

(3) The Reformation Of Calliope

[三]凱陸的新生

CALLIOPE CATESBY WAS IN HIS HUMORS AGAIN. Ennui was upon him. This goodly promontory, the earth -- particularly that portion of it known as Quicksand -- was to him no more than a pestilent congregation of vapors. Overtaken by the megrims, the philosopher may seek relief in soliloquy; my lady find solace in tears; the flaccid Easterner scold at the millinery bills of his women folk. Such recourse was insufficient to the denizens of Quicksand. Calliope, especially, was wont to express his ennui according to his lights.

蓋凱陸又要發作了。百般地無聊。對他來講，我們的好老家地球--尤其在快沙鎮那個地方--只不過是瘟疫瘴氣凝聚的地方。情緒低潮的時候，哲學家可能以自言自語採取解脫，女士從淚水尋求慰藉；軟弱的東部人爲了女人買帽子的帳單罵人。這些方法都不足以解救快沙鎮的居民。特別是凱陸，他慣常隨自己的高興發洩窩囊氣。

Over night Calliope had hung out signals of approaching low spirits. He had kicked his own dog on the porch of the Occidental Hotel, and refused to apologize. He had become capricious and fault-finding in conversation. While strolling about he reached often for twigs of mesquite and chewed the leaves fiercely. That was always an ominous act. Another symptom alarming to those who were familiar with the different stages of his doldrums was his increasing politeness and a tendency to use formal phrases. A husky softness succeeded the usual penetrating drawl in his tones. A dangerous courtesy marked his manners. Later, his smile became crooked, the left side of his mouth slanting upward, and Quicksand got ready to stand from under.

昨天晚上，凱陸亮起了精神接近低潮的紅燈。他在西方旅店廊上踢了自己養的狗而拒絕道歉。和人講話沒條沒理又愛在雞蛋裏挑骨頭。到處亂逛的時候，伸手就摘美士凱樹枝猛啃樹葉。這一向是個不祥之兆。對於了解他的幾個無聊階段的人，另一個徵兆是他會變得有禮貌，而且講起官話來。音調由原來拉長而刺耳的母音變成沙啞遲緩的聲音。他的舉止表現出危險的殷勤。然後呢，微笑起來像個老奸，左嘴角往上翹，快沙鎮馬上就要遭殃了。

At this stage, Calliope generally began to drink. Finally, about midnight, he was seen going homeward, saluting those whom he met with exaggerated but inoffensive courtesy. Not yet was Calliope's melancholy at the danger point. He would seat himself at the window of the room he occupied over Silverster's tonsorial parlors and there chant lugubrious and tuneless ballads until morning, accompanying the noises by appropriate maltreatment of a jingling guitar. More magnanimous than Nero, he would thus give musical warning of the forthcoming municipal upheaval that Quicksand was scheduled to endure.

在這個階段的時候，凱陸通常開始喝酒。終於，子夜時分，人們看到他喝過酒回家，逢人誇張而無惡意地殷勤行禮。凱陸的幽鬱還沒到達危險點。他會坐在啥會子理髮店樓上自己房間的窗台上一邊亂彈吉他，一邊唱悲傷而不成調的歌一直到天亮。比起暴君尼羅還有胸襟些，他以音樂向快沙鎮提出警告，搗蛋即將來臨。

A quiet, amiable was Calliope Catesby at other times -- quiet to indolence, and amiable to worthlessness. At best he was a loafer and a nuisance; at worst he was the Terror of Quicksand. His ostensible occupation was something subordinate in the real estate line; he drove the beguiled Easterner in buckboards out to look over lots and ranch property. Originally he came from one of the Gulf States, his lank six feet, slurring rhythm of speech, and sectional idioms giving evidence of his birthplace.

在其它時候，蓋凱陸安靜和藹--安靜到懶的程度，和藹得几乎沒用。最好嘛，他只是個懶鬼和令人討厭的東西；最壞的時候，他就成了快沙鎮的煞星。他的職業，看起來是房地產之屬；趕平板馬車載那些受騙的東部人到處去看地產和牧場。他來自沿墨西哥灣的那几州，從他瘦長的六呎之軀，講起話來含糊的聲韻，和所用的地方性俚語，可以看出他是那邊出生的。

And here, after taking on Western adjustments, this languid pine-box whittler, cracker barrel hugger, shady corner lounge of the cotton fields and sumac hills of the South became famed as a bad man among men who had made a life-long study of the art of truculence.

