

TANG OF LIFE

Chapter I

The Cañon

WARING picketed his horse in a
angle of the Agua Fria Cañon, spread
his saddle-blanket to dry in the
noon sun, and, climbing to a narrow ledge, surveyed
the cañon from end to end with a pair of high-power
glasses. He knew the men he sought would ride
south. He was reasonably certain that they would
not ride through the cañon in daylight. The natural
trail through the Agua Fria was along the western
wall; a trail that he had avoided, working his toil-
some way down the eastern side through a labyrinth
of brush and rock that had concealed him from view.
A few hundred yards below his hasty camp a sandy
arroyo crossed the cañon's mouth.

He had planned to intercept the men where the
trail crossed this arroyo, or, should the trail show
pony tracks, to follow them into the desert beyond,
where, sooner or later, he would overtake them. They
had a start of twelve hours, but Waring reasoned
that they would not do much riding in daylight.
The trail at the northern end of the cañon had shown