



THE VOODOO MASTER

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CHAPTER I. THE MAN WHO STARED

"I HAVE no name."

The words were uttered in a solemn, mechanical monotone, from lips that were expressionless. The speaker was a rigid, staring man, who stood in the center of a room that was obviously a physician's office.

"What about friends? Have you any?"

The question was put by a swarthy, stocky man who was standing beside a small group of listeners.

"I have no friends."

Again the slow, mechanical tone. The man in the center of the room retained his rigid attitude. His eyes were motionless, looking steadily at the farther wall. The swarthy questioner shook his head; then turned to a companion, a serious-faced man who was seated at a desk. The swarthy man asked:

"What about it, Doctor Sayre?"

The serious-faced man considered.

“We must talk it over, inspector,” he decided. “Perhaps it would be best for us to be alone.”

The swarthy-faced man nodded. He motioned to the other listeners; they were three in number and all looked like detectives. The three arose and took hold of the staring man. They started to walk him from the room. Doctor Sayre intervened.

“Leave him here,” ordered the physician. Then, to the swarthy inspector: “It might be better if he heard us talk, Cardona.”

The three detectives departed in a cluster. Sayre and Cardona remained in the office together; between them stood the rigid man who stared. The trio formed an interesting contrast.

Doctor Rupert Sayre possessed the proper attitude of a consulting physician. Though youngish, he was serious in manner; and his air was one that created confidence. This was in keeping with his reputation. Sayre rated high among the practicing physicians of Manhattan.

Joe Cardona, ace detective of New York headquarters, was also a man of merit. Acknowledged as a leader in his own profession, Cardona held the position of acting inspector. His dark eyes were keen; his firm jaw marked him as a man of action.

As for the staring man, he possessed features which placed him above the common run. He was above medium height, erect in carriage and handsome of countenance. His complexion was light; his hair a medium brown. His eyes, despite their stare, were clear. Their color a bluish-gray.

“GIVE me the history of this case, Cardona,” suggested Doctor Sayre, in a brisk fashion. “It is quite all right to speak while the patient is listening. Your words might produce some thought impulse that would arouse him from his present condition.”

“All right,” agreed Cardona. “To begin with, the fellow arrived in New York at three o'clock Sunday afternoon.”

“Two days ago,” mused Doctor Sayre. “He was in this condition when he arrived?”

“Yes. He came from a Jersey Central ferry, at Liberty Street. He had ridden into Jersey City on an express from Mannegat, New Jersey.”

“Mannegat is between Asbury Park and Atlantic City?”

“Yes; north of Atlantic City, south of Asbury Park. You reach it by Pennsylvania Railroad from Philadelphia; by Jersey Central from New York. Well, doctor, when this fellow reached the New York side of the Hudson River, the first thing he did was walk straight in front of a taxicab. The driver jammed the brakes; the man kept on, staring dead ahead.

“Another cab nearly bopped him. That's when a patrolman stepped in. He grabbed the chap and saw what was wrong with him. He took him to the precinct. From there, he was shipped to a hospital for observation.

“Forty-eight hours ago. No change in his condition. He slept at intervals, but stayed rigid when he did. When he closes his eyes, it looks mechanical.”

The staring man must have caught an inspiration from the words. He closed his eyes a moment after Cardona spoke. There was no flicker of the eyelids. They plopped shut like clamshells and remained

closed.

“Outside of a few dollars,” stated Cardona, “all this fellow had on him were two railway tickets. Here they are.” Joe produced the items. “One is a Jersey Central receipt for a ticket purchased at Mannegat; we know that the man boarded the train there at one o'clock, Sunday afternoon.

“The other is the return half of a Sunday excursion ticket from Philadelphia to Mannegat, via the Pennsylvania Railroad. The stamp shows that it was bought in Philadelphia at nine o'clock Sunday morning.”

Sayre nodded. He was listening to Cardona and watching the rigid man at the same time. Sayre saw eyelids open. Blue-gray eyes resumed their blank stare.

“What he did,” assured Cardona, “was board a Pennsy train at Philly, intending to return there. When he got to Mannegat, he must have changed his mind and taken the Jersey Central into New York, instead.

“That's all we know about him. We've sent pictures to the Philadelphia police. No results. Nobody knows the fellow. He won't say anything that helps. The doctors at the hospital can't figure it. That's why I brought him here to you.”

Doctor Sayre smiled.

“Why to me?” he queried. “I can scarcely be classed as a specialist in such cases as these.”

“I'm not so sure of that,” returned Cardona. “You've seen some cases that others haven't. Particularly when you were the guest of a man named Eric Veldon.”

Doctor Sayre made a sudden exclamation. He arose and approached the staring man, to study the patient at close range. He was trying to find a likeness between this man and others whom he had seen in the past. Sayre turned to Cardona and spoke in an awed tone.

“Veldon's automata!” he half whispered. “Living dead men, who moved about like mechanical figures! Victims of operations that had made their brains mere machines in the hands of a master criminal!”

APPROACHING the standing man, Sayre pressed fingers to the back of the patient's head. He was searching for incisions, some trace of a surgical operation. He found none. This man was a different case from those whom Cardona had mentioned.

“He may act like Veldon's machine men,” declared Sayre to Cardona, “but he is not the same. Of one thing I can assure you, inspector: This man's condition is the result of a nervous shock; not of a surgical operation.”

“Can you do anything to change his condition?”

“I cannot promise. I should like to keep him here a while. He is not dangerous, despite the fact that you kept three detectives as his custodians.”

“I only brought them to move him along. He walks like a mechanical figure. You say you want to keep him here, doctor. You mean alone?”

“Exactly.”

Cardona pondered.

“All right,” he decided. “This isn't a criminal case. I can leave him here, Doctor Sayre. Of course, the

responsibility will be yours.”

“I am willing to accept it.”

“That settles the matter. He is in your charge.”

“You will hear from me by this time to-morrow.”

Doctor Sayre indicated a desk clock, which showed half past five. Cardona nodded as he stepped toward the door.

“By this time to-morrow afternoon,” reminded the acting inspector. “If I don't hear from you, I'll come here, doctor.”

Sayre had risen. As soon as Cardona was gone, he stepped squarely in front of the staring man and met the fellow's gaze. The electric lights were on in the office. The physician could see the staring optics plainly. He knew that the man was observing him; but there was no motion or change in the patient's gaze.

A human automaton. A “machine man,” as Cardona had described him. Sayre was not surprised that the ace detective had classed this patient with those victims of Eric Veldon's. A flood of thoughts swept through the physician's brain.

Sayre remembered Eric Veldon. A criminal who had called himself a “master of death.” (Note: See “Master of Death.” Vol. VII, No. 2.) A fiend who had wanted Sayre to aid him in brain operations upon captured thugs and outlaws, that they might do Veldon's bidding in schemes of crime.

Sayre, himself, had been a prisoner of Veldon's, subject to the evil master's bidding. Into that dilemma had come a powerful fighter, greater than the insidious supercrook. The result had been Sayre's rescue. Veldon and his minions had perished. Since then, Sayre had served the rescuer who had saved him.

That rescuer was The Shadow. A hidden being, a master sleuth, a fighter par excellence, The Shadow was one who constantly warred against crime. He was an uncanny personage, whose ways were many, whose very presence was a shroud of mystery. No matter what the mission might be, Sayre had never known The Shadow to fail.

STEPPING toward the man who stared, Sayre placed his hands upon the patient's shoulders. He gave a turning pressure; the staring man swung about without resistance. Sayre shifted hands and urged the patient toward a door.

Regularly, with slow, automatic pace, the staring man walked forward. When they reached the barrier, Sayre's pressure stopped him. The physician stepped ahead and opened the door. He turned on a light to show a small reception room.

Coming back to the office, Sayre walked the patient forward to a chair in the reception room. Again, he turned the human machine about; then pushed him downward. The rigid arms jerked sidewise and found the chair arms. Abruptly, the man took a seated position, still staring dead ahead.

Doctor Sayre locked the outer door of the reception room and pocketed the key. He went back into the office and closed the adjoining door. He picked up the telephone and called a number. A quiet voice responded:

“Burbank speaking.”

Sayre replied by giving his own name. Tensely, he stated facts concerning the strange patient whom Cardona had placed in his charge. Burbank's voice concluded:

“Report received. Await return call.”

Doctor Sayre hung up the receiver. Anxiously, he opened the door to the reception room and again surveyed the patient. The staring man was exactly as Sayre had left him, seated in the big chair, his face expressionless as he looked straight toward the wall. Seven minutes passed, while Sayre remained almost as rigid as the man whom he was watching. Then the telephone bell rang.

Sayre bobbed back into the office and closed the door. He lifted the receiver and announced his name. Again, he heard Burbank's voice; this time, with brief instructions.

The call completed, Sayre hung up and smiled. He opened the door to the reception room; then went to his desk. Thanks to the opened door, he could keep tabs on his patient, should the man make motion.

No such indications came. Minutes ticked without a stir from the staring man in the next room. Doctor Rupert Sayre, however, wore a smile of absolute confidence. His chat with Burbank had given him assurance; for Burbank was The Shadow's contact man.

Sayre's report had been relayed. A return statement had been received. While dusk settled above Manhattan, Doctor Sayre could wait without a worry. Within the next two hours, the physician would have another visitor—one whom Sayre believed would surely solve the riddle of the man who stared.

The Shadow, master delver into unaccountable pasts, was coming to take charge of this unexplainable case.

CHAPTER II. THE SHADOW EXPERIMENTS

DOCTOR SAYRE'S desk clock showed ten minutes after seven, when the physician suddenly chanced to notice it. Sayre could not have explained the impulse that forced him to drop work that he was doing, in order to consult the clock. Nor could he have told the reason for his next action.

Sayre had heard nothing; yet, after glancing at the clock, he looked directly toward the outer door of the office. Tensely expectant, he expected it to open. Slow seconds passed; then the door swung slowly inward. Silent, smiling, a tall visitor stood on the threshold.

Sayre recognized the countenance that he observed. The smile was slight, formed by thin lips. The visage, itself, was masklike, with a hawkish aspect. Steady, burning eyes gazed from the immobile face.

“Lamont Cranston!”

In his greeting, Sayre spoke the name instinctively. The physician, like others, knew that Lamont Cranston was a globe-trotting millionaire, who spent occasional periods at his estate in New Jersey. More than that, however, Sayre had for a long while identified Lamont Cranston with The Shadow.

Later, Sayre had learned that The Shadow was not Lamont Cranston. There was a real Cranston, who was seldom at home. The Shadow, when he chose, used Cranston's residence and lived there, passing himself as the millionaire. This was with the real Cranston's knowledge and approval. But of the two, the only one who would be visiting Doctor Sayre was The Shadow.

Closing the door, The Shadow advanced and shook hands with the physician. Keen eyes noted the open doorway to the reception room. The Shadow spoke in a quiet, easy tone:

“Bring the man here.”

Sayre complied. He found his patient still seated in the adjoining room. He urged the man to his feet and propelled him into the office. The Shadow pointed toward the desk. Sayre swung the staring man so that he faced in that direction.

Leaning back against the desk, The Shadow motioned Sayre to join him. Together, they faced the staring eyes. The Shadow nodded to Sayre. The physician understood. He tried the stock questions on the patient.

“What is your name?”

“I have no name.”

“Who are your friends?”

“I have no friends.”

The Shadow was watching the expressionless eyes, as the staring man delivered the mechanical monotonous. There was no sign of intelligence behind the patient's bulging gaze.

“Some other experiments,” remarked Sayre to The Shadow. “Ones that they tried at the hospital; and which I repeated when Cardona brought the man here.”

The physician picked up a small book and held it in front of the staring eyes. Sayre asked:

“What is this?”

“A book.”

“And this?” Sayre drew a fountain pen from his pocket. He held it close to the man's eyes. “What is it?”

“A fountain pen.”

Sayre pressed the book into the man's left hand. He pushed the right hand toward the volume.

“Take the book,” he ordered.

The staring man obeyed.

“Open it.”

The patient followed the instructions.

“Look at the pages.” Sayre forced the hands upward. “Read anything that you see there.”

Mechanically, the man read a few words; then stopped. Sayre shifted the book. Slow lips spoke a few words more. Sayre took the book and tossed it to the desk.

“His eyes are focused,” explained the physician. “He can read only the few words that come directly in front of them. That is why it is necessary to move the book. Incidentally, the man is color-blind also.”

SAYRE reached over and opened a desk drawer. He removed several pencils. He held one straight across in front of the staring man's eyes.

“What is this?”

“A pencil.”

“What is its color?”

Lips moved, but made no utterance. Eyes, though they did not shift, were strained as they continued their stare. The Shadow picked up a blue pencil; he took the yellow one from Sayre. He held the two so that the man could see them.

“Which one is yellow?” queried The Shadow. “This?” He moved the blue. “Or this?” He moved the yellow.

The staring man could see both. His lips moved. Each time they delivered a slow gasp. The Shadow put down the pencils and picked up another, a green one.

“This is green,” he remarked, in the slow tone of Cranston. “Remember it: green.”

He turned about, mixed the pencils, then raised them one by one before the straining, staring eyes.

“Name the green pencil when you see it.”

The staring man's lips moved as each pencil passed his vision. Nevertheless, no words arrived. Sayre made comment.

“As I remarked,” he said, “the man is color-blind.”

“I disagree,” returned The Shadow, with a slight smile. He tossed the pencils to the desk. “He has simply lost his sense of color perception. It is a peculiar condition that accompanies his aphasia.”

Sayre looked puzzled. The Shadow explained.

“A person who is totally color-blind,” he declared, “should show one of two reactions. He will either think that he knows colors and will therefore name them incorrectly, because of the shades that he sees, or he will admit his inability to recognize colors and will show no effort.

“This man has tried to identify the colors of the pencils. He has found himself unable to do so. Apparently, he has lost his color sense. Perhaps you can explain that, Doctor Sayre.”

“It is puzzling,” conceded the physician. “Your theory seems to strike the facts. I attribute the man's aphasia to a shock. But this matter of colors, once recognized, but no longer—”

“What sort of a shock?”

Sayre stroked his chin.

“That opens a realm of speculation,” he declared. “Sound could have produced this condition, as with the cases of shell-shocked victims. Brilliance might have done it; there have been cases of aphasia among physicians who have witnessed terrific lightning flashes.”

“It was color shock, in this instance.”

Sayre looked toward The Shadow, as he heard the quiet statement. The physician was stopped with amazement. The possibility had not gripped him until this moment.

“Color!” he gasped. “That could account for it! Deafness after sound; blindness after brilliance! Loss of color reception, after some strange shock involving color!”

“Yes!” The Shadow pronounced the word with a sibilant hiss. “Color! That fact is known”—his voice had become a weird whisper. “Through it, we can grasp forgotten facts that dwell within this stilled brain.”

AS he spoke, The Shadow reached to the wall and pressed the light switch. Ceiling bulbs faded; the only glow that remained came from a lamp upon Sayre's desk. Reaching for it, The Shadow tilted the shade upward. A spot of light was thrown upon two faces: The Shadow's and that of the staring man who gazed blankly across the desk.

Doctor Sayre watched The Shadow's countenance move eye to eye with the face of the unknown patient. Sayre caught the glint of fire sparkling from The Shadow's optics. The glow seemed to reflect into the blue-gray eyes of the staring man.

Again, The Shadow whispered. His visage, like his voice, had altered. Sayre was transfixed, as if beholding a visitor from another world. The expression of The Shadow's face was commanding, all-impelling. He was impressing his powerful personality upon the man before him.

There was something hypnotic in The Shadow's gaze. Sayre, being a physician, knew its purpose. The Shadow was gaining the full attention of the staring man, forcing him to forget all except those eyes which glowed before him. Though the staring man gave no visible sign, it was apparent that his gaze was fixed.

“Your thoughts return to the past.” The Shadow's tone was solemn. “Back to the time when memory was full. Think! Remember! The scene lies all about you!”

No response from the staring man. Only sibilant echoes from the walls, reverberations of The Shadow's hissed command.

“All about you. Color! Vivid color!”

Staring eyes bulged. Lips began to quiver, but gave no utterance. Again, The Shadow whispered:

“Color! Everywhere! You remember!”

Lips were forming words, no longer mechanical. The staring man gasped:

“Yes—yes! Color everywhere—the glow—”

“Lights!” hissed The Shadow. “Lights that glowed with color! You remember the color itself!”

“The color—yes! It—it was red—red—”

“Red! Vivid red!” The Shadow's hands, rising, reached the staring man's chin. One hand on either side, The Shadow used his finger tips to tilt the man's face slightly upward. Gazing deep into the other's eyes, The Shadow delivered final utterance: “Glowing red! Red that gripped you, that terrorized you—”

The Shadow's tone ended abruptly. His words were like a knife-thrust into the thoughts of the man whose memory he sought to jab. A wild cry ripped from gaping lips. Hands came up; the victim clutched the sides of his head.

“Red! Maddening red!” His voice was hoarse as he backed away. “Red— there! Upon the walls!”

Eyes were staring no longer. They were rolling, terrified, as though viewing a horrendous scene. The man was wheeling, pointing to one wall, then to another. His head tilted toward the floor.

“Red!” he shrieked. His head went back, his eyes rolled upward as his hand pointed to the ceiling. “Red!”

Terrible red! The light—the red light! Take it away! Away, before it kills me!”

The man recoiled; then drove forward with furious impulse. His face distorted, he leaped toward the desk lamp. Young, powerful, he snatched the lamp from its resting place and swung back his arm, ready to deliver a terrific hurl against the wall.

The Shadow's hand shot forward.

WITH one quick grasp, The Shadow clutched the fierce man's arm. With his other fist, he wrenched the lamp from the fellow's grasp. Eyes, no longer staring, were wild with frenzy. As The Shadow wheeled away, carrying the lamp, the maddened man straightened and spun about, clutching at his hair.

“Red—everywhere!” he screamed. “Take it away—the red—the light —”

He was focused in the glow, as The Shadow turned the light straight upon him. A frenzied scream; a thwarted, desperate stare; then, with a choking gasp, the man crumpled and rolled crazily upon the floor.

Doctor Sayre sprang beside him, as The Shadow pressed the switch at the wall.

“His frenzy has overcome him,” declared the physician. “The memories that you induced have caused him to reenact the former scene.”

“Results have been gained,” responded The Shadow, in the calm tone of Cranston. “We must be prepared for his next awakening.”

“His memory will be gone—”

“Not necessarily. Come, doctor. Help me raise him.”

Together, they lifted the helpless man from the floor. One supporting each shoulder, The Shadow and Sayre moved the patient toward the door. It was The Shadow who led the course; Sayre followed, puzzled. Out through an entry, to the level of the front street. There Sayre saw a waiting limousine, a chauffeur by the opened door.

The Shadow urged Sayre toward further effort. Together, they placed the unconscious man in the car. The Shadow stepped aboard; the chauffeur closed the door, leaving Sayre on the sidewalk. The face of Lamont Cranston appeared at the window.

“To-morrow,” came the quiet tone, “I shall summon you. Be ready to join me, Doctor Sayre.”

“But—but the patient!” stammered the physician. “He was in my charge. You are taking him—”

“He will be in good care. To-morrow, you will find him recovered.”

“Recovered? You mean—”

“Since I have found the cause of his condition,” interposed The Shadow, quietly, “I shall be able to supply the antidote.”

The chauffeur had taken the wheel; the limousine pulled away. Standing on the curb, Doctor Sayre gazed after the departing car with a dumfounded expression that almost matched the blankness of the man who had stared.

Through Sayre's mind echoed The Shadow's final words. The Shadow had learned the cause. He would find the antidote. To-morrow, the mysterious patient would be restored to a normal condition. Then

would come the opportunity to learn his story.

Doctor Sayre walked back into his office, pondering. To-night, as in the past, he had witnessed the amazing power of The Shadow. From the moment when he had begun his deductions concerning color, The Shadow had predominated, even to the point of awakening blurred memories within the mind of a man who had forgotten.

To-morrow, Sayre was convinced, much would be learned. The Shadow's words had been a prophecy. Sayre wondered what the future would bring. Perhaps it was well that he could not guess.

For The Shadow, to-night, had erased an unexpected trail of crime. One that was destined to produce strange consequences, where death and evil hovered!

CHAPTER III. THE SHADOW'S ANTIDOTE

AT four o'clock the next afternoon, Doctor Rupert Sayre stepped from a local train at a small New Jersey station. An automobile was awaiting him. It was the limousine that he had seen the night before. The same chauffeur was at the wheel. Sayre stepped aboard; the car rolled from the station driveway.

Settling back in the cushions of the tonneau, Doctor Sayre felt that he had embarked upon adventure. He had come to New Jersey in response to a summons from The Shadow. That fact indicated that results had been accomplished.

The staring man must have recovered from his helpless condition. So Sayre reasoned, and with good logic. Had the patient's state remained the same, The Shadow would have returned him to New York. The fact that Sayre had been summoned here seemed proof that recuperation was the answer.

The journey from the station was not a long one. Soon the limousine had threaded its way along secondary highways, to arrive at the gate of a large estate. The big car rolled between stone gateposts. It took a curving driveway and pulled up in front of a large, well-kept mansion.

This was the home of Lamont Cranston. A servant descended the front steps to greet the visitor. Sayre was ushered into a quiet living room. The servant went away; a few minutes later, a calm voice spoke in greeting. Sayre looked up to see the tall form of Lamont Cranston. Daylight from the opened window reflected a momentary sparkle in keen eyes. Sayre knew that his host was The Shadow.

"The patient?" queried Sayre, almost in a whisper. "He has improved?"

"Immensely." Lips formed a slight smile. "Several hours of intensive treatment have proven of great benefit."

"He has spoken?"

"Not yet. It was preferable to await your arrival. A short while longer would be desirable."

THE SHADOW glanced from the window as he spoke. It was plain that he was considering the matter of daylight. Afternoon was waning; the sun was on a level with high trees that fringed the grounds about the house. The glare would be lessened, once the sun lowered beyond those treetops.

"While we are waiting," remarked The Shadow, quietly, "I shall reconstruct a few items in the history of our patient. First: how he came to the condition in which he was discovered.

"He was subjected to a strange ordeal. Some enemy placed him in a room that was entirely red. I picture deep crimson curtains upon every wall; a red carpet covering the entire floor; a glaring ceiling of the same

color.”

The Shadow paused. Sayre started a statement:

“You said that the patient had not talked—”

“He did not have to talk,” interposed The Shadow. “His actions in your office were a clear indication of the facts that I have stated. You will recall his cry: 'Red—red, everywhere' and his manner of pointing to all the walls; also to the floor and the ceiling.

“Furthermore, the room in which he had suffered was flooded with red light. That was plain because of his final action, when he tried to seize your desk lamp to bash it against the wall. He had been unable to accomplish such a deed in the red room itself. Therefore, we know that the lights in that chamber of terror must have been high, beyond his reach.”

Sayre nodded. He was impressed by The Shadow's well-constructed outline.

“This room of vivid red was located somewhere in New York. Probably in Manhattan.”

The statement came quietly from The Shadow. Sayre looked puzzled; then shook his head and offered an objection.

“Impossible!” he exclaimed. “The railroad tickets disprove that theory. The victim had one from Philadelphia to Mannegat, bought on Sunday morning—”

Sayre stopped. The Shadow was producing a small sheaf of papers, with time-tables among them.

“At nine o'clock Sunday morning,” he declared, “a round-trip ticket was bought in Philadelphia. It read to Mannegat and return, via the Pennsylvania Railroad. I have the number of that ticket. A newspaper reporter obtained it for me, during an interview with Inspector Cardona.

“Cardona, of course, has only the return stub, which was found in the staring man's pocket. He took it for granted that the victim had boarded a train in Philadelphia. It happens that the first train which leaves from Philadelphia for Mannegat after nine o'clock, makes its departure at eleven.

“The trip requires one hour and fifty minutes. Hence the train reaches Mannegat at twelve-fifty. At Mannegat, we know, the man boarded a Jersey Central express for New York. The trip takes two hours. The man arrived at three o'clock.”

Sayre nodded.

“Then he left Mannegat at once,” declared the physician. “He had only ten minutes to change from one train to another.”

“Exactly! Cardona estimated that he had a few hours. Cardona was wrong. Ten minutes was the full time. In that ten minutes, the man would have to travel two miles, for the railroad stations are that distance apart. After that, he required time to buy a ticket to New York, via the Jersey Central.”

“Close work,” agreed Sayre. “I see the answer. To order a cab; to cover the intervening distance and then buy a ticket, the man must have been in normal state. But then”—he paused, puzzled—“then his experience must have occurred upon the train. That does not fit, especially with your statement that the red room episode took place in New York.”

“It fits quite well,” smiled The Shadow. “It proves that the victim did not start from Philadelphia at all. He

was put aboard the Jersey Central train at Mannegat, already in his staring condition.”

SAYRE found himself nodding in agreement. The Shadow was right. The man could not have been normal when he took the train at Mannegat. Conversely, he would have had to be alert to accomplish so much in the time space of ten minutes.

“As proof of these statements,” added The Shadow, “I have learned two facts by long-distance calls to Philadelphia. The first is, that the eleven o'clock train to Mannegat was late last Sunday. It did not arrive at its destination until twelve fifty-eight. The second fact is that the original portion of excursion ticket number 6384 was not collected.”

Sayre blinked. This was double proof. Not only had the train reached Mannegat too late for the transfer, but no one had used the staring man's ticket!

“The assumption, therefore, is this.” The Shadow paused. “Some one went to Philadelphia and brought the excursion ticket at nine o'clock; then drove to Mannegat immediately. The victim was already at Mannegat, in the hands of other custodians. The return half of that ticket was placed in his pocket. He was provided with a Jersey Central ticket, purchased in Mannegat, and was put aboard the express to New York.”

“Amazing!” gasped Sayre. “Yet true. What was the object of this procedure?”

“To make it appear that the man had come from Philadelphia. That would have been unnecessary, unless the victim happened to be going to some place where his captors wanted no search to be made.”

The answer struck Sayre an instant later.

“I see it!” exclaimed the physician. “You have uncovered a cunning device! You are right! The red room must be in New York. The rogues were smart enough to send their victim right back to the city from where he had come.”

“Correct,” assured The Shadow. “The ordeal took place before Sunday; probably on Saturday night. Early Sunday, one of the captors drove to Philadelphia, bought the excursion ticket and came to Mannegat. The others had carried the victim to Mannegat. He was sent back to New York.

“We have, therefore, traced the staring man's actions during the period while he was in his remarkable trance. We cannot expect him to give us the details of that interval. He will, however, tell us what occurred beforehand. Therefore, we shall have his entire story.”

A glance from the window. The Shadow saw that the sun had dropped below the high treetops. He nodded to Sayre. The physician followed him from the living room. They came to a secluded door on the ground floor.

“Since color caused the patient's lapse,” remarked The Shadow, while his long hand rested on the doorknob, “I have used color to aid his recovery. You will find him in a room like the one that I described; where walls, floor, ceiling—even the lights are all alike.”

Sayre gave a troubled exclamation.

“A bad mistake!” he uttered. “Since the red room, with its crimson glow, was responsible for the man's condition, a repetition of the ordeal may have driven him totally mad. You have made a mistake—”

“I ordered curtains and carpet last night,” interposed The Shadow. “They arrived early this morning. The ceiling was painted during the interim. I obtained lights and installed them. Our patient has been in this

room since ten o'clock.”