在這兒，經過美國大西部的洗禮，這個曾經當過松木箱工人，餅乾桶搬運工，曾經在南部棉花田和山區漆樹林偷懶乘涼的懶散種，變成一輩子專事搗蛋，惡名昭彰的惡人之人。

At nine the next morning Calliope was fit. Inspired by his own barbarious melodies and the contents of his jug, he was ready primed to gather fresh laurels from the different brow of Quicksand. Encircled and crisscrossed with cartridge belts, abundantly garnished with revolvers, and copiously drunk, he poured forth into Quicksand's main street. Too chivalrous to surprise and capture a town by silent sortie, he paused at the nearest corner and emitted his slogan -- that fearful, brassy yell, so reminiscent of the steam piano, that has gained for him the classic appellation that had supersede his own baptismal name. Following close upon his vociferation came three shots from his forty-five way of limbering up the guns and testing his aim. A yellow dog, the personal property of Colonel Swazey, the proprietor of the Occidental, fell feet upward in the dust with one farewell yelp. A Mexican who was crossing the street from the Blue Front grocery, carrying in his hand a bottle of kerosene, was stimulated to a sudden and admirable burst of speed, still grasping the neck of the shattered bottle. The new gilt weathercock on Judge Riley's lemon and ultra-marine two-story residence shivered, flapped, and hung by a splinter, the sport of the wanton breezes.

隔天早上九點，凱陸便進入狀況。由於自己所唱的野蠻歌和灌到肚子的黃湯，一切準備停當，就要向快沙鎮摘桂求榮。橫橫豎豎地掛滿了子彈，打扮上好幾支左輪槍，而且醉薰薰的，他跌跌撞撞走進快沙鎮大街。由於太過俠氣，不願意靜悄悄地給這個鎮一個意外的攻擊，他站在街口高聲發出他的口號--也就是那個恐怖，刺耳，令人連想到蒸氣鋼琴的一聲大叫，也就是爲了這個贏得他古典雄辯詩神<凱陸>的雅號，人們早就把他真實姓名忘到九霄雲外。緊接著這聲大叫，他拿起45口徑左輪手槍連發三槍，這是用來試槍和練習瞄準用的。西方旅店老闆史瓦哲上校所養的黃狗，汪的一聲便四腳朝天說拜拜。一個墨西哥人剛從藍前雜貨店買了一瓶煤油提著走過街來，突然間被刺激得拿起飛腿快跑，手裏還提著

半截空瓶子。禮萊法官黃藍色雙層官邸剛剛按上的燙金風向器抖了一抖，展了一下翅，頭下爪上地掛在那裏，便隨著風兒飄盪。

The artillery was in trim. Calliope's hand was steady. The high, calm ecstasy of habitual battle was upon him, though slightly embittered by the sadness of Alexander in that his conquests were limited to the small world of Quicksand.

炮火調整就緒。凱陸的手也穩了。習於戰鬥的興緻正蓬勃高漲，可惜他和亞力山大大帝一樣，由於能征服的就只快沙鎮這麼一角而以爲憾事。

Down the street went Calliope, shooting right and left. Glass fell like hail; dogs vamoosed; chickens flew, squawking; feminine voices shrieked concernedly to youngsters at large. The din was perforated at intervals by the staccato of the Terror's guns, and was drowned periodically by the brazen screech that Quicksand knew so well. The occasion of Calliope's low spirits were legal holidays in Quicksand. All along the main street in advance of his coming clerks were putting up shutters and closing doors. Business would languish for a space. The right of way was Calliope's, and as he advanced, observing the dearth of opposition and the few opportunities for distraction, his ennui perceptibly increased.

