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FARNSWORTH WRIGHT, Editor.

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"A wonderful serenity came over the bearded face."

**T**HIS announcement appeared in the personal column of the *Times* and Kenneth Warwick read it a second and a third time:

Wanted, a "down and out," age 22-30, to act as private secretary to a wealthy and eccentric old man. Public School and Oxford University education essential. Only those who would be prepared to face death with perfect fortitude, should the occasion arise, need consider the matter. Apply, in the first instance, by letter, enclosing evidence of age and education, to Henry Pogmack, Dean's Court, near Lewes, Sussex.

"Well, I'm——;" then, realizing that he was not alone, he finished the remark to himself.

Kenneth had been coming to the public library day after day in the hope that he might read of someone requiring a young man, like himself, with no other qualifications but a

public school and university education. He was still attending Bart's medical schools and the fees were paid for another year, but that would not help him unless he could earn sufficient money to enable him to live.

He had hoped that he might get work which he could do in the evenings, and perhaps on Sundays, so that he would be free to continue at the hospital, but no such good luck came his way; in fact it seemed very doubtful if he would be able to get employment of any kind. He had answered innumerable advertisements, but all with the same depressing result. His education did not seem to attract anyone, and he had come to the conclusion that he would have to regard his two years at Bart's as so much lost time, think no more about

Beryl Summers (he could not expect her to wait for him indefinitely), and betake himself to Canada, where he would attempt to drown his misery in hard manual work.

Kenneth's case was certainly a hard one. Not only was he keen on his studies, but he had just won a scholarship when his father died with dramatic suddenness, leaving nothing but a bankrupt business and a number of personal debts. Kenneth had only one living relative, an uncle, whom he had not seen for several years, and there were very good reasons why he would not think of seeking help in that direction.

When he got back to his little room in Guildford Street, Kenneth wrote to Mr. Henry Pogmack offering his services as a private secretary. He enclosed evidence of his age and education and explained his position in detail. He stated that his total fortune amounted to less than a pound, that he had no qualifications whatever beyond being able to drive and look after a car, and he ended by saying that he was quite prepared to face death with fortitude, should the occasion arise.

Five days later Kenneth received the following reply:

Dean's Court,  
Nr Lewes,  
Sussex.

December 11th, 1928.

Dear Mr. Warwick,

I thank you for your letter of the 6th inst. with enclosures. It appears to me that you are the very man I want and I shall, therefore, be glad if you will be so kind as to call on me here at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of Friday 13th.

Please find a one pound note enclosed. I trust that this will cover the expenses of your journey.

Believe me yours sincerely,

HENRY POGMACK.

Kenneth read the letter with trembling hands and eyes that looked as if they might drop out of his head at any moment. Was it really possible that he might get the job? Of course he would be one of dozens who

would be applying, but he might have a chance. There was no mention of salary; perhaps it would not be very much, and he would almost certainly have to give up the hospital work, but he would be self-supporting, it might lead to something better, and it would at least enable him to remain in England and see Beryl occasionally.

The following day Kenneth arrayed himself in his least shabby clothes and took an afternoon train to Lewes, where he learned that Dean's Court was on the other side of the Ouse valley; so he set out to walk the five miles.

IT WAS an uninteresting walk and it was not made more pleasant by a drizzling rain. From time to time he asked his way and eventually came to the house, which stood alone in a sheltered hollow of the Downs, shut in by a semicircle of trees. It was approached by a long carriage drive which was overgrown with weeds and grass. Everywhere there was evidence of neglect. Trees and shrubs needed cutting back; fences lay where they had fallen; leaves lay in rotting heaps where the wind had swept them; and the house itself appeared to be in the same dilapidated state as the grounds.

Dean's Court was a long, low building, faced with cement which was cracking and, in places, showed the bricks beneath. All the windows were closed and curtainless, giving the place the appearance of being uninhabited; but smoke was curling lazily upward from one of the squat chimneys.

