

(12) THE HIGHER ABDICATION

[十二]天作之合

Curly the tramp sidled toward the free-lunch counter. He caught a fleeting glance from the bartender's eye, and stood still, trying to look like a business man who had just dined at the Menger and was waiting for a friend who had promised to pick him up in his motor car. Curly's histrionic powers were equal to the impersonation; but his make-up was wanting.

浪子毛捲捲側著身走向免費的餐檯。他知道酒保快速轉過的眼睛像雷達一樣在剎那間已經察覺他，於是嘛，他靜靜地站著，假裝自己是個生意人才在門爺酒店吃過飯，現在在等朋友開車來接他。樣子是裝得很像；只是這身打扮實在通不過。

The bartender rounded the bar in a casual way, looking up at the ceiling as though he was pondering some intricate problem of kalsomining, and then fell upon Curly so suddenly that the roadster had no excuses ready. Irresistibly, but so composedly that it seemed almost absentmindedness on his part, the dispenser of drinks pushed Curly to the swinging doors and kicked him out, with a nonchalance that almost amounted to sadness. That was the way of the Southwest.

酒保漫不經心地轉出櫃檯，兩眼朝著天花板看，好像是在研究要怎麼樣來粉刷天花板一樣，突然，他兩手抓住毛捲捲，讓他連個借口都沒找好。不可阻擋，又這麼穩若泰山似的，酒保把毛捲捲推到酒吧門口一腳給踢出去，毫不留情地，簡直叫人傷心。美國西南部就是這樣子。

Curly arose from the gutter leisurely. He felt no anger or resentment toward his ejector. Fifteen years of tramphood spent out of the twenty-two years of his life had hardened the fibres of his spirit. The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune fell blunted from the buckler of his armored pride. With especial resignation did he suffer contumely and injury at the hands of bartenders. Naturally, they were his enemies; and unnaturally, they were often his friends. He had to take his chances with them. But he had not yet learned to estimate these cool, languid, Southwestern knights of the bungstarter, who had the manners of an Earl of Pawtucket, and who, when they disapproved of your presence, moved you with the silence and despatch of a chess automation advancing a pawn.

毛捲捲倒是若無其事，慢條斯理地從水溝裏爬出來。他也不生氣，也不討厭那個把他趕出來的。他活了二十二歲，其中有十七年是在流浪中渡過，把他的精神纖維都硬化了。他的尊嚴有盔甲似的防護，暴虐的命運給他的打擊，儘管如箭如石而下，碰到他的盔甲都要折鈍而掉落。碰到酒保的時候，他尤其自我收斂。自然地，他們是他的敵人；但是有時候又適得其反，他們常成爲朋友。他反正得碰碰運氣。不過，由於人生地不熟，這些冷冰冰，沒甚麼生氣的酒桶拔子，林得像羅島紅，看你不順眼的時候，就像硬逼一隻小卒子一樣，連給個翻身的機會都沒有。

Curly stood a few moments in the narrow, mesquite-paved street. San Antonio puzzled and

disturbed him. Three days he had been a non-paying guest of the town, having dropped off there from a box car of an I. & G. N. Freight, because Greaser Johnny had told him in Des Moines that the Alamo City was manna fallen, gathered, cooked, and served free with cream and sugar. Curly had found the tip partly a good one. There was hospitality in plenty of a careless, liberal, irregular sort. But the town itself was a weight upon his spirits after his experience with the rushing, business-like, systematized cities of the North and East. Here he was often flung a dollar, but too frequently a good-natured kick would follow it. Once a band of hilarious cowboys had roped him on Military Plaza and dragged him across the black soil until no respectable rag-bag would have stood sponsor for his clothes. The winding, doubling streets, leading nowhere, bewildered him. And then there was a little river, crooked as a pot-hook, that crawled through the middle of the town, crossed by a hundred little bridges so nearly alike that they go on Curly's nerves. And the last bartender wore a number nine shoe.

毛捲捲在鋪了美士凱木屑的窄街上站了一回。聖安東尼讓他迷惑而困擾。自從三天前他從一節火車廂下了車之後，他已經在這個城裏白吃白住了三天，這是因為在迪莫尼那地方，滑溜手強尼跟他講過這個曾為美墨戰爭據點的聖城是個天上都會下起瓊漿玉液的地方，它們被揀起來，回鍋再煮，然後加上奶酥和糖讓人自取。毛捲捲來這兒試試倒也無可厚非。這裏的人好客，但是方式是那麼漫不經心，大方，而奇特。這個城倒是把毛捲捲的精神加了不少壓力，因為他在東部和北部的城市混過，在那兒生活腳步緊湊，一板一眼，有條有理的，他已經過得習慣。來到這裏嘛，當然，人家常會丟給他一塊錢，但是又常常會出於善意地跟著踢他一腳。有一次，在軍事廣場一群牛仔把他當成一頭牛一樣套住，然後拖過黑泥巴，把他穿的衣服磨得連破布都不像破布。拐彎抹角的馬路，從來不知道要通往那裏，把他給弄得稀裏糊塗的。有條小河，彎得好比壺嘴一樣，懶洋洋地從城中流過，跨過河上大概有一百架小橋，它們看起來千篇一律，讓毛捲捲覺得怪難過的。還有那個剛才踢他出門的酒保穿的是雙九號鞋。

The saloon stood on a corner. The hour was eight o'clock. Homefarers and outgoers jostled Curly on the narrow stone sidewalk. Between the buildings to his left he looked down a cleft that proclaimed itself another thoroughfare. The alley was dark except for one patch of light. Where there was light there were sure to be human beings. Where there were human beings after nightfall in San Antonio there might be food and there was sure to be drink. So Curly headed for the light.

那家酒店位在街角。時間是八點。回家的，外出的，從鋪石子的人行道緊擦毛捲捲而過。他的左手邊的成排店舖倒是有個空缺處，看看又是一條大街。整個巷子是暗的，除了一處燈火之外。反正有燈火處就有人家。在聖安東尼，只要有人處就有吃的和喝的。毛捲捲便朝燈火走去。

The illumination came from Schweigel's Cafe. On the sidewalk in front of it Curly picked up an old envelope. It might have contained a check for a million. It was empty; but the wanderer read the address, 'Mr. Otto Schweigel,' and the name of the town and State. The postmark was Detroit.

