

sunken upon himself in a staring collapse. The deputy could not even see the blinking of an eyelid. "He's got an eye like a fish," he said to himself, contemptuously. "He's a dope fiend."

"He's dotty," he concluded later. "He's just a half-witted bum."

But though he was reassured, he remained watchful, with a sense of something uncanny beside him — and a nervousness that was not relieved till their train slowed down at the little muddy mountain town that made a railway station for "the Pen."

Sam rose to the pull of the handcuff, like a man drugged, and followed out to the station platform in a shambling daze. Johns turned him up the cement sidewalk of the hillside street, shuffling along beside his prisoner flat-footedly. The deputy's insteps had fallen in his days of police duty. Whenever he was accused of any political obliquity, he would admit, "Well, my feet don't track good" — with a humorous air of conceding the one fault of which he could be justly suspected.

To a man who has been condemned to prison for life, there may be something momentous in his arrival at the gates of doom; but to the little world that receives him, the event is commonplace and routinary. In Sam's case, his coming was only an incident in the arrival of Johns, whose visits were always welcome; and, to the officials who received him, the prisoner remained as inconspicuous as a boy led by the hand to make a call with his parent.