By FRANK L. PACKARD Author of "THE MIRACLE MAN"

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

CHAPTER XXI

Skarvan Pays His Account THE little red-rimmed eyes blinked into the glare-it was the only color left in the white, flabby face—the red rims of the furtive little eyes. Bookie Skarvan's fat hand lifted and tugged at his collar, as though the collar choked him. He fell back a step and his heel crunched upon the telephone transmit-And then Bookie Skarvon dicked his lips-and attempted

mumbled Bookie Skarvan, "I-I can't see your face. Who-who are husky and shaken as it was, seemed to bring him a certain reassurance. "What ant?" he demanded. Dave Henderson made no reply.

seemed as though his mind and soul and body were engulfed in some primal, savage ecstasy. Years swept their lightning sequence through his brain; ours, with the prison walls and iron god himself this moment, seemed to their life and existence over again. He said ne word; he made no sound-but, with the flashlight still playing without a flicker of movement upon the ther, he felt, with the back of his relver hand, over Bookle Bookie Skarvan's revolver, and, with siter contempt for any move the man night make through the opening thus given him, hooked the guard of his own revolver on the little finger of the hand that held the flashlight, and uncere-poniously jerked the other's weapon out rom the pocket and tossed it to the

The flasblight lifted then, and circled walls of the room. Bookie Skarcan's complaint had not gone unherded Bookie Skarvan would have ample op ortunity to see whose face it was be flashlight found and held on the electric-light switch. It was on the wall behind Bookle Skarvan Dave Henderson shoved the man rough ly out of the way, stepped quickly for ward to the wall, switched on the ward to the wall, switched on the

For an instant Bookie Skarvan stood there without movement, the little eyes dilating, the white face turning ashen and gray, and then great beads of sprang out upon the foreheadit sprang out upon the forehead- here upstairs. And when I saw the through the room.
"Go away!" screamed Bookie Skar-

"You're dead! Go nway! Go back where you belong!" His hands out in front of him. "Do you are you, damn you—go away!'
Dave Henderson spoke through closed

ought to be satisfied then-

Dave Henderson's eyes automatically t around the now lighted room, that was Dago George there on the floor near the bed, lying on the side the time it would take Central to get of his face, with a hideous gash across her breath after that nerve-racking cry his head. The man was dead, of course; for help you sent her. be anything else. But anyspart, an extraneous thing. There was the station is, I'm a stranger here, and only one thing in the world, one thing I don't know. In that case, there that held mind and soul and body in a wouldn't be even ten minutes—and part thrall of wild, seething, remoresaless of that is gone now. There isn't much passion—that mandlin, groveling thing time, Bookie. But there's time enough there, whose clawing hands had found the end of the desk, and who burg there count. I used to think of what I'd do with curious limpness, as though, becourse the knees sagged, the weight of his body was supported by his arms alone—that thing whose lips, evidently trying to form words, jerked up and down like flaps of flesh from which all better control had gone.

Bookie—and bere we are together the two of us, you and not be the property of the two of us, you and not be the property of the two of us, you and not be the property of the two of us, you and not be the property of the property of

A sweat bend trickled down the fat. working face—and lost itself in a fold by flesh.

No.' Bookie Skarvan found his tongue. 'No! Honest to God, Dave!' ward o ward o ward o de whined. 'It was Baldy.'

'Don't He! I know!' There was a fold deadliness in Dave Henderson's trans. 'Stand away from the desk a that he

"Don't lie: I have told deadliness in Dave Henderson's tones. "Stand away from the desk a little, so that I can get a look at that telephone on the floor! I don't want telephone on the floor! I don't want telephone with the receiver derson's face had grown set and color-less—as colorless as his tone. "I wish less—as colorless as his tone." I wish less—as colorless as his tone. "I wish less—as colorless as his tone. "I wish less—as colorless as his tone." I wish less—as colorless as his tone. "I wish less tone was capable of that his tengue was capable of the latter than the less as his tone. "I wish less that his tengue was capable of the latter than his tengue was capa

utterly detached; he seemed utterly to ignore the other for a moment, as he pered. "You know what I mean!" Dave looked at the broken instrument. Bookic Skarvan, in an access of fear. Henderson answered levelly, mopped at his wet face, and his little it."

red-rimmed eyes, like the eyes of a "My God!" screamed Book! red-rimmed eyes, like the eyes of a cornered rat, darted swift glances in van.

directions around the room. "Dave, do you hear!" Bookie Skar-

"It's queer, kind of queer, to find you here, Bookie," said Dave Hender-"I guess there's a God-San Francisco?"

