

MARS HILL COLLEGE
MARS HILL, N. C.

Boomerang!

JOE CRUMP

Rawlins was proud of his mare. "Her plenty of oats and saddled with a lose cinch." "Sir, Mr. Rawlins," answered the hostler, "yes, sir!"

Slick left the livery stable and toward Gunsight's gaudiest the Gilded Cage, he cast glances down the street toward town. Seeing no one approaching, he walked into town and bought a beer. "That inspector should be finding I salted his claim with," Slick softly as he sat alone contemplating his beer.

Rawlins was a tall, angular man dressed in the black garb of a gambler. Except for the business-like of the walnut-butted handle of his gun, he looked like any other gambler. In the saloon, Slick was just a gambler who was relaxing and enjoying his beer looking for a game to sit in. He was tense and keenly all that was happening. The noise of drumming reached his ears, he got up and went outside.

Front of the general store, a crowd had gathered and were shouting at a grizzled old man who was standing on the steps of the store. Old Luke Peters, his face gleaming with lust, was exhorting everyone several nuggets of shining gold. "I'm rich, I'm rich!" he shouted, "I'm rich, I'm rich!"

The yellow metal glinted in the sun as he cast sly glances at each other. One man slipped from the saddle and vaulted into the saddle, and out of town shouting, "I'm rich, I'm rich!" As one, the men raced to their horses and were swept out of town.

A half-hour later, Slick watched from the saloon door the last able-bodied man leave Gunsight. Only the old men, women, and children remained. With a smirk on his face, Slick left the saloon, walked to Gunsight's bank, pulled his Colt and opened the door. The only person in the bank was a meek old man who said that he was the president. In a matter of minutes, Slick had cleaned out the bank's safe. Then he went to the restaurant.

There the waitress refused to give him the money. With a snarl he used his Colt to push her roughly aside, and she slid to the floor with a low moan.

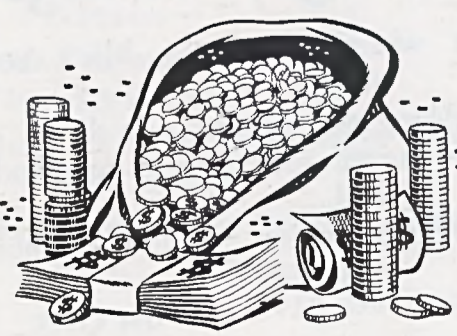
"You dawg," came a voice from the door. Slick whirled with a fluid motion and fired at the old man framed there. Quickly he stepped over the wounded man and walked rapidly toward the stables. Behind him he heard voices shouting. He broke into a run and went to his mare's stall. She was gone! Stunned, he stared blankly at a note scribbled on a piece of paper stuck to the wall of the stall.

Dear Mr. Rawlins,

I know you will not mind if I borrow your horse for a few days; I'll give you half of all the gold I find.

Bill

"Stand still or die," came a hard voice from behind him. Rough hands jerked his gun from numb fingers and shoved him toward the door. A convulsive sob shook Slick as he saw his plan fail. "The fool!" he cried. "The fool!"



The Visitor

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tracks with its monotonous roar I reviewed my plans for the rest of the day.

I arrived at Grand Central Station at fifteen minutes after twelve. That is what the clock said; I did not count much on clocks. Catching a cab, I rode to one of the lower class hotels. Habit I guess. After registering under a fictitious name, I went up to my room to wash before going out. As I was leaving the hotel, my eye caught sight of a men's clothing store and a fancy restaurant, which fitted into my plans perfectly. Then I went to the clothing store and outfitted myself from head to toe. I wanted to look sharp when I met my visitor at three o'clock. Silly, I guess. After this I went next door to the restaurant and ordered an expensive steak dinner. I was beginning to get used to the idea of money. When I had finished my dinner I went back to my room to shave. A good suit was no good without a clean face. I must make a good impression. On my way I gave the remainder to a woman who was collecting money for the Salvation Army. Just like that I did it! I did not even have to think about it. Making good plans are wonderful. Everyone should try it. Then I went to my room, shaved, dressed, then retired to an easy chair to await my visitor. I knew he would be on time. It was then fifteen till three.

I looked at my watch. It was three o'clock. Without hesitation I walked into the bathroom. I could sense my visitor was there, although I could not see him. I turned and locked the door, figuring I might as well make it as hard as possible for everybody. Nobody had made it easy for me. Then came the most difficult part in my plan. Funny it didn't hurt much. It was over in seconds. The last thought I had was to wonder what the hometown write-up would look like. They would probably run a front-page picture.