凱陸沿著街走，左右開弓地放槍。窗玻璃如下雹；狗跳；雞飛；女人驚呼，要在外面玩的小孩快快回家。街上的喧囂偶爾點綴上几聲惡煞的槍響，又像很規率地，爲子彈劃破空氣的迴響掩蓋過，這聲音是快沙鎮民所熟悉的。凱陸精神低潮時是快沙鎮的國訂假日。沿街往下的商店，店員們忙著下窗簾，關店門。生意得停擺一陣時候。行路權都是他的，他一面走，一面發現沒人阻攔，也沒有人提供機會分散他的注意，於是乎，他的一肚子窩囊更變得氣焰高漲。

But some four squares farther down lively preparations were being made to minister to Mr. Catesby's love for interchange of compliments and repartee. On the previous night numerous messengers had hastened to advise Buck Patterson, the city marshal, of Calliope's impending eruption. The patience of that official, often strained in extending leniency toward the disturber's misdeeds, had been overtaxed. In Quicksand some indulgence was accorded the natural ebullition of human nature. Providing that the lives of the more useful citizens were not recklessly squandered, or too much property needlessly laid waste, the community sentiment was against a too strict enforcement of the law. But Calliope had raised the limit. His outbursts had been too frequent and too violent to come within the classification of a normal and sanitary relaxation of spirit.

再往下四條街的地方，有一些人正在積極地準備怎麼給蓋先生這種喜歡無理取鬧的毛病做個妥善的診治。昨天晚上，有几个報信的人急急地向市警長畢柏克報告說凱陸的脾氣即將爆發。警長不只一次爲了容忍這個搗蛋鬼弄得焦頭爛額，這下子可以說已經到達忍無可忍的地步。在快沙鎮這個地方，只要是人性的自然發作，都多多少少會被人們寬容。只要安份守己一點的百姓不要莫名其妙地送掉老命的話，或者財產不被無緣無故地荒廢掉，社區的共同心態是反對執法過苛的。可是呢，凱陸已經做得太過份。他搗蛋的次數太頻繁，程

度也太過暴力，再要牽強地解釋為正常乾淨的精神鬆懈的話已經不能。

Buck Peterson had been expecting and awaiting in his little ten-by-twelve frame office that preliminary yell announcing that Calliope was feeling blue. When the signal came the City Marshal rose to his feet and buckled on his guns. Two deputy sheriffs and three citizens who had proven the edible qualities of fire also stood up, ready to bandy with Calliope's leaden jocularities.

在那聲大叫，宣布凱陸情緒不對勁的時候，畢柏克早就在他六個榻榻米大的辦公室裏面期待地等著。等到信號一響，警長即刻起身披掛。兩位副警長和三個經得起槍火的百姓也一同站起來，準備好和凱陸真槍實彈的玩笑比試。

'Gather that fellow in,' said Buck Patterson, setting for the lines of the campaign. 'Don't have no talk, but shoot as soon as you can get a show. Keep behind cover and bring him down. He's an nogood 'un. It's up to Calliope to turn up his toes this time, I reckon. Go to him all spraddled out, boys. And don't git too reckless, for what Calliope shoots at he hits.'

[把那傢伙逮住，]畢柏克說，跟他們解釋要怎麼迎戰。[用不著說甚麼，把握機會就射擊。把自己掩護好，把他擊倒。他反正是個沒用的東西。這次該凱陸四腳朝天了，我想。孩兒們，好好散開各就各位對付他。但是千萬別吊以輕心，因為凱陸要射甚麼中甚麼。]

Buck Patterson, tall, muscular, and solemn-faced, with his bright 'City Marshal' badge shining on the breast of his blue flannel shirt, gave his posse directions for the onslaught upon Calliope. The plan was to accomplish the downfall of the Quicksand Terror without loss to the attaching party, if possible.

畢柏克高，壯，面貌嚴肅，穿著藍法蘭絨襯衣，胸前掛著金光閃閃的[市警長]胸章，他向義勇團指示圍剿凱陸的戰略。作戰計劃是要把快沙鎮煞星解除，而我方無傷亡，假如可能的話。

The splenetic Calliope, unconscious of retributive plots, was steaming down the channel, cannonading on either side, when he suddenly became aware of breakers ahead. The City Marshal and one of the deputies rose up behind some dry-goods boxes half a square to the front and opened fire. At the same time the rest of the posse, divided, shelled him from two side streets up which they were cautiously manoeuvring from a well-executed detour.

