

"How do you do?" said Mr. Markheim, behind the counter, laying down his cigar.

"How do you do?" said Mack. "I've come to see you about a shack that I notice you have to let just above the depôt. It has been empty for some time, and, though it's not what could be called central, it's about the size I want. What's the rent?"

"That building?" asked Markheim. "No, it's not central, but it's the first building that a man sees coming up from the depôt, which makes up for its lack of centrality. It is, therefore, not depreciated by lack of centrality, for what it loses in that way it gains by being seen by everybody."

"Oh, I don't know," said Mack. "I seem to see it differently. I almost missed that shack myself when I arrived, for I was looking on up the hill into town. It might have been just a boulder by the roadside."

"Well, sir, it's right handy for the depôt, ain't it? It is a building I have on my books as 'close proximity to depôt'—I make a point of that. What it loses in centrality it gains in that, too—it is easy of access. The rent is forty dollars a month."

"That will be thirty, then," said Mack.

"Oh, no!"

"You can't let it," said Mack. "It has been vacant ever since I came to Eureka."

"How long have you been here, sir?"

"Four days," answered Mack, with a bland smile.

"You can have it for thirty-five," said Markheim.

"All right—give me the key."

"You don't want to go in right now, do you?"

"Sure. I'll get the place in order to-night. You can draw up the agreement," and Mack took eight dollars seventy-five from his pocket. "Here's a week's rent in advance as a guarantee of good faith."