亮光是從秦果咖啡屋發出來的。毛捲捲在咖啡屋前的人行道上揀起一個信封。有可能信封

裏藏了一張一百萬的支票。信封是空的；流浪人讀了一下地址，[秦奧圖先生，]加上城市名和州名。郵戳是底特律。

Curly entered the saloon. And now in the light it could be perceived that he bore the stamp of many years of vagabondage. He had none of the tidiness of the calculating and shrewd professional tramp. His wardrobe represented the cast-off specimens of half a dozen fashions and eras. Two factories had combined their efforts in providing shoes for his feet. As you gazed at him there passed through your mind vague impressions of mummies, wax figures, Russian exiles, and men lost on desert islands. His face was covered almost to his eyes with a curly brown beard that he kept trimmed short with a pocket-knife, and that had furnished him with his nom de route. Light-blue eyes, full of sullenness, fear, cunning, impudence, and fawning, witnessed the stress that had been laid upon his soul.

毛捲捲進到咖啡屋。在燈光裏，他的經年流浪跡象無可遁形。那些職業流浪漢的刻意整理，無懈可擊的整齊打扮完全不屬於他。他全身的衣服代表了大約六個時代的流行裝束而為人家所丟棄不要的。兩家工廠為他的腳提供鞋子。你看到他的時候，不由得要在腦海裏看到一個木乃伊，臘像，被俄羅斯放逐的，或者流落在荒島的人。他的臉一直到眼睛是由一片捲曲的棕色鬍鬚所覆蓋，這個他不斷地拿一只短刀來修短，短刀是他浪跡天涯唯一的家當。淺藍色的眼睛，飽受辛酸，恐懼，狡頡，輕率，哈巴狗一般的諂媚，這一切都證實他的靈魂深處所積壓的緊張心情。

The saloon was small, and in its atmosphere the odors of meat and drink struggled for the ascendancy. The pig and the cabbage wrestled with hydrogen and oxygen. Behind the bar Schwegel labored with an assistant whose epidermal pores showed no signs of being obstructed. Hot wienerwurst and sauerkraut were being served to purchasers of beer. Curly shuffled to the end of the bar, coughed hollowly, and told Schwegel that he was Detroit cabinet-maker out of a job.

酒店很小，在裏頭，酒肉之氣爭著騰空。豬肉和包心菜和氫氧氣糾纏。吧檯後面，秦果和一個助手忙著做活，汗流夾背。熱騰騰的維也納香腸和德國捲心泡菜往買啤酒的人的盤子裏放。毛捲捲慢走到吧檯末端，空咳了一聲，然後跟秦果說他是底特律來的家俱木匠，目前失業。

It followed as the night the day that he got his schooner and lunch.

於是呢，那天他晚上吃到啤酒和一頓飯。

‘Was you acquainted maybe mit Heinrich Strauss in Detroit?’ asked Schwegel.

[你會不會正好認識底特律的史亨利？]秦果問。

‘Did I know Heinrich Strauss?’ repeated Curly, affectionately. ‘Why, say, ‘Bo, I wish I had a dollar for every game of pinochle me and Heine has played on Sunday afternoons.’

[我認不認識史亨利?]毛捲捲假裝親切地重覆一次。[哎唷，這個，哇，但願我跟他星期天下午玩過的紙牌每場能給我一塊錢就好了。]

More beer and a second plate of steaming food was set before the diplomat. And then curly, knowing to a fluid-drachm how far a 'con' game would go, shuffled out into the unpromising street.

更多的啤酒，再加上另一盤吃食，擺在我們的外交家面前。之後，毛捲捲明知這種冒牌的遊戲能撐得多久，提起疲乏的腳步，出得酒店，走進沒甚麼希望的市街。

And now he began to perceive the inconveniences of this stony Southern town. There was none of the outdoor gaiety and brilliancy and music that provided distraction even to the poorest in the cities of the North. Here, even so early, the gloomy, rock-walled houses were closed and barred against the murky dampness of the night. The streets were mere fissures through which flowed gray wreaths of river mist. As he walked he heard laughter and the chink of coin and chips behind darkened windows, and music coming from every chink of wood and stone. But the diversions were selfish; the day of popular pastimes had not yet come to San Antonio.

現在，他開始察覺到這個石頭築成的南方城市不方便的地方。在北方即使是最窮的市鎮也有的露天歡樂，明朗，和音樂，在這兒甚麼都沒有。還這麼早，那些陰深深的石頭築成的房子已經關了門，上了門，免得夜裏的污濁濕氣進到屋子裏來。街道只不過是那條河昇起的霧氣流通的空隙。他一面走，一面聽到陰暗的窗子傳出來的笑聲，銅板和籌碼的敲擊聲，從每一個石頭和木頭空隙，也傳出來音樂聲。只不過這些娛樂都是自私的；在聖安東尼大眾娛樂的日子還沒來到。

But at length Curly, as he strayed, turned the sharp angle of another lost street and came upon a rollicking band of stockmen from the outlying ranches celebrating in the open in front of an ancient wooden hotel. One great roisterer from the sheep country who had just instigated a movement toward the bar, swept Curly in like a stray goat with the rest of his flock. The princes of kine and wool hailed him as a new zoological discovery, and uprariouly strove to preserve him in the diluted alcohol of their compliments and regards.

終於，毛捲捲一邊沒頭地走，疾轉過一處街角，正巧碰到一群從城外某個牧場進來嬉鬧的牧羊人，他門在一家木造旅館前面不知道慶祝甚麼東西。這群牧羊人之中一個最會鬧的，往酒吧一指，把毛捲捲像一頭迷失的羔羊也一同趕進酒吧裏面。這群牧羊人把毛捲捲當成一隻稀奇古怪的動物一樣跟他歡呼，一邊大吼大叫地跟他敬酒，要把他浸成酒精標本似的。

An hour afterward Curly staggered from the hotel barroom, dismissed by his fickle friends, whose interest in him had subsided as quickly as it had risen. Full -- stoked with alcoholic fuel and cargoed with food, the only question remaining to disturb him was that of shelter and bed.

