

"Give me your hand."

Dan thrust his hand through the bars and John grasped it.

"Are you a friend of mine?"

"Ain't I a showin' ye."

"Take Billy home and take care of him until I return—will you do it?"

"Yes—but I don't like this givin' up a fight when I've won it."

"And one thing more, Dan, old boy, before I let your hand go, you've got to promise me not to kill Steve Hoyle."

"Who said I was goin' to do it?"

"I say it."

"He ain't fit ter live."

"Yes, but somehow God lets a lot of such trash cumber the earth. We'd better not try any more interference with his plans."

Dan hesitated, struggling with deep passion, drew a handkerchief and blew his nose.

"Ye're putty hard on me, Chief, I was goin' ter call by Steve's house and finish both jobs to-day, but orders is orders. I'll take 'em from you. I won't take 'em from nobody else. Good-bye, take care er yourself."

Billy pressed his brother's hand, silently turned and left with Dan.

When the last echo of their steps had died away