



SEVENTH INSTALMENT
SYNOPSIS: Slim Loyale is paroled from prison after serving 18 months for a crime he did not commit. He returns to his Circle L ranch to find his father dead and sinister forces at work, trying to make him violate his parole so that he can again be railroaded to prison.

The Brockwells and their gang are plotting to gain possession of Circle L ranch and the property of Mona Hall, a neighbor and life-long friend of Slim Loyale.

Slim discovers that Sheriff Starbuck has joined the plot against him. With the help of Dakota Blue and his cowboys, Slim Loyale defies the landgrabbers to do their worst.

"Oh, nothin' in particular."



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PAINT HEADQUARTERS

had grown cold to him. And besides, just now he was wondering what angle of approach to use on George Arthur about that mortgage.

Dakota Blue, however, with a sudden gleam in his eyes, pulled the paper to him and began reading it carefully. Slim rolled a cigarette, lit it, then went over to the pool table and began idly punching the balls about.

Presently came the thud of hoofs and a lone puncher rode down the street, stopping before Jigger Starbuck's office. He dismounted and went in, to reappear about five minutes later and cross to the saloon.

He was a diminutive, shriveled up crooked-legged fellow, with a pair of flaring bat-wing, nose so enormous as to make him appear almost square. He had a pair of beady, button, black eyes, set in a wrinkled, mahogany-brown visage. Half hidden by the flare of his chaps, a pair of big, black Colt guns dragged at his waist.

As the newcomer stepped into the room, Dakota Blue turned to half face him, his eyes wary, his right hand dropping until his thumb was hooked in his belt. The newcomer grinned crookedly.

"Go on with yore readin', Blue," he remarked in a thin, whispy voice. "All I'm after is a shot of liquor, providin' Dillon will sell it to me. I understand he told my boss an' Leo that their money wasn't any good. How about it, Dillon? Does that apply to the whole Half Diamond B outfit?"

"Not if they mind their business, Cinder," growled Dillon.

"What'll it be?"

"Bourbon," announced the puncher, rocking up to the bar. "Blue, will yuh an' Loyale have one with me?"

Dakota shook his head. "Thanks we just turned Spud down on the same offer."

Cinder Alton shrugged. "Okay! Lots of fellers don't care for liquor before noon. Me, I'm different. Any time is drink time to me." And again he smiled that crooked, twisted smile.

When Alton finished his drink he turned, leaning his shoulders against the bar, hooking a negligent heel over the bar rail. As he rolled and licked a cigarette, his eyes rested steadily upon Slim.

"Don't know where the Half Diamond B could pick up a new foreman, do yuh, Loyale?" he asked.

"Now!" exploded Spud Dillon before Slim could answer. "Yuh don't mean it? How'd it happen, Cinder?"

"Stopped a slug. It broke Rango's neck, clean as a whistle." Dakota smiled thinly. "That's tough. Yuh'd thought Deale would have learned that, long time ago."

"Yeah," agreed Alton, "yuh would at that. How'd yuh get the hole in yore hat, Loyale?"

A subtle change came into Alton's voice at this question. It grew flat and toneless to a degree. His hands had dropped to his hips with the words and his eyes were hard as obsidian. Suddenly Slim knew he was looking straight into the eyes of death, but he did not quail. He squinted, carefully along his cue, made the shot and dropped the six ball into a corner pocket.

"Rango Deale put it there with a 45, Alton," he drawled. "It was rotten shootin'."

"Yeah," agreed Alton coldly, "it was. Me, I allus could out-shoot Rango. Don't move, Blue, or I'll spatter yuh against that bar like a rotten tomato."

By some uncanny legerdemain Alton had slipped one of his guns free and now held it bearing directly upon Dakota's belt buckle. He flicked out the other and coughed it at his hip, the muzzle looking Slim directly in the eye.

"Rango should have put his slug just about four inches lower," he observed with a chill laugh. "That's where I aim to put mine." He flared into sudden fury, his thin lips peeling back over his teeth in a grimace of hate.

"Damn yuh!" he whispered. "Yuh killed Rango—killed my pal. Did yuh think I'd let yuh get away with anythin' that? Not by a jugful. I'll give yuh now, in about ten seconds, what yuh gave to him."

Spud Dillon's voice broke in, a little thick and wheezy, but very determined. "What yo're gonna do, Cinder, yuh poison whelp, is drop them guns, now!" And with the beginning of his words, Spud showed the gaping muzzle of a bulldog revolver against the back of Alton's neck.

The leer on Alton's face persisted, a frozen grimace. His eyes flickered. "Yuh ain't got long," reminded Spud.

Alton dropped his guns, shrugged and laughed. "I didn't think yuh had the nerve to butt in, Dillon," he observed, "knowin' all the time, o' course, that yo're signin' yore death warrant."

"Yo're thinkin' is plumb outa order," observed Spud sturdily. "I don't scare worth a whoop. From now on, what I told Sarg an' Leo Brockwell goes for their whole dang'd outfit. None of yuh are wanted in this saloon. Next of yuh to show in here, I meet with a sawed-off shotgun. Now rattle yore hocks."

Again Alton shrugged, then sauntered to the door and out. Without a backward look. He crossed the street, swung into his saddle and rode off. Spud Dillon replaced his weapon on the shelf behind the bar. "Gimme his guns, Dakota," drawled Spud.

his long, pointed nose quivering, his hands clinching and unclenching. He saw Jigger Starbuck slouching across to his office and hailed him.

Continued Next Issue

AUSTIN

Next Sunday will be the regular preaching day at Knobbs Baptist church. The public is invited to attend.

Miss Eudra Crabb of Winston-Salem, spent the latter part of last week with her mother, Mrs. James Crabb.

Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Windsor and daughter, Mary, of Elkin, spent Sunday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. L. M. Hawkins of this community.

Miss Dorothy Lyon was the guest of Mrs. Delah Baker at Elkin, Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Dameron announce the birth of a son May 29, 1937.

Mrs. J. Z. Adams has returned to her home from the Elkin hospital at Elkin, we are glad to note.

Mr. and Mrs. Hardin Brown and Mr. and Mrs. Guy Cox attended preaching services at Cherrylane church, Sunday.

Rev. Harrison Hayes was a visitor at Austin church Sunday evening. He made a very interesting talk.

Next Saturday, June 5, everyone in this community who has relatives buried at Knobbs Baptist church is expected to attend the cemetery cleaning.

Grammar

"Are your father and mother in?" asked the visitor of the small boy who opened the door.

"They was in," said the child, "but they is out."

"They was in. They is out. Where's your grammar?"

"She's gone up stairs," said the boy, "for a lay-down."

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE

Having qualified as administrator of the estate of George P. Gray, late of Surry county, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons holding claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned within one year from date hereof or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate settlement.

This the 12th day of May, 1937.
W. M. GRAY,
Administrator of George P. Gray, deceased.

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WBT 10:45 A. M., Mon.-Wed.-Fri.

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