



JIBARO DEATH

Maxwell Grant

This page copyright © 2001 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

- ? [CHAPTER I. DEATH MARK](#)
- ? [CHAPTER II. FACES FROM THE PAST](#)
- ? [CHAPTER III. THE MESSAGE OF DOOM](#)
- ? [CHAPTER IV. BETWEEN THE KILLERS](#)
- ? [CHAPTER V. THE NEW SEARCH](#)
- ? [CHAPTER VI. CRIME'S WARNING](#)
- ? [CHAPTER VII. THRUSTS THROUGH THE DARK](#)
- ? [CHAPTER VIII. NEWS FROM SANTANDER](#)
- ? [CHAPTER IX. STRANGERS FROM THE DARK](#)
- ? [CHAPTER X. TRAILS IN THE NIGHT](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XI. ZENJORA'S MESSAGE](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XII. DOOM BEFORE DAWN](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XIII. THE SHADOW'S STROKE](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XIV. ZENJORA'S EMISSARY](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XV. CHANGED TRAILS](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XVI. THE DOUBLE TRAP](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XVII. JIBARO TORTURE](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XVIII. OAKBROOK'S VISITORS](#)
- ? [CHAPTER XIX. THE CLAIM OF WEALTH](#)

CHAPTER I. DEATH MARK

THE man who alighted from a cab in front of the Hotel Goliath was a foreigner. That was apparent from the olive hue of his skin; the jet blackness of his glistening hair, and the dark glint of his eyes. His exact nationality, however, would have been difficult to guess.

The man's expression showed odd contrasts. The flash of his eyes; the set of his lips; the strength of his squatty frame were indicative of a person who could combat danger. Nevertheless, his eyes showed a blink; his lips carried a twitch. There was a shudder of the broad shoulders as the foreigner stepped hastily across the stretch of sidewalk between the curb and the hotel entrance.

Once inside the glittering lobby of the Goliath, the olive-skinned man regained his composure. Lights were brilliant; the lobby was thronged. The place seemed to be a meeting spot for all Manhattan. The squatty man smiled as he looked about and saw a desk that bore the sign: "INFORMATION."

When he approached the desk, however, the man became cautious. He looked warily about; studied faces that he saw near by. He saw a light-complexioned, blond-haired man standing near the information booth, and apparently considered him of no importance. Observing no one of darkish visage, the olive-skinned man leaned across the desk and spoke to a girl who was sorting mail.

"Tell me, please," he inquired. "Senor Alvarez Rentone - is he registered here?"

The girl went to a filing case marked "R." She consulted a card; without looking toward the questioner, she replied:

"Mr. Rentone is registered here; but he has gone out of town for a few days. He left no word when he would be back."

The squatty man looked troubled. He chewed his lips; then turned away and looked across the lobby. He saw a line of telephone booths. He walked over, consulted a telephone directory and entered a booth. After some perplexity with the dial, he managed to call the number that he wanted.

"Hello?" The squatty man's voice was questioning as he heard an answer. "Is this Senor Dundee?... Ah, buenos! Allow me, senor, to introduce myself. My name is Manuel Fendoza... Ah, si, senor. I have come from Santander."

There was a short-pause, while Fendoza listened to a voice across the wire. When Dundee had finished speaking, Fendoza became voluble with further explanation.

"Ah, senor," he exclaimed, "it is not my wish to cause you bother. I have come to New York to find Senor Alvarez Rentone... Ah, si. He is the grandson of Jose Rentone... But he is not where I should find him... At the Hotel Goliath... Your name? Ah, senor, I heard of it by pure accident... Gracias, senor."

FENDOZA finished his call and stepped from the booth. He went to the cigar stand, purchased a pack of cigarettes and looked about while he was opening them. He failed to glance back toward the telephone booths. Hence he did not notice that a man was hunched in the booth next to the one that he had just left. The man in the booth was the light-haired individual who had watched Fendoza at the information desk.

A hard grin showed on the man's lips as his finger dialed a number. The call went through; the light-haired man recognized the voice that responded. Lone-toned and harsh, the caller gave information.

"Hello, Zenjora." he announced. "This is Cardell, watching at the Goliath... Yeah. A fellow just came in and asked for Alvarez Rentone..."

"His name? Sure. I got it. Manuel Fendoza. He just put in a call to a guy named Dundee. I caught it from the next booth... What's that? Howard Dundee? I can't say for sure. All that Fendoza called him was Dundee..."

"No. Dundee didn't know anything about Alvarez Rentone. From the way it sounded, he didn't want to be bothered... Wait a minute, Zenjora! I see Fendoza going back to the information desk!... Yeah. I think he's going to fall... Sure. I'll be ready with the tip-off..."

Completing his call, Cardell stepped from the booth. He watched Fendoza approach the information desk; but Cardell made no effort to draw closer. Instead, he edged toward a side door of the lobby. From that vantage point, he could see what happened at the desk.

There, Fendoza made another polite inquiry regarding Alvarez Rentone.

"Ah, senorita!" he said to the girl at the desk. "I must ask you again regarding Senor Rentone. He is a friend of mine. Is it not possible that he has left some message here?"

The girl made another reference to file "R." She looked along the line of mail boxes; found number 1282, There she discovered a sealed envelope, a memo slip with it. She passed the envelope to Rentone and tossed the slip in the wastebasket.

"This was left for any one who inquired," stated the girl. "No name mentioned with it. It must be for you, sir."

Fendoza took the envelope. Clutching it, he looked about, saw the side exit from the lobby. Cardell had stepped away; Fendoza suspected nothing as he hurried through the doorway. Outside, he spied a taxi. He entered it.

"Where to?" queried the driver.

Fendoza hesitated; then replied:

"Take me to a station of the subway." Then, noting a subway station just across the street, he corrected himself: "No, no! I mean a station of the elevated railway. The one that is nearest."

Fendoza's only desire was to open the envelope in privacy. He started the task as soon as the cab pulled away. Hence he did not observe a sedan that started from the curb and followed close behind the cab. The driver of the sedan had caught a signal from Cardell, at the lobby door.

THE lights of Seventh Avenue were just what Fendoza wanted. Eagerly, he ripped the envelope open, pulled out a stiff correspondence card that was within. The card was sharp-edged; it cut Fendoza's finger, and brought an exclamation from his lips. Then, placing his finger to his mouth, Fendoza forgot about the slight cut while he studied the card. His eyes blinked in puzzled fashion.

The correspondence card was blank.

Turning it over and over, Fendoza wondered. He looked inside the crumpled envelope; found nothing there. The cab swung eastward on a gloomy side street, where no more light was available. Fendoza shoved the card and the envelope in his pocket. Drawing his finger from his lips, he muttered to himself in Spanish. Fendoza could not understand the barren message.

"Here you are, sir."

The cab driver made the announcement as he pulled up beneath a station on the Sixth Avenue elevated. Fendoza alighted and produced the fare.

As the cab drove away, Fendoza looked about and became nervous. Sixth Avenue was less brilliant than Seventh. Many of its lights were obstructed by the elevated. Glancing along a side street, Fendoza saw the brighter district that he had just left. He decided to go back to it. He hurried westward along the side street.

Halfway to Seventh Avenue, Fendoza stumbled as he passed the open front of a garage. His face showed a wild expression beneath the glare of a street lamp. Another stumble; Fendoza gave an inarticulate cry. He lost his footing and rolled to the sidewalk. The spot where he sprawled was dark.

A sedan swung up from the opposite direction. It was the one that had trailed Fendoza from the Hotel Goliath. It had rounded the block while Fendoza was walking from Sixth Avenue to Seventh. The door of the sedan swung open; a hunched, apish figure scrambled to the curb. The sedan blocked the glow from the nearest street lamp. The apish man was scarcely discernible, as he crouched above Fendoza's body.

With quick hands, this hunched ghoul went through Fendoza's pockets. There was a momentary glimmer: an arm jabbed as though delivering a knife thrust. A low call from the sedan; the apish man bounded back into the car. The sedan shot away as its door slammed. At that instant, an attendant arrived from the open front of the garage.

"Hey, you!!" he shouted after the car. "What's going on here?"

The sedan did not stop. The garage man could not catch its license number; nor did he gain a good glimpse of the car as it wheeled around the corner. He looked toward the sidewalk, near where the car had stopped. He saw Fendoza's body.

The garage man raised a shout. Another attendant joined him. As the two shouted together, a patrolman came on the run, from some distance down the street. Reaching Fendoza's body, the officer heard the first garage man's statement.

"There was a sedan stopped here," the fellow informed the officer. "Maybe they dumped the guy. Or maybe somebody hopped out and slugged him while he was walking past."

The policeman stopped and gripped Fendoza's shoulders. The body had tilted forward; the officer rolled it on its back. One garage man gulped. From the dead man's breast he saw the handle of a knife. Fendoza had been stabbed through the heart.

THE policeman grunted. This did not perturb him. He had seen dirked victims before. He had viewed corpses with their faces shot away. He was used to all forms of death. With one hand, the officer tilted Fendoza's face into the light, so that he could observe it better.

An instant later, the bluecoat came upward, rigid. His nonchalance was gone. His eyes were staring; his hands shook. Yet he could not turn his gaze away from the horror that lay upon the sidewalk.

The face of Manuel Fendoza looked human no longer. No person on earth could have identified that countenance as one that had been seen at the Hotel Goliath only fifteen minutes before. Death had changed it to the visage of a fiend.

Livid eyes bulged from sunken sockets; eyes that were glaring brown orbs, surrounded by a rim of bloodshot white. Olive skin seemed drawn tight across the dead man's cheek bones, pulled downward by a sagged lower jaw.

Fendoza's lips were twisted into a terrible, downward smile that contorted his entire face. Half askew, those lips looked as if they had tried vainly to deliver a shriek in response to something that the bulging eyes had witnessed.

That was not all. Upon Fendoza's face stood proof that his terror had been real. A knife thrust was not the only token that had been left upon the corpse. Upon Fendoza's forehead gleamed a mark that stood for death.

That mark was formed by three crimson lines, like narrow welts. The symbol was in the center of Fendoza's forehead; two lines horizontal, the third crossing them at the diagonal. They were like slashes, carved upon the dead man's flesh; though scratches only, they had brought blood to the surface.

Yet, terrible though Fendoza's expression had become, his face was but the countenance of a victim. The devilish glare that showed upon the dead man's visage stood as a reflection of an evil that still existed.

That was the evil of some master murderer who had ordered the doom of Manuel Fendoza.

CHAPTER II. FACES FROM THE PAST

FENDOZA'S death produced big headlines in the next day's newspapers. Though killings were not unusual in New York, this one presented sensational angles. It was seldom that a man was stabbed to death within half a block of the Times Square area.

To the police, Manuel Fendoza was an unidentified victim. There was no clue to his exact nationality; and the contorted condition of his face made it still more difficult to trace the race to which he belonged. The weapon, however, was not an ordinary knife. It was a stiletto; and that fact apparently placed an Italian angle to the murder.

One fact was mentioned by all the newspapers. The victim had died in fear and anguish. Those who had seen his face were unanimous on that point. All agreed that they had viewed a sight that they would like to forget.

The morning newspapers handled the case in rather conservative fashion. The evening journals made it more sensational. Behind Fendoza's murder, so they claimed, might lie a huge vendetta that would lead to more deaths. The newspapers announced that the police commissioner had taken personal charge of the case; and it was predicted that a round-up of criminals might be due.

Until midafternoon, reporters beleaguered the office of Commissioner Ralph Weston. Then their efforts ceased. Weston ducked out and made for the Cobalt Club, where he was a member. No one had ever crashed the gate of the exclusive Cobalt Club. The reporters gave up their efforts to gain an interview, on the assumption that Weston would issue a statement later.

Four o'clock found Commissioner Weston finishing a steak in the grillroom of the Cobalt Club. Weston was a man of brisk, military appearance; when he became ruffled, he was a hard man with whom to deal. He had foregone his lunch hour in order to avoid reporters; and he had been annoyed on that account. A meal in the quiet grillroom of the Cobalt Club had calmed him; in fact, Weston looked up with a half-pleased smile when a visitor approached his table.

WESTON recognized the newcomer as Lamont Cranston, a millionaire member of the Cobalt Club. He invited his friend to sit down at the table. Cranston complied. Weston looked across to eye a calm, hawklike countenance, with keen eyes and thin, straight lips.

As Weston recalled it, he had never seen Cranston indulge in any but the slightest of smiles. There was something masklike about the millionaire's face; his manner, too, was unusual. Cranston was always deliberate and leisurely. Weston supposed that he had cultivated that manner through his long experience as a globe-trotter. Cranston had experienced adventures in many parts of the world.

Though Weston thought he knew a great deal about Cranston, there was one fact that the commissioner had never grasped. He would have been astonished had he been told that there were two Lamont Cranstons; that the real one was seldom in New York. The Cranston whom Weston faced at present was actually another person. He was that mysterious being known as The Shadow.

Master sleuth who hunted down men of crime, The Shadow used the role of Cranston to hide his own identity. Moreover, he found it useful when he sought certain items of information. Today, The Shadow was in quest of facts; he had learned enough about last night's murder to want more. Anticipating that Commissioner Weston would be at the Cobalt Club, The Shadow had come here as Cranston.

In quiet, leisurely fashion, The Shadow expressed surprise at finding Weston at the lunch table, so late in the afternoon. The remark produced the very result that The Shadow expected. It started Weston on a tirade that led to the subject of Fendoza's murder.

"There is no rest for a police commissioner," snapped Weston. "When crime is rampant, I am criticized by the newspapers and besieged by hordes of outraged reformers. Do they give me rest when I have curbed crime? No! Then they magnify small crimes into large ones!"

"I suppose," inserted The Shadow, "that you are referring to last night's murder."

"I am," acknowledged Weston. "To read the newspaper reports you would think that a feud had begun. Bah! It is such talk that stirs up trouble!"

"The newspapers state that you have taken personal charge of the case."

"I have. What else could I do? I had to satisfy them in some fashion. However, I am handling it through Inspector Cardona. He is the best man to get to the bottom of it."

The Shadow indulged in one of his slight smiles. He knew that if Joe Cardona was on the case, Weston's part would be a small one. Cardona was the most able sleuth on the New York force. He had long served as Weston's right-hand man.

"CARDONA isn't even sure that the dead man is an Italian," confided Weston, leaning across the table. "All he knows is that the man was stabbed to death with a stiletto; and that his forehead was marked with a peculiar symbol that might be the sign of some secret society."

"But Cardona hasn't found out who the dead man is; and he hasn't located a single suspect. He's down in Little Italy today, quizzing people there. Being a native of the district himself, Cardona ought to learn something."

The waiter brought Weston his dessert. The Shadow lighted a cigar; leaned back in his chair and put a casual query to the commissioner.

"The newspapers mentioned the mark on the dead man's forehead," he remarked. "They also stated that the victim's face was distorted. Was that true, commissioner?"

For reply, Weston reached to a briefcase beside his chair. Gingerly, he produced a photograph, turned its picture side down and passed it across the table.

"Take a look at it, Cranston," he suggested. "But don't spoil my meal by turning it in this direction. You'll see the face and the mark on the forehead."

The Shadow studied the photograph. It showed the face of Manuel Fendoza as the patrolman had viewed it the night before. The picture was a large one; it was almost as horrible as the face itself. The photograph, however, produced a gleam of interest in The Shadow's keen eyes. He made a careful study of the mark upon the forehead.

"Tell me, commissioner," said The Shadow. "Has the dead man's face altered since this photograph was taken?"

A nod from Weston. The commissioner brought another picture from the brief case.

"There is a shot that was taken this morning."

The Shadow eyed the second photograph. Two features intrigued him. One was the fact that Fendoza's face, though still distorted, had dulled. It no longer showed the lifelike glare that would have befitted a demon. The other point was the mark upon the forehead. It was more conspicuous than before. The reason for both changes seemed to be explained by a shrinkage that had come to the dead man's flesh.

"You seem to relish those photographs, Cranston," laughed Weston. "Have you ever seen any like them?"

"I have," responded The Shadow, quietly. "In fact, I have seen actual faces that were contorted like this one."

"Where was that?"

"In Ecuador. Commissioner, this dead man resembles those who have been victims of the Jibaro head-hunters. He appears to have died from the virulent poison which the Jibaros use."

"You mean those chaps who shrink the heads of their victims and keep them as miniature souvenirs?"

"Precisely! The Jibaros apply the same substance to the heads, after death."

Weston thwacked the table with his fist. He delivered a long laugh.

"That would be a story for the newspapers," chuckled the commissioner. "Jibaro head-hunters, stalking the streets of New York! Only one trouble, though, Cranston." Weston sobered, and spoke with mock seriousness. "They wouldn't swallow it, even if I told them that I believed it."

"By which I infer," remarked The Shadow, "that you reject my theory."

"You have inferred correctly," smiled Weston. "That man was stabbed to death, Cranston. We have the stiletto that was thrust through his heart."

The Shadow returned the photographs without comment. Weston packed them away in his briefcase. He glanced at his watch; decided that he would chance a return trip to his office. A few minutes later, he was on his way.

AN hour later, The Shadow left the Cobalt Club. He entered a waiting limousine; gave the chauffeur an order. The big car drove slowly through Manhattan streets. The day was gloomy; dusk had settled when the limousine reached an almost deserted street.

The figure that alighted silently bore no resemblance to Lamont Cranston. During the ride, The Shadow had donned garments of black. Cloaked, with slouch hat on his head, he was like a phantasm amid the dying daylight. Even the chauffeur did not detect his exit.

For a moment, The Shadow was visible as he crossed the sidewalk; then he was gone, beneath the gloom of a dingy building. A silent alleyway marked his route; but from the point, his course was untraceable.

Soon a click sounded amid darkness. A bluish light glowed within the corner of a black-walled room. White hands came beneath the glow. The Shadow was in his sanctum, the lone abode that formed his hidden headquarters in Manhattan.

Hands moved away from the light. When they returned, they carried half a dozen photographs and spread them on the table. Faces glared upward toward the hidden eyes of The Shadow. Those photographs looked like a gallery of demons.

Every picture displayed a countenance as contorted as that of Manuel Fendoza. Each had been touched by the same grim death that had struck the man from Santander. These were the photographs of dead men whom The Shadow had seen; the ones whom he had mentioned to the police commissioner. They were the hapless victims of Jibaro head-hunters.

Not only were those victims rendered alike in death, so much so that their own identities seemed gone; in addition, each carried an unmistakable mark upon his forehead. It was the three-line symbol: two cross bars with the slashed diagonal.

Another set of pictures came into the light. They were pictures of the same victims, taken later. As with

Fendoza, each had undergone a relaxation. Skin was shrunken; the symbols on the foreheads were more conspicuous.

Commissioner Weston would have expressed surprise had he seen those photographs. Perhaps some of his ridicule would have faded. But those pictures were to remain within The Shadow's files. Weston had passed up his chance.

The Shadow removed the photograph. He returned with a large-scale map that showed the northern section of South America; also stacks of clippings that he placed to one side. Studying the map, he placed a long finger upon the newly formed republic of Santander, which was close to Ecuador.

From the clippings, The Shadow produced a batch that referred to Santander. During the past few years, that country had been governed by a dictator, old Jose Rentone. A famous champion of liberty, Jose Rentone had been the idol of his people; but since his death, one month ago, revolution had been rife in Santander.

With the clippings that gave the life story of Jose Rentone, The Shadow found a small one that had appeared recently in a New York newspaper. It mentioned that Alvarez Rentone, grandson of the dead dictator, had arrived in New York and was stopping at a Manhattan hotel. Written on the clipping was the notation: "Hotel Goliath."

With the cooperation of his agents, The Shadow kept extensive files concerning all news that might have any bearing upon crime. South American revolutions frequently extended their ripples to the United States. Therefore, The Shadow had not neglected them.

Today, one lead had brought another. Newspaper reports of a mysterious stabbing had mentioned the distorted face of a victim. The Shadow had seen photographs of the dead man, had recognized that he could be a South American instead of an Italian.

Shrunken skin, the tri-marked forehead, had pointed to the Jibaro headhunters. A check on Ecuador had brought The Shadow to a consideration of Santander; he had further checked the fact that Alvarez Rentone, grandson of the dead Santander dictator, was registered at the Hotel Goliath.

Only a few blocks lay between the Hotel Goliath and the spot where the body of Manuel Fendoza had been found. The chain had become a circle. The Shadow could see a connection between the dead man and Alvarez Rentone. In fact, The Shadow was positive that Fendoza had encountered death either while on his way to the Hotel Goliath or shortly after leaving it.

THE bluish light clicked off. Unfathomable darkness gripped the sanctum. From the darkened depths came the whispered tone of a sinister laugh, that faded to leave absolute silence. The Shadow had departed.

Since Commissioner Weston had rejected The Shadow's theory, The Shadow knew that he could expect no immediate cooperation from the law. Any effort to push the police to a trail that Weston regarded as absurd would be worse than futile.

This case demanded lone effort, of the sort that The Shadow could provide. Slender threads must be tightened; small clues built into great ones. By the time such was achieved, the police would be through with their own futile search for an Italian assassin. They would be ready to follow new and stronger leads when they received them.

Tonight, working upon pure speculation, The Shadow had only one course; yet its very simplicity promised results. The Shadow knew Manuel Fendoza only as a man who had undoubtedly tried to

contact Alvarez Rentone and had received death for his effort.

That meant that death might threaten others who attempted the same contact. To deliver death, murderers would be forced to show their hand. The Shadow intended to follow the course that Fendoza had chosen. He was ready to dare a horrible death to learn the source from which it came.

CHAPTER III. THE MESSAGE OF DOOM

DARKNESS had settled when The Shadow alighted from his limousine, in the vicinity of Times Square. During his return ride in the big car, he had divested himself of his blackened garments. That equipment was safely stowed beneath the rear seat of the limousine. The Shadow had again assumed the character of Lamont Cranston.

Strolling to a side street, The Shadow approached a parked cab. The driver was absent; that fact discouraged would-be passengers from boarding that particular taxi. Nevertheless, The Shadow entered the deserted cab. He pulled the door shut; let it swing half open; then gave a final tug that closed it.

A shrewd-faced cabby arrived immediately from a side-arm restaurant. He had spied the motion of the cab door; he knew it as a signal. This cab was The Shadow's own. Its driver was employed in his service. As soon as the driver was behind the wheel, he heard quiet-toned orders from the passenger.

The cab headed for the Hotel Goliath.

Since his departure from the sanctum, The Shadow had formulated complete plans. He had contacted agents to work with him, because his own part demanded that he bluff any watchers who might be at the Hotel Goliath. The Shadow was sure that surveillance would commence as soon as he inquired for Alvarez Rentone.

The cab reached its destination. The Shadow stepped beneath the marquee of the Hotel Goliath; waited until the cab had pulled away. He entered the lobby; saw the information desk and strolled toward it. As he approached, he spied a clean-cut young man seated in a chair near the desk. This chap looked like a guest at the hotel. He was reading a newspaper, apparently oblivious to persons who went past his lobby chair.

The young man was Harry Vincent, one of The Shadow's agents. Harry's interest in the newspaper was genuine. His duty here would not begin until he received a signal. That was due to come.

Stopping at the desk, The Shadow made inquiry. His tone, though modulated, had a peculiar carrying quality. It reached the ears of Harry Vincent.

"Is Mr. Alvarez Rentone stopping here?"

The girl behind the desk made prompt answer to The Shadow's query. She was the same girl who had been on duty the night before. Ordinarily, she might not have remembered facts concerning one particular guest at the huge hotel; but the name of Alvarez Rentone had impressed her because it was unusual.

"Sorry, sir," responded the girl. "Mr. Rentone is out of town. We do not know when he will return."

"He left no message?"

"He left a message; but a gentleman called for it last night. I am sorry, sir, but -"

The girl paused suddenly. She had remembered Alvarez Rentone's room number. Glancing methodically toward the pigeon-hole mail boxes, she saw an envelope projecting from 1282. It was identical with the

envelope that Manuel Fendoza had taken.

Puzzled, the girl brought the envelope from the mail box. With it was a penciled memo, which she tossed into the wastebasket. She handed the envelope to The Shadow with the remark:

"This was left with the day clerk. The memo says that it is to be given to any one who inquires for Mr. Rentone."

Nodding in Cranston's leisurely fashion, The Shadow held the envelope between his hands. He turned slightly, so that the action could be viewed from the lobby. The Shadow noted people from the corner of his eye; but none was watching him.

Carrying the envelope, he strolled to the side exit; there he paused to eye the envelope once more. In indifferent fashion, he placed it in his inside pocket and walked out to the street.

HARRY VINCENT, meanwhile, was glancing over the top of his newspaper, on sharp lookout for any observers. At the moment when The Shadow pocketed the envelope, Harry caught a glimpse of a tall, blond-haired man who had just stepped from the door of the tap room, some distance from the information desk. He saw the fellow become tense; glance quickly toward the mail boxes behind the desk. It was Cardell, the same watcher who had spied Fendoza.

Cardell had been caught off watch. The Shadow, noting no lookout, had suspected that a watcher might be away from his post. The Shadow had deliberately delayed departure, as far as possible, without overdoing the ruse. His method had worked. Cardell was quick to snap up The Shadow's trail.

Harry saw the light-haired man scowl viciously; then hurry to the street. Since Cardell's attention was concentrated on The Shadow, Harry had an opportunity of his own. Rising from his chair, he tucked his newspaper under his arm. Pausing for a few moments, he waited while two chance passers went toward the side exit. Harry followed behind them.

Though scarcely more than a minute had passed, events had swung too swiftly for Harry. He thought that he would be in time to observe the actions of the light-haired watcher. Harry was wrong in that surmise.

As he reached the street, Harry saw a cab swing the corner. It was The Shadow's taxi; it had rounded the block and parked to await his reappearance. A sedan was pulling from the curb, headed for the same corner. Simultaneously, a cab was starting from beside the hotel.

Cardell had reached the street in time to see The Shadow step aboard his cab. Flashing a signal to men in the waiting sedan, Cardell had immediately taken a cab himself. Harry saw the pursuing sedan swing left after The Shadow's cab. He watched Cardell's taxi turn right. A hunch gave Harry the answer to this procedure.

Murderers had taken up The Shadow's trail. The watcher who had handed them the tip-off was on his way elsewhere. He would not return to the Hotel Goliath until assured that death had been delivered and that all clues had been eliminated.

Walking back into the lobby, Harry came to the conclusion that his presence here would be of no further avail. For Harry Vincent was confident that assassins would not deal with The Shadow as they had with Manuel Fendoza.

RIDING southward in his cab, The Shadow had quickly noted that a car was on his trail. His lips phrased a whispered laugh as he reached for a bag upon the floor. Murderers had taken the bait that The Shadow had given them. Emergency might soon arrive; The Shadow was preparing for it.

From the bag, he produced black attire; donned it and slid a brace of huge automatics into holsters beneath his cloak. Edging to a side of the rear seat, he looked back to see the sedan only a quarter block behind. The Shadow whispered an order to the driver. The cab swung right at the next street. It was heading for an avenue where traffic would be less.

The Shadow had drawn black gloves over his hands. From beneath his cloak, he brought the envelope that he had received at the Hotel Goliath. Carefully, he opened it, glimmered a tiny flashlight upon the contents. The envelope was identical with the one that Fendoza had received. It contained a stiff, sharp-edged card.

The Shadow did not make Fendoza's mistake. He was careful as he drew the card from the envelope. Despite that fact, he could not avoid contact with the sharp edge. The paper had been tapered to almost knife-edge keenness. The Shadow, however, was equipped against the cutting edge. His hands were gloved.

Though the card edge actually jabbed through the cloth, The Shadow's glove was sufficient to protect his finger. He sensed the razor keenness; carefully shifted his hand. He let the flashlight glow along the edge of the card. There, The Shadow detected a faint brownish stain.

The card had been painted with the juice of poisonous herbs known to the Jibaro head-hunters. Fendoza's sudden death was explained. The dead man had received a card like this one at the Hotel Goliath, last night. The remark made by the girl at the information desk was sufficient to prove that fact.

As The Shadow carefully replaced the blank card in its envelope, he calculated an important time element. He decided that last night's victim must have died within fifteen minutes after he had opened the envelope. Therefore, the trailers in the sedan would expect similar results tonight.

