

42 Trails to Two Moons

the whole cattle clan — branded the barons of the great range and all their gentry of the cow outfits with the mark of bloodguiltiness. He compared the dominant caste to Pharaoh's hosts and made the small settlers a people in bondage, awaiting but the call of a Moses. Uncle Alf visioned himself in the rôle of deliverer.

"They drive my people from the water fords. They tromp down my people's lambs with their horned cattle, and their murderers lurk in the hedges to destroy the innercent. Bear witness, oh God! They think this here range was giv to them by You exclusive, like You set Adam in the Garden. Your waters and Your flowin' streams belong to no man but them. The strong grasses nussed by Your sun is for their fat steers only. But, God, I hearn You when You says to me out of a cloud, 'Alpheus, rise up and gird up your loins. Take the rifle in your hands, Alpheus,' says You to me, 'and call your people together with rifles in their hands to rise against the Egyptians and confound 'em — lay 'em low and utterly destroy the whole stiff-necked congregation!'"

The white head was tipped far back to bring the beard pointing at the horizon and his rapt