

Trails to Two Moons 21

"Jed Monk on Teapot five miles below my place is murdered. The Killer, he does it."

Bang! Sheriff Agnew's heels slid from desk edge to floor. His huge body straightened itself alertly. "Murder!" he echoed.

"Yes, murdered," Old Man Ring placidly repeated. His frost-bound features changed by not so much as a wrinkle. He was standing on one foot like a tired horse; the toe of the free boot kicked languidly against the heel of the other. "It is the Killer does it because I saw him."

"Where — when?" the Sheriff snapped.

"Last night 'bout sundown when I ride by Bad Water Breaks. I look for that white-faced mulley cow of mine which makes always to go by her calf down in Jed Monk's corral which I sold to him. I hear a leetle shot — bim! — away off near Jed Monk's house, and I ride there. So I am going through the breaks — 'nother leetle shot — bim! — this time leetle closer. I cut across Bad Water Breaks in a hurry and soh —" Old Man Ring interrupted his narrative to rummage for a bandanna and blow his nose. He was calm as a graveyard monument.

"So when I come to the road I see a man