the physician.

"Did you open that window?" asked Doctor Savette.

"No, sir," replied Hughes. "It was locked when I lowered the shade."

"It was open a few minutes ago," declared Savette, in a reproving tone. "Be more careful after this, Hughes."

The servant left the room, shaking his head. He closed the door behind him. Savette looked at Tremont in a puzzled manner.

"I can't understand that," he said. "I have been in this room all evening. No one could have opened the window from in here. Someone from the outside - with the right kind of implement or -"

Glade Tremont laughed heartily.

"You want the explanation?" he asked. "I'll give it to you. Hughes lied. He forgot to close the window. That's all."

"I'm not so sure about that," declared Savette, in a thoughtful tone.

"You aren't?" queried Tremont. "Well, I am. You know who is outside, don't you?"

"Biff Towley?"

"Yes. Jake Bosch is with him. I don't take chances when I come to see you, Gerald. They are watching this house like a pair of hawks. They landed here half an hour before I came along.

"If anyone scaled that wall and opened the window, it happened some time ago, and the fellow is gone now. He couldn't get up or down without making a lot of noise about it. Biff and Jake would spot him sure."

Doctor Savette appeared reassured. He settled back in his chair, and lighted his pipe.

"Where were we?" he questioned.

"Talking about a secretary for Orlinov," replied Tremont. "I think we can handle that. Take Towley, for instance. He is smart enough to do Orlinov's work -"

"But Towley is needed here."

"Certainly, I am merely mentioning him as an example. There must be other gangsters of his mental caliber. I'll tell him what we want. He can get one, even though he may have to go outside of his own mob."

"Good idea," commended Savette. His tone changed suddenly. Once more he was staring beyond Tremont.

"That window again!" he said in a low voice. "I thought I saw the shade move!"

UP on his feet, Savette strode across the room and raised the shade. The window sash was tightly locked. Savette shrugged his shoulders, and drew down the shade. He came back to his chair.

"Imagination, that time," he said. "I might as well forget it from now on. Tell me all that happened with Steffan."

"It was quite short and quite sweet," declared Tremont, with a smile. "Orlinov and I were talking yesterday afternoon. The fellow evidently overheard us. He disappeared right after dinner."

"We called in the man at the gate, and he said that Steffan had gone out in a car, saying that Orlinov had sent him to the village - something which Orlinov had done on a few occasions. We sent a man down to the station, and he found the car parked there.

"I figured that Steffan had just had time enough to catch the express for New York. So I called Towley, and then I called you. Towley and Bosch were waiting for him."

"Where?"

"At the Weehawken Terminal. Steffan tried to call Murdock's place, but Towley beat him to it. He dialed the number from another booth."

"Ah! That's why he talked so long and so vaguely, when he made the first call. He asked me to keep speaking, but he didn't say why."

"You know the reason now. Well, Steffan gave it up as a bad job, and headed for Murdock's. Jake went along in another cab. Biff had two men on the job. Jake nudged Steffan into the car, and he wound up in the Bronx."

"Very, very nice," said Doctor Savette. "Well, it's all done now. You told me over the phone that you heard from Orlinov this afternoon."

"Yes," declared Tremont. "I came down on the late train, as you know. I received Orlinov's wire about two o'clock this afternoon. Here it is."

He drew a yellow slip from his pocket, and handed it to the physician. Savette smiled as he read it. He laid the telegram on a table beside him.

"Now about the next job," he suggested.

"I'll take care of that," responded Tremont. "That is, the first part of it. You know my general plan. There are advantages in being an attorney, just as there are advantages to the physician."

"Together," observed Savette, "we make an excellent team."

"Yes, but you are handicapped."

"I haven't shown it."

"I am speaking comparatively, Gerald. First of all, I contact well with Orlinov. He appears as an inventor, and I represent him. Besides that, there is nothing out of the way for me to meet Biff Towley in my office. That is, as long as Biff keeps away from crime that looks too big. All racketeers have their lawyers. It's quite legitimate to represent one."

"You have a variety of clients," said Savette, with a smile. "The best contrast was between Bellamy and Sharrock -"

"Let's not talk about Sharrock," said Tremont testily. "We slipped up with him. We had him where we wanted him, and we let him get away. If it hadn't been for that, we could have closed up long ago."

"Perhaps," responded Savette, in a reminiscent tone. "But why? Circumstances have put us in line for a much greater opportunity. You know how we stand now, Glade."

"Yes. All right, if we take our time. But I'm wondering about the capital."

"Leave that to me. I'll find a way to handle it. You brought in the first. I'll bring in the last."

Glade Tremont arose. He walked toward the door, and Gerald Savette followed him. Lawyer and physician, they appeared a pair of reputable men.

"How is Orlinov making out?" questioned Savette, as they stood within the door. "As well as he claimed he would?"

"Yes," Tremont answered him. "He speaks French very fluently. It has served well."

With this remark, the lawyer opened the door. The physician accompanied his guest downstairs. The living room was deserted.

THE shade of the side window trembled slightly. It pressed slowly inward until it formed a bulge. From beneath it came a mass of black, which developed into a crouching form.

The huddled shape arose and became a tall, imposing figure - a man garbed in a black cloak, whose features were obscured by an upturned collar and the brim of a broad slouch hat.

With gliding, silent stride, The Shadow swept across the room. He stood beside the chairs where the two men had discussed their affairs. His keen eyes spotted the telegram that lay upon the table. A black-gloved hand reached forward and picked up the paper.

The message was from Glendale, New York. It was addressed to Glade Tremont, Waverly Building, New York City. It was signed Ivan Orlinov. Its capitalized letters formed this statement:

MODEL OF NEW APPARATUS RECEIVED STOP MAKING FIRST TEST THURSDAY

The gloved hand replaced the paper on the table. Swiftly, The Shadow swept across the room and moved upward beneath the window shade. Thus concealed from view, he drew his form over the sashes, which were at the bottom of the large window.

Clinging, invisible, to the narrow ledge, he pushed the top sash upward. It glided noiselessly into place. There was a scratching sound - scarcely audible - as a thin strip of metal was wedged between the two sections. Under pressure from the unseen hand, the latch on the lower sash closed tightly. The metal implement was withdrawn leaving the window dark.

Batlike, the tall form moved along the wall, clinging to the uneven stone surface. It was totally invisible in the darkness as it began a careful descent.

Then The Shadow stopped his progress and remained suspended ten feet from the ground as stealthy footsteps came along the cement walk beside the house.

"Jake," came a low whisper.

"All right, Biff," was the response short distance away.

"Come on. We're scrambling. His nibs has left. All been O.K. in back?"

"Not a ripple anywhere."

The two men sauntered away in the dark. Then the clinging form of The Shadow was again in action. Noiselessly, the man of the dark reached the walk and made his way to the street.

He was a being of silence as he merged into the darkness. Tonight, The Shadow had been a man of



stealth. Not even a whispered laugh indicated his departure.

Two men had plotted while their henchmen were on guard. They were supermen of crime, and their underlings were shrewd and watchful.

Yet not one of the four had detected the presence of The Shadow. Silently and invisibly, he had come from the dark to learn the ways of these men of crime. Tonight, The Shadow had withheld his hand.

Two men, possessors of tremendous resources, were using their guise of high respectability to further a gigantic scheme of evil. The Shadow, alone, had gained a knowledge of their malefactions. Secretly, working from the dark, he must sap their power until it was no more than an empty shell.

Then would The Shadow strike!

## **CHAPTER VII. THE SHADOW'S CHOICE**

IT was late in the afternoon when Biff Towley, the swarthy racketeer, strolled into the office of Glade Tremont. The visitor's name was announced, and he was ushered into the lawyer's private office.

Every gangster of Towley's ilk had an attorney; and even so prominent a man as Glade Tremont was willing to act as legal representative for persons who kept on the shady side of the law. Hence there was nothing out of the ordinary about Biff Towley's visit to this place.

But within the walls of the inner office, where the two men were sequestered undisturbed, the relationship between gangster and attorney took on a new light. Biff Towley had not come here for advice. He had come to make a report, and to receive instructions.

"I've got a good man for you," declared Biff, in a low tone. "Fact is, I've picked two of 'em. It's up to you to make your choice."

"Tell me about them," said Tremont quietly.

"Well," said Biff, "when you told me night before last, that you needed a guy that could handle a rod and act like a stiff shirt, too, I knew it wasn't going to be too easy to get one. You know the kind of bozos I keep in my mob."

Glade Tremont nodded.

"I figured I could spot a guy I wanted," continued Biff, "if I waited around at the Club Savilla. That's my regular hangout, and lots of smooth birds come in there. Well, last night, two of them showed up. Got talking with both. Expect to see 'em again tonight, and I'll sign up the one you want."

"Who are they?"

"One is Pinkey Baird. Looks like a gentlemen, and acts like one. An old con man, resting easy. Good with the rod. I've known him from years back. Just the smooth sort of fellow we want; talks in long syllables and all that."

"Who is the other?"

"I don't know him so well, but I've met him before. He's been out of New York for a while. Cliff Marsland is his name. He did time up in the Big House, but that's pretty well forgotten now. He's been mixed up in a couple of big rackets, and he's always come out O.K. The dicks haven't got a thing on him."

"Does he look the part we want?"

"To the dot. Younger than Pinkey Baird. Poker-faced, but he talks like a college graduate. I guess he is one, for that matter."

"Did you make a deal with either of them?"

"No. I wanted to talk to you first. They'll both be at the Club Savilla tonight. All I've got to do is give the wink to the right one, and hold him there after the other has gone away. Thought I'd talk it over with you, first."

"That's right," commended the lawyer. "From what you say, Biff, either one would do. I prefer Pinkey Baird, however."

"I feel the same way," agreed the gangster.

"You've known Baird longer," said Tremont thoughtfully. "He's older and, from what you say, he's safer. This fellow Marsland sounds like a good one - but I choose Baird in preference. Try him."

"If he wants the job, give it to him. If he doesn't, then take Marsland. I'm leaving it to your judgment, Biff. I want the man to go to Glendale tomorrow."

Biff Towley nodded.

"You know all about it, Biff," declared Tremont. "Tell your man the old story. Orlinov has enemies. Needs an intelligent companion. Has the place under guard. All the rest of it. Beyond that, keep mum - as usual."

The gangster grinned. Well did he know the game that Glade Tremont was playing. He had helped that game, and it had proven profitable.

Tremont was a square shooter in Biff's estimation. At the same time the swarthy gangster knew well that he was totally within the lawyer's power. A snap of Tremont's fingers, and the police would have enough evidence to send Biff to the electric chair.

Yet the gang leader was not ill at ease. He knew that the threat which hung over him would never be used so long as he played square with Glade Tremont.

Biff had never entertained the notion of double-crossing his chief. Hence he dwelt in security, and had proven himself an important adjunct to the lawyer's schemes.

"That's all, Biff," said Tremont. "I choose Baird - if you can get him. Otherwise Marsland. Orlinov knows all about it. Fix it tonight."

BIFF TOWLEY left the office. He strolled along Broadway and dropped into a theater. Biff liked crime thrillers. They gave him a laugh - these murder pictures - when he compared them with the reality.

It was nearly six o'clock when he went into the theater. That meant that he would reach the Club Savilla after nine.

Mentally, Biff Towley agreed with Glade Tremont's choice. "Pinkey" Baird was the right man for the job at Glendale. There had been trouble because of Louis Steffan - but Louis Steffan had not been a product of the underworld.

With either Baird or Marsland serving Orlinov, there would be no repetition of the trouble that had

occurred with Steffan.

Biff had left both men eager to meet him again. He knew that each was looking for a tie-up with a shady enterprise. Either could be bought cheap and would serve well.

Biff had promised nothing. He had merely intimated that he would like to see his acquaintances again. Tonight he would line up Baird and ease off Marsland. Unless - as was extremely unlikely - Baird should express a lack of interest.

BUSINESS was moving at the Club Savilla before the hour of nine. While Biff Towley was still enjoying the feature talkie, a throng of early comers was filing into the gay uptown nightclub. Among these early arrivals were the two men who were anxious to meet Biff Towley again.

They entered the club almost side by side, but did not speak to one another, for they were not acquainted. They had met Biff Towley separately, the night before.

Each took his place at a separate table, but both were close to the spot where Biff Towley made his headquarters on his nightly visits to the Club Savilla. Tilted chairs denoted the gang leader's reservation.

Cliff Marsland, husky and steady-faced, did not appear to be a gangster. Quietly puffing at a cigarette, he had the air of a wealthy club member. He was attired in a tuxedo, and his clothes were well-fitted and immaculate.

Pinkey Baird, twenty feet away, formed a contrast to Cliff Marsland. His face had a cunning look. His roving eyes were everywhere as though seeking someone whom he could interest in a gold-brick proposition.

Cliff's eyes met Pinkey's; but the stare was only momentary. Neither knew that the other was awaiting Biff Towley. In Pinkey, Cliff recognized the look of the shrewd confidence man. In Cliff, Pinkey saw only a stern-visaged person who would be too smart to fall for any plan that he might offer. So both lost interest in the other.

A tall man clad in a dark suit entered the Club Savilla and strolled over to the table where Pinkey Baird was seated. He sat down without a word, and looked at the menu card.

Pinkey Baird surveyed him quizzically, then looked elsewhere. But Cliff Marsland stared with furrowed brow.

The newcomer had an impassive face, and his hawklike nose gave him a stern appearance. Somehow, that face impressed Marsland.

He tried to catch a glimpse of the stranger's eyes, but failed. They were turned toward the table, except when they occasionally peered in the direction of Pinkey Baird, who was staring straight ahead, unnoticing.

Cliff had seen that man last night. The hawk-faced stranger had been seated at a table close by, while Cliff had been chatting with Biff Towley. Strangely enough, the same man had been there while Biff and Pinkey Baird had conversed. But Pinkey, unlike Cliff had not noticed his presence.

Now, as Cliff Marsland ended his scrutiny, it was Pinkey Baird who found his interest aroused by the man with the hawk nose. A voice spoke at Pinkey's elbow. Surprised by the low tones, Pinkey turned suddenly to meet the gaze of two sharp, burning eyes.

"Good evening, Baird," came the even, monotonous voice. "You are waiting for Biff Towley."

"Who are you?" questioned Pinkey, in a low growl.

"That does not concern us," was the deliberate reply. "The important matter is that you are leaving here before Towley arrives."

"Yes?" Pinkey Baird raised his eyebrows "That's your idea, is it?"

"It is my order," stated the hawk-faced one.

"Try and make me," chuckled Pinkey Baird.

"I have no quarrel with you," said the stranger quietly. "But I can make one if you desire it. The easy course is for you to leave - now. I feel that a trip South would be good for your health.

"This envelope" - a long hand appeared with a sealed package - "contains a ticket and reservation on the Florida Flyer that leaves at 9:15. Take it."

With a contemptuous gesture, Pinkey Baird flung the envelope back to the man who had given it to him. He leaned back in his chair, and grinned as he looked toward the dance floor of the club. Then the smile froze on his lips.

WITHOUT a word, the stranger had nudged close to his chair, and now the threatening muzzle of an automatic was tickling Pinkey's ribs. The confidence man turned pale.

"Move along," came the low voice.

Pinkey stared into a pair of menacing eyes. He realized that he had met a man who meant business. Shakily, he arose from the table and started toward the door of the Club Savilla.

The hawk-faced man rose with him. Side by side, they kept pace. Cliff Marsland stared in surprise as the men passed his table. He did not see the hidden automatic.

"You are going to Florida," whispered the voice in Pinkey's ear. "You are going to stay there - for one month. Longer, if you wish. Here is your ticket."

Pinkey felt the envelope as it entered his pocket. Gradually, he was yielding to the dominance of this man who had so suddenly appeared to command him.

They reached the street in front of the Club Savilla. There, the stranger beckoned to a taxicab. He urged Pinkey into the car. He followed.

Pinkey realized that this man would brook no delay. He was taking him to the station - for that was the order that Pinkey heard him give to the taxi driver.

As the cab pulled away from the curb, the pressure of the automatic relaxed. Slumped back in the seat, Pinkey Baird appeared completely subdued. The cab moved onward a few yards; then stopped at a traffic light, less than half a block from the Club Savilla.

The sight of a uniformed policeman brought a sudden inspiration to Pinkey Baird. He was not in wrong with the police. Perhaps this man was. Why should he let himself be shunted away at the order of a stranger?

Like a flash, Pinkey fell upon the man beside him. Sinewy and wiry, the confidence man was a powerful fighter. He knew that his opponent would not risk a shot.

The swiftness of his attack served him well. With one hand, Pinkey pulled the knob of the door. As his opponent gripped him, Pinkey dove with both hands for the automatic.

The cab was starting forward, its door swinging wide, as Pinkey raised a cry for help. The policeman was dashing for the sidewalk. Pinkey was gripping the muzzle of the gun as he sought to drag the other man toward the door of the cab.

The odds were all in Pinkey Baird's favor. He had raised the shout. His opponent could not stop him now. That gun in the other man's hand would mean trouble for him. It was too late for his enemy to fire, Pinkey reasoned; but in that he was wrong.

A muffled shot occurred within the taxicab. Pinkey's tugging hold relaxed. He toppled away, and plunged headlong through the open door, falling flat in the street.

The door closed, and the startled driver heard a sharp command to drive onward. Knowing that his remaining passenger was armed, he had no other choice. He slipped the car into gear.

The driver did not hear the left door of the cab open and close. The darkened street was filled with stopping cars. The shrill blast of a police whistle sounded from the spot where the cab had been. The way was blocked ahead.

Between two menaces, the cabman stopped his car and crouched upon the driver's seat. He expected a shot to issue from within the cab.

The shot never came. A husky policeman dashed up to the side of the cab. With heavy hands he yanked open the door. The driver, rising, stared in that direction.

The cab was empty!

WHERE was the mysterious passenger? People were thronging about the cab. Drivers of other cars were running up. They were talking excitedly about the shot that they had heard; but none could offer further information.

A tall man with a hawkish face picked his way between two stopped cars, and approached the cab. He plucked the policeman's sleeve. The officer turned toward the newcomer.

"Some one left the cab," the tall man announced, in a deliberate voice. "He went out of the door on the street side. Just as the cab started forward."

A driver who had left his car some distance back came puffing up in time to hear the words.

"He's right, officer," the new arrival declared. "I thought I saw some fellow cut in front of my headlights. I couldn't trace him after that. He was headed for the opposite sidewalk. He must have gone down the street."

The statement was logical. It was obvious that the mysterious assailant would no longer be anywhere near this vicinity.

Other policemen were arriving. The people crowded about the cab were pushed aside. Drivers went back to their cars. Bystanders moved to the sidewalk. Among these was the hawk-faced man.

He watched until an ambulance had driven away with Pinkey Baird. He waited until traffic was flowing along the street. Then he quietly returned to the Club Savilla.

Ten minutes later, Biff Towley arrived at the entrance to the nightclub. An assistant to the manager drew him to one side as he stepped through the door.

"Trouble out in the street a little while ago," said the assistant manager, in a low voice. "A couple of tough babies began to shoot it out in a taxicab."

"Who were they?" questioned Biff, in an undertone.

"I only saw one of them," replied the assistant. "He was the fellow who took it. He was in here before it happened, but I didn't shout about it. Thought you would like to know, though, because you met the guy last night. Pinkey Baird, the old con man."

"Pinkey Baird!" Biff's eyes narrowed "You don't know who got him?"

"Nope. I didn't see him go out. You know the way it is with those small-timers. Always battling among themselves."

"Did Pinkey get the works?"

"No. Just a clip in the shoulder. He did a nosedive out of the cab, though, and he was cold when I saw him. He'll be around again in a few days."

BIFF TOWLEY was thinking as he walked back to his favorite table. A few days on the shelf put Pinkey Baird out of a job, so far as Biff was concerned. Furthermore, he did not like the idea of taking on a man who had participated in a recent feud.

In a way, Biff was glad that this had occurred tonight. It showed him that Pinkey would not do.

Looking up from his table, Biff spied Cliff Marsland. He waved a greeting to his acquaintance. Cliff arose and came over to Biff's table.

"I want to talk to you," said Biff. "I've got something for you, Cliff. A job that's made for you. Want it?"

"Sure thing."

"All right, then. Listen."

In a low voice, Biff Towley began his story. Cliff Marsland listened, nodding his understanding. Both men were intent. Neither noticed another who was watching them from the seclusion of a table beside a pillar.

It was the hawk-faced man who had returned from his encounter with Pinkey Baird. Quietly, he surveyed the chatting men. He waited, silent and austere, until the two arose and left the Club Savilla. Then, from his firm, straight lips came a low-whispered laugh that throbbed inaudibly.

It was the soundless mirth of The Shadow. He had called the turn. Last night he had observed Biff Towley talking with two men - Pinkey Baird and Cliff Marsland. He knew that one of these was to be selected. He had eliminated Pinkey Baird.

There was a reason. Cliff Marsland reputed gangster, was a man who had a special mission. Presumably a free lance in the underworld, he was in reality an agent of The Shadow. He had been summoned to make contact with Biff Towley, the very night that The Shadow had listened to the schemes of Glade Tremont and Doctor Gerald Savette.

A new man was being called in by the plotters; and that man was The Shadow's emissary. Biff Towley had found two who would do. He and Glade Tremont had made their choice - Pinkey Baird.

But circumstances had altered that decision. Pinkey Baird was not to be their man. Instead, Cliff Marsland had received the job.

Cliff Marsland was The Shadow's choice!

## CHAPTER VIII. ORLINOV'S CASTLE

CLIFF MARSLAND was seated on a broad veranda, smoking a cigarette. Before him was a wide lawn that ended in a thick clump of trees, cleaved by a narrow road. Beyond that were the rolling mountainsides of the Catskills.

Cliff leaned his head back in his chair and let his eyes rove straight upward. There he saw a wall of gray stone, topped by a thick, projecting turret. This huge building was a replica of a medieval castle.

A remarkable place, this large estate situated three miles from the town of Glendale. Cliff had first spied it from the hillside road, the day that he had arrived in Glendale.

It had amazed him then, the gray-walled building with its squat wings and uneven battlements. It looked like the fortress of a baron of the Middle Ages - a sight that would have been commonplace in Europe, yet which was astonishing in New York State.

It had not taken Cliff long to learn the history of the place. It had been built by a wealthy railroad magnate, some forty years before, and had been disposed of by his heirs. The name "Glamartin" was still inscribed over the old stone entrance gate - for that had been the name of the estate.

Now it was the residence of Ivan Orlinov, wealthy Russian of the czarist realm, who had become a naturalized American citizen.

To the casual observer, Orlinov's castle was a secluded and placid place. The estate comprised some thirty acres, fenced with a high-spiked iron fence, well posted with signs that forbade trespassing.

Besides this barrier, Orlinov employed the services of more than a dozen men, who served in various capacities.

