

## 46 Trails to Two Moons

species — queer creatures and a little akin to bull calves in their antics.

"Old Man Ring got you working for him again?" Zang hailed, curbing his pony near the shallow trench wherein the girl stood.

"Yes," Hilma answered, and she squared her shoulders for another pick drive.

"What you digging away up here on the hill — water hole?" the man quizzed laughingly.

"No; grave — his grave." The reply came shortly and with the sweep of the pick point down to shale. Whistler swung from the saddle in an instant and reached to take the pick handle from her. She met his questioning eyes with a curiously objective stare.

"Ole Man Ring dead? What — who did it?"

"The Killer," Hilma answered dully. "The Killer got him when he was coming back from Two Moons. Crazy Uncle Alf's over yonder to the stable now, tinkering up something to bury him in."

Her story of the shooting was bald and brief. The leader of the Spout gang of black-balled cow-punchers and outlaws heard her through with a growing pucker of wonder in