That meant that if The Shadow's cab did not stop soon, the pursuers would overhaul it. They might attempt an attack at some secluded spot, hoping for the opportunity to jab a stiletto into a dead body. False clues were important to their game.

An encounter with the murderers would be a set-up for The Shadow. The killers would find a live antagonist, instead of a dead one. They would meet a battler who expected them; who could deal with greater odds than any they might produce. But The Shadow saw disadvantages as a sequel to such a fray.

The Shadow was sure that the men who followed him were mere tools in the employ of a master murderer. To eliminate them would be a double mistake. The master crook would know that his plans had failed. Chance for a trail to the superkiller would be lost.

The Shadow had a better plan; there was still time to employ it. This was no ordinary cab in which The Shadow rode; nor was the driver simply an average cabby. Moe Shrevnitz, the man at the wheel, had been chosen by The Shadow because he was one of the most capable cab drivers in New York; the cab, itself, was geared for high speed and specially equipped for camouflage.

LEANING to the front window, The Shadow gave an order that brought a pleased grin from Moe. The driver gave the accelerator a jolt. The cab increased its speed. Looking back, The Shadow saw the lights of the sedan drop away; then hurry along to keep pace with the taxi.

The increase in speed did not arouse the suspicion of the followers. It merely signified that the passenger in the cab was probably anxious to reach some destination. That was actually the case. The Shadow had spurred the cab ahead in order to gain the twisted streets of the old Greenwich Village section of New York before his fifteen-minute interval was finished.

Those thoroughfares were the very sort that The Shadow needed for his coming strategy. Moe knew them like a book.

A few minutes later, the cab swung from the avenue. It struck a short street that formed an angle; made a sharp turn a block farther on. Another half block, the cab doubled on its course; staged a quick right turn and came to a stop.

The door opened; The Shadow stepped to the sidewalk of a narrow Greenwich Village street. He spoke an order; the cab rolled away.

Soon after the taxi had turned a corner, the sedan appeared and came to a halt. The Shadow had stepped to a low, obscure doorway. Half behind a flight of descending steps, he watched the sedan's behavior. It waited a few moments; then pulled slowly ahead. It turned the next corner, but took the wrong direction.

The Shadow stepped up from the doorway. He moved back along the street, found a new lurking spot and remained there.

Five minutes passed; the sedan came hesitatingly around the corner. It had evidently circled a few blocks, stopping frequently. As the sedan rolled by, The Shadow could tell that its occupants intended to scour this district further.

Taking advantage of the sedan's new departure, The Shadow moved swiftly along the next street. He neared the front of a large apartment house and waited across the way. Soon, a cab pulled up near the apartment building. It was Moe's cab; but only The Shadow could have recognized it.

The top was down, making it an open cab instead of a closed one. One of the two rear lights had been removed. Conspicuous lettering, of washable paint, had been wiped from the cab's side; also a row of checkered ornamentation had been obliterated. As a final and most important touch, the license plates had been changed to show a new number.

Gliding across a darkened sector of the street, The Shadow stepped aboard the cab. Deep in the rear seat, he watched. He saw the sedan come from a corner at increased speed. The Shadow gave Moe the order to follow.

The sedan had ended its hunt. Threading through the streets, the driver had found a route out from the twisted thoroughfares of the Village. The sedan reached an avenue; turned northward. Half a minute later, Moe's cab nosed forth to take up the trail.

Followers had lost The Shadow. The sedan's chase was ended. The driver of the car was heading somewhere to report that he had lost all traces of a cab that was carrying a new victim. Yet, while he sped to that mission, the driver who had trailed The Shadow was providing a trail of his own.

In the very same cab in which he had given the sedan the slip, The Shadow was pursuing the quarry that he wanted. The message of doom had failed to deliver death. By avoiding its poisoned edge, The Shadow had picked up a route that could lead back to the master murderer who dealt in demonish death.

CHAPTER IV. BETWEEN THE KILLERS

FIVE minutes pursuit of the northward-bound sedan was proof that the driver of the car did not know that he was being trailed. That was not surprising; crooks seldom guessed that Joe's cab was tailing them.

Thanks to the pick-up of the special taxi; its ability to wheel corners at high speed, Moe was able to fall back without losing the trail. He could always make up for lost ground through spurts of speedy driving; furthermore, he had tricky ways of keeping behind intervening cars, whenever he closed in upon his quarry.

Reclining deep in the rear seat, The Shadow kept tabs upon Moe's methods. At last, he gave a warning signal, and the taxi driver slackened speed. The Shadow had noted that the sedan was nearing the end of its trip; for it had hesitated momentarily while passing a street corner. This was the time for the cab to lie back.

The sedan's driver found the street he wanted. He swung left. When the cab reached the corner, The Shadow sighted the sedan pulling into a garage halfway down the block. The taxi halted in front of a darkened house. The Shadow silently alighted. He approached the door of the garage.

No attendants were in sight. The sedan was in the center of the floor; one man was cautiously alighting from it. By dim illumination, The Shadow could spy a darkish face; eyes that showed a scowl as they looked about. The man straightened when he reached the garage floor; he was stocky and of more than medium height.

The Shadow expected him to beckon to some other occupant of the sedan. Instead, the man came alone toward the door of the garage, a proof that he had no companion with him.

The Shadow was back in darkness when the stocky man reached the street. The fellow paced rapidly along the sidewalk; The Shadow gave him sufficient leeway, then followed.

The trail was a short one; it ended before the next avenue. The stocky man came to an old house with high stone steps. Turning in, he went beneath the steps and entered a basement door.

The Shadow followed, to find the door unlocked. Entering a dim, gaslit passage, he heard the creak of footsteps on stairs. He followed upward; reached a dim, ground-floor hall, where doors were closed. He heard footsteps going to the second floor. As they faded, The Shadow again followed.

He reached the top of the stairs just in time to hear a door close. Picking the direction of the sound, The Shadow noted a door at the rear of the hall. It was closed; but light glimmered from beneath.

Approaching the door, The Shadow heard subdued voices from within. He knew that this must be a rooming house; hence any occupants engaged in crime would be cautious in their conversation. The Shadow had not heard the turn of a key in the lock; hence he saw opportunity to listen and observe the speakers as well.

With one gloved hand, he tried the doorknob. Soon, the door yielded imperceptibly to his touch. It opened inward, the scant fraction of an inch. The Shadow peered into the room.

THERE, he saw two men. One was the light-haired lookout whom Harry Vincent had spied at the Hotel Goliath. The other was the darkish sedan driver whom The Shadow had followed from the garage. Their conversation promptly disclosed their identities.

"You should not have lost him, Marinez," growled the light-haired man. "I gave you the tip-off quick enough. Why didn't you close in on the cab sooner?"

"Ah, Senor Cardell," returned Marinez, his teeth gleaming as he spoke, "the man is not yet lost. He must have reached the place where he intended to go. Quinquial will find him."

"Maybe, if the guy dropped dead on the street. But suppose he lives in the Village? What if he went into

some apartment there? Quinquial won't be able to locate him, if that's the case."

Marinez shrugged his shoulders. Cardell changed his tone.

"If he's dead, that's the main thing," decided Cardell. "But it would have been great stuff to keep the police guessing. That's the way Zenjora wanted it."

"Emilio Zenjora is one man who has great brain," reminded Marinez. "What are police to him? They are nothing. Bah! You should know that, Senor Cardell. Like myself, senor, you have seen Zenjora make the great fool of generals and soldiers."

"In Santander, yes," agreed Cardell. "But this is New York, Marinez. I'd handle a half dozen of those uniformed monkeys they call soldiers in Santander. But I wouldn't tackle a pair of New York cops at one crack."

DURING the pause that followed, The Shadow summarized the facts that he had heard. The name of Emilio Zenjora was one that he had immediately recognized. It told him the identity of the supercrook with whom he had to deal; also the unusual sort of foeman who had begun a reign of crime.

Emilio Zenjora had been mentioned in news reports from Santander. He was an outlaw who had been banished from the capital city after an attempt to overthrow the government of Jose Rentone. Instead of accepting his banishment with good grace, Zenjora had established headquarters in the jungle near the border of Ecuador. From that base, he had made raids upon various cities; and had twice started new revolutions that had been curbed.

Since the death of Jose Rentone, Emilio Zenjora had not been heard from. This had caused various rumors. One had it that Zenjora was dead; another, that he was waiting until different political factions had so weakened each other that Zenjora could come from his jungle stronghold and seize the reins of government.

A third - and more definite report - was that the Lepres faction, at present the strongest in Santander; had negotiated with Zenjora. The outlaw had presumably been bribed to remain away from the capital; perhaps to wait, in reserve, until Pedro Lepres, new president of Santander, needed him.

None of these reports had carried any inkling of the remarkable truth that had just reached The Shadow, namely, that Emilio Zenjora was in the United States. Zenjora's purpose in New York unquestionably concerned Alvarez Rentone, grandson of the late dictator. Therefore, it could have a political significance, linked with recent developments in Santander.

As for Zenjora's ways of crime, the death of Manuel Fendoza had already demonstrated the supercrook's ability. The fact that Zenjora was in a strange land did not make him less dangerous. In fact, The Shadow was prepared to regard Zenjora as a more powerful foe for that very reason.

As sample of Zenjora's cunning, The Shadow held a specimen of the little-known Jibaro poison that Zenjora used for murder. Commissioner Weston, head of the law forces that were supposed to combat such men as Zenjora, was inclined to regard the Jibaro poison as a myth.

WATCHING Marinez and Cardell, The Shadow counted upon some new clue from their conversation. All that he needed was a lead to Zenjora's present whereabouts. None came; but as the lieutenants resumed their talk, they unwittingly furnished further facts.

"Zenjora expected Fendoza in New York," remarked Cardell. "Well, Fendoza came here. You and Quinquial handled him like clockwork, Marinez."

"Gracias," returned Marinez with a grin. "It is good to hear you commend me, senior."

"I'll take back that bouquet," growled Cardell. "On account of tonight. You should have bagged this second man, Marinez."

"Perhaps so. But you have also slipped, senior."

"How do you figure that?"

"You did not learn the name of the man whom you saw tonight."

Cardell eyed Marinez suspiciously. The Shadow knew why. Cardell had not been close on the job tonight. Perhaps Marinez had guessed the fact. Cardell decided to change the subject.

"You'd better go over and see Zenjora," he told Marinez. "I'll stay away from the Goliath until after you've seen him. Then I'll give him a call. Maybe Zenjora won't want me to go back to the hotel."

"Why not, senior?"

"Because if Quinqual don't find the guy that took the note tonight, the police may. Perhaps they'll get a lead that he was at the Goliath. That poison message might make trouble, if they find it and make inquiries at the hotel."

Cardell was rising. The Shadow edged back from the door. Just as he was about to close it, he heard Marinez make a last remark:

"Very well, Senior Cardell. I shall wait here a little while, in case that Quinqual returns. Then I shall go to see Zenjora."

The knob was turned; The Shadow had stepped to a darkened passage past the door; when Cardell made his exit. The blond-haired man looked back and forth along the hall; but his inspection was a brief one. He was more interested in eying closed doors than in viewing darkened corners. Cardell caught no sight of The Shadow.

Nor did The Shadow make an effort to trail this lieutenant of Zenjora. There was more to learn through watching Marinez. The darkish lieutenant had stated that he intended to contact Zenjora. That was the trail that The Shadow wanted.

THERE was a stir within the room. Listening at the closed door, The Shadow decided that Marinez was packing his few belongings, probably supposing that Zenjora would order him to move to another hide-out. There was a slight, thuddish click that indicated the placing of a revolver on a table. The pacing; the crackle of a flame.

Marinez was probably burning some papers that he did not care to carry on his person. The Shadow listened closely, ready to move away the moment that he heard Marinez approach the door.

Perhaps it was that intentness that prevented The Shadow from hearing a creak upon the stairs. Possibly it was because the creak itself was barely audible. Whichever the case, The Shadow did not sense a peculiar, junglelike approach that came slowly closer. It was like the stalk of a jungle hunter; a tread that was, in itself, noiseless.

Yet the approach registered itself subconsciously. The slight creaks that it caused were noises that seemed to belong to the old house. The Shadow might not have detected them had they continued. It was their pause that caused him to suddenly sense that some new circumstance must be met.

The Shadow performed a sudden move. His right hand was resting lightly upon the knob of Marinez's door. His left sped suddenly beneath his cloak; at the same instant, he wheeled his body leftward. The Shadow's eyes were like living coals as they gazed straight toward the head of the stairs. Those eyes glinted as they saw the menace that had arrived.

Upon the topmost step was a crouched figure, apish in its pose. The arrival was clad in rough trousers and sweater; he had a ragged cap tilted back upon his head. These clothes were but improvised American attire. Even in the dim light, they did not hide the racial characteristics of this dangerous foe.

The Shadow saw a face that was of dullish brown. Its forehead sloped sharply; below it was a high sharp nose, with bulging cheek bones upon either side. Nose and cheek bones added depth to the eye sockets. The eyes that glittered toward The Shadow's were as menacing as those of a huge-coiled jungle snake.

Below the bulgy nose were lips that formed a hideous gloat. They were spread away from teeth that protruded in forward angle from both gums. Below was a malformed chin, that sloped backward, as did the forehead.

The face was as apelike as it was human. So were the tawny hands that the ugly creature displayed. They had thumbs as long as their fingers. One hand was raised; it gripped a ten-inch-long stick of bamboo, that was tapered to a needle point. Though shaped like a javelin, the weapon had some semblance to an arrow, for the brilliant feathers of jungle birds projected from the stub end of the stick, set there to give it straight direction in flight.

In one brief instant, The Shadow knew this foeman's ilk. The creature on the step was a Jibaro head-hunter. He was Quinqual, whose name The Shadow had overheard. Brown stain upon the yellow tip of the javelin told of the menace that the whittled weapon carried. Quinqual was ready to launch a poisoned barb straight for The Shadow. Quinqual had a large target, there against the door. The slightest scratch from the bamboo javelin would carry death.

At the same instant that he sighted Quinqual, The Shadow heard a sound that he had expected. It was the scrape of metal upon wood, accompanied by a heavy footstep. The sounds came from within Marinez's room; they told that the darkish man was coming to the door.

The two who had previously trailed The Shadow had regained the hunt that they had lost. The Shadow stood between two killers, with quick battle as his only hope for life.

CHAPTER V. THE NEW SEARCH

THE SHADOW had gained but one advantage in the battle that was due. He had spotted Quinqual before Marinez had arrived. Though he must meet two foemen, The Shadow had a chance to handle one before the other.

Had Quinqual been an ordinary fighter, The Shadow might have found his task simple. But the Jibaro headhunter, armed with a poisonous weapon, was as dangerous as a venomous reptile. Moreover, he was as quick as a jungle beast; he could not be tricked by any ordinary move.

Quinqual's long-thumbed hand was already on the move; its direction was true. No bullet could stop the toss of the feathered javelin. The Jibaro's fingers were ready to release the pointed weapon at any instant.

Likewise, those fingers were tense enough to restrain the throw, if occasion demanded. Quinqual's huge-toothed grin told that he would welcome any quick shift that The Shadow might make. The Jibaro was used to victims who tried to dodge his thrusts.

Half turned between the door and Quinquial, The Shadow made a sudden, forward dive. His left hand, whipping out its automatic, went ahead of him, as if to break his fall. Quinquial saw the cloaked fighter plunge headforemost, straight to the floor. On the instant, the Jibaro hurled the bamboo weapon at a downward angle.

The throw was perfectly gauged to find The Shadow's shoulder at the moment when his body struck the floor. But The Shadow did not flatten. As Quinquial's javelin whistled toward its well-directed destination, The Shadow performed an amazing twist in mid-air. His body seemed to bounce from nothingness; it spun backward, upward.

The jolted reverse saved The Shadow. Quinquial's weapon whistled beneath his upward-spinning shoulder. The whittled point of the bamboo barb crunched as it struck the wall beside the door. Simultaneously, Quinquial's glaring eyes saw how The Shadow had so aptly bounded back from the javelin's path. As he dived, The Shadow had gripped the doorknob with his right hand. His body had started a genuine dive; but his right arm had stopped it with the precision of a safety lever. With a powerful pull, The Shadow had whipped himself back from danger. Literally, he had taken a plunge and pulled himself out of it.

In that snap, The Shadow had spared no effort. He had pulled his body into a violent reverse twist. The result was a broken hold upon the doorknob. As The Shadow's left shoulder swept the surface of the door, his right hand lost its grip.

Quinquial, poised at the finish of his throw, saw The Shadow whirl outward from the door. This time, the cloaked fighter could not halt his sprawl.

The Shadow landed face downward, away from the door. His left hand thudded the floor. The Shadow still gripped his automatic; but, for the moment, the gun was useless. Speeding a quick look toward Quinquial, The Shadow saw the Jibaro whip forth a stiletto.

THE flash of the knife told The Shadow the Quinquial was no longer an extraordinary foeman. Had the Jibaro pulled another javelin, The Shadow would have been forced to meet the thrust upon the instant; for he could make no compromise with poisoned weapons. The Shadow recognized, however, that the stiletto must be like the one found in Fendoza's body; a weapon intended to deceive the law.

There was time, before Quinquial sprang, to deal with an opponent who could prove more formidable. That was Marinez. The Shadow looked instantly toward the door. He was just in time to see the barrier rip inward.

Marinez had heard the jolt of The Shadow's body against the door. The darkish man had sprung to action; he was on the threshold, aiming a revolver. Trained in the ways of guerrilla warfare, Marinez spotted The Shadow on the floor.

The moves that came were simultaneous.

Marinez jabbed finger to trigger, hoping to drill The Shadow at less than five-foot range.

Quinquial, his stiletto raised, came bounding forward from the top of the stairs, snarling in hope of a downward knife jab into The Shadow's unprotected back.

The Shadow acted also.

From hands and knees, he hurled himself to the right. His move was a tremendous half roll, back foremost. His body launched toward the leaping form of Quinquial. His left hand swung its automatic

straight for Marinez, taking quick chance aim.

Marinez tugged his trigger. A bullet from his revolver splintered the floor at the exact spot where The Shadow had been. The slug had missed its mark, to dig deep into the hardwood flooring.

Before Marinez could deliver another quick pull to the trigger, The Shadow's .45 responded. Its blast roared amid the echoes of the revolver shot. A bullet singed Marinez's right shoulder. The darkish assassin dropped back with a snarl, to clamp his left hand to the flesh wound.

The Shadow had no chance to deliver another shot. Quinquial was upon him.

The Jibaro came driving downward with his stiletto, chopping his blow short because of The Shadow's outward roll. Had The Shadow stopped short, the blade would have found his ribs. But The Shadow did not end his roll, as Quinquial expected.

Carrying back with the recoil of his gun, The Shadow stretched face upward, just as Quinquial stabbed. His left arm rammed the Jibaro's shins, turned Quinquial's lunge into a sprawl. The stiletto slashed the right sleeve of The Shadow's cloak, drove deep into the floor. Quinquial did a half somersault as he hit the floor.

So far, The Shadow had outmanaged the Jibaro; but Quinquial suddenly changed the sequence. As The Shadow rolled to hands and knees, raising his left hand to aim point-blank at Quinquial, the apish fighter rallied with incredible speed.

Forgetting his stiletto as he had the broken javelin, Quinquial bobbed about with the agility of a monkey. With a fierce jungle cry rattling from his throat, he shot his vicious fingers toward The Shadow's throat. Quinquial's arms sped out like lazy tongs. His hands found the mark they wanted.

THE SHADOW sprawled backward before he could aim. His arms flung wide; he let the automatic clatter across the floor. There was only one way to deal with Quinquial; that was to match the Jibaro's death grip and outchoke him. The Shadow's hands snapped to Quinquial's neck.

Two bodies lashed about in grotesque fray, that had full semblance of a jungle battle. Forced to primitive measures, The Shadow was put to ill advantage; for this was the sort of fight in which Quinquial starred. Marinez, his wound forgotten, stood gloating at the doorway. He expected Quinquial to finish the struggle within another minute.

At moments, Marinez half raised his gun, as if to put in a timely shot in Quinquial's aid. Such action proved impossible. The scuffle on the floor was too wild. The Shadow and Quinquial were lashing everywhere; both were half obscured by The Shadow's cloak, which was almost ripped from the body that it covered.

Amid this tumult, Marinez heard the slam of a closing door. He looked beyond the fighters to see another door come open; he glimpsed a white face that peered into the hall. Then that door jammed shut.

Roomers in the house had heard the gun shots. They had looked out to see the scuffle. Marinez heard muffled shouts. He knew that people were calling from the front windows. Police would respond; the outcome would be bad.

With a shout to Quinquial, Marinez sprang forward. He wanted the Jibaro to release The Shadow; to writhe free from the grapple. That accomplished, Marinez could drill The Shadow with a stream of death bullets. It looked like a quick way to end the melee; but a speedier finish came before Marinez expected.

Just as Marinez arrived beside the fighters, the grapple became almost a standstill. Clutching figures half rose from the floor, shrouded with the drape of The Shadow's cloak. They swayed away from Marinez; then snapped in his direction with a terrific convulsion.

The Shadow came upward with a side twist. His hands had crossed upon Quinquial's neck. With a terrific heave of his shoulders, he swung the Jibaro like a puppet figure, spun him through the air like a living cudgel.

Quinquial's hands lost their grip upon The Shadow's throat. The Shadow's fists released also - but of their own volition. Quinquial's flying form landed squarely upon Marinez; sprawled him to the floor. Quinquial shot farther, landed headforemost and rolled to the door of the room that Marinez had left.

Instantly, The Shadow was on his feet. He sprang across Marinez, made a long leap for Quinquial. He knew how quickly Quinquial could rally. The Shadow was taking no chances with that wiry adversary.

Quinquial was up before The Shadow reached him. Beside him was his bamboo javelin. Quinquial grabbed it; snarled as he snapped his arm for a thrust. Though the whittled point was broken, too dulled to deliver a death scratch, it could still pierce flesh if driven with a straight-aimed swing.

Quinquial jabbed; The Shadow lunged beneath the stroke. Driving like a human ram, he caught Quinquial with one tremendous dive. As The Shadow bowled the Jibaro into the room, he regained his footing. A chair went clattering to the floor; then a table.

Marinez, coming up with his gun, saw the tremendous finish of the fight.

THE SHADOW had risen in the center of the room. His slouch hat was gone from his head; his cloak was hanging from one shoulder. Back toward Marinez, The Shadow seemed taller than he had when fully cloaked.

Perhaps that was because he had drawn to full height, with arms above his head. Gripped like a puppet, Quinquial was squirming in those upraised arms. Marinez could see the fiendish contortions of Quinquial's face. He spied the Jibaro's right arm writhing furiously; its fist still swung the javelin, but Quinquial's arm was doubled and could make no stroke.

Still gripping Quinquial, The Shadow recoiled almost to the floor; then snapped up to full height, away from Marinez's direction. Long arms added to the body's heave. The gloved hands let Quinquial go. The Jibaro shot through the air with the speed of his own javelin, straight for a shaded window at the rear of the room.

The crash was complete.

When Quinquial struck, he carried the whole window with him. His body ripped the shade from its fastenings; smashed glass with one huge clatter; splintered the woodwork that formed the sash; carried all along on an outward plunge.

Too dumfounded to raise his revolver, Marinez saw blackness where the window had been. About the edges of the yawning space hung trifling vestiges of woodwork; scant slivers of glass; a puny side strip of green window shade.

From the darkness beyond came a crash; the thud of a body accompanied by the clatter of broken glass. It marked Quinquial's arrival in a rear alley, fifteen feet below the shattered second-story window.

The smash aroused Marinez to action. Wildly, he bounded toward the stairs, swinging his gun to aim as he retreated. As he stabbed a first wild shot, Marinez saw The Shadow wheel. A masklike face, grim

and vengeful, turned toward Marinez; a gloved right hand whipped a fresh automatic from an uncovered holster that was no longer covered by The Shadow's cloak.

Marinez sprang down the stairs. The Shadow followed in swift pursuit. He was at the top before the fleeing man reached the bottom. There, The Shadow paused. Marinez's path was blocked.

A husky patrolman had arrived from the street. The bluecoat held a leveled revolver; he gave a hoarse shout for Marinez to stop. Instead, Marinez went berserk.

With a wild yell, he leaped toward the patrolman, aiming his gun as he sprang. The Shadow fired; his bullet clipped Marinez's gun arm below the wounded shoulder, this time with perfect aim. The shot, however, was superfluous. The patrolman fired with The Shadow; his revolver shots drowned out the gunburst from above.

Three bullets found their lodging in Marinez's chest. The killer dropped, dead, at the patrolman's feet. The tactics that Marinez had used against the soldiers of Santander had failed when he had tried them upon a sturdy New York policeman.

TO The Shadow, Marinez's death was unfortunate. It meant the end of a needed trail. The Shadow had counted upon Marinez to lead him to Emilio Zenjora. Since Cardell was gone and did not intend to return, there was only one other who might show the path. That was Quinqual, if the Jibaro still chanced to be alive.

Regaining his first gun and his slouch hat, The Shadow plucked the stiletto from the floor. He sped into Marinez's room. He extinguished the light; paused for a moment at the ruined window. Hearing no sound from below, The Shadow swung across the sill, lowered his body and dropped to the alleyway beneath.

Even as he landed, The Shadow was ready with gun and flashlight. He blinked the torch upon the rough stones of the alley. The space was vacant. Not only had Quinqual survived the fall; the Jibaro must have bounced like a rubber ball. Gifted with the instincts of an ape, Quinqual had landed without injury.

The Jibaro was gone; he had left no trail behind him, not even the bamboo shaft that he had carried when he crashed through the window. The Shadow knew that it would be futile to look for clues; moreover, he saw that it would be unwise to remain here. Already shouts were sounding from one corner of the alley. Police were on the ground.

The Shadow took the direction away from the shouts. He found a space between two buildings opposite. He hurried through the opening, tightly clutching the remnants of his cloak, to gain full benefit of darkness.

A trail had been lost; therefore, The Shadow must depend upon an intensive search to locate Emilio Zenjora. Nevertheless, The Shadow did not intend immediately to hunt Zenjora himself. The supercrook would be forewarned by Quinqual. There was another man whom The Shadow could find more easily; one who might know much about Zenjora.

The Shadow's search would be for a man against whom Zenjora had declared a strange ban; a taboo that meant threat of death even to strangers who sought that missing person.

The Shadow's next move would be to find Alvarez Rentone. That young man from Santander could certainly provide much-needed information concerning the machinations that inspired Emilio Zenjora to deeds of supercrime.

CHAPTER VI. CRIME'S WARNING

ON the morning after The Shadow's victory over Marinez and Quinquial, a young man entered a towering skyscraper in the vicinity of Wall Street and boarded an express elevator.

Though American in manner, the young man had a slightly foreign appearance. His large forehead, highbridged nose and straight, solemn lips gave him an aristocratic air. His brownish eyes, black hair and darkish complexion bespoke a Spanish parentage.

Reaching the forty-fifth floor, the young man followed a corridor and came to the offices of a brokerage company. He noted a door that said "Entrance"; but he passed it, counting the numbers on other doors until he came to the one he wanted. This was an obscure door that looked as if it had long been kept locked. Nevertheless, the young man paused beside it. He glanced along the corridor. Positive that he was unobserved, he knocked.

The door opened. The young man entered a sumptuous office and stepped aside while the man who had admitted him closed the door and locked it. The visitor found himself faced by a man of sixty, who was gray-haired and keen of eye. The elder man inquired quietly:

"You are Alvarez Rentone?"

The young man nodded. The gray-haired man smiled and extended his hand to deliver a warm shake.

"I am James Oakbrook," he announced. "Let us sit by the table, over near the safe. We are alone. We can discuss our business."

Oakbrook's face was a frank one; rugged, despite the heavy jowls that suited the man's portly frame. The weight of his cheeks drew his lips into a downward smile. His eyes were gray, like his eyebrows and his bushy hair. He was conscious of the color, for he wore a gray suit that exactly matched his hair and eyes.