Bookie Skarvan licked at his dry lips, nat was suddenly cutflung in Dave Henderson's hand.

"I followed the girl. I thought and opened up to the old man, and e'd bumped you off with that bomb to

of it when he died, and she beat it for "And tonight?" Dave Henderson's

Voice was rasping now,

"I got the room opposite hers." Skarvan gulped heavily; his eyes were fixed, staring now, as though fascinated by the revolver muzzle. "Sho came downstnirs. I followed her, but I don't know where she went to, I saw the package go into the enfe. could see through the fan ight over the door. I saw him"-Bookie Skarvan's jerked out toward the huddled orm on the floor-"I saw him put it

Mcchanically, Dave Henderson's eye fellowed the gesture-and narrowed for in instant in a puzz'ed, start'ed way. llad that dead man there moved? The bedy seemed slightly nearer to the head of the bed! Fancy! Imagination! He eadn't marked the exact position of the to begin with, and it was still buddled, stil inert, still in the same itawled, contorted position. His eyes severted to Bookie Skarvan.

work on that safe, a man you called Maggot, and you sent him. With that dirty brand of trickery of yours, to bring back some one you called Cunny the Scorpion, with the idea that in-stead of finding you and the money here —they would find the police." There was a twisted, merciless smile on Dave Hendesson's lips. "Where did you get into touch with your friends?"

Bookie Skarvan's eyes were roving again, seeking some avenue of escape, it seemed. Daye Henderson laughed shortly, unpleasantly, as he watched the other. There was only the door and the window. But he, Dave Henderson blocked the way to the door; and the window, as he knew through he not-too-cursory examination he had made of it when he had come down the fire escape with the valises, was equally impassable. It had been in his mind then that perhaps he, bimself, might gain entrance to Dago George's room through the window-only the old-fushioned iron shutters, carefully closed and fastened, had barred the way.

'Wel'?" He flung the word sharply at Bookie Skarvan. "I-Baldy knew the Scorpton." Bookie Skarvan's fingers wriggled be-

tween his collar and his fat neck.

the Scorpion put one over en-on that fellow on the floor, and got me a room

Baldy gave me a letter to him, and



The gastly surprise on the sweat-beaded face, the fat body spinning and pitching forward to the floor

the Scorpion, and got him to give me boxworker, so he got Maggot for me,

"You hadn't the nerve, of course, when you saw Dago George putling the money in the safe, to tackle the alone before the safe was locked! There was grim, contemptuous irony tu You've wanted me dead for same old Bookie, aren't you-yellow as while—for five years, baven't the sulphur pit of hell!" His face hardened. "Ten minutes, you said it would take them to get back. It's not very long, Bookie. And say two or

"Or maybe the police to you when I got out on the other side merre control had gone.

"Maybe you didn't know that I knew it was you who were back of that attend to murder out that night—five year; ago," Days Henderson thrust the fishlight into his nocket, and took a step forward. "Well, you know it house, Bookie, for there isn't room house. Bookie, for the roof its house, Bookie, for the roof its house.

enough in this world for the two of us-us-one of us has got to go." Bookie Skarvan had crouched against the end of the desk again. He cringed now, one arm upraised as though to ward off a blow.

"What—what are you going to do?" The words came thick and mis-erably. Their repetition seemed all that his tongue was capable of, "What—what are you going to do?".
"I can't murder you!" Dave Hen-

"My God!" Bookie Sharvan cried out But I can't! There's your revolver on the end of the desk. Take it!"

Yes, I guess it's out of commis
Again and again, Bookie Skarvan's

Henderson's voice seemed tongue licked at his lips.

screamed Bookte Sknr-

'No! My God-no!

'Yes-that! You're getting what I Tan's voice rose thin and squealing.
"Why don't you answer? Do you hear! What are you going to do?"

