

Pike's Peak Or Bust.

sent the water hissing down the bricks. They were hustled so late when they saw a bluish green flame flash in the red of the fire in the roof below, and a belch of smoke rolled up to them on the burst and echo of an explosion. Before it reached them they heard another roar beneath it. The cloud of smoke was split with flame, and they leaped back from the parapet as if from the crater of a volcano and threw themselves on their faces as the burning gases, freed by the collapse of the roof, flared 200 feet in the air and licking up the side of the massive building, to break every window glass in its upper ten stories and ignite every window curtain, window frame and "trim" in its north wall, rolls never them in a belt that slipped their ears like a frostbite and was gone.

Gorman plumb down the pipe that was thrashing about the roof and staggered back to the parapet with it. The heat was unendurable, and he could see nothing for the smoke that blinded him with tears. He did not know that the gale was carrying a solid tongue of fire into the hidden air shaft and that every window on that shaft was already spitting flames. He could just see that the woodwork of the window below him was afire, and he called Hanrahan to train the pipe on it with him. They doused it black at once and scattered the smoke to see another blaze below. Then suddenly the stream from their hose weakened and stopped. It was plain that the crews were using the water on the lower floors.

"We're wasted down below," I guess," Hanrahan said. "We're no good up here now."

Gorman nodded. They shut off the nozzle and turned to drag the line to the door of the stairs.

They were too late. Gorman saw the gash in the air shaft and cried out an oath. That shaft, he knew, ran the staircase from the ground up and cut them off from the elevator shaft in the center of the building. They dropped the line and ran to the door. Smoke was pouring from it, and flame was behind the smoke. Gorman ran back for the hose, turned the neck guard of the helmet over his face and with the water to open the way for him, fought down three steps into a blaze that could not be faced.

Hanrahan pitched forward on his shoulders. Gorman braced himself against the weight, turned to catch him under the armpits and carried him up, himself half suffocated, to lay him on the roof. They were greeted by the fierce purring of the flames. Hanrahan groaned.

"All right," Gorman asked him. He rolled his eyes. "Let's get down out of this," he gasped.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Hanrahan went over to it and crooked to peer beneath the flanks. Hanrahan stumbled against him. "Bill," he whispered, "I can't—I can't get down." Gorman thrust him aside. "Well, who said you could?" he snarled. "You're up here to stay. You better make up yer mind to that an' shut yer yap."

Hanrahan threw up his arms and screamed at the sky in a high, dry voice, clutching with his fingers and snapping like a dog with his teeth. Then he pitched forward into the smoke on a run for the street parapet again.

Gorman climbed slowly up the iron ladder to the top of the tank. He came on a scuffle there and raised his

to find that the tank was almost full. He took off his rubber coat and dipped it down, and it came up dripping. He rubbed it over his face and licked at the moisture on the smooth tarpaulin, and the touch of water sent a burning fever flush of thirst through him. He reached down with his helmet, drew it up half full and emptied it over his head and down his back again and again. Then he drank it in great gulps, sighing with satisfaction.

The relief brought back his energies. The tank ladder took his eye, and it occurred to him that if he could get it loose he might be able to reach a lower window with it. He took hold of it in his huge hands, drew a long breath and strained to wrench it from its iron sockets, tightening on it slowly until the blood drummed in his ears. He beat the upright of it, but the socket held it still. When he paused to remember Hanrahan and leaped back from the parapet as if

from the crater of a volcano and threw themselves on their faces as the burning gases, freed by the collapse of the roof, flared 200 feet in the air and licking up the side of the massive building, to break every window glass in its upper ten stories and ignite every window curtain, window frame and "trim" in its north wall, rolls never them in a belt that slipped their ears like a frostbite and was gone.

Gorman plumb down the pipe that was thrashing about the roof and staggered back to the parapet with it. The heat was unendurable, and he could see nothing for the smoke that blinded him with tears. He did not know that the gale was carrying a solid tongue of fire into the hidden air shaft and that every window on that shaft was already spitting flames. He could just see that the woodwork of the window below him was afire, and he called Hanrahan to train the pipe on it with him. They doused it black at once and scattered the smoke to see another blaze below. Then suddenly the stream from their hose weakened and stopped. It was plain that the crews were using the water on the lower floors.

"We're wasted down below," I guess," Hanrahan said. "We're no good up here now."

Gorman nodded. They shut off the nozzle and turned to drag the line to the door of the stairs.

They were too late. Gorman saw the gash in the air shaft and cried out an oath. That shaft, he knew, ran the staircase from the ground up and cut them off from the elevator shaft in the center of the building. They dropped the line and ran to the door. Smoke was pouring from it, and flame was behind the smoke. Gorman ran back for the hose, turned the neck guard of the helmet over his face and with the water to open the way for him, fought down three steps into a blaze that could not be faced.

Hanrahan pitched forward on his shoulders. Gorman braced himself against the weight, turned to catch him under the armpits and carried him up, himself half suffocated, to lay him on the roof. They were greeted by the fierce purring of the flames. Hanrahan groaned.

"All right," Gorman asked him. He rolled his eyes. "Let's get down out of this," he gasped.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose down, the staircase and shut the tin sheathed door on the blaze below. He went to the stone railing that surrounded the corners on the front of the building. The coping overhanging the lower windows in a sheer drop to the street. He hurried to the south wall. The windows there were twelve feet down, and there was no pipe or foothold. He went to the back of the roof and found another coping.

He tried to see Hanrahan running from parapet to parapet, now hidden in a cloud of whirling smoke, now blazed in the red glow of wild blue flame. He saw him lean over the marble railing that surrounded the corner of the front of the building and put his hands in a trumpet to his mouth. The voice was lost in the roar of the wind. He saw him take off his helmet and try to throw it down to the street, and the gash snatched it from his hand, tossed it aloft and blew it away to the south with the smoke and the flying embers.

He turned back to Gorman. "For the love of God, Bill," he cried, "don't let me burn alive up here!"

Gorman took his head. "I can't get down," he said.

He could see that there was nothing on the back roof to burn. The heat and hot chemicals would be their only gun. It was at its worst in the right wall, and at the point further from the gash an enormous water tank protruded with a caving of the wall and projected across the angle of the wall and the gash, so that, even if the roof should fall, the tank would not go with it. Here was the greatest safety. They would have water to prevent a heat from taking him alive, and they would have the tank to shelter them from the drift of smoke.

Gorman straightened up and looked around him. The doorway was the only entrance to the roof. He walked back to kick the useless hose