WHEN you called me earlier," spoke Oakbrook, "I made preparation for your visit." He opened the door of the safe; produced an oblong box and raised the lid to show green stacks of bonds and bank notes, all of high denomination. "Here are your required funds. One million dollars. The exact amount that your grandfather placed in my hands. It is yours, in return for the promissory notes that I gave to Jose Rentone."

Alvarez shook his head.

"You must keep the funds a while," he stated. "Due to complications, I have not yet brought the promissory notes."

Oakbrook showed surprise. Alvarez explained.

"On his deathbed," stated Alvarez, "my grandfather told me of this money. He told me to visit New York, the city where I had been educated, and obtain the money that he had loaned to you. In giving me your name, however, my grandfather supplied me with only half a secret.

"He said that on his last visit to New York, he buried a coffer that contained family heirlooms and certain gifts for friends in the United States. He put instructions with those treasures. More important, however, is the fact that he placed your promissory notes in the same coffer. He instructed me to use the notes to obtain the money from you. The entire fund is to be used to offset revolution in Santander."

"I begin to understand," nodded Oakbrook, slowly. "I take it that you have not yet learned the location of the treasure chest?"

"That part of the secret belongs to my cousin Estaban," declared Alvarez. "He, alone, knows where the treasure lies. I must wait to hear from him. He is still in Santander, where he has taken refuge in the mountain village of San Luis. Estaban is safe there; but a danger threatens us. Look, Mr. Oakbrook" - Alvarez picked up a newspaper that lay on the desk. "Read this account that appeared yesterday."

"It concerns the murder of an unknown Italian," exclaimed Oakbrook scanning the headlines. "What has that to do with us?"

"The man was not an Italian," returned Alvarez. "He was a messenger from Santander, looking for me. He was slain near the Hotel Goliath, where I had registered. I was wise enough to move to another hotel, a little place called the Clearview. If you doubt this" - Alvarez eyed Oakbrook solemnly - "you have simply to read an account in today's newspaper."

Alvarez picked up another journal, showed a paragraph to Oakbrook.

"A man named Marinez was killed last night," he resumed. "Slain in a gun fray with the police. Marinez is the lieutenant of Emilio Zenjora, the most notorious outlaw in Santander! Zenjora is more than a mere bandit. He has traveled everywhere in Europe and South America. He came to Santander hoping to become a secret dictator of the country. One faction has dealt directly with him. It is plain that the new regime has sent Zenjora here to acquire the million dollars that my grandfather left as a means to fight them."

Oakbrook strummed the table. His voice showed a troubled tone when he spoke.

"I must hold the funds," he declared. "The notes stipulate payment on demand - either to Jose Rentone or bearer. Since your grandfather is dead, any 'bearer' presenting them will be paid. If Zenjora should acquire them, I would be forced to pay him the million dollars. Since Zenjora seeks your life, you must remain under cover until you hear from Estaban. You are in grave danger, Alvarez."

"You, also, are in danger," insisted Alvarez. "If Zenjora has learned of you, he may try to seize the funds and handle me afterward. Estaban is safe in San Luis. I am secure at the Clearview Hotel. You, too, must avoid Zenjora."

OAKBROOK pondered, his chin deep in his hand. His eyes turned anxiously toward the door at the side of the office. At last, he spoke with decision.

"I agree with you," declared the gray-clad man. "The police are powerless. They have not linked the death of a supposed Italian with that of Marinez. I shall leave New York, carrying the funds with me. When I am safely entrenched, I shall communicate with you."

"How? No letter would be safe."

Oakbrook considered the matter. He formed a plan.

"I shall insert an advertisement in the New York Sphere," he decided. "I shall use the name of Thomas Rustwick. The advertisement will appear in the real estate section, offering a property for sale. The location of the property will tell where you can find me."

"I have trusted men in my employ. I shall be guarded. The advertisement will appear only once; then you will know the location. Wait, though" - Oakbrook pondered, then nodded - "there is a chance that I might want to see you, even before you have found the treasure. If I run the advertisement twice, that will mean urgent. I shall expect a prompt visit."

Alvarez nodded his understanding, as Oakbrook opened the door to the corridor. The way was clear;

Alvarez paused only while Oakbrook whispered a reminder:

"Remember the name: Thomas Rustwick."

Riding down in the elevator, Alvarez Rentone smiled his satisfaction. In James Oakbrook he had found a man whose cooperation promised success against the machinations of Emilio Zenjora. Alvarez had taken steps to counteract death's warning.

Alvarez was doubly pleased by the death of Marinez. It gave him an inkling to Zenjora's presence in New York; it also indicated strife among Zenjora's own followers. The real reason for Marinez's death did not occur to Alvarez. He would have been amazed to know that a mysterious avenger called The Shadow had stepped into the game.

EVENTS were brewing that were to render Alvarez Rentone completely helpless, particularly since he had no knowledge of them. Others than The Shadow were at work that day. Late afternoon produced their culmination, in a sumptuous apartment high above Manhattan.

There, by a window, a tall, broad-shouldered man gazed toward the city lights that twinkled early beneath a clouded sky. The glow was palled by a lowering fog that stirred in slowly from the harbor. Night's approach was sinister; it boded an evening suited to crime. That pleased the watcher from the window.

The man's bulky build was accentuated by the fullness of his face. He was heavily bearded; his lower face formed a thick black brush of hair. The beard was well kept, cut to a perfect spade shape.

Darkish skin seemed light against the matted black of the beard. A high-bridged nose gave its owner the appearance of a vulture; sharp, glistening eyes increased the likeness to a bird of prey. Above a high forehead was thick hair, as well groomed as the beard.

The evil smile of large red lips, plain despite the beard, gave the man a satanic expression. Scores of unfortunate persons could have testified to the cruelty of that smile. None remained, however, of those who had fallen into this monster's toils. Death had been the ultimate lot of all who had ever been captured by Emilio Zenjora.

In this high apartment, Zenjora was as much at home as in the mountain strongholds of Santander. His eyes glinted with cunning; his lips leered contempt of the city that lay spread below. Zenjora liked New York; thrusts were easy in the confines of this great city. Retreat was a simple matter, when the thrusts were done. The metropolis formed a perfect setting for Zenjora's methods of evil.

Hearing the shuffle of footsteps, Zenjora wheeled suddenly from the window. He waited; smiled as he recognized the footfalls. Cardell arrived from another room. Zenjora waved his lieutenant to a chair.

"Bad news, chief," growled Cardell. "I've just come from Oakbrook's apartment house. He hasn't returned there."

"It is not late," purred Zenjora, his lips pursing as he spoke. "Perhaps he has been detained at his office."

"I faked a business call there. They say Oakbrook left for a vacation. He's wise to something. I'll bet that Alvarez has seen him. We ought to have kept tabs on Alvarez, chief."

Zenjora's smile hardened. The supercrook did not relish suggestions from subordinates. Cardell became apologetic. Zenjora's smile relaxed.

"You have failed to understand my strategy," purred the bearded man, his eyes sharp as they studied

Cardell. "We knew that Alvarez Rentone left the Hotel Goliath, fearing that he would be watched. He chose the Clearview Hotel, knowing that he could observe strangers. Therefore, I decided not to watch him, I wanted to lull him into the belief that he was safe. We watched the Goliath, however, and thereby eliminated Manuel Fendoza. We should have done the same with another visitor who came to the Goliath."

Cardell winced. Zenjora saw the strained expression of his lieutenant's face.

"You fear The Shadow," scoffed Zenjora. "I do not fear him! My ways are his! I stalk my prey as does The Shadow!"

"Quinqual didn't get The Shadow, though," objected Cardell. "And we've lost Marinez."

"Quinqual did not expect The Shadow. He will be prepared in the future. So will Incos and my other head-hunters. I have four Jibaros, Cardell. As for Marinez, he was a poor lieutenant. Bandrillo is better. Tonight, we shall eliminate Alvarez Rentone. We can deal with Oakbrook when he returns to New York."

ZENJORA turned to stare from the window. Increased dusk brought a new leer to his lips. Still looking outward, Zenjora purred new statements.

"We have ceased to cover the Hotel Goliath," he declared, "because of The Shadow. Therefore, should another visitor come there, we could not molest him. Such a visitor might learn where Alvarez is. The Shadow, too, may learn. So I shall reverse my policy. Since Alvarez suspects danger, we shall watch him. I shall order Quinqual and Incos to that task."

Cardell grinned. He was willing to wager that Alvarez Rentone would never gain an inkling that watchers were close by. The Jibaro head-hunters had methods of keeping under cover that were as effective in New York as in the South American jungle.

"We have arranged for Alvarez Rentone and James Oakbrook," declared Zenjora, methodically. "We shall consider others on our list. There is one who must be eliminated early. That man is Howard Dundee. If Fendoza's body is identified, Dundee may report to the police that Fendoza called him by telephone and referred to Alvarez Rentone."

Turning from the window, Zenjora hardened his tone with the order: "Call Quinqual and Incos. I shall assign them to their new duty."

THERE was reason for Zenjora to watch Alvarez Rentone. He, himself, had learned of Alvarez's new lodging. What the master crook had discovered, The Shadow might find. Proof of this very fact lay elsewhere in Manhattan, where a wiry young man was seated at a rear table in a small Spanish restaurant, talking confidentially to the mustached proprietor.

"It's a big story, Francisco," the young man was saying. "An interview with Alvarez Rentone, grandson of the late Santander dictator. It's the kind of stuff the Classic likes."

"Ah, Senor Burke," shrugged Francisco. "You are an amigo, a friend that I have known long. But I have told you too much. You ask me when Alvarez Rentone has come here to eat, last time; where he has gone since then. I ask you: 'Quien sabe? Who can tell?' But you say you have wait all afternoon to speak of it with me.

"So I tell you I have taken a special Spanish dish, of which I am very proud, to the Clearview Hotel. That was two days ago. Si. Dos dios, I remember. I gave it to the man you call the clerk; I hear him say to the

bellboy that it was for Meestaire Rentone."

"Thanks, Francisco." The wiry young man gripped the Spaniard's hand. "There'll be no comeback. When I see Alvarez, I won't mention that I learned where he was through you. He'll never think that the tip-off came from a restaurant where he ordered dinner by telephone.

Outside the restaurant, the wiry young man walked quickly to a telephone. He had learned important news. Clyde Burke was more than a newspaper reporter, on the staff of the New York Classic. He was also an agent of The Shadow.

By telephone, Clyde passed the facts along to Burbank, The Shadow's contact man. Clyde knew that the word would soon reach The Shadow.

SOON afterward, the desk clerk at the Clearview received a telephone call asking for Alvarez Rentone. He gave Alvarez's room number as 308, but added that the guest was out.

That was the second call the clerk had received; each had been in a different voice. What worried him was the fact that no one was supposed to know that Alvarez was at the Clearview. But the clerk had no instructions in case persons called up and asked. Thinking that they must be confidential friends of Alvarez's, he had given the information.

The Gearview Hotel fronted on a quiet street. Odd-shaped, the hotel had a broad front; but the extension that went through to the rear street was only half width. The rest of the space formed a courtyard. Access was easy, for there was a broad alley between the front of the hotel and an old, deserted theater next door.

Twenty minutes after the clerk had received the second call, a taxi passed the Clearview Hotel. Keen eyes peered from the rear window; a passenger whispered an important order. The cab circled the block, paused at the deserted theater. From the door glided a blackish figure that sought the shelter of darkness beneath a battered marquee.

The cab pulled away, but the shape glided onward. It neared the alleyway and entered. The Shadow had found the element he wanted; completely obscured in darkness, he was planning a visit to the hotel room, occupied by Alvarez Rentone.

From the rear courtyard, The Shadow saw the outline of a fire escape against the dull glow that filtered through the increasing fog. He saw window lights in the hotel that indicated crosswise corridors. They showed that the fire escape could be reached by short passages from those main halls. Finding the hinged extension of the fire escape, The Shadow drew it down without noise.

Ascending to the third floor, The Shadow avoided entry by the passage. Instead, he went across the rail and moved along a stone cornice. Gripping the wall with clutching fingers, he passed two windows. One was lighted, with shade drawn; the next was dark. The Shadow moved slowly as he passed a third room, also dark. He stopped at a fourth window.

If The Shadow's calculations were correct, this room would be 308. Raising an unlocked sash, The Shadow entered. He used a flashlight on a telephone; saw the number 308. Calmly The Shadow awaited the return of Alvarez Rentone.

FIFTEEN minutes passed. Then a slight sound occurred. It was the click of a key in the door of the room. Close beside the wall, The Shadow waited. The door did not open; the key sounded again. This time, it rattled.

Instantly, The Shadow knew that the arrival was not Alvarez. He could tell that a skeleton key was in the lock. Someone was trying to effect an entry before Alvarez returned. Whether the entrant would be friend or foe to Alvarez was something that The Shadow intended to determine.

As the key turned, The Shadow drew an automatic. Whoever entered would be due for questioning; and kept here until Alvarez arrived. The Shadow's purpose was definite. He expected no difficulty.

Strange events were in the making beyond that opening door. Once more, The Shadow was due for a struggle that would tax him to the utmost.

Though the mere entrance of an unknown person did not betray the fact, the hand of Emilio Zenjora lay hidden in the background.

CHAPTER VII. THRUSTS THROUGH THE DARK

THE door of the room moved slowly inward. It paused, as though hesitating of its own accord. Against the framed light of the corridor, The Shadow saw a squat form. He could not distinguish the entrant's face; for the light was behind the man.

A hand reached inward to the wall, probing for a light switch. That delay gave The Shadow an opportunity that he wanted. He had waited to view the man from the hall, to see if the fellow made a sudden move or acted as if he thought someone was within. Since the intruder was unaware of The Shadow's presence, The Shadow had chance for an excellent move.

Gliding along the darkness of the side wall, he reached the front wall of the room. There, he placed himself on a line with the man at the doorway. The door, half opened, lay as a barrier between.

Cautiously, the squat man began to shut the door behind him. He left it open a few inches, keeping one hand upon the knob. His free had found the light switch.

A click sounded. Side brackets illuminated the room. With the door no longer blocking, The Shadow saw the face of the man who had entered. It was an ugly, broad-nosed countenance that boasted puffy lips and squinty eyes.

The man's dark hair was an unkempt mass. His clothes were rough and baggy. He looked like a marauder who had sneaked in through the tawdry lobby of this old hotel. As the man's face turned, The Shadow saw a reddish scar that ran halfway across his face, on a line with his upper lip.

That mark told the man's identity. The Shadow recognized him as Nick Broggoletta, a notorious assassin.

Broggoletta was the sort who killed for hire. As such, he had served various big-shots, by disposing of henchmen who had double-crossed them. His murders had saved the police considerable trouble; nevertheless, the law had tried to pin the deaths on Broggoletta. The law had failed to do so. Nick had always been clever enough to cover up his trail.

Lately, Nick had lain low. His hideout was known; but he had presumably ended his ways of crime. Yesterday, Inspector Cardona had quizzed him regarding the death of Manuel Fendoza. For once, Nick Broggoletta had shown a clean slate. Tonight, however, the killer had bobbed into the game. Nick's entry was puzzling, even to The Shadow.

The Shadow intended to gain the answer shortly. He was waiting only until Nick closed the door completely. Then The Shadow intended to greet the assassin with the muzzle of a .45. Like most hired

assassins, Nick was the sort who would turn yellow when trapped. The Shadow had dealt with his ilk before. Hired killers were usually paid in advance. They had little to lose by squealing on the man who had employed them.

A FEW seconds more, Nick would have found himself staring into the mouth of The Shadow's leveled automatic. Something occurred, however, to change the course of events.

Nick heard a peculiar sound from the corridor. He pulled the door inward; the space of six inches. He turned to peer out into the hall. As he did, he saw The Shadow, past the inner edge of the door.

Through sheer instinct, the killer performed an unexpected action. His hand was on the end of the door; wildly, Nick swung it inward. Speeding on its hinges, the door rammed straight toward The Shadow, who was starting forward in response to Nick's move. The Shadow sidestepped. The edge of the door thwacked his shoulder. The Shadow was jolted halfway to the floor.

Broggoletta whipped a long stiletto from beneath his jacket. He sprang forward, driving the weapon in a long, underhand thrust.

Resting on one hand, The Shadow swung the other up from the floor. His fist held its heavy gun; the .45 cracked Broggoletta's forearm. The assassin's stroke went wide.

Spinning, Nick made a wild dive through the doorway. The Shadow swung to aim. Before he could fire, there was a wild cry from the corridor. The Shadow saw Broggoletta stop short. With the killer's halt, there came a whizzing swish from the end of the corridor.

A pointed weapon drove deep into Broggoletta's shoulder. The killer staggered backward; before he could rally, another sound came from the opposite direction. A second shaft struck the back of Broggoletta's neck; it quivered there, displaying its feathered stub.

The Shadow had seen such weapons before. They were bamboo darts like the one that Quinquial had hurled last night.

Though death had been slow with Fendoza, it was swift with Broggoletta. The drives from those stubby javelins delivered more than trivial cuts. Points of bamboo, dyed with their poison, had penetrated deep. Dropping his stiletto, Broggoletta plucked the first shaft from his shoulder; then vainly tried to tug the second from his neck.

Nick's fingers failed, as they clawed the feathered barb. The killer reeled; then sagged. His face turned toward the doorway. The Shadow saw eyes that bulged from their sockets; lips that writhed, then froze into an agonized leer.

Nick Broggoletta's countenance had become the counterpart of Manuel Fendoza's. The horror of a poison death was fully registered upon the killer's face.

Nick sprawled forward; as he struck, his body gave a sidewise roll. That jolt accomplished the deed that Nick had found futile. The flounder of the dead man's head threw weight upon the feathered end of the death shaft. The Jibaro weapon twisted free from Broggoletta's neck.

PADDED footsteps thudded in the corridor. An apish form appeared beside the corpse. The Shadow saw a vicious, large-toothed face. The arrival was a Jibaro - almost the twin of Quinquial. Only The Shadow could have detected the slight difference in the slope of this Jibaro's forehead.

This head-hunter was Incos, whom Zenjora had ordered to act as Quinquial's teammate. If Incos had heard the sounds of Broggoletta's scuffle with The Shadow, he must have considered them unimportant;

for the Jibaro did not look into the lighted room. Instead, Incos pulled a stiletto from beneath his ill-fitting coat. He rolled Broggoletta's body on its back, then jabbed the stiletto deep into the dead man's heart.

Grinning with his gritted teeth, Incos snatched up the feathered dart that had fallen from the neck of the corpse. He used it to make quick scratches on the dead man's forehead. The Shadow saw the Jibaro's arm slash twice across; then downward at an angle.

Steadily, The Shadow was shifting to the edge of the doorway, intending to be out of sight when Incos turned. Before he could reach that vantage point, oddly chattered words sounded in the corridor. Quinquial was giving advice to Incos. Instantly, Incos whipped about and stared into the lighted room.

The Jibaro saw The Shadow.

The action that followed was instantaneous. Incos performed in a style that differed from Quinquial's. With a twist, Incos came up from the floor; but instead of driving toward The Shadow, he gave a huge, sideward bound away from Broggoletta's body.

Incos wanted to retain the safety of the corridor. He also sought to gain an angled line along which to hurl his bamboo shaft. His arm swung back, then jabbed forward, while he was still in mid-air. His hand loosed the poisoned weapon with incredible speed.

Simultaneously, The Shadow acted with a swiftness that equalled the Jibaro's. He faded to the wall within the doorway, making a long dive that carried his body well beyond. To stop his swing, The Shadow shot his left hand forward; he hooked the door frame with his automatic. As the metal clicked the woodwork, The Shadow pulled the trigger.

The bamboo shaft whistled above The Shadow's fist; sped through emptiness where The Shadow's shoulder had been. Incos had launched a futile thrust. But the Jibaro's high, sidewise bound had served him well. The Shadow's levered aim was too much of a makeshift. His bullet zipped an inch wide of the Jibaro's body.

Raising his right hand quickly, The Shadow extinguished the light switch. He whisked away into the darkness, none too soon. Quinquial had arrived from the corridor, scooping up his own shaft as he came.

Half into the doorway, Quinquial sped a side-arm throw, that even a bullet could not have stopped. With uncanny skill, the Jibaro picked the exact spot where The Shadow had been against the wall.

THE second dart found blankness. From the center of the blackened room, The Shadow answered with a quick gun stab. Had Quinquial paused, counting upon his accuracy with the shaft, he would have received a bullet as reward. But the Jibaro had left nothing to chance. He somersaulted as he made his throw; his rubbery body bounded clear beyond the doorway. Quinquial was following Incos. Like his teammate, Quinquial had hurled himself to safety a scant space ahead of The Shadow's gun blast.

The Shadow sprang to the doorway of the room, reached the corridor just in time to see Quinquial dive into the passage that led to the fire escape; a route that Incos had already taken. The Shadow pursued; when he reached the passage, Quinquial had already gained the fire escape.

The Shadow arrived at the metal rail, aimed his gun straight downward and blasted bullets through the open metal work. Even as he fired, he heard a thud in the darkness of the courtyard; then another.

Incos and Quinquial had both leaped from the metal steps, ahead of The Shadow's barrage. The jump was a dozen feet for Incos; twice that for Quinquial. Yet both Jibaros must have landed with equal ease, and made instant dives to cover. Although The Shadow fired in the direction of the sounds; produced a

fresh automatic and boomed additional shots, his bullets found no targets. The Shadow could hear his slugs ricochet from the cement of the courtyard.

There were nooks and spaces below by which the Jibaros could reach the street under cover. Once again, The Shadow saw that pursuit was useless. His only course was to try and find Alvarez Rentone, in accordance with the original mission that he had chosen for this night.

The Shadow hurried back through the corridor; passed Broggoletta's body and entered Alvarez's room. Flicking his flashlight, he found the bamboo shafts. The Shadow gathered them as trophies, removing his gloves to twist them about the sharp points. Thus sheathed, the poisoned weapons went beneath The Shadow's cloak.

There was the clatter of an elevator door; shouts from the corridor; a clang as the door closed. The Shadow's gunfire had been heard below. Investigators, up from the lobby, had spied Broggoletta's body. Fearing danger, they were descending to summon the police.

The Shadow waited no longer. He made for the fire escape. His descent was swift.

When he reached the courtyard, The Shadow heard the whine of a patrol car. He still had opportunity to gain the front street. He used it. He reached the darkened space beneath the marquee of the theater just as a police car stopped in front of the hotel.

Another patrol car arrived. Police were entering the hotel; additional bluecoats were coming on foot. Ten seconds later, a taxi sped into view; it slackened speed with suddenness and rolled lazily to a stop in front of the deserted theater.

It was Moe's cab. The Shadow gained it with a quick glide.

FROM darkness within the cab, The Shadow watched the police spread. Three officers had entered the hotel; one was on guard in front. The others were making for the rear, through the alley by which The Shadow had come. None suspected that Moe's cab had an occupant. They thought that the driver had merely halted at sight of the commotion in front of the hotel.

People from the Clearview were gesticulating, as they explained matters to the patrolman who was on guard. None - not even the bluecoat - were concerned with events in the street. It was The Shadow alone who saw a cab come past and stop in front of the hotel.

The Shadow watched the door come halfway open; he saw the face of a young man that peered toward the group on the sidewalk. The young man's face was dark-complexioned. It bobbed back into the cab. A moment later, the taxi rolled away.

The Shadow knew that the arrival must be Alvarez Rentone. The young man from Santander had returned to his hotel, to discover confusion there. Alvarez had sensed that it might mean danger to himself. He was off to a new destination.

The Shadow spoke an order to Moe. The cab started; went slowly past the hotel, then gradually quickened speed as it neared the corner. Rounding into an avenue, Moe saw Alvarez's cab a block ahead. In his usual skillful fashion, Moe took up the pursuit.

Shrouded in darkness, The Shadow kept keen watch. He had found the trail he wanted. Sooner or later, it would end in a meeting with Alvarez Rentone. That meeting gained, The Shadow could learn the vital facts that he needed to combat Emilio Zenjora.

CHAPTER VIII. NEWS FROM SANTANDER

IT was after midnight. Heavy fog had set in, hours ago. Watching from the darkened window of a small apartment, Alvarez Rentone could not see the street below. That fact pleased him. Alvarez felt that he had found a new refuge.

A key clicked in the apartment door. Alvarez calmly lighted a floor lamp. He dropped into a comfortable armchair. He was gazing toward the door when it opened to admit a young man attired in a tuxedo.

The arrival was of husky build: his countenance was friendly and jocular. When he saw Alvarez, the young man stopped in surprise.

"Close the door, Lynn," suggested Alvarez, in a hoarse whisper. "What's that you have there? A morning newspaper?"

Lynn nodded, as he handed the newspaper to Alvarez.

"Just bought it at Times Square," said Lynn. "Boy! Is the fog thick down there! No use taking a cab. I had to come by subway. Say, Alvarez - what's up? Why did you come to my apartment?"

Alvarez pointed to the front page headlines. Lynn saw news of a new stiletto stabbing.

"I started to read it," he remarked. "Thought it might hook up with the one you spoke about. Only this fellow was a real Italian. Nick Broggoletta."

"Yes," agreed Alvarez, "but he was murdered at the Clearview. The newspaper doesn't happen to mention the hotel by name."

"They were after you, then?"

"I think so," declared Alvarez. "I figure it this way, Lynn. Fendoza was killed two nights ago. He was a loyal chap; but his connections in New York may have been bad ones - persons like this Broggoletta. When Fendoza failed to reach me, Broggoletta made the attempt."

"Maybe not," disagreed Lynn. "Perhaps Broggoletta thought that you were responsible for Fendoza's death and came after you for vengeance."

"That's possible," admitted Alvarez, "but the main point is that Broggoletta was murdered by Zenjora's assassins. They must have learned that I was at the Clearview."

As Alvarez stared with troubled expression, Lynn suddenly remembered an important matter. From his tuxedo pocket he produced a letter that bore a Colombian postage stamp: It was addressed to Lynn Jefford; but Alvarez's friend had not opened it. Alvarez recognized the handwriting; gave an elated cry.

"The letter was at the club," smiled Lynn. "I expected to hear from you while I was at the banquet. Is it from Estaban?"

Alvarez nodded; he tore open the letter and scanned the contents. He imparted brief information to Lynn.

"Estaban received my message," stated Alvarez. "He is safe at San Luis. He sent this letter across the mountain, to be mailed from Bogota, in Colombia."

Reading the letter once again, Alvarez nodded to himself. He struck a match, applied it to the letter and

dropped the flaming paper into a metal wastebasket.

"You have been a true friend, Lynn," declared Alvarez. "An old school chum on whom I could rely. That is why I sent your name and the address of your club to Estaban, telling him to mail any letters to you.

"I have told you about my grandfather's fortune; that Estaban was to tell me where it was. I said also that I would have to communicate with a man in New York. Today, I saw that man and warned him of danger. He has left New York."

Alvarez did not mention James Oakbrook by name. He had deemed it best to keep Oakbrook's identity a secret, even from Lynn Jefford.

"Estaban's letter," resumed Alvarez, "has given me the location of the treasure, Lynn. I want you to help me gain it. This very night!"

THE news brought a prompt reaction from Lynn.

"I'm game," he declared. "Only you'll be letting me in on the secret that -"

"I trust you, Lynn. The treasure is in New Jersey, near the town of Roselawn. There, we shall find an old estate, once owned by a man named Kincaid. Near the empty house is a mausoleum, that was never used. There is a secret opening in the stone floor; it leads to a vault below. The vault is sealed with an emblem that bears my grandfather's coat of arms."

Alvarez drew his watch from his pocket; displayed a heavy fob and pried it open. Inside, Lynn saw a gold seal the size of a half dollar.

"When do we start?"

Lynn put the query. Alvarez smiled.

"Right away," he replied. "That is, as soon as you have changed your clothes."

"I'll wear these duds," returned Lynn. "I'll phone the garage and tell them to send over the coupe."

"No, no!" exclaimed Alvarez. "I am afraid that I was followed here, Lynn, although I had a taxi driver take me all over town and drop me a block from this apartment house. Watchers may be hereabouts; they would observe any car that appeared at this hour. Let us go to the garage, instead of having the coupe come here."