Gardeners, chauffeurs, cooks, and butlers - these were the positions that they occupied.

But Cliff, even if he had not been informed beforehand, would have immediately recognized their true caliber. He knew graduates of the underworld when he saw them. Every man in Orlinov's retinue was a close-mouthed mobster who had come here from New York.

There was a gun on every hip. The gardeners carried weapons; so did the cook. As Cliff shifted his position, he felt his own revolver bulge against his side. For although he was technically Orlinov's secretary, he was also an appointed member of the crew of armed henchmen whose vigilance was never ending.

It had been Biff Towley's task to supply Orlinov with retainers, and the New York gang leader had done his work well. Every one of these underlings took orders direct from the Russian. Each man had his own duties, and kept his own counsel. Arguments and disagreements were taboo.

Every man had a good reason for being satisfied here, living easy and away from the besetting difficulties of Manhattan. Had anyone attempted mutiny, the others would have swarmed upon him in an instant.

IN this transplanted realm of gangdom, Cliff Marsland was biding his time. He had duties here, other than those which Biff Towley had planned for him. While he appeared to be answerable to Biff alone, he was

actually in the service of The Shadow.

But he knew that his usefulness would cease the moment that he betrayed his hand. For that reason, Cliff Marsland was playing a waiting game. Already he had learned a few facts of interest. He was holding them for the present. It was not yet time to communicate with The Shadow.

There was mystery here in Orlinov's castle; and so far, Cliff had not been able to penetrate it.

The huge building was divided into three sections, the narrow central portion and the two side wings. The left portion of the house was where the majority of the men resided, Cliff among them. Ivan Orlinov and two of his oldest henchmen lived in the right wing of the building.

There, Cliff knew, Orlinov had a laboratory and a workshop, His only assistant - outside of the mobsters - was a taciturn Russian called Petri, who never left that portion of the house. The wing could be entered only from the central section, and the way was closed by an iron door.

On the surface, it seemed likely that Orlinov was merely a suspicious inventor who feared that someone might steal the fruits of his creative mind; but Cliff thought differently. Unless Orlinov feared the law itself, he would not require the services of such a large crew of mobsters.

How did affairs at this place concern The Shadow? That was a question Cliff Marsland could not answer.

When he had arrived here, he had wondered why there had been no action. The presence of the armed force was not sufficient to restrain The Shadow. Cliff had known that remarkable man to fight his way through twenty hoodlums.

But as time progressed, Cliff, although he had found no solution to the mysteries here, had gained an inkling of The Shadow's purpose.

Somehow, Orlinov must possess the key to an amazing scheme of crime. One false step by The Shadow might mean disaster to any attempt to frustrate the evil. Furthermore, Cliff's own experience with Biff Towley indicated that matters here were linked with events in New York. Well did Cliff know that The Shadow was vigilant in Manhattan.

The one point that Cliff had particularly observed was that of Orlinov's correspondence. Most of it had been addressed to Glade Tremont, a New York attorney, who represented the Russian in all his legal affairs.

This appeared to be a bona fide arrangement that might have no connection with crime, yet the connection had aroused Cliff's suspicions.

While thus engaged in summarizing his experiences and findings in one week, Cliff Marsland heard a footfall on the porch and turned his head to see Ivan Orlinov approaching. The Russian seated himself and looked in Cliff's direction. Cliff became alert.

IVAN ORLINOV possessed an appearance that was both brutal and imposing. He was a big bulk of a man, with a countenance that was cold and stolid. He wore a close-cropped reddish beard, which Petri trimmed for him every few days.

His eyes, deep set between half-closed lids, had a habit of opening at unexpected moments. When they did, they glowed like spots of flame, livid and threatening.

This afternoon, Orlinov was mild and deliberate. He seemed in a thoughtful mood as he puffed a huge



black cigar. His auburn beard glistened in the light. The man spoke pleasantly as he turned to Cliff.

"Well, Marslandt" - the voice was deep and marked with a distinctly foreign accent - "you haff been here one week now."

"One week today," replied Cliff.

"That is goot," declared Orlinov. "I hope you haff liked it. You are to stay a long while, you know."

"It's all the same to me."

Orlinov's eyes opened momentarily; then closed as the Russian continued in a reflective tone.

"I may haff a visitor tonight," he said. "It iss very important that we should not be disturbed. You understandt?"

"Yes, sir."

"I think I haff toldt you about the man that wass here before you, nein?"

"You mean your last secretary?"

"Yess. He wass a man who spoke Russian, which was goot. But he wass a man who made mistakes. Not like these others who are here. He was not like you."

"One mistake is too many for a man to make," observed Cliff, as he extracted a fresh cigarette from a pack.

"I am glad you tink like that," declared Orlinov. "That iss because you haff come from the right man. I do not like mistakes. They bring trouble - and that trouble comes to those who haff made the mistakes. You understandt?"

"Exactly," said Cliff, with emphasis.

Ivan Orlinov laughed gruffly. He seemed pleased with Cliff's statement. He arose and gave parting instructions.

"This man will come here for dinner," he explained. "He iss Mr. Tremont, my lawyer from New York. You shall meet him, Marslandt. But when I wish to speak to him in private, you shall go. You understandt?"

"Certainly," responded Cliff.

"There iss much for me that you can do," added Orlinov. "But it iss wise that you should be here a long time first. I haff been very careful in the past. When one man tries to know those things which he should not know, it iss bad. That wass why the one before you hass gone away. You understandt?"

Cliff nodded shortly and watched while Orlinov walked back toward the door of the big house.

The intended visit of Glade Tremont interested him deeply. Orlinov had received a letter from the lawyer that morning. Evidently it had announced his contemplated trip.

AFTERNOON was waning. A car swung around the corner of the house and ran along the narrow roadway toward the clump of trees. It was bound for the station, in all probability, to meet Glade Tremont when he arrived.

Whatever the lawyer's business might be with Orlinov, Cliff Marsland was determined to learn it tonight. Something important must be in the air; otherwise Tremont would not find it necessary to come up from New York.

Perhaps the lawyer represented the Russian in legitimate enterprises. Nevertheless, anything that might be discussed would at least give a clue to what was happening in this castle-like mansion.

Cliff Marsland arose from his reclining chair. He had nothing to do until the evening. So far as Orlinov was concerned, his work was ended for the day - unless there might be some details to prepare for Glade Tremont. But tonight loomed very important in Cliff Marsland's mind. He sensed that this would be his first opportunity to gain results for The Shadow.

Stepping to the front of the porch, Cliff flung his cigarette on the lawn. He turned toward the big building, and his sidelong gaze wandered to the wing at the right. Therein lay the secret of this place. Before his work was ended here, Cliff would know all about it.

The sun was setting over a mountain, and the cold gloom of night was spreading its haze about these gray walls. The sullen turrets spoke of crime and mystery. Soon they would be dark and shadowy.

There was a prophetic touch to the scene. To Cliff, the growing dusk bespoke the presence of a living shadow - a man who lived within the night. Cliff was here because The Shadow knew that all was not well within these walls.

Crime, but suspected only by The Shadow! Was it crime of the past or crime of the future? Cliff smiled grimly as he entered the high front door and strode across the darkening hallway.

Tonight, if all went well, The Shadow would learn of plots that were transpiring here. He would learn of them through Clifford Marsland's watchfulness.

## **CHAPTER IX. CLIFF SENDS A MESSAGE**

It was evening. Three men were seated in the living room of Ivan Orlinov's abode. One was the Russian; the second was Glade Tremont; the third was Cliff Marsland.

Tremont had arrived before dinner. He had been introduced to Cliff by Orlinov. Cliff had caught the shrewd, penetrating glance of the lawyer, and it had placed him immediately upon his guard.

From that moment, Cliff had sensed that Tremont knew all about his presence here. He saw a connection between the attorney and Biff Towley, the New York gang leader.

Yet now a lulling silence had fallen. The discussion during dinner had been of little consequence. Here in the living room, the men were seated before a glowing fire, for evenings brought chill in this region of high altitude. Tremont was speaking of the difficulties that went with the patenting of new inventions; but he was not at all specific in his remarks.

At last the subject changed. Tremont, glancing from the corner of his eye, looked toward Cliff Marsland, who saw the action, but gave no indication of having noticed it.

"Well, Mr. Orlinov," said the lawyer, "I am glad that the last apparatus you received has proven satisfactory. It is working well?"

"Yess," said the bearded man, staring toward the fire.

Here, as in the sunlight, Orlinov's beard was glistening. It had the ruddy glow of burnished gold. The

man's eyes were open, and they caught the sparkle of the fire.

In that face, Cliff detected a new expression - a determined brutality that gave the Russian the appearance of a mocking fiend.

"You would like to see?" questioned Orlinov, staring directly at Tremont.

"I should be interested," returned the lawyer.

"Come," said Orlinov. He turned to Cliff. "You will stay here, Marslandt. I have business - a private business - with Mr. Tremont."

"Yes, sir," rejoined Cliff.

The men crossed the living room, and Cliff seemed indifferent to their departure. He fancied that questioning looks would be directed back toward him, but he paid no attention. Instead, he stared directly at the fire.

He knew where those men were going. Through the iron door that led to the mystery wing of this house.

Cliff Marsland played hunches. He was a man of action. He had gained his craving for excitement on the battlefields of France. He had continued it in the service of The Shadow. Inactivity wearied him. He was most confident when he was in danger.

Yet he also possessed a reasoning mind. He knew from what both Biff Towley and Ivan Orlinov had told him that the previous secretary here had proven false.

Cliff pictured a situation very much like this one - a man, left alone in the living room, while the others, probably the very two who had just departed, went away to discuss matters of importance. Cliff's predecessor had evidently pried, and had doubtless paid for his temerity with his life.

That, instead of being a restraint to Cliff Marsland, was an incentive. So far, Orlinov had trusted him. Cliff was armed, and capable of taking care of himself. There was only one reason for caution.

He must not reveal his game because of The Shadow. Nevertheless, Cliff was determined to make use of the present opportunity.

THIS living room was in the center portion of the house. It led directly to the hall. There was no reason why Cliff should not go into the hall. So he arose and strolled in that direction.

In the hall, he observed the door that led to the mystery wing. The door was a sliding one, and it was partly opened.

Cliff laughed softly. He saw it as a trap. Idly, he lighted a cigarette and sauntered to the front door, where he made his exit to the porch.

Two courses seemed apparent. One was to go back and enter that open door. That, to Cliff meant certain trouble. It was too obviously a test to sound him out. The other course was to do nothing; to be content with knowing that Glade Tremont had come to Glendale.

Neither of these plans appealed. Cliff sought a scheme that would have the advantage of both and the disadvantage of neither. He stared toward the silent wing of the house.

Somewhere, there, Tremont and Orlinov were in conference. Cliff wondered what The Shadow would do if he were here. Perhaps The Shadow might be here. That was pure speculation.

However, the thought brought inspiration. Cliff's problem was to enter the mysterious section of the house without going through the open door. Scaling the wall would be a dangerous task. The windows of the ground floor were barred; those above were likewise protected. Furthermore, Cliff knew that watchful men were likely to be prowling the grounds about the house.

Then he thought of the turrets. Two of them, large and imposing, towered above the front of the house. There were others at the joint of each wing.

Between them were battlements - high walls of stone that copied the pattern of grim, old-time fortresses. Nonchalantly, Cliff sauntered back into the house and hummed softly as he strolled into the living room.

There his manner changed. He peered into the deserted hall, to make sure that no one was watching from that partly opened door. The inspection convinced him that whoever might be lying in wait was well past the inviting barrier.

Softly, Cliff stole to the rear of the hall, and ascended the steps that led to the second floor.

This was a little-used portion of the house. It had no connection with any portion other than the central hallway.

At the front of the second story were two doors, one for each of the disused turrets. Cliff tried the door on the side toward the mystery wing. He found it locked, but not formidably. He opened it with a skeleton key, and ascended a winding stairway, which terminated in a small room within the expanding turret.

Here, Cliff found an uncased window. He slipped through it and dropped quickly to the roof behind a battlement. He made his way to the nearest of the smaller turrets. This had a narrow, slit-like opening, through which Cliff managed to squeeze his body.

He was in a small room, and as he walked across it, the floor yielded slightly beneath his feet. That indicated a trapdoor.

The trap opened upward. Cliff descended a cylindrical shaft of stone by means of a metal ladder. At the bottom, he encountered another door, locked.

It required careful probing with the key before he managed to unlock the barrier. Then Cliff found himself in a long, gloomy corridor that ran the full extent of the wing.

THERE was need for caution now. Instinctively, Cliff gripped the handle of his revolver. The weapon would serve him handily, if he should encounter Petri or either of the two mobsters who lived in this section of the strange house.

Both sides of the corridor were lined with heavy, closed doors. At last, Cliff reached a stairway.

Descending, he came to the ground floor, where the steps ended. Peering along the corridor to the central part of the house, he saw a closed door. Then he realized the arrangement.

The sliding door was merely the first barrier. Had he entered it, he would have found but one way to leave - through the door from the center of the house. It was a perfect trap; but Cliff had avoided it. Now he felt secure.

There were few doors here, and side passages led from the single corridor. Cliff went to each door in turn. At last he found the one he wanted. The dull sound of voices was audible, and as Cliff listened, he distinguished the tones of Ivan Orlinov and Glade Tremont. Oddly enough, their words referred to him.

"Good man, the one Towley sent you," Tremont was saying.

"Very goot, yess," rumbled Orlinov's bass. "Good - like the others."

"Not like Steffan," retorted Tremont, with a short laugh.

"That man wass bad," agreed Orlinov. "This one - he iss goot. But I must wait until a while. Then I can make him be useful."

"You aren't taking chances with him, though. That is best, until he has been here a few months. That's a nice trap you have if he gets curious. Petri could let that sliding door close in a second.

"I don't think there will be trouble, however. Biff Towley picks men who are reliable."

Cliff smiled as he fingered his revolver. He enjoyed this situation. Now he was hearing new information.

"It iss ready for tomorrow night?" came a question from Orlinov.

"Not tomorrow," corrected Tremont. "The next night. Matt Hartley is coming to my home. He will be there at ten o'clock. He has had trouble over some lawsuits.

"It was fortunate that I learned of them and arranged to give him advice. Owing to the circumstances, he is paying me a private visit. I shall do the rest."

"Our friend, the goot doctor -"

"He will play his part. Don't worry, Ivan. You will get your next shipment. It may be the last, unless -"

"Unless?"

"Unless we find others that are valuable. Savette spoke of further plans."

There was a slight stir in the room and Cliff drew back along the passage. He was thinking as he went.

He had heard of Matt Hartley. The man was an inventive genius in the field of aviation. He had made tests to develop new forms of aerial torpedoes, and had gained considerable publicity through his experiments.

Despite the delay that he had experienced in getting here, Cliff had arrived in time to hear a vital portion of the conversation. He knew that something was to be done concerning Matt Hartley. It would happen two nights from now.

The door of the room was opening, but Cliff had reached a point of safety. He was hiding in a short, black passage, between the room where he had listened and the stairway. He was confronted now with a problem that he had not anticipated.

What if the two men returned to the living room and found him missing? It would require some time for him to get back through the turrets. Then he would have to descend the main staircase into the face of danger.

Cliff was pondering futilely. The problem seemed insurmountable. But while he was disturbed by his dilemma, something occurred that changed the situation entirely.

INSTEAD of returning along the corridor to the distant central door, Tremont and Orlinov were approaching the passage where Cliff was in hiding! Quickly, Cliff drew his revolver.

If they came down this short passage there would be only one course - to fight it out and flee for safety. Cliff tingled with excitement as the footsteps came closer.

Then the men's forms passed by the end of the passage, and the menace was ended. A few moments later, Cliff heard them going up the stairs that led to the second floor of the wing.

They had taken the very avenue which he must follow to elude them! Cliff was now between two dangers. Petri at the door to the center of the house; Orlinov and Tremont on the second floor of the wing.

Then it occurred to the waiting man that Orlinov and Tremont might intend to stop at one of the rooms on the second floor. Tremont had said something about viewing Orlinov's work. Cliff saw the opportunity he needed.

Boldly, he came from his hiding place and approached the stairs. He stole softly upward. The corridor above was deserted. He was right; they had entered another room.

Cliff hurried along the passage until he came to the door of the little turret. He entered and carefully locked the door behind him.

Up in the turret, he squeezed through the slit and scrambled along behind the protecting battlement. His last effort was a quick pull to the turret window.

Then the course was easy. Down the spiral stairway - a door locked behind him - the central staircase. Within two minutes, Cliff was gliding across the main hall into the living room. His clothes were dusty from the stone. He brushed them at the fireplace. Then he dropped into his chair and lighted a cigarette.

After a few moments, Cliff was comfortably settled. He drew a sheet of paper and an envelope from his pocket.

With a fountain pen, he inscribed a coded message in clear blue ink - the fluid which was used in all The Shadow's messages. He sealed the envelope and placed it in his pocket.

Cliff was on his third cigarette when he heard Orlinov and Tremont returning. The two entered to find Cliff staring moodily at the embers of the fire.

"Mr. Tremont is leaving on the next train," informed Orlinov. "We shall go with him to the station. Yess. You and I, Marslandt."

Orlinov pressed a button on the wall. A few minutes later, the abrupt honk of a horn was heard from the front of the house. Orlinov arose, and both Tremont and Cliff followed him. A limousine was waiting outside, chauffeured by one of Orlinov's converted gangsters.

CLIFF was elated as they rode toward Glendale. This was a great break. He had anticipated no difficulty in getting to the station on the morrow, for he had previously been sent with the chauffeur to get the mail. But tonight - in time for the last train - that worked in direct accordance with plans which he had been given by The Shadow. The big car pulled up by the station. Cliff alighted with Tremont and Orlinov. The two men were conversing about minor matters.

Cliff, as he strolled beside them, was positive that Orlinov was watching him, and that he was also under scrutiny from the gangster in the car. Cliff smiled to himself. His opportunity would be here soon. He waited until the headlight of the New York express came glowing down the track. His left hand slipped in his pocket. It emerged holding the folded envelope. Cliff's body was turned so that neither Orlinov nor the man in the car could possibly spy the missive.

It was at that moment that a young man idling on the station platform arose and moved past Cliff. Their hands met, and as the stranger continued, it was he - not Cliff Marsland - who carried the folded envelope.

Calmly and deliberately, Cliff Marsland had passed his message to Clyde Burke, whom The Shadow had stationed in Glendale for this purpose. Constantly in the neighborhood of the station, Clyde was ready for any report that might be slipped to him.

But Cliff did more. As Burke moved onward, Orlinov's new secretary raised his left hand to his hip. His outthrust elbow was a signal. Clyde saw it as the train was stopping.

The signal meant that the message was intended for The Shadow, that it should be taken directly to him. Clyde, with his hands in his pockets, stepped aboard the train.

Thus it was that two passengers left Glendale that night - each bound on a mission. Cross-purposes were involved. Glade Tremont was on his way to prepare for some new crime. Clyde Burke was taking information to The Shadow.

Cliff Marsland thought of the situation as he rode back to Orlinov's castle, along with the silent Russian. Tonight, two men had plotted, not knowing they were overheard. Their plans were doomed to failure.

The Shadow was due to intervene!

## **CHAPTER X. THE SHADOW'S PLAN**

A TINY spot of light was glowing in a darkened room. The shadow of a hand passed over the spot of illumination. A telephone clicked. The light went out. A low, whispered voice spoke through the darkness.

Low words came from the receiver:

"Burbank speaking."

"Report," said the voice of The Shadow.

Short, terse information was given. The conversation ended. The Shadow laughed.

Although it was pitch-black in this windowless room, daylight had not yet waned outside. The afternoon was just drawing to a close. Tonight was the time when Glade Tremont and Matt Hartley were to meet at the lawyer's Long Island home.

Through Burbank, the only man who contacted regularly with him by phone, The Shadow had learned that Matt Hartley was still in flight out of Mineola. The famous aviation expert had left at noon for a test of one of his new devices. He was not expected back until after dusk.

Now a light appeared in the corner of the room. It revealed a small table upon which rested various small articles of make-up. The Shadow seated himself before the table, but only his white hands appeared within the sphere of light. The hands appeared with what seemed to be a thin mask of wire gauze, no more than a skeleton framework filled with a few solid patches. The object disappeared as it was raised into the dark.

The hands worked with other articles. Then the top of the table swung upward in the center, the various objects remaining at the sides. A mirror came into view, on the under surface, which was now vertical. On the horizontal portion of the table appeared a large picture of Glade Tremont.

Into the range of the light came a head and a strange, weird reflection from the mirror. It was the image of a man who seemed to have no face! Guised with the colorless surface of the thin mask, only The Shadow's eyes were visible as they glowed through a plastic mass of grayish blur!

The hands came into action. The long fingers moved here and there about the table, finding the objects that they needed. Upon the artificial base, the semblance of a human countenance was slowly forming. At last it resembled the features of the photograph.

Still, the work continued, the ever-active fingers plying at their task. Then came the final result. Staring from the mirror was the perfectly formed face of Glade Tremont!

The Shadow's laugh resounded. He had fitted himself with a perfect disguise - so deceptive that even the closest friends of Glade Tremont could not detect the imposture.

The mirror disappeared as the top of the table swung downward. On the vacant surface, The Shadow's hands placed a sheet of paper. It was the list of names that had been prepared before.

Money - Austin Bellamy.

Television - Pierre Rachaud.

Atomic Energy - Clark Murdock.

Aeronautics -

Money -

After the word "aeronautics," the hand of The Shadow inscribed the name of Matt Hartley. Then came a soft laugh. The light went out.

IT was after dark when a figure appeared near the house where Glade Tremont lived. The lawyer's home was situated some distance from an avenue that ran near the shore of Long Island Sound. The house was surrounded by a high hedge.

The stranger who had arrived in this vicinity was scarcely more than a phantom shape. Silently, almost invisibly, he glided along the street in front of the lawyer's home. Then his tall form merged with the blackness of the lawn. It paused beside a clump of shrubbery.

Two whispered voices were engaged in conversation. The speakers did not know that they were being overheard.

"What's the lay tonight, Biff?"

"There's a guy we've got to get, Jake. We're taking no chances on missing him. Your spot is right here. If you see anybody sneaking around, grab him."

"O.K. Who else is watching?"

"Plenty of others. They're all posted, like you. That's why I don't want any of you to leave your places. I'll be out front in the car."

"If anybody comes up the walk?"

"I'll take care of that. You're after snoopers. That's all. Grab them - and give them the rod if you have to."



"The coppers?"

Biff Towley laughed contemptuously at Jake Bosch's question.

"Not one within half a mile," he declared. "Forget about that. This is a big job tonight. Get anybody that tries to sneak in or to sneak out. If a car comes up the drive, or if anyone comes deliberately up the walk, leave them alone. That's my part."

