Valley OF REVENGE

BY JACKSON COLE

CHAPTER XXXIII

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[illegible] ed the sandy hair back from Straw Aldman's eyes.

[illegible] you [illegible] the [illegible] you [illegible] going to settle here in Deer [illegible] Valley until the minute you save some in that door."

Young Aldman's face changed as [illegible] if life and confidence had flowed back into him. He even smiled a little hopefully. Hope that was justified, as far as the red-headed [illegible] was concerned—but not even he, any more than the other three in the schoolroom, could suspect what even now death lurked [illegible]

[illegible] Valdez. "Where [illegible] you wore?"

A feeble hand pointed [illegible] the cold fireplace [illegible] the cheap [illegible] sash and neckerchief which [illegible] been crudely [illegible] turkey-red calico curtain. He [illegible] dropped the things [illegible] Bought 'em from a Mex [illegible] saying you might need [illegible] between, Straw Aldman said [illegible] silently. He went there to [illegible] nagging knowing that would [illegible] come you—me—if that was right."

Valdez' laugh was short and icy. "I see. But don't you see there must be a reason for that man Bartle to be like that?"

"You mean he lied on purpose?" Young Aldman frowned. "Not like Bartle. You're wrong there. He's a fine man, [illegible] that—points."

The old man stepped forward. "I'm Dan'l Weber, friend of the Aldmans—a Kentucky hillbilly myself," he said. "You've got no reason to quarrel with Bartle, son. I've seen a heap of men in settlement men. Bartle's all the boy claims he is, and more. He brought us here to this valley, gave up plenty of credit for tools and things to build with."

Weber's temper was testy. "What's the situation you want to know about, Mr. [illegible]? Or maybe you're figuring I'm going to deliver this gent where Bartle should by any chance be [illegible] he's worth most—unless everybody here's willing to take his word against Valdez'? Well, I think it's good business to—

"Yes, I think it's good business," [illegible] he?"

"I'd rather not say right now."

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The stranger at the door was a man in store clothes. Though unknown to Sheriff Bartle, he was Clarke Weber, newly arrived settler in Deer Valley.

The sheriff stood in the door for his visitors' enter and in the poll lamp [illegible]

"Get out, you [illegible]!"

"I thought you'd like to give me a little [illegible] information."

"About what," the sheriff asked.

"Rewards," Weber's twin Aldmans—a Kentucky hillbilly myself," he said. "You've got no reason to quarrel with Bartle, son. I've seen a heap of men in settlement men. Bartle's all the boy claims he is, and more. He brought us here to this valley, gave up plenty of credit for tools and things to build with."

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