Five minutes later, Lynn and Alvarez were stealing along a side street. Even their footsteps seemed muffled by the fog. They passed a lighted corner; took to another misty stretch. They reached Lynn's garage, three blocks away.

Riding forth in the car, they headed westward. Lynn, at the wheel, found driving difficult. The coupe barely crept along; fog swallowed it completely.

That fact pleased Alvarez. He was sure that they could never be observed. Alvarez would not have believed it, had he been told that there was a being - The Shadow - to whom fog and darkness served as a welcome cloak; whose keen eyes could pierce both elements.

ONE hour out of Manhattan, the coupe reached a secluded New Jersey highway. High ground had thinned the fog; thick clouds, however, blackened the landscape. Alvarez watched ahead to identify the route that he had learned from Estaban's letter. At times, he gazed through the rear window to make sure

that no car was trailing them.

Coming down a slight grade, Lynn cut off the motor. The coupe creaked as he coasted it at snail's pace. Ahead, Alvarez saw the gates of the Kincaid estate. Listening, he thought he heard the sound of a motor back along the road. He looked back, wondering if a car was following, its own lights darkened, depending on Lynn's headlamps to show the road. Alvarez decided that he had imagined the sound behind.

Lynn cut off the headlights, turned on the cowls. The coupe entered the gates; followed a curving drive. Lynn guided by the border of a lawn where the grass had grown high. Massive darkness bulked ahead. It was the abandoned Kincaid mansion. Lynn picked a space past the house; extinguished the car lights.

Using flashlights, the two young men studied the graveled driveway. Satisfied that all was well, they picked a course past the back of the old mansion. Trying to do without flashlights, they blundered against a wooden wall a few hundred yards in back of the house.

Lynn risked a flashlight, to see an old work shack, built of half-rotted pine. Through a door half off its hinges, the searchers saw stacks of old boards and bags that had once contained cement. There were a few tools: rusted wrenches and a heavy sledge hammer. In one corner, they noted a pile of large lead pipe that varied in length from two feet to six.

"It looks as though they intended to build a garage," remarked Alvarez. "Probably at the time when the old mansion was abandoned."

"It doesn't matter," decided Lynn. "Our job is to find the mausoleum. We'll have to use the flashlights when we get outside, Alvarez."

Taking the toolhouse as a base, the two started a new search outside. This time, they made cautious use of the flashlights. They discovered an old path and followed it. The ground leveled; a mass of ghostly whiteness loomed suddenly ahead.

Lynn doused his flashlight; Alvarez did the same. They crept toward the whitened object, placed their hands against a stony wall.

"The mausoleum!" whispered Lynn. "Whew! It's spooky here! Let's find the door to it and finish up this job."

GROPING along, they passed a corner. Their hands found a crevice. Prying together, they swung a heavy door that groaned on rusty hinges. The sound was sepulchral; almost like a voice that protested against this entry. Lynn could hear Alvarez mutter low words in Spanish. He knew that his friend also felt the chill of this ghostly spot.

Nevertheless, both had the same idea the moment that they had entered. Together, the pair groped for the door that they had opened and drew it shut behind them. Again, hinges grated; this time, the sound brought hollow echoes from the interior of the mausoleum. The new groan was even less assuring than the former one.

Lynn used his flashlight. Its glare was ample. All about were white walls. The floor, like the walls, was of stone; it gave a solid click as Alvarez walked toward the rear wall. There, he stooped, beckoned for Lynn to approach with the flashlight.

It was obvious that this mausoleum had never been used for a burial. Any ordinary visitor would have regarded it simply as a structure of solid stone and would not have troubled to search the interior. That

fact showed the wisdom of old Jose Rentone. Alvarez's grandfather had made an excellent choice in using this abandoned building as the blind for a treasure vault.

In fact, as Lynn watched Alvarez probe the floor, he felt that the quest would prove useless. Stones were fitted so closely together; they seemed so solid, that it was difficult to believe that an opening could exist. However, Alvarez must have received exact instructions from his cousin Estaban.

Pressing one hand against the lowest stone of the wall, the other against a section of the floor, Alvarez manipulated them like the panels of a tricky Japanese box. The wall stone clicked; receded slightly. Pushing his fingers into the space, Alvarez found hidden springs and pressed them. Other wall stones slid aside.

Alvarez pushed the floor stones inward. Entering the wall, they left an opening that measured two feet by three. Lynn eagerly turned the rays of the flashlight down into the space below. The light showed a drop of five feet. Alvarez slid his feet over the edge and dropped into the space beneath.

There, he beckoned to Lynn. Watching Alvarez, Lynn saw his friend stoop and crawl through an opening that led beneath the rear wall of the mausoleum.

Lynn came through, down into the space that Alvarez had left. He saw his companion's flashlight blinking from a flight of rough-hewn stone steps that led down into a lower passage. Lynn joined Alvarez; the two stood erect in a narrow corridor that ended in a heavy metal door.

They were more than six feet underground. The top of the passage had been reinforced with metal crossbeams and cemented stones. Though crumbly, the roof was strong enough to support the weight of the ground above.

THE pair approached the door. Above a roughened knob, they saw a mass of heavy wax. Implanted in that wax was a mark of a seal that Lynn immediately recognized. It was the seal of Jose Rentone, identical with the one that Alvarez carried in his watch fob.

Alvarez gripped the doorknob, tugged at it. The door did not open; Lynn found the reason when he ran his flashlight along the crevice. There was a hidden catch that held the door tight. Lynn could barely detect its glimmer, for the catch was behind the heavy seal.

Producing a penknife, Lynn jabbed at the seal. It cracked; he thrust the knife blade into the crevice. He forced the catch back; motioned for Alvarez to pull the knob. The door swung this time. Drawing it wide, the young men played their flashlights into the vault beyond.

They saw a close-walled room, fashioned of rough stone. The chamber measured about eight feet in each dimension. It was reached by a descent of three stone steps. At the far wall rested the object that they sought: a metal coffer the size of a large trunk.

Alvarez sprang forward with eagerness. Lynn, more cautious, remained upon the steps to satisfy himself that the door could not swing shut. Finding it tight upon its hinges, he joined Alvarez. He aided him with the heavy bands that girded the coffer. The bands were of metal; clamped, not locked.

"In a few minutes more," promised Alvarez, breathlessly, "you will see my grandfather's heirlooms! I know what some of them will be; for he told me about them, often.

"The silver sword belt, that was worn by Balboa; the candelabra that belonged to a former Spanish viceroy; medallions, once the property of Simon Bolivar. They are of rare value, Lynn; but most important are those promissory notes, that will bring a million dollars to the cause of liberty in Santander!

"Come! Help me with this last band. There! It is loose! Hold the flashlight close, while I raise the lid -"

As Lynn glimmered the light, Alvarez suited his words with actions. He jolted the lid of the coffer upward and backward. It nearly snapped its hinges from the force of the jerk that Alvarez gave it.

Instantly, Lynn Jefford uttered an inarticulate cry.

The contents of the coffer were not those that Alvarez had promised. Instead, the metal box contained a gruesome object - that made Lynn Jefford sag away in instinctive horror.

Packed within the coffer, twisted into a shape that seemed no longer human, was the corpse of a man who had died in fearful agony.

THE face that stared from above contorted shoulders had once been handsome; but in death, it was terrible. White eyeballs showed from shrunken sockets; dark pupils had narrowed to the size of tiny beads. Black hair looked like withered grass. Sallow features were drawn like tightened parchment.

Lynn could see that the dead man's face must have shown a demoniacal expression soon after death. Its leer, however, had shrunken into a mummified grin, from which teeth stood out against brownish, withered gums.

Shaky as he held the flashlight, Lynn managed to turn his eyes from the terrible sight within the coffer. He looked toward Alvarez, expecting to see his companion crouched back in awe. Instead, Alvarez was rigid.

The young man from Santander was leaning above the coffer, looking straight down upon the face that mocked him with its hideous upward glare. No horror was registered by Alvarez; nor was his expression one that denoted inability to turn his eyes away.

Alvarez's face was toned with a profound sorrow. Though strained, his eyes were watery. His lips, alone, were quivering; as though ready to utter piteous words. Lynn gained sudden realization as he noted Alvarez's emotion.

In strained tone, Lynn queried: "You know him?"

Alvarez nodded; his movement was slow and mechanical. Lynn waited for Alvarez to speak. When words came from Alvarez's saddened lips, they were solemn despite their chokiness. More than that, they carried an astonishing statement that left Lynn Jefford dazed.

"I knew this man," pronounced Alvarez, his eyes fixed on the face below. "I knew him, trusted him, depended upon him more than any other man alive!"

Then, in a tone that might have been a knell, Alvarez Rentone added: "This man was my cousin Estaban!"

CHAPTER IX. STRANGERS FROM THE DARK

FLOODING thoughts surged through Lynn Jefford's brain, when he heard the dead man's identity. Disjointedly, Lynn began to piece the circumstances that had led up to the discovery of the corpse.

Estaban Rentone had been safe in Santander, in a town called San Luis. From there, he had sent a letter to Alvarez, telling him of this treasure vault. There could be no question regarding the authenticity of the letter.

Alvarez would have recognized a forgery. Moreover, Estaban alone knew that Alvarez had come to America in search of buried wealth.

Fate, none the less, had provided a grim surprise for the finish of Alvarez's quest.

Behind such fate, Lynn began to see the plotting of a human brain. A mind that well might belong to a demon. Some master hand of evil had delivered a series of amazing strokes.

Estaban Rentone was dead. His grandfather's treasure was gone. In its place was Estaban's body, its shrunken face grinning in irony at Alvarez. The master criminal who had prepared this climax must know everything.

That final thought made Lynn turn to Alvarez. In one instant, Lynn could see that he and his companion stood in a spot of danger. Lynn gulped words; Alvarez did not notice them. He still stood staring at the cramped body of his dead cousin.

"Alvarez!" Lynn added emphasis to his cry by shaking his companion's shoulder. "Alvarez! Snap out of it! We can't stay here!"

The shouted words echoed within the vault. They came back with ringing shudder that seemed loath to cease. Lynn, startled by the reverberations of his own cries, stood in startled silence. The echoes seemed ugly, inhuman in this vault.

"Alvarez -"

Lynn repeated the name in lower tone. Again, there were echoes. They were uglier than before; from them came new words that Lynn had not uttered. Snarled words, that made Lynn spin about. Alvarez came with him, as they heard a voice pronounce the words:

"Alvarez Rentone! I have expected you here!"

STANDING upon the stone steps that marked the entrance to the vault was the man who had uttered the sneering announcement. Lynn saw a face that showed evil against the framed light of a lantern that was held by someone in the outer passage.

The face was vulture-like. Its nose was high-bridged, beakish. The face itself was full, with high forehead; adding to its heavy effect was a spade-shaped beard through which fierce, ruddy lips formed a merciless smile.

The identity of the arrival was plain to Lynn Jefford, even before Alvarez blurted the name:

"Emilio Zenjora!"

Zenjora chuckled at the recognition. His tone was satanic. His teeth showed in tigerish ferocity as he spread his lips to laugh. Then Zenjora's manner changed to harshness; though his words were purred, the vault gave them a deep rumble.

"You expected to find treasure," announced Zenjora. "Something that your grandfather valued. You should not be disappointed, Alvarez. Your grandfather thought much of your cousin, Estaban."

A pause. Alvarez glared his defiance. He countered with the accusation:

"You murdered Estaban! You tortured him to make him speak!"

"No!" Zenjora shook his head as he spat the word. "I did not murder Estaban; nor did I torture him. He

was killed by these."

Zenjora beckoned. From beneath the muzzles of guns that bristled from the corridor came two hunched figures - apish men who scampered down into the vault and stood with grinning faces. Each gripped a pointed shaft of feathered bamboo. Alvarez recognized the men and their weapons.

"Jibaros!" he exclaimed. "They killed Estaban with their poisoned weapons!"

Zenjora nodded.

"They slew Estaban," he declared. "They brought me the letter that he had written to you. So I came to this country by plane, bringing Estaban's body with me. Once I had learned of this treasure vault, I felt that I should substitute something for the wealth that I intended to acquire.

"My Jibaros came with me, along with other followers. They killed Manuel Fendoza; for he had learned of Estaban's death and was coming to inform you. Tonight, they killed another man: Nick Broggoletta, evidently a friend of Fendoza's. It was unwise for you to learn that Estaban had died."

There was significance in Zenjora's tone. The answer dawned on Lynn and Alvarez, even before Zenjora gave the explanation.

"Your death," stated Zenjora, "might have caused too much comment. It might have alarmed James Oakbrook, whose promissory notes I now hold. So I decided to let you come here, Alvarez, hoping that you would bring your friend Jefford with you.

"The trap was simple. I merely mailed your cousin's letter, before I left Bogota. The envelope was opened, then sealed again, but too well for you to notice it. By coming here, you have aided my plans. Your disappearance will not cause the comment that your death might.

"Especially since you were staying under cover. That was something that you probably told Oakbrook, when you saw him today. Oakbrook, I understand, has left New York. That will not matter. I shall await his return."

THE completeness of Zenjora's measures left Alvarez astounded; and Lynn shared his friend's amazement.

Zenjora spoke in a strange tongue, giving a command to the Jibaro headhunters. Alvarez and Lynn expected thrusts from the deadly bamboo shafts. Instead, the head-hunters lowered the weapons; they bounded forward and began to search the helpless men. While the Jibaros pulled articles from the pockets of Lynn and Alvarez, Zenjora added a final touch.

"We might have trapped you outside this vault," he sneered, "but that was not necessary. Fortunately, I had this" - he held up a circular object of gold - "a replica of your grandfather's seal, which we found upon your cousin's body. I used it to seal the vault after I had taken the treasure.

"When I depart, the seal will again be applied. Some time, years from now, someone may find this vault again. The seal will be the same as ever. Only there will be three skeletons - not one - within this death pit!"

Walls echoed back the evil prophecy. The Jibaros had finished their search of the trapped men's pockets; They brought the collection to Zenjora, who pocketed all papers and letters. When he examined watches and money that the two men had carried, Zenjora gave a contemptuous shrug of his shoulders. He ordered his servitors to return them to the doomed prisoners.

Mechanically, Lynn and Alvarez accepted the trifles that the Jibaros thrust into their hands. Zenjora explained his action with an ugly chuckle.

"I am Emilio Zenjora," he declared, proudly. "I never rob the living. I prefer the dead."

With that, he clucked an order to the head-hunters. The Jibaros retired; Zenjora stepped back. Leveled gun barrels parted to make way for him. Zenjora placed a brawny hand upon the metal door. His bearded face showed a final surge of devilish malice. His arm slung; the heavy door clanged into place. The automatic catch clicked from above the steps.

Lynn and Alvarez were standing in the feeble glow of the flashlights that they still held. The brilliant lantern was gone with Zenjora and his followers. The trapped men saw what their intended fate would be. Zenjora had spared them the thrusts of Jibaros spears, evidently considering such strokes as useless.

Buried alive, Lynn Jefford and Alvarez Rentone could count the few minutes that remained to them. Zenjora had left them flashlights and watches so that they could clock the time until their doom arrived.

That interval would not be long.

Already, the air of the vault was stifling. The oxygen in a room as cramped as this one could not last two men more than a few hours, at best. The vault, however, lacked the qualities of an ordinary room. Its air supply was already bad.

LYNN JEFFORD groaned, as he foresaw the death that was to be. Then, gaining determination, he sprang to the door. Beyond it, he heard scraping sounds: Zenjora was restoring the seal. Lynn looked for the catch that held the door tight. It could not be reached from this side.

Since the door closed from the corridor, a metal frame had been designed to stop it. That frame covered the crevice. In addition, the door hinges were on the outside. Despairingly, Lynn turned about to ask Alvarez for suggestions.

Alvarez had none. He seemed resigned. Lynn saw him gaze at Estaban's body. Perhaps the sight of his cousin's upturned face gave Alvarez the courage to meet death. For Alvarez stood rigid, concerned only with the sight before him.

Lynn sat on the stone steps and mopped his forehead with a handkerchief that Zenjora had allowed him to keep. He held his flashlight loosely, let the glow play toward Alvarez. Sniffing the air, Lynn noted its rankness.

"We're through, Alvarez," he said, slowly. "Half an hour will do us in. Well, the only thing to do is face it. My only regret is that Zenjora is free to go ahead with further dirty work."

No comment from Alvarez. Lynn put a question:

"What about James Oakbrook? Is he the man you saw today? The one who has the money?"

Alvarez heard Lynn's query; he nodded. He no longer had reason to keep Oakbrook's identity a secret.

"I hope Oakbrook keeps clear of Zenjora," remarked Lynn. "Naturally, Oakbrook will be allowed to live until he forks over the cash. I suppose he will have to recognize Zenjora's claim on the cash."

"He will," spoke Alvarez, turning away from the coffer that held Estaban's body. "Oakbrook will have no other course, once Zenjora finds him. When I am dead, the new regime in Santander can claim possession of all that belongs to me."

"And when Oakbrook has paid -"

"Zenjora will murder him. Let us hope, therefore, that Zenjora does not find him. But there are others, Lynn, who will suffer, regardless of what happens to Oakbrook."

"You mean your grandfather's friends?"

"Yes. A list of their names was with the heirlooms. Zenjora will kill them because of his hatred for my grandfather. He may have another reason, also. If he does not find Oakbrook, he will hunt those men down, one by one, to learn if they know where Oakbrook is."

LYNN came to his feet. The stifling air made him gasp from his effort. Approaching the coffer, he wrenched away one of the iron bars that had clamped it. Driving upward, he began to chop vainly at the ceiling. He chipped one stone; then ceased his effort. He stood panting beside the wall.

"We cannot aid those other men," announced Alvarez, in a stoical tone. "I do not know their names. I was dependent upon the list. All were old friends of my grandfather's, whom he knew before I was born. He never mentioned their names to me."

"We can help ourselves," retorted Lynn. "We've got to get out of here, Alvarez!"

With that, Lynn began new efforts. He wielded the bar with fury. Two minutes of effort tired him. He waited for a few minutes; then began again. This time he cracked a stone; a few more lunges caused a chunk to clatter to the floor beside him. Gasping, Lynn turned his flashlight upward. He saw another layer of stone above the insignificant hole that he had made.

Lynn sat wearily upon the steps, and Alvarez joined him. Glancing at his watch, Alvarez calmly remarked:

"Zenjora has been gone for fully fifteen minutes. Even he would not be present to hear your hopeless efforts. We have but a few minutes to live, Lynn. Let us spend them in quiet contemplation."

Lynn nodded with effort. His flashlight was dying; its fading rays barely showed the coffer that contained Estaban's body. Thought of Estaban made the next few minutes easier. After all, suffocation would be a better death than the poisoned doom that Zenjora had meted out to Estaban.

"Death will be comfortable," promised Alvarez. "Each breath will come harder." He paused, gasped a moment for air, and added: "At last, breath will not come. That will be all -"

Lynn's hand groped to grip Alvarez's arm. Gasping, Lynn panted:

"Listen!"

From somewhere above came a slow crunching sound - the bash of metal against resisting rock. It jarred its muffled grind through the very stones that formed the roof above this vault of doom.

"Someone has heard us!" panted Lynn. "He is working to rescue us!"

"It is too late!" gasped Alvarez, his voice calm despite its effort. "No need to hope, Lynn!"

Lynn did not accept Alvarez's opinion. He wobbled to his feet; used the iron bar to pound at the ceiling. Though his strokes were few and feeble, they gave another signal to prove that life still existed within the vault.

LYNN sagged to the floor and lay there, his breath coming in long sighs. Above, the grind came louder.

Alvarez flicked his flashlight to the ceiling. A cry of jubilation came from his parched lips. Until now, he had not believed rescue possible; but what Alvarez saw told him that it was reality.

Mortared stones cracked. Fragments clattered to the floor. The end of a metal pipe poled into view. It shoved two feet downward; stopped. Whoever had driven it knew that the pipe had reached the hollow space of the vault.

Again, Alvarez uttered an elated cry. The echoes of his shout must have carried through the pipe, for there was a response from above. A weird, commanding tone issued from the mouth of the pipe, like a voice through a speaking tube. Alvarez was awed by the compelling power of that strange whisper.

Rescue had come to the doomed men in the vault. The being who had brought that rescue was The Shadow.

CHAPTER X. TRAILS IN THE NIGHT

WAVERING through lack of air, Alvarez dropped his flashlight and gripped the welcome pipe. Too excited to remember his usually perfect English, he gasped words in Spanish to the rescuer above. There was no response; Alvarez suddenly understood why.

He had babbled that he needed air. He had it. Inhaling from the opening of the pipe, Alvarez obtained the oxygen he needed. The mouth of the pipe was two inches in diameter; as a result, the pipe formed an excellent air shaft.

Alvarez remembered Lynn. He stooped, found his companion groping on the floor beside him. He hoisted Lynn to the pipe, helped his friend to puff fresh air. Taking turns, each man revived. They could feel a draught of fresh air that crept downward.

The Shadow had seen the need for an air line, the moment that he had heard raps from below. From the toolhouse, he had brought short pipes and long ones. With the short pipes, he had pounded a wedge through stone and mortar; he had finally driven the long pipe through.

Calmly, Alvarez began to talk through the pipe. In brief words, he told the location of the vault; how it could be reached through the mausoleum. The response was an encouraging whisper from The Shadow. After that, there was a period of silence, while Alvarez and Lynn continued to obtain fresh air.

Soon, they heard sounds at the door of the vault. The barrier swung outward; a flood of fresh air entered. Alvarez and Lynn blinked into the glare of a flashlight. They heard The Shadow order them to follow him above. Gladly, they came from the vault and took the stairs up to the mausoleum.

There, they caught a hazy glimpse of their rescuer; for The Shadow purposely turned the flashlight toward himself. The rescued men gaped as they saw the weird shape in black. Lynn could tell from Alvarez's awed whisper that his friend half believed The Shadow to be some supernatural being who inhabited the mausoleum.

Certainly, there seemed no other explanation for The Shadow's presence. Neither Lynn nor Alvarez guessed that The Shadow had trailed them from Lynn's garage; that his car had actually been behind the coupe outside the gates of the Kincaid estate.

Because of Lynn's tactics on the driveway, The Shadow had been unable to trail them farther by car. Coming on foot, The Shadow had been belated. He had not reached the mausoleum until after Zenjora had entered and departed.

The Shadow knew who had trapped the prisoners. Zenjora's evil hand was apparent throughout this plot. The words that The Shadow put formed a question; but it sounded more like a command to Lynn and Alvarez. The Shadow's tone was sibilant:

"State Zenjora's purpose!"

"ZENJORA rifled the treasure vault," explained Alvarez, wondering how The Shadow had learned the name of the master crook. "He learned of it when he murdered my cousin, Estaban, whose body we found in the coffer. Zenjora holds promissory notes that call for a million dollars. Those funds belong to Santander. They are held by -"

Alvarez paused, loath to reveal Oakbrook's name, even to this rescuer. It was Lynn who supplied it. He had heard it from Zenjora. To Lynn, it seemed obvious that The Shadow, so amazing a rescuer, must be the only person who could prevent Zenjora from committing further evil.

"James Oakbrook has the money," stated Lynn. "He is a wealthy New Yorker. Alvarez warned him today that there might be danger. Oakbrook has left New York, carrying the funds with him."

There was a pause. The flashlight fell squarely upon the rescued men, as they sat against the inner wall of the mausoleum, near the yawning opening which The Shadow had not yet closed. Lynn saw an object leaning against the wall. It was the sledge hammer from the toolhouse. The head of the hammer was wrapped in a cement sack.

Lynn understood how The Shadow had pounded the pipe line through to the vault. He realized also that the sack had served as muffler, so that no outside listeners could have heard the blows.

"State who placed the seal upon the vault."

The Shadow's words were addressed to Alvarez. In reply, Alvarez drew his watch from his pocket, opened the fob and gave the seal to The Shadow. Alvarez explained that it was his grandfather's seal; that Zenjora had found a duplicate on Estaban's body. After a moment's thought, Alvarez added:

"Zenjora could not have guessed that I also carried one of these seals. If he had, he would have searched me until he found it."

A whispered laugh chilled the mausoleum. Despite the fact that they knew The Shadow for a friend, Alvarez and Lynn felt a creepy chill. Then came commanding words. They nodded as they heard them.

"Remain here," ordered The Shadow. "Be on guard. Soon I shall return."

He pressed automatics into the hands of the rescued men. His cloaked form showed momentarily, as he edged downward through the opening in the floor. Lynn and Alvarez saw the flashlight blink below. Its rays vanished. Lynn whispered to Alvarez.

"He has gone back to the vault!" expressed Lynn. "To close it and affix the seal!"

"As Zenjora did," responded Alvarez. "The wax can be softened with a single match. Once the seal is applied, it will harden."

"And be as Zenjora left it. If Zenjora returns, he will not guess that we were rescued from the vault."

SOON, The Shadow's flashlight reappeared. The task was done. When he came from the floor, The Shadow turned about and used his flashlight while he clicked the stones back into position. That accomplished, he whispered to Alvarez and Lynn, telling them to follow. The flashlight went out. In

darkness, The Shadow opened the outer door of the mausoleum.

A drizzle had begun. Night seemed to be impenetrable. Nevertheless, The Shadow picked his path without a single blink of the flashlight. His low-toned whispers guided the men behind him. They reached a spot where the slight rain slackened.

Lynn recognized that they were at the spot where he had left his coupe; but the car was gone. Zenjora and his men had taken it. Lynn remembered that a Jibaro had given the car keys and licenses to Zenjora.

The Shadow's whisper commanded further progress. The group reached the drive; took another course across a soggy lawn. At intervals, the lessening of the drizzle told that they were passing beneath clustered trees. At last, there came a guarded blink of the flashlight. The Shadow had brought the rescued men to a side road, off the edge of the estate. Sheltered behind a cluster of bushes was a high-speed roadster.

The Shadow took the wheel; Lynn sat beside him, with Alvarez on the outside. In darkness, he started the motor; its rhythm was scarcely audible. Lynn began to understand how his coupe had been trailed; for this car was remarkably silent. Further understanding came to Lynn when The Shadow eased the car out to the road.

Without the slightest difficulty, The Shadow nosed the roadster through pitch darkness, feeling the rough road by the touch of the front wheels. He eased the car down the slope and reached the highway. There, he turned on the lights and headed in the direction of the gates that marked the entrance to the Kincaid estate.

As the car rolled slowly ahead, The Shadow spoke to Lynn. With gloved hand, he passed a key to the man beside him.

"Go to the Atlas Apartments in New York," ordered The Shadow. "This key is for Apartment 5-G. Remain there until a visitor arrives, tomorrow. His name will be Harry Vincent. You may trust him fully."

The roadster had covered a quarter mile. It was slowly nearing the gates. Peering straight ahead, The Shadow must have noted the glimmer of a light, even though Lynn did not spy it. Slowing the roadster, The Shadow opened the door on the left; he drew Lynn over to the wheel.

"Speed past the gates," ordered The Shadow. "Drive straight into New York. No one will overtake you."

An instant later, The Shadow was gone. The click of the door told that he had dropped off to the road.

THE gates were just ahead. Lynn stepped on the accelerator. He was amazed by the sudden response that the big roadster gave.

Like an unleashed hound, the car launched forward in a joltless burst of speed. As it passed the gates, a cluster of men sprang from the side of the road. Revolvers flashed in the glimmer of the roadster's lights. Lurkers had come from ambush.

Two factors offset the trap that Zenjora had laid.

The first was the whippet speed of The Shadow's super-powered roadster. The car had idled up to the gates; when Lynn gave it gas, it had covered the intervening space at a pace that the lurkers had not deemed possible.

The other factor was The Shadow himself.

The Shadow was ready with a brace of reserve automatics. He saw the enemy, by the glare of the roadster's lights, the moment that Zenjora's henchmen leaped forth from cover. Before a single foe could loose a shot, The Shadow opened fire.

Bullets burned through the drizzle, big slugs that found immediate marks. Two of the foemen staggered. The others forgot the roadster and whipped about to return The Shadow's fire. The tail-light of the speeding car dwindled into nothingness. Thanks to The Shadow's timely barrage, Lynn Jefford had run the gantlet.

