

"*Dios!*" he whispered, throatily. "*Jesus Maria!*"

He crossed himself; the gesture was made in terrible, spasmodic haste. His arms flung out wide, palms backward as though in search of some support. He took a retreating step, and another, as that tall figure strode down at him; he backed against a boulder and stood thus, staring. His brown face became ghastly pale, his mouth opened in slavering horror.

In his madness there was reason. He had come here quickly, very quickly, after shooting Thady Shea and seeing him topple into that gully; he knew that no other man could walk here and arrive so soon after he had arrived himself. He knew that this tall figure with the raw, red brand across the brow could be no living man.

"*Que quiere?*" he cried, huskily, with a great effort forcing his vocal chords to do their work. "*Que quiere?* What do you want, hell dweller?"

Mrs. Crump, who did not believe in ghosts, and who was not easily shaken off her balance, satisfied herself that it was really Thady Shea who approached. Then she slipped to the doorway of the shack and picked up the blacksnake whip which she had tossed away. She stood at the corner of the shack, waiting, watching Abel Dorales, her lips grimly clenched into a thin line. She was quite content to let Thady Shea settle his own score with the man.