那個亂發脾氣的凱陸，並沒有察覺前面伏下了回報他搗蛋的伏兵，好像一條軍艦駛進了海峽一樣，他頻頻向兩岸發炮射擊，突然間他發現正前方出現了防波堤。警長和一位副警長在半條街遠的地方從几只乾貨箱後面站起來向他開火射擊。同時呢，義勇團的其他團員遠遠地小心抄到兩條旁街，由兩面向他射擊。

The first volley broke the lock of one of Calliope's guns, cut a neat underbit in his right ear, and exploded a cartridge in his crossbelt, scorching his ribs as it bursts. Feeling braced up by this unexpected tonic to his spiritual depression, Calliope executed a fortissimo note from his upper

registers, and returned the fire like an echo. The upholders of the law dodged at his flash, but a trifle too late to save one of the deputies a bullet just above the elbow, and the marshal a bleeding cheek from a splinter that a ball tore from a box he had ducked behind.

在第一陣眾槍齊發之中，凱陸的一支槍被打斷了扳機保險，給他右耳垂削了一小塊，掛在胸前的子彈也引爆了一枚把他的肋骨給灼傷了幾根。原來低潮的情緒意外地注射了這一針營養劑，他感覺為之一振，好像義大利歌劇裏唱男高音的一樣，凱陸高聲放出一個音符的極強音，接著呢，馬上像回音一般迅速給予反擊。義勇團見機躲藏，可是沒能來得及，一位副警長早在左臂上吃了一槍，警長自己躲在一隻木頭箱後面，臉頰也被子彈削起的碎片劃破一道。

And now Calliope met the enemy's tactics in kind. Choosing with a rapid eye the street from which the weakest and least accurate fire had come, he invaded it a double-quick, abandoning the unprotected middle of the street. With a rare cunning the opposing force in that direction -- one of the deputies and two of the valorous volunteers -- waited, concealed by beer barrels, until Calliope had passed their retreat, and then peppered him from the rear. In another moment they were reinforced by the marshal and his other men, and then Calliope felt that in order to successfully prolong the delights of the controversy he must find some means of reducing the great odds against him. His eye fell upon a structure that seemed to hold out this promise, providing he could reach it.

現在，凱陸為敵人採取的戰術還以顏色，他看準了火力最弱，槍法最爛的方向，放棄了沒有掩護的街心，快速往那裏進攻。在那裏，有一位副警長和兩位義勇團員難得很狡猾地躲在啤酒桶後面，一直等到凱陸從他們前面經過之後，起身往凱陸背後拼命射擊。很快地，警長和其他團員也一齊聚合到此地增援，這時候嘛，凱陸心裏明白，假如他想把這場警匪爭鬥的遊戲成功地拖延的話，就必須想個法子來減少自己所處的劣勢。他一眼看到一個建築物很管用，只要他能到達那個地方。

Not far away was the little railroad station, its building a strong box house, ten by twenty feet, resting upon a platform four feet above ground. Windows were in each of its walls. Something like a fort it might become to a man thus sorely pressed by superior numbers.

離他不遠的地方是那個鎮裏的小小火車站，一棟十個塌塌米左右的堅固建築，座落在四呎高的月台上。四壁都開了窗。面對人數上占絕對優勢的敵人，這地方倒像是個很好的防禦工事。

Calliope made a bolt and rapid spurt for it, the marshal's crowd 'smoking' him as he ran. He reached the haven in safety, the station agent leaving the building by a window, like a flying squirrel, as the garrison entered the door.

凱陸向它猛衝，警長和他的團員一面[薰]以子彈。他安全進到堡壘裏面。在他由門進來的時候，火車站員像一隻松鼠一樣從窗戶逃之么么。

Patterson and his supporters halted under protection of a pile of lumber and held consultations. In the station was an unterrified desperado who was an excellent shot and carried an abundance of ammunition. For thirty yards on each side of the besieged was a stretch of bare, open ground. It was a sure thing that the man who attempted to enter that unprotected area would be stopped by one of Calliope's bullets.