With these closing words, Biff Towley emerged from the shrubbery, and made his way across the lawn, passing within a foot of the spot where The Shadow crouched.

JAKE BOSCH watched the house. The front walk was on this side; the driveway on the other. He did not know the reason in back of tonight's vigil, and he did not care. It was his job to be alert, and to obey orders.

There was a patch of light close by the side wall of the house. Watching it, Jake saw a streak of blackness flicker by. He drew his revolver. Then the dark shape disappeared.

Jake decided that it was merely the moving shadow of a tree. He did not know that he had caught a fleeting glimpse of The Shadow!

A huddled gangster, crouching near the back porch, saw that same shape. His view was a closer one than Jake's. This toughened sentinel fancied that he had caught sight of a human form. He rose beside the wall, staring into the darkness.

Then, out of the thick night came two sinister hands. One caught the gangster's wrist. The other, swinging sidewise, struck sharply against the mobster's throat. With a gurgling gasp, the watcher collapsed. His gun dropped on the grass beside him.

There was a cellar window not four feet away. It opened inward under the pressure of an unseen hand. The body of the senseless gangster was forced through. It hung suspended; then slumped to the floor beneath.

Noiselessly, another form followed it. Then the window closed.

A tiny flashlight flickered, its rays submerged within the depths of the cellar. A soft laugh sounded. Hands in the dark bound and gagged the captured hoodlum. One of Biff Towley's trusted watchdogs had failed in his vigil!

There was a soft, swishing sound by the cellar stairs. The door at the top was locked; but its lock gave as an unseen hand applied a tiny metal instrument. The door opened. The Shadow advanced through the silent house.

There was a light in the front hall. Crouching low, The Shadow at last came into view, but he could not be seen from the outside. He was garbed in his cloak of black. Upon his head, he wore the slouch hat that obscured his features.

Looking right and left, The Shadow swung rapidly up the stairs. His cloak swished, and for an instant its crimson lining was revealed. Then the mysterious figure disappeared in the gloom of the second story, until he reached a room where a single light was burning. This was Glade Tremont's study. The room was empty.

Again, The Shadow moved in crouching fashion. He reached a corner of the room, by the door of a closet. A tall bookcase projected to the spot where the edge of the door would reach when opened. The

Shadow's crouching form raised upward. It merged beside the end of the bookcase, until it became a motionless shape that no eye could have distinguished.

The Shadow had become a shadow!

Out of the night he had come. Silently he had passed through the outer group of watching gangsters. One man had fallen by his hand. Now, at the desired place, he was waiting, ready to frustrate the plans of Glade Tremont.

Tonight, he wore a remarkable disguise. His face was the face of the lawyer in whose home he now stood! But that duplicated countenance was hidden for the present.

The Shadow was dealing with supercrooks - men who left no traces of their evil deeds. Beside them, Biff Towley and his mobsters were but children.

It would be a game of wits tonight - the brain of The Shadow pitting itself against the minds of master criminals. For the first time in this strange struggle, The Shadow would meet one of his enemies face to face.

Glade Tremont would soon be here. The crafty lawyer had arranged a conference with Matt Hartley - an intended victim of his plotting. Like Doctor Gerald Savette, he was bent on the perpetration of insidious crime.

What was his plan?

That was to be learned.

But tonight, Glade Tremont was to meet with the surprise of his life. Before this evening was ended, he would see his own face - worn by another man!

That was the plan of The Shadow!

## **CHAPTER XI. ORLINOV SPEAKS FACTS**

SEATED in the living room of Ivan Orlinov's castle, Cliff Marsland was reviewing past events. His mind reverted to the events of two nights ago, when he had made his crafty visit to the side wing of the strange house.

Since then, Cliff had been chafing because of his idleness. He had done nothing since he had given his message to Clyde Burke. He could do nothing until he received some reply. Above all, he must restrain himself tonight, for a man's life might be at stake.

In New York, Glade Tremont was to meet Matt Hartley. That meeting held some sinister purpose. The Shadow had been warned of it. The outcome, therefore, would be to Glade Tremont's disadvantage.

Meanwhile, Cliff must play his waiting game. It would be unwise for him to repeat his trip to the forbidden territory in the side wing of the house. Much though Cliff desired the excitement of another expedition, he could not afford to take chances that might bring an encounter with Ivan Orlinov or his henchmen.

Cliff had a very definite hunch that there was more of interest in this house than a mere laboratory or workshop. When circumstances would permit it, he intended definitely to learn the secret which Ivan Orlinov had managed to preserve so well.

He recalled the Russian's face as he had seen it by the firelight two nights ago. The mere recollection made Cliff feel uneasy.

While Cliff was picturing Orlinov, the man himself stepped into the room. Cliff looked up inquiringly. The Russian smiled pleasantly. He sat down and stared mildly at his secretary. Then he began to speak in a pleasant tone of voice.

"It iss quiet, here," he said. "Very quiet."

"I enjoy the quiet," responded Cliff.

"It iss different from New York, nein?"

"Plenty different."

"Plenty different." Orlinov repeated Cliff's expression with a laugh. "You haff been here one week, Marslandt. It iss time now that I told you many things, so that you can be of more help to me. Yess?"

Cliff Marsland affected a disinterested attitude.

"There are places here that I would like for you to see," continued the Russian. "Come. I shall show you where you haff not been."

He beckoned as he arose, and Cliff walked by his side.

They left the living room and crossed the hall. The door to the wing was open. With a bow, the huge Russian ushered Cliff into the forbidden territory.

CLIFF restrained his enthusiasm. While he had been thinking of a visit here, he had not hoped to make it so soon. He looked about him as they passed the second door, and pretended to view the corridor as though he had come into it for the first time.

"There iss something strange for you to see," declared Orlinov. "It iss not here. It iss on the floor up above. Come."

They reached the stairs and went up to the second story. There Orlinov stopped before a closed door. Cliff noticed something now that he had not observed before, when he had been in haste to travel through the passage. This door - as well as the others on the floor - was fitted with a cross-shaped paneling that had a square center.

"Look."

Orlinov pronounced the word like the name Luke. Cliff was too interested to even notice the tone of the voice.

The Russian's finger was on the square center of the panel. A slight press, and the square dropped, revealing a small pane of glass. At Orlinov's bidding, Cliff peered within.

He saw a beautifully furnished room - apparently one of a suite, for there was an open door beyond it. The room was carpeted with thick Oriental rugs. A huge bookcase stood filled with massive volumes. The furniture was of heavy mahogany.

These features were of small interest to Cliff. His eyes were focused upon the inhabitant of the apartment. An elderly man was seated at a writing desk, tracing lines upon a sheet of paper. He appeared to have no interest in his surroundings. His face was long and solemn, his eyes dreary and dull.

Orlinov drew Cliff away from the opening. He closed the panel. He beckoned, and Cliff followed him to another door. Here a panel dropped, and Cliff viewed another room, less elegant in its furnishings.

This room also contained an occupant. He was a foreigner, a large-headed man with a bushy beard that bristled like a black brush.

He was wearing a pair of large spectacles. He was seated in front of a chessboard, studying the positions of the pieces. He did not notice Cliff's face peering through the opening.

"Come."

A third panel was opened for inspection. This room was a virtual duplicate of the second. A stoop-shouldered, gray-haired man was pondering over a large book. He was making notations on a pad that lay beside him. He was the first to realize that he was being watched. He turned suddenly about and looked at the open panel with sharp, piercing eyes.

Orlinov closed the panel, and conducted Cliff along the corridor. He allowed brief inspections of other rooms. These resembled the ones that Cliff had seen, but they were not occupied.

Orlinov maintained a cryptic silence. Cliff pondered. He followed the Russian to the first floor.

There, Orlinov opened the doors of other rooms. These were workshops and laboratories, each fitted out in excellent style. Another apartment contained a vast array of bookcases and filing cabinets - a veritable library.

Finally, Orlinov led the way to the very room where Cliff had listened to the talk between the Russian and Glade Tremont. This proved to be a simply furnished office Orlinov motioned for Cliff to sit down.

THE Russian took a standing position at the other side of the room. Cliff watched him, wondering. He was completely puzzled by the strange sights that he had witnessed. He felt sure that Orlinov was about to give an explanation. That, Cliff decided, would be both interesting and of value.

"They were comfortable?" came the Russian's question.

"They appeared to be," responded Cliff, knowing that Orlinov referred to the men upstairs.

"It iss well," said Orlinov. "They can haff comfort if they wish it. If they do not, they can haff trouble."

Cliff accepted this ominous statement without making a response. He was anxious to hear Orlinov talk, but was too wise to question the Russian.

"Few haff seen them there," declared Orlinov. "Yess. Few haff seen them. That would not be wise. Do you know why?"

Cliff shook his head.

"Because," Orlinov was speaking solemnly, "those men are dead. Dead! Yess! They are dead men."

"Dead men!" Cliff echoed the statement in spite of himself.

"Yess." The man was coldly emphatic. "They are dead men. Dead men who liff!"

Dead men who live!

The thought chilled Cliff Marsland to the marrow. His teeth clenched, and his face hardened, as he stared

at Ivan Orlinov. Had the huge Russian gone crazy? His tone was serious; his expression had been positive.

A strange, wild glow had come into Orlinov's eyes. Cliff began to rise from his chair, thinking that he was dealing with a maniac. Then the Russian motioned him back with an imperious gesture. Orlinov's face became quiet. Cliff relaxed.

"When dead men liff," declared the Russian slowly, "there must be a reason. Yess? I shall tell you what iss the reason. Those men haff been useful. Iss it not nice to know that because you haff been useful, you can liff when you haff been dead?"

Cliff was staring hard at Orlinov. He did not like the peculiar emphasis in the man's tone. It seemed that every remark was directed toward himself. Cliff sensed a dangerous situation developing. He remained calm in spite of his qualms.

"I haff told you what those men haff been," resumed Orlinov. "I haff told you that they haff been dead. You would like to know who they haff been? Giff me that pen from your pocket. Then can I write the names of them -"

Cliff's hand was moving toward his vest pocket. He realized suddenly that his fountain pen was gone. It was the pen that he had used in writing his message to The Shadow - the pen filled with the special ink that vanished after it had dried and been exposed to the air!

REALIZATION dawned. Cliff knew that Orlinov was tricking him. His hand slipped away from his vest pocket, reaching for the handy revolver. Something cold pressed against the back of Cliff's neck. It was the muzzle of a gun. He knew that another move would mean instant death. He paused and waited.

"Ah!" exclaimed Orlinov, with a leering grin. "You are too wise to move. That iss goot - for you. You were not so wise to sit with your back toward that door. It iss Petri who holds that gun against you.

"You tink that you are wise, perhaps. You haff made a great mistake. Remember what you haff told me - that one mistake can be too much. Why did you leave that fountain pen so carelessly?"

The Russian's voice took on a tone of sarcastic reproach as he chided his victim.

"Yess" resumed Orlinov, "I haff found that pen this morning. I haff written with it. That iss strange writing that goes away so quick. Perhaps you haff found out too much. Perhaps you haff told someone. That iss why I haff talked to you tonight. You haff seen those men who still liff. That iss because you, too, will soon be one of those men.

"When a man iss bad for us, we kill him. But not if he iss to be of use. It may be that you will be of use. It may be that you will not. We shall see, yess?"

Cliff's face was obdurate. He expected Orlinov to question him, now that he was suspected of a plot. The Russian's eyes were blazing, and Cliff detected a suppressed frenzy there. Let the man try, thought Cliff. He would learn nothing of The Shadow!

Orlinov seemed to be reading Cliff's thoughts. He laughed as he rose and came closer. His eyes stared toward Cliff's face. His lips formed a wicked, evil grin.

"You will say nothing? Goot! It does not matter. If you haff learned nothing, it can do no harm. If you haff heard - last night - that will be no goot. We haff made things so that it can not matter."

His shrewd eyes were watching to see if Cliff betrayed alarm. Orlinov would gain nothing by his survey of

Cliff's poker face. The bearded man shrugged his shoulders.

"You tink that you are strong?" he questioned. "You tink that you are wise? We shall see of that. You haff been sent here by someone. There iss just one man that it could be. That iss the man they call The Shadow."

Cliff failed to indicate that the surmise was correct.

"You tink that you will not talk," laughed Orlinov. "That iss not needed now. That chance you will haff some time after this - if it iss needed. You will know then how I haff found the way to make people talk.

"There iss one thing that can keep you from trying to be wise. You haff seen the men who haff once died. They keep quiet now. Yess, they haff known what it iss to die. So you shall see the same. My goot friend, the doctor, he hass given me a way."

Lacking understanding, Cliff expected to receive a revolver shot from the man stationed behind him. But as Ivan Orlinov approached and stood beside him, Cliff realized that something different was to take place.

Orlinov was speaking quietly, now, except for guttural chuckles that interrupted his words.

"Yess," he was saying, "if this man, The Shadow, hass tried to make trouble, he iss too late. He will find trouble for himself. So it may be that we shall not find you to be of use to us. We shall see."

THE words made Cliff tighten his lips. He realized now that there had been ample time for Orlinov to communicate with New York.

By a mere chance, the Russian had picked up Cliff's pen. Thus had he divined the reason for Cliff's presence here. Orlinov - Tremont - and a third whom the Russian called the doctor - all were superfiends. The plot against Matt Hartley was not scheduled until tonight. Cliff knew well that Glade Tremont was now cognizant of the new turn that had occurred here in Glendale.

The Shadow must be warned!

But how?

Instant death threatened Cliff Marsland if he dared to move. He was staring straight ahead, seeing neither Orlinov nor Petri. He did not see the bearded Russian's hand approach his arm, carrying a tiny, shining object in its grasp.

The sharp point of a hypodermic needle stung Cliff's arm. He sat motionless, still staring. He felt a strange, unexplainable weakness. The room was growing black about him. His body swayed. He forgot the pressure of the gun upon his neck. His veins seemed chilled - freezing within his body.

Orlinov laughed as Cliff Marsland's body slumped in the chair and became rigid. Cliff heard that laugh from the midst of whirling blackness. Then his brain ceased to function.

Orlinov stood looking at the form in the chair. To all appearances Cliff Marsland was dead. The same fate had befallen him as that which had been the lot of Clark Murdock, when the chemist had struggled with Doctor Gerald Savette.

A laugh came from the Russian's bearded lips. In his native tongue, he spoke to Petri, the stalwart servant who still stood with gun in hand. Petri answered. He and Orlinov picked up Cliff Marsland's body from the chair.

Together they took their burden up the stairs to the second floor, Heavy though Cliff was, the Russians carried him with ease.

Orlinov ordered his man to set the body on the floor. Then the bearded Russian unlocked a door that led to one of the smaller rooms. The two men carried the rigid form into the apartment and placed it upon a couch beside the wall.

There was no indication that Cliff Marsland still lived. A corpselike pallor had settled on his face. But Ivan Orlinov, leering hideously, showed more interest in that form than he would have wasted upon a mere corpse. He knew that his victim would awaken later.

Cliff Marsland had become one of the dead who lived!

## **CHAPTER XII. TREMONT'S VISITOR**

It was nearly ten o'clock when a trim coupe swung up the driveway by Glade Tremont's home. The lights of the car went out. Glade Tremont stepped to the ground, and entered the side door of the house. The lawyer had arrived before the hour of his appointment with Matt Hartley.

When Tremont reached his upstairs study, he turned on a light by the desk. He looked about the room. Though his glance was keen, it did not detect that shadowy shape that stood beyond the bookcase.

The lawyer walked over to the closet and opened the door. In so doing, he passed within two feet of The Shadow; yet he did not see the form of the man in black.

The closet door, swinging wide, formed a barrier between Tremont and The Shadow. The lawyer left the door half open, and returned to his desk. He sat there, meditative.

Slow minutes went by. Glade Tremont was apparently waiting for the arrival of a visitor. Ten o'clock came. The telephone on Tremont's desk began to ring. The lawyer raised the receiver.

"Hello?" he questioned. "Yes. This is Mr. Tremont... Ah - Matt Hartley?... I've been expecting you... Fifteen minutes? Yes, indeed. I shall be here... You have your car? Come right up the drive by the house. Look out for my car. You can park in back of it... Good... Yes, I am alone..."

The lawyer's voice dwindled. He replaced the receiver on the hook, and his cold, stern features took on a malicious look.

Resting back in his chair, Tremont half closed his eyes and folded his hands across his chest. He seemed to be enjoying the thought of Matt Hartley's coming visit.

Thus unobservant, the lawyer did not notice a long shadow that stretched across the floor toward the outer edge of the desk. A form followed that streak of black. The Shadow glided from his hiding place. Tall and silent, he stood before the desk - a figure of doom.

Glade Tremont opened his eyes. He looked upward and blinked. Before him stood the man in black, a fantastic being conjured from nothingness. The flowing cloak, the broad-brimmed hat - these formed the figure of the mysterious personage who had come unseen.

Tremont saw the glow of two menacing eyes. He observed the muzzle of a powerful automatic, poised in a black-clad hand.

Fiends of crime had quailed before that figure. The Shadow, mysterious avenger, had brought shudders to the stoutest frames. Yet Glade Tremont gave no sign of a perturbed spirit. Instead, he stared boldly at

The Shadow.

"Good evening," remarked the lawyer quietly. "I have been anticipating your arrival here."

THE SHADOW made no response. Glade Tremont, despite his quiet assurance, knew that a false move would mean his doom. The lawyer remained in his posture of affected calm, leaning back in his swivel chair, a forced smile upon his parched lips.

He had spoken the truth. He had expected The Shadow here. But, though prepared for the meeting, though emboldened by a sense of bravado, Tremont was finding The Shadow a more menacing personage than he had supposed.

It was with an effort that the lawyer preserved his pretended ease. His words, intended to nonplus The Shadow, were spoken in a raspy tone that clearly indicated his trepidation.

"Yes," declared Tremont, "I have expected you. I have heard of you, and I decided that you might come here tonight. You have come to protect Matt Hartley. In that, I assure you, you have failed."

The sound of his own voice gave Glade Tremont a feeling of reassurance. His forced smile became a genuine one. Although he feared The Shadow, he knew that the man in black would hear him out - so long as he did not make a false move.

"You have sought to pry into my affairs," announced Glade Tremont. "You have succeeded - to a degree. Beyond that, you have failed. If you wish, I shall be specific."

The lawyer stared into the glowing eyes. They were focused directly toward him. Tremont knew that those burning optics were keen enough to ferret out a falsehood. But tonight, Tremont with malicious shrewdness, was relying on the truth. He met the fiery stare and continued his speech in a low tone.

"I prepared a trap for you," declared the lawyer. "How you eluded it is more than I can understand. But it is a trap that works two ways. Had you fallen into it when you came here, you would now be in my power."

"I suspected that you might pass my sentinels. I doubt that you can escape them again. You cannot leave this house without my willingness. So it will be wise for you to hear me."

Subtly, the lawyer was endeavoring to bait The Shadow. His tone was convincing. Although his mind was disturbed by vague qualms, Tremont managed to assure himself that he actually held The Shadow within his control.

Right now, the situation lay in the balance. Tremont, with his artificial smile, felt sure that it would turn to his advantage as he proceeded.

"Two nights ago," the lawyer said. "I announced my plan to effect the capture of a man named Matt Hartley. I told that plan to one person only - a man named Ivan Orlinov, at Glendale in the Catskills."

"With Orlinov is a man who calls himself Cliff Marsland. Today, Orlinov discovered a mysterious object in Marsland's possession - a fountain pen filled with ink that vanished after it was used for writing."

"Orlinov did not know the significance of that fluid. Nevertheless, he called me at my office. I understood. I have heard of the mysterious messages of The Shadow. My contact with the underworld is not a slight one."

Tremont paused and moistened his parched lips. He continued with his careful story, watching The



Shadow intently as he spoke.

"I suspected," said Tremont, "that Marsland might have overheard what was said at Glendale. So I made new plans. This afternoon, Matt Hartley took off on a testing flight. In response to my suggestion, he landed, alone, at an obscure field in the Catskills. There he expected to meet me. He encountered certain others, instead.

"Tomorrow, the world will know that Matt Hartley is dead. His plane has been blown to atoms on that landing field. Foolishly - so the world will believe - he carried a loaded torpedo to make a test. It loosened from his plane when he was forced to make his landing."

Encouraged by the shrewdness of his remarks, Tremont grinned derisively. The silence of The Shadow indicated that the man in black was perplexed.

"I have just come from my office," added Tremont. "There I received a long-distance call from Ivan Orlinov. Your agent - the man called Marsland - is in his power. To all intents, Marsland is dead. He will continue dead - forever - unless you listen to my terms."

The Shadow's long, dark cloak moved slightly. It was the first indication of action that the man of mystery had given. Tremont decided that The Shadow was perturbed.

"Why try to thwart our plans?" questioned Tremont. "I am not alone. We have power which you cannot afford to combat. I offer you fair terms. We have preserved the lives of certain men, because we have found it advantageous to do so. Your man - Marsland - is of no use to us. Nor will the others be of use, if we are forced to take the defensive.

"While you remain inactive, those men will live - your man among them. But should you move so much as a finger against us. Marsland will die - and the others with him.

"I have heard it said" - Tremont laughed huskily - "that the agents of The Shadow bear charmed lives, like their master. This time, one is virtually dead. He can come to life, at my order. It is for you to decide."

The lawyer waited for The Shadow to speak. The man in the cloak seemed to be considering the matter.

"Should I die," added Tremont, as an afterthought, "you will defeat your own aim. My life is on one side of the scales. Marsland's life and the lives of the other men - there is the counterbalance!

"I can assure you that all are watchful; both here in New York and at Glendale. It is impossible for you to divine the extent of our preparations

"Orlinov is a man of steel. He is a spark, ready to ignite a magazine. Puff! All could be gone - lives, evidence, everything.

"Should you or any of your emissaries dare to approach the place from now on, Orlinov will not hesitate to strike. Our plans are nearing their culmination. Let them proceed, and your man Marsland will be restored to you, alive. Try to frustrate our methods, and he will die. Perhaps you, too, will perish."

THUS did Glade Tremont conclude his oration. As spokesmen for two other villains, Ivan Orlinov and Doctor Gerald Savette, he had done his work well. His proposal was one that The Shadow could hardly fail to accept.

Tremont felt that he had taken the measure of The Shadow. He knew that the man of the dark was not an agent of the law. He was dealing with a man who had freedom to act or to stand by, as he might

prefer.

"One point more," added Tremont, as a quiet afterthought. "Perhaps you may have a wild dream of killing me and making a mad escape through the human wall that protects this house. That would be futile.

"Unless my chief companion sees me tonight, Orlinov will be told to strike. I must leave this house. I must be alive. I must keep a definite appointment. When I receive the phone call for the meeting I shall set the time."

The Shadow offered no response. He stood unmoving, waiting as the minutes went by. Tremont wondered for a while then realized that The Shadow was testing the truth of his statement. The Shadow was waiting for that call!

