

instead of finding you and the money here—they would find the police." There was a twisted, merciless smile on Dave Henderson'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. Dave 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 the 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, himself, might gain entrance to Dago George's room through the window—only the old-fashioned iron shutters, carefully closed and fastened, had barred the way.

"Well?" He flung the word sharply at Bookie Skarvan.

"I—Baldy knew the Scorpion." Bookie Skarvan's fingers wriggled between his collar and his rat neck. "Baldy gave me a letter to him, and the Scorpion put one over on—on that fellow on the floor, and got me a room here upstairs. And when I saw the money going into the safe I beat it for the Scorpion, and got him to give me a box-worker, so he got Maggot for me, and——"

"You hadn't the nerve, of course, when you saw Dago George putting the money in the safe, to tackle the job alone before the safe was locked!" There was grim, contemptuous irony in Dave Henderson's voice. "You're the same old Bookie, aren't you—yellow as 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 three minutes longer, or perhaps a little more, for the police, allowing