“Again, I insist!” exclaimed Sayre. “You should have told me all this before you acted. Such treatment may have proven disastrous. Since color caused the trouble—”

“Color can therefore offset it,” interjected The Shadow.

“But if red produced aphasia—”

“I said color, doctor. Not red.”

With that, The Shadow opened the door.

A GLOW met Sayre's astonished gaze. Instead of the fierce crimson glare that the physician expected, his eyes were greeted with a pleasing, mellow light. One that was restful from the first moment.

In the center of the room, half reclining upon the floor, was the man who had stared. His head was leaning back upon his clasped hands. With wide-opened eyes, he was absorbing the color and the glow that pervaded the scene about him. No reddish glare disturbed this peaceful room.

Curtains, carpet, ceiling—even the lights that shone from sockets in corners of the walls—all were deep-green in color. Not another shade or tone disturbed the setting. The immediate impression was one of quiet and comfort, freed from any antagonistic hue.

The staring man's face showed delight, as if his eyes were drinking in the color that enclosed him. The bulge had gone from his optics. He turned his eyes slightly; his face showed a smile of greeting as he observed the two arrivals. Slowly, the man arose and stretched himself, like one who had enjoyed a long repose.

Doctor Rupert Sayre stood silent in admiration. Through use of the opposite color; the ravaging effects had been counteracted. The red room, to the patient, was a forgotten nightmare of the past. This green room symbolized the present.

The Shadow had divined the cause of the staring man's condition. The Shadow had supplied the antidote.

CHAPTER IV. CLUES FROM THE PAST

THE SHADOW closed the door of the green room. Doctor Sayre and the other man watched him while he approached a wall and found a cord within the folds of a velvet curtain. The Shadow drew the cord; green draperies slid away to reveal a window.

The Shadow repeated the operation farther along the wall. Daylight replaced the glow of greenish lamps. The Shadow found a switch and extinguished the emerald lights. Green still predominated; but the aspect of the room was changed.

Doctor Sayre was astonished to see cushions upon the floor at the spot where the patient had been reclining. He blinked as he eyed chairs in corners, other objects that had mysteriously come into view. Cushions and chairs were green. Against curtains of the same color, dyed by greenish lights, the chairs and cushions had been blotted from sight.

The glare from the window disturbed the man who had occupied the green room. Although the sun had set; though the outside scene was restful, the man began to shade his eyes. Beyond the window he saw green grass, green trees; nevertheless, he blinked.

Sayre saw the man stare suddenly. Looking from the window, the physician caught a glimpse of a

cardinal bird, as it fluttered from the branches of a small cedar. Sayre turned quickly toward the patient. He saw the man's face wince.

The Shadow, too, had observed. He approached the patient and motioned him to a chair that faced away from the window. Sayre realized that The Shadow had made a test. He had learned that the patient's sense of color perception had been restored.

As Sayre watched, The Shadow produced a pair of green-tinted spectacles and gave them to the seated man. The patient donned them eagerly; then sank back with a pleased sigh.

"My name," stated The Shadow, quietly, "is Lamont Cranston. This gentleman is Doctor Rupert Sayre. You may regard him as your physician; while I am your friend."

The patient nodded; then spoke slowly.

"My name is Stanton Wallace."

"Where do you live?" inquired The Shadow.

"In New York," replied the young man. "At the Dalmatia Apartment. I came to New York from Texas."

"You have friends?"

Lips moved, but made no utterance. Eyes showed trouble through the greenish glasses. The Shadow divined the reason.

"What you tell us," he declared, "will not be repeated. You were found in a dazed condition—"

"By the police?"

"Yes. But they have placed you in full custody of Doctor Sayre. At present, you are away from New York City."

Stanton Wallace nodded. He still seemed loath to speak, although his reticence had lessened.

"To aid you," remarked The Shadow, quietly, "we must know your full story. Specifically, the facts which concern the red room."

A gasp from the young man's lips. His eyes gazed toward The Shadow's. For a few moments, they remained fixed; then confidence gripped Stanton Wallace. He was ready to accept Lamont Cranston as a friend.

"MY story is an unbelievable one," Wallace began. "It involves incredible circumstances—"

"Which we shall recognize," interposed The Shadow, "once we have heard them."

"I could be accused of complicity in crime—"

"We shall bring no accusations."

"If I am sure that I shall be believed in my statements—"

"You will be believed."

Wallace paused. His lips twitched. Again, he sought The Shadow's gaze. Eyes assured him. The young man spoke.

“I came to New York,” he stated, “to handle special correspondence for a wealthy Texan named Dunley Bligh. Among other matters, I arranged steamship passage for Bligh from New York to Europe. That completed my work. I mailed everything to Bligh, so that he might take passage immediately upon his arrival in New York.”

“Bligh has reached New York?”

“Not yet. But there was another point that I must mention. Bligh is a millionaire. He made his fortune from oil. Once on the steamship, he is to receive a collection of valuable gems, which he purchased recently by proxy. He is taking the jewels to Europe, there to dispose of them in exchange for paintings which he intends to bring back to America.”

Wallace paused; then added an explanation.

“The jewels,” he remarked, “once belonged to wealthy Europeans, who are anxious to reclaim them. Bligh can dispose of them more readily in Europe than in America. He is also anxious to please the persons who want them.”

The Shadow nodded his understanding. He sensed that these statements were merely a preliminary account. Stanton Wallace had given his reason for being in New York. His real adventures would constitute another chapter.

“A month ago,” declared the young man, “I met Doctor Rodil Mocquino.”

The tone was awed, as though the very mention of the name brought horror to Stanton Wallace. As the young man paused, both The Shadow and Sayre could see his hands twitch and his shoulders shudder.

“Doctor Mocquino,” repeated Wallace, slowly. “The Voodoo Master from San Domingo. A man with a friendly smile, with eyes that search you. A man who commands trust, but whose words are lies. A man with a blackened heart—a fiend—”

The tone was quickening; Wallace's voice had reached a higher pitch. His eyes were darting furtively; they showed terror. The Shadow caught the man's shoulder and forced him to meet a steady gaze. Fear faded as Stanton Wallace stared into the eyes of The Shadow.

“Proceed.”

The Shadow's command was a whisper, in the sibilant tone which he had used the day before. Sayre saw Wallace nod his obedience. The young man's voice was calmed, when he spoke again.

“MY meeting with Mocquino seemed a chance one,” declared the patient. “We were both strangers in New York. We became friends, Mocquino spoke of his adventures. He discussed the voodoo rituals held in Haiti and San Domingo.”

Sayre saw that the speaker was depending upon The Shadow's gaze. The eyes before him enabled Stanton Wallace to crowd out fears of the past. His voice had become a steady monotone. The Shadow, it seemed, was drawing forth the story.

“One evening,” proceeded Wallace, “Mocquino amazed me with the statement that a voodoo cult existed in New York. He asked if I would care to attend one of the rituals. I was intrigued. I went. There, I gained new astonishment. Mocquino was more than a privileged spectator. He was the leader of the cult!

“Picture it—a dozen persons, about an artificial fire that was weirdly realistic! In a room arranged to

resemble a West Indian jungle, with natives beating tom-toms! I can hear the rhythm of those steady beats. Terrible—impelling—”

The Shadow's eyes were steady. Wallace hesitated; then a growing frenzy faded from his voice. Steadied, the young man proceeded:

“Before that meeting ended, I had been seized by the lure. I, too, was willing to accept Doctor Mocquino as my leader. I went to other meetings, a full-fledged member. Like the others, I recognized no one present except Doctor Mocquino. He called himself our parent.

“One night, Doctor Mocquino produced a wax effigy of a human being— a tiny figure no more than six inches tall. He named it. He said that it was Myron Rathcourt. One of our members stepped forward and claimed recognition. That member must have been a friend or relative of Myron Rathcourt.

“Doctor Mocquino took a long pin and thrust it through the heart of the wax figure. He was fiendish—and we echoed his delight. All of us, including the man who had recognized Myron Rathcourt. Three days passed.” Wallace paused; his voice awed: “Then I read a newspaper account of Myron Rathcourt's death. Rathcourt was a Chicago millionaire. He died of heart failure.”

A pause. Sayre's brain was drumming. He, too, had read of Myron Rathcourt's death. But no newspaper had hinted at any other cause than a natural one.

“One week later,” continued Wallace, “Doctor Mocquino produced another effigy. To this one, he gave the name James Lenger. A member of the cult claimed recognition. Doctor Mocquino opened a penknife. Savagely, he severed the head of the figure from its body.

“Two days afterward”—the speaker's tone was sinking to a whisper— “just two days afterward, the New York newspapers carried a story of James Lenger's death. Lenger had made a lone trip up the Amazon River. He was slain by native head-hunters. His body, alone, was discovered by an expedition. He had been decapitated; his slayers had taken his head as a trophy.”

STANTON WALLACE'S face was tilting forward. The Shadow spoke a single word. Wallace's eyes came up to meet an impelling gaze. Mechanically, the young man resumed:

“Like the other members of the cult, I gloated. We were proud of Doctor Mocquino's power. I looked forward to the time of the next meeting; for I had imbibed the fiendish joy that predominated at those voodoo rites. Then came the last time. The night that broke the terrible spell of the false jungle fire and the beating tom-toms.

“Doctor Mocquino had led us in a ghoulish chant, wherein our voices joined instinctively with his. He called for silence. He produced a new effigy. He named it; and called for recognition. His eyes were toward me when he pronounced the name of Dunley Bligh.

“I advanced. I looked in horror at the effigy! It was a miniature of the man whom I was serving in New York: my employer, Dunley Bligh! My mind filled with understanding. I looked at Doctor Mocquino. His smile was the distorted gloat of a fiend. I knew Mocquino's game.

“Murder! His voodoo rites were a sham. Mocquino had urged me to talk of Bligh's affair. Mocquino knew that wealth would be in Bligh's hands. Because of the information that I had heedlessly given, my friendly employer would be doomed to die like others whose death Mocquino had ordered.

“I was dumfounded! I watched while Mocquino thrust a long pin through the body of the wax image. A jeering chant rose from the throng about me. Angered, I seized the effigy and smashed it upon the floor! I

sprang at Mocquino's throat! His servants seized me!”

Stanton Wallace was staring with fixed eyes. He was coming to his final recollection of that terrible night.

“I shall never forget what resulted,” he stated, slowly. “Doctor Mocquino became a demon. His frenzied followers screamed for my blood. I expected terrible torture; but of a physical sort. Instead, I was subjected to a mental anguish. Doctor Mocquino had me carried to the red room.

“I had seen the horrible place before. Curtains—walls—ceiling— all of that blood-red color. But when I was placed, bound, within the walls of the terrible room, the ordinary lights were extinguished. Instead, crimson bulbs began to glow. Walls took on depth. I was in an abyss of redness!

“I remember Mocquino's devilish face, reddened by the glow. The gold cloth of his robe was bronzed by the glare. The red scarf that he wore about his waist was blotted from my view. He looked like a living creature in two sections. Then Mocquino left me. The red lights glared, more terrible with every passing moment! I was frenzied, screaming for death in preference to such torture! When I closed my eyes, the red light penetrated my eyelids.

“Then came oblivion. I have only a hazy recollection of walking, of encountering crowds, of persons who forced me or guided me. My thoughts regained alignment only after I found myself in this green room.”

Dusk was streaking the outside lawn. Modulated light was soothing. Stanton Wallace again settled back in his chair. He seemed refreshed, since his mind was unburdened.

The Shadow spoke.

“YOU have told your story,” he remarked in the quiet tone of Cranston. “Your memory is restored. Therefore, you should remember the place where Doctor Mocquino holds his meetings with the voodoo cult.”

“I do,” nodded Wallace. “I cannot recall the street number; but the house itself is easily located. It is an old mansion with closed shutters. The first house east of the new Europa Building. It is entered from the basement of another house—the next beyond. The meetings are held upon the second floor of the empty house.”

“When will the next meeting be?”

“Not for a few days. To be exact, on the same day that Dunley Bligh sails from New York. His ship will leave in the afternoon. The cult will meet that evening.”

Wallace paused; then added, suddenly:

“Bligh must be warned! He will be in danger after he leaves for Europe. There is still time to save him. The cult meets on Wednesdays and on Saturdays. We still have until Wednesday, before Dunley Bligh sails from New York on the Doranic—”

Doctor Sayre was staring, puzzled. Before the physician could speak, The Shadow intervened. Stanton Wallace was sitting upright; The Shadow motioned him back in his chair.

“Bligh will be protected,” he assured. “I shall inform him of the danger. Meanwhile, you must rest. Remove the glasses and enjoy the twilight. Doctor Sayre will visit you before it becomes dark.”

With a motion to Sayre, The Shadow opened the door. The physician followed. Together, they went to the living room. There, Sayre put an anxious question.

“What does Wallace mean by 'until Wednesday'?” he asked. “Does he think that this is an earlier day?”

“He does,” replied The Shadow. “His ordeal took place last Saturday. He does not recall the time lapse. He thinks that this is Sunday.”

“But to-day is Wednesday! And that means the Doranic will leave New York, with Dunley Bligh aboard—”

“The Doranic has already sailed.”

“Then Bligh is doomed!”

“Not yet.” Calmly, The Shadow picked up a telephone. He gave a number; then pressed a button on the wall. “You will remain here, Doctor Sayre. Call Cardona; tell him that you wish to keep the patient a while longer. Do not let Stanton Wallace learn that to-day is Wednesday.”

A servant entered while The Shadow was still holding the telephone, awaiting his connection.

“Go at once, Richards,” ordered The Shadow, in the methodical tone of Cranston. “Tell Stanley to have the coupe ready. I am going to the Newark airport.”

Richards went out. The Shadow began to speak into the telephone. He was connected with the airport. Doctor Sayre, listening, began to understand. The Shadow was right; there was still a chance to save Dunley Bligh.

The Shadow, himself, was preparing for a race against death. He, the master who stood for right, was setting forth to balk the evil plans of Doctor Rodil Mocquino!

CHAPTER V. MILES OFF SHORE

DUSK had ended. Stars were brilliant in the clear sky above the Atlantic Ocean. The steamship Doranic was plowing through long swells, four hours out of New York harbor.

From atop the liner, searchlights were swinging long beams toward the sky. Passengers, assembled on the decks, were watching the process with keen interest. Those shafts of light indicated something unusual. A stocky man with black mustache made inquiry of a deck steward:

“What is the purpose of the searchlights?”

“A plane is expected, sir,” replied the steward. “It is bringing a passenger from New York.

“An airplane?” queried the mustached man. “How can it expect to make a night landing on the steamer's deck?”

“It will be an autogiro, sir. Such was the radio message from New York. The passengers are anxious to see it land.”

“An autogiro. Humph! Have none of the passengers ever seen one of those before?”

“Not one like this, sir. They say that this autogiro is wingless. The improved type that can take off vertically.”

The mustached man walked away. He glanced upward at the searchlights; for a moment, he hesitated, as if intending to remain on deck. Then, with a shrug of his shoulders, he reverted to his original plan. He entered a doorway and followed deserted passages until he reached the purser's office. An assistant

purser was on duty.

“My name is Dunley Bligh,” announced the mustached man. “I have come for a package which was left for me. You will find it in the safe.”

The assistant purser found the package. An envelope was with it. He drew out a folded paper and read a message within.

“You must identify yourself by a special code word, sir—”

“I understand,” broke in Bligh. “The code word is 'aurora'; you will see it in the note.”

The ship's officer nodded. He gave the package to Bligh, who signed the receipt and then walked away in the direction of a stairway. The purser's assistant started to resume his chair; then stopped as a steward came dashing into view. Shouts could be heard from the outer decks.

“The autogiro!” exclaimed the steward. “It has landed! Hear the passengers cheering?”

“I thought that we would hear the motor first—”

“So did we; but it fooled us. The giro came straight down from the sky. The landing was perfect!”

“What about the passenger aboard it?”

“He is coming here now, accompanied by a friend.”

THE steward's words were almost a prophecy. Two persons appeared from the deck, followed by a throng of excited passengers. Stewards urged back the crowd, while the arrivals approached the purser's window. One man was slight of build, but wiry. He grinned as he nodded to the ship's officer.

“I'm your passenger,” he stated.

“My name is Clyde Burke. Reporter for the New York Classic. What cabin are you giving me?”

The purser's assistant brought out a chart.

“Could I see the passenger list?” inquired Burke.

The officer nodded and passed out the list. It was a logical request, coming from a reporter, particularly when Burke added an explanation:

“This is a news stunt. I was going abroad, anyway, to handle some foreign correspondence for the Classic. But that wasn't to be for a couple of weeks. I had a lucky chance to catch the Doranic by a trip in an autogiro, so I took it. Since I have to write a story, I'd like to know who is on board.”

The assistant purser was nodding, while he still consulted the chart. At last he assigned a cabin:

“Stateroom 411-B.”

As he looked up, the ship's officer noted Burke's companion. This second arrival was a tall personage, with hawklike countenance. Burke had finished with the passenger list. His friend was scanning the list of names.

“This gentleman?” inquired the assistant purser. “Is he also a passenger?”

Burke shook his head.

“This is Mr. Cranston,” he explained. “Owner of the wingless autogiro. He's going back to New York. How about it, Mr. Cranston?” He turned to his friend. “Have you time to take a look at my cabin?”

“Certainly, Burke.”

A steward accompanied the two arrivals to 411-B. As soon as the steward was gone, Burke yanked open a suitcase. He pulled out a deck plan of the Doranic and made quick comment:

“Bligh is in 316-C,” stated the reporter. “There is a stairway on the right—”

A quiet whisper interrupted. Burke looked up. Already, his tall companion had drawn garments from the suitcase. Black folds of cloth were settling over shoulders, to form a covering cloak. A slouch hat was coming from the bag, along with gloves. Clyde Burke eyed a brace of automatics. The Shadow, too, had noted the number of Bligh's cabin from the purser's list; in addition, he had already been familiar with the deck plan of the Doranic.

CERTAIN cabins on the C deck of the liner were arranged in connecting pairs. From the main corridor of the deck were short side passages, dead-ends that led to the deck wall. Entrances to the cabins were from the small side passageways. Thus one side passage had doors 314 and 315 opposite. The next had 316 and 317 as opposite doors.

Cabins 315 and 316 formed a suite, with a connecting door between the two rooms. For this voyage, the connecting cabins had been occupied as separate rooms.

In the darkness of 315, a man was listening at the connecting door. He could hear sounds of motion, which meant that Dunley Bligh was in his cabin.

Beside the listening man was another, who wore a white coat that showed in the gloom. The listener arose from the door and turned to his white-jacketed companion.

“It's Bligh, all right,” he whispered, hoarsely. “Get ready, Hoke, in case we need you.”

“All right, Borey,” returned the man in the white coat. “Only I can't work nothin' until we hear from Hummer.”

“That's Hummer now!”

A slight tap at the outer door. Hoke started to answer it. Borey pushed him aside with a growl about keeping his coat out of sight. It was Borey who opened the door to admit a third man.

“What about it, Hummer?” demanded Borey, in a harsh whisper. “Did he pick up the package?”

“Sure thing!” returned Hummer. “I was watching from around a corner. I trailed him until I was sure he was going to 316.”

“Then why did you keep us waiting?”

“There wasn't any hurry. Bligh had the package.”

A grunt from Borey. Then the man spoke.

“You're right, Hummer,” he said. “Listen: The whole thing is a set-up, the way it stands. I planted the fixed glass in 316. When Bligh takes a drink out of it, he's done. The only thing was, we didn't want him to plop until after he'd gotten the jewels from the purser.”

“That's why I had you here, Hoke. In case Bligh didn't bring the sparklers, it was your job to get him out of the cabin before he used the glass. That's why you're wearing the steward's rig—so you could give him a phony message, or an excuse to get him back on deck.

“But since he's brought the package, all we've got to do is wait. When he keels over, we barge in and grab the sparklers. Nobody's going to suspect us, on account of the regular medicine that Bligh takes.”

“But suppose he don't take it?” queried Hoke. “What'll we do about it then?”

“We'll gang him, in a pinch. Make him swallow it. Listen: Dill is in 317, across the passage from Bligh's cabin. You go in there, Hoke, faking that you're a steward, in case Bligh's door is open. With two of us here in 315 and two in 317, Bligh won't have a chance to go out.”

“Do we leave the door open, Dill and I?”

“Not a chance. Keep it closed, like this one. We don't want no snoopers. You'll hear Bligh if he comes out.”

Hoke departed. He followed the short passage, rounded the pair of cabins and entered another passage that brought him to the door of 316. It was closed. Hoke turned to the door opposite—317—and knocked softly. The door opened. Hoke joined Dill. The door closed.

Back in 315, Borey, listening, spoke to Hummer.

“Just heard a gurgle,” whispered the listener. He arose and stepped back from the connecting door. “Bligh has poured water out of the bottle! It's curtains for him, quick!”

IN Cabin 316, Dunley Bligh was standing beside a table. He had opened his package. From it, he had brought glimmering gems to form an array upon the table. Rubies, sapphires and emeralds formed a galaxy of sparkling possessions. Bligh's face showed pleasure.

He had finished his preliminary survey. He had taken a drinking glass and a water bottle from a shelf above the washstand. He had poured a glassful of water—the gurgle that Borey had heard—and he was placing the glass upon the table.

Bligh corked the water bottle. As he did, he fancied that he heard a slight click. He turned toward the outer door; then smiled at his own qualms. He had locked that door and left the key on the inside. No one could possibly enter.

So Bligh thought. He did not note that the key was turning, as if clipped by thin pliers, thrust through the outer keyhole.

Bligh went to a suitcase. He brought out a small pill box and carried it to the table. He opened the box and extracted two tiny pills. He put the box beside the glass of water, where the table lamp shone upon it. The box lid bore a pharmacist's formula; beneath it, the warning: “Two pills only!”

The pills that Bligh held were grayish. He placed them on the tip of his tongue and swallowed them with a gulp. He reached for the glass of water. His eyes were still upon the gems; he did not notice a change that had occurred in the liquid. Bligh had let the water stand. A grayish scum was forming on its surface.

As his right hand fondled a brilliant emerald, Bligh raised the glass of water with his left. The tumbler came toward his lips; but Bligh never quaffed the liquid. A hand shot forward into the glare of the table lamp. A black-gloved fist gripped Bligh's wrist. Water bobbed, but did not spill.

Bligh wheeled; a gasp froze on his lips.

Standing before him was a shape in black, a being that could have been a spirit conjured from the sea. Silent, unseen, this visitant had entered the cabin. He was cloaked in black; his eyes burned from beneath the brim of a slouch hat. His gloved hand furnished a viselike clutch.

Bligh, his own lips wavering, was conscious of a whispered tone that spoke from the folds of an upturned cloak collar. The words—the eyes —both commanded silence. Though fearful, Dunley Bligh nodded. Somehow, he understood that this weird arrival was a friend.

The Shadow had arrived in time. Silently, he had entered Bligh's cabin almost through the midst of watchful foemen. Instantly, he had discovered the death that threatened.

The Shadow had prevented doom!

CHAPTER VI. BACK TO LAND

“WHO—who are you?”

Dunley Bligh gasped the words; his voice was scarcely articulate. Heeding The Shadow's warning, he could not even whisper his question.

“A friend.” The Shadow's tone was a low whisper. “One who has uncovered a plot upon your life. These pills”—with his free hand, The Shadow raised the rounded box—“are poison!”

“So I understand.” Bligh managed a smile. “They were prescribed for me by a specialist. They are safe, so long as I take no more than two at a single dosage.”

“You have already taken two.”

“Yes. But I intended to swallow no more.”

“Look at the glass which you hold.”

The Shadow's hand released its grip. Bligh lowered the tumbler. His eyes opened wider as he saw the grayish scum, which the jogging of the glass had stirred further. Eyeing still closer, Bligh noted that the floating substance was formed of tiny flakes.

“Powder!” he gasped. “Pulverized from—from—”

“From pills of the sort that you have taken,” interposed The Shadow. “Powder placed in the glass, which you later filled with water. Enough to triple your usual dosage.”

“Enough to kill me!”

“And make your death appear an accident—or suicide.”

Shakily, Bligh lowered the tumbler toward the table. The Shadow plucked the glass from the man's hand. Stepping toward the opened porthole, he tossed the tumbler and its liquid contents out into the ocean. Bligh turned to face The Shadow, as he returned into the light.

“You are a friend,” acknowledged Bligh. “Tell me—how did you learn of my danger?”

“Through Stanton Wallace,” returned The Shadow. “He experienced an accident. Otherwise, he could have warned you. Some enemies learned that you intended to receive jewels aboard this ship.”

“Those enemies”—Bligh paused, troubled—“perhaps they are close at hand?”

“They are. They intend to take your jewels. A prize that would net them at least two hundred thousand dollars.”

“Possibly more. I value these gems at a quarter million. That is why I took precautions about their delivery. You are right.” Bligh mopped a perspiring brow. “Murder and robbery could both have been committed without a trace. And even now—even now there is danger—”

“Which can be eliminated.”

Bligh looked up, his eyes wide open.

“Men of crime are lurking,” informed The Shadow, in his low whisper. “They will enter. If they encounter trouble, they will have reserves. They are murderers. We must lure them to their own undoing.”

THE SHADOW pointed to Bligh's suitcase, where a revolver glimmered. The man from Texas reached for the weapon. The Shadow pointed to the floor.

“Fall, and carry the table with you,” he ordered. “Let the gems scatter. Keep your revolver ready beneath you. Do not move until they have taken the bait.”

Bligh saw the gloved hands produce a pair of automatics. Nodding, the Texan gave his agreement. He watched The Shadow step to a darkened corner of the cabin. Then, with a sideward drop, Bligh sprawled to the floor. His gun hand was doubled inward; with his free arm, he tipped the table.

The ruse was perfect. Above the rhythmic beat of the liner's engines, Bligh's drop combined both thud and clatter. The table crackled as it fell. Gems skidded across the carpeting, to lie about like glittering markers.

Ten seconds passed. Then the connecting door opened. A face appeared from the darkness of Cabin 315. A hand motioned. Borey crept into view, followed by Hummer. Both were sliding revolvers back into their pockets. Borey chuckled as he pointed to Bligh; then his voice uttered a growl:

“Dead as a block of wood,” voiced Borey. “But look at the sparklers! They've gone all over the joint! Come on! Get busy! We've got to snatch 'em up in a hurry!”

Both men stooped beyond Bligh. Eager fingers reached for sparkling stones. Hands halted suddenly, as if the gems were hot coals. Borey and Hummer spun about. Their lips coughed oaths. A creepy laugh had shuddered to their ears. They saw the being who had uttered that whispered taunt.

The Shadow!

THUGS by profession, Borey and Hummer recognized the figure that had stepped deliberately into the light. They stared helplessly. Slowly, they shifted upward, raising their hands. Terror gripped their evil faces. They thought that Bligh was dead; that The Shadow had found them with a victim.

Slowly, The Shadow circled, his gun muzzles looming toward the crooks. He neared the outer door. He drew the staring faces away from Bligh's direction.

Peering along the floor, the Texan saw the move. He came up to a half-seated position, gripping his revolver.

