

should be no slips, Penfield was sent with you, ostensibly as your acting secretary, but really as a spy—”

“Oh, no; I can’t think that of young Penfield,” protested the president.

“I say yes; and the proof is that Penfield has confessed. He was scared into it when I told him what had happened at Horse Creek and gave him his choice of telling me what he knew, or going to jail. Then I came on the scene at the inopportune moment, and after North had carefully issued instructions intended to delay me as much as possible, he sent Eckstein in post-haste by way of Jack’s Canyon and the stage trail to get ahead of me. You see, he was afraid to trust matters to Penfield, who would most certainly have stopped short of the desperate measures Eckstein and the MacMorroghs finally took. It was decided at a council in which Penfield was present, that Ford’s elimination must go through. If you didn’t quarrel with him and drop him, he was to be murdered.”

Mr. Colbrith was silent for a long minute after Adair ceased speaking. Then he looked up to say: “What was Ford doing at Horse Creek that night? He had left me only a few hours before; and, as I have said, we had—we had some words.”

Adair smiled. “He was about to begin doing what he has been doing ever since: flogging the extension into shape night and day to get it ready to carry passengers