Kenneth advanced up the drive with fast-falling spirits. He shuddered at the thought of having to come and live in this decaying and lonely place, but he realized that he was in no position to choose. He mounted the short flight of mossy steps which led to the front door and he pulled at the bell. It gave easily

in his hand, but there was no sound within. The bell was, presumably, broken; so he knocked upon the sun-blistered panel with his stick and stood listening.

After a few minutes there was a sound of a door closing, then shuffling footsteps, the turning of a key in the lock, and bolts being shot. The door opened a few inches and an old man, who must have stood well over six feet and was proportionately broad, with massive, square-set shoulders, stood looking at him with an inscrutable expression. He had a large, sallow face which was partly concealed by a short, shaggy beard; he had thick, bushy eyebrows, gray, penetrating eyes, and thin, colorless lips, behind which Kenneth could see two broken and tobacco-stained teeth. He wore no collar; his shirt was open at the throat; his shabby trousers hung down about his ankles; and the old dressing-gown which he was wearing was in need of much repair.

For a moment Kenneth stared at this strange-looking person without speaking; then he asked, "Is Mr. Pogmack at home?"

In reply the old man opened the door wide and, without uttering a sound, motioned Kenneth to enter. Then he closed the door, locked it and shot the bolts.

Kenneth found himself in a large, almost dark hall which smelt damp and musty and was bare of all furnishings. To the right and at the far end were several doors; on the left was a broad staircase up which the old man led the way. On reaching the landing they passed down a long corridor, and, opening a door, the old man stood aside to allow Kenneth to enter a room.

As he entered Kenneth looked round and was a little surprised to find that the room was comfortably if shabbily furnished as a sitting-room; a striking contrast to the hall and carpetless stairs. The furniture

was old and much worn, and the faded rugs on the floor were threadbare in many places. In the center of the room stood a large table, littered with books and papers. There was an armchair on each side of the fireplace where a cheerful fire was burning. Between the two chairs was a small table upon which tea was laid. A kettle was singing merrily on the hob.

"You wish to see Mr. Pogmack?" said the old man, speaking for the first time. His voice was soft and cultured and he smiled pleasantly. Kenneth noticed that he had closed the door.

"Yes, I have an appointment with him."

"I am Mr. Pogmack. Won't you sit down?" indicating one of the chairs.

Kenneth accepted the invitation.

"I am afraid that you must have had a very unpleasant walk," said Mr. Pogmack, as he began to make the tea. "We are rather out of the world here, but it is an extremely pleasant spot for anyone who wishes to be quiet. Do you take sugar?"

"Please."

"Pray help yourself to whatever you may want and do not stand on any ceremony."

Mr. Pogmack handed Kenneth a cup and then sat down in the other armchair. He was scarcely seated when he leant back with a groan and his huge, hairy hands clutched violently at his chest. His eyes were closed, his lips compressed, and his breathing came in labored spasms.

"Can I do anything?" cried Kenneth, as he got up.

There was no reply, but after some moments the old man shook his head. His face was distorted with the agony which he was suffering.

There was a pause and then he murmured, "It will pass."

Kenneth sat down again and gazed with horror at the huge form that lay back helplessly before him. Pres-

ently Mr. Pogmack opened his eyes and uttered a sound which was half groan, half sigh, and he looked across at Kenneth as if he did not see him.

"It comes on like that, quite suddenly," he said in jerks, as he tried to drag himself into a more upright position. "I never know when it is coming. My God! I shall be glad when it is over."

"What is it?" Kenneth asked.

Mr. Pogmack did not reply for some moments; he just sat there with his eyes closed, a cold sweat trickling from his forehead.

"Ah! you have not seen it before?" he said at length. "You will when you start your clinical work. Angina, mild attacks as yet. Each one is worse than the last, and so it will go on until one of them finishes me off. My only hope is that the end will come soon. Go on with your tea, Mr. Warwick; don't take any notice of me. The pain has gone now, but it leaves me much exhausted. I shall be all right in a minute."