一個鐘頭之後，毛捲捲由旅館酒吧間跌跌撞撞地走出來，這群快來快去的朋友把他給甩出

來。飽足之餘--一肚子的酒精，滿腸子的食物，唯一剩下的頭痛問題是那裏去尋找一個安身之處。

A drizzling, cold Texas rain had begun to fall -- an endless, lazy, unintermittent downfall that lowered the spirits of men and raised a reluctant steam from the warm stones of the streets and houses. Thus comes the 'norther' dousing gentle spring and amiable autumn with the chilling salutes and adieux of coming and departing winter.

開始下起德州典型的清冷小雨--一陣沒完沒了，懶懶散散，從不少歇的雨，令人是那麼地提不起精神，白天被太陽晒暖活的石頭馬路和石頭房子，經雨一淋，好比睡夢初醒一樣，水蒸氣興意瀾珊地勉強上昇。這就是所謂的[西北雨]，在晚秋入冬或者早春冬末的時節，往往有它來祝興，入冬前，它來說哈囉，開春時，來說拜拜。

Curly followed his nose down the first tortuous street into which his irresponsible feet conducted him. At the lower end of it, on the bank of the serpentine stream, he perceived an open gate in a cemented rock wall. Inside he saw camp fires and a row of low wooden sheds built against three sides of the enclosing wall. He entered the enclosure. Under the sheds many horses were champing at their oats and corn. Many wagons and buckboards stood about with their teams' harness thrown carelessly upon the shafts and doubletrees. Curly recognized the place as a wagon yard, such as is provided by merchants for their out-of-town friends and customers. No one was in sight. No doubt the drivers of those wagons were scattered about the town 'seeing the elephant and hearing the owl.' In their haste to become patrons of the town's dispensaries of mirth and good cheer the last ones to depart must have left the great wooden gate swinging open.

毛捲捲全憑直覺地跟著自己的鼻子走，反正他的腳到那裏他就跟到那裏。在這第一條令人難過的街矮的一端，臨著婉延曲折的河，他發覺在水泥築成的石頭牆裏有個打開的門。往裏邊一看，裏面有營火和沿著三邊牆搭起來的矮木棚。毛捲捲進到裏面。在木棚下面，好幾匹馬正大口嚼著燕麥和玉米。一輛一輛的馬車和平板車橫七豎八地，套馬的龍頭七上八下，就車轆上隨便亂放。毛捲捲認出來，這是一個馬車園，做生意的人給城外來的朋友和顧客們停馬車用的地方。很顯然這些車子的主人已經散布城裏四處找樂子去了。那最後到的，急著尋歡作樂，忘了把門關上。

Curly had satisfied the hunger of an anaconda and the thirst of a camel, so he was neither in the mood nor the condition of an explorer. He zigzagged his way to the first wagon that his eyesight distinguished in the semi-darkness under the shed. It was a two-horse wagon with a top of white canvas. The wagon was half filled with loose piles of wool sacks, two or three great bundles of gray blankets, and a number of bales, bundles, and boxes. A reasoning eye would have estimated the load at once as ranch supplies, bound on the morrow for some outlying hacienda. But to the drowsy intelligence of Curly they represented only warmth and softness and protection against the cold humidity of the night. After several unlucky efforts, at last he conquered gravity so far as to climb over a wheel and pitch forward upon the best and warmest bed he had fallen upon in many a day. Then he became instinctively a burrowing animal, and dug his way like a prairie-dog down among the sacks and blankets, hiding himself from the cold air as snug and safe as a bear in his

den. For three nights sleep had visited Curly only in broken and shivering doses. So now, when Morpheus condescended to pay him a call, Curly got such a strangle hold on the mythological old gentleman that it was a wonder that any one else in the whole world got a wink of sleep that night.

毛捲捲吃飽喝足，到城裏尋歡作樂對他來講興緻乏乏。棚子下面，要暗不暗，要亮不亮地，他繞了幾個圈子找到第一輛馬車。這是一輛兩匹馬拉的白帆布篷車。車子裏大概裝了半滿，羊毛袋鬆鬆地綁在一起，兩三大疊灰色毯子，和一些打包，捆綁，和盒子裝的東西。稍微一想就知道這是些畜牧場用的貨，明天一早就要趕回城外的某個牧場。對睡眠惺忪的毛捲捲，它們除了是對付夜間寒冷濕氣的暖和和舒適之外甚麼都不是。他試了几次沒夠得上，這次終於爬上一個車輪，往前一裁，跌進几天以來最好最暖和的一張床上面。隨即，他直覺地變成了一隻撥土的動物，好比土撥鼠一樣直往袋子和毯子裏鑽，把自己舒舒服服地藏在那裏頭好比一頭熊在地穴裏冬眠，把冷氣都屏拒在外頭一樣。前三個夜晚，毛捲捲只能零零碎碎，萎萎縮縮地睡。現在嘛，當睡神同意降臨，毛捲捲牢牢地把他抓住，真奇怪那天晚上其他人怎麼會打得一點瞌睡。

Six cow-punchers of the Cibolo Ranch were waiting around the door of the ranch store. Their ponies cropped grass near by, tied in the Texas fashion -- which is not tied at all. Their bridle reins had been dropped to the earth, which is a more effectual way of securing them (such is the power of habit and imagination) than you could devise out of a half-inch rope and a live-oak tree.

六位西堡牧場的牛仔子在牧場販賣部門口窮等。他們的座騎在附近草地上吃草，馬兒以德州的獨特方式栓著--也就是連栓都沒栓的意思。韁繩掉落地上，說真的，這比其他任何栓馬方式都還有效（習慣與想像力的力量由此可見），那怕你拿半吋粗的繩子套在一棵活橡樹上，也沒這麼功效。

These guardians of the cow lounged about, each with a brown cigarette paper in his hand, and gently but unceasingly cursed Sam Revell, the storekeeper. Sam stood in the door, snapping the red elastic bands on his pink madras shirtsleeves and looking down affectionately at the only pair of tan shoes within a forty-mile radius. His offence had been serious, and he was divided between humble apology and admiration for the beauty of his raiment. He had allowed the ranch stock of 'smoking' to become exhausted.

這些牛隻的看護者閒著，每個人的手裏都拿了一張香菸紙，而且溫和卻不停地罵這個看販賣部的雷山姆。山姆站在門裏，把他的吊褲鬆緊帶彈著上身穿的粉色花格子薄綿襯衫，一邊低下頭盯著眼睛看自己腳上穿的這雙方圓四十哩之內唯一的一雙棕皮鞋。他的罪過大了，現在嘛，他不知道該好好低聲下氣地道歉，還是好好欣賞自己的鞋子。他居然讓牧場的[煙火]給斷貨了。

'I thought sure there was another case of it under the counter, boys,' he explained. 'But it happened to be catterdges.'

