

endless chain of buckets, suspended from a cable and operated by gravity, that would carry the ore across the cañon to the quartz-crusher. Likewise, the whole mine grew before him and beneath him,—tunnels, shafts, and galleries, and hoisting plants. The blasts of the miners were in his ears, and from across the cañon he could hear the roar of the stamps. The hand that held the lump of quartz was trembling, and there was a tired, nervous palpitation apparently in the pit of his stomach. It came to him abruptly that what he wanted was a drink—whisky, cocktails, anything, a drink. And even then, with this new hot yearning for the alcohol upon him, he heard, faint and far, drifting down the green abyss of the cañon, Dede's voice, crying:—

*"Here, chick, chick, chick, chick, chick! Here, chick, chick, chick!"*

He was astounded at the lapse of time. She had left her sewing on the porch and was feeding the chickens preparatory to getting supper. The afternoon was gone. He could not conceive that he had been away that long.

Again came the call: *"Here, chick, chick, chick, chick, chick! Here, chick, chick, chick!"*

It was the way she always called—first five, and then three. He had long since noticed it. And from these thoughts of her arose other thoughts that caused a great fear slowly to grow in his face. For it seemed to him that he had almost lost her. Not once had he thought of her in those frenzied hours, and for that much, at least, had she truly been lost to him.

He dropped the piece of quartz, slid down the slide, and started up the trail, running heavily. At the edge of the clearing he eased down and almost crept to a point of vantage whence he could peer out, himself unseen. She was feeding the chickens, tossing to them handfuls of grain and laughing at their antics.

The sight of her seemed to relieve the panic fear into which he had been flung, and he turned and ran back down the trail. Again he climbed the slide, but this time he climbed higher, carrying the pick and shovel with him.