The Shadow had left the outer door unlocked. He was approaching it, to hold his position there while he

dealt with these two murderous men. He was not quite to the door when he stopped. At that moment, the door swung open. A white coated man appeared in the light. It was Hoke; behind him, another thug: the man called Dill.

The pair had also heard Bligh's fall. They had come to join Borey and Hummer. The Shadow hissed a command to Bligh. He was to pounce upon Borey and Hummer, while The Shadow dealt with this new duo.

Bligh misunderstood the order. He caught a motion of Hoke's gun. Quick on the trigger, the Texan aimed for the white-jacketed crook.

The revolver roared. Hoke staggered. The shot brought Borey and Hummer into action. Seeing Hoke fall, their only thoughts were those of battle. Yanking their guns, they sprang in different directions: Borey toward Bligh, Hummer toward The Shadow.

Bligh was caught flat-footed because of Borey's speed. Had The Shadow not performed amazingly, murder might yet have been accomplished. The Shadow, however, took in the entire scene. He handled events with complete control.

The Shadow met Hummer's leap halfway, without firing a shot at the fellow. He tossed aside his left-hand automatic and faded to the right as he caught Hummer's gun-hand. With his right hand, he tugged the trigger of his automatic; but his .45 was aimed at Borey, not at Hummer.

A sizzling bullet withered Borey's gun arm. The man's hand dropped as he sought to fire at Bligh. The Texan, beaten to the shot, suddenly gained the advantage. He fired his revolver twice; both bullets found Borey. The crook sagged; then rolled to the floor.

IN this melee, Bligh had forgotten Dill, who had dropped back to the passage. Dill could easily have picked off Bligh; but The Shadow spoiled his opportunity. Grappling with Hummer, The Shadow drove his adversary straight for the outer door, fully blocking Dill's aim.

The outside crook was snarling his rage. He could not reach The Shadow with a shot, for The Shadow had twisted Hummer toward the door.

Then, as Bligh scrambled toward a point of safety, The Shadow sprang another ruse. He jolted backward, carrying Hummer with him. Dill thought that Hummer had gained an advantage. With a mad cry, the outside crook plunged into the room. He learned his mistake as he saw The Shadow's right hand swing with a short sidewise jab. The automatic cracked the side of Hummer's skull. The Shadow hurled his human shield aside.

Like a living arrow, he dived straight for Dill. His free left hand gripped the ruffian's gun wrist. His right fist drove another sledgelike stroke that crashed down Dill's warding arm and reached the head beneath. Dill sprawled sidewise and fell helpless. The Shadow stepped over and picked up his extra automatic.

"Take credit for the victory," he ordered, as he turned to Bligh. "I fired only one bullet. It will not be noted. Call upon Clyde Burke, a reporter who has come aboard. He will declare himself to be your friend and will substantiate any statements that you make. You have no other enemies on board. Rely upon Burke for aid and advice, when you reach the end of the voyage."

Borey was dead; Hoke was gasping his last. Hummer and Dill lay stunned. The Shadow knew that excitement would soon reign aboard the Doranic. He had no need to remain. Cutting through Cabin 315, he reached the passage beyond. Peering from its end, he saw two excited stewards, who had heard the shots. They had listened; hearing no further fray, they were hurrying away to summon aid.

The Shadow reached a deserted companionway. In its gloom, he whisked off his cloak and placed it across his arm, stuffing the slouch hat beneath it. He gained the deck, divesting himself of gloves. His automatics were buried beneath his coat. His cloak appeared to be a light cape that he was carrying over his arm.

Quick pacing brought him to a cluster of passengers, close beside the autogiro. The plane was standing on a landing platform, its fan-blades turning lazily like the arms of a giant windmill. Beside it was the pilot, anxious-faced, ready for the take-off. The Shadow stepped up beside him.

“Sorry, Crofton,” he remarked, in the casual tone of Cranston. “I did not realize that I was delaying the takeoff. I was talking with some passengers.”

“We're all ready, Mr. Cranston—”

“Then let us depart.”

The Shadow stepped aboard; the pilot with him. Passengers fell back as broad blades whirled to rapid spin. Faced toward the ship's bow, the autogiro started forward. Its wheels made no more than a double revolution. Aided by the head-wind caused by the liner's speed, the plane rose from the landing space. It poised in air, at the same speed as the Doranic; then climbed upward. Searchlights showed the autogiro rising high into the night.

WITHIN the gloom of the autogiro's cabin, The Shadow delivered the echo of a whispered laugh. He had managed this mission well. Miles Crofton, his skilled pilot, had happened to be in New York, to test the new wingless autogiro. By taking the trip to the Doranic as a passenger, The Shadow had been able to handle Bligh's enemies and then depart.

No one could connect his brief visit with the fray on shipboard. Clyde Burke's entry as a friend of Dunley Bligh would be regarded as the natural action of a newspaper reporter. Bligh, himself, would be wise enough to follow The Shadow's instructions. Recovered crooks would be placed in irons.

Bligh, warned against future danger, would be safe, particularly with Clyde Burke as his friend.

The Shadow had chosen the first of important clues. Aid to Bligh had been imperative. The Shadow had given it. He had thwarted death that had been ordered by the evil Voodoo Master, Doctor Mocquino. The time had come to take up the second clue: the trail to the voodoo cult itself.

The Shadow placed earphones to his head. He began a wireless signal from the autogiro. He gained contact; coded messages came in return. The Shadow recognized the words. Burbank was reporting. Other agents of The Shadow had been posted in Manhattan. They were watching the headquarters of Doctor Mocquino.

Miles Crofton was heading back to Newark. Time was ample to-night. The cult would meet, undisturbed. The Shadow would have opportunity to reach New York from the airport, long before the meeting ended. He was counting upon a chance to deal with Mocquino before the voodoo master would guess that he was in the game.

Luck alone could balk The Shadow. Chance was the one element that he could not counteract. Oddly, fate was tricking him to-night. While the autogiro sped shoreward, minor events were happening over which The Shadow had no present control. One such occurrence was due to bring trouble.

The Shadow's trail to Doctor Mocquino would be a quicker one than The Shadow had originally planned. But because of haste that would soon prove necessary, the trail would become incomplete.

Danger, struggles, blind search—all would be involved before The Shadow would gain his final goal.

Doctor Rodil Mocquino, the Voodoo Master, was destined to become a foe of formidable proportions. One who would fight The Shadow to the finish.

CHAPTER VII. THE LAW INTERVENES

WHILE The Shadow was engaged in rescue of Dunley Bligh, Doctor Rupert Sayre had remained in charge of his patient, Stanton Wallace. With sunset, Sayre had turned on the emerald lights in the green room. Wallace had laughed at the procedure.

“Give me a break, doctor,” he had insisted. “I’m feeling fit again. Let me sit around in a regular room. Provided, of course, that there is nothing red to disconcert me.”

Sayre had approved the suggestion. He had gone to Cranston's living room and had ordered Richards to remove some red books and other small objects. Then he had taken Wallace to the new quarters. The patient had found himself quite at ease.

In Wallace's presence, Sayre made a call to Joe Cardona, telling the acting inspector that he would like to keep the patient under further observation. Sayre had mentioned nothing about Wallace's recovery. He was careful not to tell Cardona the young man's name.

Leaving the living room, Sayre had met Richards and had quietly instructed the servant to make sure that Wallace did not gain a copy of to-day's newspaper.

Oddly, the newspaper was the first thing for which Wallace asked, when Richards entered the room an hour later. Wallace had finished looking at some magazines. He was leaning back in a comfortable chair, smoking a cigar; and he seemed bored when he questioned:

“Isn't there a newspaper somewhere about?”

“To-day's paper?” queried Richards.

“Of course,” returned Wallace. “I'd like to read the news.”

“Sorry, sir. There was only one newspaper here and Mr. Cranston took it with him.”

“What about yesterday's newspaper?”

“We have that somewhere, sir.”

“Let me see it then. I may find something in it.”

A clock was chiming the half hour when Richards returned. It was half past nine. Wallace received the newspaper that the servant handed him. Richards walked out, smiling to himself. He had not mentioned this matter to Doctor Sayre, who was at present in the library. Richards thought that he had followed the required instructions.

Wallace's reading of the newspaper was brief. Certain headlines puzzled him. He glanced at the date line and saw the word “Tuesday.” For the moment, he thought that Richards had given him a journal that was several days old. Then he glanced at the date itself.

Realization struck him. With a startled cry, the young man crumpled the newspaper and threw it to the floor.

“Tuesday!” he exclaimed aloud. “Next Tuesday—and yet the flunky said that it was yesterday's newspaper! This is Wednesday, not Sunday! Wednesday—next Wednesday—”

He rose to his feet and clutched his head, half dazed. A whirlwind of thoughts overwhelmed him. This was Wednesday night; Dunley Bligh had already sailed from New York. To Stanton Wallace came bitter belief that he had been betrayed. Then resignation gripped him.

“Sayre has kept it from me,” he groaned. “He knows that Bligh has met death. But he should have told me—he should have told me—”

He paused, distracted; then, pacing the room, he mumbled:

“They fear Doctor Mocquino. I must call upon some one else to aid. Some one else—I have it!”

BOUNDING to the telephone, Wallace raised the receiver. In a tense voice, he asked for a connection to New York detective headquarters. Soon a gruff voice spoke across the wire. Wallace asked for Inspector Cardona. He was informed that Cardona was out.

“Give him this message,” urged Wallace. “Tell him to hunt Doctor Rodil Mocquino... Yes; Mocquino. He is in the first house east of the new Europa Building... On what charge? Murder!... Yes. Mocquino is a murderer...”

Footsteps beyond the door of the living room. Suddenly alarmed by his own action, Wallace hung up the receiver. He dropped the telephone and settled back into his chair, just as the door opened. It was Doctor Sayre.

Wallace, leaning back in the chair, began to mumble. Sayre looked worried, to find the patient talking to himself; then Wallace's smile reassured him. Sayre sat down to have a chat. He did not notice the newspaper, which lay beyond the table. Thus he failed to gain an inkling of the deed which Stanton Wallace had just performed.

AT New York police headquarters, Joe Cardona strolled into his office to find two detectives arguing over a crank call that had just been received. They passed the news to Joe. The ace detective questioned the man who had answered the telephone.

“You're sure of the name? Mocquino?”

A nod from the dick.

“And the call was cut off?”

Another nod.

“It doesn't sound phony,” decided Cardona. “I've got a hunch this means something. That moniker—Mocquino—it sounds like an alias. What's more, cranks either cut off quick or they stick a long while. This fellow was interrupted. Come on; we're making up a squad. I'm going to take a look at that house.”

THE Europa Building was a towering structure that fronted on an avenue and extended a half block deep. The street beside it was poorly lighted; most of the buildings in the rear portion of the block were old and dilapidated. When Cardona and four detectives reached the place that Wallace had mentioned, they found the street deserted.

Standing across the far side of the street, Cardona eyed the front of the first house. It was a four-story

building with a brick front. All windows were shuttered; the front door needed paint. Joe studied it by the glow of the nearest street lamp. He saw a rental sign on the house.

“That place is supposed to be empty,” he stated. “If we take it easy, we can pry the door without too much noise. Nobody's got a right in there; and we're acting on a tip that prowlers are about the premises. Two of you patrol while the rest of us work on the door.”

The squad crossed the street. Immediately, a hunched figure shifted from a doorway on the side where they had been. Unnoticed, this man scudded to an alleyway, some distance along. He dived into darkness.

“Cliff!”

A voice responded to the hunched man's hoarse whisper.

“What's up, Hawkeye?”

“Cardona and a squad just showed up from headquarters! They're going to bust into Mocquino's house!”

“On a tipoff?”

“Yeah, from what Cardona said.”

“Hawkeye's” words made a profound impression on the listener. Cliff Marsland, agent of The Shadow, was stationed here to watch the front of the house next door to Mocquino's; for Wallace had said that entry was made through adjoining cellars. Harry Vincent, another agent, was at the back, in the next street. The arrival of the police was a bad factor.

“Put in a call to Burbank,” whispered Cliff to Hawkeye. “Then duck around and tip off Harry. Slide in here afterward.”

Hawkeye scurried through the alleyway. He found a cigar store one block distant. He entered a phone-booth and called Burbank. The contact man received the report. Hawkeye knew that it would go to The Shadow. He did not guess, however, that the relay would be made by coded wireless to a wingless autogiro, at present over the ocean near New York harbor!

So far as Hawkeye knew, Cliff and Harry were on duty only to await The Shadow. No information had been given as to The Shadow's whereabouts.

Somewhat assured by Burbank's calm acceptance of his report, Hawkeye took a circuitous course that brought him to Harry's outpost. He told Harry about Cardona; then made another circuit and arrived back with Cliff. Hawkeye found Cliff peering from the alleyway.

“There goes the door,” groaned Cliff. “Cardona and his bunch have wedged it open. If the chief had only arrived here!”

“It's been ten minutes since I talked to Burbank,” returned Hawkeye. “Maybe The Shadow will be here soon.”

“We'll stick tight. That's all we can do.”

ACROSS the street, Cardona and his two companions had entered the gloomy first floor of the empty house. Flashlights showed the place to be deserted. Cardona went to the door and signaled for the other two detectives.

“Not much chance of trouble,” he told his crew. “Close the door. We’ll all stick inside. Five of us will be too many for any bird that’s got a hide-out here. Let’s take a look up those stairs.”

They crept up to the second floor, with flashlights blazing the trail. They reached another deserted hallway. Closed doors showed all along the line. Cardona opened the first and entered a small, deserted room. The detectives were finding other doors locked. They came to the front and joined their leader.

“Listen!”

Cardona gave the whisper for silence. A rhythmic beat was coming from beyond a doorway at the rear of the front room. There was a sinister sound to the thrum. Instinctively, the five invaders crept toward the doorway.

“Sounds like a tom-tom,” said one detective, in a tense voice. “What’s that doing here?”

“It don’t sound human,” came another comment. “Say—this house gives you the jitters—”

Cardona gave a growl for silence. His hand seemed numbed as he moved it toward the handle of his revolver. He was about to order his detectives to copy his example, when an unexpected happening occurred. A click sounded. The bare room was suddenly flooded with light. The glare arrived from sockets in the ceiling.

“Cover the hall door!” barked Cardona.

Two detectives wheeled. They stopped short. A pair of dark-faced men had bobbed in from that direction. Each was holding a revolver. They had the detectives covered. Cardona was facing the inner door at the back of the room, expecting it to open. Instead, a click came from another corner. A panel opened. Cardona and the other two detectives swung; then stopped.

They, too, were covered by a pair of revolvers. One was held by a dark-faced servant, who looked like the ones at the other door. The second man was obviously the leader of the outfit. He was of medium height, dark-faced and smiling. His visage was friendly; yet there was a dangerous sparkle in his blackish eyes.

MOST remarkable was the man’s attire. Though his servants were clad in old, rough clothes, the leader was splendid of garb. He wore a robe that looked like burnished gold. His waist was girded by a sash of deep, yet vivid, crimson. Thrum of tom-toms came more strongly, drumming through the thoughts of the astonished headquarters men.

The robed stranger cried a word in a strange tongue. The drumbeats ceased.

As a background to the opened panel, Cardona and the others could see a flicker that looked like the reflection of a blaze. They heard the robed man give another cry. The flicker ended. Scuffling footsteps sounded in the room beyond. Cardona realized that there were others beside the four who had trapped himself and the detectives.

“Why have you come here?”

The inquiry was musical. It came from the smiling lips of the robed man by the panel. Cardona saw fit to answer.

“We heard that there were prowlers in this house,” he stated. “We entered to make a search.”

“Who gave you that information? The owners?”

“No. We received an anonymous call at headquarters.”

The robed man laughed. His dark-faced retainers grinned.

“You have spoken the truth,” declared the robed man, suavely. “That was wise of you. Since I am the owner of this building, you could not have received a bona fide complaint.”

“You are Doctor Rodil Mocquino?”

Cardona regretted the question, the moment that he put it. A change came over the smiling face. Evil eyes glared. Lips snarled vicious words.

“You have learned my name! That changes everything! Fools! To intrude upon me in my own abode! You shall regret this action! Stand as you are! One move means death!”

Before Cardona or his men could offer response, Mocquino and the man beside him had stepped back into the next room. The panel clicked shut. As the headquarters squad looked toward the hallway door, the two men there sprang from sight. The door slammed. A bolt clicked.

Detectives ejaculated triumphant cries. Cardona alone called for caution. The others, staring, saw the reason. Loopholes had opened in the walls—three from the side toward the inner rooms; three from the wall to the hallway. Revolver muzzles were sliding into view.

The detectives stood rooted, expecting instant death from foemen against whom they could not fight. The guns, however, did not blaze. Cardona suddenly understood why. He could hear scraping sounds from beyond the rear wall. Grimly, Joe held his own counsel.

He knew Mocquino for a villain—one who deserved the brand of murderer. But the fiend had a reason for delaying slaughter. He was moving out of the room beyond. He was giving up this abode. Not until his paraphernalia was on its way would Mocquino give the command for massacre.

The best plan was to wait. Perhaps, if flight proved easy, Mocquino might decide to let the prisoners go. A slight hope, at best. More logically, Cardona realized, Mocquino simply preferred to withhold the clatter of guns. Nevertheless, there might be some intervention. Nothing could be gained by present action. Nothing could be lost by waiting.

OUTSIDE, Cliff Marsland was still watching from the entrance to the alleyway. He was alarmed concerning Cardona and the detectives. If their search had been barren, they should have returned. If they had captured some one, or met with opposition, at least one detective should have appeared to summon police or call headquarters.

Cliff sensed the truth. Though he had been deputed merely to watch here, he had learned through Burbank that Doctor Mocquino might prove dangerous. Cliff was troubled. He feared to call police; Mocquino might well be prepared for such invaders. Cliff could see only one hope: The Shadow.

Hawkeye was straining. He started to speak. Cliff stopped him. From high above, Cliff had caught an unexpected sound. One that purred from the sky; then ended suddenly.

Looking up, Cliff saw a whirling motion, faint in the reflected glow of city lights. Grabbing Hawkeye, Cliff started from the alleyway.

They dashed across the street. Cliff yanked open the basement door of the house next to Mocquino's. He sent Hawkeye scudding through, with the quick command:

“Get Vincent!”

Glimmering a flashlight, Cliff searched along the wall toward the next house. He spied a closet door. He yanked it open and ripped away a hanging mass of clothes. A yawning cavity gaped in the glare of his flashlight. It was a passage through to the supposedly empty house. Tensely, Cliff waited for Hawkeye to arrive with Harry.

ABOVE Mocquino's house, a spinning object had taken shape. With swift descent, a toylike plane enlarged. Downward, almost skimming the granite wall of the fifty-story Europa Building came The Shadow's wingless autogiro. Its objective was the roof of Mocquino's four-story house. The Shadow, contacted by a wireless report from Burbank, had ordered Crofton to New York instead of Newark.

The Shadow had taken the helm for this descent. His close scrape of towering walls was a stroke of perfect piloting. He had allowed for air currents; his calculations were correct. With its windmill blades spinning furiously, the autogiro edged away from the Europa Building and settled squarely upon the flat roof of Mocquino's house.

A blackened form dropped from the giro. With blades still whirling, the machine rolled forward. The motor roared with sudden speed. At the edge of the roof, the autogiro took off and gained a vertical ascend, to clear the houses across the street.

Crofton had taken the controls. He was whirling off to Newark. This brief descent amid Manhattan's towers would never be suspected.

With the Europa Building as a sure landmark, The Shadow had arrived ahead of schedule. A cloaked shape on the roof, he was ripping open the customary trapdoor that he found there. While his ready agents were invading from below, The Shadow was crashing through from above!

The law had intervened. Cardona and four others had been trapped. But rescue was coming from two unexpected quarters. The Shadow was here with aid!

CHAPTER VIII. THE ESCAPE

WITHIN the barren front room, five men still retained their rigid attitude. Detectives were copying Cardona in his lack of action. They were relying upon their leader to pull them from this trap. Joe knew it; and the thought harassed him.

Scraping sounds had ceased. He guessed that rapid packing had been completed. Minutes alone remained until the stroke of doom. Those gun muzzles from the wall meant marksmen, stationed in the room beyond. Cardona looked toward the other wall. He pictured gunners in the outer hall.

Joe had seen that hall; hence his visualization was accurate. But had he viewed the hall itself, he would have found reason for new hope. There, three dark-faced servitors were peering above the muzzles at the loopholes. A single ceiling light had been turned on; it showed their figures plainly.

The glow revealed something else. Blackness on the stairway to the floors above, where all rooms were deserted. Blackness that moved, took shape. Blackness that formed a living figure as it crept downward. The Shadow stood looming above the vassals of Doctor Mocquino.

Hidden lips delivered a whispered laugh. The weird sound was spectral in that gloomy hall. It caused heads to turn. Glaring faces met blazing eyes. A shout came from one of the marksmen, as The Shadow's laugh rose to a taunting crescendo.

Madly, Mocquino's henchman yanked his revolver from the loophole and fired a wild shot at The

Shadow. The others followed suit.

As they fired, The Shadow's automatics answered. From his post, The Shadow had pictured the situation. Doomed men in a trap. One way to save them. That was by drawing away the entire trio of sharpshooters.

These minions of Mocquino were savage. But their very frenzy ruined that. Quick shots sizzled wide; but The Shadow's did not fail. spurts from the automatics sent the henchmen sprawling.

One managed a dive that carried him beyond the stairs. He pounded at a door which The Shadow could not cover. The barrier opened. The man rolled through. The others lay where they were. The Shadow swung into the hall. Seeing no opposition from the rear, he sprang to the bolted door.

BEFORE he acted, The Shadow had pictured the arrangement of the room where Cardona and the detectives were trapped. He had done this by a simple deduction, based on the room's position in the house. He had seen the marksmen in the hall. He had known that others would be aiming through another wall. But through one wall only, for the room was at the front corner of the house.

By eliminating the sharpshooters in the hallway, The Shadow had given Cardona and his fellow-prisoners a perfect chance for safety. He was relying upon Cardona to take it; and The Shadow's faith in the acting inspector proved justified. Cardona had been thinking things over during the wait for death.

The moment that shots had sounded from the hallway, Joe had noticed the disappearance of the guns on the hall side. The departure of those muzzles meant that the fire could come from but one line: the wall of the rear room. That wall, itself, offered safety. Cardona had shouted to his companions to follow him.

With a dive, Joe reached the wall between the outpoked revolvers. The muzzles began to blast; but detectives were already on the jump. One dick staggered, wounded. Joe yanked him to safety. Gun muzzles swung viciously; they could not make the angle. Cardona and his men were safe. The guns were jerked from view.

Evidently, Doctor Mocquino had not anticipated a happening like this. A two-walled trap had seemed sufficient. It had proven otherwise. Joe Cardona voiced a grim chuckle; then snapped a command to his men.

“Cover the panel! In the far corner! That's where they'll come from!”

A click. A harsh, venomous voice. Cardona wheeled. He saw his mistake. Mocquino had crossed them. For this time, it was the rear-room doorway that had opened. Again Cardona and the detectives were caught unaware. First they had covered the door to the rear room, not knowing of the panel. This time, they had covered the panel, forgetful of the door.

Two ugly, leering servitors were with Mocquino. Loopholes had dropped shut everywhere, impelled by a switch that Mocquino had pressed. The Voodoo Master wanted them no longer. Slaughter in cold blood, face to face—such was his present plan.

“One move!” snarled the Voodoo Master, still resplendent in his golden robe—“one move and we fire—”

His leer told that bullets were his intention, no matter what Cardona and the others did. His delay was merely a bluff, a part of Mocquino's gloating, baiting game. This time, he had underestimated the situation. Mocquino had not seen the power of the opposition that had stricken down his henchmen in the hall.

The door from the hallway swung open. Mocquino snarled; two reserve henchmen aimed point-blank in that direction. But their murderous efforts were too late. They expected a foeman who would stop. Instead, a mass of living blackness hurtled clear to the center of the room.

Revolvers spoke in vain. Automatics tongued flame as The Shadow wheeled. One man sprawled; the other dived back. Mocquino and his closer servitors scrambled to the doorway, firing.

The Shadow faded back toward the outer door. Detectives jumped out into the center of the room. Guns roared in unison.

Despite his valiant effort, The Shadow was faced by desperate odds. Mocquino and his men had swung back too quickly for Cardona and the detectives to aid. Only a skillful, unexpected fling saved The Shadow in that moment. Slugs whistled through the folds of his black cloak. One bullet slashed The Shadow's left forearm. His hand dropped momentarily.

Then came shots from the inner room. Mocquino hurled his henchmen back from the door. The Shadow blasted two bullets toward the Voodoo Master. An intervening servitor saved Mocquino without intention. As the howling man spun about, Mocquino slammed the door. The sagging henchman was hurtled head-foremost to the floor.

THREE men had come into the inner room: Cliff, Harry and Hawkeye. The valiant trio had found a secret stairway up through the center of the house directly into the middle room. They had smashed open an unguarded door at the head of the stairway, in time to begin fire upon Mocquino and his clustered men.

This middle room, like the front one, was barren; but its furnishings had been only recently removed. Mocquino must have possessed a dozen servants; for he still had ruffians about him. The Shadow's aids had dropped a pair before Mocquino turned. But before they could give further battle, a new door opened into the middle room. The new door was from another room, the third farther back. Through it piled half a dozen wild-eyed men. Unarmed, they flung themselves upon The Shadow's agents. These unexpected attackers were members of Mocquino's cult, come to aid their master when his servants failed.

Cliff and Harry sprawled to the floor. Guns were wrested from their fists. Hawkeye, twisting, managed to retain his feet. He saw blows descending toward the heads of his companions. Wildly, he delivered counterstrokes. He floundered instantly beneath an overwhelming crew.

A shout from Mocquino. It saved the would-be victims. Not because Mocquino held mercy, his lips would have snarled denial of such a thought. Self-preservation was Mocquino's motive. Already the door from the front room was crashing under the drive of Cardona and his detectives.

The cult members heard Mocquino's order. They sprang for the secret-stairway up which The Shadow's aids had come. Behind them came Mocquino and his men. The Voodoo Master stopped as his henchmen took to the stairs. The Shadow's agents were rising unsteadily from the floor, gunless. Mocquino prepared to slaughter them.

The door from the front room ripped clear of its hinges. Cardona and a pair of detectives surged through. Even then, Mocquino would not have given up his vicious purpose had he not seen a black-clad figure hard behind the invaders. The Shadow's .45 was looming. With a maddened roar of final venom, Mocquino chose the door to the rear room.

Two barriers slammed: one from the secret stairway; the other from the rear room. Detectives sprang to pound at both. Half groggy, The Shadow's agents joined them in the effort. The stairway door was first

to give. Cardona and the sleuths surged downward, abandoning the other portal. The Shadow, alone in the center of the room, hissed a command. His agents completed the work at the rear door.

They sprang into a lighted room beyond; this also was barren. The Shadow, however, knew the former arrangement. The middle room had been the meeting place of the cult. The rear apartment had been the red room. Across it was another door. The Shadow knew that it must lead to a rear exit. He watched his aids rip at the barrier. It came open, showing a short passage to an old fire escape.

This was the way through which the furnishings had gone. It explained why The Shadow's agents had not encountered the bearers on the way up.

