

A few seconds later Mashkaugan found himself on the great ledge of rock which overhung the water, at the end of the point. He could go no further and turned at bay like a boar before hounds. A second later Curran had flung himself upon him and they grappled like two wild beasts, gasping like bull moose in deadly fight. The lust of battle was upon them, the fierce joy of the man gone back to the primitive, heedless of pain, seeking to rend the foe. As they tore at one another they snarled and grunted with the power of their blows, with the violent effort to slay. For an instant one of the agent's hands became free of the hunchback's grasp. Something gleamed in his hand and there was an explosion.

There was another brief second during which Mashkaugan's hold seemed to become relaxed. His face whitened and he swayed, as if stunned, but all at once one of his long arms went back to shoot forth again with lightning speed. The massive fist met the enemy's lower jaw with a thudding crash. The chief agent's hands suddenly dropped to his side, the pistol falling to the ground. Then slowly his body seemed to col-