**K**ENNETH took a slice of the beautifully cut bread and butter and wondered if the old man had cut it himself. The tea-table was as carefully arranged as if it had been prepared by a butler, but Kenneth had a feeling that Mr. Pogmack was alone in the house.

"You see," said Mr. Pogmack, as he sat up and poured out his own tea, "I am better now, but it is absolute hell while it lasts."

"Can nothing be done?" asked Kenneth.

"No, Mr. Warwick, nothing can be done. I have just got to put up with it until the end comes, and that may be any time now."

"Have you no one to look after you?"

"No. I do not want anyone fussing round. The less I am worried the sooner I shall go, and that's all that I care about. Now, tell me a

little more about yourself. Of course you told me a great deal in your letter, but not everything. I understand that your chief concern is that you should be able to continue your medical studies?"

"Yes; I want that more than anything."

"You would scarcely be able to go on with them if you came here?"

"No, but I have got to live."

"Of course, of course. Are you—er—keen because you want to make money or because you like the work?"

"I like it."

"You mean that you would still go on if, say, you suddenly inherited a small fortune?"

"I most certainly should."

"And there is not much chance of that happening?"

"None whatever," declared Kenneth.

Mr. Pogmack sipped at his tea and then leant back in his chair. For a while he was silent.

"I think that you mentioned something about a girl in your letter," he said at last.

"Yes."

"You are engaged to be married?"

"More or less."

A look of annoyance came into Mr. Pogmack's face.

"You must forgive me if I appear to be impertinently inquisitive," he said, "but, as you will realize before you leave this house, it is of the utmost importance that I should understand your position. What do you mean, exactly, when you say that you are more or less engaged?"

"I should marry at once if I could afford to keep a wife, but at the moment I can not even keep myself any longer."

"And you have no prospects?"

"None whatever."

"Have you no relatives who might help you?"

"Only an uncle who quarreled

with my father some three or four years ago."

"What did they quarrel about?"

"Over some matter connected with their business. They were partners, and it was due to my uncle's behavior that my father failed."

"And you do not wish to ask your uncle for help?"

"I would sooner shoot myself," declared Kenneth, convincingly.

"You are determined to fight your own battle?"

"Yes. I do not want charity or favors from anyone."

"I congratulate you, Mr. Warwick, I congratulate you," said Mr. Pogmack with an approving nod of his head. "There is a modern tendency, which I deprecate, for young people to rely too much upon their elders. I admire your viewpoint, Mr. Warwick. I feel that yours is a very hard case and that you deserve encouragement."

Mr. Pogmack leant back again and gazed into the fire. The room had become almost dark except for the glow from the flickering flames. Kenneth sat watching the old man, wondering what was passing through his mind. The thought of having to come and live in this house was almost as unpleasant as the prospect of the Canadian prairies; and yet there was something about this strange person that appealed to Kenneth. He was a gentleman, he had understanding and he could sympathize with those who were less fortunate than himself.

"Perhaps," said Mr. Pogmack, suddenly sitting upright and fixing his eyes upon Kenneth, "you wonder why I have troubled you to come all this way?"

"I—I understood that you wanted a secretary," replied Kenneth, with some surprise.

"A secretary! But of what use would a secretary be to me? An old man, my life's work is done, I stand on the threshold—the great, myste-

rious, dreaded threshold of the unknown, ready to pass over when the word of command reaches my ears."

Mr. Pogmack's voice had risen in pitch and volume, and a strange radiance had come into his massive face.

"But you advertised for a secretary," Kenneth pointed out.

"Yes, that is true, perfectly true," said Mr. Pogmack, calmly, as he got up and poked the fire. "You compel me to admit that I got you here on false pretenses. I apologize, but I can assure you that I had a very good reason for asking you to come."

"Then will you kindly tell me what you require of me?" said Kenneth, making no attempt to disguise his annoyance.