[我以為櫃檯底下當然還有一箱，孩兒們，]他解釋說，[那想到居然是箱子彈。]

‘You’ve sure got a case of happendicitis,’ said Poky Rogers, fence rider of the Largo Verde potrero. ‘Somebody ought to happen to give you a knock on the head with the butt end of a quirt. I’ve rode in nine miles for some tobacco; and it don’t appear natural and seemly that you ought to be allowed to live.’

[你當然還有一箱從人家肚子裏割下來的盲腸，]那個在最末大綠牧場當巡圍手的羅開管這麼說。[該讓個人拿馬刷子頭好好敲一下你的頭才是。我騎了九英里來買菸草，看起來你不該活才是。]

‘The boys was smokin’ cut plug and dried mesquite leaves mixed when I left,’ sighed Mustang Taylor, horse wrangler of the Three Elm camp. ‘They’ll be lookin’ for me back by nine. They’ll be settin’ up, with their papers ready to roll a whiff of the real thing before bedtime. And I’ve got to tell ‘em that this pink-eyed, sheep-headed, sulphur-footed, shirt-waisted son of a calico broncho, Sam Revell, hasn’t got no tobacco on hand.’

[在我離開的時候，兄弟們抽的是切下來的軟木塞和晒乾了的美士凱葉子，]泰野馬一邊嘆氣說，他是三榆樹營的套馬手。[他們九點一到就會巴巴地等我回去，每個人手裏拿著一張捲菸用的菸紙，為的是在睡覺以前能捲一捲真的貨色抽抽。看看，我必須跟他們講那個粉紅眼睛，長著羊頭，硫磺腿，腰綁襯衫的那位圍了圍裙的野馬生出來的小孩，名叫雷山姆的，手頭上沒菸草。]

Gregorio Falcon, Mexican vaquero and best thrower of the rope on the Cibolo, pushed his heavy, silver-embroidered straw sombrero back upon his thicket of jet-black curls and scraped the bottoms of his pockets for a few crumbs of the precious weed.

費葛雷，那個墨西哥牛仔，也就是西堡套馬套得最準的，把繡了銀色的大草帽往後一推，露出他滿頭炭黑的捲髮，一邊在口袋裏搜，看能不能找到一兩絲菸草。

‘Ah, Don Samuel,’ he said, reproachfully, but with his touch of Castilian manners, ‘escuse me. Bthey say dthe jackrabbeet and dthe sheep have the most leettle sesos -- how you call dthem -- brain-es? Ah, don’t believe dthat, Don Samuel -- escuse me. Ah dthink people w’at keep esmokin’ tobacco, dthey -- bot you weel escuse me, Don Samuel.’

[啊，山姆大爺，]他說，帶責備地，又帶了一點古西班牙的風格，[對不起。人家說兔子和羊的頭殼--你們叫甚麼腦袋瓜是不是--最小。啊，不要相信，山姆大爺--對不起。我看管抽菸草的才--可是你要原諒我這麼說，山姆大爺。]

‘Now, what’s the use of chewin’ the rag, boys,’ said the untroubled Sam, stooping over to rub the toes of his shoes with a red-and-yellow handkerchief. ‘Ranse took the order for some more smokin’ to San Antone with him Tuesday. Pancho rode Ranse’s hoss back yesterday; and Ranse is goin’ to drive the wagon back himself. There wa’n’t much of a load -- just some woolsacks and blankets and nails and canned peaches an a few things we was out of. I took for Ranse to roll in to-day sure. He’s a early starter and a hell-to-split driver, and he ought to be here not far from

sundown.’

[窮發牢騷有甚麼用呢，孩兒們，]面不改色的山姆這麼說，一面低下身子拿一條紅黃色手巾擦他的鞋尖。[藍賽在星期二到聖安東尼訂些菸草去了。昨天班卓騎了他的馬回來，藍賽自己要趕馬車回來。裝載不很多--只是些羊毛袋，毯子，釘子，桃子罐頭，和一些我們短缺的東西。我想藍塞今天一定會回來。他是個早起的，趕車快得像趕鬼似的，他在日落不久就會回來才是。]

‘What plugs is he drivin’?’ asked Mustang Taylor, with a smack of hope in his tones.

[他趕的是甚麼馬?]泰野馬問道，口氣裏帶了一絲希望。

‘The buckboard grays,’ said Sam.

[拉平板的灰馬，]山姆回答。

‘I’ll wait a spell, then,’ said the wrangler. ‘Them plugs eat up a trail like a road-runner swallowin’ a whip snake. And you may bust me open a can of green-gage plums, Sam, while I’m waitin’ for somethin’ better.’

[我就等他一等吧，]這位套馬手說。[這些馬跑起路就像一隻快腿鳥吞一條皮鞭蛇一樣快。你可以替我開一罐青梅子，山姆，好讓我等我更好的東西。]

‘Open me some yellow clings,’ ordered Poky Rodgers. ‘I’ll wait, too.’

[替我開一罐黃肉李子，]羅閑管說。[我也等它一等。]

The tobaccoless punchers arranged themselves comfortably on the steps of the store. Inside Sam clopped open with a hatchet the tops of the cans of fruit.

這些沒菸草可抽的牛仔們把自己舒舒服服地安排在進販賣部的階梯上。山姆在裏面拿一把柴刀開水果罐頭。

The store, a big, white wooden building like a barn, stood fifty yards from the ranch-house. Beyond it were the horse corals; and still farther the wool sheds and the brush-topped shearing pens -- for the Rancho Cibolo raised both cattle and sheep. Behind the store, at a little distance, were the grass-thatched jacals of the Mexicans who bestowed their allegiance upon the Cibolo.

