

never would have suspected it from the movements of his long figure in its black frock coat. The Colonel never suspected it at all. No one had told him, not even life itself.

He moved around to the back of the house, humming something quite tuneless under his breath. On his way he did a number of little things of which he was not fully aware. He plucked successively leaves of the bay, the camphor tree, and sweet geranium, rolled them in the palms of his hands and inhaled their aroma; he took off the cover of the *olla*—the earthen evaporation jar hanging from a tree—and inspected its supply of cool drinking water; he pulled up a number of weeds from the brilliant flower borders and concealed them carefully beneath the shrubbery; a flaming humming bird poised buzzing in front of his face—he held motionless until the little creature had darted away. None of these things could he have repeated to you. A modern psychologist would have told you they were products of his subliminal. Manuelo, ranch foreman, at present superintending the preparations for the barbecue, would have shrugged his shoulders and said:

“Eet is the *señor*. He ees like that.”

Same thing.

But near the kitchen door the Colonel awakened from this sauntering, buzzing happy dreaming. In the course of his progress hung the substitute of that day and place for the modern icebox—a framework covered with layers of burlap over which water constantly sprayed. The evaporation lowered the temperature. This contraption possessed, of course, a door; and the Colonel's hand reached for it, as his hand had reached for the fragrant herbages or the cover of the *olla*. And then the alarm bell of his mind rang violently. The Colonel withdrew his hand as from a red hot iron, and looked about him with a comically guilty air. None too soon. Almost on the instant the back porch screen door opened behind him.

“Good morning, Sing Toy,” said the Colonel.

“You wan' blekfus?” demanded Sing Toy.

“Presently. Pretty soon,” said the Colonel, managing a dignified retreat. He did not hasten his steps; yet one psychically endowed would have said he hastened. The expression of