"Most certainly I will," replied the old man, returning to his chair and sitting back with his hands thrust into the pockets of his dressing-gown. "I fear that you will regard me as a very strange person, but I warned you that I was eccentric, did I not? I asked you to come here for one reason and one reason only."

Mr. Pogmack paused and looked very straight at Kenneth.

"I wonder if you could guess what that reason was, Mr. Warwick?"

"I haven't the remotest idea," Kenneth replied, shortly.

"I am not at all surprized; I will tell you; I asked you to come here in order that I might murder you."

**K**ENNETH sat perfectly motionless, gazing at Pogmack, who was smiling at him benignly. It seemed incredible that this pleasant, gentle, courteous man could be a lunatic, and, apparently, a homicidal lunatic. And why, Kenneth asked himself, had he chosen him as his victim?

For some moments neither of them spoke. There was not a sound in the room except the crackling of the fire. Mr. Pogmack continued to hold Ken-

neth with that benign smile. Kenneth's eyes passed from the old man's face to the pockets of the dressing-gown. What were those pockets concealing besides the two hands?

"You are wondering why I should want to murder you," Mr. Pogmack said, at length.

"The thought did cross my mind."

Kenneth strove to appear perfectly calm. He instinctively felt that it would be wise if he could show no signs of fear. He had never come into contact with an insane person but he had always understood that such people were sometimes amenable to being humored and that opposition only tended to aggravate their madness. He made a mental note of Mr. Pogmack's size and compared it with his own. The old man was by far the bigger, and Kenneth knew that lunatics are often vested with Herculean strength. No, he would try to avoid a physical conflict. Leaving individual strength out of the question, he felt certain that a weapon of some kind was concealed in one of those pockets.

"I will tell you why I want to kill you," said Mr. Pogmack, speaking perfectly calmly and at the same time drawing a small automatic pistol from his dressing-gown pocket, and allowing it to rest upon his knee. "As I have already told you, I am suffering from an agonizing and incurable disease. I can not possibly live for more than a few weeks, at the most, and the end may come at any moment. My condition, so the doctors say, has been brought about by overwork. I will not tell you how I have made my money or what my real name is. Pogmack, as you may have guessed, is merely a *nom-de-guerre*, which I have assumed because I am particularly well known in certain circles and I wish to pass out without attracting any attention. When I go no one will know who I really am. It is all arranged. I have

realized all my property; this house I rent, my modest fortune, which has practically killed me in the making, lies in a bank in the name of Pogmack."

He paused and sipped at his tea. His face had become drawn and his forehead was moist with perspiration.

"May I give you some more tea?" he asked, casually.

"No, thanks."

"This does not bore you—what I am telling you?"

"I am most interested," Kenneth said, with an effort.

"Well, for close on fifty years I have worked like a Trojan, and, although I have spent my money freely, I have managed to accumulate a nice little fortune. I have traveled all over the world; I have entertained lavishly; I have mixed with the highest personages in the land; I have sat in the House of Commons; I have owned race-horses and racing-yachts; I have been married; I have had children and I have lost them; in fact I have experienced most of the joys and sufferings of life, but never that of seeing a man killed, and, moreover, seeing a man killed by my own hand."

Mr. Pogmack paused and mopped his forehead with a large colored handkerchief.

"Would that be counted as a joy or a suffering?" Kenneth forced himself to say.

Mr. Pogmack looked a little surprised. "That I can not tell you until the experiment is made, Mr. Warwick," he replied. "It might be either. I particularly wish to see how a man behaves at the moment when death is about to descend upon him."

"May I ask if I am the first would-be secretary whom you have interviewed?" Kenneth asked as he took a packet of cigarettes from his pocket.

In a moment Mr. Pogmack was on his feet.

"I beg your pardon," he said, in



the most courtly manner, as he reached to the table for a cigarette case, which he handed to Kenneth. "I had not realized that you had finished eating. You can afford to smoke?"

"You sent me a pound, Mr. Pogmack."

"To be sure I did," said the old man as he sat down again. "I had quite forgotten. Now, what was it that you asked me? Ah, yes! Have I interviewed anyone else? Yes, you are the third man whom I have interviewed."

