

The Cañon

shift in a sort of vague restlessness, as though trying to evade the ever-brightening tide of moonlight that burned away their shrouds of dusk and fixed them in still, tangible shapes upon the cañon floor.

Across the cañon the farther trail ran past a broad, blank wall of rock. No horseman could cross that open space unseen. Waring, seated upon the ledge, leaned back against the wall, watching the angling shadows shorten as the moon drew overhead. Toward morning he became drowsy. As the white radiance paled to gray, he rose and paced back and forth upon the narrow ledge to keep himself awake. In a few minutes the moon would disappear behind the farther rim of the world; the cañon would sink back into its own night, all its moonlit imageries melting, vanishing. In the hour before dawn Waring would be unable to see anything of the farther wall save a wavering blur.

Just below him he could discern the outline of his horse, with head lowered, evidently dozing. Having in mind the keenness of desert-bred stock, he watched the horse. The minutes drifted by. The horse seemed more distinct. Waring thought he could discern the picket rope. He endeavored to trace it from horse to picket. Foot by foot his eyes followed its slack outline across the ground. The head of the metal picket glimmered faintly. Waring closed his eyes, nodded, and caught himself. This time he traced the rope from picket to horse. It seemed a childish thing to