A car roared forth from farther up the road. It was a sedan that was manned by others of Zenjora's men. It was taking up the roadster's trail - a useless task. Underslung, with widened body, equipped with a gigantic motor, The Shadow's car could do a hundred miles an hour, when handled by an ordinary driver.

The Shadow knew that Lynn would outdistance the sedan. Within five miles, the chase would be a farce. Lynn knew the road, for he had driven here.

Gunfire ceased temporarily after the cars had sped away. The slight patter of the drizzle was audible, as crouched men waited tensely. Then came a strident laugh that made this lonely spot seem a haunted place. That mirth arose in long and sinister mockery. The laugh was The Shadow's; a challenge to the lurkers who sought to locate his position.

In addition to its challenge, The Shadow's laugh carried other import. It told men of crime that they had been thwarted by The Shadow's design. The roadster's easy escape stood as reason for The Shadow's mirth.

In addition, it conveyed the news that The Shadow himself was here. It gave the impression that the men in the roadster must be agents whom The Shadow had brought with him. Zenjora already knew that The Shadow was in the game. As a result, the master crook would believe that his own men had been trailed by The Shadow. Zenjora would not suspect that Alvarez Rentone and Lynn Jefford were the ones who had actually blazed The Shadow's path to this lonely terrain.

THE SHADOW'S laugh brought spasmodic shots from foemen. Their fire was wide. No one could have guessed The Shadow's exact location from the deceptive shudder of his eerie laugh. The shots that Zenjora's men delivered were as bad for them as boomerangs. Even while their guns echoed, The Shadow returned the barrage. He had targets: the flashes of the revolvers.

Cries sounded as The Shadow clipped foemen in the darkness. There were shouts; scurrying sounds along the road. Shifting his position, The Shadow blazed new bullets; then shifted again. No one returned the fire. Evil henchmen were seeking darkness, anxious to elude the superfighter whom they could not see.

As The Shadow made a circuitous advance, another car suddenly started from a spot beyond the gates. The Shadow snapped quick shots as he saw the lights come on. The driver zigzagged; his car wallowed through the ditch at the left side of the road.

The maneuver was a lucky one. It carried the escaping car on a line beyond the gates; prevented The Shadow from taking new aim until the fleeing machine was out of range.

Alone, The Shadow laughed. He was not disappointed by the car's escape. The Shadow knew that Zenjora must have gone ahead; that these were mere underlings left in reserve. The sooner the news of The Shadow's fight reached the supercrook, the better it would be. The Shadow could foresee what Zenjora's next step would be. It was one that suited The Shadow's plans.

Passing through the gates, The Shadow headed for the old mansion. He reached the house, kept onward and arrived at the mausoleum. There, he made a brief inspection; he carried away the sledge hammer that he had left. Going to the rear of the white-walled building, he found the spot where he had drilled the air hole into the vault. The Shadow covered all traces of the work after he had drawn the six-foot pipe from the ground. Carrying odd lengths of pipe, he returned to the toolhouse and stacked the articles there.

Waiting under the shelter of the toolhouse roof, The Shadow listened for tokens of an approach. Time passed slowly amid the drizzle; yet The Shadow scarcely moved from his position. After an hour, he heard a stealthy, creeping sound from a spot close by. Silently, The Shadow moved through the rain.

Ghoulish visitants had arrived; enemies against whom The Shadow did not care to risk a battle under these circumstances. He knew who the stealthy men must be. They were Jibaro headhunters, sent here by Zenjora. Though The Shadow had sensed their presence, he knew that these jungle lurkers could use darkness almost to equal advantage with himself.

Unquestionably, they would be equipped with poisoned shafts. Moreover, they had subtle ways of teamwork. One might purposely risk a sound, in order to bring an enemy to encounter him. Another would be lurking, ready for his prey. The Shadow could not tell how many of Zenjora's strange tribesmen were present.

Had this been an emergency, The Shadow would have chanced battle despite the odds against him. Present conditions, however, gave him a reason to desist from a fray. He knew why Quinquial and others had been sent back to the old estate. Zenjora had ordered them to investigate the mausoleum, to learn if the seal upon the vault was still intact.

The Shadow wanted the Jibaros to find that seal; to carry back the report that Alvarez and Lynn Jefford must be dead in the tomb that Zenjora had provided for them. Hence, The Shadow kept under cover, although he approached close to the mausoleum.

NEAR the whitened building, The Shadow heard a slight stir. A dozen minutes passed; he recognized that creeping men had met in darkness. He heard slight sounds as they moved away. One - Quinquial, perhaps - had descended to the vault, then come out to join a watcher, possibly Incos. Satisfied that the vault had not been entered, the Jibaros were leaving to report to Zenjora that The Shadow had learned nothing.

Through darkness, The Shadow followed the Jibaros. At times, he lost their trail, for those jungle tribesmen often moved with the stealth of panthers. Knowing that they would be returning to the road, The Shadow managed to close in each time he was temporarily at loss. Always, he caught some new sound in the night.

The Shadow reached the road. There he heard no more sounds until a motor throbbed suddenly from beyond the gates. Moving swiftly beneath the fringe of trees, The Shadow reached a coupe just as it was starting out into the road.

Cowl lights blinked into view. The Shadow recognized the car as Lynn Jefford's; he also knew the face that he saw at the window beside the wheel. The driver was Cardell, Zenjora's lieutenant. Cardell had taken the Jibaros on board.

The coupe jounced on the sharp edge of the road. At that instant, The Shadow sprang toward the rear of the car. The slight thump of his body was unnoticed as he gripped the sloping back and drew his body between the rear of the car and the spare tire. The car gained speed, riding eastward, carrying its unseen passenger.

The Shadow had regained the trail. He was traveling to New York, along with Zenjora's lieutenant and the headhunters who had served as spies. Again, The Shadow was daring death to find a route that would lead him to Emilio Zenjora.

CHAPTER XI. ZENJORA'S MESSAGE

CARDELL used discretion in his trip back to Manhattan. He was operating a stolen car. Since he had but recently arrived in New York, he had no driver's license. He was carrying a pair of odd companions and knew that the Jibaros would arouse suspicion on the part of any inquisitive New Jersey State police.

Hence he not only traveled at a moderate speed; he also chose a secondary highway. Instead of driving for the Holland Tunnel or the George Washington Bridge, he headed for a Hoboken ferry slip. These precautions suited The Shadow. They passed few cars; when they neared towns, they went through dim side streets.

The arrival at the ferry slip was also helpful. It was considerably after midnight; there was no boat in the slip. Cardell was forced to wait until a ferry arrived. He parked his car in an obscure corner of the ferry building and alighted to take a stroll, leaving the head-hunters huddled in the interior of the coupe.

The Shadow was gone from the rear of the car before Cardell stepped from the front. Moving into a darkened waiting room, The Shadow came to a telephone booth. He put in a call to Burbank; then waited in the booth until the ferry arrived. The boat was poorly lighted, for it carried vehicles only. The Shadow easily glided aboard after Cardell had driven the coupe on the boat.

When the ferry reached Manhattan, The Shadow again gave Cardell leeway. There was no need for haste. Outside the ferry slip, The Shadow found a parked cab that Cardell had not noticed. It was Moe's taxi, sent here by Burbank. The Shadow entered the cab, ordered his driver to follow the coupe.

It became apparent that Cardell was not going to Zenjora's headquarters. The Shadow had already credited Zenjora with having chosen some sumptuous apartment as his New York residence. Cardell was not driving toward an apartment house district. Instead, he picked a dingy section of the East Side.

The coupe stopped in a street that was scarcely more than an alleyway. Moe was wise enough to halt at the near corner, where he turned off his lights. Peering along the street, The Shadow saw two hunchy figures sneak from the coupe into a house. The car started ahead. Cardell had dropped the head-hunters; he evidently intended to leave Lynn's car somewhere and then come back.

STATIONING Moe, The Shadow left the cab and crept through foggy darkness. Mist was changing into drizzle; the street lamps were too dim to reveal The Shadow as they had the headhunters. Finding the house where the Jibaros had entered, The Shadow circled the block and came along a rear street.

Looking upward, The Shadow discerned a light in a third-story window, a glow that trickled through a shabby window shade. There was no fire escape; but the wall was jagged and offered simple ascent for The Shadow. Like a human fly, he crept upward in the darkness. His course became snail-like as he neared the window.

It was not the increase in height that slowed The Shadow. He was considering the Jibaros. He knew that the jungle-trained ears of Quinquall and Incos could detect almost any sound. Complete silence was essential.

Reaching the window, The Shadow found two advantages. A small hole in the shade gave him a perfect peek hole. The window was open; the Jibaros had probably raised it to listen for sounds from outside. Hence The Shadow could see and hear all that happened within the room.

The room was very much like the one that Marinez had occupied. The Shadow saw the Jibaros crouched upon rickety chairs. He heard their low-toned chatter. It was one of the few dialects with which The Shadow was not familiar; but he noted a similarity to a head-hunter's language that he had heard before. The talk impressed The Shadow as unimportant.

Five minutes after The Shadow's arrival, the door opened and Cardell entered the room. From his vantage point, The Shadow had complete control over any emergency. He could have started quick battle with Zenjora's lieutenant and the two Jibaros.

Nevertheless, The Shadow bided his time. Facts, if they became available, would be more important than the elimination of the evil trio.

Facts seemed due the moment that Cardell entered. The light-haired man glared about the room. His face showed puzzlement. He growled to the head-hunters:

"Where are the others? Miquon and Lakiki?"

Quinqual and Incos recognized the names and babbled in negative fashion. The Shadow knew that Cardell had referred to other head-hunters, whom he had expected to find present.

Cardell tugged at his chin; then went to a corner and picked up a telephone. He dialed a number; The Shadow listened to the clicks.

There was a prompt response. The Shadow heard Cardell's end of the conversation.

"Hello, chief!" Cardell grinned as he recognized Zenjora's voice... "Yes. All jake out in Jersey... Quinqual took a peek below. Sealed up just the way you left it.

"No sign of The Shadow. Say, how did that bunch come out of it? Only a couple clipped, eh? Looks as if The Shadow didn't do much damage, after all. Tough, though, that those guys with him made a get-away..."

There was a pause. The Shadow could hear the purr of Zenjora's voice across the wire, but the words were unintelligible. Cardell explained them partially, when he replied.

"I was going to ask you about Miquon and Lakiki," he stated. "They were here when I left... So you sent them out to Long Island... I get it. Sure. You could start things there, with Alvarez Rentone out of the picture..."

"What's that?... Say, that was bad... Yes, Lakiki can talk English, enough of it, too; but he was liable to slip... You think it will mean trouble?"

Cardell's face was toward The Shadow. It showed a sudden gleam that replaced a frown. Pulling pencil and paper from his pocket, Cardell began to make notations. Finished, he concluded his call with the terse statement:

"Sure. I'll send Quinqual and Incos to the other hide-out. After that, I'll hop a cab. I'll be on the corner when you come along... Yes, I'll make it in half an hour."

CARDELL hung up. He gestured to Quinqual and Incos, uttered garbled words that he had been told to repeat by Zenjora. Quinqual and Incos understood. They slid from their chairs and sneaked out through the door.

Alone, Cardell lighted a cigarette and sat down to study the notations that he had made. After a few

moments, he nodded, crumpled the paper and tossed it into a wastebasket. Tapping a gun that he carried on his hip, Cardell opened a table drawer; he pocketed a pack of cigarettes and went to the door. He turned out the electric light and departed.

The Shadow was in the room half a minute after Cardell had gone. His flashlight, dwindled to a tiny disk, gleamed upon the wastebasket. The Shadow found the paper that Cardell had wadded and tossed away.

Opening the paper, The Shadow discovered why Cardell had not troubled to tear it or burn it. The paper carried no message. It simply showed a crisscross of penciled lines, roughly drawn, with letters marked beside them.

Cardell had mentioned Long Island in his telephone conversation. The Shadow surmised that the diagram represented certain streets somewhere on Long Island. Cardell had also stated that he would reach a specified corner in half an hour.

Since Cardell was going by cab, there were only a limited number of places that he could reach within the time allotted. The Shadow considered possible localities. Simultaneously, he reached for the telephone. In darkness, he dialed a number.

A quiet voice responded: "Burbank speaking."

In whispered tone, The Shadow called for a prompt check of detail maps showing three Long Island towns which he named. He told Burbank to look for a street or avenue which began with the letter B and crossed two streets that started with R and J. While he waited for Burbank's report, The Shadow studied Cardell's diagram further.

The street marked B was elongated. Cardell had pushed the line an inch beyond the diagram; he had terminated it with a dot. The Shadow believed that the dot represented the place where Cardell intended to go with Zenjora, after they met at one of the nearer corners.

Three minutes passed. Burbank's voice came from the receiver.

"Town of Graywood," announced Burbank. "Brisbane Avenue crosses Ross Street and Jackson Road."

"Further details," ordered The Shadow. "State where Brisbane Avenue leads."

"One mile," returned Burbank. "No other crossings. Three side lanes; then a termination at the through highway near Long Island Sound."

"Report received," whispered The Shadow. "Instructions. Check on New York telephone number, Kingland 5-3842. Be ready with report."

THE telephone number was the one that Cardell had dialed when he called Zenjora. Familiar with the names of all exchanges, The Shadow had learned the number from the slow return clicks of the dial. He did not, however, intend to wait for Burbank's new report. Minutes had become too precious.

The Shadow knew that Zenjora intended crime at Graywood. Cardell had watched some house on Brisbane Avenue, outside of the little town near Long Island Sound. With Cardell called in from lookout duty, Zenjora had sent Miquon and Lakiki to replace him. The head-hunters had made some slip.

Hence Cardell had been ordered to meet Zenjora at one of the corners in the town of Graywood. Chances were that the meeting would be delayed. Zenjora would be too wise to pick up his lieutenant until after Cardell's cab had left the vicinity. That probability gave The Shadow opportunity.

Despite the five minutes that he had lost, he still had a chance to ride ahead of the crooks; to be at their goal, somewhere on Brisbane Avenue, before they met and came along together. In a pinch, The Shadow could intercept them on the way, or overtake them if they managed to get ahead.

The main object, in any event, was to get to Graywood with the greatest possible speed; to avoid the streets marked on Cardell's diagram. That could be done by taking the highway along the Sound and striking back on Brisbane Avenue.

The Shadow's light went out. Cardell's diagram gave a slight thud as it landed, newly wadded, in the wastebasket. The door opened and shut. The Shadow quickly descended the house stairs. He reached the street, blinked a signal. Moe's cab coasted from beyond the corner, its cowl lights alone visible in the drizzle.

A few minutes later, the high-gear taxi was speeding across a bridge that spanned the East River. Night was nearly ended; traffic was absent. Calculating the cab's speed, The Shadow could foresee success; for he knew that Cardell would not have ordered a taxi driver to carry him at a breakneck rate like Moe's.

Nevertheless, The Shadow could not count on complete results. He might beat Zenjora to the goal; but he knew that the crook's schemes were many. Zenjora was the sort who never relied upon a single thrust.

The Shadow was to see that fact proven before this new, quick quest was ended.

CHAPTER XII. DOOM BEFORE DAWN

TEN minutes after The Shadow had started from Manhattan, an automobile slowed in front of a driveway on Brisbane Avenue. Headlights showed a gravel entrance beneath the drizzle. The car nosed into the driveway; took a curve and pulled up near a darkened house.

A low voice sounded within the car. It was firm and businesslike. The voice was that of Inspector Joe Cardona, ace sleuth of the New York police.

"This is the place, Markham," announced Cardona to the driver. "Howard Dundee said it was the only house past Graywood, after we struck Brisbane Avenue."

"Looks like there's nobody home," vouchsafed the detective sergeant who sat at the wheel. "You sure the call wasn't a phony, Joe?"

"Not a chance. I can spot a crank call any time."

"But Dundee didn't tell you much. Except that he was afraid of something -"

"Which is enough for me. He needs protection and he knows it. That's why Dundee wanted me to come alone. He told me enough, Markham, when he said he'd crack these stiletto murders if I showed up in a hurry."

With that, Cardona alighted from the car; he instructed Markham to wait with ready gun and extinguished lights. Ready to approach the house, Joe gave a last admonition.

"I ought to find the front door open, like Dundee said he'd leave it. If it's open, I'll go through to his study. If you hear anything, barge into the house. The same if you see anything - or suspect anything. Only don't let your imagination throw you."

Cardona's footsteps scarcely crunched the water-soaked gravel as he walked toward the front of the house. A white-painted door showed between gray walls, at the top of stone steps. A revolver shown half from his pocket, Cardona ascended the steps and tried the knob. The door opened.

Joe closed the door behind him, then beamed a flashlight through a darkened hallway. He saw large, covered chairs and heavy curtains at each side of the hall. Anything might indicate a hiding enemy. Joe drew his Police Positive, wangled the gun back and forth while he gazed suspiciously at furniture and drapes.

Satisfied that no one was about, Cardona took the route that he had intended. He went through the hallway, turned left into a little passage. There, he stopped short and uttered a satisfied grunt.

There was a closed door at the end of the passage, and it showed a light of its own. The glimmer came through a keyhole. This was the room that Cardona had come to find.

ADVANCING to the door, Cardona gave two abrupt raps. There was no response. Cardona rapped again.

This time, he fancied that he heard a creep within the room; yet no one spoke from the other side of the door. The thought struck Joe that the man within might be too fearful to answer. Stooping to the keyhole, Cardona spoke in buzzed tone.

"Hello, Dundee! This is Inspector Cardona!"

Slight footsteps sounded. There was a grating sound from beyond the door. Dundee was drawing bolts. Cardona stood ready, waiting; the door opened a crack. An eye surveyed Cardona by the light that trickled from the study. A bony finger came through the space and beckoned.

Cardona edged through the doorway; the man who had admitted him closed the portal quickly. He shoved two bolts in place; then turned to Cardona to make the unnecessary announcement:

"I am Howard Dundee."

Cardona had seen troubled faces before but few had been as haggard as Dundee's. The man was elderly; his features were dryish, which probably added to his strained expression. Nevertheless, fear was registered by every line of his countenance.

Long, bony hands were trembling as Dundee rubbed them together in rinsing fashion. The smile that the dry-faced man gave was but a hollow attempt at bravado. At last, Dundee steadied sufficiently to gesture toward a desk that stood at the far wall of the room. There was a chair at the near side of the desk. Dundee indicated it with the request:

"Please sit down."

As Cardona accepted the invitation, Dundee went behind the desk. Looking about, Cardona noticed that the side windows of the room were shuttered, held in place by huge inner bars. He looked to the door, noted that the bolts were heavy ones.

"My shutters are steel," remarked Dundee. Then, ruefully: "The door is only wood; but it is strong. Tight-fitting, too. The panels are thick oak; strong enough, I hope. Those bolts are the largest that I could obtain.

"I would not trust a key." Dundee shook his head as he spoke. "People can push keys from a door. They can pick locks. But they cannot reach bolts!" Dundee's voice took on a hysterical crackle. "They cannot

touch bolts that are inside a door!

"Or can they?" His face showed sudden alarm. "Perhaps they can. You should be able to answer that, inspector. Tell me. Am I safe behind a door that is double bolted?"

"YOU'RE safe enough," affirmed Cardona in a steady tone that offered reassurance. "Your best bet is to slip me all the facts you know about these stiletto murders. I've been trying to find the answer in Little Italy; but I've had no luck. I didn't expect to get information on Long Island. But I'm taking your word for it that you know something about those murders."

"I do." Dundee licked his dryish lips. "When I read of the first man's death, inspector, I thought that he was an Italian. Did you?"

"No, I didn't," returned Cardona. "I argued it with the police commissioner. I thought I was right; that he was wrong when he figured an Italian angle. But when Nick Broggoletta was stabbed, it changed the whole thing. It made me wrong and the commissioner right. Nick must have been trying to dodge somebody, when he sneaked into the Clearview Hotel.

"One minute, though, Mr. Dundee. You said you read about this case. It only happened early in the evening; but the midnight newspapers carried the story. Where were you at midnight? In town?"

Dundee nodded. He leaned across the desk. The oldish man had steadied. He wagged a bony finger as he spoke.

"Let me explain my theory, inspector," began Dundee. "Two nights ago, I had a telephone call. It came from a man named Manuel Fendoza. He wanted to know the whereabouts of a friend of his named Alvarez Rentone."

Cardona uttered an exclamation.

"Rentone!" he interjected. "Alvarez Rentone! Say - it was his room at the Clearview where we found Nick Broggoletta! Only we hadn't figured Rentone in the case. He didn't always stay in his room overnight -"

"One moment, inspector." Dundee was insistent. "I shall come to that portion of the story. When Manuel Fendoza called me two nights ago, he said that he had inquired for Alvarez Rentone at the Hotel Goliath."

Cardona's forehead wrinkled. Joe was thinking of the spot where the police had found the first stiletto victim.

"The next day," added Dundee, "I read of an unidentified man who was stabbed to death near the Goliath. I thought of Fendoza, but decided it could not be he. Nevertheless, I was puzzled when I did not hear from him. He came from Santander, a country where there has been much trouble lately.

"Tonight, when I took the late train home from the city, I read of Broggoletta's death. I was under strain, you understand, still wondering about Fendoza. I was sitting in the front room, reading the newspaper, when a taxicab came in the driveway.

"I went to the front door and listened. I peered through the little side window. I saw a man half out of the cab, talking to the taxi driver in broken English. Finally, the cab went away, taking the man with it. But I had seen enough."

Dundee's voice dropped to an awed, wheezy whisper as he leaned across the desk and declared:

"I saw the face of the man in a cab. He was a Jibaro!"

EYES gleaming, Dundee sank back. His expression indicated that he had revealed something of weird significance. To Cardona, it gave the impression that the speaker was a madman. Nevertheless, Joe prompted Dundee with the question:

"What's a Jibaro?"

"A head-hunter," confided Dundee, again leaning across the desk. "From that part of Ecuador that borders on Santander. The Jibaros are killers who take the heads of their victims as trophies. They shrivel those heads until they are no larger than that!"

Dundee arched his hands, to indicate the size of a small grapefruit. Cardona became suddenly impressed. A recollection shot through his mind.

"The commissioner mentioned that!" exclaimed Cardona. "Said that somebody had fed him a crack-pot theory that those jungle hunters were in on that first murder. It sounded screwy to me; and the commissioner took it like a big joke. Say - it wasn't you who talked to the commissioner?"

Dundee shook his head in solemn fashion.

"I never met the police commissioner," he declared. "Someone else must have guessed the truth before myself."

Cardona considered; then demanded:

"If Fendoza was a South American, how do you figure Broggoletta got into the game?"

"Possibly as a friend of Fendoza's," replied Dundee. "But I know little more than nothing about Fendoza. So I cannot help you, inspector. I have simply told you -"

"You've told me why you called me to -"

"No, I haven't." Dundee was quick with his new interruption. "Hear me further, inspector. After I saw the Jibaro, I came to this room, which I long ago prepared in case danger should come to this isolated house. I was dozing here when I received a telephone call."

"Who was it that called?"

"Alvarez Rentone. At least, he gave that name. His voice was smooth, with a Spanish accent. He reminded me that I had been a friend of his grandfather's."

To further this statement, Dundee opened a desk drawer; from it, he brought a folio of letters and other documents. Rising, he came to the front of the desk, spread the papers in front of Cardona. Joe noticed that they pertained to affairs in Santander.

Standing in front of Cardona, Dundee again wagged his bony forefinger. He was in front of the desk, facing it. Cardona had to turn about to eye him.

"The man who called by telephone," repeated Dundee, "stated that he was Alvarez Rentone, grandson of the late Santander dictator. He declared that he was in New York upon an important mission; that he had to find a man to whom old Jose Rentone had intrusted important funds. He wanted to know if I could tell where that man might be found."

"This sounds like something," nodded Cardona. "Did Rentone tell you the man's name?"

"He did," affirmed Dundee. "But remember" - his face showed shrewdness - "I cannot swear that it was Alvarez Rentone who called. He merely claimed that he was Alvarez -"

"Never mind that," broke in Cardona. "I understand. Tell me the name that he mentioned over the wire."

"He asked me," began Dundee, impressively, "if I knew anything concerning a man named James -"

DUNDEE stopped short; his lips showed a sudden quiver. Leaning backward, the elderly man thrust his hands behind his hips, as though trying to grip the small of his back. His face was pained; his lips showed confusion. He did not complete the name that he had begun.

Instead, Dundee gave a sudden gasp. His dry lips parted. His eyes stared as though they viewed a scene of horror. Cardona watched sunken eyeballs bulge from their sockets; he watched pupils that became smaller as Dundee's glare continued.

The corners of Dundee's lips curled downward. The sag of his lower jaw drew his skin to a tightness that made it look ready to crack. Gradually, an expression froze Dundee's features. The man's face became a devilish leer that Cardona had seen twice before: once on the face of Manuel Fendoza; again, upon the ugly countenance of Nick Broggoletta.

No further word came from the hideous lips that had undergone that startling change. Dundee's body sagged; it toppled sidewise to the floor and sprawled motionless. Doom had struck Dundee despite the fact that he stood within a room equipped with barred shutters and bolted door.

The murderous power of Emilio Zenjora had seemingly stretched from nowhere to prevent the law from learning the name of James Oakbrook. Howard Dundee had died before dawn; before The Shadow had arrived to save him.

CHAPTER XIII. THE SHADOW'S STROKE

TO Joe Cardona, the sudden death of Howard Dundee was an unaccountable phenomenon. As he stooped beside the dead man, Cardona was ready to believe in the impossible.

Dundee's face still held its grotesque stare. Blinking, Cardona looked about the room. For a moment, he thought that some ghostly manifestation could have occurred within this room; that Dundee might have died in horror, at some sight he had viewed.

The room, however, was empty, except for Cardona and the corpse. The meager furniture of the study offered no hiding place for even a midget. Barred shutters were tight in place. The bolts of the door were closed.

Dundee's body rolled rigidly as Cardona shifted it. The fixed face turned downward; one shoulder sagged. Staring squarely at the dead man's back, Cardona saw something that made him utter a low grunt.

Projecting from a spot near Dundee's spine, plain against the dark smoking jacket that the dead man was wearing, Cardona spied a yellowish sliver that looked like a large thorn. Gripping it, Cardona plucked the needlelike object from Dundee's flesh.

It was a thorn, and a long one. It had buried itself an inch deep in Dundee's back. Cardona knew that the thorn must have come from some peculiar tropical tree, for it was as unpliant as a metal nail. The point was long and sharp.

As Cardona held it to the light, he noted that the sharp tip was stained with some brownish substance.

Cardona guessed instantly that the thorn was poisoned. That guess gave credence to Dundee's story. It told that Fendoza and Broggoletta had died from similar thrusts. It proved the possibility of Jibaro head-hunters, rampant in New York. For the moment, however, it did not explain how Dundee had become a victim.

Cardona arose; he placed the thorn carefully upon the desk. He looked toward the window and shook his head. He stared at the door, but remained as puzzled as before. Eying the position of Dundee's body, Cardona pictured the exact spot where the victim had last stood. Joe visualized Dundee between himself and the door; he remembered that Dundee had been facing him when the stroke had come.

His revolver gripped in his right hand, Cardona slowly lifted his eyes on a direct line. His gaze again rested on the door; this time, Cardona's eyes halted. He was looking straight for a spot that he had forgotten. That was the keyhole of the bolted door.

PERHAPS Joe would not have realized that the keyhole offered a solution to the riddle of Dundee's death, if he had not seen it at this precise moment. It chanced that as Cardona gazed, an action occurred at the keyhole. A tiny object thrust inward; Cardona saw the rounded opening of a hollow reed, no larger than a pea-shooter.

With that, Cardona had the answer; but it came too late for his own comfort.

A Jibaro killer had slain Dundee by blowing the poisoned thorn through a long stalk. The murderer had easily inserted the improvised blowgun through the keyhole. The Jibaro had been in the house when Cardona arrived, but he had reserved death for a later moment. Evidently, the Jibaro had been instructed to deal with Dundee before any other victim.

Dundee was dead. The Jibaro had bided his time outside the door. Peering through the keyhole, the killer had watched Cardona. The Jibaro had deemed it time to take another victim. Cardona was in the exact spot where the head-hunter wanted him.

