

The Cañon

the reins. Dex nosed him inquiringly. He patted the horse, and, turning, strode swiftly down the dry river-bed. He walked upright, knowing that he could not be seen from the trail. He could even have ridden down the arroyo unseen, and perhaps it was a senseless risk to hunt men afoot in this land. The men he hunted were Mexicans of Sonora; fugitives. They would fight blindly, spurred by fear. Waring's very name terrorized them. And were they to come upon the gringo mounted, Waring knew that there was more than a chance his horse would be shot. He had a peculiar aversion to running such a risk when there was half a chance of doing his work on foot.

Moreover, certain Americans in Sonora who disliked Waring had said recently that no man was quick enough to get an even break with the gunman, which tentatively placed him as a "killer," whereas he had never given a thought to the hazard when going into a fight. He had always played the game to win, odds either way. The men he sought would be mounted. He would be on foot. This time the fugitives would have more than a fair chance. They would blunder down the pitch into the arroyo, perhaps glancing back, fearful of pursuit, but apprehending no ambushment.

Waring knew they would kill him if they could. He knew that not even a fighting chance would have been his were they in his place and he in theirs. He