

THE MAN WITHOUT A SHADOW

strong and big, and there was something to be dreaded from his cudgel, no doubt, but once I could get inside the sweep of it, I knew I should be safe enough.

I moved quietly toward him, came near enough to draw a blow, a whistling sidewise cut that I had no trouble in dodging under. Then I knew he was mine. He was no more than a child in my hands, and in a moment I had him in the grip of knee and elbow, and was slowly, remorselessly, bending his body backward. At last, with a groan, he let the cudgel slip out of his nerveless hands and sank down, half fainting with pain and terror, at my feet.

I tossed the cudgel away. "I don't need that in dealing with you," said I. "I could kill you with my hands if you were to make it necessary. Lie still and don't attempt to cry out, or I will do it."

I left him lying there, with no precaution whatever further than keeping the corner of a watchful eye on him, and bent over his fellow-comrade in some real concern. I was happy to discover that my "turning-kick" had struck upon an unusually thick head. As a matter of fact, I limped for three days as a result of that blow. But the man on whom it had fallen showed signs of coming rapidly to his senses.