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THE SILVER BULLET.

In 1869, Lawrence Nutting was a United States Marshal in the southern district of Virginia.

But Nutting proved himself worthy and fit for the office.

Many were the expeditions which the officer had led, many his escapes, and many the prisoners safely captured.

His man was known throughout the state. His career had been that of a criminal from his birth.

Several times Nutting sought this quarry; twice he had actually caught him, yet twice he had escaped.

"The United States marshal," said he, interjectively.

"Yes, sir," said Lawrence, rising. "Be seated. What can I do for you?"

"I would speak with you alone," he said, glancing around him.

"This office is out of hearing from the street," replied Nutting.

The other drew a couple of cigars from his pocket, offered one to the marshal and lit the other himself.

"You are desirous of arresting a noted moonshiner, one Rufus Allen, are you not?"

"There's no doubt of that," said the marshal, smiling.

"I am the man," said the other, lighting his pipe.

"You are Allen?"

"For a full moon either man moved. It was though two large figures gazed at each other.

"Listen, I am armed; I am not. I am fully as desperate a man as you report makes me.

"Do not try to arrest me; I shall then be obliged to kill you.

Nutting assented his chances. Unarmed in the presence of a man who had the reputation of being a lawless man.

"At length, however, the visitor paused, and then concluded as follows:

"So have I lived. As a wild man, almost dead, that life has for the past five years been more a nuisance than ever before.

"I am not a man of money, and I have been seeking money and money only. Not so widely different, you will say, from all the world, except that my search was without the pale of the law.

"You can permit it—you can prevent it. I am an outlaw. Very well! I will cease outlying, will return to civilization.

"Be it so. Then we are enemies. I to you and the law. You to me. Remember my 15 minutes, and beware when next we meet."

He threw his cloak about him, buckled his pistols at his waist and disappeared, but as he left the room a little piece of metal fell from his person.

"The morning following, as Nutting entered his office, his agent seated bowed low before him, extending his brown and wrinkled hand, and said in an awe-stricken voice:

"Found 'dis on de floor, massa. 'Spose him your's, bud ting, massa, bud—'e 'ow ole plager to say so?"

"I'm pleased, I'm pleased. Form it yet, though. De ar's a sawy-side bullet, massa," he continued, lowering his voice to a whisper.

"I know 'em. My ole massa he had one case and carried it many years. De nobber kill no one but de feller dey's made for. Massa John, dough, he didn't get a chance to use his," and the old man chuckled.

"A suicide bullet," said Nutting, with a smile, as he examined the silver sphere.

"And he pointed toward some of the heavy cartridges belonging to his own pistols which lay on the table near.

"Dey mought miss massa. Ye know de debil care for his own 'bout de bullet is made by his help at night in de graveyard, an' can't miss. I knows 'em, massa, I's seen 'em afore."

"And did they do their work," said Nutting, laughing lightly.

"De officer near opened a drawer in his desk and took from it an old-fashioned duelling pistol which he had picked up somewhere, and fitted the bullet into the rusty muzzle.

"It's just the thing, uncle. Bring me my flask, and I'll load it with the suicide bullet. It's best to have it handy by if I get the blues."

"The servant obeyed.

"No use to fix 'em, massa. 'Twon't only kill one who it's made for, shuah an' ye couldn't shoot yourself wid it, nohow."

"Well, uncle, I'll load the old smooth-bore, anyway," said the marshal, sitting the action to the word.

The days and weeks passed, summer came and went, and fall ripened the year. A dozen times had the marshal organized expeditions and scoured the country seeking the notorious Allen.

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to him and said: "Will you let me smoke once more?"

"The fellow eyed him sharply.

"I have some here," said Nutting, and like a flash his hand shot upward toward the pigeon-hole where lay the old duelling pistol.

"Down with your hand!" cried Allen. It was too late.

"I used Dr. Jove's Catarrh Remedy. It cured me and it will cure you. I've heard of it, and by Jove I'll try it."

"A Hopeless Case.

"What's the matter, old fellow? You look sick."

"Business dull?"

"No."

"Health bad?"

"No. Dyspepsia."

"That's too bad. Your cooking is not very good, is it?"

"No. Girl has."

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