The Shadow ripped open the window and leaped to the fire escape. Shouts, wild gunfire came from below.

Two trucks were speeding away from an alley behind the house. These had arrived during battle. The police, coming on the scene at sounds of battle in the house, were too late to stop them. So was The Shadow. His automatic blazed final bullets; but the range was too long to clip the tires, as the light trucks shot out to the street beyond.

The police took up pursuit.

Doctor Mocquino had lost his prisoners. Doomed men had escaped, thanks to The Shadow. But Mocquino, in turn, had managed his own escape, with the remnants of his henchmen and the members of his voodoo cult. Sprawled men lay upon the floor of the front room. Those that lived would be prisoners of the police. As for Mocquino, the law could more easily trap him to-night than could The Shadow.

The cloaked fighter gave an order to his agents. They followed him hurriedly down the fire escape, knowing that they would have time to depart from the vicinity. The law was off to a chase. Whining sirens told that patrol cars were joining in the quest.

Perhaps the law would trap Doctor Mocquino. If so, The Shadow would be satisfied with the result. If not, the quest would again become The Shadow's. There was a chance that Mocquino's flight would end in freedom. The Shadow already had a plan, if such was the outcome.

For The Shadow still held another clue that Stanton Wallace had provided. The Shadow had met Doctor Mocquino and had driven him to flight. He could find a new route to reach the insidious Voodoo Master.

CHAPTER IX. THE CONFERENCE

AT three o'clock the next afternoon, Doctor Rupert Sayre was seated in Lamont Cranston's library, perusing a rare book that dealt with voodoo rituals. A streak of blackness hovered above the page. Sayre looked up quickly; then smiled as he saw the tall figure of Cranston.

Again, Sayre knew that this was The Shadow; and with good reason. The Shadow's left arm was bandaged and in a sling. Doctor Sayre himself had bandaged it, last night. The Shadow had come back to New Jersey after the flight of Doctor Mocquino.

"How is Stanton Wallace?"

The Shadow made the query in the quiet fashion of Cranston. Sayre placed his book to one side.

"When you left for New York this morning," stated the physician, "Wallace was still asleep. He awoke shortly before noon. He seems quite normal; but he is not talkative."

“You tested his color perceptions?”

“Yes. Red no longer annoys him. So I have allowed him to stroll outside. At present, he is in the living room.”

Richards entered as The Shadow ceased speaking. The servant had come to announce a visitor.

“Mr. Vincent is here, sir.”

“Good,” spoke The Shadow. “Conduct him to the living room, Richards. Doctor Sayre and I will be there. After that, you may dismantle the green room. Pack the draperies and put the lights with them.”

THE SHADOW went to the living room, accompanied by Doctor Sayre. Just as they entered, Harry Vincent arrived. The Shadow greeted him; then introduced him to Stanton Wallace, who had risen from his chair.

The Shadow eyed Wallace when the latter studied Harry. He saw that the patient was impressed by the newcomer. That was as The Shadow had expected. Harry Vincent was a clean-cut chap, whose frank friendliness immediately commanded respect.

The group seated themselves. The Shadow turned to Stanton Wallace. Quietly, he announced:

“To-day is Thursday.”

The unexpected statement brought an instant response. Wallace began to speak; then became confused. His face flushed. He stammered:

“I—I thought—that is, I guessed—well, to-day should be Monday. Perhaps, though, I was mistaken—”

He paused, his words a give-away. Doctor Sayre realized at once that Wallace had somehow learned the actual day of the week. The physician was both startled and perplexed. The Shadow calmly pressed the button to summon Richards. He ordered the servant to produce the day's newspaper.

Richards went out and returned with a Thursday morning sheet. Eagerness replaced Stanton Wallace's presence. His eyes were avid, as he seized the newspaper and scanned the headlines. His lips phrased an ejaculation.

“Dunley Bligh is safe!” he exclaimed, gladly. “He defended himself aboard the Doranic! This is certainly wonderful news—”

“Read the third column to the right,” suggested The Shadow.

More blurted words from Wallace.

“Doctor Mocquino in flight!” cried the young man. “Sought by the police! For attempted murder! Mocquino and all those with him!”

There was another paragraph on the front page, that The Shadow did not mention. It referred to a successful trip by a wingless autogiro, to and from the liner Doranic. Apparently, it bore no connection with the other stories. Nor, for that matter, did Bligh's battle and Mocquino's flight appear to be related.

“You wanted Bligh,” declared Wallace, seriously, as he placed the newspaper aside. “I suppose that you also planned to deal with Mocquino.”

“I did,” responded The Shadow, quietly.

“Then I am to blame,” confessed Wallace. “I learned by accident that yesterday was Wednesday. I called New York police headquarters. I was the person who tipped off the law. I imagine that injured your plans.”

“You did.” The Shadow's slight smile showed that he had already divined the source of the tipoff. “Nevertheless, you are not to be blamed for the mistake. You can make amends by answering certain questions.”

“Gladly!” agreed Wallace.

“First,” queried The Shadow, “tell me if you gave your name to the police when you called last night?”

“I did not,” replied Wallace. “I lacked sufficient time.”

“Did you state that you were the man whom they placed in custody of Doctor Sayre?”

“No.”

“Did you tell where you were?”

“No.”

“Did you talk to Inspector Cardona in person?”

“No. He was not in his office. I left the message for him.”

“Why did you end the call so abruptly?”

“I heard Doctor Sayre at the door. I was afraid that he would disapprove of my action.”

A PAUSE. The Shadow knew that Stanton Wallace had answered truthfully. Since the law had no clue to the patient's recovery, all was well with The Shadow's future plans.

“Doctor Sayre is returning to New York.” The Shadow's tone carried the semblance of a command. “You will remain here, Wallace, while he requests further time to study your case. Vincent will remain here also. Meanwhile, I shall search for Doctor Mocquino.

“The Voodoo Master has proven slippery. Despite the swiftness of the police, he has eluded them. Through quick action, the law covered every bridge, tunnel and ferry that offered departure from Manhattan. All trucks were stopped. Mocquino's were not among them.

“All garages have been questioned. Every parking lot has been searched. No trace has been gained. Mocquino has gained some remarkable hide-out, apparently in Manhattan itself.”

The Shadow ceased his quiet speech. Stanton Wallace blurted a question:

“Then how do you expect to trace him?”

In reply, The Shadow produced a sheaf of papers. He flipped them open with his right hand and spread them upon the table. He pointed to one sheet.

“This concerns James Lenger,” he stated. “The information was not difficult to obtain from back files of newspapers. James Lenger was slain on the Amazon, presumably by headhunters. That was not astonishing, in itself. But when one studies the reasons for Lenger's trip to the Amazon country, an answer begins to develop.

“Lenger had been to the Amazon a year ago. Old clippings state that he went to locate a cache of gold that had been left somewhere along the river, years ago, by Portuguese explorers. On his recent trip, Lenger made no statement of any purpose.”

“He had learned something!” exclaimed Wallace.

“Probably“ remarked The Shadow. “He may have actually located the gold on his first trip and left it where it was. Assuming such to be the case, it is likely that only a few of his closest friends would have known that his last trip was to reclaim the gold.”

“And one friend was a member of Mocquino's cult!”

“Yes. Some one who talked about Lenger as you spoke concerning Bligh. Mocquino sent his own agents to reclaim the gold. They finished that work by murdering Lenger. Head-hunters were not involved.”

“And by tracing James Lenger's friends—”

“Unfortunately, that is almost impossible. Lenger was something of a mystery man. He presumably kept all his business to himself. Hundreds of persons were acquainted with him. Which ones had his confidence is a difficult matter to learn.”

WALLACE sank back in his chair, his face troubled. The Shadow referred to another document.

“The case of Myron Rathcourt,” he remarked. “The Chicago millionaire who died of heart failure. In all probability, his death was cleverly arranged by Mocquino, who profited thereby.”

“But how—”

“All of Myron Rathcourt's estate was left to his nephew, Elridge Rathcourt. The latter lives in New York.”

Wallace started to speak. He paused; The Shadow was pronouncing his very thoughts.

“Doctor Mocquino could profit only through Elridge Rathcourt,” declared the calm-voiced speaker. “Therefore, we may believe that Elridge Rathcourt is a member of the cult. He was the man who showed glee when Mocquino thrust a pin through his uncle's effigy.

“Controlled by Mocquino, Elridge is furnishing funds to the Voodoo Master. He has come into a large fortune. Mocquino will eventually acquire all of it. Elridge Rathcourt is his complete dupe. Similarly, Elridge Rathcourt is the man through whom we may find a new trail to Mocquino.”

The Shadow removed one paper from the sheaf. Harry Vincent, close to the table, noted a telegram addressed to Rutledge Mann. The latter was an investment broker, who served The Shadow as an agent. Mann had made moves in tracing Elridge Rathcourt.

“It proved possible,” stated The Shadow, “to trace Elridge Rathcourt through an investment house in Chicago. Through such a process, I learned that young Rathcourt is living in New York. His residence is the penthouse of a small hotel called the Delbar.

“Elridge Rathcourt once purchased securities through a concern called Voder &Co. That brokerage house is now defunct. But Rathcourt would not be surprised if a former representative of the concern should call upon him. Today, a telephone message went to the Hotel Delbar, stating that James Rettigue, formerly of Voder &Co., would like an interview with Elridge Rathcourt.”

A pause. Harry Vincent guessed that the supposed James Rettigue had been The Shadow.

“Elridge Rathcourt is out of town,” resumed The Shadow. “He will not return until to-morrow night. Presumably, he is in Atlantic City. His valet took the message. Hence Rathcourt will not be surprised when he receives James Rettigue as a caller to-morrow night.

“Until that time, the police are welcome to proceed with their futile search for Doctor Mocquino. Real results will be accomplished when Elridge Rathcourt is interviewed by James Rettigue.”

THE SHADOW arose. He turned to Doctor Sayre and asked if the physician was ready to return to New York. Sayre nodded his affirmative. It was apparent that The Shadow was also going to the metropolis. But before departure, he turned again to Stanton Wallace.

“You have spoken frankly,” approved The Shadow. “In return, I have given you a full outline of immediate plans. Doctor Mocquino is still at large. You are in no danger while he does not know your whereabouts, nor has knowledge of your improved condition.

“Therefore, you must remain here and hold no outside contact. Vincent will stay here also, for your own protection. You will find him an agreeable companion. I know that you and he will become friends. This arrangement should prove satisfactory.”

“It is,” declared Wallace, seriously. “I owe you thanks, Mr. Cranston. Also an apology for my folly—”

“That is forgotten.”

Turning, The Shadow left with Sayre. Stanton Wallace remained with Harry Vincent. He looked toward his new friend and gained further confidence. Harry's air of self-assurance marked him as a man who would prove reliant in emergency.

Stanton Wallace smiled in relief. His outlook on the world had changed. He realized that results had already been accomplished. For the first time, he understood that he had given three potent clues concerning Doctor Mocquino. Two had already been followed. The Shadow had saved Dunley Bligh. He had later delivered a thrust at the headquarters of Doctor Mocquino.

Though progress was temporarily halted, The Shadow would soon begin a new endeavor. He had developed his third clue, through an investigation of Elridge Rathcourt, who must certainly be a member of the voodoo cult. The future looked bright to Stanton Wallace. He could see trouble for Doctor Rodil Mocquino.

But in his survey of the future, Stanton Wallace made few allowances. That, perhaps, was because his present security caused him to minimize the craftiness of Doctor Mocquino. Careful consideration would have brought realization that Mocquino's schemes were not yet beaten.

The Shadow, alone, could have predicted the grim obstacles that still might rise along the trail to the evil Voodoo Master.

CHAPTER X. CARDONA GAINS SUSPICIONS

AT half past six the next afternoon, Joe Cardona was absent from his office. The acting inspector had gone out to dinner, leaving Detective Sergeant Markham in charge. Markham, a capable routine man, was pondering over a large map of Manhattan that lay on Cardona's desk.

The map was marked with pencil lines and dotted with circles that had been inscribed in colored crayon. It represented Cardona's efforts of Wednesday night, when the ace had attempted to box the elusive

Doctor Mocquino. The dots were located at important ferry slips, at bridges, and at the entrance to the Holland Tunnel. There were others at the stations of the Hudson and Manhattan Tubes.

Markham was growling as he talked to a detective who was standing near the desk. While speaking, he fingered a pile of report sheets. Those referred to the search of Manhattan garages.

“This business don't click with me,” was Markham's opinion. “There's too much chance for a leak. How can we figure on catching Mocquino this way?”

“Everything's covered,” put in the detective.

“Yeah?” queried Markham. He pointed to the map. “Look at all these subway routes to Brooklyn and Long Island. What's to prevent Mocquino and his bunch from going in and out by those lines? Answer that one, Cassidy.”

“You can't load a couple of trucks on board the subway,” returned Cassidy, promptly. “That's what the inspector was saying just before you came in, Markham.”

“Humph! Maybe not. We had good description of those trucks, too. Well, it beats me, Cassidy. Look. Here's all the schedules of every regular ferry service. Men watching every slip. They've stopped cars going and coming at the bridges and the Holland Tunnel. There's only one answer: Mocquino is still in New York.”

Cassidy grunted his agreement; then looked at his watch. He had completed his hours on duty. The detective went out, leaving Markham alone in the office.

SEVERAL minutes passed. Markham heard a footfall. He looked up to see a slender, stoop-shouldered man at the door. The fellow's face was darkish; he looked like a Cuban. His head craned forward from his neck, and Markham noted a beady, ratlike glimmer in his eyes.

The arrival was smoking a cigarette. Nonchalantly, he flicked ashes to the floor; then took another puff. Markham scented the aroma of heavy cigar tobacco. The man eyed him more directly; then spoke an inquisitive purr:

“Inspector Cardona—is he here?”

“Out to dinner,” returned Markham. “What can I do for you?”

“Ah! Too bad.” The man clucked. “It was Inspector Cardona that I wished to see.”

“About what?”

The darkish man paused; then approached the desk.

“I am from Philadelphia,” he stated. “I read the newspapers of that city. I learned of a man who had come here to New York. His eyes were staring straight ahead.” The darkish man paused and tapped his forehead. “His mind—it was like a blank.”

“You know the fellow?” demanded Markham.

“I am not quite sure,” came the reply. “The picture of him was very poor. Unfortunately, I could not give his name, even if he should be the man I think.”

“How's that?”

“I am a Mexican,” explained the darkish man. “My name is Jose Arilla. I once operated a roulette wheel in Tia Juana. It was there that I saw this man first. Months ago, I came to Philadelphia. I saw him there, twice again, in a gambling room.”

“What good would it do if you saw him again?”

“Ah! There are names that I could mention. Persons who might be his friends. Perhaps, though, the unfortunate man has already recovered?”

“I don't think so. Here—sit down.”

Markham picked up the telephone and dialed a number. There was no response. He hung up the receiver.

“Can you stay in town a while?” he questioned.

“If you wish,” replied the darkish man. “If I could be sure—”

“Of seeing this bird that stares? I think you can, Mr. Arilla. We placed him in charge of a doctor named Sayre. That's who I just called. Sayre isn't in his office.”

“You will call him again?”

“Yes. Inside half an hour.”

Arilla glanced at a wrist watch. Again, his rattish eyes gleamed. But his suave voice offset the expression of his face.

“I, too, must have my dinner,” he laughed. “I shall call back here, sir. In one hour.”

With that, Arilla departed. Markham methodically made a notation to call Doctor Sayre at seven o'clock. As an afterthought, the detective sergeant checked Sayre's number by the telephone book and found that he had it correctly. Markham resumed his study of the map.

SEVEN o'clock. Markham had accidentally guessed the hour of Sayre's return to his office. It was precisely seven when Rupert Sayre stopped at the street door and unlocked it. The physician went into his office; there he stopped and sniffed.

There was an aroma of tobacco in the room; not surprising, since Sayre himself smoked frequently. But the doctor's preference was for cigarettes. This odor was that of a heavy cigar tobacco.

Sayre looked at the ash stand. There he saw nothing but cigarettes. He did not notice that one stump was thicker and rounder than the others, that flakes of dark tobacco projected from it.

Sayre went to open the window. It was locked; but the catch turned loosely in his hand. As he opened the window, Sayre decided that the catch would have to be repaired. The possibility that it might have been forced loose did not occur to him at that moment. The sudden ringing of the telephone bell brought Sayre from the window.

“Hello, hello...” Sayre paused. “What's that? Detective headquarters?... Oh, yes. Sergeant Markham... About the patient? I see... Yes, I can produce him if necessary... His condition? Somewhat improved... Better have Inspector Cardona call me later...”

Sayre hung up. He paced the office. Previous thoughts were forgotten. A breeze from the window had cleared the darkish odor of the room. The physician paused, musing. He did not notice that the door to

the little reception room was ajar. Had he turned, he might have seen a shrewd, ratlike face peering from that opening.

Instead, Sayre picked up the telephone. Tensely, he put in a call to New Jersey. He pronounced the number clearly. When a voice came across the wire, Sayre questioned:

“Is this the residence of Mr. Lamont Cranston?... Good... Ah, yes. Richards, of course... Yes, this is Doctor Sayre. I should like to talk with Mr. Vincent...”

A pause. Harry's hello came over the wire.

“Vincent!” Again Sayre was tense. “I have heard from detective headquarters... Yes... About Stanton Wallace... I shall have to tell Cardona where he is... I can explain it satisfactorily... But perhaps Cardona will want to see him...”

“Yes... Agree to any request that comes from detective headquarters... Certainly... Bring Wallace there if they want him... That is the idea. Tell him to act as if he were still dazed. Yes. It will conform with my story of his partial improvement...”

Sayre sat down at the desk. The door from the reception room closed. Sayre had begun to drum with his fingers. Otherwise, he would have heard the slight thump from the door. Suddenly, the physician arose and went to the reception room. He opened the door and turned on the light.

The room was empty; but had Sayre looked at the window on the other side, he would have noted that it was open an inch from the bottom. Some one had scrambled from that window and had not fully lowered the sash. The lurker had reached a small courtyard that offered exit, by a passage to the front street.

THERE was a clang from the doorbell. Sayre went back through the office and answered the summons. He blinked in surprise as Joe Cardona shouldered in through the door. Cardona motioned Sayre into the office. The ace looked about; then appeared to be satisfied.

“I talked with headquarters,” explained Joe, “right after Markham had called you. I was near here, so I hurried over. Markham is coming up. He's on his way.”

“What about?” queried Sayre.

“Markham pulled a boner,” returned Joe. “A guy came into my office and asked about that stiff-eyed patient of yours. Markham did too much talking. That's why I asked him what the inquirer looked like. He said the fellow was a Mex.”

“What was the man's name?”

“Jose Arilla. Do you know what I think, doc? My hunch is that Mocquino sent Arilla to talk to me. This chatter about the staring man was Arilla's bluff. Markham said that Arilla looked like a rat.

“I know what you're going to say: Why would Mocquino send a bird that looked suspicious? I'll tell you why. He probably didn't have any one else who was smart enough to send. Arilla had a good story. Good enough to bluff Markham, until I got busy with some questions.

“Markham mentioned your name. There's a chance that Arilla might come snooping up this way. Maybe there's some connection we don't know about—between your patient and Doctor Mocquino. Let's look around.”

Cardona strode into the reception room. His inspection was brief. He wanted to satisfy himself on one point only: that no one was at present on the premises. Not knowing of Sayre's call to New Jersey, Joe did not consider the possibility that Arilla might have already come and gone.

Nor did Sayre enlighten him. The physician was in a quandary. He wanted to say as little as possible until he had opportunity to communicate with The Shadow. Unfortunately, Sayre had seldom served The Shadow as a regular agent. Most of the physician's aid had been concerned with medical matters. Hence Sayre, troubled by events, did not connect possibilities.

Quick rings sounded from the doorbell, as Cardona and Sayre came back into the office. Some one was jabbing the button hastily. Cardona answered. It was Markham. The detective sergeant had made a speedy trip from headquarters. He was highly excited.

"I came in a cab," reported Markham. "Just as we swung in here, I saw a guy doing a quick sneak for the corner! I spotted him. It was Jose Arilla! He grabbed a cab of his own. I dropped off and flashed my badge to another hackie who was standing there. He'd heard the address that Arilla gave. Arilla has headed for Red Mike's!"

"To the new joint?" queried Cardona. "Over in Hell's Kitchen?"

Markham nodded.

"That's where we'll travel," decided Cardona. "It's a cinch that Arilla sneaked up here. He saw you come in, doc. He was watching for his chance to enter when he saw me show up. He beat it the first moment he could; but Markham was lucky enough to spot him."

Sayre saw the logic of Cardona's theory. It destroyed all other inklings. The physician's chance to reconstruct the recent past was gone. Sayre, himself, would have been amazed and unbelieving had he been told that Arilla had been listening to the call that Sayre had telephoned to New Jersey.

It was nearing eight o'clock when a sedan stopped near a corner not far from West Twenty-third Street and close to the Hudson River. Three men were in the back seat: Cardona, Markham and Sayre. They looked toward a cheap restaurant on the other side of the street. Lights showed through lowered blinds on the floor above.

"That's Red Mike's," growled Cardona. "The hash-house is the blind for his joint. He used to run a basement dive. He's gone up in the world. Using a second floor now."

A car rolled by and turned the corner. Hardly had its lights passed before a grimy-faced man sneaked up to the sedan. Cardona spoke to the fellow through the window. The man shuffled away. The observers saw him cross the street and enter the beanery.

"That was Tyke Lukan," explained Cardona in an undertone, to Sayre. "He's a stoolie. A smart guy for a pigeon. He's gone in to see if Arilla is there. The car that went by is going around the block to another street. It has three headquarters men in it.

"Cassidy is in charge. We were lucky enough to get hold of him when I called headquarters just before we started over here. Cassidy saw Arilla in the hall when the guy was on his way in. There's only two ways out of Red Mike's. Markham is here in front; Cassidy watching in back."

"And we both know Arilla," put in Markham.

A few minutes passed. A sneaky form came from the hash-house. Tyke Lukan crossed the street. Sidling to the sedan, he whispered a quick story.

“De guy's in dere,” he informed. “A dead ringer for de mug you told me to look for. He's waitin' for a phone call. Sittin' right by de little room where de phone is.”

“Let him get his call,” decided Cardona. “Keep on going, Tyke. We don't want you mixed in it.”

Then, as the stoolie made eager departure, Cardona added:

“Wherever Arilla goes, we'll trail him. See ahead there?” He pointed to a corner where a man was lounging against a wall. “That's Dowley, from headquarters. Knows how to play the part of a bum. Parker is down at the next corner, sitting in a parked cab. Nothing suspicious about it; over here, the hackies work on eighteen-hour shifts. That's why they call them 'coolies', and they're liable to stay in one spot for half the night.”

Cardona paused to chuckle.

“If Jose Arilla comes out the front door,” he said, “Markham identifies him and we signal Dowley. If he comes out the back, Cassidy spots him and flashes the tipoff to Parker. Either way, we have two cars starting out to trail him. We'll let him go where he wants.”

Again a pause; then, with a tone of conviction, the ace sleuth added:

“Wherever Arilla leads us, that's where we'll find Doctor Mocquino!”

CHAPTER XI. WHEN TOM-TOMS BEAT

WHILE Joe Cardona was watching at Red Mike's, events were beginning in another section of Manhattan. Near Times Square, a tall stroller was walking along a cross-town street where occasional twenty-story buildings loomed like mushrooms among smaller, antiquated structures.

The stroller was The Shadow. He paused to study one of the taller buildings. The light above the marquee flashed a name: “Hotel Delbar.”

Keen eyes followed upward. Constructed in limited space, the Hotel Delbar was straight-walled almost to the top. At one side only did it show a pyramid formation. The inward step-backs were slight and narrow, scarcely more than ledges, except for the nineteenth floor. That offered a wider margin.

The twentieth floor was the penthouse, and it had its own veranda. The penthouse walls were sheer, except at that one end. There, the nineteenth floor was decorated with a row of clumpy trees. They looked like potted cedars, along the low bulwark of the nineteenth floor.

The Shadow was considering the possibilities of scaling the penthouse wall. His survey ended, he approached the hotel from across the street. He paused to light a cigarette when he neared the lighted area beneath the marquee.

The Shadow was clad in street clothes. His attire was drab; his face, too, lacked impressiveness. It was less hawklike than the countenance of Lamont Cranston. His features were long and dreary; his eyelids droopy. No chance observer would have picked him for The Shadow. He was playing the part of a mythical personality: James Rettigue.

With a peculiar flick, The Shadow tossed his match away. The motion was performed with his right hand. His left remained motionless. Though his arm was no longer in the sling, it was heavily bandaged from wrist to elbow.

A watcher saw the flip of the match. He shuffled forward from beside the wall, an ill-clad, huddled man.

It was Hawkeye; as he approached the standing figure of The Shadow, the little spotter looked like a typical bum seen on a side street near Times Square.

With a panhandler's whine, Hawkeye asked for a dime. This was for the benefit of passers-by. They shied away, figuring that they would be touched if the bum failed to receive money. They saw a sour look on the features of James Rettigue. Hawkeye was grinning, while The Shadow fumbled for a coin. With a wary dart of his eyes, Hawkeye saw a chance to speak.

"Rathcourt is in," he whispered. "Cliff spotted him in the lobby. Slipped the news to me when I was touching him for two bits."

The Shadow passed coins to Hawkeye.

"Got in at eight," he added. "No messages for him. Nobody's been about. Cliff is gone."

"Off duty."

As he heard The Shadow's whisper, Hawkeye mumbled thanks for the money. Jingling the coins, the spotter slouched away, looking back and forth as if fearful that some policeman had seen him make the touch.

THE SHADOW strolled into the lobby of the Delbar. He approached the desk, announced himself as James Rettigue and asked for Elridge Rathcourt. The clerk put in a call to the penthouse, then nodded. It was all right for the visitor to go up.

While ascending in the elevator, The Shadow's lips formed a sour smile that well-fitted the rather cynical character of James Rettigue. His expression, however, had a significance that escaped others in the elevator. The Shadow was deliberating upon the simplicity of this expedition. He had chosen a direct measure as a start.

The Shadow knew that Elridge Rathcourt was a man controlled by Doctor Mocquino. Because of that, The Shadow had considered the plan of making a crooked entry, coming from outside the penthouse. Such a system would certainly have proven a mental jolt to Rathcourt. He would have found himself faced by a being fully as terrible as the Voodoo Master.

Contrarily, The Shadow had pictured Rathcourt's present mental condition. The Shadow was sure that members of the voodoo cult must be having qualms because Mocquino was, at present, a hunted villain. A worried man would be apt to seek confidence in any one who came to him as a friend. As James Rettigue, The Shadow might play such a part with Elridge Rathcourt. Hence The Shadow had finally decided to utilize the mythical personality.

ARRIVING at the penthouse, The Shadow stepped into a small reception room to find a stocky, solemn-faced menial awaiting him. This was Rathcourt's valet, the fellow with whom The Shadow had talked by telephone.

While the elevator door was clanging shut, The Shadow inquired for Mr. Rathcourt. Before the valet could reply, a strained voice sounded from an inner room.

"Who is it, Manuel?" came the query. "Mr. Rettigue?"

The valet turned.

"Yes, sir," he responded. "Shall I usher him in?"