Let him wait, thought Tremont. The minutes no longer seemed anxious. When the phone bell would sound, the tension would be ended. The Shadow would be forced to agree.

The bell tinkled. With a quiet glance at The Shadow, Tremont reached forward and lifted the receiver. He recognized the voice of Doctor Savette.

"Yes, this is Glade," said the lawyer. "He is here... The man I expected... All will be well... Yes, he has listened to my terms... I shall see you before midnight... At your home... Be careful and ready. You know the plan."

Tremont hung up the telephone and looked at The Shadow. He was positive that his enemy did not know who had called.

Tremont had weighed the situation carefully. He knew that he was covered; that Orlinov had been watched. But Savette, he felt sure, was too well secluded to be suspected of complicity by The Shadow.

"You have heard," declared Tremont boldly. "Now let me hear your answer."

A soft, shuddering laugh came from the man in black. More terrifying than his presence alone, the mockery of The Shadow broke Glade Tremont's nerve. The lawyer sensed that he had overplayed his hand.

"I know your ways," came a whispered, sinister voice. "I have dealt with crooks like you before."

Instinctively, Tremont quailed as The Shadow spoke. He saw his plans fading away.

"I know who called you," continued The Shadow. "Savette is your accomplice. In all probability, he has a coded dispatch to send to Orlinov, in case you do not appear at his home."

The Shadow laughed again, and his tone, though louder, did not emanate from that room. It caught the echoes of the wall. It reverberated, and Tremont's eardrums throbbed with the ghostly sound.

"Tonight," declared The Shadow, "Glade Tremont will appear at the home of Doctor Savette. Later, Glade Tremont will go to Glendale and order the release of Clifford Marsland. There, in addition, Glade Tremont will end the schemes of terror that now exist.

"You doubt my statement? That is because you do not understand my methods. Look!"

With his left hand. The Shadow swept away his slouch hat and brought down the collar of his cloak. His head was fully revealed.

Staring at the disclosed face, Glade Tremont gasped. He was looking at himself - his own features as

clearly portrayed as though he had been staring in a mirror.

The lips of the false Glade Tremont moved. The Shadow was speaking again but his voice was a perfect imitation of the lawyer's tones.

"I am Glade Tremont!" declared The Shadow. "I am the man who will act tonight!"

As he heard that voice, the real Glade Tremont wilted in his chair. He had sought to combat The Shadow. He had planned, but he had failed.

The master crook slumped helplessly. He saw death now - death that he could not escape. With keenness that out-rivaled all the schemes of Tremont, and his companions, The Shadow had found a certain way to foil the methods of the band of fiends.

Savette would be duped! Orlinov would be duped! The game was ended! But Tremont, cowering, thought only of himself. The Shadow's eyes were flaring through his masklike face. They boded no good for Glade Tremont.

### **CHAPTER XIII. THE SHADOW'S FLIGHT**

GLADE TREMONT was in The Shadow's power. Until now, the man of the dark had played a waiting game, never once revealing his hand. From the start, he had realized that he was dealing with a new game of crime.

He had divined that all the evidence against the crooks was hanging by a single thread - ready to be dropped into oblivion. Released of their burden, Tremont, Savette, and Orlinov would be beyond the law.

Now, thrusting from the dark, The Shadow had checkmated the first of the terrible three. He was master of the situation. As Glade Tremont, he might deceive the lawyer's crafty confederates. But to do this, he must leave this house.

Divested of his cloak and hat, The Shadow could easily pass Biff Towley at the outer gate. But he must first eliminate Glade Tremont.

That was why the lawyer cringed with fear. He did not expect The Shadow to fire a shot - such might be interpreted as a signal by the men outside. But the lawyer did expect to die by The Shadow's hand.

A blow from that heavy automatic - a thrust with an unseen knife - powerful fingers clutching at his throat - these were the harrowing thoughts that entered the cowed lawyer's mind.

The Shadow, however did the unexpected. Calmly, he drew his cloak about his shoulders. His slouch hat once more covered his features. The false visage of Glade Tremont was concealed from view

What was The Shadow's purpose?

Gradually, it dawned upon Tremont that the man in black intended to take him from this place. The wisdom of such a course was apparent. A dead body, hastily concealed, might be discovered, particularly if Biff and his henchmen entered the house for any reason at all. Furthermore - the thought brought a faint hope to Tremont - The Shadow might have a use for his captive.

That was it! Tremont's wavering pulse beats quickened. The Shadow would take him away - off to some hidden lair, to hold him there a hostage as Cliff Marsland was held at Orlinov's. The checkmate would be stalemate. Neither side could move.

Tremont did not relish the situation; at the same time, he realized that the plans of his associates would go on, uninterrupted.

Tremont was none too sure of Savette and Orlinov. Crooklike, he, himself would have been willing to sacrifice a companion for his own good. He fancied that Savette and Orlinov would do the same.

What if The Shadow should kill Glade Tremont? They would retain the upper hand. Tremont cursed himself for his folly in coming here.

THE SHADOW'S automatic seemed to beckon. Weakly, Tremont arose and moved in response to the command. The black-gloved hand that held the automatic was close to Tremont's body. The barrel of the gun was against the lawyer's ribs.

Tremont trembled as he sensed the touch of the metal. Quivering, he walked from the room, crouching low at The Shadow's whispered order.

Well did Tremont know the repute of The Shadow. He knew that the mighty hand would not falter in the face of danger. A shot, now, would not be to The Shadow's liking; nevertheless, that weird personage would not hesitate to use his gun if his commands were disobeyed. The Shadow did not fear the hordes of gangdom.

They reached the bottom of the stairs. Here, The Shadow's hissing whisper formed one word:

"Stop!"

Tremont obeyed. He listened while The Shadow spoke low and with emphasis. The command was plain. Tremont was to leave and enter his car; to wait there for The Shadow.

It was the man in black who opened the door. Standing in the gloom, his automatic still a threat, he watched Glade Tremont walk from the house. Then his tall form flitted through the opening. The door closed almost as if the lawyer himself had shut it.

Tremont descended to the drive. His footsteps crunched upon the gravel. The step of the car creaked as he entered the automobile.

He could not see The Shadow - in fact, Tremont dared not look behind him. He entered the car on the side opposite the driver's seat. As he shut the door, he stared past the wheel. He saw the opposite door closing softly.

The Shadow had tricked him! Instead of keeping him covered, The Shadow had silently flitted past the car to the other side. Noiselessly, invisibly, he had entered. Tremont could see only a mass of black. It indicated The Shadow - behind the steering wheel of the car!

The starter purred. The motor throbbed. The lights of the car came on - with the exception of the dash light. The two men in the car were invisible.

Tremont sensed the boldness of The Shadow's plan. If anyone had been seen, it must have been Tremont himself. With the car pulling away openly, Biff Towley might be deceived into thinking that Tremont was leaving of his own accord, at the wheel of his coupe.

Tremont suppressed a groan as he realized his hopelessness. Why should Biff suspect that anything was wrong? He and his hounds of the underworld had been watching this house all evening. Only Tremont had been seen to enter. They did not suspect the presence of The Shadow!

Deliberately, The Shadow drove Tremont's car to the circling end of the drive. He swung the wheel; then backed the car and started it forward. He headed out along the drive, toward the safety of the street.

Tremont was too alarmed to move. He was being shanghaied in his own automobile, and he could not prevent it!

All seemed well with The Shadow's plan. The calm handling of the car gave every indication that nothing could be wrong. But as the front wheels turned left from the drive, an unexpected interruption occurred,

From a car hidden across the street, a blinding searchlight turned its rays directly upon the coupe!

BIFF TOWLEY was making sure. He knew that if Glade Tremont were leaving, the searchlight's momentary glare could do no harm. The gang leader, with stout henchmen by his side, was watching from his own machine.

The bright light revealed Glade Tremont. But it showed more than that to Biff Towley. It indicated that the lawyer was not driving the car. Another man was at the wheel, and in the brilliance the full form of The Shadow was brought to view!

In a twinkling, Biff saw the situation. A hardened gangster, he had heard much of The Shadow. Like every other evildoer, the swarthy gang leader had sworn to some day slay the man who had so long terrorized the demons of the underworld.

"The Shadow!"

Biff Towley spat the words. His wolfish snarl rose as a battle cry. Swerving, almost at a standstill, the coupe was directly in the path of Towley and his gorillas, a perfect target for their gunfire!

Split seconds brought results. The gleam of the searchlight; Biff Towley's cry; Glade Tremont's reaction. Hearing the shout, the lawyer flung himself low at the wheel. He was grabbing at The Shadow's right hand, which held its automatic poised above the wheel. At the same time, Tremont had dropped his head and shoulders, fearing that they might block the path of shots from the other car.

In this sudden turn of affairs, The Shadow was not idle. The glare of that light brought a taunting, whispered laugh from the grim, unseen lips of the man of the night.

As Tremont's form flung toward him, The Shadow's arm came up. The barrel of his automatic caught the lawyer's descending chin. Tremont's knees shot forward, his back caved, and he crumpled on the seat, his head below the side window.

The Shadow had wasted neither shot nor time in this quick meeting of the first attack. His hand had swung upward for a double purpose. First, to eliminate Tremont; second, to beat the other men to the opening shot. While Tremont's head was still hurtling backward, The Shadow's finger pressed the trigger of the big pistol.

There were three simultaneous results. A loud report sounded within the car. The searchlight was extinguished. The clatter of shattered glass was heard.

With sure, swift aim, The Shadow had burst the blinding eye that had revealed his form. A single shot had done the deed.

The motor of the coupe snorted. Above its thrum came the defiant shouts of thwarted gangsters. A deluge of fire burst from the parked car. Spurts of flame appeared from trees and bushes near the house, where Jake Bosch and other men were stationed.

All were firing blindly. The coupe, gaining speed, was whirling down the narrow street, a fleeing, elusive target that defied the marksmanship of gangland's gunners.

Angrily, Biff Towley hurled his car into gear. His powerful machine leaped forward. Gangsters, scrambling from the lawn, leaped upon its steps. Others came running, to join the mad pursuit in the wake of Biff's sedan.

Gangsters were leaning from open windows, blasting away at the zigzagging coupe. Shots were wild. Oaths were futile. The coupe had gained a precious start.

Biff Towley, leaning over the wheel, leered grimly. Ordinarily, he would have told his men to stay their fire until the range was closer. But now this torrent of leaden hail was working in accordance with a well-planned idea.

The headlights of the sedan showed the fleeing car half a block ahead. Then beyond, Biff saw the sight for which he hoped.

FROM a side lane came a long, low touring car. It shot to the middle of the narrow street and stopped there. From its dark sides came new shots - a barrage directed toward the approaching coupe.

The Shadow was trapped between two fires! Anticipating some such situation as this, Biff Towley had stationed his carload of reserves with instructions to block the path of any escaping enemy.

Had the coupe continued on its mad dash, it would have run into certain doom. Had it stopped in its course, Biff and his shooters would have found it easy prey.

As the first shots came from the men huddled in the blocking car, The Shadow was momentarily out of range from both directions.

It was on that instant that The Shadow acted. Alone, between two formidable dangers, he made an amazing effort to elude them both. On the left of the road was a low wall lined with the trees. On the right was a hedge.

Those black-clad hands gave the wheel of the coupe a mighty twist to the right. The car spun on two wheels. It shot over the low curb, and knifed its way through the matted thickness of the barberry hedge!

Its tires digging deeply in the soft turf of a bush-covered lawn, the car sped onward, The Shadow's amazing skill guiding it along its lurching way.

It crashed through shrubbery, and skirted low-branched trees. Its gleaming lights showed an oddly formed course toward a wooden picket fence that bordered an extension of the lane.

The wooden spikes crackled as the car drove its way through to safety. Almost toppling as it struck the bumpy path beside the lane, the car righted itself as the deft hands whirled the wheel.

With Glade Tremont's body bouncing crazily at his side, The Shadow piloted the car down the narrow, winding roadway, heading away from the crossing where the touring car had awaited him.

A long shout arose from the slope behind. The gleaming lights of the touring car had spotted the return of the coupe. The low-bodied car took up the pursuit that Biff Towley had lost.

Back on the side street, Biff, his sedan stopped past the spot where The Shadow had hurtled his car from view, joined in the mad race to overtake the man who had fled.

As his sedan turned the corner and sped down the lane after the distant taillight of the touring car, footsteps pounded along the sidewalk beside Biff's car. Half a dozen running hoodlums were bringing up the rear.

By a swift, daredevil chance, The Shadow had shot from a death trap. Two cars and more than a dozen desperate gangsters were on his trail. In the coupe, grimly clutching the jostling wheel, The Shadow laughed as he bumped on through the night. He was on a narrow winding road that might lead nowhere.

What would be the outcome of this mad race?

His captive was bobbing helplessly at his side, but The Shadow gave no heed to the man whom he had taken. He was engaged in the thrill of the moment, his mighty schemes and well-laid plans depending entirely upon what might happen now.

On, on, went The Shadow, seeking some avenue where he might turn, guiding his way along the twisting road that was curving its rock-incrusted route down a rugged, rambling slope. Soon he would be at the end of this path.

Ahead, there might be safety. Ahead, might lie a trap more formidable than the one which The Shadow had escaped. The thumping of the rocky road was racking the frame of the coupe. Life or death hung in the balance with the great hazard yet to come.

Again, The Shadow laughed. His mocking mirth rang clear and bold through the blackened air of night!

## **CHAPTER XIV. THE SHADOW'S FIGHT**

A FLATTENED, widening strip in the road ahead. The wheels of the coupe swished as the fast-moving car spurted over the short stretch.

Then came a sharp turn to the left - a downward road on a low-banked, treeless stretch of land. Beyond that, something white and level shone beneath the approaching lights.

The coupe, responding to The Shadow's urge, hurtled toward the whitish mass ahead. Then its hood tilted upward to a level. The raising lights hurled a vivid glare upon the blackness of the waveless Sound.

A quick foot pressed the brake. The coupe skidded sharply upon the dampened surface of a swimming wharf. The car swung to the right. Its rear wheels skimmed along the edge of the pier, almost dropping over the side.

Jammed to a stop, the thick tires glided sidewise until the car halted on the very edge of the deep water at the end of the pier.

A wild finish to a desperate ride. But the thrill of this amazing episode was yet to come. Mere seconds after the coupe had halted, the bright lights of another car plunged down the slope.

The driver of the touring car could see the danger as he spotted the plight of the nearly wrecked coupe. He jammed his brakes before he reached the wharf. His skid was shorter; his stoppage was more abrupt.

The lights of the sedan were now in view. The second of the mob-manned cars was coming up with its horde of desperate killers. Wild shouts were heard from the gunmen.

Coldly, calmly, The Shadow slipped through the door beside the driver's seat. The jolted form of Glade Tremont crumpled completely, along the floor of the car. The door closed.

Tremont, helpless, was trapped within. The Shadow gave no thought to him. There was other work to do. Flight had ended. Fight was to begin!

Poised on the step of the car, his black form clinging to the farther side, The Shadow was standing almost above the watery depths at the end of the pier. First one hand rose; then the other. Each thin black glove was tight about an automatic.

An opening shot came from the body of the touring car. It crashed against the side of the coupe. The Shadow gave no sign of a reply. Another shot splintered a side window. Still, The Shadow was silent.

Now, emboldened men were dashing forward. With gleaming revolvers, two gangsters leaped from the touring car. Five more, headed by Jake Bosch scrambled off the running boards of the sedan. Across the docks they raced, protected by the men in the cars behind,

They were anxious to seize their quarry. They knew that they were dealing with The Shadow. Where was he? Hiding in the car? Stunned at the wheel? Or had he leaped into the Sound?

Wherever he might be, these men were out to get him by force of numbers. A widespread, grimly snarling tribe, they were wedging in like the spokes of a fan.

THEN came the report of The Shadow's right-hand gun. The same deadly aim that had shattered Biff Towley's spotlight proved its merit again; but this time its target was a human body.

A dashing gangster screamed and leaped upward, hands clawing in air. His body flattened and sprawled upon the dock sliding into a huddled shape. His revolver, skimming onward, slipped from the side of the wharf and splashed into the water.

No one heard that splash. The Shadow's gun was delivering its second bark. Another man fell. He sprawled like a starfish, his revolver still in his grasp.

The others were dropping to the wharf, lying low and spread, their revolvers returning the attack.

Biff Towley, alert in the sedan, spotted the exact place from which the shots had come. He saw the dim top of a black hat above the rear of the coupe.

His yell gave the signal as he fired. The men in the touring car blazed away.

Had The Shadow remained to risk another press of the trigger, Biff's bullet would have clipped him. But the hat was dropping to safety as the gang leader fired. The leaden missile skimmed the crown of the disappearing headpiece.

The men on the dock were crawling forward. Biff and the others who covered were alert. They saw The Shadow's chosen spot. Another move on his part, and death would be his lot.

But The Shadow had made a sudden change. Crouching, he flung himself flat upon the outer running board. With incredible swiftness, he wriggled his tall form between the front fender and the hood. His left arm paused by the edge of the radiator. His sharp eyes peered forth unseen.

Two men were crawling forward from that direction. One was Jake Bosch. With low, perfect aim, The Shadow fired. Jake dropped without a sound.

Before the other startled gunman could turn his revolver, a second shot occurred. Jake's companion fell, writhing.



Now guns blazed in fury. Hard bullets crashed through the side of the hood. They never found their mark. Between The Shadow and his enemies lay the protecting motor. It was a solid barrier that bullets could not penetrate.

Four men had fallen. Four of nearly a dozen. The others on the pier, realizing the fact, surged forward in a mass. The first of the attackers reached the hood of the car. Like a soldier going over the top, he flung himself across the hood, his gun arm forward, aiming for the hidden foe.

The Shadow, twisted on his back, his left arm by the hood, his right against his body, saw the gleaming revolver as it shot above him. He heard the brutal curse from the gangster's lips as the man tried to stop his plunge and bring his weapon downward.

The Shadow's gun spat upward. The gangster's efforts failed as the bullet cleaved his chest. His body hurtled forward into the water beyond.

In that well-timed, precise action, The Shadow had lost a precious second. Another foe had profited by the delay. Sneaking by the rear of the car, this man was clinging to the back fender, on the very edge of the pier.

He could see the spatter of The Shadow's gun. Hanging backward, holding by his left hand, this gangster thrust his right arm across his body and fired.

He lost his aim in the effort. From his cramped position, his shot was high. Another chance was all he needed; but he did not get it.

The Shadow, serenely resting between the fender and the hood, deliberately leveled his right hand. His finger pressed the trigger of the automatic. His shot was toward the one portion of the gangster's body that could not move - the white left hand that gripped the fender of the car. The Shadow's aim did not fail.

With a hideous cry, the man's hold broke as the bullet crunched his gripping hand. His arms flung up above his head as he seemed to leap backward. His body smacked against the water with a resounding splash.

A NEW enemy menaced. He was more cautious than the others. Prowling forward, he had opened the door of the coupe. He was reaching through the window, by the wheel - for he had found it open. He was stumbling over the form of Glade Tremont. The Shadow swung up to meet this gunman. A hand and a head came into view. A pointing revolver shimmered. Before it was The Shadow's rising figure, with its blackened automatic.

It was a split second race between hair triggers, and The Shadow won. His shot echoed like a cannon's roar. The gangster's head disappeared. His hand lay limply on the opening of the window, the trigger guard of the revolver dangling from a nerveless finger.

The Shadow laughed as he gripped his right automatic in the bend of his left elbow. He extended his long arm and the black-gloved hand plucked the revolver from the dying hoodlum's unresisting clutch.

Scowling, at the wheel of his sedan, Biff Towley spat low curses. Seven men had advanced to take The Shadow. Seven bullets had ended their attack. The man was a demon! His work had been at close range, but never once had he faltered.

Biff nudged the man who sat beside him - the only other occupant of the sedan. Together, they clambered from the car and found protection beside the touring car. There were two men there.

"We've got to get him!" snarled Biff. "It's The Shadow!"

In the badlands of Manhattan, that name would have inspired its hearers with terror. Here, with the echoes of gunshots still ringing in their ears, the utterance inspired Biff's henchmen with a new and grim incentive.

They had The Shadow within their grasp, if they could but take him. Their companions had tasted his death-dealing bullets. It was a game of vengeance, now!

The nose of the touring car was pointed at an angle toward the bullet-riddled coupe. Biff's plan was a quick and simple one.

"Close in on him!" ordered the gang leader. "Drive up to the end of the pier."

The man who crouched at the wheel uttered a terse grunt. The touring car shot forward and jammed its radiator close to the side of the coupe.

"Give him the works!"

Biff Towley's command came from the side of the car. The two men raised their revolvers. Biff and his companion peered from the hood of the touring car.

From this spot, a quick attack was possible. Yet Biff hesitated. Then, as though in answer to a sharp oath that sputtered from the gang leader, a shout was raised from the road that came to the pier. Five running gangsters were arriving as the last reserve.

It would be sure death for The Shadow now! To stop the approach of these men, he must show himself. Otherwise there would be a horde to clamber as one about that tilted coupe.

"Hold it!" exclaimed Biff, to the three men near him. "Watch when he shows his head -"

Before the men could heed their leader's warning, The Shadow's tall form appeared suddenly at the rear of the coupe, rising above the top - at the very spot where he had made his earliest appearance. He, too, had heard the shouts and now his eyes could see the cluster of gangsters who were nearing the pier. But these were not his quarry.

THE SHADOW had outguessed Biff Towley. He had realized the very situation that was springing through the swarthy gangster's mind. Springing upward, almost on top of the car, The Shadow was a mighty monster of the night.

The height of his position, the proximity of the touring car - both gave him an advantage which Biff Towley had not anticipated.

Down swept the hands that held the automatics. Only long, spitting flames revealed the presence of the guns. The quick shots were directed at the two men in the touring car, one in front the other in the rear. Both were raising their revolvers, as they crouched behind the doors.

The Shadow clipped the front man in the shoulder. The gangster managed to return the shot, but his aim was faulty. The Shadow's next bullet smashed the man's arm. He dropped his gun and fell to the protecting floor.

The other automatic was not idle. While the left used two shots to wound the man in front, the right hand swung toward the man in the back of the car.

He was crouching, thinking himself safe. In that he was wrong. The Shadow made a living target of his huddled form.

Biff's lone companion saw The Shadow, and made a mad dash forward. He fired wild as The Shadow's body swayed. The answer was a whistling shot that felled the unwary gangster.

The Shadow dropped flat upon the top of the car, and his automatics slipped away. They were empty. From his cloak, he plucked the revolver that he had taken from the dying gunman.

The reserves of the gangster horde were pounding across the dock, yelling wildly. They did not know the power of their foe. They fired at the top of the car as they ran.

