

official, asked, with his head on one side, grinning:
"How d' you mean, boss? How d' you mean?"

"You know 'how' I mean. They're playin' you fer a suckor. Did the detective give y' any money?"

"Ainy money? Fo' God, boss, I don' got nothin'."

"All right," Johns said. "Dream on. Dream on. What's your name?"

"Mah name's Joel."

"All right, Joel. Tell me when you find yourself beginnin' to wake up." Johns tipped his hat down on his eyes and leaned back comfortably in his seat. The train was crawling up the rise of alkali flats toward the foothills, in the heat and glare of dusty barrenness. After a long silence, Joel asked: "Does you know this heah Sam Daneen, boss?"

Johns replied placidly that Sam was an old and intimate friend; that every one knew he had not wrecked the D. & C. train; but that the railway detectives had accused him of it so that the road might not have to pay damages on the wreck. Johns made that point very clear. He illustrated it, elucidated it in detail, forced it on the intelligence of the blinking negro.

"They put him in the Pen," he said, "so's to save all that money. See, sonny? We were fightin' to get him out. We were provin' he'd never wrecked the train. So they gets you to say you helped him wreck it, an' that settles *him*, an' keeps the money in the bank. See? An' then they flings you in with him — 'cause you said you 'd helped him — an' they keeps you there,