

24 Trails to Two Moons

working for the cow interests and I can prove it. Why does he mark the head of each man he kills with a stone? Just to show the people paying him he's earning his money, by God!

"Run down the list. Old Hard Winter Peters, who ran his sheep over on south prong of Beaver; he homesteaded on the only water hole in twenty miles. First to go, with a quartz pebble laid between his eyes. Jay North up in Rainhole; the K Cross outfit claimed he was branding their mavericks and there was hot talk between them. Number Two for North! I tell you, we got to make an example in the courts — got to make an example, or the cattlemen 'll have every homesteader and sheepman from here to No Wood throwing up their hands and dusting back East."

Strayman had worked himself into a fearful passion; his cowlick was roached up like a fighting rooster's crest, and his eyes were beady. The less emotional Agnew turned to Ring:

"Told anybody what you know — this murder business?"

"I tell my girl Hilma. She knows everything I know," the informer from Teapot answered defensively as if he expected his testi-