畢警長和他的隨員躲在一堆木材後面商量對策。在車站裏嘛，是一個膽大包天的亡命之徒，槍法極好，而且彈藥充足。在他所在的周圍，各有三十碼的空地，沒有任何東西擋住他的視野。無疑地，任何人企圖進入這非保護區的話，一定會被凱陸的槍彈所阻擋。

The City Marshal was resolved. He had decided that Calliope Catesby should no more wake the echoes of Quicksand with his strident whoop. He had so announced. Officially and personally he felt imperatively bound to put the soft pedal on that instrument of discord. It played bad tunes.

這位市警長已經下定決心。他已經決定凱陸不能再以吱吱的尖叫鬧得快沙鎮雞犬不寧。他這麼向眾人宣布。於公於私，他都自許以掩滅那只彈曲惡劣，怪聲怪調的樂器。

Standing near was a hand truck used in the manipulation of small freight. It stood by a shed full of sacked wool, a consignment from one of the sheep ranches. On this truck the marshal and his men piled three heavy sacks of wool. Stooping low, Buck Patterson started for Calliope's fort, slowly pushing this loaded truck before him for protection. The posse, scattering broadly, stood ready to nip the besieged in case he should show himself in an effort to repel the juggernaut of justice that was creeping upon him. Only once did Calliope make demonstration. He fired from a window and soft tufts of wool spurted from the marshal's trustworthy bulwark. The return shots from the posse pattered against the window frame of the fort. No loss resulted on either side.

在附近有一輛裝載小宗貨的手推車。停在滿棚子的羊毛袋旁邊，那是一個牧羊場交的貨。警長和他的隨從把三袋羊毛堆到車上。畢警長俯著上身，慢慢推著保護著他的手推車向凱陸逼近。義勇團員分散開來，準備一但被包圍者企圖擊退向他逼近的執法者的話馬上予以還擊。凱陸只出現了一次。那是他由一個窗子向外射擊，羊毛應聲由警長的堅固壁壘飄起。義勇團迅速予以還擊，碉堡的窗框吃了好幾個子彈。雙方各無傷亡。

The marshal was too deeply engrossed in steering his protected battleship to be aware of the approach of the morning train until he was within a few feet of the platform. The train was coming up on the other side of it. It stopped only one minute at Quicksand. What an opportunity it would offer to Calliope! He had only to step out the other door, mount the train, and away.

就這麼，警長全神灌注於操縱他的戰艦，完全沒有注意到那班上午的列車進站，一直到他已經推進到離月台只有几呎的地方。火車由月台另一邊進站。只在快沙鎮停一分鐘。對凱陸來說真是一個絕好的機會！他只要從另一個門一溜上車便可長揚而去。

Abandoning his breastworks, Buck, with his gun ready, dashed up the steps and into the room, driving open the closed door with one heave of his weighty shoulder. The members of the posse

heard one shot fired inside, and then there was silence.

警長槍枝備便，一脫離他的掩護，便直撲台階，以他厚重的肩膀一頂頂開門衝進屋裏面。在外面等候的義勇團員只聽得一聲槍響，然後，一切回歸寂靜。

At length the wounded man opened his eyes. After a blank space he again could see and hear and feel and think. Turning his eyes about, he found himself lying on a wooden bench. A tall man with a perplexed countenance, wearing a big badge with 'City Marshal' engraved upon it, stood over him. A little woman in black, with a wrinkled face and sparkling black eyes was holding a wet handkerchief against one of his temples. He was trying to get these facts fixed in his mind and connected with past events, when the old woman began to talk.

終於，被擊傷者睜開了眼睛。在一陣空白之後，他開始能見，能聽，能感覺，能想。睜開眼睛四周圍望了一望，他發現自己躺在一張長板凳上面。一位個子很高，面貌若有所失的男士站著往下看著他，那個人掛著的胸章上刻著[市警長]的頭銜。有一位穿黑色衣服，滿臉皺紋，眼光灼亮的老婦人手裏拿著濕手巾敷著他自己的太陽穴。他嚐試把眼前所見的理出頭緒來，把以前發生的事關連起來。這時，老婦人開口了。

'There now, great, big, strong man! That bullet never tetches ye! Jest skeeted along the side of your head and sort of paralyzed ye for a spell. I've heerd of sech things afor! Con-cussion is what they names it. Abel Wadkins used to kill squirrels that way -- barkin' em, Abe called it. You jest been barked, sir, and you'll be all right in a little bit. Feel lots better already, don't ye! You just lay still a while longer and let me bathe your head. You don't know me, I reckon, and 'tain't surprisin' that you shouldn't. I come in on that rain from Alabama to see my son. Big son, ain't he? Lands! You wouldn't hardly think he'd ever been a baby, would ye? This is my son, sir.'