這販賣部，一棟好比穀倉的木造房子，離場房大約五十碼。後面是馬圈子；再往後是羊毛棚和剪毛欄--因為西堡牧場又養牛又養羊。離販賣部稍遠，是墨西哥人的房子，這些人忠心於西堡，以西堡牧場為家。

The ranch-house was composed of four large rooms, with plastered adobe walls, and a two-room

wooden cell. A twenty-foot-wide 'gallery' circumvented the structure. It was set in a grove of immense live-oaks and water-elms near a lake -- a long, not very wide, and tremendously deep lake in which, at nightfall, great gars leaped to the surface and plunged with the noise of hippopotamuses frolicking at their bath. From the trees hung garlands and massive pendants of the melancholy gray moss of the South. Indeed, the Cibolo ranch-house seemed more of the South than of the West. It looked as if old 'Kiowa' Truesdell might have brought it with him from the lowlands of Mississippi when he came to Texas with his rifle in the hollow of his arm in '55.

場房有四個大房間，四週圍有石灰築成鄉村式的牆，加上兩間木製地窖。建築物四週由二十呎寬的走廊圍成一圈。座落在臨水塘的大活橡樹，大水榆樹林子裏頭--水塘成長形，不很寬，水極深，日落時分，看起來像鱷魚的長嘴硬鱗魚跳躍嬉戲，發出河馬出浴一般的聲音。從那些大樹，一大掛，一大掛的鬱灰色西班牙青苔，這是典型的南方景色。事實上，西堡牧場與其說是西部式的，還不如說是南方風味的。好像是老杜[奇奧瓦]55年從密西西比下游，夾著一柄來服槍來到德州的時候，把它也一起帶過來了一樣。

But, though he did not bring the family mansion, Truesdell did bring something in the way of a family inheritance that was more lasting than brick or stone. He brought one end of the Truesdell-Curtis family feud. And when a Curtis bought the Rancho de los Olmos, sixteen miles from the Cibolo, there were lively times on the pear flats and in the chaparral thickets of the southwest. In those days Truesdell cleaned the brush of may a wolf and tiger cat and Mexican lion; and one or two Curtises fell heirs to notches on his rifle stock. Also he buried a brother with a Curtis bullet in him on the bank of the lake at Cibolo. And then the Kiowa Indians made their last raid upon the ranches between the Frio and the Rio Grande, and Truesdell at the head of his rangers rid the earth of them to the last brave, earning his sobriquet. Then came prosperity in the form of waxing herds and broadening lands. And then old age and bitterness, when he sat, with his great mane of hair as white as the Spanish-dagger blossoms and his fierce, pale-blue eyes, on the shaded gallery at Cibolo, growling like the pumas that he had slain. He snapped his fingers at old age; the bitter taste of life did not come from that. The cup that stuck at his lips was that his only son Ransom wanted to marry a Curtis, the last youthful survivor of the other end of the feud.

他雖然沒有真正把祖傳的房子帶過來，老杜確實把一件比磚石還持久的家族遺產帶了過來。他帶來了杜家和柯家的宿怨。當柯家把西堡牧場十六哩遠的鷗馬牧場買起來的時候，西南部長著仙人掌樹和莢芭樂叢的大草原確時不曾安寧一時。在那時候，老杜把樹叢裏每一隻狼，每一隻山貓，每一隻墨西哥獅都清除掉，也有一兩個柯家人被他打死，他每打死一個，就在槍柄上刻一道痕做記號。他自己也埋葬了一位吃柯家子彈打死的兄弟，葬在西堡水塘邊。後來，奇奧瓦印地安人做最後出擊，騷擾冷河到大河之間的所有牧場，老杜帶領所有牧童，把他們打得一個不剩。他的綽號就是這樣來的。之後，景氣好轉，牛隻增長，牧地擴大。又後來，年紀老來，人也變得尖刻，他頭髮白得像西班牙白蘭花一樣，兇狠的淺藍色眼睛，吼起來像他曾宰殺的山豹一樣，他無事坐在陰涼的西堡場房走廊。晚年，他若有所失地彈他的指頭；生命之苦並非來自如此。讓他苦苦不能下嚥的是他的獨子藍賽要和柯家女孩結婚，她是這門家族宿怨另一頭的唯一青年生存者。

For a while the only sounds to be heard at the store were the rattling of the tin spoons and the

gurgling intake of the juicy fruits by the cow-punchers, the stamping of the grazing ponies, and the singing of a doleful song by Sam as he contentedly brushed his stiff auburn hair for the twentieth time that day before a crinkly mirror.

有那麼會子，在販賣部這裏唯一可以聽到的是錫鐵湯匙的叮噹響聲和牛仔們吞食水果呼嚕呼嚕作響，低下頭吃草的馬匹蹄子踩地的聲音，還有山姆一邊唱一首悲哀的曲子，一面照一面彎彎曲曲的鏡子梳他紅棕色的頭髮，少說已經梳了二十次了那天。

From the door of the store could be seen the irregular, sloping stretch of prairie to the south, with its reaches of light-green, billowing mesquite flats in the lower places, and its rises crowned with nearly black masses of short chaparral. Through the mesquite flat wound the ranch road that, five miles away, flowed into the old government trail to San Antonion. The sun was so low that the gentlest elevation cast its gray shadow miles into the green-gold of sunshine.

從販賣部門口，可以看到大草原不怎麼整齊地往南延伸，淺綠色波浪般的美士凱草皮在低處，高處則由暗黑的矮莢芭樂樹叢所佔領。五哩外，牧場的通道婉延美士凱草地，通到往聖安東尼的古官道。低低的夕陽把最矮的坡地也照出好几英哩的灰影，點綴金綠色的垂陽夕照之中。

That evening ears were quicker than eyes.

當晚，耳朵比眼睛來得靈光。

The Mexican held up a twany finger to still the scraping of tin against tin.

老墨舉起一隻棕色手指，要大家暫時不要拿湯匙刮錫鐵罐發出聲響。

‘One wageen,’ said he, ‘cross the Arroyo Hodo. Ah hear dthe wheel. Verree rockee place, dthe Hondo.’

[一輛馬車，]他說，[跨過洪渡溪谷。我聽見車輪的聲音。很多石頭不平的地方，那個洪渡。]

‘You’ve got good ears, Gregorion,’ said Mustang Taylor. ‘I never heard nothin’ but the song-bird in the bush and the zephyr skally-hootin’ across the peaceful dell.’

[你的耳朵很好，葛雷，]泰野馬說。[我除了鳥兒在樹叢裏唱歌和輕風沿著寧靜的山谷呼嚕作響，甚麼也聽不到。]

In ten minutes Taylor remarked: ‘I see the dust of a wagon risin’ right above the fur end of the flat.’