"Did you kill the others?"

"No, they were not worthy of the trouble."

"In what way?" asked Kenneth.

"I can hardly explain to you, for I doubt if you would appreciate the subtleties of my requirements."

"And you think that I am suitable?"

Kenneth fully realized the fatuousness of his questions, but he was playing for time. He did not for a moment question the genuineness of the sudden heart attack, of which he had just been a witness, and he was hoping that there might be another which would give him an opportunity of making his escape.

"I think that you are eminently suitable," replied Pogmack, so calmly and with such sincerity that it was indeed difficult for Kenneth to believe that he was in the presence of a madman.

"Are you seeing anyone else, after me?"

"No. I have made my choice and I am confident that it will prove to be a very good one."

"What happened to the other men?" Kenneth asked. It was becoming increasingly difficult for him to think of things to ask.

Mr. Pogmack smiled. "The first gentleman came yesterday morning, and I very soon saw that he was not at all the sort of person who could face death with fortitude, so I sent

him off. The second one came in the afternoon and he took to his heels the moment he saw me." Mr. Pogmack paused and laughed. "It really was the funniest sight in the world. I wish you could have seen the fellow's face."

Mr. Pogmack leant back and laughed again until the tears were streaming from his eyes. Suddenly an inspiration came to Kenneth and he got up.

"Well," he said as he stood with his hand extended. "I think that I ought to be making a move or I shall miss my train back to town."

He had hoped that he might be able to take advantage of the old man's joviality, but the latter was not to be put off so readily.

"But—but, my dear fellow," he said, as he slowly leveled the pistol at Kenneth's chest. "How can I—er—well, you know why I asked you to come here."

"Then for heaven's sake get on with it," Kenneth demanded. He decided that the time for humoring the old man was past.

Mr. Pogmack smiled. "I apologize, Mr. Warwick, if I appear to keep you waiting, but I assure you that one can not take an important step like this in a hurry. Things have to be arranged. Please sit down."

"I will stand, thank you."

Mr. Pogmack shrugged his massive shoulders. "As you wish. I am sorry that I should have to keep this thing pointed at you but I think you will agree that it is a wise precaution on my part——"

"Oh, for God's sake get on with it!" cried Kenneth, who felt that he could not control himself much longer. "Why don't you fire the damned thing? Are you scared of it?"

"Scared!" exclaimed Mr. Pogmack, with a little, hard laugh. "No, oh dear, no, I am not scared of it. You see, I should like you to choose."

"Choose what?"

"How I am to kill you."

"I don't think that it makes the slightest difference to me," Kenneth replied.

"Oh, come, come, you must have a preference," Pogmack coaxed, with the gentleness of a parent trying to persuade a child to take its medicine. "There are so many ways open to me and it is only fair that you should have the choice. For example, I could shoot you, I could strangle you or drown you, or——"

"Drown me! drown me!" cried Kenneth, whose self-control was all but spent.

"It should make a great deal of difference to you, Mr. Warwick," Pogmack went on. "However, since you choose death by drowning it is fortunate that I can accommodate you. You are sure that you will not have another cup of tea bef——?"

"Look here!" Kenneth cried, starting forward, then he stopped short as a shot rang out and there was a shattering of glass at the far end of the room.

FOR a short space the two men glared at each other. Pogmack was standing, the smoking pistol in his hand. His previously sallow cheeks were flushed; his jaw stuck out menacingly; and as he drew himself up to his full height Kenneth felt like a dwarf beside him.

"That was your fault, you young idiot," he growled. "The next time you play the fool the bullet will go into you."

"Do it then, you old swine," Kenneth shouted as he took a step forward, his hands clenched.

Pogmack did not shoot; he swiftly raised his free hand and drove it out against Kenneth's shoulder. Kenneth went spinning back to the wall. Again they glared at each other.