[嚙！好了。又大又壯的人！那顆子彈並沒有真正碰到你！只是從你頭旁邊划了過去，把你麻痺了一陣子。我以前聽過這樣的事！他們稱它為震盪。瓦艾柏以前就是這樣子打松鼠的--艾柏稱它為<吠它>。你只是被吠了一下，先生，待會兒就會好的。已經感覺好多了，不是嗎！你再躺躺，讓我清洗一下你的頭。我想你不認識我，我也不覺得甚麼意外。我搭那班火車從阿拉巴馬來看我的兒子。好大的孩子，不是嗎？老天！你根本想不到他曾經是個襁褓裏的嬰孩，是不是？讓我跟你介紹，這位是我兒子，先生。]

Turning, the old woman looked up at the standing man, her worn face lighting with a proud and wonderful smile. She reached out one veined and calloused hand and took one of her son's. Then smiling cheerily down at the prostrate man, she continued to dip the handkerchief in the waiting-room tin washbasin and gently apply it to his temple. She had the benevolent garrulity of old age.

這位老婦人轉過來，抬頭看著那位站著的男士，曾歷經蒼桑的臉泛發驕傲美好的微笑。她伸出青筋多繭的手握住兒子的手。然後呢，笑容滿面地看著受傷躺著的那位，一面繼續把手巾在候車室洗手台裏沾水，親切地敷抹他的太陽穴。她和其他慈祥老人一樣，喋喋不休

，講個不停。

‘I ain’t seen my son before,’ she continued, ‘in eight years. One of my nephews, Elkanah Price, he’s a conductor on one of them railroads, and he got me a pass to come out here. I can stay a whole week on it, and then it’ll take me back again. Jest think, now, that little boy of mine has got to be a officer -- a city marshal of a whole town! That’s something like a constable, ain’t it? I never knowed he was a officer; he didn’t say nothing about it in his letters. I reckon he thought his old mother’d be skeered about the danger he was in. But, laws! I never was much of a hand to git skeered. ‘Tain’t no use. I heard them guns a-shootin’ while I was gitting of them cars, and I see smoke a-coming’ out of the depot, but I jest walked right along. Then I see son’s face lookin’ through the window. I knowed him at oncet. He met me at the door, and squeezed me ‘most to death. And there you was, sir, a-lyin’ there jest like you was dead, and ‘lowed we’d see what might be done to help sot you up.’

[我有八年沒看見我兒子了，]她繼續說。[我有一位外甥，叫白而侃，他是一個鐵路管車的車長，他給了我一張票來這裏。我可以在這裏整整住一星期，然後再回去。現在，你想想，我的小男孩已經當了警官--一個市鎮的警長！那相當於一個巡官，不是嗎？我一直都不知道他是個警察，他在信裏從來沒提過。我猜他擔心他媽媽會因為當警察危險而害怕。但是呢，老天！我那裏是那麼容易害怕的。怕並沒有用。我下車的時候聽見射擊的聲音，看到煙從候車室冒出來，我只是照常地走。然後我看到兒子的臉隔著窗子往外看。我一眼就知道是他。他到門口接我，差點沒把我給掐死。還有你，先生，躺在那裏好像死了的一樣，老天，我們得想辦法把你給整治好。]

‘I think I’ll sit up now,’ said the concussion patient. ‘I’m feeling pretty fair by the time.’

[我想坐起來，]那位被子彈震盪的病人說。[我感覺蠻好的了。]

He sat, somewhat weakly yet, leaning against the wall. He was a rugged man, big-boned and straight. His eyes, steady and keen, seemed to linger upon the face of the man standing so still above him. His look wandered often from the face he studied to the marshal’s badge upon the other’s breast.