過了十分鐘，老泰說：[我看到一輛馬車在平原多樹的那端揚起來的塵土。]

‘You have verree good eyes, senior,’ said Gregorio smilin.

[你有很好的眼睛，先生，]葛雷邊笑邊說。

Two miles away they saw a faint cloud dimming the green ripples of the mesquites. In twenty minutes they heard the clatter of horses’ hoofs: in five minutes more the gray plugs dashed out of thicket, whickering for oats and drawing the light wagon behind them like a toy.

在兩哩遠的地方，他們看到淡淡的灰塵飄忽波浪般起伏的美士凱樹梢。再過二十分鐘，他們聽見馬蹄聲噠噠作響：再過五分鐘，那兩匹蚤斑灰馬衝出樹叢，直衝牠們嚮往的燕麥，那輛馬車拖在後頭就像玩具一樣。

From the jacals came a cry of: ‘El Amo! El Amo!’ Four Mexican youths raced to unharness the grays. The cow-punchers gave a yell of greeting and delight.

從墨西哥人住的房子那邊四個小孩跑出來，一邊叫：[主人！主人！]。牛仔們高興地大聲打招呼。

Ranse Truesdell, driving, threw the reins to the ground and laughed.

杜藍賽，趕著馬的，把韁繩一把擲到地上，哈哈大笑起來。

‘It’s under the wagon sheet, boys,’ he said. ‘I know what you’re waiting for. If Sam lets it run out again we’ll use them yellow shoes of his for a target. There’s two cases. Pull ‘em out and light up. I know you’ll want a smoke.’

[在遮雨布下面，孩兒們，]他說。[我知道你們在等甚麼。假如山姆再讓菸給斷貨的話，你們可以拿他穿的黃色小牛皮鞋當靶來練習。有兩箱。把它們拿出來，點起火來。我知道你們都要抽根菸。]

After striking dry country Ranse had removed the wagon sheet from the bows and thrown it over the goods in the wagon. Six pairs of hasty hands dragged it off and grabbed beneath the sacks and blankets for the cases of tobacco.

進到乾燥的山區以後，藍賽把遮雨布從車頭拿下來，蓋到車箱裏的貨物上面。六雙手很快地把它拿掉，開始在羊毛袋和毯子裏摸索裝菸草的箱子。

Long Collins, tobacco messenger from the San Gabriel outfit, who rode with the longest stirrups west of the Mississippi, delved with an arm like the tongue of a wagon. He caught something harder than a blanket and pulled out a fearful thing -- a shapeless, muddy bunch of leather tied together with wire and twine. From its ragged end, like the head and claws of a disturbed turtle, protruded human toes.

長腿柯林，聖給布牧牛營來的菸草使者，他用的馬蹬子是密西西比河以西最長的，把一隻長得像馬車臂一樣長的手往裏一埋。他拿到了比毯子還硬的不知道是甚麼東西，往外一抽--一團不成模樣的皮球，用鐵絲和麻線胡亂綁著。在破的一端，好比縮頭縮尾的烏龜一樣，是人的腳指頭挺了出來。

‘Who-ee!’ yelled Long Collins. ‘Ranse, are you a-packin’ around of corpuses? Here’s a --howlin’ grasshoppers!’

[哇呀!]長腿柯林大叫。[藍賽，你怎麼到處裝起屍體來?這裏有個--真是要命!]

Up from his long slumber popped Curly, like some vile worm from its burrow. He clawed his way out and sat blinking like a disreputable, drunken owl. His face was as bluish red and puffed and seamed and crosslined as the cheapest round steak of the butcher. His eyes were swollen slits; his nose a pickled beet; his hair would have made the wildest thatch of a Jack-in-the-box look like the satin poll of a Cleo de Merode. The rest of him was scarecrow done to the life.

毛捲捲從他的長覺突然暴醒，好像一條潛伏的蛇從洞裏出來一樣。他用爪子爬了出來，坐在那裏活像一隻喝醉了的貓頭鷹。他的臉是青一塊，紅一塊，又腫，又像摺了皺紋，又是滿臉線條縱橫，比肉攤上最賤價的一塊排骨還不值。兩眼腫得只見兩條細縫；鼻子紅得像醃甜菜；頭髮和玩具箱跳出來的小丑的稻草頭一比，把人家的都比成了美羅地艷后錦帛般的秀髮。再看看他這身打扮，直是稻草人化身。

Ranse jumped down from his seat and looked at his strange cargo with wide-open eyes.

藍賽從馬車座縱身跳下，睜大兩眼看這宗奇貨。

‘Here, you maverick, what are you doing in my wagon? How did you get in there?’

[你這頭沒戶籍的小牛，在我車上幹甚麼?你是怎麼進來的?]

The punchers gathered around in delight. For the time they had forgotten tobacco.

仔子們興奮地圍過來。這時候把菸草忘了。

Curly looked around him slowly in every direction. He snarled like a Scotch terrier through his ragged beard.

毛捲捲往每個方向慢慢地看。他隔著鬍鬚嘶牙裂嘴地，像條蘇格蘭小獵犬。

‘Where is this,’ he rasped through his parched throat. ‘It’s a damn farm in an old field. What’d you bring me here for -- say? Did I say I wanted to come here? What are you Reubs rubberin’ at -- hey? G’wan or I’ll punch some of your faces.’

[這是那裏，]他拿乾燥的嗓門沙啞地說。[是古老田地裏的一座爛農場。你把我帶來這裏幹嘛--怎麼樣？我說過我要來這裏嗎？你們鹵畚們嚼甚麼蛆--嘿？滾蛋，否則我會給你們拳頭吃。]

‘Drag him out, Collins,’ said Ranse.

[把他拖出來，柯林，]藍賽說。

Curly took a slide and felt the ground rise up and collide with his shoulder blades. He got up and sat on the steps of the store shivering from outraged nerves, hugging his knees and sneering. Taylor lifted out a case of tobacco and wrenched off its top. Six cigarettes began to glow, bringing peace and forgiveness to Sam.

毛捲捲從馬車滑了下來，肩膀和地碰了個結實。他站起來，坐到店鋪前面的階梯上，一面爲了暴怒的神經渾身顫抖，把手臂圍著膝蓋，一面冷笑。泰勒抬出一箱菸草，把蓋子撬開。馬上六只香菸點燃起來，使山姆得到和平和原諒。

‘How’d you come in my wagon?’ repeated Ranse, this time in a voice that drew a reply.