"I admire your pluck, young man," Pogmack grinned, "but I warn you not to play any more of your mock heroics on me. If you

do as I tell you, you shall go out as you have chosen, but if you don't I'll riddle your body with lead. There are five of 'em left and you won't be dead until you've had the fifth."

"You mean it?" gasped Kenneth, involuntarily.

"Mean it? Of course I do. What d'you take me for, a sane person? It's only sane people who say what they don't mean. Yes, I know what you've been wondering all this time: whether I'm mad or not, and now you know. Oh yes, I'm mad, all right, but not so mad that I don't know how to carry out a simple little job like this. Now, Mr. Warwick, you're made of pretty sound stuff, so let us see some barrack-room discipline. About turn and slow march out of the room."

Kenneth did not move.

"If I have to issue another order a second time I shall put a bullet into your thigh and that'll hurt like hell."

Kenneth turned slowly and walked toward the door. Pogmack followed so closely that the muzzle of the pistol was pressed into the small of Kenneth's back. In the other hand he held an electric torch.

"Right turn—down the stairs."

Kenneth had to feel his way, for the torch was dim and only cast a small circle of light. The house was otherwise in complete darkness.

"Left turn—halt!"

They had come to the end of a long passage which ran almost the whole length of the house.

"Open that door—down the stairs."

They were stone stairs, and Kenneth had to grope his way. The muzzle of the pistol never ceased to be pressed into his back, and Kenneth was obeying each command without a moment's hesitation. The time would come, he felt sure, when the automatic would be momentarily withdrawn and he would be able to

seize his opportunity, spring round upon his tormentor and overcome him with a sudden blow.

“**H**ALT!” They had reached the bottom of the stairs. The atmosphere was dank and evil-smelling. From somewhere came the faint drip, drip, drip of water.

“In front of you there is a door; open it.”

Kenneth obeyed. The door opened outward. The torch had faded altogether, and everywhere was intense darkness. The pistol was pressed, as if by way of a warning, more firmly into Kenneth’s back.

“Take three paces forward into the cellar.”

Kenneth hesitated and he felt the pressure in his back increase. He took three steps; the pressure had relaxed; he swung round and struck out savagely with his clenched fist. It crashed against the closed door, and at the same moment he heard the shooting of a bolt and the mocking laugh of Pogmack.

“Wait one minute,” came the old man’s voice. “I’ll go upstairs and turn the cock, and then you’ll have as much water to splash about in as you want.”

Kenneth staggered back as he realized the truth. What an idiot he had been to allow himself to be trapped like this without being able to put up a fight! No wonder that Pogmack had laughed at him. He had been a child in the madman’s hands.

Kenneth searched his pockets for matches but he had left them upstairs on the tea-table. For a moment he stood listening, but no sound reached his ears except the rhythmic drip, drip, drip of water. He felt for the wall and passed his hands up and down its rough surface, from floor to ceiling, which was only a few inches above his head; then he began to move slowly round the cel-

lar, hoping that he might find an opening somewhere, but there was none. His hand—the one which had struck against the door—was paining him and it felt as if it were bleeding, and he wound his handkerchief about it. He felt in all the corners and along the angle between floor and wall; he went down on his hands and knees and felt all over the floor but there was nothing but the rough concrete. He could find no place where water might enter.

The cellar seemed to be quite small, perhaps not more than ten feet square, and it was not long before the air began to be vitiated. Kenneth felt his way back to the door. It was studded with large nails. He stepped back a pace, measured his distance and then threw his whole weight against it. To his amazement it yielded easily, so easily, in fact, that he found himself sprawling on the floor outside.

Kenneth sat up and reflected. Had the old man’s diabolical plot failed, or was this only the beginning and was there more to come?

After a moment he got up and groped his way up the stairs. He reached the passage and paused to listen. There was not a sound anywhere. Slowly he crept toward the hall, expecting every minute that Pogmack would spring upon him from some corner. But Pogmack did nothing of the kind.