他靠牆坐起來，還覺得有點弱。他是個粗壯的人，大骨架子，長得很挺。他的眼睛穩而亮，似乎常常停留在那位靜靜地站在他旁邊的男士身上。他的眼光由那位男士的臉和胸前的警章來回地看。

‘Yes, yes, you’ll be all right,’ said the old woman, patting his arm, ‘if you don’t get to cuttin’ up again, and havin’ folks shootin’ at you. Son told me about you, sir, while you was lyin’ senseless on the floor. Don’t you take it as meddlesome fer an old woman with a son as big as you to talk about it. And you mustn’t hold no grudge ag’in my son for havin’ to shoot at ye. A officer has got to take up for the law -- it’s his duty -- and them that acts bad and lives wrong has to suffer. Don’t blame my son any, sir -- ‘tain’t his fault. He’s always been a good boy -- good when he was growin’ up, and kind and ‘bedient and well-behaved. Won’t you let me advise you, sir, not to do

so no more? Be a good man, and leave liquor along and live peaceably and godly. Keep away from bad company and work honest and sleep sweet.'

[是的，是的，你會好的，]老婦人說，一面拍拍他的手臂，[只要你不再自找麻煩，讓人家拿槍來打你。兒子把你的事跟我說了，先生，那時候你還昏迷地躺在地上。我有個跟你一般大的兒子，我跟你這麼說請不要嫌我多管閑事。你也不可以爲了我兒子打你來怪他。一位警官必須執法--那是他的職責--那些爲非做歹的人必須受到懲罰。不要怪罪我兒子，先生，那不是他的錯。他一直是個好孩子--他長大的時候一直善良，和氣，恭順，又知檢點。能不能容我勸勸你，先生，不要再這樣？當個好人，不要喝酒，過和平的生活，信仰上帝。擺開那些壞伙伴，誠懇地工作，晚上睡好覺。]

The black-mittened hand of the old pleader gently touched the breast of the man she addressed. Very earnest and candid her old, worn face looked. In her rusty black dress and antique bonnet she sat, near the close of a long life, and epitomized the experience of the world. Still the man to whom she spoke gazed above her head, contemplating the silent son of the old mother.

這位年老說教者手穿黑手套，她輕按那位她在說教的人的胸膛。飽經滄桑的臉是多麼誠摯，多麼熱心。身穿鏽黑衣裳，頭戴一頂古董帽子，她已經進入漫長生命的終幕，在她身上好比看得到生命經驗的濃縮短劇一樣。她在說教的人一直看她頭上方，凝視這位老母親一聲不響的兒子。

'What does the marshal say?' he asked. 'Does he believe the advice is good? Suppose the marshal speaks up and says if the talk's right?'

[警長怎麼說呢?]他問。[他認爲這忠告好嗎?讓警長說這席話說得合理不合理怎麼樣?]

The tall man moved uneasily. He fingered the badge on his breast for a moment, and then he put an arm around the old woman and drew her close to him. She smiled the unchanging mother smile of three-score years, and patted his big brown hand with her crooked, mittened fingers while her son spake.

那位高大男士不安地站著。他拿手指玩弄胸前的警章，然後，伸手把老婦人摟近身邊來。老婦人臉上煥發出爲人之母六十年不變的微笑，她以帶著薄手套彎彎曲曲的手，拍拍兒子健壯而晒成棕色的手。她兒子說了。

'I say this,' he said, looking squarely into the eyes of the other man, 'that if I was in your place I'd follow it. If I was a drunken, desp'rate character, without shame or hope, I'd follow it. If I was in your place and you was in mine I'd say: "Marshal, I'm willin' to swear if you'll give me the chance I'll quit the racket. I'll drop the tanglefoot and the gun play, and won't play hoss no more. I'll be a good citizen and to work and quit my foolishness. So help me God!" That's what I'd say to you if you was marshal and I was in your place.'