Doom's finger pointed straight at Joe Cardona, in the shape of the same jungle blowpipe that had finished Howard Dundee. The fact struck Joe instantly; dazed him to the point where his own actions seemed slow-motion.

Springing forward, Cardona came up with his revolver, to aim for the keyhole. His thoughts were speedier than his moves. Instinctively, Cardona knew that his attempt was futile. The Jibaro had the bead; already the killer's lips were starting the puff that would speed the poisoned thorn to its new victim. Cardona's action was no more than a frantic, hopeless effort to save his own life.

Two amazing things happened while Cardona's gun was coming up. First, there came a muffled report from somewhere outside the room - a gunshot that seemed like a previous echo of the one that Cardona intended to deliver. Simultaneously, the hollow reed quivered in the keyhole. The projecting end twisted at an upward side angle. A yellowish sliver sped from the tiny muzzle; but its path was wide.

The thorn skimmed past Cardona's shoulder, hit the wall and dropped somewhere on the floor. Cardona's finger tugged the revolver trigger after all that happened.

While his own gun shot echoed in the steel-shuttered study, Cardona saw the useless damage that his bullet had done. The shot had plowed the woodwork of the heavy door above the keyhole and inches to one side of it. In fact, the shot was so close to the door frame that it could not have reached a person on the other side of the door.

Nevertheless, the blowgun had not delivered death. More than that, it was sliding away from view,

vanishing through the keyhole in a downward direction. As Cardona reached the door, he realized that someone had spotted the Jibaro from the hall and had dropped the killer ahead of Joe's own shot.

CARDONA ripped back the bolts, yanked the door inward. The light from the study showed a sprawled shape on the threshold. Cardona saw an apish face, staring upward in an agonized expression that meant death. The huddled creature answered Dundee's description of the Jibaro who had been outside the house.

Vaulting the Jibaro's body, Cardona reached the hall. He swung toward the front door, expecting to see it open. As he gazed, Cardona heard a warning hiss. From the blackened wall, a cloaked figure whirled to view, delivered a sidearm swing that sent Cardona rolling toward the passage from which he had come.

Cardona's head banged back against the wall. Dimly, he sensed what followed; for he knew the identity of the person who had thrust him back. Joe's rescuer was The Shadow.

Arrived at Dundee's, The Shadow had picked the house as the one which Zenjora probably intended to visit. He had passed Markham's car without being spotted by the detective sergeant. Inside, The Shadow had discovered Lakiki, the English-speaking Jibaro, crouched outside the door of Dundee's study.

Knowing that Lakiki's purpose was to deliver death, The Shadow had dropped the Jibaro before the staring killer knew that he was watched. Dundee's death was avenged; Cardona's life was saved. But The Shadow had not waited to examine that situation.

He knew that another Jibaro might be present - the one called Miquon. Hence The Shadow had wheeled back into the hallway. Cardona's opening of the study door had brought light to the rear end of the darkened hall; though not enough to show The Shadow, the glow had outlined Cardona when the latter reached the hall.

Therefore, The Shadow had thrust Cardona downward and backward. The Shadow, in turn, made a dive in the opposite direction. His quick moves were necessary. A snarl sounded from the curtains at the side of the front hall; a bamboo javelin whizzed through the air, straight for the spot where The Shadow had intercepted Cardona.

It was Miquon's thrust; though speedy, it failed. Halfway between Cardona and The Shadow; above the heads of both, the poisoned shaft struck the hall, to bounce back harmlessly and strike the floor.

The Shadow's automatic blasted an answer. Cardona heard two shots, quick ones that came while The Shadow aimed in darkness, both directed uncannily toward the curtains from which Miquon had hurled his weapon. But the Jibaro had sprung away, the moment that he had loosed the missile. The clatter of a window told that he was making an escape outside.

The front door swung inward. A flashlight blinked in the hand of Detective Sergeant Markham. Just inside the doorway, Markham saw The Shadow. Before Cardona could shout for Markham to stay his gun, The Shadow sprang upon the newcomer.

With one hand, The Shadow plucked the flashlight from the detective sergeant's grasp; sent the lighted torch bouncing off through the room where Miquon had fled. With his gun arm, The Shadow gave a swing like the one he had handed Cardona. The blow swept Markham from The Shadow's path. It bowled the amazed detective sergeant away from the door.

AGAIN, The Shadow had acted just in time. As he sprang outside and leaped to the side shelter of the stone steps, shots ripped from the lawn. Zenjora and Cardell had arrived, a horde of imported outlaws at

their heels. The Shadow's shots had brought them to a quick attack.

Markham would have been their first target, had The Shadow failed to shove him from the doorway. The flashlight was the very sort of indicator that Zenjora's fighters wanted; but The Shadow had disposed of it. Again, he was opening battle in darkness with men who had given him their positions by the spurts of their own guns.

This time, however, the gunmen shifted. They were trained to guerrilla warfare, these outlaws from Santander. They had learned a lesson in their first encounter with The Shadow. They tried his own tactics: quick shifts in the darkness after every shot.

Meanwhile, The Shadow kept up a wary fire from in front of the house. No shots came from inside. He guessed the reason. Cardona had dashed back into the study to put in a call for police reserves. That done, Joe would wait with Markham, to resist an onslaught. Cardona was a cool head when battle started. He would deem it better to maintain a stronghold to which The Shadow could retreat, than to break out from the house with a useless attempt at aid.

Counting upon Cardona's tactics, The Shadow continued a spasmodic fire. Gradually, he shifted away from the wall; ceased his shots altogether. Reaching the lawn, The Shadow knew that he was almost in the midst of Zenjora's outspread men. They had also ceased their fire, waiting for The Shadow to disclose his own position.

Moving across the lawn, The Shadow stopped short. One of the enemy was close at hand; The Shadow could hear the man moving in the drizzle. A shoulder jostled The Shadow's; he heard a snarled oath in a foreign tongue. Instantly, The Shadow shifted; he fired a quick shot toward the wall where he had previously been.

The ruse was perfect. An encounter with this ruffian would have told the others that The Shadow was among them. The shot toward the house made them think that the person who fired it belonged to their own clan.

The outlaw who had jostled The Shadow gave a growled laugh; muttered approving words to the fighter whom he thought was a companion. For good measure, the ruffian aimed and fired a shot of his own.

Timed with the recoil of the fellow's gun, The Shadow slugged downward with a .45. His sledged blow clipped the gunman's skull. The enemy plopped without noise upon the softened turf. No others were close enough to hear this aftermath. Zenjora's band numbered one less.

CROUCHED beside his vanquished foeman, The Shadow sensed the sound of creeping enemies. They were closing toward the house, prompted by some order from Zenjora, whose location was hidden. Another revolver spat from darkness; dispatched a futile shot toward the house.

The Shadow saw the game.

Zenjora believed that his cordon had closed sufficiently to trap The Shadow. Soon there would come a massed onslaught - a vicious drive in which a dozen fierce fighters would attempt to overwhelm a single foe. None had guessed that The Shadow was safely away from the house.

The Shadow waited, letting his enemies creep on ahead. They would be due for a double surprise when the right moment came.

The time arrived.

Flashlights burned suddenly from the drizzle. Guns began to roar, all along the line. Zenjora's squad

surged forward, blasting the house steps with a withering fire. Though the space ahead looked vacant, they believed that The Shadow was there; that they had dropped him with their barrage.

All the while, they had watched the white door of the house; they knew that it had not moved, hence The Shadow could not have gone inside. Nevertheless, as Zenjora's men revealed themselves, that door ripped open. From inner darkness, two marksmen fired for the approaching flashlights.

Cardona and Markham had entered the fray. Their shots were timely. One of Zenjora's henchmen sprawled as the others dived away, flinging their flashlights from them. Thinking that The Shadow had been eliminated, the vicious attackers aimed for the house door.

An instant later, shots ripped from behind them. The Shadow was commencing a rear attack, using two mammoth automatics against the men who thought him dead. Outlaws wheeled; they fired too late. The Shadow was speeding across the lawn at an angle. He gained the shelter of Markham's car.

Two fires burned the ranks of Zenjora's men. They were boxed between the house and the car. Like The Shadow, Cardona and Markham riddled a flank of the attacking line. Crooks broke and ran; their attack had become a rout.

They were heading for cars out near the entrance, running pell-mell across the lawn. Huddled figures lay behind them, unseen in the darkness. The Shadow had accounted for three; Cardona and Markham had dropped a pair. Others were wounded, but still able to run.

Cutting across the lawn, The Shadow came suddenly upon the starting cars. The first were away; but as they sped from the road outside the gates, they were met by new arrivals. Police, called by Cardona, had come to halt the flight. A machine gun blasted from a police car as it swung beside the road.

Crooks would have fared badly as they ran the gantlet, except for the intervention that came from a standing car. Shots crackled from that machine; rifle bullets raked the police car. The driver of the police car ditched it, to avoid the bombardment. The machine gun went out of play.

It was The Shadow's countercharge that ended the rifle barrage. Seconds more, and the police car would have been riddled and its occupants killed. As the car that held the riflemen started forward, The Shadow reached its running board. He sprang upon the step, into the midst of bristling gun barrels.

A gloved fist sledged its heavy .45 straight for the heads of sharpshooters. Rifles dropped as their owners sagged. They could not swing the long barrels to cover their unexpected adversary. The car jolted forward; its driver, crouched low, gave it the gas. The car sped ahead in high-speed second gear, The Shadow still clinging to its side.

The Shadow swung for the driver's skull. An arm shot forth above the man who gripped the wheel. The Shadow's gun clashed metal. Half into the car, his eyes came close to a bearded face that showed above the dashlight.

The Shadow had found Emilio Zenjora.

BY a quick parry with a revolver, Zenjora had luckily stopped the blow that The Shadow had aimed for the driver's head. Coming up above the top of the front seat, Zenjora snarled as he aimed for his cloaked opponent.

Simultaneously, The Shadow swung far out from the side of the car. Clutching an open rear window with his left hand, he let his body fall from view. His right hand planked its gun muzzle on the window ledge; the mouth of the weapon tilted toward Zenjora.

A death duel was at hand. A split-second could decide it. The Shadow, however, had outmaneuvered Zenjora. The Shadow had dropped away while his enemy had come upward. The quick shift completely changed the odds. Both guns were due to roar; but the most that Zenjora could do would be to wound The Shadow. Zenjora, however, had become a sure target. At that instant, his death seemed certain.

It was the driver who changed matters, without knowing the importance of his deed. Huddled over the wheel, riding the car at thirty miles an hour, the driver saw cars ahead as they took a sharp turn into a lane on the right. Instinctively, he picked the same course. He gave the steering wheel a hard twist just as The Shadow and Zenjora were about to tug their triggers.

The car careened as it skidded and swung its nose to the right. The Shadow's left hand nearly lost its precarious grip upon the door. As he sought to maintain his hold, the door itself swung open. The Shadow pulled the trigger; but he was already hurtling to the road. His bullet whined wide of Zenjora's bearded face.

At the same instant, Zenjora fired; his shot, too, was useless. It was high; it proved that Zenjora would not have clipped The Shadow, even if the car had not made the sudden swing. Accident had saved Emilio Zenjora from The Shadow.

The speeding car did not halt. As its tail-light vanished in the drizzle, shots boomed from the road behind. They were proof that The Shadow had been uninjured by his fall; that he had come to his feet, to begin a last barrage. The pursuing shots smashed into the rear of the car, but the range was too great for The Shadow to find the gas tank or the tires.

Zenjora was gone, carrying his groggy crew of riflemen. His other minions had gone ahead, some of their number wounded. Back on Dundee's lawn lay others, who were either dead or prisoners of the law. The Shadow's stroke had been a heavy blow to Emilio Zenjora.

The Shadow hoped to follow up his victory. Hurrying along Brisbane Avenue, he came to an open spot, where he blinked a signal with his flashlight. Lights answered; they were from Moe's cab. The Shadow boarded the vehicle, ordered Moe to speed him into Manhattan.

ONCE in the city, The Shadow paused to contact Burbank. He learned the location of Zenjora's apartment, from Burbank's search of telephone numbers. The Shadow sped to that new destination. He knew that he must be ahead of Zenjora; for the crook had taken a roundabout route through muddy lanes.

From darkness across the street, The Shadow studied darkened windows that he knew must be Zenjora's. He waited half an hour; there were no signs of returning men. Dawn was appearing, despite the drizzle. The Shadow decided to make final investigation.

Entering the apartment house, he ascended by an automatic elevator. He found the door of Zenjora's apartment unlocked. Entering, The Shadow discovered nothing but the furniture. Zenjora had taken no chances with a trail for either The Shadow or the law.

The supercrook had abandoned this headquarters when he had started for Long Island. Once again, The Shadow must begin a hunt for the bearded man of crime. Yet, as he stood in the gloom of Zenjora's abandoned lair, The Shadow delivered a whispering laugh.

Tonight, The Shadow had gained the key to Emilio Zenjora's schemes. From now on, he could play an equal game. Though Zenjora had managed the murder of Howard Dundee, the supercrook would be too wary to attempt similar crimes that he might have intended.

Zenjora would have but one objective: a meeting with James Oakbrook. It would be The Shadow's task to anticipate that meeting. That new goal offered opportunity to deal finally with men of crime.

The Shadow knew.

CHAPTER XIV. ZENJORA'S EMISSARY

EARLY afternoon found Alvarez Rentone and Lynn Jefford seated in their new apartment. With them was a man who had just arrived; a visitor whom the pair had expected. He was Harry Vincent, agent of The Shadow. Harry's appearance, his firm handshake, had impressed both rescued men.

Laying a stack of newspapers to one side, Harry smilingly remarked that he was ready to answer questions. Lynn grinned and put the first one:

"Who rescued us last night?"

"The Shadow."

Harry's calm reply brought an exclamation from Lynn Jefford. That young man had heard of The Shadow's ability at hunting down criminals and bagging them like big game. Lynn questioned quickly:

"Do you know who The Shadow is?"

"I serve The Shadow," replied Harry, "but I have never learned his actual identity. He saved my life; in return, I accept all duties that he assigns to me."

"We are willing to do the same," put in Alvarez. "We know that only The Shadow can combat Emilio Zenjora."

"Very well," declared Harry, briskly. "Here is the first test. Read these evening newspapers - editions that have just appeared on the street. A man named Howard Dundee was slain last night by a Jibaro head-hunter. The death has been linked with those of Fendoza and Broggoletta -"

"And I am mentioned as the man behind the crimes!" cried Alvarez, scanning a newspaper. "New men support the police theory! Here are their names; they are men who expected gifts from my grandfather. They think that I have tried to rob them. This is an outrage! Zenjora is the perpetrator of those crimes! The Shadow knows it. He should have cleared my name!"

"Zenjora found the list of your grandfather's friends when he looted the treasure vault," explained Harry, calmly. "He had three reasons to want to murder them. Profit, for one; vengeance, for another. But the third and vital reason was information. Zenjora believed that one of those men might give him a lead to James Oakbrook."

Nods told that Alvarez and Lynn agreed.

"Zenjora chose Dundee first," continued Harry, "because he had heard from Fendoza. Though The Shadow did not save Dundee, he rescued Inspector Cardona. That cracked the case. Dundee had talked to Cardona. The police knew that the stiletto stabbings were faked. The Shadow left them a dead Jibaro to clinch the case.

"The law knows only the first name of James Oakbrook. They have not learned his full name from your grandfather's friends. Zenjora will therefore learn that those men are useless as informants. Since they have revealed themselves to the law and are protected, it is better that they should regard you as their enemy. Zenjora will feel secure. The Shadow can hunt him more effectively and the law will not bungle

the search."

HARRY'S words carried weight. Alvarez saw other points. He recognized that Zenjora would desist from crimes that meant but small profit and minor vengeance, particularly since Zenjora believed Alvarez dead. Zenjora would prefer to let old crimes be blamed on Alvarez, without risking new deeds that might lead a cross trail to himself. Harry Vincent added another point.

"James Oakbrook will read the newspapers," he declared. "He will stay under cover; he will understand that this is Zenjora's work. You must tell me, though, what plans you have made to hear from Oakbrook."

Alvarez hesitated; then decided to answer. Briefly, he explained how Oakbrook was to place an advertisement in the Evening Sphere, offering property for sale under the name of Thomas Rustwick. He added that the location given in the ad would tell Oakbrook's residence; while a repetition would call for a visit from Alvarez.

As Harry was about to leave, he added a question which he put to Alvarez:

"What about Nick Broggoletta? Can you account for him being a friend of Manuel Fendoza?"

"I thought, perhaps, that Broggoletta had a message," replied Alvarez. "One that Fendoza failed to bring; perhaps about Estaban's death. That seems weak, though. Fendoza might have chosen an adventurer for a friend, but scarcely a paid assassin like Broggoletta."

The question of Broggoletta puzzled Harry, after he had put in a call to Burbank. Harry knew that Zenjora had introduced the fake Italian angle; but he had done it through his Jibaros. Zenjora would not have sent Broggoletta purely to bluff the law. His policy had been hands off regarding Alvarez, for Zenjora had already arranged the treasure vault as Alvarez's place of doom.

The only answer that Harry could see was the one that Alvarez had rejected: namely, that Broggoletta had been a friend of Fendoza. His duty done, Harry wondered how much he had accomplished for The Shadow. He would have been pleased, had he known.

Though the facts that Harry relayed through Burbank did not pave the route to Emilio Zenjora, they would soon enable The Shadow to choose the proper battleground for a final conflict with the bearded master of crime.

FOR the present, Zenjora was secure. He was gone from Manhattan, vanished with his tribe of followers. In some new stronghold, the bearded outlaw leader was free to plot new mischief. The Shadow knew only that Zenjora must have been crafty in his choice of a new headquarters. The Shadow's opinion was correct.

Forty miles northwest of Manhattan, the setting sun shone upon a crew of desperadoes who outrivaled any that had ever visited American soil. These cutthroats were assembled in a rocky glen that bordered a rugged ravine. They were congregated away from the gorge, under the shelter of larger trees; for only saplings lined the brink of the ravine.

The stronghold was perched in a remote section of the New Jersey hills. The outlaws numbered a dozen; men of mixed nationalities who had served Zenjora in Santander. Some looked like Americans who had become soldiers of fortune. Others might have been French convicts, escaped from Devil's Island. A few were mestizos - half Spanish, half Indian.

Their babbled jargon, which mixed one language with another, ran the gamut of many dialects. They were

like pirates, these banditti; but they had chosen land in preference to ocean. The ugly appearance of the renegades had been increased by last night's skirmish with The Shadow. Three had bandaged heads; two carried arms in slings; another was propped against a tree, too crippled to move about.

Their growled epithets included a name. Those who spoke French referred to L'Ombre and added the expression "Le Diable." Those who used Spanish uttered the titles: "El Ombre" and "El Diablo." Translated, the expression meant that The Shadow, in their opinion, was one with the devil.

One huge ruffian glowered as he watched two others build a fire in the circle. The glowering man was Bandrillo, Zenjora's chief lieutenant. Bulky of form, with ugly eyes that glowered from a square, pock-marked face, Bandrillo was impatient as he listened to talk of The Shadow.

Curbing his anger, Bandrillo arose to examine the wounds of his men. He had crude skill at surgery; that was one reason why Zenjora had first raised him to the rank of lieutenant. After attending the man who lay against the tree, Bandrillo showed new malice.

Facing his men, he delivered a savage tirade that included every language known to the group. From his belt, Bandrillo drew a machete. He flourished the knife as if he intended to carve the next man who mentioned The Shadow in any tongue.

The group silenced. Bandrillo paused in his outburst. Before he could resume, he heard a purred voice behind him. Turning, Bandrillo faced Zenjora. The master of crime had stalked up silently to join the group.

AS he stood close by the firelight, Zenjora appeared more demoniacal than any mortal whom that cutthroat crew had ever seen. His face carried a ferocity that surpassed the death-frozen countenances of victims who had cried at the hands of his Jibaros.

Ruffians shifted uneasily; even Bandrillo quailed. They watched Zenjora as he eyed them. Beyond their chief, they saw the three head-hunters: Quinquial, Incos and Miquon.

Lakiki was missing. The absence of that Jibaro told of The Shadow's power. But the circled crew was not thinking of The Shadow. To a man, they were awed by their sight of Zenjora.

"Ah, Bandrillo!" The smoothness of Zenjora's tone seemed all the more insidious, when it issued from his twisted, ruddy lips. "So you think it unwise that the men should talk of The Shadow? Perhaps you are right, Bandrillo. Perhaps you are not. Listen, while I question the men themselves."

Turning to the group, Zenjora spat a medley of words that all could understand. Each man who heard words in his own language grinned and nodded his agreement. Zenjora was telling them that they would meet The Shadow again; that the time would come very soon. He was urging them to look forward to that meeting.

Elated snarls were their replies. Men rose to foment, as they shook their fists in the firelight; whipped revolvers into view, to signify their readiness for new battle. Even the wounded man against the tree made effort to join in the enthusiasm.

"You see?" Zenjora's face had calmed when he turned to Bandrillo. "You should not misunderstand them. They are more than eager, Bandrillo. Let them talk about The Shadow. It will sharpen them for the next encounter."

Henchmen resumed their growled palaver. Zenjora stepped close to Bandrillo. He lowered his voice below the babel of sound and said:

"Come! Let us go to the main cabin. Cardell is there. We have much to discuss."

With the Jibaros following as escort, Zenjora and Bandrillo took a path that led to a group of tumble-down cabins. These buildings explained the nature of the place that they had chosen for their headquarters. This was an abandoned summer colony, long since forgotten. Zenjora had located it soon after he had uncovered the buried treasure vault. This deserted settlement was within fifteen miles of the old Kincaid estate.

These shacks explained how Zenjora had kept his polyglot crew under cover; yet had them available for any call. He had kept a few in Manhattan; but the rest had remained here. Instead of returning to his apartment, Zenjora had simply come to join his men.

No place could have been better suited to an outlaw band like Zenjora's. Used to the hardships of the Santander mountains, these bandits considered themselves in luck, with roofs above their heads. The battered bungalows were their idea of luxurious living quarters.

Zenjora and Bandrillo arrived at the central cabin. They entered its square main room, stepping into the glow of hanging lanterns. A man awaited them. It was Cardell. He nodded to Bandrillo, then joined Zenjora and the lieutenant at an old table that was scarred with carved initials.

Zenjora planked his hand upon a stack of newspapers that Cardell had brought. Scanning them, he uttered an ugly chuckle that was for Bandrillo's benefit.

"The police!" sneered Zenjora. "Bah! They are as stupid in New York as in Santander! Luck has enabled them to find out how men have died; it has spoiled my plans of vengeance upon others like Dundee. Beyond that, however, it has served me."

From his coat pocket, Zenjora produced a folded paper, spread it to show a list of names.

"I have marked death for these men," he declared. "I delayed their doom once, until I had settled with Alvarez Rentone. I shall postpone death again, until after I have disposed of James Oakbrook. Look - one name is off the list; that of Howard Dundee. Some day, you shall see lines drawn through the other names as well."

PAUSING, Zenjora put away the list; he lowered his voice to a harsh growl.

"For the present," he declared, "Oakbrook is most important. The police are stupid fools; they think that Alvarez Rentone is responsible for Dundee's murder. They do not know that Alvarez is dead. I do not want them to learn the fact. That is why we must use the utmost strategy."

Zenjora looked to Bandrillo and Cardell as if inviting questions. Cardell put one.

"What about The Shadow?" asked the light-haired rogue. "Does he know that Alvarez Rentone is dead?"

"The Shadow's part is plain," assured Zenjora. "He is a fool who hounds crude criminals. He was watching Nick Broggoletta; saw the Italian meet Manuel Fendoza. The Shadow followed Fendoza to the Hotel Goliath; heard him ask for Alvarez Rentone.

"Believing that Fendoza was the man we murdered that night, The Shadow came to the hotel himself. Like a parrot, he asked for a message from Alvarez. He was wise enough not to open it. Instead, he gained an encounter with Marinez and Quinquial.

"There, his trail ended. He went back to watching Broggoletta. That brought him to the Clearview Hotel,

where he battled Quinquial and Incos. He managed to follow them; that is how he came to be at the Kincaid estate, too late to rescue Alvarez and Jefford."

Zenjora had delivered a series of erroneous statements; but in his egotism, he thought that he had struck the truth. He was allowing a connection that Alvarez doubted; namely, a friendship between Fendoza and Broggoletta. Sure that he was right, Zenjora continued with more mistaken declarations.

"The Shadow was not at the mausoleum when Quinquial and Incos returned there," he announced. "He could not have followed them had he been there, for I gave them strict instructions to avoid all followers. Where was The Shadow? I shall tell you. He was back in New York.

"There, he learned that Inspector Cardona had gone to see Howard Dundee. So The Shadow went there himself. He had the luck to surprise Lakiki, to kill him and save Cardona's life. All this is the result" - Zenjora tapped the newspapers - "because Cardona lived to tell what Dundee had said."

CARDELL and Bandrillo were fully satisfied with Zenjora's incorrect analysis. They gazed in awe at their bearded chief, impressed by his ability to piece unknown facts.

"We must find Oakbrook," growled Zenjora, suddenly. "There is only one man whom I can risk sending to New York. That is you, Cardell. The Shadow will be looking for Oakbrook. You must learn facts before The Shadow."

"Suppose" - Cardell hesitated, to mop his forehead with a handkerchief - "suppose I run into The Shadow?"

Bandrillo snarled, taking Cardell's question as a sign of weakness. Zenjora raised a silencing hand. He faced Cardell.

"If you encounter The Shadow," purred Zenjora, "you will meet with no harm. He will know that you are a link to me. He seeks me, as well as Oakbrook. Should you find The Shadow, or believe that he has discovered you, simply rejoin me here. That will bring The Shadow on your trail."

"The Shadow went past our men before!" put in Bandrillo. "They cannot stop him in darkness. If he sees their lights, he will -"

Again, Zenjora's hand was raised. This time, it pointed to the doorway. Bandrillo and Cardell saw Quinquial and the other head-hunters seated outside the door. The ape-faced trio were engaged in a curious task. They were weaving long strips of canelike wood into an odd-shaped matting.

"A jungle trap," chuckled Zenjora. "Tonight, the workmanship will be superior. There will be no need to dig a pit. There are gullies all about, where streams have cut their way to the gorge."

Rising, Zenjora gestured for Cardell to start his journey to New York. The spy saluted; turned and strode past the Jibaros. Soon Zenjora and Bandrillo heard the muffled sound of a departing automobile.

"All will be well, Bandrillo," purred Zenjora in Spanish. "The Shadow came alone before; he will venture alone again. This time, his own stealth will lead him to sure disaster."

With that promise, the evil chief beckoned his lieutenant to follow him. Together, they went out to join their mongrel followers at the camp fire. Though Zenjora's theories were wrong, his prediction was one that seemed certain to come true.

In sending Cardell upon his mission, Zenjora had chosen a perfect bait to snare The Shadow.

CHAPTER XV. CHANGED TRAILS

IT was late afternoon the next day when Cardell entered a secluded restaurant just off Broadway to partake of an early dinner. Picking an isolated corner of the cafe, Zenjora's spy made sure that no one was watching him. Thereupon, he produced a memo pad from his pocket.

Cardell had listed his progress in the search for James Oakbrook. Last night, immediately upon reaching Manhattan, he had gone to Oakbrook's apartment house; he had made inquiry, with no result.

Later, he had called Oakbrook's club, with the same bad luck. Afterward, Cardell had registered at a hotel; this morning, he had stopped at Oakbrook's Wall street office, to represent himself as a customer who wanted advice on bonds. Cardell had insisted that he must talk with Oakbrook in person. He had been told that the broker had gone away and had left no word regarding his destination.

Though Cardell had not guessed it, he had been under almost constant surveillance from the first step onward. Outside of Oakbrook's apartment house, a small crafty-faced man had spotted him. That was "Hawkeye," who served The Shadow.

A cab had stopped to pick up Cardell. The taxi was Moe Shrevnitz's. It had carried him to the store where he made a telephone call; the same cab, slightly altered in appearance, had Cardell as a fare to his hotel.

