You'll excuse us?"

ed Tisdale, who guessed how

things stood between these two.

Slim rode for two miles before

"Back in Jarilli there were

the ground, and that thing was

thinking of you. Looking back I

can see where you have been my

"Unconsciously I built my

scheme of living around you. It

wasn't whether I wanted to do

this or that merely because I

wanted to; it was because I al-

ways did what I thought you

would approve of. Even when

ou were a little, long-laiged

kid with pigtails down yore back

here was no greater reward for

that standard or reward now, I

out it. Before I got this confes-

sion, I had no right to ask you.

Now I can. I've loved you for-

ever, it seems like, Mona. Will

Stained garments and bed clothes

ruined by greasy, discoloring

salves cost you many times

more than the salve it-

self-Why not use

on marry me?"

duty done, than yore smile. "I-I've gotten so used

FINAL INSTALLMENT

The concussion of that roaring discharge brought a shower of broken glass from the raised window sash, and the recoil upset old Joe as though a horse had kicked him. The buckskin screamed wildly, spun around twice then raced away. But it went with an empty saddle. Following horses leaped high as dily and wiped his lips with the hurdled the still figure in back of his hand. A drunken know as I blame him, though. got Arthur's signed and witness-

feet rubbing his shoulder rue-fully. "What a cannon!" he sight of you. Get out of this of-fice." that time. I shore musta hit something.

Slim. Then he leaned out of the are daid. Get that? Daid!" window and yelled, Hi, Roy! Stoney! 'Yuh all right? This is Slim.'

"Shore, and we're coming along, Slim, my lad. Be with you in a minute.'

leg. Dakota grinned dryly.

stand a little jolt of liquor, tho." "Git abottle, Joe," puffed Spud. "Yuh other boys help yore

selves. My treat." The liquor steadied them. Sto. ney Sheard turned to Slim. "What say we sashay up the street a bit, Slim? I kinda think I got Brockwell when they was riding for a getaway. I know I hit him, and he was beginning to wobble just as they went outa

sight past the livery stable." Slim nodded and they went up the street, picking their way past groups of excited, jabbering townspeople. Sure enough, not twenty yards beyond-the northern end of the street, they found Sarg Brockwell. He was sprawled flat on his back, his face to the sky. A single look satisfied them that there was nothing they could do.

As they turned back, membered George Arthur. "We got to find that crooked lawyer. Stoney. Brockwell can't talk, but Arthur can and will, before I get thru with him. Yuh didn't see him with that crowd anywhere?"

The cowboy chuckled sardon-

"Looks like somebody might badly mistaken, "e can investigate anyhow."

it looked. Pressing his ear to the Apache methods to wring it out Mona whirled and followed portal he listened intently. From of you. I ain't changed my mind. Tisdale's pointing arm. Sure inside sounded thick measured We've cleaned house on this enough a rider was loping steadsnores. "Sounds like somebody range, Arthur—cleaned it plen- iy towards them and Mona recwas sleeping off a drunk," he ty. We didn't stop at rocking off ognized Sim. muttered. "Well, we're going in. the Brockwells and Jigger Star-

of them, the door sagged, creak- list, yo're some mistaken. ed, then broke open with a crash. I'm admitting this: In a fair George Arthur was sprawled court you can probaby beat a across his desk, his head pillowed death sentence, 'cause we got no Less Monthly Discomfor. on his arms. The air was foul direct proof of you killing anywith stale whiskey fumes.

man and shook him roughly. Ar- treatment. Yo're listening to the to increase the appetite and thur sighed, coughed and tried gospel truth, Arthur. I'm gonna to push him away. Slim jerked get what I want, or know the him erect in the chair and slap reason why." ped his face. Arthur's eyes open. Still half drunk as he was

rattled. The lawyer stared at him assurance have I that you'll play vacantly for a moment, his jaw square?" he blurted. hanging. Then slow recognition

which had deadened his brain.

what do you want?" "Plenty," snapped Slim. "Get ta Blue.

yore wits together. Yuh've got a lot of explaining to do. Sto-ing the governor right away?" ney pour him another drink. It will straighten him up for a time.' Arthur gulped the liquor gree-

back of his hand. A drunken The kid has been eating his ed confession that I was framtruculence took hold of him. heart out all along about Mona ed," he stated. "And that makes Five seconds later it was all "Get out" he growled. "Got no over. Joe Rooney crawled to his use for you Loyale. I hate the "And though he's never hinted I'm going to say, Mona." He

I felt my shoulder blades touch lifting him from his seat only to kept min from he's sorta then that damn thing went off that time. I shore musta hit omething."

Then be leaned out of the lime Then be leaned out of

and Leo Brockwell were killed innocent, same as the rest of us. Shore, and she's a fine girl. She'd Roy and Stoney Sheard were Sarg Brockwell was killed try-stick to the man she loved resoon in the wild horse both uninjured. They looked anxiously at not fifteen minutes ago. But be- the boy for his pride, just the fore he died, Jigger Starbuck same. chair while Spud Dillon careful- talked. He put the tag on you, ly cut away the bloody pants Arthur. Yeah, yuh got a lot of e-l no time. He shaved and cleanexplaining to do."

Arthur sat quietly, evidently store clothes. two ole ground hawgs. It ain't trying to arrange his hazy tho-

aight into the lawyer's bloodshot ised lands in the Kicapoo range. a deadly chill in his voice. "Con- arrangement as to price with

my words good, and you know it. | confession, and, while she had | Slim." Are you ready to do your stuff? expected that Slan would ride

day, a little cavalcade jogged its at the sight of him. ting beside Roy, with his wound- led. "How about a little ride? honey?" "Loyale," he murmured. "You ed leg cushioned and propped up These boys can watch the cattle."

