

then, his arm falling nervelessly, he held the weapon dangling at his side.

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

"When you lift your hand, Bookie, it's the signal," he said in a monotone.

Bookie Skarvan's knees seemed to bend and sag a little more—there was no other movement.

"I'm waiting," said Dave Henderson—and pulled the trigger of his revolver to put a shot into the floor.

There was the click of the falling hammer—no more. A grim smile played across Dave Henderson's lips. It was as well, perhaps, that he had tried in that way to startle, to *frighten*, this terrified, spineless cur who stood there into action! The cartridge 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 revolver were empty!* His brain seemed to sicken, and then to recover itself, and leap into fierce, virile activity. He was at the mercy of that cringing hound there—if the other but knew it. It seemed as though all the devils of hell shrieked at him in unholy mirth. If he moved a step forward to rush, to close with the other, the very paroxysm of fear that possessed Bookie Skarvan would instinctively incite the man to fire. There was one way, only one way—the electric light switch behind him. If he could reach that without Bookie Skarvan realizing the truth, there would be the darkness—and his bare hands. Well, he asked no more than that—only that Bookie Skarvan did not get away. His bare hands were enough.