[你怎麼進到我的馬車的？]藍賽又重復一次，這次問的口氣得到了回答。

Curly recognized the tone. He had heard it used by freight brakemen and large persons in blue carrying clubs.

毛捲捲認得這聲調。鐵路公司幫忙司機接車的和高大個子穿藍衣，帶警棍的，講起話來就用這種聲調。

‘Me?’ he growled. ‘Oh, was you talkin’ to me? Why, I was on my way to the Menger, but my valet had forgot to pack my pajamas. So I crawled into that wagon in the wagon-yard -- see? I never told you to bring me out to this bloomin’ farm -- see?’

[我？]他像狗咆哮一樣。[噢，你在跟我講話？哦，我正要去門爺酒店，可是我的佣人把我的睡衣給忘了放進行李。所以嘛，我就爬進馬車園的那輛馬車裏--你瞧？我沒有叫你把載來這個發泡的農場--你瞧？]

‘What is it, Mustang?’ asked Poky Rodgers, almost forgetting to smoke in his ecstasy. ‘What do it live on?’

[怎麼回事，野馬？]羅管閒問道，興奮得几乎忘了抽菸。[它是吃甚麼活的？]

‘It’s a galliwampus, Poky,’ said Mustang. ‘It’s the thing that hollers “williwallo” up in ellow trees in the low grounds of nights. I don’t know if it bites.’

[是隻狗屁王八，老管閒，]野馬說。[是那種在低地榆樹上晚上叫<哇哩哇囉>的東西。不知道它咬不咬人。]

‘No, it ain’t, Mustang,’ volunteered Long Collins. ‘Them galliwampuses has fins on their backs, and eighteen toes. This here is a hicklesnifter. It lives under the ground and eats cherries. Don’t stand so close to it. It wipes out villages with one stroke of its prehensile tail.’

[不，不是，野馬]長腿柯林自己加進來說。[狗屁王八背上長鰭，有十八隻腳指頭。這隻是稀奇泥鰍。住在地下吃果子。別站太近了。那條長了吸盤的尾巴一鞭可以掃過好幾個村落。]

Sam, the cosmopolite, who called bartenders in San Antone by their first name, stood in the door. He was a better zoologist.’

山姆，這個四海之內皆兄弟的，把聖安東尼每個酒保都稱兄道弟，站在門裏。他是個比較上道的動物學家。

‘Well, ain’t that a Willie for your whiskers?’ he commented. ‘Where’d you dig up the hobo, Ranse? Goin’ to make an auditorium for inbreviates out of the ranch?’

[哦，那不是長了鬍子的老鳥嗎？]他評判道。[你在那裏挖到這個流浪漢的，藍賽？要把牧場變成無極講堂是不是？]

‘Say,’ said Curly, from whose panoplied breast all shafts of wit fell blunted. ‘Any of you kiddin’ guys got a drink on you? Have your fun. Say, I’ve been hittin’ the stuff till I don’t know straight up.’

[怎樣，]毛捲捲說，所有的智慧之矢碰到他加了防護的胸膛都要折鈍。[你們開玩笑的那一位有酒喝？儘管消你們的遣。我從不知道甚麼時候起就沒碰過一滴酒，我說。]

He turned to Ranse. ‘Say, you shanghai’d me on your d--d old prairie schooner -- did I tell you to drive me to a farm? I want a drink. I’m goin’ all to little pieces. What’s doin’?’

他轉向藍賽。[我說，你拿這鬼--鬼草原扁舟把我給拐來--我叫你把我載到農場嗎？我要喝酒。我整個人快完蛋了。怎麼樣？]

Ranse saw that the tramp’s nerves were racking him. He despatched one of the Mexican boys to the ranch-house for a glass of whisky. Curly gulped it down; and into his eyes came a brief, grateful glow -- as human as the expression in the eye of a faithful setter dog.

藍賽看看這流浪漢的神經緊張使他痛苦。他派了一個墨西哥小孩到場房去拿一杯威士忌。毛捲捲一口吞下肚子；眼睛裏一瞬間閃出感激之情--好比忠實的撒特獵犬眼睛裏表現出來的一般有人性。

‘Thanky, boss,’ he said, quietly.

[謝了，老闆，]他說，靜靜地。

‘You’re thirty miles from a railroad, and forty miles from a saloon,’ said Ranse.

[你離鐵路有三十哩遠，離酒吧四十哩遠，]藍賽說。

Curly fell back weakly against the steps.

毛捲捲一聽，無力地靠坐階梯上。

‘Since you are here,’ continued the ranchman, ‘come along with me. We can’t turn you out on the prairie. A rabbit might tear you to pieces.’

[你既然在這裏，]牛人接著說，[跟我來。我們不可以把你放出去。一隻兔子都可能把你給撕得稀爛。]

He conducted Curly to a large shed where the ranch vehicles were kept. Then he spread out a canvas cot and brought blankets.

他把毛捲捲領到一個大棚子，牧場的車輛都擺在這裏。之後，他鋪開一張帆布床，拿了毯子來。

‘I don’t suppose you can sleep,’ said Ranse, ‘since you’ve been pounding your ear for twenty-four hours. But you can camp here till morning. I’ll have Pedro fetch you up some grub.’

[我想你睡不著。]藍賽說，[因為你的耳朵整整碰撞了二十四小時。你不妨在這兒露宿到天亮。我會叫沛多給你拿食物來。]

‘Sleep!’ said Curly. ‘I can sleep a week. Say, sport, have you got a coffin nail on you?’

[睡!]毛捲捲說。[我能睡一星期。怎樣，老弟，你那個地方不對勁?]

Fifty miles had Ransom Truesdall driven that day. And yet this is what he did.

杜藍賽當天騎馬趕了五十哩。可是他這麼做。

Old ‘Kiowa’ Truesdell sat in his great wicker chair reading by the light of an immense oil lamp. Ranse laid a bundle of newspapers fresh from town at his elbow.

老杜[奇奧瓦]坐在那張大大的籐椅上，靠一盞大油燈看報。藍賽把一包剛從鎮裏拿來的報紙放在他肘邊。

‘Back, Ranse?’ said the old man, looking up.