“At once!”

The Shadow entered a living room to be met by a long-limbed, peak-faced man whose eyes blinked nervously. Elridge Rathcourt was chinless, his handshake flabby. With a shaky gesture, he urged his visitor to an inner room, which was larger than the first. Beyond it were curtained French windows that led to the penthouse veranda.

Rathcourt closed the door of this private living room. Still shaky, he produced a box of imported cigars.

“Have a corona, Mr. Rettigue. Then we can talk business. About bonds. You used to be with Voder & Co.?”

The Shadow nodded.

“We never had direct transactions, though? You and I?”

“No,” admitted The Shadow. “I simply obtained your name from Voder’s list.”

“I see, I see.” Rathcourt was biting at the end of his cigar. A match went out as he tried to light it. “You must excuse me, Mr. Rettigue. My nerves are bad. I need a rest. That’s why I went to Atlantic City.”

“Yesterday morning?”

“Yes. No, no—it was the day before. I wanted to stay there a while. But I had to come back. I rode in on the Blue Comet late this afternoon.”

Though his own attitude was listless, The Shadow could easily separate truth from falsehood as he listened. He knew that Rathcourt had actually gone to Atlantic City yesterday; not the day before. Fear that he might be connected with the voodoo cult had caused the man’s change of statement.

As for the time of his return, that was accurate. Rathcourt had shown relief when he spoke truth. The time element was also proof. The Shadow knew that the Blue Comet, crack flyer of the Jersey Central, arrived at the Jersey City station at about half past seven.

“I had dinner on the train,” continued Rathcourt. “I came here from Liberty Street. Manuel told me of your message. Of course I wanted to see you. But tell me one thing, Mr. Rettigue”—he paused, eyeing The Shadow quickly—“tell me just one thing. Your business concerns nothing other than investments?”

“Hardly,” replied The Shadow, with a sour smile. “Since I sell securities and you buy them, I could scarcely have another reason for coming here.”

“Of course!”

Rathcourt smiled in relief. The Shadow flicked cigar ashes into a tray.

“I felt privileged to visit you,” he stated in a precise tone, “because I previously had negotiations with your deceased uncle.”

Rathcourt suppressed a gasp of alarm.

“Your uncle’s death was most unfortunate,” added The Shadow. “It was heart failure, I believe?”

“Yes.” Rathcourt was fidgety. “Heart failure. Of course.”

“Many persons die of heart failure. That is, supposedly of heart failure. It is a fact, however, that many

cases are not heart failure at all. Since a man's heart naturally fails when he dies, it is easy to attribute a death to heart failure, even when other causes may have been contributory.”

“But my uncle's heart was weak! Very weak! He was ordered not to exert himself—”

“Indeed!” The Shadow's tone changed suddenly. “Then perhaps his death was actually due to overexertion.”

“It was. No, no—it wasn't! That's—well, he should have remained in his bed. He was not well. A paroxysm must have seized him. Of course, you understand I was not in Chicago at the time—”

THE SHADOW'S eyes had lost their droop. Steadily, keenly, they were staring at Elridge Rathcourt. The young man's weak lips were quavering. He was caught by the glow of the optics before him. The Shadow's eyes were like orbs of fire that burned deep into Rathcourt's thoughts.

“There were servants,” protested Rathcourt. “They—they found my uncle. If he—if he—”

“If he had been dragged from his bed—”

“No, no! That couldn't have happened. Yes, it could have happened!” Wildly wavering his head Rathcourt was denying his own statements. “I thought of that at the time. But there was another reason—”

“Another reason why your uncle died before his time?”

The Shadow had risen. His eyes were coming closer. His voice, though lowered, still carried a semblance of Rettigue's tone. But it also held a sinister touch that drilled deep into Rathcourt's brain.

“Another reason?” repeated The Shadow.

“Yes!” Rathcourt gasped the word. “It could have been—have been the spell—the voodoo spell! I saw—I saw the effigy—”

He broke off; then sinking back, delivered a hopeless cry. As The Shadow, advancing, stood above him, Rathcourt stared straight upward into the burning eyes. The Shadow's right hand clamped the young man's shoulder. To Rathcourt, it felt like the grip of threatening death.

“It began when I met Doctor Mocquino.” Rathcourt spoke mechanically. The Shadow's burning gaze, no longer tempered, was drawing forth the man's true story. “Doctor Rodil Mocquino—the Voodoo Master. He took me to the meetings of his cult. I came beneath his sway.

“My thoughts—my ambitions—my very life—all seemed to tune with the rhythm of the chants I heard. The glow of the fire—the beat of the tom-tom—they made me obey. I gloried in evil! I rejoiced when I saw Doctor Mocquino thrust the pin point through the heart of my uncle's image!”

A pause. Rathcourt breathed in short, quick fashion, as though his statements had cost him great exertion.

“My uncle died. I believed that Mocquino's charm had caused his death. Away from the voodoo meetings, I wondered. Servants—paid murderers of Mocquino's—could have dragged my uncle from his bed. He could have died in fighting them off.

“But when I returned to the meetings, my doubts faded. I believed again in Mocquino's power—until two nights ago. It was then that Mocquino fled. He carried all of us with him. Later, he sent us on our separate ways. I went to Atlantic City; then returned here.”

PANTING, Rathcourt showed terror. His hands came up and clutched The Shadow's arm.

“Mocquino does not know!” gasped Rathcourt. “He does not know that I doubt him! But he does know that I would fear to talk to any one— except—except to some one like yourself. He has bled me of nearly all my inheritance! Though I learned, two nights ago, that Mocquino's strength could fail; still, I cannot disobey his last command!

“To-morrow night! Then the cult will meet again, at the new place that Mocquino has chosen. I must go, to calm Mocquino's suspicions. Once I am there, I shall fear him as I did before! When tom-toms beat —”

Rathcourt was wild-eyed; his chin was shaking. He was chewing at his lips, trying to avoid repetition of the words that he had last uttered.

“When—when tom-toms beat—”

The Shadow's grip tightened. His eyes came closer. His lips spoke whispered words:

“Speak! Name the place where Mocquino now has his headquarters!”

Elridge Rathcourt started to reply. Words failed to reach his lips. His clutch became clawish upon The Shadow's arms. When he found speech, Rathcourt reiterated his former statement; but this time, his voice was a whispered gasp.

“The tom-toms! I hear them! Drumming—drumming—beat—beat! Like the rhythm of the savage jungle! Drums that beat for me!”

For an instant, The Shadow believed that the man was the victim of his own imagination. Then, suddenly, came a different answer. Rathcourt, in his strained, wild state had heard a sound before The Shadow caught it.

The beat of tom-toms—from the walls of this very room! From walls that were undraped. A rising thrum, like the beat—beat—beat that Cardona had heard two nights before. It came from all about—from the ceiling, as well as the walls. Steady in its beat, but quickened in its loudness, the pound of the tom-toms reached a threatening cadence.

THE doors from the roof veranda trembled. The Shadow saw them; yet he wheeled instinctively, to face the door of the outer room. It was opening. The Shadow swung his right hand toward his coat, to draw a gun.

At that instant, Elridge Rathcourt emitted a terrorized scream. With terrific frenzy, he doubled his arms, to clutch The Shadow's right arm with a death-grip.

The pull was a maddened one. The Shadow could not wrench his arm free.

Nor was there time to hurl Rathcourt aside. Instead, The Shadow sped his left hand toward a hidden gun. Instinctive in action, he forgot his wounded forearm. A stabbing pain jabbed above his wrist. The Shadow's, fingers numbed. They faltered as they reached the edge of his coat.

Then action was too late. The outer door had swung wide. Upon the threshold stood Doctor Rodil Mocquino. Arms folded, he was backed by two dark-visaged henchmen who held leveled revolvers. At the same moment, the doors from the porch ripped open. Another pair of grinning servitors aimed with ready guns.

Thrum—thrum—the drumming continued from all about. Mocquino, though clad in tuxedo instead of his golden robe, was as evil in appearance as when The Shadow last had seen him. Gloating, the Voodoo Master gazed upon the rigid figure of The Shadow and the cowering, clutching form of Elridge Rathcourt.

Doctor Mocquino had gained a triumph, while the hidden tom-tom beaters drummed their fiendish cadence of conquest!

CHAPTER XII. MOCQUINO DECREES

DOCTOR Mocquino stood in full control.

Wisely, The Shadow had stopped all effort to defy the Voodoo Master. The moment for battle had passed. The Shadow had lost the vital opportunity that he always required in such emergencies as this.

Luck had tricked The Shadow. Elridge Rathcourt's sudden, frenzied clutch had stayed his right hand. An unexpected twinge had halted his left. Covered by four weapons, The Shadow was too late to offer immediate resistance.

Rathcourt had dropped away. Seeing The Shadow's dilemma, the cringing man had lost faith in his protector. As Rathcourt sagged moaning into a chair, The Shadow's right hand was loose; but he made no attempt to draw an automatic. Instead, he slowly raised both hands. Wearily, he faced Mocquino.

An ugly chuckle came from the Voodoo Master. Surveying The Shadow, Mocquino saw the soured features, the droopy, tired eyelids of James Rettigue. He knew that this was The Shadow. But Mocquino believed that the superman had yielded.

After a contemptuous leer toward Rathcourt, Mocquino advanced. Reaching The Shadow, the Voodoo Master thrust his hand beneath the latter's coat. He found two automatics. He brought them forth and tossed them to the floor.

All the while, tom-toms pounded in their torturing rhythm like beats of doom upon throbbing ears. Mocquino uttered a sharp command. The throbs ceased. The silence of the room was charged with menace. Then Mocquino spoke.

“One fool,” he sneered, “has lured another. Both unwittingly. You, Rathcourt—you were the first fool! I knew that you would talk, once you gained the opportunity.”

“He—he made me talk!” panted Rathcourt, pointing toward The Shadow. “He is the one to blame! Take his life, Mocquino—not mine!”

“Silence!” hissed the Voodoo Master. Then, his tone becoming suave: “You were the bait, Rathcourt. Good bait—only because you did not know my plans. I sent you to Atlantic City yesterday. Why? So that I could turn this penthouse into a snare.”

The Voodoo Master clapped his hands. His four henchmen moved in closer from their opposite doorways. Then two others appeared: one was Manuel, the valet; the other, a rogue who might have been the fellow's brother. Both were carrying tom-toms.

“Manuel and Fernando,” chortled Mocquino. “They prepared this trap. They admitted my servants and myself. All was ready hours ago. Look!”

MOCQUINO went to the wall and pulled away a forward-filled picture. Behind it was a disk: a loud-speaker. The Voodoo Master wrenched the device from its socket. He strode to a corner and whisked the cloth covering from a small table. He produced another amplifier. From a bookcase,

Mocquino yanked two massive volumes. A cord came with them. The books fell apart, to show a third loud-speaker.

Manuel and Fernando had laid aside their tom-toms. They had pocketed The Shadow's guns. They gathered the amplifiers and Mocquino added a fourth that he brought from behind a radiator. He pointed to a telephone that stood on a table in the corner. The instrument had a wire that terminated in a wall-socket.

"Some time ago," purred Mocquino, "you had special wiring placed in this penthouse, Rathcourt. You were pleased by the idea of a telephone that could be detached and plugged in elsewhere. Quite a convenience."

Picking up the telephone, Mocquino removed its cord from the wall. He carried the instrument to a table in the center of the room and plugged the wire into a floor-socket.

"While the place was torn out for the wiring," remarked Mocquino, "Manuel and Fernando added sockets of their own. Those were the hidden plugs for the amplifiers. I knew that some day I might need to terrify you, Rathcourt, with tom-tom beats from everywhere. To-night was the time. Manuel and Fernando drummed their tom-toms from another room. A microphone picked up the sounds and brought them here."

Mocquino had raised the cradle-type telephone. He was dialing a number. A voice came over the wire. Mocquino showed a suave smile as he spoke:

"Ah, Jose! I knew that you would answer... You are ready?... What?... Yes, there is time to tell me... Ah, you went there? Good! And afterward?... Ah! Even better! Bueno, Jose! That means another task for us to-night..."

"You have already called Cordez? Good! That was right... He is to be ready with the automobiles... Yes, I am at Rathcourt's. I want you here, Jose... When you have joined us, we shall be ready for departure..."

Mocquino laid the telephone on its stand. He looked toward The Shadow, who was standing close by.

"Sit down!" snarled Mocquino. "We have fifteen minutes yet. I wish to talk with you."

The Shadow complied in a fashion that befitted his character of Rettigue. Once in a large armchair, he relaxed and let his hands rest upon the arms. Doctor Mocquino stepped back from the center table.

"YOU are The Shadow," sneered the Voodoo Master. "I saw you two nights ago. I listened through an amplifier while you questioned Rathcourt to-night. You do not believe me? Look!"

He opened the front of a humidor stand and revealed a microphone. The instrument had picked up sounds through holes bored in the door of the square stand. Mocquino chuckled, as he detached the mike.

"I ordered the tom-toms," he purred, "before Rathcourt could say too much. You were asking him where I have my new headquarters. I shall tell you. In a place that you will never guess or find.

"By that I mean a place that you never could find; because you will have no further opportunity to search for it. Death will be my decree to-night. Death for The Shadow!"

Hideous gloats showed on the faces of Mocquino's henchmen. Rathcourt gasped pleading words.

“Kill him, Mocquino! But spare me—”

“You will not die.” Mocquino wheeled to Rathcourt. Then, as the weakling raised his hands in gratitude, the Voodoo Master issued new words: “You will live. You will become a zombi!”

“No, no!” cried Rathcourt. “That would be like death! I saw—I saw —”

“You saw a zombi once,” gloated Mocquino. “A man who stared. One who lived no longer, except as a walking corpse! I made that man a zombi”— Mocquino's tone was fierce—“because he was ready to betray me! You were betraying me to-night, Rathcourt. You will become a zombi!”

Hopeless terror dominated Rathcourt's chinless face. The man's gawky form was hunched. He gibbered inarticulate words, while his teeth chattered their fear.

Mocquino looked toward The Shadow, whose features had retained their listlessness. Apparently, the Voodoo Master thought that he could make The Shadow register emotion.

“In Hispaniola,” purred Mocquino, his tone insidious, “the masters of voodoo control beings whom they term 'zombie.' A zombi is a living dead man, whose body has been disinterred from its grave, then imbued with life at the command of the voodoo worker.

“The zombie are slaves, vitalized corpses that behave like mechanical figures. But I hold spells and incantations more powerful than those of ordinary voodoo workers! I can transform a living man into a zombi! It is too bad”—he paused, an evil twist upon his lips— “too bad that you can not live to witness the fate of Elridge Rathcourt.”

The Shadow made no comment. Mocquino thrust his leering face closer.

“The same fate,” he hissed, “that overtook Stanton Wallace!”

MOCQUINO hoped to learn whether or not The Shadow would recognize the name. He was disappointed. The Shadow's face returned its dreariness. Mocquino's lips fumed; his jaws tightened.

“Enough!” he gritted. “Jose will be here soon. Then you will die— and we shall depart! Come, Manuel! Fernando!” The Voodoo Master wheeled. “Carry away those amplifiers and the other apparatus. Pack them; then come back for Rathcourt. He will be in your custody.”

Manuel and Fernando complied. Rathcourt, hunched against the wall, was wild-eyed as he watched their departure. Then, half shrieking, the future zombi crept forward. He managed to mouth words as he approached Mocquino.

“Spare me,” he wailed. “You have one victim! Kill him—make him a zombi—do what you will! But let me serve you as I did before, as a member of the cult—”

“I have declared your fate,” rasped Mocquino. “My decisions never change; nor do my purposes fail!”

“You failed with Dunley Bligh!”

Rathcourt fairly shrieked the words. He had read the newspaper accounts of the fray aboard the Doranic. That memory awoke him to sudden argument.

“Bligh still lives!” Rathcourt was persistent. “Let me live also!”

Savagely, Mocquino thrust his face toward Rathcourt's. His tone became a disdainful snarl, as he issued his command:

“Stand back! I have decreed your fate! You are to be a zombi!”

As Mocquino hissed the word “zombi,” all reason left Elridge Rathcourt. Stark fear accomplished more than if the man had gained a new-found courage. With a frenzied bound, Rathcourt sprang forward. His clawing hands drove for Mocquino's throat.

The Voodoo Master had baited his dupe too long. A maddened man had turned upon his persecutor. Mocquino staggered back, writhing to free himself of the attacker.

The Shadow watched.

CHAPTER XIII. DEATH IN THE PENTHOUSE

SCATTERED thoughts had suddenly gathered within Elridge Rathcourt's brain. The dupe had realized that Doctor Mocquino was not infallible. In addition, he had found an answer to a problem which had terrified him.

Though Rathcourt had pleaded for life, he had gained the belief that death itself would be preferable to the fate of a zombi. Rathcourt had seen Stanton Wallace, after the latter had visited Mocquino's red room.

Death! In a sense, Rathcourt wanted it, and he had tried a way to force it. If he could not kill Mocquino, he would at least compel the guards to slay him, Rathcourt, instead. Yet none were moving forward—and The Shadow knew the reason.

Those four thought that Mocquino would overpower Rathcourt. They awaited their master's call before they acted. Even should it come, they would not try to kill Rathcourt. Mocquino wanted him for a zombi. His henchmen had heard the decree.

The struggle was fierce between Rathcourt and the Voodoo Master. Out of the midst of the scuffle came an articulate gurgle. It was the only cry that Mocquino could utter: a call for aid. Rathcourt, strong in frenzy, was choking the Voodoo Master.

The two guards from the outer porch sprang forward. The pair at the inner door hesitated; they were covering The Shadow. Both could not give up that vigil. One man grunted to the other, then sprang in to give new aid to Mocquino.

Elridge Rathcourt was a madman, wrenching away from the three guards who seized him. A lone gun was covering The Shadow; above the revolver, the scowling face of the darkish man who held it. A quick move by The Shadow would have brought prompt bullets.

The Shadow waited, as listless as before.

The lone guard leered contemptuously. He heard a shriek from Rathcourt, as the maddened prisoner went down beneath a sudden surge. At the cry, the single guard darted a quick glance toward the melee, where Mocquino had come free, puffing as he rubbed his throat. The guard looked back toward The Shadow. He was an instant late.

The Shadow had sprung to his feet. His right hand had swung to the table. Quick fingers were clamping the telephone, swinging it from the table, yanking the wire from the plug beneath. As Mocquino's henchman dropped back to gain new aim, The Shadow drove the telephone downward with a long, swift stroke.

THE guard's revolver barked. The bullet sizzled just beneath The Shadow's swinging arm. That was the

only shot. The Shadow sledged the scowling rogue with the finish of the driving swing. When the telephone met the dark guard's skull, the fellow's body crumpled to the floor.

The guard's revolver clattered. The Shadow made a feint to gain it; then twisted amazingly in the opposite direction. The move was masterful. Mocquino's other henchmen had suppressed Rathcourt. They were turning hurriedly. They fired in the direction of The Shadow's feint. Their whistling bullets thudded the wall.

The Shadow was whirling away in an amazing spring toward the penthouse roof. One guard alone was close enough to dive across his path. The others aimed, expecting The Shadow to clear the blocker. Instead, The Shadow made a sharp stop by the outer door. His right fist jabbed upward and caught the blocker's chin, just as the man swung downward with his gun.

The guard's head went back; but his revolver sped on, through the French windows, to clatter on the porch. As the guard sagged, The Shadow made a sidewise dive to the outer porch itself, pounced on the gun.

Mocquino's two remaining henchmen fired, just too late. For a moment, they hesitated; then Manuel and Fernando dashed in to join them. Four in all, Mocquino's minions sprang forth to the chase.

The Shadow had sped to the side rail of the roof. He jabbed two quick shots as he turned about. One pursuer gave a cry and dropped his gun arm. The others spread. Their revolvers were barking; but The Shadow was away, zigzagging toward the far rail.

Seeing the move, the three converged, piling in to trap The Shadow from different directions. Diving straight into the throng, The Shadow met the middle man, Fernando. With a slash of his revolver, he disarmed the rogue; grappling one-handed—he forced himself to use his injured left arm—he dragged Fernando back toward the outer rail. At the same time, he jabbed quick shots that sent the other two killers diving for cover.

The Shadow had numbed Fernando's hand with the heavy blow. He was grappling with his right; Fernando with his left. But the rogue's hand recovered. His right fist shot to his belt; it came up wielding a long-bladed knife.

The Shadow twisted away; he hoisted himself half across the rail, in order to avoid the coming slash.

Fernando made a balk; then changed direction. His arm stabbed downward. The Shadow's gun tongued up. With the flash, Fernando jolted. His arm swung wide; his knife clattered from the railing. His body sagged forward on The Shadow.

A fierce roar from the penthouse doorway. Poised on the rail, his right arm down, The Shadow saw Doctor Mocquino. The Voodoo Master had recovered. He was ready with leveled revolver, finger upon trigger. The Shadow gave a roll. Mocquino fired.

Timed with the shot, The Shadow sprawled beyond the rail. Mocquino's revolver blasted at vacancy. He ceased his fire; his lips phrased a triumphant cry that was echoed by his last two henchmen. Mocquino pictured The Shadow on a final, headlong plunge to the ground two hundred feet beneath.

MOTIONING to his henchmen, Mocquino started back into the penthouse. There he encountered an excited arrival. It was Jose Arilla. The rat-faced man gripped the voodoo doctor's arm.

“The police!” he ejaculated. “They trailed me here! I could have slipped them; but they heard the shots, just as my cab was stopping outside! I beat them to the elevator—”

“Come!”

Mocquino started toward the front portion of the penthouse. He would have forgotten Elridge Rathcourt; but the rescued man came bounding suddenly from behind a chair, brandishing a revolver.

Mocquino snarled. He pumped four shots into Rathcourt's body. As Rathcourt slumped, Mocquino fled.

He and his followers gained a stairway just as an elevator arrived at the penthouse level. Joe Cardona and a squad of detectives began a hurried chase. Downstairs, floor after floor, through an echoing fire tower, where wild revolvers barked.

The Voodoo Master and his men gained the rear street. Cardona and the squad arrived too late to stop them, as they dived aboard two waiting automobiles and sped away.

When Joe Cardona returned to the penthouse, he found Doctor Rupert Sayre upon the roof. Cardona growled the news of the escape; then added:

“We ought to nab them, though. The radio patrol is on the job. The bridges and the ferries are still covered. They can't get through the Holland Tunnel.”

WHILE Cardona was ordering the removal of bodies, Sayre stopped by the farther rail. He had seen detectives carry away the body of Fernando. A thought had struck Doctor Sayre. Casually, the physician looked over the rail. He saw two cedar trees tilted outward from the ledge of the nineteenth floor. He noted something sprawled beside them.

Doctor Sayre strolled through the penthouse. He took the stairs down to the floor below. He found a window at the end of a corridor. He stepped out to the ledge. There, he found The Shadow. The cedars had partly broken the lone fighter's dive; but the crash had been sufficient to stun The Shadow.

Sayre propped The Shadow against the inner wall. He began measures to revive the injured fighter; but he worked slowly, for he wanted to keep The Shadow here until the law had gone. Mocquino had gained another start. Sayre could see no immediate duty for The Shadow.

In that decision, Sayre made another error. The minutes that he let slip past were precious. The physician was listening as he watched The Shadow's pale, disguised face; he was hoping that soon there would be no sounds from the penthouse porch above. Then, he felt, he could revive The Shadow fully. For Sayre had already dodged explanations to Joe Cardona; and he wanted to avoid another complication. He preferred that the acting inspector should not know of this discovery on the nineteenth-story ledge. But while Sayre was keeping up a bluff with Cardona, he was also making trouble for The Shadow.

Doctor Mocquino, in flight, could prove as dangerous as in battle. With the Voodoo Master, even a retreat could be a forward move. The Shadow had guessed that Mocquino would find a new objective. That was why he had chanced the plunge to the cedars that he had noticed beneath the penthouse wall.

Unfortunately, the fall had brought temporary oblivion to The Shadow. Had Sayre revived him hurriedly, The Shadow could have told the physician what to do. Sayre, in delaying, had become the unwitting aid of Doctor Mocquino.

Again, The Shadow would be forced to seek the Voodoo Master; this time, without a clue. Elridge Rathcourt had died; with him had perished the last thread that The Shadow needed.

Moreover, when The Shadow once more began his search, the tracing of Doctor Mocquino would be doubly imperative. It would involve the lives of men who had served The Shadow! For Harry Vincent was still at Lamont Cranston's estate in New Jersey, unknowing of the fray in the penthouse.

CHAPTER XIV. FLIGHT BRINGS RESULTS

“A GRAY sedan bearing New York license. Number—”

Harry Vincent clicked off the radio in Lamont Cranston's living room. It was a short-wave set; Harry had been using it to listen in on New Jersey police calls. There was a reason why Harry cut off the call before he heard the license number of the gray sedan. Stanton Wallace had just entered the living room.

“What is it, Harry?” questioned Wallace, anxiously. “Something about Mocquino?”

“Yes,” replied Harry, quietly. “But don't let it worry you, Stan. The police are after him again.”

“Where? In New York?”

Harry nodded.

“It is murder, this time,” he stated. “Not merely armed resistance of the law. Mocquino has killed Elridge Rathcourt.”

Wallace did not speak. He sat down; his face troubled.

“He entered Rathcourt's penthouse,” resumed Harry. His tone was reassuring. “The police trailed him there; but he made a get-away. I caught snatches of the story, tuning in by short wave. They were starting to describe two automobiles. One was a gray sedan.

“They've boxed Mocquino in Manhattan. This time, he shouldn't have a chance. The outlets are already watched. I don't see how he can leave the Island. Nevertheless, the New Jersey State police are watching this side of the river.”

“Mocquino made a get-away with the trucks, two nights ago,” mused Wallace. “Bridges and ferries were watched then. He didn't have time to make the Holland Tunnel.”

“I know. But he may have been lucky, Stan. This time, the police are already covering. Mocquino is more likely to head for Long Island. Still he'll be blocked at any of the East River bridges.”

“Probably he'll stay in Manhattan, Harry.”

“I think so, Stan.”

Strolling over, Harry thwacked his new friend's shoulder.

“Buck up, old man,” he said. “Forget Mocquino. We've got something else to think about. Remember that call that came at seven o'clock? From Doctor Sayre?”

Stanton Wallace nodded.

“It's after nine, right now,” observed Harry, glancing at the clock. “From the way Sayre spoke, we're liable to hear from Joe Cardona at any time. If he shows up, you know what you're to do.”

“I'll act dumb,” assured Wallace. “I'll keep staring and pretend that I'm dazed—”

A knock from the door interrupted. Harry called to enter. Richards appeared.

“A car has just arrived, Mr. Vincent,” said the servant. “I thought it was Stanley, so I went out to the driveway. A man spoke to me. He said he was a detective.”

“From where?” queried Harry.

“From New York,” answered Richards. “He said that Inspector Cardona sent him. He wants to see Doctor Sayre's patient, to take him back to New York with him.”

“Did you ask him to come in?”

“He said he would wait outside. Inspector Cardona prefers the visit to be kept a secret.”

“Of course.”

HARRY turned to Stanton. He gave a nod which the other understood. Mechanically, Stanton arose from his chair. Richards looked puzzled as Harry guided him to the door. Still wondering, the servant followed through the hall.