What what are you going to do?" fix you, and I'll fix it so that yo won't move from here until your friend the Scorpion gets his chance at you for the pleasant little surprise you had arthe pleasant little surprise you call the pleasant little surprise you call the Skarvan licked at his dry lips. The through ticket to the electric owered back from the revolver chair for what looks like murder over there on the floor. You understand-Bookie? I'll make you fight, you cur-It's the only chance you've got for your life. Now—take it."

Bookie Skarvan wrung his hands together. A queer crooning sound came from his lips. He was trembling vio-

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"There aren't very many of those ten minutes left, Rookle," said Dave Henderson coldly. "But if you got in a lucky shot—Bockic—you'd still have time to get away from here. And there's the money there, too-you could take that with you."

The man seemed near collapse. Great beads from his forehead ran down and over the sagging jowls. He mouned a little, and stared at the resolver that lay upon the desk, and reached out his hand toward toward toward. lay upon the desk, and reached out his hand toward the weapon, and drew his hand back again. He looked again at Dave Henderson, and at the muzzle of the revolver that covered him. He seemed to read something irrevocable and remorseless in both. Slowly, his mouth working, his face muscles twitching, he reached again to the desk, and pulled the revolver to him; and then, his arm falling nervelessly, he held the weapon daugling at his side.

weapon daugling at his side.

Dave Herderson's revolver was lowered until it pointed to the floor.

"When you lift your hand, Bookie, it's the signal," he said in a mono-Bookie Skarven's knees seemed

hend and sag a little more-there was no other movement. said Dave Hender-

I'm waiting," said Dave Hen-son—and pulled the trigger of his volver to put a shot into the floor. There was the click of the falling ammer-no more. A grim smile played across Dave Henderson's lips. It was as well, perhaps, that he had tried in

For the fraction of a second the room his breath, as he rose the seemed blurred to Dave Henderson. The chambers of his revolver were empty!

George's side.

No. just the ringing in his ears; there no has a second the sec ecover itself, and leap into flerce, virbut knew it. It seemed as though all the devils of bell shricked at him in unholy mirth. If he moved a step for-ward to rush, to close with the other, the very paroxysm of fear that possessed Bookie Skarvan would instinctively in-cite the man to fire. There was one way, only one way—the electric light switch behind him. If he could reach that without Bockie Sharvan realizing the truth, there would be the darkness -and his bare bands. Well, he asked more than that-only that Bookie karvan did not get away. His bare hands were enough.

He moved back a single step, na

though shifting his position, his face impassive, watching the daugling weapon in the other's abaky hand. vatching the other's working lips. The chamber of his revolver was empty How? When? It had been fully loaded when he lay down on the bed. To remembered! It was queer It was queer that it had twisted like that in his sleep. Dago George! It came in a lightning flash of intuition. Dago George, cautious cautious to draw, his, Dave Henderon's, teeth!

He edged back another step-and

stopped, as though rooted to the spot. Bookie Skarvan, that dangling revolver in the other's hand, his own peril, all, everything that but an instant before had obsessed his mind, was blotted out from his consciousness as though it bad murdered man on the floor Skarvan, that he could see over Bookie Skarvan's shoulder, had raised his hand in a swift, sudden movement, and bad thrust it under the mattress at

ut a revelver.
It was quick, quick as thought, quick very long, Bookie. And say two or as the winking of an eve. A shout of feeled from the figure outside in the hallway launched three minutes longer, or perhaps a warning rose to Dave Henderson's lips bimself fereciously forward across the little more, for the police, allowing for | -and was drowned in the report of the derson's brain: The upflung arms of spinning grotesquely like a run-down top-and pitching forward to the floor. And through the lifting smoke, another face—Dago George's face, working, livid, blood-smirched, full of demonlation triumph. And then a surgling peni

burching there, the revolver swaying weakly, trying to draw its head now on him. Dave Henderson. He moved with

a spring to one side toward the door. The revolver, as though jerked desperately in the weak hand, followed him. He fluing himself to the floor. A shot rang out. And then, as though through the flash again, another picture lived: The revolver dropping from a hand that could no longer hold it, a graying face that swayed on shoulders which in turn rocked to and fro—and then a lurch—a thuil—and the face was hidden between out-sprawled arms—and Dago George did not move any more.

