

mistaking that sound, and the signal is never given except in desperate emergency.

Hogan spun around and began running along the avenue toward his fellow patrolman. At the further end was a gathering mob of men. Hogan reached the outskirts of the crowd and began to force his way through.

"What is it?" he bellowed.

"Man murdered his wife! Crazed with dope!" he heard somebody say, and pushed to the open door of the house.

Upon the bottom step James lay. There was a bullet wound somewhere in his body, and he was drenched with blood. And at the top stood the drug-crazed madman, brandishing his revolver and shouting defiance to all who dared to try to take him.

Hogan did not pause "just an instant." He did not pause at all. That is not the way of the police. Up the stairs he ran, three at a time, and as he reached the middle of the flight he felt an odd twinge in his leg and heard the crack of the revolver. Another bullet spun past his shoulder. Hogan felt that sudden twinge—in his right arm this time. The nightstick dropped from his hand—and he caught it in his left.

Another bound and he was upon the madman, who was fighting like a fury. He swung the empty revolver down upon Hogan's head with a thud that felled the patrolman to the floor. Then, with a yell, the maniac had darted up the stairs.

Hogan looked down. He saw the frightened mob around the door. He tried to rise, but his limbs failed him, and he lay there, wondering whether he was paralyzed and why he couldn't get on his feet.

A yell broke from a thousand throats below. "He's fired the house!"

A thin whisp of smoke crept down the stairs. Then a fiery tongue began to lick the wall above him, and Hogan could hear the madman yelling as he watched the conflagration.

Below him he saw James huddled up at the foot of the stairs.

The sight of him seemed to give Hogan new vigor. He got on his feet and began ascending the stairs. As he went up he found that he had unconsciously picked up his nightstick.

He never knew how he reached the upper floor. But when he got there the mad man was too busy to notice him, for he was standing over a woman's body and chuckling as he watched the spreading flames. With his last reserve strength Hogan leaped the man and brought the nightstick down upon his head. He fell like a stricken ox.

Hogan picked up the body of the woman and staggered down the stairs with her. He saw that she was still living. The bullet had only pierced her arm, but she was as unconscious as though the blow which Hogan dealt had fallen on her own head.

A roar of cheering greeted him as he carried the woman out into the street. Men flocked around him and tried to grasp his hand. But Hogan turned and made his way slowly back into the burning building. They tried to stop him. He pushed them away.

Up, up he went, through drifting clouds of smoke and scorching fire. Now he was on the upper floor again and had picked up the body of the drug-crazed man. He swung him in his arms, but the weight was too heavy and Hogan pulled him down the stairs after him, wrapped in his own tunic.

The smoke filled his nostrils and Hogan dared not breathe, because as all fire-fighters know, an inhalation of fumes consumes the body within and kills more swiftly than a bullet in the brain. He held his breath and he pulled the madman through that Gehenna of fire.

Down, down—and the breath came from his lungs, and Hogan drew in one gasp of fresh, life-giving air. He