At the breakfast, Cardell had been watched by Harry Vincent, who sat at another table. When he visited Oakbrook's office, an elderly man had noted him, hobbled to the elevator just behind him, making good progress with a cane. That watcher had been The Shadow, in disguise.

While Cardell lunched, Moe's cab had been outside. Cardell had been trailed all afternoon; it was known that he was in this restaurant at present. In fact, Cardell had scarcely ordered his meal before a tall, calm-faced individual entered, took a seat at a near-by table and unfolded a copy of the evening Sphere.

This chance diner was The Shadow. He sat almost unnoticed by Cardell. As soon as he had given his own order, The Shadow sat back and turned to the real estate ads. His attention centered upon the newspaper.

Halfway down a column, The Shadow noted an advertisement that he had hoped to find. It stated that a fine lodge was for sale, in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains. The ad described the lodge as being three miles northwest of the town of Mercer; it specified that the property included forty acres, ten of which had been cleared as an emergency landing field for airplanes; that one portion of the grounds bordered a fair-size lake.

The owner's name was given. It was Thomas Rustwick.

FROM that moment, a singular policy was adopted by The Shadow. He folded the newspaper, laid it aside and stared suspiciously at Cardell. Zenjora's spy was quick to observe The Shadow's action; but he caught no glimpse of The Shadow's face. The Shadow turned away too soon.

When the waiter arrived with the first course, The Shadow began a complaint, always avoiding Cardell's direct observation. Tossing money on the table, The Shadow arose and stalked from the restaurant, still keeping his face turned from Cardell's view.

Cardell became uneasy as soon as The Shadow had gone. He pocketed his memo pad; began to think about his own departure. He finally decided to finish his meal. When he was halfway through it, he saw another man enter the restaurant.

This fellow looked like a reporter - which, in fact, he was. The arrival was Clyde Burke; he had come in response to a call from Burbank. Clyde's first action was to give a quick glance toward Cardell. The spy turned his head. Clyde sat down, ordered a dinner and began to drum the table. He looked toward a corner telephone booth and gave a grin.

Soon, Clyde arose and sauntered to the booth. He entered it and closed the door, just as Cardell was paying his check. The spy arose, came toward the door of the restaurant. He was within six feet of the telephone booths. The temptation was too great.

Cardell used a trick that he had worked before. He stepped to the booth next to Clyde's, entered it and shifted low. Listening, he could hear the reporter's words.

"He's the man all right!" Clyde's tone was emphatic... "No. There's no use to trail him. We know where he's stopping... What's that? You'll leave the report for me? About Oakbrook?... I won't be able to pick it up for an hour..."

"All right, leave it anyway... Yes. Room 608 at the Marmont. I left the door unlocked, in case you came there... What's that? You're at the Marmont now?... Good! Then you can leave the report right away... I'll get it in about an hour..."

Clyde hung up, stepped from the booth and glanced toward Cardell's table. The spy saw his action; smiled as he watched Clyde go from the restaurant. Coming from his own booth, Cardell could scarcely cover his elation.

Cardell was sure that he had spotted two agents of The Shadow, who were doing double duty: covering him and searching for James Oakbrook. Apparently, they had learned important facts concerning the missing broker. Any time after the next ten minutes, those facts might be available in a report that could be found in Room 608 at the Marmont Hotel. That report would be available, in an unlocked room, for nearly an hour to come.

CARDELL hurried from the restaurant and boarded Moe's cab, which came along in timely fashion. Cardell took the precaution of looking at the hack-driver's license; saw that the name and photograph were different from those in cabs that he had previously taken.

That was because Moe also took precautions. He put in new cards every time he dropped Cardell.

The spy ordered Moe to take him to the Marmont Hotel. Fifteen minutes later, they arrived there. Cardell entered the hotel.

Moe rounded the block, changed the license inside his cab and came back. He nosed into the hack stand just in back of a waiting cab. Moe figured that the other taxi might be gone by the time Cardell came out. If it still happened to be there and picked up Cardell, Moe could simply trail it.

When Cardell entered an elevator in the hotel, he experienced a sudden attack of jitters. The car did not start at once; the operator held it to take aboard a belated passenger; then waited for a few others. Each time that that door joggled and halted, Cardell became impatient. His lips twitched; his hard face paled. Cardell shifted as other passengers glanced curiously toward him.

The delay had sapped the spy's nerve.

Cardell recalled how effectively he had been covered at the restaurant. He knew that The Shadow was on his trail. He had two duties: one, to learn facts concerning Oakbrook; the other, to lure The Shadow to Zenjora's new lair. Cardell began to wish that he had forgotten the first job and concentrated only on

the second.

The door of the elevator clanged shut. The operator called for floors. Cardell spoke nervously when he uttered "Six." He fancied that several passengers noted him. Any of these might be other watchers, posted by The Shadow. Cardell felt a sudden doubt of Zenjora's assurance that The Shadow would adopt a hands off policy.

Cardell remembered Marinez and Lakiki. Zenjora had expressed no great regret for the deaths of his lieutenant and the Jibaro. To Zenjora, one henchman more or less was a matter of but little consequence. In fact, Zenjora was so proud of his own prowess that he had often made it evident that he could replace any one who served him. In Santander, Cardell had seen Zenjora shoot down some of his most valuable men when they disobeyed minor orders.

When the door opened at the sixth floor, Cardell stepped off in halting fashion. He quivered like a victim going to a sacrifice. It was not until he felt sure that he stood unwatched that Cardell rallied. Looking along the corridor, he saw a turn that led to Room 608.

Cardell sneaked to the short passage. He noticed that it was unlighted. Dusk had settled; the entire corridor was gloomy. That gave Cardell mingled sensations of doubt and assurance. At last, Cardell steeled himself, moved to the door of 608 and opened it.

A floor lamp was illuminated; by its glow, Cardell saw an envelope that lay upon a writing desk. The envelope was unsealed.

Leaving the door open, Cardell drew a gun and edged across the room. His nerves were at high pitch; he did not dare to let his finger touch the hair-trigger of his revolver, for fear the gun would go off. He reached the desk, rested one shaky hand beside the envelope.

One moment more, Cardell would have taken the bait. But before he could steady his hand, he heard a sound from somewhere in the outside corridor. It was the closing of a door.

HAD Cardell waited and reasoned, he would have picked the true source of that sound. Some hotel guest had simply stepped from his room and closed the door behind him.

Cardell, however, no longer possessed a sense of reason. He sprang away from the writing desk as if it had been electrified. He darted out into the short passage.

There he halted, crouching with his gun. He heard the clang of an elevator door; it was simply taking the guest on board. Again, Cardell's strained senses deceived him. He fancied that the elevator had let off men who had come here to trap him. Completely victimized by his own imagination, Cardell shrank back. His revolver nearly wobbled from his hand.

Two minutes passed. Cardell regained some of his spent nerve. He looked back to 608; made an effort to return to the room, then changed his mind. Instead, he crept toward to main corridor; gasped his relief when he saw that it was deserted.

Cardell spied the dial above an elevator, noted that a car was descending from the tenth floor. Seized with a sudden phobia, he shoved his gun into his pocket and made a bolt for the elevators. Wildly, he pressed the button in time to halt the descending car.

The elevator stopped. Cardell entered it. The door clanged shut. That sound carried through the sixth floor. It caused an action across the hall from Room 608. Another door opened; a cloaked figure stepped into the gloom of the passage. The Shadow, listening in another room, had sensed Cardell's

flight.

The Shadow's first move was to enter 608. There, he picked up the unsealed envelope. He carefully drew a paper from it; there was a slight resistance to The Shadow's pull. He had affixed the paper in the envelope with a tiny dab of gum.

The paper was simply a small sheet that had Oakbrook's want-ad pasted to it. A ring was drawn in blue pencil around the name of Thomas Rustwick; below was the written notation.:

This is James Oakbrook. Wait for a repeat ad tomorrow.

For some strange reason of his own, The Shadow had desired that this information should reach Emilio Zenjora. That was why The Shadow had played hide-and-seek with Cardell. The Shadow, through some deductive process had foreseen that Oakbrook would soon advertise his whereabouts. As soon as he had seen the ad in the Sphere, The Shadow had changed tactics with Cardell.

The Shadow had made the spy's task an easy one. He had planned that Cardell should gain the message and rejoin Zenjora. The Shadow would then have had no need to follow Cardell, for he could have avoided a trip to Zenjora's headquarters. The simple course would have been to go to Oakbrook's new abode, to await Zenjora's eventual arrival.

Cardell's sudden fright had changed all that. The bait might not work again. The Shadow's only alternative was to find Zenjora as soon as possible; that meant that he must take up Cardell's trail.

THE SHADOW picked up the telephone and called Burbank. He received an immediate report - one that proved the efficiency of his agents. Moe had picked up Cardell as a fare outside the hotel. Cardell had told the taxi driver to take him to a West Side garage. It was obvious that Cardell was going to obtain a car of his own.

Moe had scrawled this information on a slip of paper, unnoticed by Cardell. He had flicked the paper, wadded, from the cab window. Hawkeye, who was slouched near by, had snagged the paper and phoned the news to Burbank.

The Shadow knew that Moe would dawdle on the trip to the garage, choosing streets where traffic was heavy and delay unavoidable. Calmly, The Shadow replaced the baited envelope that Cardell had failed to take. Doffing his cloak and hat, he placed them over his arm, so that they appeared as ordinary garments.

With that, The Shadow strolled from the room. He was on his way to gain his own car, that same speedy roadster that he had used before. He had time to reach the garage before Cardell arrived there. Darkness had almost settled; The Shadow would find it easy to pick up Cardell's trail when the man started out in his own car.

Tonight's trail was to prove easier than The Shadow supposed. Cardell's actual fright had lulled him; prevented The Shadow from divining the real truth behind the spy's hasty action. Cardell's quick flight foreboded trouble that The Shadow did not foresee.

The Shadow was faring to a spot where the odds would be hopelessly against him. He was heading straight for an invisible trap that Zenjora's headhunters had prepared. Tonight, The Shadow was to find new evidence of Jibaro cunning.

Changed trails had swung the game in Zenjora's favor.

CHAPTER XVI. THE DOUBLE TRAP

DARKNESS lay thick amid the Jersey hills when a coupe stopped near the end of an old abandoned road. The driver turned off the ignition switch; he lighted a match with shaky hand and applied it to a cigarette. The glowing flame showed the strained face of Cardell.

Zenjora's spy had reached the spot where he must begin a trail on foot; but he was not satisfied that his work was done. This time, it was doubt that made Cardell nervous. All along the route, Cardell had watched the mirror for signs of a following car. At times, he had believed that he had spotted one; but he was not sure.

The Shadow had again used the trick of following by the headlights of the car ahead. At this precise moment, he was stowing his smooth-motored roadster in a place well off the road. The Shadow had picked a winding path that led to lower ground beside a wide stream. He was bringing his car almost on a line with Cardell's, without the fellow's knowledge.

Cardell finished his cigarette. Extinguishing it, he stepped from the coupe. He started along a path that led upward, then turned and led back toward the creek, but on a higher level. After a hundred yards, Cardell stopped.

The spy grunted a troubled laugh. He realized that he stood a good chance of putting himself in Zenjora's bad graces. Cardell did not intend to mention the episode at the Marmont Hotel. He knew that Zenjora would show no mercy to an underling who had turned yellow in a pinch. Nevertheless, the knowledge of his failure rested heavily upon him. To cover it, Cardell had hoped to bring The Shadow here. He began to feel that he had not succeeded.

Inspired by a failing hope that The Shadow might possibly have followed, Cardell stopped to light another cigarette. He let the tiny coal glow in the darkness; then strolled slowly ahead, flourishing the cigarette as he went. A bit farther on, Cardell used a flashlight, blinking it at intervals.

These beacons served better than Cardell had supposed. Eyes had spotted them from the path. The Shadow had seen opportunity to close the trail. Coming speedily, but silently, the cloaked follower moved within a dozen paces of Cardell. The Shadow expected trouble. The closer he came to it, the better, under circumstances such as these.

Cardell had nearly reached the cabins when his feet crunched underbrush that lay upon the path. Cardell remembered this spot. Previously, it had marked a hollow cut by heavy rains; wide boards had been laid across the space. Those boards were gone.

Though the path seemed solid, Cardell guessed what lay beneath. He was treading upon the weaved matting spun by the Jibaros. Thin poles lay beneath the weave; underbrush had been gathered and spread above.

Just as Cardell reached the far side of this stretch, he detected motion beside him. The Jibaros were crouched in darkness. The instant that Cardell passed, they reached down to cut thongs that held the poles in place. They were preparing the trap for Cardell's follower. Their purpose was to have the matting loose, so that an arrival would tumble the moment that he struck it.

There was one flaw to the plan. Neither Zenjora nor his cunning headhunters had supposed that The Shadow would be so close upon Cardell's trail.

The Shadow's foot struck the underbrush before Cardell was fully past it. One step more told The Shadow that he was upon treacherous footing. His keen ears caught sounds ahead; as he took a long

stride, he felt a quiver beneath him. Lunging, The Shadow gave a long spring forward. He was too late.

UNDERBRUSH crackled; the matting dropped as poles were loosened. The Shadow's plunge went short; his hands failed to reach the farther bank. There was a crash as debris plunged into an eight-foot gully; twisting downward. The Shadow was swallowed into the pit.

One factor alone had favored The Shadow. His leap had carried him almost to the far side of the gully. As he sprawled, he was still spinning forward. His shoulder struck the far side of the pit. His fall was broken as he slipped down to the bottom.

Something scraped The Shadow's back. Lying prone, he probed in darkness. He learned instantly that he had escaped death by hair-breadth. The object against his back was a stout pole, driven deep into the bottom of the pit. The Shadow's gloved hand found the upper end of the pole. It had been whittled to a sharp point.

Reaching farther, The Shadow found another wooden spike. He realized that the pit was full of them. Any ordinary plunge would have impaled its victim upon one or more of these spearlike prongs. Chances were that all of them were dyed with Jibaro poison.

Though The Shadow's spring had not carried him beyond the trap, it had at least saved him from death. It gave him a chance for battle; and The Shadow expected such strife soon. Already, he could hear elated shouts from back along the path by which he had come.

Zenjora's outlaws had heard the crash. They were coming in from the woods to view the pit. Flashlights began to glimmer. The Shadow could see them through the remnants of the underbrush.

The pit would be a death trap of a new sort when those enemies arrived. Though The Shadow might thin them with bullets, they would gain the final victory if he remained in the cramped space where he had fallen. The Shadow's only course was to climb from the pit, on the side toward the cabins.

With an upward lunge, The Shadow gripped the claylike bank, clawed his way to the top. Each slip of his hands offered disaster, for a backward fall would impale him on a spike. Lights were coming closer every second; any delay would mean death from outlaw guns. The Shadow had eight feet to go. He made it by superhuman effort.

Each time one hand slipped, the other was quick to grip a higher spot. Before his body slid slowly back to its former level, The Shadow gained a temporary grip that pulled him closer to the solid ground above. One hand came over the brink, caught a twisted tree root. The other hand joined it; The Shadow hoisted his body into the clear by virtue of one tremendous pull.

AS The Shadow rolled upon solid turf, lights burned downward from the other side of the trap. Outlaws gave fierce snarls when they saw vacancy. One spied the muddy stretch of bank where The Shadow had clawed his way to freedom. The rogue turned his flashlight to the far edge of the pit.

The glare was just in time to show The Shadow coming to his feet. The outlaw shouted; the others swung their guns, but did not fire. The Shadow had scrambled away to farther darkness. Wildly, Zenjora's henchmen began to circle the pit, hopeful that this time they could surround The Shadow and down him with their guns.

Ordinarily, The Shadow would have stopped to meet them; but he knew that another menace existed in the darkness. The Jibaros were on his side of the pit. If any one of the three should gain a chance to fling a poisoned dart, The Shadow's doom would be assured. What The Shadow needed was a temporary stronghold. He came upon one in the darkness.

The Shadow had found a cabin, with door and windows closed. He was beside the door; as he listened, he could hear the creep of Jibaro headsmen, plain despite the more distant shouts of outlaws. Gun in one hand, The Shadow gripped the knob of the cabin door with the other. The door loosened; The Shadow flung it inward and dived with it.

Instantly, he was in the glare of lanterns. The tight door, the shuttered windows had hidden the glow. Yet the light did not deter The Shadow. He whipped the door shut behind him. He wheeled to face any foemen who might be within. As he swung, The Shadow saw a man seated at a table. He covered the fellow instantly; then eyed his foeman.

The man at the table was Zenjora. Eyes glaring, a distorted smile upon the lips that showed from his heavy beard, the supercrook was gloating at The Shadow's arrival. Zenjora's arms were folded. His ugly gaze expressed no fear.

An instant later, The Shadow learned the reason for Zenjora's composure.

Windows swung wide on either side; the door whipped inward. The Shadow saw apish faces to left and right; he knew that another stood behind him. Each was ready with a poisoned bamboo javelin. Death threatened The Shadow from three directions. Zenjora had not trusted to the Jibaro pit alone. He had prepared this second trap.

IN order to give the head-hunters full opportunity to gain their posts, Zenjora had stationed himself within the cabin. His ruse had worked well. The Shadow, entering, had looked for an occupant; hence had concentrated on Zenjora. Timed to perfection, the headhunters had arrived to back their master.

Another move was due, according to Zenjora's calculations. Ever crafty, he had remained unarmed. His guess was that The Shadow would swing in futile attempt to shoot down the Jibaros. Zenjora did not expect him to clip a single one of them; for the head-hunters were set to dodge from the windows as they launched their javelins.

This time, Zenjora was wrong.

The Shadow's first actions had been logical; for every one had offered him some advantage. Sighting the Jibaros, The Shadow saw a hopeless situation. Had he swung about, or made a single mistaken shift, death would have struck upon the instant.

Instead, The Shadow took advantage of the only flaw in Zenjora's snare. Finger upon the trigger of his .45, he held steady aim toward Zenjora. To give it emphasis, he moved forward to the table; faced the bearded crook almost eye to eye.

The Shadow had not allowed a fraction of time for Zenjora to spring away while head-hunters made their thrusts. The moment that a bamboo javelin winged the air, he could pull his trigger. If death should be The Shadow's, Zenjora would share it.

The Shadow had produced a stalemate. Zenjora knew it; he babbled frantically in high-pitched dialect. The Shadow recognized that he was calling to his head-hunters, telling them to retrain their weapons.

To The Shadow, however, Zenjora snarled in English:

"Kill me, you will die!"

The Shadow's answer was a sinister laugh that crept through the pine walls of the cabin. The game worked either way. The Shadow's mockery told that he had no fear of death; that Zenjora's dilemma was the same as his own.

Nevertheless, The Shadow foresaw that he might lose his equal status. Though the Jibaros stood motionless, there were others: those outlaws whom The Shadow had escaped. They were creeping toward the cabin. At any time, they might poke gun muzzles through knot holes in the pine boards. If rifles crackled from the hands of sharpshooters, their bullets could kill with speed.

There was one way to end this changing situation that could become worse for The Shadow. That was to give Zenjora a reason to call off his hounds of death. Calmly, The Shadow spoke unexpected words.

"My death," pronounced The Shadow to Zenjora, "will mean yours. My death would end your schemes. I hold facts that you can never learn. I, alone, can tell you where James Oakbrook may be found."

A sudden glint came to Zenjora's eyes; his optics glittered below the beads of perspiration that had formed upon his bulky forehead. Zenjora snapped up The Shadow's proposition.

"Your life for mine," he bargained. "Your freedom, later, when you have told me where Oakbrook is!"

"Agreed," announced The Shadow. "Order your men to lower their weapons."

ZENJORA hesitated; then leered in confident fashion. His men were too numerous for The Shadow, with this cabin a trap instead of a stronghold. Zenjora delivered two orders; the first to the Jibaros, the second to the outside outlaws.

The Shadow stepped back from the table, placed his automatic beneath his cloak. Instantly, Zenjora whipped out a revolver to cover him. While Jibaros stood at the windows, outlaws surged through the door; they surrounded The Shadow and disarmed him.

Zenjora ordered them to tie the prisoner hand and foot. The brigands obeyed, using lengths of ropes and leather thongs. They sprawled The Shadow in a corner, thrusting him there with kicks and jeers.

Zenjora ordered his motley crew outside. Standing above The Shadow, he was joined by two men: Bandrillo and Cardell. With these witnesses present, Zenjora snarled his ultimatum.

"I have allowed you to live," he sneered to The Shadow. "You shall have freedom after my plans are complete. Tell me where Oakbrook is. That will complete our bargain."

"Our bargain is complete," responded The Shadow, calmly. "We are both alive. As for freedom, I no longer request it. Find Oakbrook for yourself."

Zenjora scowled. He realized what The Shadow had gained. Death was no longer a weapon for Zenjora, until he had learned the facts he needed. Torture was the one instrument that the crook could use.

"You think that you will not speak?" purred Zenjora. "Ah, we shall learn that for ourselves. You have not yet tasted the medicine that Emilio Zenjora can give. It may take hours, days perhaps; but you will speak before I have finished!"

Cardell saw a sudden chance to hold his chief's favor. In concise fashion, the spy began to tell of the episode at the Marmont Hotel. He softened the story, to make it appear that danger had been too great to enter the hotel room. At first, Zenjora showed an outburst of anger.

"You failed!" he snarled. "You fool! You know the fate of those who fail me!"

"Let me return," pleaded Cardell. "I brought The Shadow here, as you wanted. He is your prisoner; the way is safe. The message may still be where I saw it."

Zenjora stroked his beard; his eyes glistened approval as he nodded.

"Go, Cardell," he ordered. "After you have searched for the message, call by telephone to the little store two miles from here. Bandrillo will be waiting there to receive your message."

Cardell strode from the cabin. Zenjora's eyes gleamed triumph. Beckoning to Bandrillo, Zenjora drew the lieutenant to the table; there, the two sat down to discuss future deeds.

Men of crime had reached their zenith. With The Shadow a prisoner, success seemed certain to Emilio Zenjora.

CHAPTER XVII. JIBARO TORTURE

IN the minute that followed Cardell's departure, The Shadow summed the present circumstances and found that they offered little. The Shadow had gained respite from death; but he knew that the interval would not be long.

When he bluffed Zenjora, The Shadow had hoped that a period of imprisonment would give him opportunity to work out an escape. He had been willing to take doses of Zenjora's tortures, if they came as part of a campaign for freedom.

Cardell, however, had crossed The Shadow's plans. The spy had taken a chance that The Shadow had expected him to avoid. Zenjora, in turn, had curbed his wrath, and had agreed to let Cardell return to his former mission.

In about one hour, Cardell would be back in Manhattan. He would find the room at the Marmont exactly as The Shadow had left it. Soon after that, Bandrillo would receive the telephoned message, stating the news concerning James Oakbrook. Once that word was brought to Zenjora, the crook could pronounce doom for The Shadow.

Looking ahead, The Shadow considered the vital hour that still remained to him. No minutes could be wasted. The only course was to force a change in present circumstances.

Half rising in his corner, The Shadow began to struggle against his bonds. His hands were securely tied behind him. It would take a long time to loosen them. Nevertheless, The Shadow used great effort, twisting about until his back was half toward Zenjora and Bandrillo. The two halted their conference to watch the motions of The Shadow's wrists.

While he fought against the rigid bonds that held his hands, The Shadow used his ankles also; but the watchers scarcely noticed that fact. The Shadow had deliberately attracted their attention to his wrists. He had a reason; he knew that he could free his feet sooner than he could his hands. Therefore, he wanted to divert attention from his ankles.

When the outlaws had bound him, The Shadow had managed to cross his feet. By shifting his ankles, bringing them side by side, he could gain slack at will. Ropes and thongs were still too tight to be slipped; but steady pressure might eventually loosen them.

Zenjora and Bandrillo returned to their conference, satisfied that The Shadow's struggle were hopeless. They had nothing to fear; for head-hunters were close at hand, ready for immediate call. Nevertheless, the crooks could still hear The Shadow's struggle on the floor; and that fact caused Zenjora to deliver occasional glares toward the corner.

At last, Zenjora stopped the conference with a snarl. He gesticulated impatiently to Bandrillo.

"Bah!" exclaimed Zenjora. "We waste time talking! What good are plans until we know where we must go? When we hear from Cardell, then we can make plans."

There was a pause, while Zenjora eyed The Shadow, who had temporarily ceased his struggles. Sight of The Shadow made Zenjora express new thoughts.

"What if Cardell finds nothing?" he demanded, savagely, with a gesture to Bandrillo. "What shall we do then?"

Bandrillo made no answer. Zenjora replied for himself.

"We must torture him," the supercrook declared, pointing to The Shadow. "We must make him speak as soon as possible. Perhaps" - Zenjora smiled with relish as The Shadow began a new struggle against the bonds - "ah, perhaps it would be good to start the torture now."

RISING, Zenjora walked to The Shadow's corner, glared down at the huddled prisoner. The Shadow's eyes met Zenjora's; they showed a blazing challenge that brought a snarl from the crook.

"You ask for torture, eh?" queried Zenjora, angrily. "Very good. You shall have it!"

Wheeling to Bandrillo, Zenjora gave an order. He told the lieutenant to go outside and summon four outlaws. As Bandrillo started, Zenjora added:

"Send the men here. Then go to the little store and wait to hear from Cardell."

Two minutes after Bandrillo had gone, four ruffians entered the cabin. Zenjora ordered them to carry The Shadow, while he led the way. As the banditti hoisted their living burden, Zenjora called an order from the doorway. His three head-hunters scrambled from their posts, joined their evil chief and followed him.

Zenjora led the way to the glade, where other outlaws sat about their camp fire. The throng arose with ugly murmurs as they saw four of their fellows bringing The Shadow on their shoulders. Zenjora beckoned; all followed.

Zenjora strode to the brink of the ravine. There, he turned about; his face glowed with demonish malice; the light from the camp fire gave that bearded visage a satanic ruddiness.

The four men dropped The Shadow at Zenjora's feet. Prone and motionless, on the very edge of the gorge, The Shadow could hear a roar from far beneath, where the wide stream surged through the gap between the slopes.

The Shadow had ceased his struggles with the bonds. Given a dozen minutes more, he could have loosened those about his ankles. Zenjora had unwittingly blocked that move. At present, new struggles would be more than futile. They would lead the outlaws to tighten the bonds more fully.

Calmly, The Shadow watched Zenjora. He knew that the supercrook must have picked this spot for some definite reason; one that undoubtedly included torture. Zenjora's eyes saw The Shadow's gaze; the crook's ruddy lips formed a devilish leer.

Like a showman upon a platform, Zenjora summoned his Jibaros. He pointed to a stout sapling that was rooted on the very edge of the gorge. With chattered response, the head-hunters started up the tree like monkeys.

As the first Jibaro neared the top, the slender tree wavered. As it swung toward Zenjora, another Jibaro scrambled beside the first. The sapling bent down toward the high ground; the third Jibaro added his

weight to the top branches. In one mass, the head-hunters carried the slender treetop to the ground; they held the doubled sapling in its new position.

Another gesture from Zenjora; a pair of husky outlaws stepped up and held the bent tree where it was. Zenjora pointed to a second sapling, only a dozen feet from the first. The Jibaros repeated their process; brought the second treetop downward. Again, a pair of outlaws took over the task of holding it.

ZENJORA had evidently tested this device beforehand; for other preparations had been completed earlier. Stooping to a spot beside The Shadow, Zenjora pushed away a small pile of brush. The action showed heavy timbers sunk deep in the ground, and weighted by huge stones. From the logs projected the ends of a massive leather strap.

The Jibaros knew what was due; for this was one of their own jungle tortures. Without a word from Zenjora, they dragged The Shadow to the sunken timbers. They pushed a strap end between The Shadow's ankles, over the bonds that held them. Zenjora, himself, buckled the strap; saw that it was firm.

Shoving The Shadow to a seated position, the Jibaros cut the bonds that held his wrists. Instantly, Quinqual seized one of The Shadow's arms, while Incos grabbed the other. They raised The Shadow's hands above his head. Miquon tightened a leather thong around one of The Shadow's wrists; then bound the other wrist with the same cord, leaving a stretch of stout leather between.

