

THE YOUNG RAILROADERS

tunately, with his back towards the house, was the Italian, Tomaso. Beyond doubt the foreman was inside!

At the rear of the barn, and some hundred feet from where Alex stood, was a small cow-stable. Alex determined to make an effort to reach it, and see if from there he could not get, unseen, into the barn itself.

The Italian continued to smoke peacefully, and with his eyes constantly on him Alex stepped forth, and set off across the clearing on tiptoe. The guard puffed on, and he neared the stable. Then suddenly the man moved, and made as though to turn. But with a bound Alex shot forward on the run, made the remaining distance, and was out of view.

The rear door of the stable was open. On tiptoe Alex made his way inside. The door leading into the barn also was ajar. With bated breath, pausing after each step, Alex went forward, reached it, and peered within.

Yes, the foreman was there, a dim figure sitting on the floor a few feet from him. But the outer doorway, in which stood the man on guard, also was only a few feet away, and at once Alex saw that the problem of reaching the foreman without being discovered was to be a difficult one. Trusting to the now gathering gloom of the twilight, however, Alex determined to make a try. Opening his knife and holding it in his teeth, he sank to the floor, and began slowly worming his way forward, flat on his stomach. It was a nerve-