



The FIGHTING TENDERFOOT By WILLIAM MACLEOD RAINE

CHAPTER XIII—Continued

Grogan flushed but made no comment. Quantrell was far more nimble-witted than he, and had completely turned the tables on him. It was the prisoner now who jeered at him, an-dering him, and led him into verbal traps that made him furious. Yet he did not want to be relieved, exasperating though the situation was. He found in it the same savage pleasure that one with a toothache has when he is impell to grind upon the throbbing molar in resentment.

In the room. Did you want to see Grogan? Brad Helm knew now the meaning of the shots he had heard. Until now they had not even disturbed him. He had thought his boy was practicing at a target back of the hotel. Swiftly Quantrell stepped back of the home-made office counter and lifted from a nail a belt containing cartridges and a revolver. He broke the Colt's and saw that it was loaded. "Much obliged, Brad," he said. "Since you're so pressin' I'll borrow the loan of this for a while."

"I'll take a look at those," Quantrell said, and he stepped back of the bar. After swift examination he selected a .44 and tossed aside the one he had taken from Helm. He helped himself to a belt filled with cartridges, and to a pint bottle of whisky. "The bill goes to the sheriff," he said to Mike. "I'm the guest of the county. If he doesn't pay it let me know an' I'll have a lit' talk with him."

himself to all the guns he wanted first. "Which way did he go?" "Took the east road. Looks like he might be—" The sheriff had turned on his heel and was on his way. He had all the information they could give him and he was too busy to listen to surmise. Within the hour he and his posse were following the escaped bandit. He had with him Worrall, Owen, a cowboy known as K. C., and Buckskin Joe. The latter was an old scout who had trailed after the Apaches with Al Sieber.

He escaped from town," Worrall added. "Whatever we do will probably be wrong," O'Hara said. "Might as well try Horse creek as anywhere." The sky was clear and the sun shining. As they dropped down from the rugged peak country the temperature became perceptibly warmer. O'Hara came to a decision. "Think I'll ride over to the Diamond Tall and find out if anything has been seen of our birds. You fellows meet me at the Circle S O before supper. We'll stay there tonight. You might work the creek on the way down."

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