Kenneth reached the front door. He felt for the bolts and pulled them back but the door would not open. It was locked and there was no key. He tried all the other doors in the hall and passage, but they were likewise locked, with the exception of the one that led to the cellar. The only window was one high up above the stairs. Even now escape seemed impossible. But where was Pogmack hiding? Or had he left the house?

Kenneth went back to the hall and stood looking about him. Suddenly

he heard a noise coming from upstairs and he could see a faint light. Cautiously he went up, and when he reached the landing he paused again to listen. Yes, someone was moving about in the lighted room—the room where he had had tea. Then he heard the sound of a chair being moved and the rattle of the shovel in the coal-box, and then the gentle voice of Pogmack.

“Don’t stand there in the cold, Mr. Warwick. Come in.”

KENNETH never knew why it was, but for some strange reason all sense of fear left him and he walked along the passage and entered the lighted room. Pogmack was standing with his back to the fire.

“See that slip of paper there?” he said, pointing at the table which separated them. “It’s for you.”

Kenneth advanced and picked up the slip and examined it. It was a banker’s check, made out in his favor for £50,000 and signed H. Pogmack. Kenneth was still gazing at it when a chuckle from the other end of the room caused him to look up.

“Mr. Warwick,” said Pogmack, “I fear that I owe you an apology and an explanation?”

His tone indicated a question, but Kenneth was too much surprised to say anything.

“Sit you down, sit you down,” Pogmack went on; then, as Kenneth remained motionless, “It’s all right. I’m not armed. There’s the gun. It only had one cartridge in it and I used that to complete the stage effects. Yes, I’m mad all right”—he was speaking slowly and wearily and his expression as he looked across at Kenneth was one of intense sadness—“hopelessly mad, more mad than you ever imagined, but not in the way that you thought I was mad. Sit down and I will tell you all—”

Again he clutched at his chest and uttered a loud groan. For a second

he stood there, convulsed with agony, then he lurched forward and fell across one of the armchairs. Kenneth rushed round and tried to move him into a sitting position, but it was impossible. He took hold of one of the wrists and felt the pulse; it was quick and irregular and scarcely perceptible at times.

For some while Kenneth stood looking down at the huge prone figure. He wondered if he should go for a doctor, but where would he find one nearer than Lewes? and it would take him an hour to walk there. He might try to find a house where there was a telephone . . . Mr. Pogmack was moving.

“Let me help you,” said Kenneth, as he leaned down.

Pogmack made an effort and with Kenneth’s aid he succeeded in getting into the chair, but it was some while before he was able to speak and then his voice was so feeble that Kenneth could scarcely hear what he said. He spoke very slowly and there were long pauses between the words.

“This is—end—thank God! Listen. Your trouble’s over now. P’raps you don’t believe me—true—told bank to pay out to anyone who presents check, so be careful. Finish your studies; marry girl and good luck. No one to leave money to except scamp of nephew; rotter, coward—funked the war—never went out—can’t stand funks. Had two sons—fine fellows—they weren’t funks, no, by God!—They went—both killed—fine fellows. Given lot to charities—wanted to help someone who wanted it—rotten time I gave you but you went through it like a man—didn’t lose your head. Not like other rotters who came—no spunk. Take check to bank tomorrow. Glad you’ve got it. Don’t say anything ’bout me to anyone. All I ask. Old woman’ll be in sometime tomorrow. She’ll tell police.”

Pogmack paused. His eyes were closed and his head was sunk upon his chest.

“Everything settled,” he went on. “Letter to coroner and money to finish up with. No relatives except nephew—rotter—funked war—pots o’ money.—Happy now—you go off—there’s key of front door—don’t say anything to anyone. No one knows who I am.” A long pause and

then, very feebly: “Goo’ luck—you deserve it—you——”

The voice trailed away, and as Kenneth looked down at the old man he saw a wonderful serenity come over the huge, bearded face.

Kenneth remained for awhile and then, when he knew for certain that Pogmack was dead, he took up the lamp and the key and passed out of the room.