“Shall I turn on the porch light, Mr. Vincent?”

Harry shook his head in response to the inquiry from Richards. He opened the door and guided Wallace out into the darkness. Harry spoke in a whisper.

“The bluff will be easier in the darkness,” he remarked. “I'll introduce myself and go along. I'm your attendant. Sayre will back it.”

A car was standing in the driveway. In the gloom of night, the automobile was no more than a long, colorless shape. Dimmed headlights; red sparkles at the rear. Those were the only distinguishing marks. The motor was idling in rhythmic fashion.

A man was barely discernible beside the car. He stepped forward as Harry and Stanton approached. He put a gruff question:

“Is this Doctor Sayre's patient?”

“I am bringing him,” replied Harry. “My name is Vincent. Doctor Sayre left me in charge of the man. You are from New York headquarters?”

“Yes. I'm Detective Sergeant Berrani. Inspector Cardona sent me. I've got a squad with me. On account of trouble across the river. Here, let me help you get this fellow into the car.”

The door of the car was open. Harry and the other man helped Stanton aboard. They pushed him to the rear seat, past another man who was hunched on a folding seat. Harry climbed in beside Stanton. Berrani took the other folding seat. He closed the door; the car started out the driveway.

Harry noted two men in front; the driver and the man beside him. The presence of four detectives gave him confidence. Harry gained a feeling of greater security as they swung to the roadway outside the drive. This came when Berrani turned in his seat, to give a nudge toward the rear window.

“Another car is coming with us,” informed the gruff speaker. “Look back and you'll see it. I had it waiting outside.”

Harry looked back. He saw the headlights of a second automobile. The two cars were driving eastward.

“We're keeping off the main roads,” continued Berrani. “The inspector wants us to come into town quietlike. There's too much excitement on the other side. They've got a new trail on this murderer, Mocquino.”

“What has he done?” queried Harry, feigning anxiety. “I thought the fellow had disappeared.”

“He bobbed up again. Bumped a guy named Rathcourt at the Hotel Delbar. They're hunting all over Manhattan for him—”

Berrani paused to stare ahead. They had pulled away from the car in back and had come to a well-paved highway. Up ahead, a man was standing in the center of the road, signaling for the car to stop. Harry recognized the uniform of a New Jersey State policeman.

The big car halted. The trooper stepped in from the glare of the headlights. Berrani leaned from his window and flashed a badge. He spoke in his gruff, slightly accented tone.

“We're from New York headquarters—”

A second trooper interrupted. He had stepped up in back of the car. His fist came up from a holster, carrying a gun.

“Yeah?” he queried. “What are you doing in this gray sedan, with the license number we're after? Where did you pick it up?”

“A few miles west of here—”

“Without notifying the local authorities? That doesn't listen good to me. Come on, all of you! Pile out while we talk this over!”

A fierce hiss came from the man seated beside the driver. Like a whip, the big car snapped forward. The low gear whined as the machine whisked away from the astonished State policeman. A revolver spoke too late. The trooper was slow with the trigger.

A gasp had come from Stanton Wallace. Forgetting his pretended daze. Stanton was declaring his recognition of the snarled voice that had come from the front seat:

“Doctor Mocquino!”

HARRY heard the gasp. He lashed forward to strike down Berrani. A revolver muzzle jabbed Harry's ribs. At the same instant, the man in the other folding seat leaned back to cover Stanton. Berrani spoke harshly. By the glare of an approaching car, Harry saw the supposed dick's face. It was ratlike.

“No tough stuff!” came the order. “If you try it, we'll rub you out and dump you!”

“Very good, Jose,” purred the man from the front seat. He had turned; Harry saw Mocquino's gloating visage. “Ah! We have two prizes! I have seen your face before.” He leaned over the seat to eye Harry. “Yes. You were one of those who fought against me the other night.”

The flash of light had passed. Mocquino's purr continued while gun muzzles held Harry and Stanton at bay.

“So you came along with Wallace,” chortled Mocquino. “And Wallace is a zombi no longer. More of The Shadow's doings. The Shadow! Bah! He will trouble me no longer. He is dead! At least, he should be dead. He fell twenty stories to the ground.

“He tried to balk Mocquino. He failed. Yes, failed!—like all who believe that they can offset my power. I possess strength that no one can defeat!”

Shots were popping from behind the fleeing car. The troopers were pursuing in a sidecar motor cycle.

Mocquino delivered a sharp command. Brakes crunched; the big sedan veered sharply and skidded to a side road. It began to slacken speed.

A siren whined. The motor cycle wheeled to complete the chase. From the side window, Harry saw a car that Mocquino had spotted before he gave the order to turn off. It was a police car, coming up the main road. It swung in behind the motor cycle.

The gray sedan was stopping. Harry wondered why. He could not picture Mocquino in the act of sudden surrender. The State police had ceased their fire. Harry saw Mocquino's hand extending a white handkerchief from the window. Despite that signal, the officers were wary.

They dropped from sidecar and automobile. Half a dozen strong, they started to deploy. They intended to surround the gray sedan, to approach it from all angles. Suddenly, Mocquino rasped another order. The sedan shot forward.

Revolvers spoke. The police car started forward; Harry could see its headlights in the mirror. Two officers had remained in their automobile. A machine gun began its drill, as others leaped to the running board. In a minute, the gray sedan would have been crippled and overhauled. But Mocquino had allowed for that.

JUST as the police barrage began, headlights blazed from the entrance to the side road. Mocquino's second sedan had arrived. His rear guard was taking up the battle. Submachine guns rattled, as the reserve crooks bore down upon the law.

The gray sedan was swinging another turn. Again from the side window, Harry saw developments. The police had quickly ceased their fire. A brilliant searchlight from Mocquino's second car enabled Harry to witness how the officers escaped death.

The driver of the police car ditched his machine. Troopers dived from doorways and rolled beneath the rails of a fence. Those who had deployed were quick to drop for cover. Riddling bullets from machine guns found only the motor cycle and the abandoned police car.

Mocquino's reserves roared onward, to follow the gray sedan. Troopers sprang up from cover, to blaze with their revolvers. The gray sedan was well out of range. The second car was speeding rapidly enough to escape the hurried shots. Pursuit was ended; for the motor cycle and the ditched police car had been rendered useless.

Mocquino and his double crew had run the gauntlet. Lost in Manhattan, they had reappeared in New Jersey. Again, they were headed toward New York.

To Harry, the sequence was amazing; but it aroused him to a fit of fury. Catching a sudden opportunity, he snatched at Jose Arilla's gun. He wrenched away the pretended detective's weapon.

Stanton Wallace saw the move. He jabbed a punch to the jaw of the man who had him covered.

Wildly, Jose hoisted Harry upward. Doctor Mocquino, snarling, dived over the back of the front seat. His fierce hands caught Harry's throat. Choking, The Shadow's agent subsided. At the same moment, Stanton's adversary managed a return punch. It was a squarer, harder stroke than the one that Stanton had given. With a groan, Stanton Wallace slumped back.

A few seconds later, the prisoners were suppressed. Doctor Mocquino had gained a bottle from the front seat. The odor of chloroform filled the car. Flapping cloths were pressed to the faces of the prisoners. Struggling weakly, Harry and Stanton sank into oblivion.

A gloating chuckle came from Doctor Rodil Mocquino. The Voodoo Master had suppressed all opposition. His prisoners were helpless; his car was speeding on to safety. Mocquino's flight had brought him new success!

But in Manhattan was The Shadow, winged temporarily, under the care of a physician, but gaining new strength to take to the trail of the Voodoo Master.

CHAPTER XV. SAYRE RECEIVES VISITORS

SATURDAY morning was a busy one for Doctor Rupert Sayre. He had postponed appointments from earlier in the week. The result was a flood of patients. It was after two o'clock when he stepped into his reception room to find a lone patient waiting. This was a chubby-faced man, whose expression was serious. Sayre invited him into the office.

"You had an appointment?" inquired the physician. "I do not recall your name—"

"I am Rutledge Mann."

Sayre showed a relieved smile. He had expected a visit from this gentleman, ever since his last call to Burbank. Over the telephone, the quiet-voiced contact man had stated that Sayre would soon have a chance for conference. Like Burbank, Mann was one of The Shadow's passive agents. But where Burbank made contact by telephone alone, Mann carried on such negotiations in person.

"How is your patient?"

Mann's slow, deliberate query roused Sayre. The physician arose and conducted his visitor through a short passage. He opened a door and showed a darkened room. A figure was stretched upon a cot. Steady breathing could be heard.

"He is asleep," whispered Sayre. "It would not be wise to awaken him. He has a slight concussion."

"Will it be gone when he awakes?"

"I believe so. He struck his head when he fell to the tiles beside the cedar trees. The blow was not severe, but it left him dazed. I just about managed to get him out of the Hotel Delbar."

SAYRE and Mann returned to the office. The physician felt that he could rely thoroughly upon this solemn-faced investment broker. Burbank had assured him that he could speak in detail. Mann's appearance gave Sayre added confidence.

"Cardona knows nothing of this," informed Sayre. "He called me an hour ago and stated that he was very busy tracing Mocquino."

"He has had results?"

"None. Mocquino's appearance in New Jersey, an hour after the fight at the Delbar, has left Cardona baffled."

"What else did he say?"

"Merely that he could not spare time to examine the staring man. He wants me to keep Stanton Wallace for further treatment. Cardona, of course, does not know Wallace's name. Nor does he definitely connect the episode of the staring man with Mocquino's machinations—"

"One moment, doctor. You say that Cardona has not seen Wallace recently?"

“Of course not.”

Mann looked troubled.

“I have just come from New Jersey,” he stated. “I went there as Mr. Cranston's investment broker. I talked with Richards.”

“Did you see Vincent? Or Wallace?”

“No, because they had gone. Richards said they left last night.”

“Where did they go?”

“Men came for them. Detectives from New York headquarters. They said Cardona wanted to see Wallace. Vincent went along.”

“But Cardona could not have sent for him! Cardona was hot on the trail of Mocquino—”

Sayre broke off speaking. He sank back in his chair. The answer had dawned.

“It was Mocquino!” gasped the physician. “He trapped Vincent and Wallace! That is why he was in New Jersey!”

“So it appears.”

SAYRE sat drumming the desk. Mann retained his calmness. When the contact man spoke, his words were definite. “Every emergency offers a solution,” declared Mann. “Fortunately, Burbank and I are well supplied with details. We can face the facts. Vincent and Wallace are prisoners. The Shadow is unable to aid them.”

“He will be, soon.”

“Before to-night?”

“I am sure of it.”

“Good! That brings us to another fact. To-night, Mocquino meets with his voodoo cult.”

“Where? Do you know?”

“I have no idea. Nevertheless, The Shadow may learn, once he has recuperated. If Vincent and Wallace are as yet unharmed, it is unlikely that they will suffer prior to the meeting.”

Sayre nodded. The statement was convincing. He knew Mocquino's flare for the theatrical, the way in which the Voodoo Master handled his dupes.

“Of course,” agreed Sayre. “Mocquino must impress the members of his cult. Whatever he does to Vincent and Wallace will be in the presence of the circle. I think I know what it will be. I delved deeply into the study of voodoo practices.

“Mocquino unquestionably used Wallace as an example. He thrust him into the red room and made him a temporary automaton. In that state, Wallace would have passed for a zombi—a living dead man. Voodoo doctors claim the power of obtaining such results.

“Moreover”—Sayre paused and stared toward the room where The Shadow rested—“last night, coming

here from the Hotel Delbar, The Sha—that is, my present patient—repeated that one word: 'zombi,' time and again.”

“Then all depends upon his prompt recovery,” announced Mann, rising. “If he can locate Mocquino's present headquarters, he will be able to strike at once. He ordered certain equipment for such an expedition.”

“Equipment?” queried Sayre.

“Yes,” replied Mann. “It is at present in my office at the Badger Building. That is where I shall remain until I receive further word. You will give this information to The—to your patient, as soon as he awakes.

“Meanwhile, I shall arrange for your protection. Since it is possible that Mocquino has connected you with Wallace, we must make provision. It would be unwise for you to appeal to Cardona. So I shall notify Burbank to post watchers outside. They should arrive here presently.”

Sayre shook hands with his visitor. Mann departed. Returning to his desk, Sayre methodically made a notation on a memo pad: “Equipment ready at Mann's office.” That done, Sayre began to ponder upon circumstances.

He realized that The Shadow possessed an organization of efficient workers; that Burbank and Mann could supply orders for active agents to follow, even while The Shadow was incapacitated. Routine performance, however, could not prove sufficient to cope with Doctor Mocquino.

Where was the missing voodoo doctor? His name was emblazoned in headlines. His description was known to a T. After his escape from Manhattan, he had reappeared in New Jersey; but there he had been hounded eastward. His only refuge seemed to be New York, where the hunt still persisted. Did the Voodoo Master actually possess some witchcraft? Sayre actually paused to consider that outlandish theory.

Trucks—automobiles—henchmen—these were gone with Mocquino. As for his cult members, none were known. They were probably all persons of supposed repute, like Elridge Rathcourt. But they would not speak; and there was no new trail to any of them.

A CREEPING sound halted Sayre's reverie. The physician looked up from his desk. Alarm seized him as he observed a man who had entered the office. The fellow was darkish, his features ratlike. Sayre pushed his right hand toward a desk drawer. A warning came from the intruder's lips. A revolver glimmered in the man's hand.

“Good afternoon, doctor.”

The rat-faced visitor pocketed his gun as he spoke. He had no further need of it. Two others had appeared at the doorway of the office. Both were armed.

“Allow me to introduce myself,” The darkish intruder smiled in ugly fashion. “I am Jose Arilla. You have heard my name, eh?”

“Yes,” admitted Sayre, “I heard it mentioned.”

“By Inspector Cardona, I suppose?”

Arilla paused to extract a cigarette from his pocket. He lighted the cigarette and puffed. Sayre scented the aroma of heavy tobacco. He recalled the odor from yesterday. He had noted that same smoke here in this office. For the first time, Sayre realized that Arilla had been here, listening to that call to New

Jersey.

“I come from Doctor Mocquino,” announced Arilla, smoothly. “He is very clever, Doctor Mocquino. He told me that I would find no police here. He was right. He said that you had not told Cardona of Wallace's recovery; on that account the police would be absent.”

A pause. Arilla delivered a polite bow.

“Doctor Mocquino extends his respects,” he added. “Since you found some way to restore his zombi, he would like to know the details. He regards you as a man worth meeting. He would like you to be his guest.”

“Suppose that I decline?” demanded Sayre. “What then?”

“Ah! You cannot refuse. Doctor Mocquino would not hear of it. You see, he intends to make Wallace a zombi once again, along with another man who is also a prisoner. A man named Vincent. You must come, Doctor Sayre, to witness the experiment.

“You must also be prepared to stay a while. Doctor Mocquino does not care to have his zombie restored to regular life. Since you have found some method of changing a zombi's condition, you belong with Doctor Mocquino. Come! You must accompany us.”

ARILLA motioned toward the door. The others aimed their revolvers. Sayre had no choice. Slowly, he walked forward. He realized two points: first, that he might treat with Doctor Mocquino when he met the Voodoo Master; second, that The Shadow must be kept free. Otherwise, all hope would be ended.

By prompt submission, Sayre fancied that he would draw his captors from these premises without further search. His hopes sank, however, after he had allowed himself to be conducted to the street.

There, he was urged into a taxi manned by a dark-faced driver: another of Mocquino's West Indian servitors. One of Arilla's aids stepped in beside him. Arilla turned to the other.

“Come, Manuel. We will look about the doctor's office.”

The two departed. Sayre realized that Arilla's companion was Rathcourt's former servant. Would they find The Shadow? Sayre could only wait, tense as he hoped that their search would not cover the entire place. He feared to start a battle, lest Arilla would guess the reason.

Sayre was counting, too, upon the protectors promised by Mann. If those aids would only come! The future, it seemed, was hinging upon the next few minutes.

Mocquino's men of murder were at large. The Shadow, helpless, might become their prey!

CHAPTER XVI. DARK BRINGS THE SHADOW

JOSE ARILLA chuckled when he returned to Doctor Sayre's office. He glanced at the desk clock; then toward the window. He turned and spoke to Manuel:

“Nearly three o'clock. Bueno! That is a time when this office should be shut, on Saturday. It is well that we waited until the last patient had left. This place should look as if closed. Draw the curtains, Manuel.”

Manuel complied. The room became gloomy when the shades were drawn. Arilla opened the door to the reception room. He pointed to another window.

“That shade also, Manuel. This is the room where I listened, yesterday.”

Manuel entered the reception room and darkened it. Arilla indicated the doorway to the passage.

“Look through there, Manuel. Tell me about any other rooms you find. Pronto!”

Arilla went to Sayre's desk. He opened a drawer, found a revolver and dropped it in his pocket. He tapped his own gun with his right hand, Sayre's with his left. He turned about, to see Manuel returning. There was just enough light for Arilla to discern the other's face. Manuel closed the door of the passage.

“I looked into a darkened room,” stated Manuel. “There I saw a cot. I thought that I heard breathing, as of a man asleep—”

“Who was there?”

“I do not know. Since the shades were drawn, I thought that the room was as you wanted it.”

“You fool!” spat Arilla. “Go back! Find what is there! Wait! I am going with you.”

Manuel was opening the door. As Arilla stepped to join him, the fellow dropped back. In the gloom, Arilla saw a figure, a tall shape that leaned against the door frame. Manuel, closer than Arilla, recognized a face. He cried a name:

“The Shadow!”

RATHCOURT'S servant had seen the features of James Rettigue. The Shadow, weary of countenance, looked weakened. He was clad in slippers, dark trousers and white shirt, open at the collar. His face was pale; but his eyes, fully opened, held a glimmer.

Manuel's trip to the darkened room had awakened The Shadow. He had heard the intruder leave. Though weaponless, he had come to investigate. As Sayre had hoped, The Shadow's brain had cleared. Weakness was his only handicap.

Arilla spun toward the outer door, whipping out his revolver. Manuel, rooted, yanked forth his own gun, which he had previously pocketed. His hand came snapping upward, straight for The Shadow's body.

A strange laugh escaped pale lips. With that peal of mockery, The Shadow drove his right arm downward, while his left shoulder hooked the door frame. His clutching hand met the upswing of Manuel's revolver. Fingers clamped the gun barrel; The Shadow's sweeping hand wrenched the weapon from Manuel's grasp.

The action was a crosswise sweep that carried The Shadow almost clear of the door frame. He was off balance. Manuel, his gun gone, made a dart for The Shadow's throat. With a twist, The Shadow came up, his long arm swinging in a backhand stroke. The handle of the revolver thudded the side of Manuel's jaw.

Manuel sprawled. Rolling over, he dived past Arilla, anxious to gain the outer door. Arilla, snarling, aimed for the motionless, half-turned figure of The Shadow. He pressed the trigger of his revolver. His action was deliberate, too much so for his evil purpose.

The Shadow wrenched backward, just as Arilla fired. The revolver bullet pinged the wall beside the doorway. This time, The Shadow's left hand, though still stiff from the bullet wound, had not failed him. A quick grip, a jerk of his shoulders—he had swung clear just before Arilla's shot.

The Shadow's right hand was not idle. As his body rolled, that hand performed a maneuver. Fingers flipped the revolver in the air; instantly, the waiting hand caught the weapon. The Shadow's forefinger

found the trigger. Arilla saw the gleam of the gun. He fired as he dived through the outer door, following Manuel. Arilla's shot zoomed wide, just as The Shadow fired.

A bullet whistled past Arilla's neck. The Shadow, too, had missed; but only because he had fired the first shot while the revolver was still settling in his hand.

Seeing Arilla's flight, The Shadow bounded forward. His foot caught the telephone cord beside the desk. With a long sprawl, The Shadow flattened upon the floor, still gripping Manuel's revolver.

OUTSIDE, listeners had heard the shots. An instant later, they saw Manuel and Arilla come bounding across the sidewalk. Doctor Sayre was already covered by a revolver. He could not budge. Manuel and Arilla piled aboard. The fake taxi driver had the cab in motion the instant that they arrived.

Doctor Sayre managed to glance through the rear window as they rounded the corner. He saw no sign of a pursuer. Arilla was growling to Manuel in Spanish. Sayre could not tell whether they had fled to avoid a challenger; or because they had committed murder. He feared that it was for the latter reason. For Sayre's last backward gaze was proof that no one was upon the trail.

The physician set his lips to suppress a groan. Three guns were jabbing him. There was no chance to return. The shots from the office had been muffled. No passer-by had been present to hear them. Sayre could picture The Shadow lying upon the floor, mortally wounded.

THE first portion of Sayre's picture was correct. The Shadow still was prone; but he lay unwounded. The jolt of his fall had weakened him. Dizzy, he preferred not to rise. There was still a chance that invaders would return. From this position, with gun thrust forward, The Shadow could meet them most effectively.

Minutes passed, while The Shadow waited. Slowly, his upraised hand began to lower. Even this effort was wearisome. The Shadow let the revolver clatter to the floor. Raising up on both hands, he found the edge of the desk. He reached for the telephone, still intact from The Shadow's tripping on the cord. His hands missed it. Head swimming, The Shadow sagged back to the floor and lay there, motionless.

The desk clock ticked slowly, steadily. It was sounding the passage of precious minutes. The Shadow had lapsed into oblivion. Sayre was a prisoner; he would not return to aid his weakened patient. But others were due.

At the end of thirty minutes, footsteps sounded softly from the outer passage that led in from the street. Whispered voices followed.

“Wait here, Hawkeye-”

“Look, Cliff! On the floor!”

A few moments later, Cliff and Hawkeye were stooping above The Shadow's prone form. Together they lifted their chief and carried him to the inner room. They placed him on the cot. Cliff produced a glass of water. He forced the liquid past The Shadow's lips. Eyes opened wearily.

Hawkeye was about to raise the window shade. Cliff stopped him. The Shadow spoke in a tired tone. He pointed to a coat and vest that were hanging on a chair.

“The vial. In the lower pocket of the vest—”

Cliff found a tiny bottle and uncorked it. He brought it to The Shadow, who took it and carried it to his lips. A purplish liquid showed in the gloomy light. The Shadow swallowed the entire potion. Slowly, he

began to strengthen.

“I must rest,” he decided. “A short while only. After that—food. Bring it—while I rest—”

The Shadow's head settled back upon the pillows. Cliff left Hawkeye in charge and went outside. He stepped aboard a waiting taxi, driven by Moe Shrevnitz, another of The Shadow's aids. Cliff went to a restaurant. He returned with a large container filled with soup.

The Shadow stirred when Cliff arrived. He managed to prop himself against the pillows; then he began to partake of nourishment. Cliff and Hawkeye sat by in the increasing darkness. It was after four o'clock, heavy clouds were bringing early dusk. Very little light reached this secluded room.

THE SHADOW rested after he had eaten. Minutes ticked past, while his agents waited. At last The Shadow spoke. His voice was steady.

“Tell me all the details,” he ordered, “beginning with last night.”

“Rathcourt was murdered by Mocquino,” stated Cliff. “Doctor Sayre found you on the nineteenth floor of the Hotel Delbar. He brought you here. You were dazed.”

“I remember portions of the trip.”

“Cardona pursued Mocquino. The Voodoo Master slipped him. Every outlet was covered; but he got away to New Jersey.”

“To New Jersey—”

“Yes; an hour later. He fought a battle with the State police. They forced him toward New York. Once more, Mocquino disappeared. To-day, we learned that he had—”

Cliff paused. The Shadow spoke quietly:

“Mocquino captured Vincent and Wallace?”

“Yes!” exclaimed Cliff. “But how do you—”

“How do I know? Their capture would have been the only reason for his appearance in New Jersey. Tell me: what traces has the law gained?”

“They had none,” replied Cliff, “until a few hours ago. On our way here, I bought an extra. Mocquino's two trucks, used to escape from the house next to the Europa Building, have been found abandoned in New Jersey. The two cars he used last night are—”

“Here in Manhattan.”

Again Cliff was amazed. The Shadow had stated the exact case. The police had found the sedans in a New York garage. They were baffled by the situation; yet The Shadow had divined it.

“New York and New Jersey,” declared The Shadow. “Stanton Wallace was taken from New York to New Jersey; then sent back to New York. Elridge Rathcourt was in New York with Mocquino. He was sent to Atlantic City. He returned to New York.

“Last night, Mocquino left New York. He arrived in New Jersey. He has not been seen since. Perhaps it is because he believes that I am dead. That is something that Doctor Sayre could answer. But Sayre is no longer here. He, too, was taken.”

“By Mocquino?” gasped Cliff. “We were afraid that he—”

“By those who served Mocquino. They, too, move fast. From your account, they must have gone to New Jersey last night, along with the Voodoo Master. Mocquino has played his trump too often!”

THE SHADOW'S voice had taken on a sinister tone. His eyes were no longer wearied. Cliff could see them gleaming in the gloom.

“Once—twice—that would have been enough!” pronounced The Shadow. “Mocquino was prepared for flight from which he could strike when occasion called. But he has counted too much upon his unique situation.

“He has baffled the law; but I can name his method. Simply because it allows but one solution. All that I need is information. I can use whatever the law has gained. Go, Marsland, telephone to detective headquarters. Ask for Cardona.”

“And when he answers?” queried Cliff, anxiously.

“Tell him that you are speaking for Doctor Sayre,” replied The Shadow. “Mention that Sayre has been called from the city. State that Sayre may return. Ask when Cardona can see him.”

“And if Cardona is not there?”

“Learn when he will be. It is best to call from here, instead of through Burbank. Then you can answer directly, if there is a return call.”

Cliff went from the darkened room. He returned a few minutes later.

“I talked to Markham,” he explained. “He says that Cardona is in conference with Commissioner Weston. He will be back at headquarters by seven o'clock.”

The Shadow made no response. Cliff added a comment:

“I found a notation on a memo pad on Sayre's desk. It says that the equipment is ready in Mann's office.”

“What time is it at present?” inquired The Shadow.

“It was quarter of five,” replied Cliff, “when I looked at Sayre's desk clock.”

A pause. Then came the Shadow's whisper.

“Instructions!” The sibilant tone carried command. “Send Shrevnitz for the equipment. Bring it here. Arrange for the light truck to be ready at the New Era Garage. After that—”

A pause, The Shadow's tone had changed. He was quiet in speech as he leaned back upon his pillows:

“After that, remain here. Call me at half past six.”

The Shadow's eyelids closed. His breath came with a deep sigh. A few minutes later, he was sleeping, while Cliff and Hawkeye stood silent and dumfounded.

Worriment, too, wrinkled their features, for in the minds of both was the question whether The Shadow was physically equal to attempt rescue of Vincent, Sayre, and Wallace.

CHAPTER XVII. MOCQUINO ENTERTAINS

“GET up!”

Harry Vincent responded to the growled order. He blinked as he arose from the floor. He was in a square room with plain walls; a single light was dazzling his eyes. Coming to his feet, he stared at two of Doctor Mocquino's servants.

“Get up!”

The repeated growl was not for Harry. It was addressed to Stanton Wallace, who was also coming to life. Harry saw his friend rise drowsily. He was not surprised. He felt dopey; he knew that he and Stanton had been drugged.