CHAPTER XXII

The Ending of the Night Mechanically, Dave Henderson rose to his feet, and for an instant stood as though, his mental faculties numbed, he were striving to grasp as a concrete thing some stark and horribly naked tragedy that his eyes told him was real. but which his brain denied and refused to accept. Thin layers of smoke, suspended; sinuous, floated in hideous little gray clouds about the room—like palls that sought to hide what lay upon the floor from sight, and, failing in their object, but added another grim and significant detail to the scene.

And then his brain cleared, and he

jumped forward to bend first over Bookie Skarvan and then over Dago George; and, where his mind had been unreceptive and numbed but an instant before, it was keen, swift and incisive now—the police who had been sum-moned—the Scorpion and his parasite yegg who were on the way back—there was no time to lose! There was no one in the house to have heard the shore in the house to have heard the shots— Bookie Skarvan had settled that point—no one except Teresa upstairs. But the shots might have been heard out-

that way to startle, to frighten, this terriffed, spincless cur who stood there into action! The carridge that he had depended upon for his life had missed fire! He pulled the trigger again. The hammer clicked. He pulled again—his eyes never leaving Bookie Skarvan's face. The hammer clicked.

For the fraction of a second the room seemed blurred to Dave Henderson. The chambers of his receiver research is breath, as he rose from Dago George's side.

the activity. He was at the mercy of wasn't an instant to lose; both Bookie but critising hound there—if the other Skarvan and Dago George were dead. the instant he must take to make sure he made no false move here before he snatched up that package on the desk there, and ran upstairs, and, with Teresa, made his way out by the fire-

hand to exchange his own empty refloor where it had fallen from Dago George's lifeless fingers-and, instead. drew Fool! his hand sharply back again The police would investigate this, wouldn't they? Bookie Skarvan couldn't bave been shot by an empty revolver! Well—he was moving toward the desk and back toward where Bookie Skarvan lay-suppose he took Bookie's revolver then? He shook his He did not need one bad enough hat. It was better to let things for that. remain as they were and let the police eraw their own conclusions, conclusions which, if nothing was interfered with and he got away with the package of bauknotes, would point no interference that, by hook or crook, would afford a clue which might lead to him. Was he so sure of that? Suppose the Scorpion had been let into Bookle's confidence and that the Scorpion when he got here should happen to be caught by tilice—and talked to save himself?

A grim smile settled on Dave Hen-derson's lips, as he thrust his useless revolver into his pocket, and, reaching cut to the desk, picked up the package of banknotes. Well, if anything came of the Scorpion, it couldn't be he'ped! And, after all, did it matter very much? Ir wasn't only Dago George and Backle Stars who was to the scorpion of the Scorpe and Backle Stars who was to the score and Backle Stars who was to the score and Backle Stars who was the score and Dago George and Bookie Skarvan who were dead-Dave Henderson was dead, too!

staggered suddenly back, aurecled from the impact, as a man from just outside in the hallway launched revolver shot, deafening, racketing, in the confined space. And, as though the confined space. And, as though the floor. Half flung to his thrown into relief by the flash and the knees, Dave Henderson's arms shot out tonging flame of the same hand the instinctions. tongue flame of the revolver, a picture instinctively and wrapped themselves seemed to sear itself into Dave Hen- around his assailant a pody.

on the awent bended face, the fat body ders from a victous short-arm jab that dazed him; he was sonscious only he had not let go his hold, that his hands, like feeling tentacles, were creeping further up the man's body toward threat and shoulders, drawing his "Yes, and you, too! Con amore!" upright position. His head cank with gurgled Dago George. "You, too!" the blow. A voice seemed to float from the man was on his knees now. "That's the stuff, Maggot! Soak

To be continued temorrow

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Pursuant to order of the United States District

Court, all properties of the Lincoln Motor Com-

pany, a Delaware corporation, will be sold at Public Auction to the highest bidder at the Com-

pany's plant, Detroit, Michigan, on February 4,

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Bidders will be required to deposit, at least

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Purchasers are required to assume all out-

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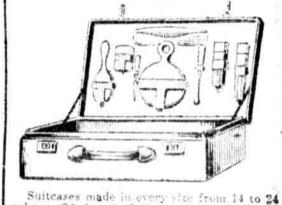


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