One such bond was not enough. Miquon added more, with Quinqual and Incos helping him; for they no longer needed to hold The Shadow's arms. They nodded to Zenjora; babbled harsh words of glee.

Outlaws maneuvered the tops of the bent saplings between The Shadow's upheld arms. Gradually, they released the pressure. The trees, stiffening upward, drew The Shadow upright. He was stretched like a rod that restrains the action of a powerful spring. The outlaws still held the bent trees to relieve the strain.

Zenjora faced The Shadow, whose back was toward the edge of the ravine. With his head-hunters clustered beside him, Zenjora described the torture that was to come.

"I have seen this in the jungle," he told The Shadow. "Once my men have taken away their weight, your body will bear the strain of four. Perhaps for a while, you will have the strength to resist it. Once that is ended, you will learn how horrible death can be.

"Perhaps an easier death will suit you better. I can promise you less pain. Speak, while the time still offers. Tell me where I shall find James Oakbrook. I shall give you until Bandrillo returns; no longer."

Outlaws were weakening; The Shadow could already feel the tug of the pulling saplings. The strain reached his feet; he felt a quiver of the cords that bound his ankles. The Shadow's reply to Zenjora was a low-toned laugh, that brought shuddering echoes from the glade.

"You have chosen!" Zenjora spat the words. Then, to the outlaws: "Away! Release! Let him have his choice!"

HANDS dropped from the trunks of the saplings. The bent trees wavered, as though eager to launch themselves in upward spring. The Shadow's tightened muscles held them. He could feel the strain from finger tips to toes.

Zenjora, glaring, expected to see The Shadow weaken within a minute. Instead, The Shadow remained as firm as a rod of steel. Thongs stretched between his wrists; the strap bulged between his ankles. His feet were off the ground; but he met the ordeal with tightened muscles that would not yield an inch.

There was another quiver of bonds that held The Shadow's ankles. Muscles taut, he shifted his feet. The Shadow's hidden lips were grim beneath the folds of his upturned cloak. The Shadow saw a coming result, due within the next two minutes. He was prepared to stand the strain until then.

One minute passed. There was a shout from the glade. Zenjora turned; he saw Bandrillo. In dialect, the lieutenant shouted news.

"Cardell called me!" cried Bandrillo. "He has found the message! He knows where Oakbrook is!"

With a basso chuckle, Zenjora turned to his head-hunters; then pointed to The Shadow. From their jackets, the Jibaros drew their poison-tipped javelins. Zenjora was ready to cut short The Shadow's torture; to let the Jibaros have the privilege of delivering their favorite death.

The Shadow's time was shortened. He could no longer rely upon the increasing strain to accomplish the result he wanted. Bonds were quivering anew at his ankles; with a mighty effort, The Shadow tightened every muscle, gave his feet a last fierce twist.

Stretched thongs responded at The Shadow's feet. His heels came upward; they ripped loose from the shoes that encased them. As the Jibaros swung their arms to drive their poisoned shafts, there was a sudden crackle from the saplings.

Like a flash, the trees whipped upward, carrying The Shadow with them. His feet freed, tension was gone; he was snapped from the path of the Jibaro weapons with skyrocket speed. Bamboo shafts whirred through vacant space.

The Shadow's swift ride continued. Saplings had lashed to a fifteen-foot height. The Shadow's wrists were loose across their tops. The momentum carried him a dozen feet higher; whirled him like a missile from a catapult, far off through the darkness.

THE SHADOW was gone from the firelight at a speed that no eye could follow. Zenjora stood astounded, his henchmen riveted beside him. They saw yellow saplings that wavered back and forth, as if pleased with the duty that they had performed. Beyond that was only blackness.

Then, from far below, came a dull splash amid the roar of waters. Zenjora spat an order. Outlaws leaped to the brink, flashed powerful lights upon the surging stream at the bottom of the gorge. Some thought they saw The Shadow among water-swept rocks and blackened whirlpools.

Revolvers barked; rifles crackled. The whole gorge echoed with the wild barrage. Outlaws fired until their guns were emptied. When the volleys died, Zenjora turned to Bandrillo.

"Perhaps The Shadow still lives," sneered Zenjora, "but it is doubtful. He may be crippled on the rocks below; if so, he will die there! Those shots were needed; but they have probably aroused the countryside. These hills are not the mountains of Santander. We can no longer stay here."

Bandrillo nodded his accord. The lieutenant called the outlaws, told them to prepare for immediate departure. Zenjora gave the same order to the Jibaros. As henchmen hurried away, Zenjora asked Bandrillo:

"What of Oakbrook? Where is he?"

Bandrillo stated the location of the Catskill lodge. Zenjora smiled.

"A few hours will bring us there," he declared. "Once we have dealt with Oakbrook, our main task will be finished. Come, Bandrillo, let us speed upon this mission."

Emilio Zenjora no longer expected obstacles in his path. The bearded rogue was confident that he had successfully disposed of his greatest enemy, The Shadow.

CHAPTER XVIII. OAKBROOK'S VISITORS

AT the very hour when Zenjora was planning hasty departure from the New Jersey hill region, Alvarez Rentone and Lynn Jefford were in their apartment, studying a copy of the evening Sphere. Harry Vincent had left the newspaper with them, a short while before.

"Oakbrook understands matters," declared Alvarez. "The advertisement is proof of it. I think, Lynn, that he wants to see me."

"You will know that for sure," reminded Lynn, "if he repeats the advertisement tomorrow."

"I would like to visit Oakbrook anyway," asserted Alvarez. "We know nothing of The Shadow's plans. Even Vincent is in doubt concerning them. Your car has been returned to your garage, so Vincent told us. Let us get it and go to see Oakbrook."

"We promised to stay here, Alvarez."

Recalling his promise, Alvarez became sheepish. He had made the pledge to Harry Vincent, that he would not visit Oakbrook until he was sure that the broker wanted to see him. Alvarez was a man who never broke his word. He pondered upon the hopelessness of visiting Oakbrook; then, suddenly, a thought struck him.

Picking up the telephone, Alvarez called the evening Sphere. Lynn, puzzled, heard his friend inquire:

"Want-ad section?... Could you tell me about an advertisement placed by Thomas Rustwick?... Yes, I have misplaced my copy of your newspaper... But if it will appear tomorrow, I can buy an early edition... Ah! You say the ad is listed to be repeated? .. Thank you."

Alvarez turned triumphantly to Lynn.

"That settles it," he declared. "We know that Oakbrook wants to see us. To be fair to Vincent, we will call him and let him know what we have learned. We can go, if he offers no objection."

Lynn nodded his agreement. He put in a call to the Metrolite Hotel; found that Harry was not in his hotel room. As he finished the call, he saw Alvarez donning hat and coat. Lynn tried new argument. It was useless. Alvarez maintained that there had been no objection from Harry. At last, Lynn yielded.

"All right," he decided. "We'll leave a note, though, for Vincent. I know the region around Mercer. It's straight north and we can make a speedy trip. After all, we're within the terms of our agreement."

THE two started immediately. Fifteen minutes after their departure, the silence of the apartment was broken by the ringing of the telephone bell. That sound ended; another quarter hour passed. A key rattled in the door; it opened and Harry Vincent entered the apartment.

Returning to his hotel, Harry had learned of a call, with no name mentioned. He had supposed it was from Lynn and Alvarez. He had called the apartment; had made a quick trip here when he gained no answer.

Harry found a note that Lynn had left. It told what had happened. Harry called Burbank over the apartment telephone. After reporting, he waited for a return call with instructions. Twenty minutes passed; the delay was serious. It meant that Burbank had not made contact with The Shadow.

When the telephone finally rang, Harry answered quickly. He heard Burbank's voice; the contact man was talking to someone else. That was not unusual; Burbank had several telephones in the contact room. Listening, Harry found that Burbank was talking to Miles Crofton, an agent of The Shadow's who had recently arrived in New York, flying an autogiro that belonged to The Shadow.

"Emergency field at White Hill..." Harry could hear Burbank giving instructions to Crofton. "Forty miles due north from Newark... Make landing... Await contact..."

Burbank switched telephones to give Harry brief instructions. Harry was to wait for Cliff Marsland outside the apartment. Cliff was one of The Shadow's agents who always came on duty when heavy action loomed. Harry guessed that there might be others in the car with Cliff; probably Hawkeye, perhaps Clyde Burke.

APPROXIMATELY fifty minutes had passed since Lynn and Alvarez had left the apartment. They had made good speed from New York. Miles north of Manhattan, Lynn's coupe was hitting a steady seventy along the smooth concrete of a perfect highway.

The car approached a crossroad. Lynn slackened speed and turned to the left. They followed a rougher road, near a lake. Lynn saw a dirt road to the right and decided that it must lead to Oakbrook's lodge. Taking the road, he and Alvarez came to a small stone house, just inside a gate. The building looked like a miniature fortress.

A wicket opened in the house door. A gruff voice inquired:

"Who's there?"

Alvarez replied, giving his name. He stated that he had brought a friend named Lynn Jefford; that they wished to see James Oakbrook. The wicket closed. The gatekeeper was making a telephone call to the lodge. Two minutes later, the gate swung open mechanically. Lynn drove through and followed a driveway.

Window lights showed the lodge. Lynn parked the coupe; he and Alvarez alighted. They noted some darkened windows indicating that armed men were on guard. They stepped into a glow that came from a light above the front door. Eyes must have approved them, for the door swung inward.

Stepping into a huge living room, they were greeted by a man who stood with outstretched hand. His appearance was striking, for he was entirely in gray. His hair, his eyes were of the same color as his clothes. Lynn saw Alvarez return the smile of recognition that the gray man gave. Lynn knew that this must be James Oakbrook.

Closing the door, Oakbrook conducted his visitors across the huge room that occupied the whole front of the lodge. Lynn and Alvarez were amazed at the sumptuous furnishings. Rich rugs adorned the floor. Chairs, tables and bookcases were of solid mahogany. Each rear corner showed a huge tapestry; the hangings were works of Persian art, that made a perfect match.

The door by which the visitors had entered was at the right of the front wall, when viewed from the interior. The space to the left of it had a huge window. Each side wall had a window also. There were two doorways at the back of the room. Each marked a passage to another portion of the lodge and both doorways were heavily curtained.

Between the doors was a large desk; behind it, in the wall, a fair-sized safe. This equipment showed that Oakbrook handled some of his brokerage business at the lodge.

OAKBROOK sat down behind the desk; Alvarez and Lynn faced him across the flat top. The broker smiled as he motioned to some newspapers.

"I have not believed these reports about you," he told Alvarez with a smile. "I know that you are not a public enemy. Tell me: Has Emilio Zenjora been responsible for all this?"

Alvarez nodded. He began his story, from the time of his first visit to Oakbrook. He told of Broggoletta's death; of Estaban's letter; of the trap at the Kincaid estate. He described the rescue accomplished by The Shadow and explained why The Shadow had believed it best for Alvarez to accept the burden of crime until Zenjora could be trapped.

"The story amazes me," expressed Oakbrook, when Alvarez had finished. "It sounds fantastic, beyond belief! I doubt that you could convince any one of its truth, even with Jefford's supporting testimony. I believe you, though, for you forewarned me of trouble. My advertisements in the Sphere are proof of my confidence in you. I wanted to see you, to discuss matters. Your story, however, has brought up some important angles."

Oakbrook leaned back in his chair. He began with a brief summary.

"You tell me that Estaban is dead," said the broker. "That makes you sole heir to your grandfather's estate. Though Zenjora thinks you dead, you are still alive."

That settled, Oakbrook put his first question:

"Was Howard Dundee actually a friend of your grandfather's?"

"I am positive that he was," replied Alvarez. "His name must have been on the list of those who were to receive gifts."

"And Zenjora has the list of other names?"

"Unquestionably! He killed Dundee because of Fendoza. The Shadow has made it unwise for Zenjora to seek others."

"But what about this killer Broggoletta? Who was he?"

Alvarez had no answer to that question.

"He might have known Fendoza," he told Oakbrook, "but I doubt it. Zenjora, though, took him for a messenger like Fendoza. In fact, Zenjora mentioned Broggoletta as such when Lynn and I were trapped in the treasure vault."

"That should settle the matter," decided Oakbrook, "unless The Shadow holds to another theory."

"The Shadow simply asked what I knew about Broggoletta. The question came through Vincent. I gave the theory that Broggoletta knew Fendoza."

Oakbrook nodded. His questions were ended. Raising one hand, he snapped his fingers. There was an immediate response to the gray man's signal. A trio of husky servants appeared from one of the curtained doorways at the back of the big living room. All held revolvers.

"My bodyguards," explained Oakbrook. "I have a fourth man - the one at the gatehouse. I shall post these men; they must be ready in case -"

He stopped short as the telephone rang. Answering the call, Oakbrook showed a sudden expression of

alarm. His rugged face tightened. He spoke into the telephone:

"Hold the line, Keller."

A firm smile on his lips, Oakbrook announced to Alvarez and Lynn:

"We have another visitor. Emilio Zenjora is at the gatehouse!"

TO both listeners, the statement was a dread one. Zenjora's unexpected arrival could mean doom. It told that the supercroc had located Oakbrook. The gray man, however, showed but little concern.

"Keller reports that Zenjora is alone," he declared. "I see his game, even though I did not believe that he would arrive so soon. He believes that you are dead, Alvarez. Zenjora holds the promissory notes; he will expect me to deliver the million dollars. If I refuse, he will probably send to Santander for instructions and will visit me again. At present, he will not attack me."

Motioning to his three servants, Oakbrook told one to watch the back door of the lodge. He instructed each of the others to move behind a curtained doorway; to remain there, guarding each passage. It was plain that Oakbrook intended to admit Zenjora, to learn the crafty outlaw's game and trap him if opportunity afforded.

Alvarez was impressed by Oakbrook's nerve; but he saw a flaw in the broker's game. Referring to himself and Lynn, Alvarez blurted:

"But if Zenjora finds us here -"

"He will not find you until the proper time. I have a place for each of you." Oakbrook pointed to the corner tapestries. "Stand behind those. Wait; I have revolvers for you."

Reaching into the desk, Oakbrook produced two weapons of .32 caliber. Alvarez and Lynn came to their feet; each took a gun and started for a corner. Oakbrook spoke into the mouthpiece of the telephone:

"Very well, Keller. Tell Senor Zenjora that he may drive through to the lodge."

Rising from the desk, Oakbrook looked about with satisfaction. His three servants were stationed out of sight. Lynn and Alvarez were behind the tapestries. A desk drawer was pulled half open; within it lay a .38 for Oakbrook's own use.

"Be ready," he spoke for Lynn and Alvarez to hear. "Come from the tapestries when I raise my left hand thus. Cover Zenjora when you appear. My servants already have their instructions."

With that, Oakbrook went to the front door and listened. He heard the purr of a motor coming along the drive. The gray-clad man smiled his confidence. Lynn and Alvarez watched him from the edges of the tapestries.

So intent were all those in the room that they failed to notice something else that happened. There was a slight rustle at one of the curtained passages at the rear of the room. Soon afterward, there was semblance of motion at the second passage.

Those occurrences were ominous, coming at the exact time of Emilio Zenjora's arrival. They signified that trouble could have come to Oakbrook's bodyguards; first, to the man at the back door; afterward, to each isolated servant who was stationed in a passage.

The rustle of curtains were ended. Like tokens of death, they had appeared; then vanished. The draperies were stilled when footsteps crunched outside the front door of the lodge. Unwitting of the happenings within the lodge itself, Oakbrook placed his hand upon the doorknob.

Calmly, the gray-clad man opened the portal and stepped back from the threshold to extend a hand of greeting to Emilio Zenjora.

CHAPTER XIX. THE CLAIM OF WEALTH

EMILIO ZENJORA had arrived alone. He was suave and friendly as he bowed from the doorway of the lodge. On this occasion, the bearded bandit had masked his evil pose. He was the Emilio Zenjora who had formerly been well received in the capitals of South America.

Glare was gone from eyes of evil. Ruddy lips were pleasant in their smile. Zenjora's hand faked sincerity in its grip when he received Oakbrook's shake. Still bowing, the bearded visitor followed Oakbrook as the broker conducted him to the desk.

When Oakbrook's back was turned, however, Zenjora's eyes showed an avaricious flash. The bearded man had spied the safe behind the broker's desk. Zenjora guessed that the safe was the repository for the million dollars that he had come here to acquire.

"I presume that you are from Santander," remarked Oakbrook, as he sat down and passed a box of cigars across the desk. "In fact, Senor Zenjora, I have heard of you in the past."

"Ah!" Zenjora shrugged his shoulders. "Any one may be heard of in Santander. I hope that you did not believe all that was told you."

"I understood," said Oakbrook, "that you belonged to a faction opposed to my former friend, Jose Rentone."

"Ah, no!" Zenjora shook his head. "Much was misunderstood. I was a friend to the late dictator; but it was difficult for either of us to state that fact. Politics are serious business in Santander. It is not wise always for friends to appear too friendly."

"I understand," nodded Oakbrook. "Perhaps, then, senor, you can tell me what has become of Alvarez Rentone. I have expected word from him; but it has not come -"

"You have read the newspapers?"

Oakbrook hesitated; then answered: "Yes. But I was not ready to believe their reports."

"You should not believe them," declared Zenjora. "They tell of another man who has been misunderstood. Alvarez Rentone is not a criminal. The crimes of others have been placed upon him. But he has been forced to leave this country. That is why I have come here in his place."

Oakbrook reigned surprise. Zenjora smiled; reached into his pocket and produced the sheaf of promissory notes. He spread them on the desk in front of Oakbrook.

"I have brought these," he declared. "Once you have given me the money, I shall carry it to Alvarez Rentone. I, alone, know where to reach him and his cousin Estaban."

ZENJORA veiled the insidious significance of his words. Oakbrook gave no sign that he suspected the true meaning. Instead, he simply examined the promissory notes; turned about and pulled the door of the safe.

The door was unlocked; it swung wide. From the safe, Oakbrook produced the same box that he had shown Alvarez in the Wall Street office. He tendered the wealth to Zenjora.

"These notes," declared Oakbrook, "are cancelled." He tore them; tossed the pieces into a wastebasket. "The entire amount is there, señor; all negotiable. I trust you to deliver it to its proper owners."

Zenjora completed a quick counting of the funds. He arose; Oakbrook did the same. The broker waited until Zenjora tucked the box under his arm and turned toward the door; then, with a quick move, Oakbrook raised his left hand.

Tapestries swept aside. Lynn and Alvarez leaped from their hiding places, with ready revolvers. At the same instant, Oakbrook whipped his .38 from the desk drawer. He gave a sharp call to Zenjora.

The bearded crook wheeled. His eyes glared as he saw himself within a triangle of guns. He gazed at the men who held the weapons. A dumfounded look registered itself upon Zenjora's bearded visage.

For seconds, no one spoke. It was Zenjora himself who broke the silence. He let the money box fall to a chair; slowly, he raised his hands above his head. His tone was an ugly purr that came from curling lips.

"So The Shadow rescued you," he said to Lynn and Alvarez. "That is how he learned so much concerning Oakbrook. Bah! The Shadow did not profit by his interference. Perhaps, my friends, you will soon join him!"

Stolidly, Alvarez reached for the money box. As he picked it up, Oakbrook spoke, telling him to place the million dollars on the desk. Alvarez did so. Oakbrook gestured for him to again cover Zenjora with his gun. Alvarez obeyed.

"So it is you," sneered Zenjora, facing Oakbrook, "who arranged this trap! You are a fool, Oakbrook! You have lost one million dollars. Perhaps you and I could have made a bargain for that wealth."

A hard smile showed on Oakbrook's lips. The gray-haired man kept his revolver leveled straight toward Zenjora.

"No bargain is necessary," declared Oakbrook, his tone a rasped one. "Stand where you are, Zenjora! I have you covered! As for you, Alvarez, and your friend Jefford, I order you to make no move! The two of you are covered by the servants whom I placed behind the curtains!"

LYNN and Alvarez stared in surprise. One look at Oakbrook's face told them that he meant his words. Oakbrook's glare was as fierce, as evil as Zenjora's.

"Why did I need to give up a million dollars?" demanded Oakbrook. "Two men alone knew the secret of its hiding place. You were one, Alvarez; your cousin Estaban the other. The day I left New York, I prepared to deal with both of you.

"To eliminate Estaban, I sent an anonymous cablegram to Santander, telling the authorities that they would find him at San Luis. I learned tonight that the step was unnecessary. Zenjora had already seen to your cousin's death.

"For you, Alvarez, I prepared a death that fitted with Fendoza's; one that would further mystify the law, by continuing the Italian angle that Zenjora had started. I hired an assassin to kill you with a stiletto thrust."

The truth struck Alvarez before Oakbrook finished.

"Nick Broggoletta!" Alvarez exclaimed. "You sent him to murder me at my hotel!"

Slowly, Oakbrook nodded. An appreciative chuckle came from the bearded lips of Zenjora. He admired the craft that Oakbrook had shown. Oakbrook smiled at Zenjora's approval.

"No one guessed my part," sneered Oakbrook. "Not even the man you call The Shadow. But Broggoletta failed to kill. That was why I brought you here, Alvarez. The newspapers told that you were wanted by the law. Very well. The law will find you. You will lie dead, here in this lodge. I and my servants will be congratulated for having disposed of a public enemy."

Lynn Jefford saw Alvarez stare, half dazed. To Lynn's brain came a sudden understanding; he realized why he and Alvarez had been told to remain in New York.

The Shadow had divined the part played by Nick Broggoletta. The Shadow had seen that a paid assassin must have come from some definite source. Only Oakbrook could have sent him; for - outside of Zenjora - only Oakbrook knew that Alvarez was at the Clearview Hotel.

Alvarez, by confiding in Oakbrook, had given the broker a chance to turn to crime. Oakbrook had grasped it; and The Shadow had seen the answer. That was why The Shadow had wanted Alvarez to take the burden of Zenjora's crimes, so that Oakbrook would feel confident enough to reveal his evil hand.

Lynn saw more; he saw that Zenjora must also have come here through information that The Shadow had enabled him to gain. The Shadow had planned a showdown, crook against crook. Zenjora, with the promissory notes; Oakbrook, with the money that they represented. The Shadow wanted the two to meet and battle while he arrived to pluck the spoils and restore them to Alvarez Rentone.

Dully, Lynn realized how he and Alvarez had blundered. He stared toward Oakbrook; then looked at Zenjora. A shiver suddenly seized Lynn as he saw a demoniacal smile appear upon Zenjora's lips. Oakbrook was speaking; he was sealing Zenjora's doom; but the bearded crook was unconcerned.

"You, Alvarez," spoke Oakbrook, "and you, Jefford, can have one satisfaction. Your guns are trained upon Zenjora. When I give the word, you can proceed to riddle him with bullets. My own men will slaughter you, immediately afterward; but the joy of dealing with Zenjora will lessen your own burden of doom. I am ready with the order -"

A TERRIFIC clatter interrupted Oakbrook's statement. Three windows shattered simultaneously. In from the dark sprang a trio of apish men; one from the front, two from the sides. They were Zenjora's Jibaro tribesmen.

They had passed Keller, at the gate. Outside the windows, they had caught a signal from Zenjora. As they smashed the glass and hurtled inward, their arms were raised to throwing positions. Each had a feathered bamboo shaft; each had a potential victim.

Quinquial and Incos were prepared to strike down Alvarez and Lynn. Miquon, at the front window, was driving his limber arm toward Oakbrook. An instant later, three javelins would have winged the air; but only one of those shafts was destined to take flight.

Timed with the crashing entry of the head-hunters, the curtain of a passage doorway was swept aside. A gloved hand jabbed toward Quinquial; a .45 boomed as a finger pressed the trigger. Swinging to the opposite angle was another hand, that held a second automatic. It waited only as blazing eyes turned to sight along it. The second automatic flashed.

Quinquial sprawled to the floor, his javelin in his fist. Incos tumbled as his arm began its heave; his fingers loosened, the shaft fell from them. Rolling, the Jibaro lay across his poisoned weapon.

Miquon alone dispatched his dart. The shaft found its victim: Oakbrook. The broker took the point deep in his shoulder; he staggered behind his desk. Miquon leaped for the window; Alvarez and Lynn saw The Shadow spring from the curtained passage. An automatic boomed its lethal message. Miquon tumbled, headforemost, through the window, dropped in his final dive for safety.

The Shadow had arrived to witness the meeting between Oakbrook and Zenjora. He had escaped from the gorge; freed his chafed wrists and had reached his hidden car. He had called Burbank, to dispatch Crofton with an autogiro from Newark Airport. In that ship, The Shadow had reached the landing field in back of the lodge, ahead of Zenjora's arrival.

Coming to the lodge, he had overpowered Oakbrook's servants in silent fashion, one by one. He had taken his place behind the curtain, ready to deliver his own thrusts when the moment arrived.

ZENJORA saw The Shadow. The bearded crook went berserk. Springing from between Lynn and Alvarez, he leaped for the desk, vaulted it and fell upon Oakbrook's swaying form. Lynn and Alvarez fired late and wild. They saw Zenjora grab Oakbrook's gun; seize the dying broker and swing him as a shield.

The move had been amazing in its swiftness. Already, Zenjora had begun to stab wild shots toward The Shadow. His aim was shaken by the sway of Oakbrook's body; and that gray-clad form failed utterly to serve him as a shield.

The Shadow was pumping bullets from both automatics. They came in a blazing stream, riddling Oakbrook, to reach the man beyond. That deadly hail was overwhelming in its power. Pummelling bullets literally chopped away the human shield. Unstopped slugs found Zenjora as their target.

Oakbrook was dead at the beginning of The Shadow's fire. The Jibaro shaft had doomed him with its poisoned dye. As the bullet-riddled corpse sank to the floor, Zenjora floundered upon the desk. He made a last effort to rise; Lynn and Alvarez added their bullets to The Shadow's.

Zenjora's hands clawed a last tattoo upon the desk. His bearded face plopped from sight.

Emilio Zenjora lay dead across the body of his rival in crime, Oakbrook.

The Shadow was reloading his automatics. The move was timely. Shots were sounding outside. Bandrillo and the outlaws had driven past the gate; Keller was firing as they went by. Ordering Lynn and Alvarez to remain in the lodge, The Shadow opened the door and headed out into the night.

There, his sinister laugh sounded its challenge to approaching foemen. As revolvers barked, The Shadow's guns responded. Once again, he was tonguing death from darkness. Banditti scattered before the double-barreled volley.

Members of the band were sprawling as they fled. Bandrillo was among the ones who dropped. Leaping into a lone car, a leaderless crew took flight. They passed the gate unscathed, for they had settled Keller with the loss of two men.

As the outlaw machine swept past the gate, a car roared up to block it. New guns opened fire. The Shadow's agents had arrived to stop the flight. The driver of the bandit car was felled; uncontrolled, the machine hurtled from the road, rolled down a long slope and wrecked itself completely when it struck a high stone wall.

WITHIN the lodge, Lynn and Alvarez heard the end of gunfire. They heard the distant rumble of a car, that faded off along the road below. Soon afterward, they caught the sound of a roaring motor; it throbbed upward, faded and was lost in the night air.

The Shadow had sent his agents from the field of battle; they had traveled away in their car. He, in turn, had left by autogiro. Crooks had met their doom. The Shadow's task was done.

Alvarez Rentone and Lynn Jefford stood by the desk where the million dollars rested. That wealth; the torn notes in the wastebasket; the dead forms of Zenjora and the Jibaros were all they needed to prove their case when the law arrived.

Oakbrook's body, too, was evidence. The broker's servants, bound and gagged, would testify to the crime that their master had planned; for they knew the power of The Shadow, and would not care to risk his future enmity.

But although The Shadow had accomplished this task for the law against great odds; although he was leaving behind him a living sermon that crime does not pay, he was bound to meet even greater obstacles before the aftermath of this crime had passed.

Not one man, no one family, but a whole city would be his next objective - a City of Crime in which the roots of gangdom had grown so strong that they held almost every citizen in their clutch. From the least important citizen to the most prominent civic leader, the guilty finger pointed its way. Only some tremendous outside force could clear this evil; only someone with the power of The Shadow could hope to battle such outstanding odds. The City of Crime was soon to have this scourge of the underworld, this amazing being of the darkness, as a much-needed guest!

THE END