Harry could remember intervals in the past. All had been hazy moments of blackness. He realized that he and Stanton had been kept in this windowless room, without light. Harry could not guess how long.

“Come!”

One of Mocquino's men opened a door and led the prisoners through a narrow passage. Harry noted a smooth wall on the right; other doors on the left. The smooth wall was slightly curved. At last it ended; but the passage still continued. The smooth, curved wall had been replaced by a straight, rough one.

At last they came to a door. A servitor opened it. Harry and Stanton stepped into a widened room, that was large in size but odd in shape. It had three doors, all in one long, straight wall. Harry and Stanton entered by a door near one end of the straight wall.

The remaining walls were curved and paneled. In a sense, they formed a single wall, like a semicircle. The woodwork on the curving wall appeared like a barrier that was hiding something beyond. Another oddity existed at the end of the room, toward the center of the long curve.

There, Harry saw two upright posts, several feet apart. Beyond them was a larger support, much thicker than an ordinary post. It was at least four feet in diameter. It made the nearer posts look flimsy.

A man was seated in a chair placed between the two thin posts, his back toward the huge pillar. It was Doctor Rodil Mocquino, attired in golden robe and crimson sash. In front of the Voodoo Master was a table, set for four. The servants ushered Harry to one end of the table; Stanton to the other. The prisoners sat down.

“Dinner will be informal,” purred Mocquino, glancing at his unshaven visitors and noting their rumpled attire. “Another guest will join us very shortly. It is time that you dined.”

Stanton was silent; but Harry boldly put a question:

“What time is it?”

“Exactly six o'clock,” replied Mocquino, “and this is Saturday evening. You have—shall we say slept?—since last night. You must be hungry.”

“I am,” admitted Harry.

“And you, Wallace?” queried Mocquino, focusing his eyes upon the other prisoner. “Come! Speak up!”

“Saturday,” mumbled Stanton. “The night that the voodoo cult meets —”

“Of course,” chuckled Mocquino. “Yes, Wallace, you will again hear the tom-toms. But forget them for the present. Our last guest is arriving.”

STANTON WALLACE pulled himself together with a shudder. Harry saw it, and experienced an odd sensation. He would have sworn that the room shivered with Stanton's action. Then, muffled, Harry heard a beat. He could not guess the source of the slow thrum. It was not the stroke of a tom-tom. But it seemed to add force to Mocquino's prediction.

Dopily, Harry began to sway in his chair. He caught himself and steadied; but he could not overcome the impression that he was being carried off through space, together with this room. He saw a leering smile on Mocquino's face. Then a door opened at one end of the straight wall.

Harry stared when he saw Doctor Rupert Sayre.

The physician was calm as he approached the table. He smiled encouragingly to Stanton; then nodded to Harry. At Mocquino's suggestion, Sayre took the chair opposite the Voodoo Master. Mocquino clapped his hands. Two servants arrived, bringing food. Mocquino and his enforced guests began their repast.

Harry realized that his mind was in confusion. He heard sounds that he could not identify. He ceased to try; but still the sounds continued. The thrum-thrum, in its monotone. Odd rumbles that seemed from afar. All the while, he felt himself swimming; nevertheless, he ate, confident that food would restore his senses. Stanton copied Harry's example.

Mocquino was smiling wisely, talking to Doctor Sayre.

"Our companions," observed the Voodoo Master, "do not know their present whereabouts. It would be unwise to inform them, doctor. I see no need of doing so."

"Nor do I," returned Sayre, finishing a plate of soup. "Where they are will not help them."

"Wisely spoken." Mocquino's chuckle was malicious. "Their status is quite different from yours. But we can discuss that later. By the way, doctor, may I ask what mode of treatment you used to restore Wallace to his normal condition?"

"I chose a method opposite to yours."

"Ah! You guessed my method? The way in which I change a man into a zombi?"

Stanton Wallace gulped. He was losing interest in food. Harry, too, was showing a troubled expression. Sayre eyed Mocquino. He thought it best to talk bluntly with the Voodoo Master.

"By your method," said the physician, "I supposed you mean the red room. Am I correct?"

Mocquino nodded.

"My antidote," resumed Sayre, "was a green room. With green lights. I installed it in New Jersey, simply to have Wallace close to the green surroundings of the countryside."

"Very interesting. A device quite worthy of The Shadow."

"I am not The Shadow."

"Of course not. But you must have acted upon his advice. Too bad about The Shadow. I should have liked to have him here to-night. But since he is dead—"

MOCQUINO broke off. He looked beyond the table. He saw Jose Arilla standing by the door. The rat-faced man was making gestures.

“What is it, Jose?” inquired Mocquino.

“I must speak to you,” returned Arilla. “Privately, master.”

“Come! Speak at once! It will not matter if these persons hear.”

“But it is about The Shadow—”

“All the more reason why you should speak promptly.”

Arilla nodded; then bared his teeth.

“The Shadow!” he snarled. “The Shadow is not dead!”

“What?” Mocquino glared as he came up from his chair. “The Shadow still lives? After that twenty-story fall?”

“He was at Doctor Sayre's—”

Mocquino stared at Sayre, expecting an explanation. The physician stopped eating and gave a cryptic explanation.

“The Shadow did not fall twenty stories,” he said. “He fell a considerable distance, though. Enough, perhaps, to have killed any ordinary man. But The Shadow is not an ordinary man.”

“You found him?” scowled Mocquino. “You took The Shadow to your office?”

“Yes. He was not seriously hurt. He was quite improved when your servants came for me.”

“That is true, master!” cried out Arilla. “He came upon us like a ghost! He snatched away Manuel's gun! He fired at me—”

“And you ran from him?”

Mocquino was threatening. Arilla looked about. Manuel had entered and was close beside him. With supporting testimony, Arilla was inspired to resist Mocquino's challenge.

“The Shadow is not human!” he gasped. “He is what I say—a ghost! Bullets pass through him like a vapor! We do not doubt your power, master. But The Shadow, too, has power—”

Manuel was nodding. Arilla kept on:

“At the old house!” he panted. “I have talked with those who fought there. No bullets could harm The Shadow! He advanced in the face of guns! At Rathcourt's—I have talked with Manuel—let him speak—”

“I saw The Shadow at Rathcourt's,” put in Manuel, promptly. “I saw guns pointed toward his heart. I saw those weapons fired. One would have thought that the cartridges were blank—”

“And to-day,” added Arilla, “I fired point-blank. My aim was perfect! My bullet did not even stop The Shadow's laugh!”

Mocquino was glowering. Sayre, turning, saw the fearful expressions on the faces of the Voodoo Master's minions. Harry and Stanton were looking on, elated. Sayre saw a chance for a conclusive statement.

“They are right, Mocquino,” expressed the physician. “Scientifically and from a medical standpoint, The Shadow is superhuman. When he fell four stories from the penthouse roof, last night—”

SAYRE'S bluff hit home. He knew that Mocquino had no knowledge of the fact that The Shadow had dropped but one floor. Sayre specified four floors, as just enough to make Mocquino ponder. Had he said more, the Voodoo Master would not have believed him.

As it was, Sayre had added one too many. Had he said three, Mocquino would have been convinced. The mention of four made the Voodoo Master believe for a few moments. Then Mocquino's face showed doubt.

The full effect, however, was impressed upon Arilla and Manuel. They believed, and with good judgment. They had accepted Mocquino as a master who possessed occult powers. They served him because they feared him. The Shadow, too, had inspired their dread. Sayre's statement fulfilled their capacity for belief.

“The Shadow is a voodoo also!” cried Arilla. “You must believe it, master! We know the truth. Your spells can overpower ordinary persons; but not The Shadow!”

“The Shadow is not your equal, master,” added Manuel, anxious to temper Arilla's words. “But he has power of his own. He cast a spell upon Elridge Rathcourt! That was why Rathcourt failed you.”

“Yes!” exclaimed Arilla. “And there will be others like Rathcourt here tonight. When the cult meets, master, they may be thinking of The Shadow.”

“Silence!” rasped Mocquino. “I shall tell them that The Shadow is dead!”

Sayre, watching, saw pained expressions show upon the faces of Arilla and Manuel. Doctor Mocquino had made a bad slip. His promise of a false statement made his henchmen waver. Their confidence had ended. Sayre looked toward Harry.

Here was opportunity. A mad attack upon Mocquino! There was a chance that his two henchmen would desert; that they would cry out their master's lie to others who might enter. But before Sayre could move, Mocquino, too, had realized the mistake. The Voodoo Master smiled cunningly.

“I shall tell them that The Shadow is dead!” he repeated. “Dead, because he is a spirit. He is a ghost, who has taken on a human form. Look!” He pointed to Stanton Wallace. “This man was a zombi once! Who but a living ghost could have restored him?”

Arilla and Manuel were babbling. Mocquino was pretending to accept their belief. Through that, he had regained their temporary confidence. His leer gleamed. It was meant for Sayre.

“Ghosts are not real,” sneered Mocquino. “I have dealt with them before. Both of you”—he was facing his two henchmen—“you know the way that ghosts are slain.”

“By the silver bullet!”

The exclamation came from Jose Arilla. Mocquino nodded wisely.

“To-night,” he promised, “I shall state the facts about The Shadow. I shall prepare the silver bullet and load it in the ghost gun. Should The Shadow come, I shall destroy him!”

SAYRE'S hopes faded. Mocquino had clinched the argument. In his reading of voodoo lore, Sayre had noted the potent claims attached to silver bullets. Those who followed voodoo rituals believed that such a

charm could never fail.

Sayre saw Arilla and Manuel serenely fold their arms. They were in the know. First of all Mocquino's followers, they had heard the news of Mocquino's forthcoming plan.

The Voodoo Master settled back into his chair. Quietly, he asked:

“What else, Jose?”

“Nothing, master,” replied Arilla. “I delayed coming here only because I feared the place was watched. That is why we kept Doctor Sayre in the taxicab until nearly six o'clock. We stayed in the old garage, which the police searched earlier to-day.”

“The summons has gone to the members of the cult?”

“Yes. They will arrive at eight.”

“Good! They will not be suspected, even if they are observed. The meeting will begin soon afterward.”

Harry and Stanton had resumed eating. They had gained enough encouragement to continue. Arilla and Manuel stood by with folded arms. Mocquino clapped for service; other henchmen entered and cleared the table, to bring on the last course.

The meal ended shortly afterward. Mocquino ordered Arilla and Manuel to return the prisoners to their little room. The Voodoo Master kept Sayre as a guest. As soon as they were alone, Mocquino smiled.

“My congratulations, doctor,” he purred. “You are clever. You would prove useful as a member of my cult. No?” He laughed gloatingly, as he saw contempt in Sayre's expression. “Ah! You must wait until you hear the beat of the tom-tom—”

“And the other bunk?” interposed Sayre. “Like your silver bullet?”

“The silver bullet?” Mocquino raised his eyebrows. “Ah! A silver bullet can prove quite as deadly as any other. Provided that it comes from a gun held by a steady hand. Such a hand as this.”

Mocquino extended his fist. It looked like the talon of an ugly, mammoth bird.

“You shall choose your own fate, Sayre,” decided the Voodoo Master. “I can use your knowledge; therefore, I shall treat you well—provided that you pretend to believe in my powers, even though you may not actually imbibe the beliefs of my cult.

“Or you may die, if you wish. Pleasantly, of course, since I bear you no malice. And if you prefer”—the last words were accompanied by an insidious chuckle—“you may become a zombi. But my zombie will no longer wander at large—not while The Shadow still lives to find them.

“He will die, The Shadow! Whether he comes to find me, or whether I am forced to seek him. That, however, is a matter to be considered later. Let me show you something that will interest you more. The place where I put those who incur my wrath. The red room.”

ADVANCING from the table, Mocquino crossed the room and opened the center door in the straight wall. Sayre saw a room that he expected: one with walls, floor and ceiling entirely of red. The background was plain, for the room was lighted with ordinary bulbs. Mocquino pressed a hidden switch. The glow changed. Fierce, crimson light pervaded the room.

Background deepened. The room became a setting for a nightmare. From high up, at unreachable spots,

blood-red incandescents streamed their flood of horror.

Mocquino stepped across the threshold. His face became the ruddy countenance of a demon. Only his golden robe showed in the light. His red sash vanished with the background. As Stanton Wallace had once described it, Mocquino looked like a man without a middle.

The Voodoo Master stepped from the chamber of horror. He let the red light burn and closed the door. Once more of natural appearance, Mocquino turned to Sayre. The Voodoo Master spoke:

“Within that room, all but red vanishes. With it goes all reason. Red dominates. Red maddens. You shall see—tonight.”

Grim dread gripped Doctor Rupert Sayre as he thought of the fate reserved for Harry Vincent and Stanton Wallace. All chance seemed feeble when confronted by the machinations of Doctor Rodil Mocquino.

Cardona and his men were undoubtedly still on the lookout, but they had no trail to follow.

Sayre could rely on but one remaining hope.

The Shadow.

CHAPTER XVIII. CARDONA FINDS A CLUE

IT was quarter past seven when Joe Cardona arrived back at headquarters. The ace was disgruntled when he entered his office. Detective Sergeant Markham was seated there. Joe growled in disgruntled fashion, while Markham listened sympathetically.

“You can talk all night to the commissioner,” declared Cardona, “but sometimes he won't listen. I didn't get any further at the finish than at the start. It all comes back to the same argument: Why haven't we grabbed Mocquino?”

Joe opened a small briefcase. He drew out envelopes, pulled back the flaps and let an assortment of small articles slide to the desk.

“Look at this junk,” he remarked. “Stuff that we found up at Rathcourt's. Voodoo charms, or whatnot. Here's a gold-ink talisman, inscribed on parchment. Lamp the three-headed dame looking in different directions.”

“What's it for?” queried Markham.

“Supposed to protect those who have secret enemies,” returned Cardona. “Rathcourt must have thought the thing would keep him safe. Some of the superstition that Mocquino foisted on the guy.

“Look at this medal, with a five-pointed star on one side and a zigzag on the other.” Cardona clanged a gold pocket-piece, the size of a half dollar. “That's a double luck talisman. A pentagram and a swastika. Supposed to protect all who carry it.

“Here's another dandy.” Joe unrolled a huge sheet of parchment, that was inscribed with a mass of cabalistic signs. “A Hindu scroll, for invoking the aid of hidden spirits. Rathcourt must have thought that he had chances of becoming a voodoo doctor on his own.”

“How'd you learn what this junk was for?”

“From these books.” Cardona produced three thin volumes, bound in red leather. “They're loaded with

occult hokum. A guy would go screwy reading these. But Commissioner Weston thinks they're important. He dug the dope out of them, while I sat by saying nothing."

"And then what?"

"I showed him the city map and explained how we were covering everywhere. But he didn't spend much time looking at it. He kept on beefing about these charms and talismans. He calls them clues. I don't see how he figures it. This junk doesn't tell us a thing we didn't know before.

"It proves that Mocquino has buffaloed a bunch of saps; and that Rathcourt was one of the dumbest. Reading up on this business would make any guy believe that Mocquino was a big shot in the voodoo line. Say—if I called these things clues, I'd start to believe that Mocquino had disappeared into a cloud of smoke!"

A pause. Sourly, Cardona added:

"It wouldn't be a tough job to believe it, either." He produced the big map of Manhattan and spread it on the desk. "Because there's not a loophole that we haven't covered. How did those trucks get over to New Jersey? How did the sedans get back here? How did Mocquino go where he wanted?"

Markham shrugged his shoulders.

"And where's his hide-out? It's not in New York; it's not in New Jersey. But he's got one. He's got to have one. He needs it to hold that outfit of his together. Some place—somewhere—for that cult of his to meet. But as far as I can guess, the joint may be in one of those spirit planes that these goofy books tell about."

BLACKNESS appeared upon the desk. Cardona looked up; he grinned when he saw the cause. A tall, pasty-faced janitor had entered the office. Stoop-shouldered, he was approaching the desk. Cardona looked at the fellow; then asked in puzzled tone:

"Thought you'd gone home long ago, Fritz."

"Yah."

With that comment, the janitor unlimbered mop and bucket. He tightened the straps of his overalls and began to mop the floor. Markham put a query.

"What's the idea, Fritz?" asked the detective sergeant. "You cleaned this place at noon."

"Not goot."

Fritz shook his head sadly.

"Not a good job?" bantered Cardona. "What do you mean?"

"People." Fritz paused and leaned listlessly on the mop handle. "Too much people. Job no goot."

"I get it," laughed Joe. "Too many of us coming in and out. The place needs cleaning again. Well, that's not your fault, Fritz. Maybe you'd better have a helper. I'll see about that. Anyway, forget it for to-day. Go along home."

"I go home."

Fritz made the statement in dull fashion; but he did not budge from his position.

“All right,” put in Markham. “Go along home. Why don't you get started? What are you standing around for?”

“I go home.”

“You mean you went home?” demanded Cardona, suddenly interpreting the janitor's remark. “You went home and came back?”

“Yah.”

“And you'd rather be back here?”

“Yah. Goot here.”

“Domestic troubles at home?”

Fritz made no reply. Markham saw a chance for more comedy.

“Say, Fritz,” suggested the detective sergeant, “where do you live, anyway? Tell us about the place.”

“I show you.”

FRITZ placed the mop in the corner. He came to the desk and began to study Cardona's map. He was muttering to himself, apparently puzzled. Cardona and Markham exchanged grins. Suddenly Fritz extended a long finger and placed it on the map.

“Don't tell us that's where you live,” guffawed Markham. “That's a ferry slip, Fritz.”

Fritz was looking up, his dull eyes puzzled.

“He doesn't mean he lives there,” put in Cardona. “He's wondering what the green pencil mark is about.”

“Yah—”

Fritz nodded. His finger was touching a green circle. Cardona winked at Markham.

“I'll explain it, Fritz,” volunteered Joe. “First off, we're after a crook named Mocquino. Have you heard about him?”

“Him goot?”

“Mocquino good? I'll say he's good!” Joe's tone was sarcastic. “He's good enough to keep us guessing. He's good, all right; but he's no good. No good. Get it?”

“No goot.”

“That's drilled through your bean. All right, Fritz. That brings us to the circles. We're trying to trap Mocquino. So we've got men stationed everywhere. See these red circles, up at the top of the map?”

“Yah.”

“Those are bridges out of Manhattan. Keep following, along down the East River. More red circles. More bridges. Queensborough— Williamsburg—Manhattan—Brooklyn—all bridges. Over here, crossing the Hudson is the George Washington Bridge.

“See those blue circles? Those are tunnels. The main one is the Holland Tunnel, because that's the only

one for vehicles. But we've been watching the Hudson and Manhattan Tubes, just the same. So they're marked blue.

"That brings us to the green circles. They mean ferries. West Shore, Lackawanna, Erie, Pennsylvania, Jersey Central—mostly railroads own them. But there's some others beside. One over here on the East River, at Thirty-fourth Street, where there's no bridge near. It's being watched, too.

"Then there's the Bay ferries, to Staten Island and Brooklyn. No use going into a list of the lot. They're all marked in green—"

"Nein!"

Fritz had put his finger upon a black circle. Markham looked; then guffawed.

"He got you there, Joe!" laughed the detective sergeant. "All green, you said, but Fritz slipped one past you. He found a black circle."

"Sure," acknowledged Joe. "There's a bunch of them. But take a look at them. The one Fritz is pointing to, for instance. Look where it runs to. Up the East River, from Twenty-third Street to Welfare Island. Can you picture Mocquino getting anywhere on that boat?"

"That would be a pip," agreed Markham. Mocquino going to Welfare Island. That's where we want him to be."

"Yah?"

Fritz had moved his finger to another black circle. Cardona shook his head. He was enjoying the game.

"Take another guess, Fritz. That ferry has been abandoned. The black circles are the ones that don't need watching. Savvy?"

"Yah?"

ANOTHER black circle, on the East River. With his other hand, Fritz tapped a final black circle, located on the Hudson.

"That's funny," remarked Cardona. He turned to Markham. "Fritz picks what's left and he gets two that are connected."

"What do you mean?" demanded Markham. "Don't tell me there's a ferry that runs around the island, from one side to the other. What would be the idea?"

"It's two lines," returned Cardona, "but one boat does for both."

Markham looked blank. Cardona pushed Fritz aside. He wanted to explain it to the detective sergeant.

"One line starts here on the East River," he explained. "It runs around lower Manhattan, past the Battery; then up the Hudson, clear to Weehawken. Takes it pretty near an hour to make the trip."

"What does it carry?"

"A few trucks, under sort of a contract arrangement. That boat is an old Hudson ferry, a two-decker; but the whole upstairs part has been boarded shut. It doesn't take passengers."

"It runs on a schedule?"

“No. It's irregular. Contractors bring their trucks down to the East River pier. So do a few vegetable truckers. When there's any trucks to go, the old ferry takes them. From the East River, down around Manhattan, up to Weehawken on the Jersey side. Then back again.”

Markham nodded his understanding. Then a question popped into his mind. He pointed to the ferry slip on the Hudson side of Manhattan.

“Where does this line come in?” he queried. “You said there were two in one.”

“There's an old ferry company,” explained Cardona, “called the Mid-Hudson. It's got a franchise and wants to keep it. The company has to run at least one ferry a day. It had an old tub and a crew; but the boat got junky and the crew cost too much.

“So the Mid-Hudson made a deal with Captain Juggers. He's the old guy who runs the boat from the East River up Weehawken. They pay him a regular sum every month. Once a day—whenever it suits him—he stops off while he's on his way between the East River and Weehawken.

“He pulls his tub into this Hudson River slip; then goes across the river and stops at a junky old pier on the New Jersey side, at Hoboken. After that, he comes across the Hudson again. He makes another stop; then returns to his usual route.”

Markham laughed.

“I get it,” nodded the detective sergeant. “He goes through the motions, just to keep the franchise alive. Say—I didn't know there was such a line as the Mid-Hudson.”

“Neither did I,” stated Cardona, “until I talked with old Cap Juggers. When I found out the kind of business he does between the East River and Weehawken, I figured there was no use detailing a man to watch his boat. Juggers knows all his customers. If any strange trucks or cars came aboard, he'd simply stay hitched to the pier. Then he'd come ashore and call us here at headquarters. That's the arrangement I made with him.

“As for this Mid-Hudson trip that Juggers takes when it pleases him, he doesn't pick up any loads. The franchise specifies that the boat must run; that's all. Juggers keeps a log for the owners. He doesn't want to be bothered by any cars or passengers coming aboard.”

“He must be a card, this Juggers.”

“He is. He's an old duck with side whiskers and his boat is called the Cantrilla. He told me he used to handle another franchise job across the East River; but the owners of the franchise called it off. Juggers said they got tired waiting for the Manhattan Bridge to fall down.”

Cardona folded the map.

“That's all there is to it,” he stated. “There's a chance, though, that Mocquino has managed to slip across an East River bridge and reach Long Island. I'm having the Long Island Sound ferries watched, in case he leaves College Point or some other place along the Sound. Mocquino might head up into Connecticut.”

“If he's on Long Island, he might.”

“And that's where he may be. Trucks abandoned in New Jersey; cars left in Manhattan. My hunch is that Mocquino is somewhere else.”

FRITZ had gone back to his halfhearted mopping. Seeing Cardona look in his direction, the janitor apparently remembered Joe's suggestion to stop work. Fritz picked up mop and bucket. He shuffled from the office. From that moment on, Cardona put the fellow from his mind.

Out in the corridor, Fritz shambled to an obscure locker. He drew out folded cloth. Blackness enveloped him as a cloak slipped over his shoulders. A slouch hat settled on Fritz's head. A whispered laugh escaped hidden lips as the shrouded form glided through the corridor.

A half block from headquarters, The Shadow paused beside a parked taxi. It was Moe Shrevnitz's cab. The Shadow whispered an order. Hawkeye scrambled from the taxi and headed for a cigar store, to put in a telephone call to Cliff Marsland. The Shadow stepped aboard the cab.

Moe, the shrewd-faced driver, was quick to hear another order. The taxi pulled away. The Shadow picked up an oblong package that lay upon the floor. This contained the equipment that Moe had brought from Mann's office. Its contents had been prepared for the time when The Shadow would deal with Doctor Mocquino, in the latter's own bailiwick.

That time was coming soon. The Shadow had guessed the Voodoo Master's mode of action. As Fritz, The Shadow had gone to headquarters, to see if the law had learned anything of import. The Shadow's trip had been successful. Information had been at hand.

In The Shadow's own presence, Joe Cardona had found a clue. But the ace sleuth had unwittingly dropped his find. The Shadow, instead of Joe, had snatched up the thread.

The Shadow was banking all upon Cardona's clue.

CHAPTER XIX. THE VOODOO CULT MEETS

SHORTLY before eight, the ferryboat Cantrilla jogged into its East River slip. The ferry had left there at six, for a trip to Weehawken. It had consumed nearly an hour in each direction. Ordinarily, this trip would have been its last.

But to-night, the Cantrilla was receiving passengers. A dozen persons were waiting upon the almost-forgotten pier. They crowded into the long passenger compartment on the left side of the ferry. Oddly, that lengthwise space was darkened.

Hence crew members caught but momentary glimpses of the passengers. Most of them were men; but there were a few women among the dozen. All were well-attired. Apparently, they were a fashionable party on a lark.

Once inside the long, darkened cabin, the passengers whispered among themselves. Then came footsteps, shuffling up a stairway. After that, the closing of a barricade. Then silence.

A clumsy truck rumbled over the cracked boards of the ferry dock. A rough-faced driver leaned out and shouted to a member of the crew.

"Makin' another trip to Weehawken?"

The crew member nodded; then asked:

"Who are you from?"

"Benny Tuppen, the poultry man. He told me about this boat—"

"Wait'll I see Captain Juggers. Maybe he ain't goin' to make a trip, after all."

While the big truck waited, a light truck drew up behind it. The driver alighted. He was Cliff Marsland. The Shadow's agent approached the truck ahead.

"This tub going to Weehawken?" queried Cliff.

The truck driver nodded.

"Guess so," he said. "But they're kind o' particular on this packet. Looks like you gotta have credentials. They asked who it was that sent me down here."

"Who was it?"

"Benny Tuppen, the poultry man. Know him?"

"Sure thing." Cliff chuckled. "Say, it was Benny told me to come here. He must have an interest in this line. When I was talking to Benny Tuppen, he said that—"

Cliff broke off. A whiskered man had arrived. He was wearing rough overalls; but his weather-beaten cap bore the frayed gilt statement: "Captain." It was Juggers. The skipper had heard Cliff's words.

"You're from Benny Tuppen?" queried Juggers.

Cliff nodded, pointing back to his own truck. Then he indicated the driver of the big truck.

"So is this fellow."

"All right," decided Juggers, gruffly. "Haul aboard. Reckon I can make another trip, seein' as there's two of you. We do contract business on this boat. That's why we don't take strangers. But Tuppen is one of our regular customers. It's all right if you're from him."

THE big truck rolled aboard the Cantrilla and took the vehicle passage on the right. Cliff returned to his truck, drove onto the ferry and ran through the left passage. The two trucks parked side by side, forward. Captain Juggers had gone to the pilot house. Chains clanked. The ferry glided from its slip.

Hawkeye was seated beside Cliff, huddled and inconspicuous. Both heard a whispered order from within a truck. Then a figure dropped to the vehicle passage. Creeping through darkness, The Shadow made for the back of the ferryboat. Beneath his cloak, he carried the oblong package.