> "I suppose Slim'll be after seesuggested Roy.

Dakota nodded and grinned. "He's as feverish as a hound he reined in. Then he turned to

of it to me, I know he's had some reached in one pocket and broumuttered "What a cannon! Shore Slim shook him again half dang-fool idee about honor that ght out a tiny, plush bubble of a kept him from springing the ques | case.

Roy snorted. "As if that'd be Arthur's head came up. 'Huh' after making one bit of differhe gasped. 'Dead You're lying.' ence to Miss Mona. She's know-"Don't kid yoreself. Starbuck ed, bless her heart, that Slim is guiding star all my life.

At the home ranch Slim wast-

two ole ground hawgs. It ain t ughts. Presently he looked up. cho Valley, in company with Sam nothing to worry about. I could "You haven't got a thing on me Tisdale and Abe Fornachon, Moscand a little jolt of liquor the" -not a thing. I won't say a na Hall sat her saddle and watched the leaders of long tides of Slim dragged up a chair and cattle flow out across her range, sat down, so he could stare str- headed north toward those promeyes. "I think you will," he said, As soon as Tisdale had made the



Slim shot with smooth precision, backing up a step at a time.

ically. Him? Why he ain't got sider my side of the matter. You Slim Loyale he had sent word to nerve enough to get within three can clear my name, give written his trail mates to start the herd miles of a gun muzzle! Yuh'll evidence that I was railroaded moving. And the herd was now dence.

Horse, where Roy O'Brien and I got a funny idea about honor. feel like a robber, Mr. Tisdale. Spud Dillon were taking turns I don't care to face the rest of taking a quarter a head for the at explaining to a clamoring my life with a jail stain on it, mere passing of those cattle. I crowd, just what it was all And I'm planning a powerful don't see where they can possiabout. It was Stoney who spied lot for some happiness in the bly do that much damage. the crack of light at the bottom future. So if you think I won't 'Tisdale grinned. "Don't let of the door leading into Ar- go to the edges of hell itself to that worry yuh, Miss Hall. Me get complete clearance, yo're and the rest o fthe gang are glad

Slim tried the door, but found ten confession, if I had to use he was in a danged hurry." Give me a heave with this door." bucks. So if you think we'll back

body. But if you ever hope to suffered from a weak, run Slim nodded with satisfaction. get in front of that kind of court down condition as, a result c "Close the door and shove that you better do as I tell you. Other chair against it, Stoney," he di-wise, it's a rope and a cottonwood tree for you; that is, if you don't He crossed to the sleeping die under a little red hot iron

Arthur could not help but read "G'way," he murmured gut- the truth in Slim's words and turally. "G'way. Lemme sleep." looks. His head went down again Slim shook him until his heels "If—if I do as you say, what lated.

"My word; nothing else. But

find him holin' up somewhere, to the pen on false, perjured evi- on its way to the new promised land. They slipped past the Wild "It just happens, Arthur, that Mona turned to Tisdale. "I

to get by with that price. We're be in there, Slim," he drawled. "I made the threat that you'd quite willing to pay it. And here talk and make a complete writ- comes somebody that looks as if

A puncher had ridden from Before the combined weight down from adding you to the bank holdup and the part Slim and his boys had played. But she had heard nothing of Arthur's

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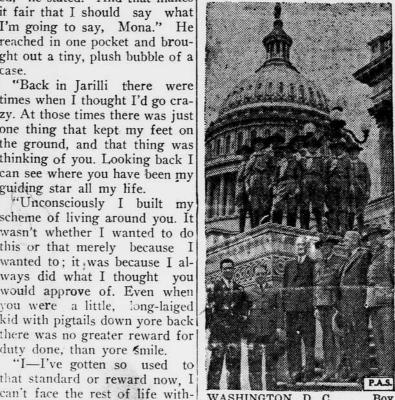
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Arthur gulped and nodded. to her when the fight was over, lude, during which a diamond Give me a pen and some paper." yet she could not help the queer solitaire that Slim had purchased In the glowing dawn of a new feeling that came over her now in town that morning was unearthed from the plush case and way from Pinnacle out to the Slim cantered up, giving a placed on the proper finger. Circle L. Ranch. In the lead rode cheery greeting. He shook hands "There's just one argument I've Slim Loyale and Stoney Sheard. with Tisdale and Abe, then turn- got to settle," said Slim. "Why Following them was a buckboard ed to Mona. "I got something to wouldn't you take that money pierced thru the liquor haze with Roy O'Brien driving. Sit-explain to you, Mona," he draw-from me to pay Arthur with,

"Because I didn't want to be Mona nodded. "I think so, too. in debt to the man I was going to marry," replied Mona daring. "Go 'long, young 'uns," laugh

Slim chuckled. "Plumb shore of me all the time wasn't you Mona dimpled. "I had hopes." Slim reached for her again. THE END

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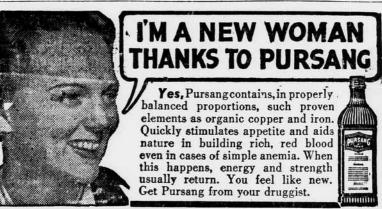
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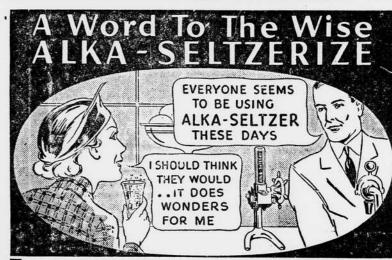












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