The Shadow ignored their fire. Coolly, calmly, he aimed with perfect marksmanship. He was a difficult target for the approaching men. They were in front of the sedan's lights, which Biff had left burning. The Shadow found them easy prey.

His final shots were timed to good advantage. Men sprawled as they came on. Two, seeing their companions fall, leaped back and dived behind the sedan. The Shadow pressed the trigger as he aimed toward one of the escaping gangsters. The hammer fell upon an empty chamber.

Biff Towley had not been idle. Crafty as well as bold, he had seen too much of The Shadow's marksmanship to risk exposing himself. Instead of springing into view, the gang leader crawled to the side of the coupe, and glided along the nearer running board.

He knew that The Shadow would be watching for someone on the outer side. Sneaking cautiously, Biff raised himself beside the car, ready for his surprise thrust.

His head and hand came up together, over the top of the coupe. Biff had intended to be close to his foe, but he had not expected the proximity which he attained. As his face came above the top of the car, Biff found himself staring into two burning eyes, not a foot from his own!

Biff's hand shot forward. His finger tugged the trigger of his revolver.

Once again, The Shadow was too quick. As he saw the gang leader's face appear, he flung his revolver squarely into that leering visage. The metal missile flattened the gang leader's face.

Biff Towley toppled backward as he fired. His bullet whistled past The Shadow's hat. The gang leader landed flat on his back, beside the coupe, and his revolver clinked as it struck the light of the touring car.

The Shadow had risen with his effort. Weaponless, now, his wavering form became a target for the men by the sedan. Under cover, they opened fire

At the sound of the first shot, The Shadow flung his arms wide. A loud cry came from his hidden lips. It dwindled as his form lurched backward. A dull splash followed as the falling man in black plunged into the water beyond the pier.

"I got him!" growled the man who had fired the shot.

"Good work!" exclaimed his companion. "You got The Shadow!"

THE two men hurried forward. One saw Biff Towley, groaning on the dock and stopped to aid his chief, the other continued to the end of the dock and peered out over the Sound.

He was still staring when the other gangster joined him. The watcher raised his gun and fired a skimming

shot across the water.

"What's the idea?" growled the other man.

"Thought I saw something floating out there," replied the first.

"Don't waste good lead. You got that guy the first time you fired. Come along. We've got to help Biff. It's time we scrambled."

The suggestion was a wise one. Even in this isolated spot the sound of gunfire had at last brought visitors. Two cars were stopping on a roadway, across a little cove. The men on the dock could hear voices.

Hurriedly, they rushed back to aid Biff and other wounded men. They piled their companions into the cars and prepared to leave. One man took the sedan; the other the touring car. With their load of wounded gangsters, they pulled away up the road that led to the winding lane.

The silence of death prevailed upon the little pier. There The Shadow had fought his mighty battle against terrific odds, only to end his glorious fight with a farewell plunge into the Sound.

People were arriving now, a uniformed policeman among them. White-faced men were peering at the sprawled forms of dead gangsters. The officer pulled a motionless man from the coupe; then saw another body beneath the form that he had removed.

This man was alive. He managed to rise of his own accord. He staggered as his feet touched the pier, then sat down on the running board of the coupe and stared about him with a bewildered air.

It was Glade Tremont. He had regained consciousness during the end of the fray. Now, he could scarcely realize what had happened. People were crowding up to talk with this lone survivor of the carnage

Men piling victims into cars that had gone; dead men on the dock; a live man emerging from the coupe - witnesses had seen all these.

But no one, either on the pier or the roadway across the cove, saw the dripping figure that came from the Sound and crawled stealthily among the rocks, five hundred yards away.

No one saw the figure - nor did any hear the mocking laugh that came from lips that were obscured by the flapping brim of a water-soaked slouch hat.

The Shadow, victor of the fray, had returned from the waters. He had feigned a dying plunge when he had dived to safety. Though weaponless, he had escaped unscathed.

## **CHAPTER XV. AFTER MIDNIGHT**

AN automobile pulled up to the door of Glade Tremont's home. A policeman stepped out to meet it. Doctor Gerald Savette, suave and questioning in glance, looked at the man in uniform.

"You are Doctor Savette?" asked the officer.

"Yes," replied the physician. "How is Mr. Tremont?"

"All right now, sir," said the officer. "He was lucky that he didn't get killed. He got caught in the middle of a mean gunfight. They were battling in and out of his car. Go right up, doctor."

Savette went into the house and ascended the stairs. He arrived at Glade Tremont's bedroom, and

entered to find the lawyer propped up on a stack of pillows.

No one else was in the room. A glass and bottle of medicine indicated that another physician had left. Quietly, Savette closed the door and sat down beside the bed.

"I received your message," he said, in a low voice. "They told me you wanted me here - as your physician. This is a professional call."

He smiled, then added reflectively:

"It is fortunate you managed to communicate with me before midnight."

"I am fortunate to be here myself," returned Tremont. "We struck a Tartar tonight, Gerald. We finished him, though. That's one satisfaction."

"Tell me about it."

Briefly, Tremont narrated the events up to the time of The Shadow's mad flight. That was the point at which the lawyer's observation had ceased. Skipping the story of the fight on the dock, Tremont came to what had happened afterward.

"When I came to," he said, "they were dragging me out of the coupe. I couldn't figure where I was at first - then I realized I was on the little dock at the end of the old lane. The policeman recognized me. He knew my car, too. It didn't take me long to think up the right sort of story."

"Which was -"

"That I had driven down to the dock to look at the Sound. Just as I was turning the coupe. Two cars came swinging down the lane, one in pursuit of the other. Then the guns started. Gangsters, battling. Two of them piled into the car. Something hit me on the head. I dropped - and that's the last I knew about it."

"A good alibi," declared Savette, nodding

"A perfect one," said Tremont. "Accepted without question."

"Why is the policeman here?"

"Just to see I'm all right," smiled Tremont. "He will be leaving soon. I called Biff Towley while you were on your way here."

"Yes?" Savette's eyebrows betrayed his eagerness to hear about the gang leader's report.

"He didn't talk long," declared Tremont, "but he told me all I want to know. One of his men nailed The Shadow. He was on top of my car.

"He smashed Biff in the face with his revolver. No shots left, evidently. Then one of Biff's mob fired pointblank, and The Shadow fell from the end of the dock."

"How did Biff's mob fare?"

"Badly. Jake Bosch was killed. Some others, too. Nearly all were wounded. That man was a fighter - but the odds were too great."

"Amazing - his scheme of posing as you. I don't think it could have deceived me, however."

"He entered through a cellar window," observed Tremont. "Captured one of Biff's men and tied him up. The fellow managed to get free, just about the time they were bringing me back from the dock.

"I'm glad about that; it wouldn't be well for him to be down there now - or even in this vicinity. He arrived at Biff's headquarters and told him all about it."

DOCTOR SAVETTE became pensive. He seemed to be reviewing the scattered details of tonight's events. He was picturing the battle on the pier. He nodded slowly as though a definite thought was coming to him.

His reverie was interrupted by the sound of raindrops that began to spatter on the sloping roof outside of Tremont's window. Savette noticed that the window was open slightly.

The noise of the rainfall became a heavy torrent. It had been cloudy ever since the afternoon; now a storm was breaking.

Savette gazed idly at the blackened window; then he resumed his meditation. Now, it was Tremont who interrupted. The lawyer emitted a low, gleeful chuckle.

"It worked out for the best," he declared. "It was a stalemate; now the game is ours. We can take our time. As for that fellow Marsland -"

Tremont made a gesture to indicate that Cliff would be obliterated from the horizon.

Savette shook his head.

"Don't act too quickly, Glade," he advised, in a crafty tone. "We can never be too sure. I agree with you that we can take our time. But I am not yet satisfied that The Shadow is dead."

"There's no doubt about it. Biff talked with the man who shot him."

"People do not always die when they are shot. If The Shadow is dead, I want to be sure of it. Wait until they find his body, drifting in the Sound."

"They may never find it," answered Tremont. "There are heavy currents along this part of the shore. You can not count on that."

"I am not counting on anything," asserted Savette. "That is the very point I am trying to make you consider. You are right when you say the game is ours. We want to keep it ours."

"How?"

"By continuing to hold Marsland. We have him safe. You gave The Shadow your ultimatum. So long as Marsland lives, we are protected, even though The Shadow may have escaped."

"That is right," acquiesced Tremont. "Marsland can do no harm; he may be useful if we keep him. We have too much at stake to allow a single loophole. You took chances tonight. You are lucky to be alive. Be guided by my advice from now on."

TREMONT realized the wisdom of Savette's remarks. He sensed that his colleague in crime was about to propose a definite plan. He listened intently.

"You need a vacation," declared Savette, assuming a professional air. "I suggest that you go away for a trip. Destination unannounced. Actually, it will be Glendale.

"Take Biff Towley with you. Put him in charge of forces up there. Forget New York for a while. Concentrate on getting results through Orlinov.

"We have accomplished what we set out to do. Our past is covered. There are only two who have ever tried to interfere - Sharrock and The Shadow. We drove the first away. We have apparently killed the second.

"I shall remain in New York. You will be with Orlinov, making sure that all goes well. With Towley in charge of the guards there can be no mutiny, nor easing of the watch. Then Orlinov can drive those slaves of his. Make them produce."

There was a steely glint in Savette's eyes as he concluded his statement. Tremont chuckled.

"Orlinov knows how to drive" declared the lawyer. "He is getting results as effectively as possible. He is handicapped by only one item. Money."

"I know that," said Savette thoughtfully. "I intend to rectify that situation. I can do it better alone, at present. Our real work is ended. It was difficult with the others, because we had set our minds on the ones we wanted. But money -"

He laughed knowingly. Tremont saw a new sparkle in the physician's eyes.

"Sharrock crossed us," added Savette. "Otherwise, we might not have started on our new venture. If we had him now, we would be all right. But it would be dangerous to go after him. There are easier ways; and I can find one."

"The need is imminent," declared Tremont.

"I understand that," said Savette. "Nevertheless, we must not be hasty. Give me three weeks - perhaps a month. By then I shall have a perfect plan. It may take me less time. When I need assistance, I shall communicate with you."

"Have you found any suitable persons as yet?"

"Several," said Savette, "but each one presents an obstacle. That is why I have been waiting. It would be a grave mistake to choose one, then find another who would prove more profitable. We want the one who will be easiest to work."

"That is up to you," said Tremont in a tired voice. "Do your best, and let me hear from you. I shall leave for Glendale tomorrow."

Savette arose and bade his companion good night. He went downstairs and donned his raincoat. He stepped from the door. The policeman, a poncho on his shoulders, was standing on the edge of the porch. He saluted the physician and Savette hastened through the pouring rain and reached his car.

The policeman watched the physician's automobile drive away. The officer had been instructed to remain here during the night. Glade Tremont was an important resident in the locality. The head of the local police force regretted his neglect in leaving this section unguarded.

UP on the roof above the policeman's head, a shadowy shape appeared reflected in the light from Tremont's window. A dripping cloak glistened as the figure of The Shadow crept toward the edge of the roof.

Escaped from the waters of the Sound, the man of mystery had come to Tremont's home, to anticipate a

visit from Doctor Gerald Savette. Outside the window, he had listened to every word that had been uttered by the two conspirators.

The Shadow reached the edge of the roof. His form became invisible. His long shape glided easily over the edge. It hung suspended amid the rain.

Had The Shadow dropped to the soft ground beneath, his fall would have attracted the attention of the policeman; but The Shadow did not resort to such an act.

He had chosen this spot with careful design. Lowering one hand, he encircled it about a pillar beneath the overhanging roof. The other arm followed. Clinging to the post, The Shadow moved downward inch by inch, until his feet touched the rail.

The officer was only a few feet away, on the other side of the post. He chanced to turn and look toward the railing of the porch. All that he saw was rain.

The Shadow's form was motionless. The projecting arms and shoulders were a black blot that to the officer's eyes were a portion of the night.

The policeman's tread sounded on the wooden porch. The man went down the steps and peered along the drive. He came back to his position, and paused to light a cigarette by the very post where The Shadow had been standing.

The blue-tipped match threw a glare as the policeman scratched it on the pillar. The sudden blaze revealed nothing. Quietly, stealthily the man of night had glided away into the darkness.

He was treading the drive now, but not even the gravel gave sign of his passing. Out to the street - then the only token of his presence was a drifting silhouette that moved along the sidewalk past a blurred street lamp.

With cloak and hat saturated by Sound and rain, The Shadow traveled on without the slightest swish to indicate his presence. Invisible, he stopped beside a driveway that led to an empty house. There he turned to approach a coupe parked off the edge of the drive.

The patter of the rain on the roof of the car drowned the noise of the opening door. The Shadow reached the wheel of his own car. The starter sounded; the motor throbbed. The lights came on as the car swung clear of the drive and headed toward New York. Soon it reached a broad boulevard, and was lost in the traffic of late-bound cars returning to the big city.

WHEN next The Shadow appeared he was in a darkened room where only the spotlight of the green-shaded lamp reflected its rays from the burnished top of a broad table.

His hands alone were visible - dry hands now. Those long, slender fingers had shown their mastery with the automatic; now they were engaged in opening an envelope.

The girasol glimmered above a typed report. The Shadow was reading word from Rutledge Mann - word that included a relayed message from Harry Vincent, the agent whom The Shadow had dispatched abroad:

Shark Nice Paris Tally

The Shadow inscribed the translation of this condensed report, which conformed with a code given Vincent.



"Shark" meant Sharrock. "Nice" referred to the Mediterranean resort. "Paris" showed where Sharrock had gone. "Tally" was an abbreviation for steamship 'Talleyrand'.

The Shadow wrote:

Located Sharrock at Nice. He left for Paris. Sailed on the  
Steamship 'Talleyrand'.

Evidently Vincent had lost the trail at Nice. Sharrock, travelling to Paris had continued from there to Cherbourg, to catch the steamer for America. The Shadow's hands were still, indicating that he was pondering over the message that lay before him.

Then the fingers found another item supplied by Rutledge Mann. It was the sailing schedule of The Franco Line. The 'Talleyrand' had left Cherbourg that day. It would not arrive in New York for a week.

There was significance in the return of this man Sharrock. Savette had boasted that he and Tremont had driven him away. Why was he coming back? What would be the outcome when the plotters learned of his return?

Sharrock, stepbrother of Austin Bellamy, might prove a key to the situation that existed in Glendale. His return was evidently unknown to Savette. Would it aid or disturb The Shadow's plans?

Once again, The Shadow's prophetic list appeared. That piece of paper gave its column of words: Money - Television - Atomic Energy - Aeronautics - Money. The first four titles had the names of men attached. At the bottom of the column stood the single word:

Money.

The list began with money; it ended with money. Whatever the purpose of the three statements in between, money was the dominating motive. Money was Doctor Savette's aim now.

The hand of The Shadow paused beside that all-important word at the bottom of the list. It waited, lingering. Then came a laugh from the blackness of the room. It was a strange, sardonic laugh - a token of mirth that presaged the downfall of evildoers.

The hand wrote. Another name was inscribed to the list. For a brief instant the name stood plain, while the girasol on The Shadow's left hand threw forth its lustrous shafts of mystic light.

Then all was darkness as the shaded lamp clicked off. From the stillness of a solid, tomblike room, The Shadow's sinister laugh flung a grim and muffled taunt.

Out of the dark, The Shadow had come tonight. Into the dark he had returned. Checked in his first attack, driven to bay by gangster hordes, The Shadow had fought against tremendous odds. His presence had been revealed. His stalwart hand was thwarted for the moment.

But with uncanny cleverness, The Shadow had retired further from the light. His enemies believed he was defeated. They were almost convinced that he was dead. The one advantage he had gained tonight was obscurity.

Only through preserving the pretense of oblivion could The Shadow hope to withhold these scheming fiends. Yet how, from oblivion, could he hope to wage the combat?

In the face of this dilemma, The Shadow laughed! His brain had evolved some system whereby odds

such as these could be met. What means could this hopeless situation afford?

Only The Shadow knew!

The Shadow always knows.

## **CHAPTER XVI. A PERFECT SCHEME**

DOCTOR SAVETTE smiled grimly as he leaned back in his easy-chair. He was alone in his front room, reviewing the past, and thinking of the future. Attired in evening clothes, he had the pose of a gentleman of culture.

Four days had passed since Biff Towley's mob had met and fought The Shadow. The affray had caused a great stir in the newspapers. The garbled and incorrect accounts had been accepted seriously.

Solemn sleuths had solved the situation - so they supposed. It was assumed that a crowd of gangsters had gone to the dock to meet rumrunners coming in from the Sound. Another crew of mobsmen had come to muscle in. One band had been victorious.

Glade Tremont, prominent attorney had unfortunately been trapped in the fray. The victors had fled, leaving the dead and wounded. Glade Tremont had escaped with only slight injuries.

Certain of the battling mobsmen had been identified with a gang leader named Biff Towley. He was not in New York. It was supposed that he had fled - perhaps before the fight - fearing that he was to be deposed as chief. Some effort was being made to find him, but the attempt was not widespread.

Glade Tremont had gone away for a rest. He had been through a grueling experience. His departure from New York had been virtually unmentioned in the newspapers.

All these reports were good news to Gerald Savette. But he had still another reason to be pleased. The Shadow had completely disappeared. Unmentioned by the press - for no one had suspected The Shadow's hand in the Long Island affair - the one enemy whom Savette and Tremont feared had passed into oblivion.

Now, Savette had begun to share Tremont's theory that The Shadow had been killed. There were good reasons for so believing.

It seemed incredible that the man could possibly have escaped. The mobster who had fired the shot at which The Shadow toppled had gazed from the end of the dock to see no one. That was Biff Towley's assurance.

Moreover, Glade Tremont's statement about the currents in the Sound were true ones. Searchers had discovered the body of a dead gangster wedged beneath another dock a half mile away.

No body had been found that might have been The Shadow's; but there was every cause to believe that his form, too, had found its way to some obscure spot.

Most convincing of all was the fact that The Shadow had not revealed himself. There was no chance - so Savette thought - that The Shadow could know of present plans. Checkmated, his only hope - if he lived - of saving Cliff Marsland's life was to communicate and come to terms. Savette was confident on this point. Therefore, The Shadow must be dead.

Nevertheless, the wily physician had not changed his plan of holding Cliff as a hostage. With his agent captive, The Shadow could not dare to strike. Savette, despite his smugness, was well versed in the lore

of the underworld. He knew that The Shadow would never abandon an underling to destruction.

FOR a short while, Savette had entertained the thought that perhaps operatives of The Shadow might carry on. That, he was soon convinced, was not only illogical, but also impossible.

Actually, The Shadow was a lone wolf. His special agents were merely men who obeyed orders blindly, covering places where The Shadow could not be. These leaderless operatives could not even know of Cliff Marsland's plight.

Now, with full security, Savette was contemplating another crime. Money was needed for a definite purpose. With his past record, it was only natural that the scheming physician should decide to use an evil method in the furtherance of his desire.

Reclining, with eyes half shut, the fiend made mental notations of persons whom he had in mind. Among his patients were many wealthy persons; but as he had told Tremont, there was an obstacle with each that prevented surety of action.

Savette took chances when necessary. He had not been so particular in the past, when he had first embarked upon his insidious trail of crime. Now, with his career besmirched, and his mind schooled to ease and perfection in method, he wanted to perform the coming job in the safest and best way possible.

Some minds are naturally crooked. Gerald Savette did not possess the quirks and twists of the natural criminal. To him, evil was useful only as a means to a definite end. He, like his associates, had left a bloody trail behind them. But in the lesser jobs, they had let Biff Towley attend to the dirty work.

Gerald Savette felt himself a criminal deluxe. He was about to make his farewell bow to his secret profession. From then on, he would be secure as a wealthy, retired physician. That was the goal he had set.

Tremont wanted action soon. So did Orlinov. Both could wait - a month if necessary. Unless a perfect scheme presented itself, Savette would hold back to the limit before perpetrating his last evil.

While he waited, he was playing his suave part of a reputable physician. He was strict ethically. He was not overdoing himself. He was enjoying social functions, extending his connections, adding to his prestige. A wary method indeed!

Tonight, Savette was keeping an appointment with a group of wealthy men. Glancing at his watch, he saw that it was past eight o'clock. Nearly time to be going. He rang a bell and summoned his servant, Hughes.

"Order the car from the garage," said Savette. "By the way, Hughes, let me have that envelope with the invitation that I left on the table in the other room. Get that first."

Hughes bowed and left the room. He returned, carrying the envelope; Savette opened it. He smiled as he read the contents of the letter.

This had come as a follow-up to a phone call which Savette had received from Lamont Cranston, the millionaire with whom he had formed an acquaintance.

Cranston was giving a special party to a few chosen guests. The affair was set for tonight. Savette had accepted the verbal invitation. The letter carried instructions, telling how to reach Cranston's home in New Jersey. It also expressed pleasure in the fact that Doctor Savette would be able to attend the affair.

WHEN the car arrived from the garage, Savette set out immediately. He headed for the Holland Tunnel,

reached the Jersey side, and arrived at Lamont Cranston's home shortly after nine o'clock.

Most of the guests had arrived. Savette was greeted by his host. He was introduced to the other men, all of whom were wealthy and influential.

"I have not seen you for some time, doctor," remarked Cranston, as the two were standing side by side. "Where was it we last met?"

"Let me think," said Savette slowly. "Ah, yes. I seem to recall it. Weren't we both at Clark Murdock's?"

"Clark Murdock." Cranston seemed puzzled. "Now it comes back to me. I had forgotten the name of that chemist chap. The one who had all the queer experiments. Very interesting. I wonder how he is progressing."

"He is dead," said Savette, in a tone of surprise. "His laboratory blew up. Didn't you know about that, Mr. Cranston?"

"I seldom read the newspapers," replied Cranston, in a laughing tone. Then his words became solemn. "I am sorry to hear the man died by accidental cause. A great loss to science. He appeared to have discovered something of value. I thought that he was still at work, trying to develop that machine of his."

Another guest interrupted the conversation.

It was nearing midnight. Refreshments were served. While all were eating, Cranston made an announcement.

"This is something of a farewell party, gentlemen," he said. "The wanderlust has seized me again. I am leaving for distant regions, tomorrow."

A buzz of interest arose. Lamont Cranston had a great reputation as a globe-trotter. Questions came. All wanted to know his plans.

"My plans?" Cranston's staid face took on a cryptic smile. "I have none, gentlemen. I go where the mood seizes me. Africa - India - South America. All are alike to me. I do not follow the beaten trail.

"Alone and unattended, I may walk into the midst of a Senegambian tribe. The chief will recognize me. Unheralded, I may appear among the ancient Indians of Peru. There, too, my presence is welcome.

"I have been to Lassa, the Holy City of Tibet. I have trekked through the South African veldt. I have explored the far reaches of the Amazon. I go to places where my very name is unknown to those who recognize me.

