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Schlager," said Kent with a change of tone. "But your life is safe enough, in any event. Pity you're such a grafter, for you've got your decent points. Let him up, Sedgwick."

Relieved of his assailant's weight, Schlager undertook to rise, set his hand on the ground, and collapsed with a groan.

"Too bad about that wrist." said Kent. "I'll take you back in my car to have it looked after as soon as we've finished here.

"I s'pose you know I'll have to

arrest you, just the same."
"Don't bluff," retorted the other
carelessly. "It wastes time. Steady! Here comes the rest of the party."

Across the moonlit lawn moved briskly the spare alert figure of the owner of Hedgerow House. His hand grasped a long-barrelled pistol. He made straight for the grove of graves. Within five yards of the willows he stopped, because a voice from behind one of them had suggested to him that

"I also am armed," the voice added.

Hesitancy flickered in Mr. Blair's face for a brief moment. Then, with set jaw, he came on.

"Two men of courage to deal with in a single night. That's all out of proportion," commented the voice with a slight laugh. "Mr. Blair; I really should dislike shooting you."

"Who are you?" demanded Mr. Blair.

"Chester Kent."

"What are you doing on my property at this hour?"

'Digging."

"Ah!" it was hardly an exclamation; rather it was a contained commentary. Mr. Blair had noted the exhumed casket. "You might better have taken my offer," he continued after a pause of some seconds. "I think, sir, you have dug the grave of your own career."

'That remains to be seen."

"Schlager! Are you there?"

"Yes, Mr. Blair. They've broken my wrist and got my

Mr. Blair took that under consideration. "It doesn't strike me that you are much of a manhunter," he observed judicially. Who are they?"

"Francis Sedgwick is the other, at your service," answered the owner of that name.

An extraordinary convulsion of rage distorted the set features of the elderly man.

"You!" he cried. "Haven't you done enough-without this! would come on now if hell yawned for me."

Stricken with amazement at the hatred in the tone, Sedgwick stood staring. But Kent stepped before the advancing man. "This



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