

trouble was I didn't dare show myself to him. I had to jump him at the very moment he was making the attack. I stepped around when Wilkins hit his line, and I got just one glimpse of Mr. Mike. He had his back to me, so fortunately he didn't see me. He had the right-hand flap of his coat hunched up above his shoulder and pressed against the scenery. His left hand was fumbling inside the mantel. I was just about to jump him when bang! the riot broke. The lights went out. Of course the beggar had strung his wire along the roof of the cellar. I had the whole thing now and I knew I could bring it off to-night if Wilkins wasn't done for. That staggered me, and I pretty much forgot everything else until I'd run on the stage and found him still living."

"I suspected a drug at the first," Quaile said, "but I couldn't see, and I don't understand now, how it was used. You say Mike held the right-hand flap of his coat against the scenery."

"Yes, so I knew it was in that pocket. You recollect how Wilkins came up here night before last and told us about that time simply dropped out of his life."

"Naturally. The same drug was responsible?"

"Yes. That started me after the drug hot foot. You saw how he came out of it last night, strong but dazed, not knowing what had happened, complaining of feeling a little sick. That's the way he acted the other time. Might have been waking