Trucks had stopped their motors. The driver of the big truck leaned out and spoke to Cliff.

"Hear that?" he queried.

"What?" asked Cliff. "The engine?"

"No. That funny beat—like drums."

Cliff listened. He recognized the muffled drum of tom-toms. He grunted.

"It's nothing," he decided. "Just something cuckoo with the machinery. This scow is lucky it hasn't sunk. Must have been the first two-decker that they ever built."

The truck driver was satisfied with the explanation. But Cliff and Hawkeye sat tense.

THE Cantrilla, being a conventional ferryboat, was double ended. Most of the crew were at the end which at present served as front. None were about to witness happenings at the back. There, a

blackened figure had stepped upon the rail of the open deck at the end. Arms stretched; gloved hands wedged a package beneath the rail of the upper deck.

The cloaked figure followed. The Shadow hoisted himself across the rail and reached the upper deck that completely circled the boat. He studied the windows of the huge, oval-shaped cabin as he made a circuit of the deck. All were tightly boarded.

Back at his starting point on the left side of the ship, The Shadow picked up the oblong package. He went to a steep, outer stairway and ascended to the roof of the upper deck. He was close beside a vacant pilot house, used only when the Cantrilla was making its return trips.

Captain Juggers was in the pilot house at the other end. The tall, smoking funnel lay between, softly chugging forth volumes of black smoke. The Shadow recognized that both pilot houses would be identical. He decided to investigate the vacant one first.

The Cantrilla was rounding the Battery. The bulky skyscrapers of lower Manhattan showed spotted gleams from offices where night workers were on duty. Beyond those buildings was the glow of the uptown district. Manhattan was on the right; to the left were the lights of Governor's Island. The lights of other boats showed from blackening waters, through wisps of gathering fog. Above the mist, Liberty's torch shone as a distant beacon.

After a brief notation of the present location, The Shadow entered the vacant pilot house. A tiny flashlight glimmered below the windows. Its beam settled on the floor. It showed the outline of a small trapdoor. The Shadow's whispered laugh filled the confined space.

The Shadow had counted upon such a discovery, with definite reason. He knew that the Cantrilla must be Mocquino's boat; that Captain Juggers was in the game. The usual route in descending from a pilot house was by way of the outer stairs to the upper deck; then through the upper cabin and down the inner stairs.

But with this boat, the upper cabin was completely boarded, its doors blocked along with its windows. The Shadow had learned that on his tour of inspection. There was only one way for the captain to reach a pilot house. That would be a direct inside route from the upper cabin.

The trapdoor furnished such passage; but the trap was bolted from below. The Shadow placed his package to one side. He produced a portable jimmy and set to work. Boards resisted; then yielded. The bolt loosened. The Shadow raised the trapdoor.

His flashlight showed a narrow, circular stairway—a metal spiral within a sheet-iron cylinder. The Shadow descended. The stairway ended at the back of the cylinder. The Shadow found a sliding sheet of metal. He tugged it upward, slowly. He listened.

From far away, he heard the muffled beat of tom-toms. The Shadow edged out through the opening and pulled the sliding section downward.

THE SHADOW had reached the room wherein Doctor Mocquino had dined. He had come from the big pillar near the end. Originally a support for the pilot house above, that pillar had been made into a tubular shell for the insertion of the spiral stairway.

Like most ferryboats, the upper section of the Cantrilla consisted of three ovals, one within another. The outer was the deck; the middle one the cabin; the innermost the engine space, extending up between the vehicle passages, forming a funnel passage to the top of the boat.

Doctor Mocquino had altered the interior arrangements of his squatly ship. He had cut it into various rooms, with partitions between. This dining hall, with its hollow pillar and tiny posts, took up but half the cabin's end. Looking toward the front, The Shadow saw the straight, blockading wall with its three doorways.

Those at the sides must lead past the inner, solid-walled oval. The Shadow knew their purposes. The central door indicated the existence of a special room between the passages, since a portion of the cabin's end had been cut off for it.

The Shadow opened the center door.

The red glow met The Shadow's gaze. He eyed the crimson depths of the walls, which seemed to lead to limitless space. The Shadow entered the red room and looked for the lamps that Mocquino had left burning. The Shadow was carrying the oblong package. He laid it upon the floor as he looked about.

The menace of the red room was apparent. Flooding lights produced heat; the atmosphere was stifling. The Shadow formed a figure of deep maroon, his garments dyed by the reddish glow. He was plainly visible in the terrible light.

Minutes passed while The Shadow surveyed his surroundings. He knew that this room was prepared for victims. He sensed that they could not stand a prolonged ordeal.

OUTSIDE, all was quiet in Mocquino's wide dining hall, except for the distant thrum of tom-toms. The Shadow had closed the door of the red room. At last, he opened it again and stepped forth, carrying the crumpled wrapping of the package. He had left his equipment within the red room.

Closing the door The Shadow went to the hollow pillar and stowed away the wrapping. He could feel the motion of the ferry, as he returned and opened one of the doors at the side of the long wall. The Shadow entered a longitudinal passage, where light was dim.

A deep-throated blast came muffled from the ship's whistle. The Cantrilla had reached the channel of the Hudson and was pushing northward through the river traffic. The Shadow paid no attention to the blare from above. He was studying the make-up of the passage.

On the right, he had come to a smooth surface that curved. It was the central, oval wall of the ferry. On the left were doorways, set in partitions. These represented small rooms which Mocquino had fashioned as living quarters for himself and his servants. One space of wall, wide between two doors, was indication of the barricaded steps that led below.

The Shadow paused, opened a doorway and found a blocking door to the steps. He unbolted the barrier; then turned to the passage and continued forward. The beat of tom-toms sounded closer. The Shadow reached a door at the end of the passage. It slid sidewise. The Shadow peered through curtains.

The tom-toms sounded loudly. The flicker of artificial firelight flared like flames from a volcano's mouth. A chant was beginning, sung by voices in unison. Inch by inch, The Shadow spread the curtains; then became motionless. He had reached his goal.

The Shadow had become an unseen witness to the ritual of Doctor Mocquino's voodoo cult.

CHAPTER XX. THE HALTED ORDEAL

THE room into which The Shadow gazed was large, for it occupied the entire front of the ferryboat's cabin. Like the other end of the boat, it had a huge pillar to support a pilot house; and on the near side of the pillar were the same slender posts. Between these was Doctor Mocquino, seated upon thronelike

cushions.

Clad in his golden, red-sashed robe, the Voodoo Master formed a contrast to his surroundings. The room was fitted to resemble a jungle. Palm trees sprouted from clumps of artificial grass. All about were masses of dense foliage. Scenery hung from the walls; half obscured by the palm trees, the painted back-drops looked like jungle depths.

Brawny, bare-armed servitors were at either side of Mocquino, beating tom-toms. One grinning, dark-faced fellow toyed with snakes that coiled about his arms. The Shadow recognized one reptile as a fer-de-lance, most dreaded of all poisonous snakes in Haiti.

Before Mocquino, seated in a semicircle, were the members of the cult. They had changed their attire to West Indian costumes. This accounted for their departure along with Mocquino, the night when Cardona had attacked the cult's headquarters. The cult members had been carried to the ferryboat, there to resume their American attire.

Well had The Shadow reconstructed Mocquino's past. The Voodoo Master had first used this ferry to convey Stanton Wallace to New Jersey, along with automobiles. On the night of Cardona's raids, he had brought loaded trucks aboard, with all the cult members.

Some—Elridge Rathcourt, in particular—had been dropped on the Jersey side. The trucks had been driven off and abandoned, far from the Weehawken landing. Last night, Mocquino had ordered the Cantrilla to remain at the New Jersey side of the Mid-Hudson Ferry. He had driven there with his two sedans. Juggers had kept the boat waiting for him, during the expedition to capture Harry and Stanton.

Returning, Mocquino had brought the cars aboard. They had later been driven off on the Manhattan shore. All the while, Mocquino had kept a perfect hide-out, a headquarters aboard the Cantrilla itself!

Joe Cardona had unwittingly described the game, when he had said that Mocquino could be in neither New Jersey nor New York. But Cardona had not suspected that the Voodoo Master could be between both shores. Only The Shadow had seen that answer.

MOCQUINO'S jungle set was portable. The Shadow noted that fact as he watched the voodoo doctor's followers sway to the rhythm of the tom-toms. Like theatrical equipment, the scenery could be packed in a hurry. That accounted for Mocquino's quick departure on Wednesday night. But The Shadow did not speculate long upon such matters.

His eyes were focused upon the center of the semicircle, directly opposite Mocquino. There sat Harry Vincent and Stanton Wallace, bound hand and foot. Doctor Rupert Sayre was with them. The physician was free, but helpless against great numbers.

Counting Arilla and Manuel, Mocquino possessed a full dozen henchmen. His original crew must have numbered more than a score. The ranks had been thinned in battle; therefore, Mocquino had none left for outside guards. He could probably have spared a few of the present quota; but obviously the Voodoo Master relied upon the security of his position aboard the ferry.

The chant was rising. Cultists were on their feet, swaying while the tom-toms beat with added fervor. Imbued with frenzy, faces were leering. A mad dance was beginning. Arms were beating; hands were clawing. Mocquino, his face demonish, was keeping time to the wild ritual. The scene matched all descriptions of a voodoo tribe in action.

An artificial fire formed the center of the circle, but its glare was realistic. Long streaks of blazing light were increased by crackles like those of flaring logs. The ceremony had become a Haitian nightmare,

transplanted to the neighborhood of Manhattan. Only the faint quiver of the ferry's engines remained as a reminder that this was taking place upon the broad channel of the Hudson River.

Doctor Mocquino clapped his hands. The effect was magical. Chanting ceased. Tom-toms died. Frenzied dancers halted.

"My followers," spoke Mocquino, amid silence, "I have brought you here with purpose to-night. Listen while I speak. Listen, for you are my children!"

Cultists and servants alike were attentive. The Shadow knew of the primitive voodoo belief, in which the worshipers regarded their leader as a "papa." Originally brought from Africa, the voodooism of the West Indies had retained much of its simple lore.

"I have much to tell you," purred Mocquino. "Questions have come to your minds. Some of you have wondered why death did not befall a certain man whose effigy I stabbed. I refer to Dunley Bligh."

Slight buzzes from the throng. Mocquino silenced them with a handclap.

"Bligh did not die," explained Mocquino, "because his effigy was broken. There you see the man who destroyed the image. You will remember; for it was in your presence."

He pointed to Stanton Wallace. Harsh cries came from many throats. Again, Mocquino clapped for silence.

"I punished Wallace," rasped the Voodoo Master. "I made him a zombi! I paraded him, staring, here before the fire! He does not remember; but you who saw remember. I sent him helpless out into the world!"

"My spell was offset by an enemy who found him. That enemy is called The Shadow! He is one against whom my servants battled. Their bullets failed. Therefore, they fear The Shadow!"

BUZZES of consternation. Mocquino drew an old-fashioned pistol from beneath a cushion. He brandished the weapon. His face developed a fierce grin.

"I do not fear The Shadow!" stormed Mocquino. "My bullet will not fail! No human hand can thwart me when I meet The Shadow! Nor can he remain immune to the shot that I shall fire! This gun contains a silver bullet!"

Wild yells of exultation. Mocquino glowered for silence.

"My power is vast," he croaked. "Look! Here is an image of The Shadow." He brought a blackened effigy from beside him. He stabbed a long pin through the waxen statuette. "Through the heart! The Shadow's heart! That is the course my silver bullet will take!"

A pause. Mocquino placed gun and effigy aside. He eyed the group; then spoke coldly.

"Perhaps some still doubt my power. Watch! I shall perform a test. Bring the cauldron."

Two servants advanced, bearing a large glass globe filled with water. Another approached with a tripod. The bowl was placed upon the stand. Mocquino ignited a burner beneath. Gas hissed, while the voodoo cultists watched.

Mocquino droned a chant. The Shadow, peering from the curtains, remained motionless. Though he was armed, he saw the danger of attack. Mocquino commanded the loyalty of a dozen ferocious servants,

who were fully convinced of their master's power. With their native costumes, all were carrying revolvers or knives. They would intervene to block an attack upon Mocquino. The Shadow wanted to reach the Voodoo Master first, if possible.

Moreover, Harry and Stanton were powerless, in the very center of the floor. Cultists, frenzied, would seize them if a fight began. The Shadow had other, better, plans, which offered later opportunity.

He waited.

The water in the cauldron began to boil. Mocquino extinguished the burner. Still the water bubbled. The Voodoo Master plucked a palm leaf and thrust it into the liquid. Water-drops sizzled as he flicked them to the floor. Again he thrust the palm leaf into the bowl and stirred the water. Then he cast the leaf aside.

With a loud cry, Mocquino dipped his hand deep into the cauldron. He swished it back and forth, while his evil face gleamed triumphant. He stilled his hand and grinned; then slowly drew his arm upward. He let the water trickle from his hand. The boiling liquid had shown no effects.

The staring followers gaped; then shouted their acclaim.

“Proof!” spoke Mocquino. “Proof that no physical pain can annoy the Voodoo Master! My life, like my hand, is protected by a potent charm!”

THE SHADOW knew the trick which had amazed the gullible onlookers. Hot water had risen; it had boiled at the top while the bottom liquid still was cold. Mocquino's stirring with the palm leaf had mixed the liquid. His hand-thrust had completed the job. Stirred together hot and cold had produced a temperature that was more than warm, yet far below the boiling point.

Yet the believers had accepted Mocquino's miracle. They were ready to serve this savage master. The voodoo doctor could depend upon his deluded band. The Shadow could see a troubled, hopeless expression upon the face of Doctor Sayre.

“I have withstood an ordeal!” grated Mocquino. He pointed to Harry and Stanton. “Can these men do the same? I say 'No!'—and I shall prove my statement. They will be placed where they can undergo a test. Within the room where every wall is red!

“There they will lose all knowledge of time, all sense of space! They will become men who walk, but who no longer live. Each a zombi! One who was a zombi before; the other a man to whom the experience will be new. But zombis both! Their very actions will be proof of my power!”

Mocquino was rising. His handclaps brought servants. Others arose, Sayre silent among them, while two of Mocquino's henchmen dragged Harry and Stanton to their feet.

Mocquino was pointing to the very curtain from which The Shadow watched. He was holding his pistol in his other hand; it was apparent that the Voodoo Master intended to carry the gun, hopeful of an encounter with The Shadow.

Before men could advance to the passage, The Shadow glided quickly away. In the dim light of the corridor, he was peeling off his black cloak, his gloves and his slouch hat. He opened the last door on the right and hurled the garments into a darkened room. He hurried into Mocquino's dining hall and closed the door behind him, just before the procession arrived at the far end of the passage.

Lacking his cloak, The Shadow appeared long and lithe. He was clad in dark, tight-fitting clothes, which had previously been covered by Fritz's overalls. He had dropped the janitor's garb when he had donned his black cloak. At present, he looked like a gymnast. Rubber-soled shoes made his quick tread silent, as

he sprang toward the central door in the straight wall of this empty room.

THE SHADOW was gone when Mocquino and the others arrived. The Voodoo Master ordered the cult members to form a semicircle, facing the door of the red room. Clutching Sayre's arm in clawlike grasp, Mocquino held the physician beside him; then commanded servants to carry Harry and Stanton into the room of horror.

The door was opened by Arilla. Four bearers hoisted the prisoners into the midst of the red room and sprawled them, still bound and helpless, upon the floor. The glow made the captives look pitiful. They were like puppets, balanced in the center of crimson depths.

Mocquino clapped his hands. The servants emerged. Arilla closed the door. Cushions were placed for the Voodoo Master; he drew Sayre to the floor beside him. With croaking gloat, Mocquino awaited developments.

"A dozen minutes," was his prophecy. "Then they will begin to weaken. After that, we can open the door and watch their final throes. They will be too far gone to gain relief by staring toward us. This will interest you, Doctor Sayre. Perhaps—"

A man came bounding in from the passage. It was Manuel. His face was wild; in his hands he carried garments of black, which he flourished before Mocquino's eyes.

"This cloak!" cried Manuel. "I found it in one of the dressing rooms! It—it is The Shadow's. He is here—among us—"

Mocquino snarled. He came to his feet, clutching the pistol that held the silver bullet. Fiercely, he studied every face in the throng. He recognized all as followers and servants, with the exception of Sayre. A vicious hiss formed the finish of the Voodoo Master's snarl.

"Open that door!" Mocquino pointed to the entrance of the red room. "At once! Be ready with your guns! Shoot down the prisoners if you find them free. The Shadow may have aided them."

Arilla leaped to the door, prepared to open it. Sayre tightened his fists as he watched the move to halt the ordeal. The torture of the red room might be ended for Harry and Stanton; but its finish would be death.

Again, Sayre could find but one possible form of hope. The Shadow had come at last. Perhaps the master fighter would appear, in an effort to ward off doom!

CHAPTER XXI. OUT OF THE VOID

THE door of the red room swung open. Jose Arilla stood staring into the chamber. Beside Arilla was Manuel; behind the pair, a cluster of Mocquino's crouching henchmen. The Voodoo Master himself was stalking forward to join the throng.

A cry came from Arilla. The fellow pointed. Others saw Harry and Stanton. The prisoners were no longer prone. Halfway to their feet, they were struggling to release themselves from bonds which had somehow become loosened. Arilla remembered Mocquino's order. He spat one word:

"Kill!"

As gun hands came up, a fierce laugh burst from within the red room. It seemed to come from the vast spaces of that weird chamber, where Harry and Stanton were the only visible persons. The room itself was mocking.

Crimson depths were hurling a challenge to Mocquino's startled crew.

“Kill!”

Arilla panted the word, in defiance of the laugh. Revolvers turned toward Harry and Stanton, who were several feet apart. Mocquino's marksmen were divided in their aim; but they were prepared to deliver death, despite their terror. Again the fierce laugh echoed from the void.

Then, in the very center of the red room, two guns appeared as if by magic. Those weapons were automatics; they were conjured in mid-air, at a spot where none of Mocquino's henchmen were aiming. Before a single finger could pull a revolver trigger, the suspended automatics blazed.

Each .45 was withering. The aim of those weapons was incredible. They must have been held by living hands, even though such fists were invisible, for bullets found the bodies of Mocquino's henchmen. Arilla sprawled; Manuel fell beside him.

Others, driving forward, forgot the prisoners and aimed for the floating guns instead. The automatics had the bulge. Like living creatures handling themselves, they pointed, fired, then recoiled.

The doorway cluttered with Mocquino's henchmen. Half a dozen were flattened before the others dived away for cover. That open door meant death.

Mocquino knew it, and his hiss was venomous. The voodoo doctor had also leaped aside. But he had reached the wall outside the red room. His fingers clicked a switch.

THE lights of the red room were controlled from either side of the wall. Mocquino's action changed the glare. Ruddy bulbs faded, ordinary light replaced them. The red room was a void no longer. It had become a crimson-walled compartment.

Sayre, the only one in position to see within, was astonished by the sight before him.

A figure stood in the very center of the room—a cloaked shape, with collar upward. A shape that wore a downturned slouch hat, with gloved hands that gripped those dreaded automatics. It was the figure of The Shadow; but changed. The Shadow was not clad in black.

Hat, cloak and gloves were crimson! A red Shadow! One whose whole attire matched the walls of the crimson torture cell. This garb had been the “equipment” in The Shadow's package. He had left his outfit in the red room. That was why he had thrown aside his customary garments of black.

The Shadow had remembered Stanton Wallace's detailed description. He had listened to the account of how Mocquino's crimson sash had vanished, its color absorbed by the glow of the red incandescents, against the blood-hued background. Sayre himself had seen the same phenomenon. Hence he could understand The Shadow's ruse.

The Shadow had prepared for a meeting with Mocquino. In hope of finding the Voodoo Master's lair, he had ordered these garments of red. A garb that he was wont to wear; but of a different color.

The Shadow's strategy had worked. Reaching the red room, he had donned his deceptive garments. The lights and the curtains had rendered him invisible!

Mocquino had regarded the red room as his greatest weapon. It had become a boomerang. The horror chamber had served The Shadow. He had been releasing the prisoners, but had been forced to desist when Arilla opened the door. A few minutes more and The Shadow could have sallied forth with Harry and Stanton behind him.

Instead, The Shadow had been forced to fight alone; but the consequences had been even worse for Mocquino's band. Mocquino had lost half his crew. He had saved the balance only by altering the lights. Mocquino saw Sayre's amazed gaze. The Voodoo Master guessed the rest.

WITH a wild bound, Mocquino leaped straight in front of the red room door, twisting about as he sprang. Clicking his heels as he stopped, the Voodoo Master had his pistol leveled. His frenzy had given him a lucky opportunity. He aimed at The Shadow.

Doctor Sayre had seen Mocquino coming. The physician leaped forward as the Voodoo Master turned. Wildly, Sayre clutched Mocquino's arm just as the villain fired. Whether that jog disturbed Mocquino's aim, or whether the Voodoo Master's own wildness overruled, Sayre could never guess. Whichever the cause, the silver bullet failed.

Timed almost with Mocquino's shot was a blast from The Shadow's right-hand gun. Again, a laugh came from lips above the red collar. It was a taunt that spelled the end of villainy. The Shadow's red form never wavered; but Mocquino, fuming, sagged in Sayre's grasp.

Crimson splotched the front of Mocquino's golden robe, as the Voodoo Master stretched upon the floor. Red—the color that Mocquino had chosen for his own; but this red was blood! A waxen effigy clattered from Mocquino's red sash and broke asunder when it struck the floor. It was the blackened image of The Shadow, that Mocquino had so lately pierced.

The Voodoo Master's prophecy had been reversed. His silver bullet had never reached The Shadow. Instead, a leaden slug had found its home in Mocquino's breast.

WITH long stride, The Shadow sprang from the red room, leaping over sprawled bodies. Screaming, the members of the voodoo cult dived to the walls and threw up their arms in surrender. But Mocquino's remaining servitors were maddened by their master's death. A trio aimed with revolvers; the rest flashed long-bladed knives and leaped forward.

The Shadow was firing when Sayre grabbed up a revolver. Then came other shots, just as Sayre joined in. Harry and Stanton were free. They had followed The Shadow. Gaining revolvers from the floor, they had entered the fray.

Snarling foemen pitched to the floor. Revolvers fell; knives clattered. Mocquino's last henchmen were routed.

Two of Mocquino's servitors rallied to a strange task. Leaping away from their sprawling companions, they snatched up Mocquino's flattened form and dragged the Voodoo Master to the pillar. Shoving the cylindrical panel upward, they gained its interior before The Shadow could fire to halt them.

To them, Mocquino was a fetish. They had obeyed the Voodoo Master in life; though his body had the rigid, motionless attitude of death, they wanted to carry it from the scene of fray. They were unwilling that even Mocquino's corpse should be captured by The Shadow.

The escape of those two murderous henchmen was something that The Shadow would not allow. He reached the panel as it fell. Wedging it up, he gained the spiral steps. Clatter told that Mocquino's carriers had arrived at the empty pilot house. The Shadow followed.

Madly, Mocquino's men had made fast progress. When The Shadow reached the deserted pilot house, he saw them. They were on the roof of the upper deck, with Mocquino's stretched form at the edge, ready to leap into the river. The searchlight of an approaching boat outlined the henchmen as they dropped their burden and aimed revolvers toward the pilot house.

The Shadow fired simultaneously with his automatics. He clipped his foemen; their revolver shots were wide. Bullets shattered glass windows of the pilot house; but The Shadow stood unscathed.

One enemy plunged headlong to the river. The other rolled; convulsively, he grasped at Mocquino's form, dragged it with him; then lost his hold. The henchman rolled off the edge of the roof.

Mocquino's robed form was a grotesque sight. Its golden garb glistened in the yellow light; the crimson splotch showed a larger blotch of life-blood. Balanced on the edge of the deck roof, the Voodoo Master's form swayed mechanically; jarred by some motion of the ferryboat, Mocquino's body teetered and slithered over the brink.

A dull splash sounded from below. The Voodoo Master had joined his dead henchmen in the river.

THE SHADOW had seen no need to gain Mocquino's body as a prize. Already, he was dashing down the spiral, to rejoin his own men. When he reached the room below, he found matters as he had left them. Harry and the others were in full control. Stepping into the room, The Shadow closed the sliding door of the pillar.

Shots sounded from below. Harry heard them; he was dashing for the stairs at the moment of The Shadow's return; leaving Sayre and Stanton in charge of the prisoners.

The members of the voodoo cult were cowed. Calmly, The Shadow picked up his garments of black. Sayre saw him stalk in the direction that Harry had taken.

The shots had been fired by Cliff and Hawkeye. It had been their task to come up from below. The Shadow had unbarred the stairs for that purpose. Cliff had heard the muffled shots; but when he and Hawkeye had started, members of the ferryboat's crew had tried to stop them.

The Shadow had sized the situation. Cliff and Hawkeye could take care of themselves, for they were competent fighters. He wanted them to keep the battle below. Harry, dashing down the stairs, found his fellow-agents in the cabin on the left, firing at crew members who were trying to duck in from the front deck.

When Harry arrived, the trio made a sortie. Crew members scattered, throwing up their hands. The Cantrilla had stopped in the center of the Hudson. The ferry was drifting, while shrill whistles announced that police boats were on hand. Closer, Harry heard the rhythm of a power boat.

Shots from high above. Captain Juggers had spied The Shadow's agents. He was firing from the front pilot house. Cliff and Harry dived for cover; Hawkeye was already out of danger. The crew members rallied; then, in this desperate moment, a gun spoke from the front darkness.

The Shadow had arrived. Again in black, he had dispatched a single bullet to the pilot house. The shot had clipped the skipper. Captain Juggers was sagging, wounded. The Shadow turned. He fired other shots. Crew members went scudding through the vehicle passages.

The agents started to the chase. The Shadow's hissed order stopped them. Shouts were sounding from the rear of the ferry, which had stopped in midstream and was pointing toward New Jersey. The police boat had reached the other end of the Cantrilla. Officers were boarding the old ferry.

The Shadow pointed forward. His agents saw the long, trim shape of the speed boat that Harry had heard. Following The Shadow, the agents clambered aboard. Miles Crofton was at the helm. The motor roared as the trim craft shot away from the Cantrilla. The police had invaded the inner stairway of the ferry. They would take over the prisoners. Explanations would rest with Doctor Sayre and Stanton

Wallace.

A parting laugh came from The Shadow. Harry Vincent heard it, as he had often in the past. Triumphant mirth that sounded like a knell. A mockery that told of right triumphant. Men of evil had recognized that laugh in the past. It had marked their doom, as it had told of death to-night.

But of all who had failed before the might of The Shadow, none had been more venomous than the villain of tonight. Doctor Mocquino had deserved to die.

The Voodoo Master's evil career was halted. Doctor Mocquino had met The Shadow in red!

But one thing still remained. The Shadow looked over the water to see if Doctor Mocquino's body was recovered. It was not in sight. Possibly the police had already picked it up.

Possibly, though, they had not. The Shadow could not pause longer, but later he was to learn that this was not the end of Doctor Mocquino. The weird Voodoo Master was to return again to menace The Shadow, and civilization, to furnish another thrilling adventure in the annals of The Shadow!

THE END