"All of the primitive peoples whom I meet have given me their own name. Translated, I am known as 'Child of the Moon,' 'White Chief,' 'Smoke Man' - and a host of other curious titles. I carry weapons, but I seldom use them, except when I am tracking game. I surprise my primitive friends with conjuring tricks, tobacco smoke, simple medical preparations, and other devices which I carry with me.

"I possess an aptitude for learning any dialect almost as I hear it. In this way, I get along well - even with cannibals, who have invariably considered me of more value as a wise man than as a kettle of stew. On my prospective journey, I shall encounter old friends and make new ones."

"You must run great risks," observed someone.

"Of course," said Cranston. "Sometime, I shall not return. No one will ever hear of me again. Well, that

will be an interesting way to shake off this life. I prefer the unusual - in death as well as in life."

"You will be gone long?"

"Longer than usual. I cannot tell the exact period that my trip will cover. That depends upon my varying moods. On this occasion, however, I am doing the unusual. I have arranged my affairs for two years - and I am closing this establishment for the first time. The servants leave tomorrow."

The bizarre notions of Lamont Cranston were highly interesting to this group. These wealthy men preferred the security of New York to the dangers of the jungle. Someone remarked to that effect. Cranston laughed in response.

"One is as safe in the jungle as in New York," he said. "I have told you, gentlemen, that I am always prepared for a strange fate. It could overtake me here, in this house, as well as in a foreign clime. That is one of the oddities of life."

"The parachute jumper dies from a fall down a short flight of steps. The man who catches rattlesnakes, dies from the bite of a mad poodle. It has been so always. Achilles, famous warrior, was slain from an arrow shot in the heel. Pyhrrus, the great general, perished from a tile which a woman dropped upon his head."

As the conversation continued, Doctor Savette found himself taking an increased interest in Lamont Cranston's statements. The man talked impressively and many of his words were interpreted by the physician in an unusual way.

As the guests began to depart, Savette lingered. He had been hearing many chance remarks that indicated Cranston's great wealth. He was loath to leave.

At last, Savette was the only guest who remained. Reluctantly, he turned to send a servant for his hat. It was then that Cranston restrained him.

"I forgot that you arrived late, doctor," he said. "On that account, you were not here when I showed my friends my den. It will be disarranged tomorrow. Can you wait a few minutes - long enough to view it? I can assure you that you will find it interesting."

"Certainly," said Savette.

CRANSTON led the way to a back room on the second floor. Despite his sophistication, Savette was astonished at the sight before him.

Lamont Cranston had collected many curios. Hunting spears from the Amazon; tiger heads from India; odd tapestries from China. The den was a veritable museum; but it possessed unusual features which impressed Savette.

Every object had a history. This tapestry had hung in the imperial palace at Peking. This lota bowl was the gift of a Hindu fakir in Benares. That rifle was a present from a squat Boer who had carried it against the British in South Africa. Skins, rugs, silken ropes - all were spread about the room in abundance.

"Marvelous!" exclaimed Savette, as he listened to Cranston's brief explanations of what the objects signified.

"Marvelous, tonight - yes," declared Cranston. "Tomorrow - just so many more items in storage. That is my one regret, doctor. I hate to see these objects put away."

"I do not blame you."

Cranston detected a glow in the physician's eyes. He became thoughtful; then spoke in a quiet tone.

"Perhaps you would like to keep some of these trifles," he said. "If so, you are welcome to any of them for which you may have a place."

"I could not think of it!" exclaimed Savette.

"Why not?" asked Cranston.

"I would be responsible for their safety," rejoined the physician. "Suppose that something happened to them while -"

"What of it?" Cranston's tone was careless. "Something might happen to them in storage. Particularly the skins and rugs. I would prefer to leave them with someone like yourself. Some one who would appreciate them.

"I have had several friends in mind, but, unfortunately, all are out of town. These guests of mine tonight - wealthy, but not appreciative. They buy what they want. Let them. You are the only one who has expressed real admiration for these objects."

Cranston pressed a button on the wall. His valet came to the room.

"Richards," said Cranston, "where did you leave that large empty box. The heavy one, you know -"

"In the downstairs hallway, sir," responded the valet.

"Come along," suggested Cranston to Savette. "I have the very thing we need."

HE led the physician to the hall below. There, at the rear of the hallway, stood a large box with a door-like front, triple-locked with padlocks. Cranston thumped it in and out to show its solidity.

"This is the very thing," he said. "I am serious, doctor. I would consider it both a favor and an honor if you would provide a comfortable home for some of my rugs and skins. Add a few of the more interesting trophies if you wish.

"I am going away for a long time. I may never come back. I attach no strings to my offer.

"When I return from my present trip, I shall have a supply of new curios that will be larger than the old collection. Larger and of more recent interest."

"You are leaving for two years?" asked Savette.

"Possibly," said Cranston. "It might interest you to know my method, doctor. Many persons have wondered how I manage my affairs while I am away. It is very simple."

He leaned against the box, and pointed upward, toward the second floor.

"When I leave here," he said, "the only luggage that I carry is a large, heavy portmanteau suitcase. I do not know whether I am going to the tropics or the frozen north. I buy the articles I need - trunks and all - when I reach my destination. I dispose of them before I return, so I have no more baggage returning than going.

"My suitcase contains some pet objects, of course my favorite revolver, a few books, other articles that I

am sure to need, and may not be able to obtain where I am going. More important, however, are my drafts and negotiable funds. I carry a supply of gold, of course. All that refers to my traveling affairs.

"But my affairs here in New York are so arranged that I can conduct them as I choose. My resources are very large. I have an old family lawyer - a lolling, stupid fellow - who is just the man I require. He knows nothing, except how to follow directions.

"If I make out checks and mail them to New York or elsewhere, they are honored as if I were here. I, alone, know where I keep my accounts. If I notify my lawyer to deliver securities or other valuables, he does as I tell him. Thus I can watch the rise and fall of the market, no matter where I am, and act accordingly."

"Then you really rely on no one," said Savette. "That is, upon no one but yourself?"

"No, indeed," corrected Cranston. "I sometimes write to friends. For instance, I might write to you and to Bartram, my lawyer, at the same time. My letter to you would request you to obtain one hundred shares of a certain stock from Bartram, to sell them on a certain day, and to deposit the money to my account in a certain bank."

"And Bartram would give me the stocks?"

"Certainly, when you identified yourself. My letter to him would verify that. He is just an office boy. I keep him" - Cranston laughed - "chiefly to be on hand to settle my estate if I should die while I am away."

"Remarkable!" exclaimed Savette.

"Remarkable, but very simple," said Cranston. "I like to do things my own way. One time, in San Francisco, I met an old schoolmate who needed twenty-five thousand dollars. The bank would grant him the loan if he had security. So I wired Bartram to send him forty thousand dollars' worth of certain bonds. Bartram had never heard of the man. That did not matter. He sent the bonds."

"Amazing!" said Savette. "I should think that you would be beset by swindlers -"

"Never," said Cranston. "I do not speak of my affairs to crooks, doctor. In fact, you are one of the very small number of persons who know anything at all about my methods. I have a complete record of my assets in my suitcase.

"Right now" - Cranston spoke calmly - "I could raise three million dollars, through my banks and through Bartram. All on the strength of my signature, by mail."

"Have you experienced any losses through this loose system?"

"It is not a loose system. It is a tight one. I know my own affairs. I keep my own records. I lend money, I trust people. I use good judgment.

"One man failed to repay a debt of five hundred dollars. I lost other small amounts. Less than a thousand, all together. That proves my wisdom in my method.

"I could leave tonight. Walk upstairs, take my bag, and step out of this house. All right. No trouble. As a matter of fact, I shall not touch that bag until I leave, sometime tomorrow night."

"What time are you leaving?"

"I don't even know that. When I please. But let us get back to the curios. It is too late now for you to make a choice. The servants are leaving tomorrow afternoon. I shall be alone here in the evening. If you wish, come out, and you and I can pack what you want. You will have to provide the truck to carry away the box. That is all."

"Good," said Savette, with a tone of sudden decision. "A great idea, Mr. Cranston. I accept your kind offer."

CRANSTON called Richards. "When are you packing up the den?" he asked.

"You said day after tomorrow, sir," said Richards. "Everything else goes out tomorrow. I am to return later to -"

"That's right," observed Cranston. "I had forgotten. Tomorrow, Richards, move this box upstairs. Doctor Savette is coming. He and I will pack some of the curios, and a truck will come to take it. You pack whatever is left, and send it to that special storage house."

"Very good, sir."

"Let's see, now" - Cranston became thoughtful - "you and all the servants will be away tomorrow night -"

"All except Stanley, sir. He will be here to drive you to the station."

"I can do that, Mr. Cranston," observed Savette.

"Surely, surely," said Cranston. "Tell Stanley he can go, also, Richards. That will be a great help, doctor. Send a truck. We shall pack the box and let the men take it. Then we can put my portmanteau in your car. At that time" - he laughed as he spoke - "I shall decide what train I intend to take, what railroad it will be on, and where I am going."

This arranged, Savette noticed the lateness of the hour, and decided that he must be leaving. Cranston accompanied his visitor to the door, and warmly bade him good night.

Driving back toward Manhattan, Doctor Gerald Savette smiled in glee. A short chuckle clucked from his lean lips as he reviewed all that Lamont Cranston had settled and said.

Savette had found a perfect scheme. He had waited wisely before formulating his final crime. Soon he and his companions would roll in unexpected wealth.

Not even The Shadow was a menace now!

## **CHAPTER XVII. THE PLAN WORKS**

AT nine o'clock the next evening Doctor Savette again arrived at Lamont Cranston's home - exactly twenty-four hours after his first visit to the millionaire's mansion.

He noted, as he came up the drive, that only a single light was burning in the house. Savette chuckled. He thought of a wire that he had dispatched last night to Glendale.

The physician was forced to ring the bell twice before the door was opened. It was Lamont Cranston who answered. The millionaire smiled wanly.

"I am everything tonight," he said. "I am taking the place of Richards. I was upstairs in the den when you



rang. Have you arranged for a truck?"

"It will be here in half an hour."

"Good. I want to leave about ten."

The men went upstairs. They entered the den. Cranston puffed as he noted that the room was warm.

"Take off your coat, doctor," he said. "I am going to put you to work."

Savette complied with the suggestion. Cranston removed his own coat. In vests and shirt sleeves, they walked about, looking at the various objects. Savette pointed out different rugs and skins. He also selected a few other objects.

Together, the men piled the articles into the big box, which stood just within the door. Cranston peered into the interior as Savette was arranging it.

"It looks like a padded cell," he said with a laugh. "Have you had any experience with them, doctor?"

Savette chuckled and grunted an incoherent reply in response. Cranston's hand was resting on the chair where the physician's coat lay. He happened to bring it into the light. The gleam of metal showed momentarily; then Cranston's hand dropped.

Doctor Savette turned from the box. He looked about the room with the air of a connoisseur; then stroked his chin, reflectively.

"I think that will do," he observed "My room is very small. I certainly appreciate your kindness, Mr. Cranston."

"Don't mention it," said the millionaire.

"Now we are ready," declared the physician, putting on his coat. Lamont Cranston also donned his outer garment.

"I must get my portmanteau," said Cranston.

He walked across the hallway and disappeared for a moment. He came back, lugging a heavy suitcase which he set down with a thump.

"All ready," he announced. "Let us close the big box; then we can see if the truckmen are here."

The millionaire stooped before the box Savette looked at the man's face in the light.

Cranston was comparatively young, but his face seemed rather old. It was almost masklike, the physician noted, as though his features were formed from an artificial mold - a smooth surface over a visage beneath.

The physician's hands were in his coat pockets. They moved restlessly; then paused as Cranston stepped away from the box and turned toward him.

"SURE you do not want to take more?" questioned the millionaire. "This box will hold a great deal -"

"It is rather well filled," said Savette.

"Listen!" Cranston held up his hand for silence. "Can that be the truck you ordered?"

"I expect so," said Savette. "I left word for it to pull up outside and wait."

"Perhaps you had better make sure," said Cranston. "Wait - I can go downstairs."

He turned toward the door of the den, but Savette stopped him.

"We might as well close the box first," he said. "Do you have the keys for the padlocks?"

Cranston fumbled in his pockets.

"Here they are." He brought out a bunch of keys and tossed them to the physician. "I shall try them to make sure."

He unlocked each of the closed padlocks. Then, as an afterthought, he walked about the box, thumping it heavily.

"Excellent," he said. "No chance of breakage, no matter how roughly it may be handled."

Savette was coming closer, as though to assist in the examination of the box. Cranston again turned away and went out into the hall. He kicked his portmanteau with his foot.

"That's all packed," he said. "We are ready to go. I just want to make sure that I have everything."

He came back after a few moments' inspection in another room. Reaching the den, he picked up a light taboret that stood near the box. It had a deep top, and its octagonal interior was large enough to contain a considerable quantity of articles.

"Are you sure you don't want this?" quizzed Cranston. "It would fit nicely in the box. No chance of its breaking. With the way those sides are padded, I could take a trip in the box myself, without minding it."

"Well," said Savette thoughtfully, "I might take it - no, I don't believe so."

Cranston placed the taboret beside the box. Again, Savette moved closer. Once more, Cranston turned away. His eyes were steady as he stared at the physician.

"What is the matter, doctor?" he questioned. "You appear to be a trifle pale. Are you feeling faint? I know - it is the stuffiness of this room. Come - let us go downstairs and see if the truck is there. The fresh air will do you good."

Savette was nerving himself for a quick action. This last suggestion interfered with his plans. He gave a sudden gasp, and began to stagger. Cranston turned to him in consternation.

"Let me help you, doctor -"

He held out his arms as Savette staggered against him. With his right hand, the physician clutched Cranston's shoulder. His left hand, unseen by the millionaire, crept stealthily from his pocket.

Upward it moved, along Cranston's steady arm.

A tiny metal object gleamed in the physician's hand. With a quick motion, he steadied himself and drove the point of a hypodermic needle into Lamont Cranston's right arm.

The millionaire uttered a sudden exclamation. His face took on a startled expression as Savette staggered away.

Then the millionaire saw the fiendish gleam that was spreading over the physician's face. He came toward Savette, with an unexpected fury. His hands went for the physician's throat. The evil man had unmasked himself too soon.

Cranston's fingers caught the villain's neck. A ring pressed hard against Savette's throat. Then the sudden hold began to weaken. Savette shoved Cranston away; the millionaire staggered backward, toppled, and fell, his shoulder striking the front edge of the box.

There he lay, helpless, without motion. Savette, his teeth together, and his fists clenched, stood above the prostrate body and spat low, furious oaths.

He was recalling statements that Cranston had made last night and tonight. He uttered them now, with evil satisfaction. He cared not that the unconscious man could not hear.

"Going away for a long trip, eh?" snarled Savette. "May never come back. Dangers strike anywhere - here, as likely as in the jungle. Fill the box, eh? With a taboret - packed so it can't break. You wouldn't mind taking a trip in it yourself.

"Well you can." Savette's voice became a hideous chuckle. "Yes, take a trip. You are dead, Cranston. Dead. For forty-eight hours, so far as I am concerned. But to the world, you will be dead forever. Dead - when I choose to say the word. Dead men sometimes live - for a time. You are one who will live, until your usefulness is ended!"

SAVETTE examined the hypodermic. Satisfied that he had given his victim the full charge, he dropped the syringe back in his pocket. Stooping, he tumbled the millionaire's body into the box. The form seemed stiff and inert as the fiend huddled it among the padding rugs.

Savette stood back and surveyed his handiwork. He closed the door of the box and applied the three heavy padlocks. He pushed the taboret a little to one side. Then he turned to the hall. He went downstairs, carrying Cranston's portmanteau with him.

Out on the porch, the physician gave a low whistle. Two men came from a truck parked in the darkness. Savette gave them a terse order.

"Upstairs," he said. "Bring down the big box from the lighted room."

While the men were on the way, Savette placed the portmanteau in his car. He waited until the men brought out the large box and placed it on the truck. He waved his hand as a signal, and the truckmen drove away.

Doctor Savette went back into the house. He walked up to the den, and laughed as he looked at the taboret. It was a valuable article, but not so valuable as the one that he had taken in its place. He picked up the taboret and set it in a corner. The top flopped open. Savette noted that the interior was empty.

He turned out the light in the den. He extinguished other lights on the same floor. He did the same when he reached the downstairs hall. He closed the big front door, latching it behind him.

Richards would be here in the morning. He would find nothing out of order. All of the furniture had been removed; only the few articles that were in the den remained for the valet to clear away.

When Doctor Savette reached his home in New York, he carried Lamont Cranston's portmanteau upstairs with him. He opened the suitcase eagerly. He went through its contents with excited fingers.

Here were the articles he wanted! Checkbooks, lists, and other objects of importance. Savette found

gold and negotiable notes to the value of two thousand dollars. But he pushed these valuables aside in contempt. What were such trifles? This suitcase would be the means of making millions!

Money! He would have it now. The firm of Savette and Tremont, with their Russian partner, Orlinov, would team with sure success. Lamont Cranston's wealth would be the basis of many millions more!

Curbing his criminal emotions, Savette closed the portmanteau and placed it in a corner. He began to consider a milder subject, the simple matter of a short vacation. Savette leaned back in satisfaction as he rested in his easy-chair.

He, too, would go to Glendale. There, Lamont Cranston, under the subtle treatment of Ivan Orlinov, would be induced to disgorge his wealth, at the bidding of his captors!

## **CHAPTER XVIII. ORLINOV'S THREAT**

IT was long past midnight. Orlinov's gray castle stood bleak and barren in the flooding moonlight. Its stone walls were deserted; yet its sullen battlements and sturdy towers spoke of hidden men-at-arms, ready to rise should the ramparts be threatened by an enemy.

A heavy truck glided up to the massive gate that bore the half-defaced name "Glamartin." The lights clicked off and on. In response to the signal, the gate opened, and a stocky man stepped out and walked to the side of the big vehicle.

The watcher had recognized the truckmen who were bringing a new shipment to the castle. All three - two truckmen and one watcher - were handpicked gorillas in the service of Biff Towley.

The truck passed on. The gate clanged behind it. The truck stopped in front of the stone building. Men came from the door. Strong hands unloaded the heavy box from the truck. Through the door went the box, into the hallway, then to the security of Orlinov's living room.

The handlers noticed the heavy fastenings of the box, its long pivot hinge, its solid padlocks. The burden rested on the floor as they surveyed it. Then the men left, locking the door of the room.

There was no light in the living room, save the dying glow of embers in the fireplace. The mysterious box loomed large in the vague light. The only tokens of activity were the flickering, changing shadows that wavered across the floor in response to the faint glow from the large fireplace.

Strange shadows in a strange room! Shadows that varied with the dying of the coals. Shadows that flitted like ghostly, goblin shapes. Shadows that were unreal, yet shades that seemed possessed of an uncanny life.

The faint crackling of the embers; the occasional creaking of the floor; these were the only sounds within that room. Then, shadows and sounds took on a more eerie trend. They were vague and uncertain as the firelight dwindled almost into nothingness.

One might have thought that elfin footfalls were creeping through that room, that the heavy door that led to the hall had opened, and then closed.

In the mystery wing of the house, a lone gangster patrolled the dim, lengthy corridor. His vigil took him from the second floor to the first; then back up to the second.

On the upper story, he stopped frequently to lift up square panels in the centers of certain doors, to make sure that no lights glimmered from the rooms within.

Calloused and unimaginative, this watchman was unperturbed by the creaking of the floor beneath his feet, and the strange, grotesque shadows that he encountered in the gloomy light. Fantastic silhouettes did not impress his sordid mind.

He was alert, but calmly so, as he patrolled his course. Reaching the end of the corridor, he turned and went back over the route that he had covered before.

WITHIN a veritable cellroom, Cliff Marsland lay half awake upon a corner couch. The flicker of dim light passed over his eyes as the watching hoodlum lifted the panel in the door that led to the hall. Then the panel closed.

A short time later, Cliff opened his eyes, fancying that another beam of illumination had strayed into the room. Then he felt that he must have been mistaken, for all remained dark by the door.

Cliff pitched restlessly. He was wearied by this captivity. He had found himself in this room, weak and peplless, after he had recovered from the effects of the hypo jabbed into his arm.

He had remained here a long while - weeks, it seemed - and his jailers had been uncommunicative. Actually, Cliff realized, his confinement had been a matter of days only; but time had passed dully.

He had eaten the food that was furnished him. He did not fear poison for he knew he was completely in the power of his captors. He had realized that he had been receiving a mild opiate for he had constantly lacked strength since his capture.

Even now, although aroused and disgruntled, Cliff could not overcome the drowsiness that gripped him. His restlessness ended. He slept.

Shafts of morning light flung a melancholy glare through the high, glass-barred slits that served as windows in Cliff's prison. The captive awoke and again - as on previous mornings - realized his plight.

Cliff was in the same predicament as those other men whom Orlinov had shown him. He was one of the dead who lived.

Cliff raised his head and adjusted his pillow, preparing for another doze. His hand struck something. He raised the pillow; then quickly dropped it while he stared toward the door of the room to make sure that no one was watching him.

Beneath his pillow was a pocket-model automatic pistol! Half dazed, Cliff remembered a vague fit of wakefulness during the night, followed by a hazy dream that someone was in the room. He rose quickly from his bed and dressed.

With another glance at the door, he raised the pillow, half expecting to find nothing there. He had not been mistaken. His hand clutched a gun.

A pocket .32, flat as a book, its magazine loaded to eight-cartridge capacity. Standing by the bed, Cliff slipped the handy weapon into his hip pocket. With the revolver was a box of cartridges. He dropped this in the other pocket. Also, he saw an envelope.

With his back toward the wall, Cliff removed a message from the envelope. It was written in code, in ink. It bore these words, as Cliff translated them.

Key on ledge of window. Be in readiness tonight. Act if shots

are fired. Otherwise wait until midnight. Then take control of upper

wing.

A message from The Shadow! Cliff was elated. Somehow, his leader had managed to penetrate to this isolated spot; to bring him a weapon; to leave him instructions. Cliff understood. He slipped his hand to the window ledge, found the key, and left it there.

Sometime tonight, The Shadow intended to open an attack. Fiends of crime would meet their match, elsewhere in this strange, castle-like abode. This wing would be under guard. It was Cliff's appointed task to spring a surprise attack, to gain control of the wing, and hold it for whatever purpose The Shadow intended.

Thus The Shadow would strike from two directions. He himself would come from without; Cliff Marsland would hammer from within.

This place was a vital spot. Cliff, by a sortie, could control the wing for The Shadow, and thus protect the other prisoners.

Cliff foresaw a struggle against giant odds, and the thought elated him. He knew well that he could hardly hope to fight his way safely from this place, with nearly a score of enemies to block his path. But with The Shadow beating down the opposition, matters were quite different. The Shadow alone was match for half a hundred hoodlums.