[我這麼說，]他說，一面牢牢地盯著另一位男士的眼睛，[假如我是你的話，我會聽她的

話。假如我是個酒醉的亡命之徒，不知羞恥又無希望，我會聽她的話。假如我是你，你是我的話，我會說，<警長，我心甘情願地宣誓，假如你給我機會，我要改過自新。我要改過投機取巧和槍戲。不再胡鬧。我要當個好老百姓，去工作，革除我的傻勁。老天保佑我！>假如你是警長，我是你的話，我會跟你這麼說。]

‘Hear my son talkin’,’ said the old woman softly. ‘Hear him, sir. You promise to be good and he won’t do you no harm. Forty-one year ago his heart first beat ag’in mine, and it’s beat true ever since.’

[聽我兒子說，]老婦人輕聲說。[聽他的話，先生。你答應當個好人，他就不會害你。從四十一年前他的心臟第一次衝著我的心碰撞起，一直到今天，他從來就沒說過謊。]

The other man rose to his feet, trying his limbs and stretching his muscles.

那位坐著的男士站了起來，伸了一下四肢，活動了一下筋骨。

‘Then,’ said he, ‘if you was in my place and said that, and I was marshal, I’d say, “Go free, and do your best to keep your promise.”’

[這樣的話，]他說，[假如你是我，而且又這麼說了，而我是警長的話，我會跟你說，<走吧！努力去實現你的諾言。>]

‘Lawsy!’ exclaimed the old woman, in a sudden flutter, ‘ef I didn’t clear forget that trunk of mine! I see a man settin’ it on the platform jest as I seen son’s face in the window, and it went plum out of my head. There’s eight jars of home-made quince jam in that trunk that I made myself. I wouldn’t have nothin’ happen to them jars for a red apple.’

[老天爺！]老婦人突然驚叫，[我差點沒把我的皮箱給忘了！就在我從窗子外面看到兒子的臉的時候，有一個人幫我提到月台上，我完完全全忘了。箱子裏面有八瓶我自己做的果子醬。怎麼樣也不能讓它們有點差錯。]

Away to the door she trotted, spry and anxious, and then Calliope Catesby spoke out to Buck Patterson:

她一溜煙跑出去，蓋凱陸趁這時候向畢柏克警長說：

‘I just couldn’t help it, Buck. I seen her through the window a-comin’ in. She had never heard a word ‘bout my tough ways. I didn’t have the nerve to let her know I was a worthless cuss bein’ hunted down by the community. There you was lyin’ where my shot laid you, like you was lead. The idea struck me sudden, and I just took your badge off and fastened it onto myself, and I fastened my reputation onto you. I told her I was the marshal and you was a holy terror. You can take your badge back now, Buck.’

[我實在沒有辦法，柏克。我從窗子看到她走進來。她從來就沒聽說過我要流氓的事。我沒有勇氣向她提到我是一個為社會所不齒的癩皮。你躺在那兒被我擊倒的地方，好像死了一樣。我靈機一動，就把你的胸章摘下來，掛在自己身上，然後把我的聲譽往你身上加。我跟她說我是警長，你是惡煞。現在請拿回你的警章，柏克。]

With shaking fingers Calliope began to unfasten the disc of metal from his shirt.

凱陸的手顫抖著，一面開始把胸章從襯衫拿下來。

‘Easy there!’ said Buck Patterson. ‘You keep that badge right where it is, Calliope Catesby. Don’t you dare to take it off till the day your mother leaves this town. You’ll be city marshal of Quicksand as long as she’s here to know it. After I stir around town a bit and put ‘em on I’ll guarantee that nobody won’t give the thing away to her. And say, you leather-headed, rip-roarin’, low-down son of a locoed cyclone, you follow that advice she gave me! I’m goin’ to take some of it myself, too.’

[慢點!]畢柏克說。[你給我好好把胸章照舊掛著，蓋凱陸。在你母親離城之前，不要想摘掉它。只要她在這裏一天，你就是快沙鎮的警長一天。只要我到處打點打點，我敢保證沒有人會告訴她甚麼。怎麼樣，你這個死癩皮，亂吼亂叫，神經病養的雜種，你好好聽著她給我的教訓！我自己倒要學一學。]

‘Buck,’ said Calliope, feelingly, ‘ef I don’t hope I may --’

[柏克，]凱陸感動地說，[假如我不希望我能--]

‘Shut up,’ said Buck. ‘She’s a-comin’ back.’

[噓，住嘴，]柏克警長說。[她回來了。]