CLIFF pondered. A pistol shot was to be the signal. He doubted that he could hear it. Then he remembered the exact wording of the message, which had disappeared from the sheet of paper he had read.

If shots are fired -

The Shadow, should he open an attack, would meet with a cannonade from Orlinov's henchmen. Cliff would hear that, surely. There was also the possibility of The Shadow waiting until midnight.

Cliff knew the exactness of his mysterious chief. Midnight would be the zero hour, if nothing transpired before then. Cliff buried the envelope within the pages of a book. He thrust the paper with some other sheets. He sat down in a chair and puffed at an unlighted cigarette. He was allowed no matches here.

The door opened, and Petri stepped in, carrying a tray of breakfast. Cliff looked stupidly toward the solemn-faced Russian. He knew that Petri was backed by a mobster in the corridor.

He ate his breakfast after Petri had gone. He drank but little of the coffee furnished him, for he was convinced that it was doped.

The day wore on. A second meal at noon. Cliff busied himself reading various books that were in the room. A long afternoon dragged by. Dinner. Then evening.

Now, Cliff was tense. He realized well the security of his position. There was nothing in this room that could be used as a weapon, save the gun that he had obtained without the knowledge of his captors. It was safely tucked in his pocket. Orlinov and Petri were the only ones who had keys to this room. Any search of the prisoner would be unnecessary.

During the day, Cliff had come to the conclusion that The Shadow must have worked through one of Orlinov's henchmen. He did not believe that The Shadow could be here; nor was it likely that he had sent another operative to the castle.

Tonight, The Shadow would attack from without, knowing that Cliff would be on hand to take charge in

the vital section of the castle. It would not be a question of Cliff fighting free; it would be The Shadow's work to battle his way inward.

Eight o'clock arrived, then nine neared. Cliff was anxious and on edge. While he was trying to maintain his composure, he saw the door move. It opened. In stepped Ivan Orlinov

It was with difficulty that Cliff restrained himself from action. He might have overpowered the bearded Russian by a quick encounter, but he deemed it best to wait. He must not spoil The Shadow's well-laid plans.

ORLINOV walked toward Cliff and stood glaring at him. The big, bearded man was a menacing figure. Cliff met his sparkling gaze with calmness. He saw one of the mobsmen in the background, holding a revolver in readiness.

This was a time for tact. Yet Cliff was perturbed. He feared that something must have gone awry; that Orlinov had learned that events were scheduled for tonight.

"Marslandt," growled Orlinov, in his deep bass, "I haff come here to speak with you. It iss wise that you should tell me tings that I haff not yet asked to know."

Cliff made no reply. He stared coldly toward his inquisitor. He was tempted to draw his automatic, but knew that such action would provoke a crisis. It was not until the Russian spoke again that Cliff fully understood the import of his visit.

"You haff come here," Orlinov declared, "to make trouble because someone hass sent you. We know who it iss who hass sent you. He iss called The Shadow."

The speaker paused, and his harsh eyes shone furiously as he advanced.

"You will tell us," he hissed. "You will tell us, Marslandt. Who iss The Shadow?"

"I know nothing of The Shadow," Cliff answered.

"We shall see," declared Orlinov, in an ominous growl. "Let me tell you this Marslandt. We haff ways here that can make you tell!"

He uttered loud words in his native tongue. It was a call to Petri. The second Russian appeared from the corridor. In his hand he held a revolver.

Again a command from Orlinov. Methodically, Petri approached and jabbed the muzzle of his gun into Cliff's back. Orlinov pointed toward the door. Petri nudged Cliff in that direction.

What did this mean?

Cliff realized that he was being forced into a predicament that might prove as dangerous as it was unexpected. His guard shoved him into the corridor; there a gangster waited, also armed. Along the corridor, past the rows of silent doors then down the stairs they went, to the ground floor.

It was too late now to make a break for safety. There was nothing for Cliff to do but wait. At least his captors did not know that he was armed, and there would be no occasion to search him.

Cliff's ears were keen, in case they might hear the report of a distant gun - the signal that would denote the arrival of The Shadow.

Orlinov passed the little group when they reached the first floor. He unlocked a panel in the wall. The

barrier slid back to show a flight of stairs descending into the cellar.

Cliff advanced when he heard the order. He entered the gloomy well and went down the steps, still feeling the threat of the revolver that pressed his back.

PETRI was a vigilant captor. Not for one instant did Cliff have an opportunity to reach for his gun.

He kept on his way until they reached a stone-walled room that had the mustiness of a dungeon. It was lighted by a single incandescent. Through a door they went, into another room, which also had a single large lamp.

Cliff's lips pressed firmly together. He realized the purpose of this journey. They had reached a veritable torture chamber, below the ground. At one side was a flat, spike-studded table. Across the room stood a coffin-like contrivance, upright, with a hinged door.

Here was a post, with manacles attached; there a yawning pit in the floor. Cliff's destination was a spot against the wall, where four metal loops dangled on the ends of ropes which passed through pulleys. In another moment, Cliff was backed against the side of the room, with Petri's revolver pressing the pit of his stomach.

Now the gangster member of the trio was covering Cliff. Orlinov stood by while Petri stooped to attach the lower bands to Cliff's ankles. Next came the wrists.

Petri walked to one side and turned a winch. It drew Cliff's body toward the right; as the rope went upward, his arm was raised above his head.

Methodically, Petri strode toward the other side of the room, and turned a second winch. Cliff's left arm was hoisted forcibly. He stood spread-eagled in the clutches of the locking bands, while Orlinov's black face remained motionless. At length, the bearded Russian spoke.

"You see?" he questioned. "We haff placed you where you can tell. This iss how it hass been done in Siberia - many years ago. People have found it wise to speak when the torture hass been close to them."

He motioned the gangster to the other winch. With Petri at one side, and the gunman at the other, both winches could be operated simultaneously.

"I haff given you the chance!" hissed Orlinov "Speak! Tell me: Who iss The Shadow? What haff you known about him? Speak!"

Cliff remained obdurate. Orlinov signaled his men. They turned the winches. Cliff felt a terrific agony as his limbs began to draw from his body. A gesture from the bearded Russian stopped the barbarous torture.

"You haff tasted what iss to follow," said Orlinov. "You shall haff more - unless you speak -"

Cliff's answer was a furious scowl. He was determined to withstand this barbarity. Orlinov watched him. Red lips leered through the jet-black beard. A sign from Orlinov, and the winches turned farther.

As the strain ceased a second time, Cliff's maddened brain began to formulate a plan. He was willing to bear the agony until it killed him; but that seemed a futile plan.

His duty tonight was to serve The Shadow. Crippled and helpless, he would be of no use. It was a long time until midnight. His endurance had not yet been fully taxed. Let them turn the winches farther; then he would offer to speak.



He could tell Orlinov of The Shadow - for Cliff's information would at best be barren. Like the other agents of The Shadow, he knew little of the mysterious man's ways. Yes, that was the best course: to hold out; then pretend to cry for mercy.

While Cliff Marsland was thus planning, Orlinov, too, was scheming. He was a master of the almost extinct art of torture. He intended to let Cliff Marsland suffer a while; then to ease him, that he might experience the temporary relief that would make the thought of further barbarity unendurable.

It was a battle of wits, with Orlinov the master. The huge Russian had looked forward to this hour, ever since Cliff had been made a prisoner. At his urging, Tremont had given him free rein.

Whether The Shadow was alive or dead, Ivan Orlinov would force statements from the lips of his helpless agent. Such work was a pleasure to the bearded fiend. The Russian spoke in his native tongue, and Petri nodded understanding.

The grim game began again. The winches tautened the ropes. Cliff Marsland set his lips. Ivan Orlinov grinned in anticipation. He saw success.

Tonight, he would learn the truth about The Shadow!

## **CHAPTER XIX. THE MAN FROM OUTSIDE**

THE light switched on in the living room of Orlinov's castle. Glade Tremont entered and sat down in a chair. He lighted a cigar and stared thoughtfully at the large box which stood beside the fireplace.

The gray-haired lawyer had undergone a metamorphosis during the stay at Glendale. Association with Ivan Orlinov had caused a change. Here, away from his staid office in New York, the attorney had lost his mask of respectability. He looked the scoundrel that he was.

It appeared from Tremont's air that he was expecting the arrival of someone. He had left the door of the room open. His eyes were watching toward the hall. The lawyer glanced at his watch. He rose and began to pace the floor.

Footsteps sounded in the hall. Tremont waited. A figure appeared, and Tremont recognized Doctor Gerald Savette. He waved a welcome to his companion in crime. The rascally physician entered, and the two seated themselves.

"Ah!" exclaimed Savette. "There are my trophies."

He pointed significantly to the box.

"Yes," said Tremont, with an evil smile. "We have kept the box here, awaiting your arrival."

"It might have been wise to open it."

"We discussed that, Orlinov and I. We decided to wait, chiefly because the box is such a strong one. We knew that you would have the keys. The contents are valuable, you know. It would not be wise to damage them by demolishing the box."

"That's true," said Savette. "No use to you until I arrived. I gave the usual death dose - forty-eight hours. There is plenty of time yet. We could wait another night; but I think it would be best to open the box now."

He brought the keys from his pocket; then, as an afterthought, he left the living room and returned with

Lamont Cranston's portmanteau.

"This is the missing link," he declared. "Its contents are as vital as those of the box."

He laid the suitcase on the floor, and opened it. Tremont drew close to watch the examination of the important articles that the bag contained.

"Where is Orlinov?" asked Savette, as he started to lift some books from the suitcase.

"He is quizzing this man Marsland," answered Tremont. "They are downstairs - below ground - in the wing of the house."

Savette uttered a sharp exclamation as he dropped a book upon the floor. He stood up and faced Tremont, an annoyed look upon his face.

"That's a mistake!" he declared "A bad mistake, Glade! Nothing can be gained. Something may be lost!"

"How?"

"Marsland won't talk. Probably he can't talk. You know enough of The Shadow's ways to realize that. We are only keeping Marsland here because we have not yet gained positive evidence that The Shadow is dead."

"Orlinov has been anxious to test Marsland," declared Tremont. "It occurred to me that he might learn something of value that would enable us to trace The Shadow's lair - to assure ourselves that the dangerous man is really dead."

"The fellow will resist," warned Savette. "Orlinov may carry the torture too far. He will learn nothing, and Marsland may die. Then it would be our ill fortune to find The Shadow alive and active. Our hostage would be gone; and we would have a revengeful enemy."

Tremont laughed.

"Don't worry about Orlinov," he said. "Ivan is a craftsman in torture. He will not overdo it. He handles his victims as a cat plays with a mouse. When he proposed torture for Marsland, I agreed. I wanted to see how he would succeed with such a close-mouthed fellow."

"He tells me that he will work to break the man's endurance. Easily, slowly - then a period of relief that is worse than the torture itself. Orlinov swears he will make Marsland talk. He is going about it by degrees. So there is no cause for alarm. Our precious hostage will not die - at least not tonight."

SAVETTE pondered, then shrugged his shoulders. After all, torture was Orlinov's stock in trade. Savette recalled the efficacy of the bearded Russian's methods.

"If Marsland gives out," added Tremont, "Orlinov will stop for tonight. If he gives in under the strain, Orlinov has promised to let me know immediately. He will come up here when Marsland expresses his willingness to speak. We can both go downstairs to hear the grilling."

"Here's wishing Orlinov luck," declared Savette. "It's good practice for him, after all. We have a new customer who may need treatment" - Savette pointed over his shoulder to the big box - "so if Orlinov experiments with Marsland it may do good rather than harm. I'll take your word for it that he is using discretion."

"Let me see what you have here," said Tremont, pointing to the portmanteau.

Forgetting Marsland's situation, Savette again stooped before the suitcase and began to pass various articles to Tremont.

"Look them over," grinned the renegade physician. "This is a gold mine, Glade. A real gold mine. Better than anything we have struck. It gives us all the funds we want.

"I caught Cranston just as he was leaving for parts unknown, to be gone for two years. He is now a dead man who will live - and people will not know it for a while, so long as he signs his checks and sends his written orders for the disposition of his available wealth.

"We can take it slowly and wisely. Time it with the progress of our experiments here. Then, when we are through with the others, we will be through with Cranston, too. He will go out with the rest."

"How will you cover his death?"

"Cover it? By letters that he himself writes. I shall go abroad, Glade. Word will come back that Cranston is in Africa, going to a dangerous region of the jungle. It will be easy to plant the evidence - especially with Cranston's own letters. He will not come back - that is all. I'm glad I waited for this. It is the best and safest proposition that we have yet encountered."

"Six months at the most," said Tremont thoughtfully.

"Ah!" exclaimed Savette. "You have made new progress here?"

"All that can be desired," declared the lawyer. "The television work is actually done. Something new may develop in it - but it has already exceeded our expectation. The energy device will require more time to get it to the point we want. It is a sure proposition, however. A little trouble with the air inventions. That will be ironed out."

Doctor Savette stood up. His face gleamed; he laughed harshly. Silently, he began to display the articles that he had stolen from Cranston. Checkbooks, with balances marked in them. Account books, carefully prepared in detail. Each item brought a grunt of satisfaction from Glade Tremont.

"I know that lawyer, Bartram," he said. "A soft egg, if ever there was one. He looks like a human jellyfish. There will be easy ways to work this, Gerald.

"Suppose an unknown inventor shows up in New York - a man with an idea in television, for instance. Taking up work that another dropped - through death. Bartram is then instructed to give this chap money -"

"A good tie-up," interjected Savette, as the lawyer paused. "That will all come later. It is just a case of playing a perfect game. The cards are in our hands. Everything has been smooth here. It will continue to be -"

There was a thump at the door. Savette dropped the loose articles back into the portmanteau. He nodded to Tremont.

"Come in," called the lawyer.

BIFF TOWLEY entered. The gang leader was hardly recognizable. A broad strip of adhesive plaster was across the bridge of his nose. His forehead and his cheeks were puffed and blackish.

Towley's physiognomy was not a handsome one at best. When The Shadow had bashed it with the revolver he had changed the contour of the vile countenance. Biff Towley had good reason to remember

that gunfight on the Long Island swimming pier.

Savette stared curiously at the gang leader. He had known of Towley's plight, and it would be his work to remake the shattered features after Biff's face had mended somewhat.

"What is it?" questioned Tremont.

"Just nabbed a bozo out front," declared Biff.

Tremont looked at Savette. Both men had the same thought. The Shadow! Could it be possible that the man still lived? Or was this some agent who was taking up his work?

"Bring him in," ordered Tremont.

Biff went away. Savette looked at Tremont with apprehensive eye.

"Maybe it is just some prowler," declared the lawyer. "We have put on strict guard. We are taking no chances now."

"It's not a good idea to bring the fellow in, then," said Savette. "If he is just someone from the vicinity, he may talk -"

"Don't worry about that," replied Tremont. "No one has a right trespassing on this property. If this man appears to know nothing, I shall simply reprimand him for entering the grounds. Orlinov has done that to trespassers frequently."

The door opened, and a man entered. Biff Towley was right behind him. The gang leader was playing the part of a grounds keeper on the estate. Savette could see that he was holding a revolver in readiness.

"Here he is, sir," declared Towley. "I thought I had better bring him in here, Mr. Tremont, because I found this on him."

He tossed a small automatic into a chair beside the lawyer. Tremont picked up the gun and examined it. He calmly released the safety lock. Thus armed with a loaded pistol, he was in readiness, although his action appeared to be perfectly normal.

The man whom Biff Towley had brought in was standing with bowed head. His pose did not make him appear formidable. Tremont uttered a terse order, bidding Towley to leave. The gang leader retired, leaving his prisoner under Tremont's guard.

"Well?" he questioned harshly.

The man raised his head. Simultaneously, gasps of astonishment came from both Tremont and Savette. Then the gray-haired lawyer chuckled, and the physician joined with a raspy laugh.

"Harold Sharrock!" said the lawyer, in a sarcastic tone. "Just the man we have wanted. Walked right in to see us. Excellent!"

Sharrock, tall and weak-chinned, stared in a stupefied manner as he faced his captors. He seemed to be making an effort to be bold, without succeeding.

Glade Tremont's chuckle trailed into a dwindling laugh that boded no good for this unexpected visitor. Harold Sharrock had come from the outside. What was his purpose here?

That he would presently explain. Glade Tremont's grim gaze showed that he intended to make Sharrock

talk.

## CHAPTER XX. THE MAN FROM INSIDE

"WELL?"

Glade Tremont's short, harsh question was uttered as he stared into Harold Sharrock's eyes. They were mild, light-gray eyes that flinched as they met the lawyer's gaze. Then, with an effort, Sharrock tried to gain composure.

A flush came to his pasty face. His weak eyes glistened. He bit his colorless lips as he looked from Tremont to Savette. His manner showed that he knew these men, and understood the evil in their hearts.

"I've come back," declared Sharrock hoarsely. "Come back, for an accounting. That's all."

"That is enough," commented Tremont.

Sharrock flinched; then stared boldly toward Doctor Savette.

"I landed this morning," he said. "I went up to watch your house. I followed you when you went to take the train. I did not know where you were going. I did not know that you had this place here. When I saw you enter, I came after. I wanted to get you - to kill you - both of you!"

Hatred flashed in Sharrock's face as he delivered this outburst. Tremont and Savette both received the statement calmly. They were not perturbed in the least.

"Your return is a fortunate one," declared Savette. "We can use some of those funds which belong to us."

"Belong to you!" Sharrock's cry was contemptuous. "Nothing belongs to you! There is nothing for you to get. I lost everything I had at Monte Carlo!"

"Hm-m-m," chuckled Glade Tremont. "Now I suppose you would like to have us finance you?"

"You can guess why I'm here," blurted Sharrock. "I'm going to face the music, that's all. Kill me, if you want. That's better than jail. I've come here to see if Austin is still alive - to make up for the evil that I have done him. It means jail for me. I don't care."

Tremont shook his head sadly.

"While you had the money, you forgot Austin Bellamy," he said. "Now you appear to have a conscience. A very useless possession - a conscience. I wonder what it feels like - a conscience?"

He looked at Savette, and the physician laughed. Like Tremont, he was conscienceless.

"SAY what you want, you crooks!" said Sharrock hoarsely. "You started the dirty work. You and that renegade, Ivan Orlinov!"

"What of it?" questioned Tremont. "You are only giving us credit for an excellent idea. I happened to be your stepbrother's lawyer. Doctor Savette chanced to be his physician. We saw that you had been wrongfully cut off in his new will. So we quietly arranged his death - with your approval - and kept him alive, with Ivan Orlinov as his capable guardian."

"Yes," retorted Sharrock. "You did it - for half a million. Then you kept Austin Bellamy because he was a threat. You had it framed so I could be the goat. All done with my order."

"You bled me - a hundred thousand dollars at a time - to get the entire two million. I got away, to France, with half a million left. There are crooks there, too. I was in no mood to ward them off.

"I'm back now, broke - all except a few thousands. I'm going to come clean. I've come to tell you that. I wanted to learn if Austin were still alive -"

"He is alive," interposed Tremont. "Alive and well. That means we still have the threat which you have mentioned."

"That is not all," added Savette. "You speak of us killing you, Sharrock. That is a good suggestion - one which we shall use. But we have a few other devices that are better than death. We have progressed since our early days, when we kept your dear stepbrother doped in a cottage on the Jersey coast."

"I've figured that," said Sharrock bitterly. "You bought this place with my money -"

"With Bellamy's money -" corrected Tremont.

"With anybody's money but yours!" cried Sharrock. "You are up to new mischief. You had a cottage; now you have a castle. I know your game! You are tricking others - holding new prisoners -"

"Excellent reasoning," declared Tremont ironically, as Sharrock paused. "You have made a perfect deduction, Sharrock. So I think it would be a good plan to reward you.

"We are keeping this establishment. It is well guarded. It is necessary. So to terminate our discussion with you, we shall let you travel the route that others have taken, since your stepbrother made the precedent.

"How would you like to become one of the living dead?"

Sharrock's face blanched. He trembled. Tremont and Savette indulged in villainous smiles.

"To kill you would be a pleasure," declared Tremont. "Unfortunately, we do not know what foolish things you may have done before you reached here. It would be best to have you alive - so that you can speak - under Orlinov's pressure.

"So you shall taste of death. It was kind of you to come here. Others have not been so obliging. That box" - he pointed to the heavy object by the fireplace - "contains one new member for our colony. We were forced to ship him here as we shipped others. You have saved us that trouble.

"What do you say, doctor? We are very busy at present" - Tremont was smiling toward Savette - "and we cannot be annoyed with our good friend Sharrock at this moment. Shall we put him away for the death period of two days?"

"An excellent idea," returned Savette.

"Are you prepared to perform the operation?" questioned Tremont.

With a suave smile, Savette removed a hypodermic syringe from his pocket. Sharrock quailed as he saw the object. Then the threat of the revolver held by Tremont became imminent. Sharrock stood trembling, fearing both the gun and the needle.

Doctor Savette approached the helpless man. He threw back Sharrock's arms, and wrested his coat from his body. He tore away the sleeve of the man's shirt. He raised the syringe and prepared to thrust its needle into the victim's flesh.

PALE, tottering, Sharrock began to edge away. A short word came from Tremont. Sharrock saw the

threat of the revolver.

He faced two deaths: that of the needle would be temporary; that of the gun would be permanent. He knew that he must accept one. He looked from Tremont to Savette. There was no mercy in either of those livid faces.

"Wait!" exclaimed Sharrock, in futile tone. "Let me talk. Maybe I can - can forget what I know -"

"You will forget it," declared Tremont coldly. "Certainly. We are arranging that at present. I give you warning, Sharrock. We do not intend to waste more time with you. You have your choice - the needle or a bullet.

"You have no friends here. If you flinch or refuse to take the hypodermic, I shall shoot you through your yellow heart. We are not afraid of anything you may have done. Do not hope that I shall spare you."

Sharrock knew well that Tremont was speaking facts. Motionless, he stared weakly at the lawyer. Tremont held the gun leveled toward the intended victim's breast.

Savette, nearer to Tremont than Sharrock was, stood away from the line of the lawyer's aim, calmly holding the needle in readiness. He was facing Tremont.

The three men formed a strange tableau, their profiles toward the fireplace, where no embers glowed tonight. Savette was awaiting a signal from Tremont - an indication whether he should go ahead with the injection or whether the lawyer intended to shoot to kill.

No eyes were upon the huge box. Something was happening there. The lone pivot hinge on one side of the box was moving noiselessly upward, actuated by some mechanism operated from the interior. The motion of the hinge stopped.

Now the door of the box was opening, slowly and silently - opening at the side where the hinge had lifted. The strong padlocks, with their firm hasps and staples, were serving as a hinge! The door was opening the wrong way!

Clear of the tricky hinge, released by slots that were now freed, the door swung wide, pushed open by a hand from within. The noise of that opening turned six eyes toward the box. Tremont, Savette, and Sharrock gazed instinctively in that direction.

Moving forward from the box was the crouching, huddled form of a man clad entirely in black. He was a blotted form, his body shapeless under its black cloak, his features invisible under the protecting edge of a broad-brimmed hat. His hands were thrust forward. They alone seemed alive. Black-clad hands - in each an automatic!

One gun was trained on Tremont; the other covered Savette. The black form continued its emergence. It rose and took the shape of a tall, sinister being.

"The Shadow!"

The cry came from Savette's lips. It was echoed by Tremont's weak gasp. The answer was a sinister, whispered laugh from lips that the cloak collar covered. The laugh of The Shadow! The laugh of a man whom Tremont and Savette believed dead!

Neither villain dared move. Fiends that they were, they trembled. Sharrock stood dumfounded at the sight of this strange avenger.

Again, The Shadow laughed. He had caught his archenemies by a well-timed ruse. The dread avenger was here, to settle scores, in the very lair of his foe. With guarding mobsmen outside, protected by the walls of a veritable fortress, the fiends were helpless.

The Shadow's laugh was the sardonic mirth of vengeance. It was a laugh that boded death!

## **CHAPTER XXI. CLIFF FINDS A CHANCE**

"I'll speak! I'll speak!"

The words were gasped by foam-flecked lips. Cliff Marsland, in the agony of exquisite torture, was calling pleadingly to Ivan Orlinov.

"You will tell all?"

The Russian's question was a growled retort.

"Yes!" Cliff's voice quavered. "Let me loose - I'll - I'll -"

His choking voice could say no more. The strain of the maddening, limb-wrenching winches was too great for him to stand. Cliff's head toppled forward on his chest.

Orlinov gave two commands. Both were the same. One was in Russian, and the other in English. Slowly, the winches were released. Cliff's arms dropped. The ropes became slack. He crumpled to the floor and lay there, inert.

Ivan Orlinov stared long at the man whom he had tortured. It was apparent that Cliff Marsland had held out until complete anguish forced him to yield. He had lost his senses now. Orlinov was sorry. It might be some time before the man would speak.

Cliff had indeed suffered; but not so much as Orlinov supposed. All through the torture, he had played a part. He had winced without an outcry, feigning pain so effectively that Orlinov had imagined his anguish far greater than it actually was.

Now, too, Cliff was playing a part. He had tried to delay this torture until he felt that it was bringing injury from which he could not easily recover. The wrenching had reached that state. Then, Cliff had uttered his pleading cry.

On the floor, he resembled a man who had lost consciousness. Orlinov leaned over him and shook his body roughly. Cliff made no response. The Russian was convinced that his victim was senseless

Orlinov became thoughtful. This torture had taken some time. It was late in the evening, now. By this time, Doctor Gerald Savette would be here. Both he and Tremont would want to see the victim; to hear Cliff Marsland speak.

The Russian knew his game. He had learned that the combined remembrance of past torture, coupled with the threat of future, was a weapon that could force the most hardened man to speak. In addition, present ease - as a pleasant lapse between two racking sessions - was also a way to make obdurate persons reasonable.

Cliff Marsland, weakened, unconscious, and weaponless, could make no trouble here. Orlinov signaled to Petri and the gangster. The men approached while the big Russian undid the fetters that held Marsland's arms and legs.



THE underlings raised Cliff Marsland, and carried his helpless body to a couch in an obscure corner of the room. They placed him so his head was propped up on a pillow. His arms and legs were sprawled.

Cliff's eyes were closed; but when he opened them, he would see the room before him. He would view the pulleyed ropes that had caused his former torture. He would observe the other implements of brutality which boded other agonies.

It would not be a pleasant thought - the possibility of running the gamut of Ivan Orlinov's grim devices. The bed of spikes, the iron coffin, the blackened pit - all were formidable.

Several minutes went by. Orlinov was waiting. He did not care to summon Tremont and Savette until this man would be ready to speak. Orlinov intended to put on an exhibition of his skill, the methods that he had learned so well in the days of czarist Russia

Cliff Marsland stirred, but his eyes did not open. His head rolled to one side. He seemed to sense the agony that he had suffered. He raised his arms and pressed them against his body. He turned on his right side, his arm beneath him. His head slumped, and he remained inert.

A clever ruse! One that was natural enough to deceive Ivan Orlinov. It placed Cliff's right hand out of view, close to his hip pocket. At that instant he could have yanked out his gun and started a battle for safety. Both Petri and the gangster had revolvers; but neither was in readiness.

There were two reasons why Cliff desisted. One was because he had suffered greatly and was weak. Each minute, he knew, would help him to recuperate. The second was because time was moving. Any minute, now, might bring the shots that would be The Shadow's signal!

Orlinov studied Cliff closely. It appeared as though the victim had again lapsed into unconsciousness. Nevertheless, he could easily be revived, since he had shown momentary signs of life. Orlinov spoke to Petri; then repeated to the gangster, in English:

"Wait here. Wait until I return. If he has begun to awake, watch him close. Haff your revolver ready."

"Sure thing," growled the gunman, drawing his revolver and brandishing it significantly.

Orlinov departed. Cliff lay motionless. He did not allow his eyelids to even tremble. He could hear Orlinov's footsteps dying away. He would know when the Russian returned.

Cliff's fingers, hidden, clutched the handle of the automatic. At any moment, now, he could begin a surprise attack. He intended to act quickly.

A sudden leap, a drawn gun - that was his chance to catch his adversaries off guard. He would have to beat two men to the shot. He was confident that he could do it.

Listening, Cliff could hear signs that indicated where each of his enemies stood. Even should Orlinov return, Cliff could act, for he felt sure that the bearded Russian would have no gun in readiness.

The time for action might be imminent. Cliff's one fear was that this would prolong until midnight. How would he know that hour? Suppose The Shadow was waiting for him to act?

This was a dilemma. The minutes on the rack had been torturous ones that had seemed much longer than they really were.

It might be ten o'clock - eleven - even past midnight - for all Cliff knew. His natural craving for action urged him to draw his gun now, while he had the opportunity. But that might mean action before the

arrival of The Shadow.

Without the man in black to help him, Cliff's efforts to escape could be no more than futile. There were too many mobsmen on these premises. Hasty action would spoil all. Patient waiting might bring success.

So Cliff Marsland waited. Possum-like, he feigned unconsciousness, waiting for the signal that would mean The Shadow was at hand!

## CHAPTER XXII. THE SHADOW SPEAKS

THE echoes of a sinister, whispered laugh died away. The Shadow, master in the lair of villains, made a downward motion with his automatics.

Understanding, Glade Tremont lowered his hand and reluctantly dropped the weapon which he held. Gerald Savette lowered his hand also, but did not release the hypodermic syringe.

The Shadow's burning eyes glared at the men whom he had trapped. They were helpless, and they knew it. The Shadow had them at his mercy. What did he intend to do?

"Pick up the pistol, Sharrock," said The Shadow in a low, strange whisper.

The tall man nodded. He was trying to recover his wits. Mechanically, he obtained the gun which Tremont had dropped on the floor. He stood between the two men whom The Shadow dominated.

"You thought me dead," whispered The Shadow.

He laughed as he addressed these words to Tremont and Savette. The strange emphasis on each uttered syllable made the villains tremble. Men without mercy, they expected none now. The Shadow was a superman. The fact that he still lived made him more amazing, in their minds, than before.

"You thought me dead," repeated The Shadow. "But I live - as you have learned. I know your schemes in full. I knew your ways of plotting. Money. You needed it, Savette. You were looking for a victim. You found Lamont Cranston."

The Shadow paused, and Savette understood. The echoed mockery of another laugh came as a hateful sound to his ears. The Shadow spoke again.

"What little of your work I did not know," resumed The Shadow, "I have learned tonight. I shall tell you of your crimes, that you may know why I propose grave consequences.

"Austin Bellamy was your first victim. Lawyer betrayed his client; physician, his patient. Your death serum, Savette, worked then for the first time. You spirited Bellamy from your sanitarium, a few years ago. Then came the fire - in which another body was recognized by you as Bellamy's.

"With wealth gained through your pact with Sharrock, you two placed Orlinov in this castle. You became brain thieves. Professor Pierre Rachaud was your first victim. He never sailed on the Albania when it left New York, cruise bound.

"You had trapped him before that. He was on his way here in a box. You posed as Rachaud. All that went overboard were clothes and false whiskers - through the porthole of your cabin. Then smug Doctor Savette was merely a passenger for the rest of the trip"

Savette looked at Tremont as The Shadow paused. The man in black had spoken the truth. He had detected the method behind Savette's game.

"CLARK MURDOCK was the next," resumed The Shadow. "I was at his house that night when you seized him and left the body of a dead man in his place. I heard Murdock speak to his servant about the box.

"At that time, I suspected that someone might have designs on Murdock's life, but I did not believe that danger was due to strike so soon. You were clever then, Savette.

"You, Tremont, have told me how you snared Matt Hartley. You would never have succeeded, had you not trapped Marsland, my man here. From then on, you thought you had me helpless. There was no way whereby I could strike. So you thought. Yet there was a way."

The Shadow's laugh was mocking as it crept softly through the room and reverberated eerily from every corner.

"Lamont Cranston was the way," announced The Shadow. "Lamont Cranston, because he was The Shadow. This box was waiting for you, Savette. You came to Cranston's home with your faithful hypodermic. You did not see Cranston place another in the pocket of your coat, and take yours in its stead.

"You did not choose to take the taboret. So Cranston used it, after you had gone to summon the truckmen. He opened the hinge of this box. From the hollow taboret he took certain articles which he required. In the box, Lamont Cranston became - The Shadow!"

A realization dawned on Savette. He remembered how light the taboret had seemed, when he had lifted it after pushing it before. No wonder. It had contained the weapons and the garb that were a part of The Shadow - articles which Lamont Cranston had chosen to carry with him on his journey.

"Tonight," continued The Shadow, "you shall know the death that you imposed upon others. The death from which men awake. Within this building dead men live. They will be released tonight; you shall remain.

"That syringe which you hold, Doctor Savette, will do nicely for Glade Tremont. I shall let you make the injection. I have another in my pocket. You will receive an injection from my hand. When you awake, you two, affairs will be different here. Ivan Orlinov and his horde will be gone. I shall settle with them."

The Shadow pronounced these words with amazing calmness. He spoke as though the conquering of a crowd of gunmen was simple in accomplishment.

Savette tried to sneer. Tremont was pale. He remembered his awakening after the battle on the dock. The Shadow had fought then to protect himself. Tonight, he would have the advantage of a surprise attack.

"We shall delay no longer," giped The Shadow. "Go, Savette. Use that hypodermic which you hold. Tremont is to be your subject. Go!"

MECHANICALLY, the physician approached Glade Tremont. He dared not disobey The Shadow. The tables were turned, and Savette knew well that The Shadow would not hesitate to start his battle here by first shooting him and Tremont.

Grim retribution! These monsters were to taste that state of oblivion which they had forced upon others. They were to experience that which they had termed temporary death.

No alternative offering, Gerald Savette wrenched away Tremont's coat and tore off the lawyer's sleeve. He was treating his accomplice as he had treated Harold Sharrock, who now stood pale and tense,

watching this strange turn of events.

Glade Tremont offered no resistance. Like Savette, he was a beaten man. Neither one could stand against The Shadow. Even glowering looks were gone. Hopelessness had replaced animosity. The fiends were demonstrating their cowardice.

The Shadow had spoken. His captives were forced to obey. Savette raised the hypodermic. Tremont quailed. The Shadow spoke again.

"Proceed."

That single word sounded like the knell of doom. There was no escape. Savette prepared to make the injection. Then, suddenly, he stood still, and his eyes regained their shrewdness. For a moment. They had looked beyond Harold Sharrock, toward the door of this secluded living room.

Quickly, Savette dropped his eyes toward Tremont's arm. He appeared to be busy with the hypodermic. But in that moment, he had betrayed himself.

The Shadow's quick eyes darted toward the door. There, a wicket had opened. And, noiselessly, a panel had dropped.

Peering through the hole in the door was the fierce, bearded face of Ivan Orlinov!

Something gleamed beside that blackened countenance. Orlinov was bringing the muzzle of a revolver into play, turning it toward the figure of The Shadow!

The game had been discovered. Orlinov, coming to conduct his confederates to the torture chamber below, had been wary. He had heard the sound of voices. He had decided to look in to learn what had transpired since the arrival of Doctor Savette.

Now he was preparing to slay The Shadow. He had arrived in the nick of time to save his companions from the sentence that The Shadow had imposed upon them!

## **CHAPTER XXIII. THE ATTACK**

THE SHADOW and Ivan Orlinov acted simultaneously.

Their chances of success were equal. The Russian, with his gun beside his face, had a difficult aim to make, but the tall form of The Shadow formed an excellent target.

Orlinov's countenance, framed in the open panel, was a small mark, but one which The Shadow could cover with a quick swing of one automatic.

Had Orlinov attempted to beat The Shadow to the shot, he might have succeeded. But the Russian played a quicker, more instinctive game. He dropped away from the open panel. The little barrier slid down to receive The Shadow's shot.

Tremont and Savette were acting ere the automatic roared. So sure were they that Orlinov would not fail that they saw only one menace before them - Harold Sharrock.

Savette dropped the syringe as he and Tremont sprang forward. All odds were with Sharrock. He had only to draw away and pump his enemies with bullets. But he acted too late. He did not shoot until the men were upon him.

His gun sounded a muffled report as the three tumbled. Then The Shadow's automatic spoke to rescue him. Savette, the upper of the three, received a bullet, and fell away from the struggling forms.

Muffled shots were repeated as Savette dropped. Sharrock rolled over, and Tremont staggered away from him, holding the pistol in readiness for another shot. The Shadow's well-timed aim was again effective. His automatic roared. Glade Tremont fell.

Now, The Shadow was sweeping toward the door. Just as he reached it, the barrier was hurled inward. Revolvers gleamed as Biff Towley and three mobsmen dashed into the room.

They had heard the shots. They had come at Orlinov's bidding. They were making a mass attack to trap The Shadow before he could escape.

Here he was upon them, his automatics pumping lead, his tall form swinging away behind the door. A few wild shots responded. They were all. The mobsmen had been too sure of themselves. They had walked into a close-range attack from two powerful guns. The Shadow had lost no time.

He had not saved a single bullet. In this emergency, he discharged every cartridge. His enemies were on the floor. The Shadow was unscathed. Laughing, loud and fiercely, he flung away his pistols and drew two new weapons from beneath his cloak. He had come here prepared, a human arsenal.

Into the hall strode The Shadow. Three gunners were entering the front door. The Shadow's automatics jerked back and forth as he struck down his new group of enemies.

Two shots from each gun. Four bullets - one more than needed. Three gangsters lay within the door, their bodies crumpled in death.

A hand flashed from the sliding door that led to the wing. Orlinov's revolver answered. A bullet swished through the collar of The Shadow's cloak.

One of those automatics answered as the hand slipped away. The shot was perfect. Ivan Orlinov uttered a cry of rage. The revolver clattered to the floor, outside the door.

The Russian did not wait. He did not attempt to fasten the barrier. He fled along the corridor, The Shadow in pursuit. The man in black fired one shot that was too late. Orlinov was turning the corner as The Shadow aimed from the sliding door.

THEN, from the other end of the corridor, appeared a wild, disheveled man with upraised automatic. The Shadow laughed and stretched his arms, to show his flowing cloak.

It was Cliff Marsland, coming from below, his smoking pistol telling of the work that he had done.

The sound of The Shadow's cannonade had reached the torture chamber. Cliff had acted. Both Petri and the gangster had failed to stop him. He had taken the gunman first; then Petri.

Sweeping forward, The Shadow pointed to the barrier through which he had come. Cliff understood. He was to guard below, while The Shadow followed Orlinov.

They passed at the center of the corridor, Cliff hastening to the door, The Shadow heading for the stairs. The man in black became suddenly alert as he reached the steps.

The stairs were gloomy, and The Shadow became a creature of the dark as he glided upward, step by step. Lost in a darkened corner, his gleaming eyes detected a crouching gangster - Orlinov's man who guarded the upstairs corridor.

The watcher saw a slight motion - the movement of a phantom shape. As he aimed his revolver in that direction, a burst of flame came from the spot. The gunman fell headlong down the steps, another victim of The Shadow. The roar of the automatic was terrific in that low-roofed space.

The Shadow was moving upward now. He stepped across the gangster's body. He paused by the corner, and peered along the corridor.

Ivan Orlinov, a revolver in his unscathed hand, was peering toward the stairs. He saw no human form; but across the floor of the corridor, he discerned a long, silhouetted patch of black. He fired.

It was a hopeless effort. The Shadow's automatic barked. Orlinov's one good wrist was crippled.

Now The Shadow, like a living monster, approached the cringing Russian. Yet Orlinov, despite his fear, was grinning defiantly, his white teeth glittering through the blackened clump of hair that formed his beard.

"You haff come too late!" snarled the Russian. "You haff not stopped me. I haff released the gas. The dead men who haff liffed now liff no longer!"

A dangling cord told what Orlinov had done. The Shadow laughed softly. This was the threat; the way whereby all prisoners in those little rooms could be disposed of in emergency. So Orlinov had planned.

With no more thought of his helpless enemy, The Shadow reached beneath his cloak and drew forth a key. He inserted it in a door and turned the lock. He went to a second door; then a third and a fourth. Orlinov watched him bewildered.

Then, one by one, four men came forth, each from a different room. Austin Bellamy, a worn, haggard old man, stared speechless, wondering what this freedom meant.

Clark Murdock, keen and shrewd-eyed, stared at The Shadow; then glared toward Orlinov. Professor Pierre Rachaud, a quiet, bearded Frenchman, appeared perplexed. Matt Hartley, a stalwart, middle-aged man, stood with arms akimbo, a look of complete surprise upon his firm-set face.

The Shadow spoke.

"YOU are the dead," he announced. "The dead who lived to do the bidding of this fiend and two other monsters who now lie dead below."

The voice of The Shadow was a weird, creepy whisper, that seemed unreal. It was as though the walls of that strange corridor had spoken, with the man in black a mere figure in their midst. Although those words meant freedom to the men who heard them, none could repress a shudder at the eerie voice.

"That cord" - the muzzle of The Shadow's right-hand gun indicated the dangling rope - "was drawn by Orlinov. It would have released a poison gas to kill you all. Last night, however" - The Shadow's eyes burned toward Orlinov - "I detached the infernal mechanism."

Orlinov snarled in helpless fury. The Shadow stood above him, the suppressed sound of taunting mirth coming from his invisible lips.

Suddenly, the mocking figure became motionless and erect. Shots were echoing from the floor below.

Turning, The Shadow swept away, his cloak swishing audibly as he moved rapidly toward the stairs. A second later, he was gone, leaving four stupefied men glaring at the crippled fiend who was sitting on the floor.

Then came a wild, high-pitched cry. Austin Bellamy, who for years had suffered at the hands of Orlinov, leaped forward in maddened fury. His clawing hands tore at the Russian's beard. His long, bony fingers dug into Orlinov's throat.

The Russian sought to resist. With both hands crippled, he could not manage to control the man who had attacked him.

Like a mongoose battling a poison cobra, Austin Bellamy, with all the pent-up rage of unhappy months, hurled the huge Russian back and forth, choking him, beating his head against the floor and walls.

None of the others moved to stop him. They, too, had suffered. Primitive though Bellamy's vengeance was, they did not choose to reason.

When the fierce old man fell exhausted on the floor, Orlinov's head was tilted, as though unhinged from his huge frame. The bearded fiend had met his doom.

More shots were heard from below. The rescued men moved in a file. Hartley picked up Orlinov's revolver. Murdock found the dead gangster's gun on the stairs and chose it as his weapon.

In the corridor, on the ground floor, the men found still another mobster, wounded and dying. The sliding barrier was open. They passed through, Hartley first, Murdock next.

Pierre Rachaud was third; behind him, Austin Bellamy dragged wearily along. More bodies in the hall. The front door was open. A man stepped in and held up his hand. It was Cliff Marsland.

The others recognized that he was a friend. Silently, Cliff led them to the living room. There, on the floor, he showed them the bodies of three men.

Gerald Savette and Glade Tremont had perished. Bullets from The Shadow's gun and the shots fired by Harold Sharrock had combined to rid the world of these monstrous plotters.

The third man was Sharrock, himself. He was dying, from a wound received when Tremont had wrested the revolver away. Sharrock, the man who had sought to make amends, stared glassily at Austin Bellamy.

The old man's face, hardened from hatred for Orlinov, softened now. He knew that Sharrock had betrayed him, and had spent his fortune; but he felt a sense of pity.

Bellamy stooped to the floor and raised his stepbrother's head. Thus, with friendly eyes upon him, with friendly hands grasping him, Harold Sharrock died.

Cliff Marsland beckoned the others to the hall. Solemnly, they went to the porch. There they stood in darkness, looking across the moon-bathed lawn, no longer dominated by gangster hordes.

"AN alarm will be raised," explained Cliff Marsland quietly. "Police will be here shortly. I was a prisoner here, too. I was Orlinov's secretary. He trapped me when he learned that I was investigating matters here."

"Who was the man upstairs?" questioned Matt Hartley. "The man in black - the one who shot the Russian. The man who laughed -"

"He was the one who rescued us," said Cliff. "They had me in the torture chamber when he attacked. I met him in the corridor, when I was escaping."

"Who is he?" asked Clark Murdock,

"They call him The Shadow," answered Cliff.

"The Shadow!"

The name passed like magic from one to another. The fame of The Shadow was known. The rescued men understood.

Cliff stepped from the porch, and stood upon the lawn, staring up toward the old gray castle. The other men were with him, surveying those walls that had held them prisoners.

The huge masonry of Glamartin was silent now - silent, where guns had thundered. The last surging wave of mobsters had entered while Cliff was guarding the corridor. The Shadow had arrived in time to meet them.

Off in the shrubbery, scattered by the walls, in other spots of temporary safety lay wounded men and dying - those remnants who had staggered away before The Shadow's last attack.

Glade Tremont, Gerald Savette, Ivan Orlinov, and Biff Towley. All four were dead. No man who had claimed leadership of any portion of the gangster crew remained alive now. Cliff could claim a share in the victorious struggle for right; but it was The Shadow's mastery that had dominated the battle.

A distant shot rang across the lawn, and echoed from the cold gray walls of the castle-like building. The rescued men looked at one another. Only Cliff knew what it meant.

The Shadow had met the henchman at the gate. The last of the mob of evildoers had met his match. Swallowed in the mountain night, The Shadow had finished the only enemy who remained to menace the safety of the freed prisoners.

Cliff fancied that he could hear the faint tones of a far-away laugh - a long, gibing peal of weird mirth that blended into nothingness.

The Shadow's triumph was complete!

Dead men were living now!

THE END