[回來了，藍賽？]老人說，一面抬起頭看。

‘Son,’ old ‘Kiowa’ continued, ‘I’ve been thinking all day about a certain matter that we have talked about. I want you to tell me again. I’ve lived for you. I’ve fought wolves and Indians and worse white men to protect you. You never had any mother that you can remember. I’ve taught you to shoot straight, ride hard, and live clean. Later on I’ve worked to pile up dollars that’ll be yours. You’ll be a rich man, Ranse, when my chunk goes out. I’ve made you. I’ve licked you into shape like a leopard cat licks its cubs. You don’t belong to yourself -- you’ve got to be a Truesdell first. Now, is there to be any more nonsense about this Curtis girl?’

[孩子，]老[奇奧瓦]繼續說，[我整天在想我們談過的一件事。我要你再告訴我。我爲了你而生活。我爲了保護你，打過狼，印地安人，更糟的，白人也打過。你從來不記得媽媽長得甚麼樣。我教你射得準，騎得猛，活得正。後來，我努力工作來爲你累積錢財。我的大限一到，你就是個富有的人，藍賽。我把你打造起來。把你舔成形，就像一頭豹子把小豹舔大一樣。你不屬於你自己--你必得先當個杜家人。現在告訴我，有關這柯家女孩你還要胡鬧甚麼嗎？]

‘I’ll tell you once more,’ said Ranse, slowly. ‘As I am a Truesdell and as you are my father, I’ll never marry a Curtis.’

[我要再度告訴你，]藍賽慢慢地說。[因爲我是個杜家人，而且你是我父親，我永遠不會娶柯家人。]

‘Good boy,’ said old ‘Kiowa’. ‘You’d better go get some supper.’

[好孩子，]老[奇奧瓦]說。[你最好去吃晚飯吧。]

Ranse went to the kitchen at the rear of the house. Pedro, the Mexican cook, sprang up to bring the food he was keeping warm in the stove.

藍賽走到房子後頭的廚房。沛多，那墨西哥廚子，一躍而起，把他在爐子上熱的晚飯拿給他。

‘Just a cup of coffee, Pedro,’ he said, and drank it standing. And then:

[一杯咖啡就好了，沛多，]他說，然後就站著喝。接著：

‘There’s a tramp on a cot in the wagon-shed. Take him something to eat. Better make it enough for two.’

[車棚裏有個流浪漢。拿些吃的給他。最好夠兩個人吃的。]

Ranse walked toward the jacals. A boy came running.

藍賽走向墨西哥人住的房子。一個小孩跑來。

‘Manuel, can you catch Vaminos, in the little pasture, for me?’

[孟兒，你能替我在小草場牽飛鳴兒來嗎？]

‘Why not, senor? I saw him near the puerta but two hours past. He bears a drag-rope.’

[有何不可，先生？兩小時前我看到牠在門那裏。牠戴了曳繩。]

‘Get him and saddle him as quick as you can.’

[快快去牽牠，給牠上鞍。]

‘Prontito, senor.’

[我馬上去，先生。]

Soon mounted, on Vaminos, Ranse leaned in the saddle, pressed with his knees, and galloped eastward past the store, where sat Sam trying his guitar in the moonlight.

很快就上了馬，藍賽騎在飛鳴兒背上，倚著馬鞍，夾緊雙膝，牠聘馳過販賣部，山姆正抱著吉他，對著月兒款款而彈。

Vaminos shall have a word -- Vaminos the good dun horse. The Mexicans, who have a hundred names for the colors of a horse, called him gruyo. He was a mouse-colored, slate-colored, flea-bitten road-dun, if you can conceive it. Down his back from his mane to his tail went a line of black. He would live forever; and surveyors have not laid off as many miles in the world as he could travel in a day.

飛鳴兒值得我們提上一句--這匹蚤斑灰色好馬。墨西哥人給馬的皮色取了上百的名子，他們稱牠灰馬。牠是老鼠顏色，石板色，有好像給跳蚤咬過一樣的斑紋，假如你能想像出這樣的顏色的話。縱貫牠背脊，由鬃毛到尾巴，由一道黑顏色連貫起來。牠真的能活，測量員在世間也沒量夠牠一天之內走的路。

Eight miles east of the Cibolo ranch-house Ranse loosened the pressure of his knees, and Vaminos stopped under a big ratama tree. The yellow ratama blossoms showered fragrance that would have undone the roses of France. The moon made the earth a great concave bowl with a crystal sky for a lid. In a glade five jack-rabbits leaped and played together like kittens. Eight miles farther east shone a faint start that appeared to have dropped below the horizon. Night riders, who often steered their course by it, knew it to be the light in the Rancho de los Olmos.

在西堡牧場場房八哩遠的地方，藍賽放鬆他快馬加鞭，緊夾馬鞍的膝蓋，飛鳴兒停在一棵喇嗒嗎樹下。喇嗒嗎的黃色花朵氛芳真能使法國紅玫瑰爲之花容失色。月色把大地照成了一個凸形的碗缸，以水晶玻璃似的天空爲蓋。在水凌之地，五隻白兔像五個貓兒一樣跳躍嬉戲。再往東八哩，點綴著一盞暗暗的星光，好比失落在水平線之下。夜行者往往以它導航，知道它是鷗馬牧場的燈。

In ten minutes Yenna Curtis galloped to the tree on her sorrel pony Dancer. The two leaned and clasped hands heartily.

過了十分鐘，柯艷娜騎馬奔馳來到，她騎的是一匹栗色馬名叫跳舞的。兩個人靠在一起，手牽手，情意奔放地。

‘I ought to have ridden nearer to your home,’ said Ranse. ‘But you never will let me.’

[我應該騎到靠妳家近一點的地方，]藍賽說。[可是妳一直不讓我這麼做。]

Yenna laughed. And in the soft light you could see her strong white teeth and fearless eyes. No sentimentality there, in spite of the moonlight, the odor of the ratamas, and the admirable figure of Ranse Truesdell, the lover. But she was there, eight miles from her home, to meet him.

艷娜笑了。在暗淡的月光之下，你可以看到她雪白的牙齒和毫無畏懼的雙眼。儘管月色照滿詩情，花香瀰漫畫意，加上她的有情郎杜藍賽威風凜凜，她卻一點不感情用事。她就在那兒，離家八哩遠，中途來與他相會。

‘How often have I told you, Ranse,’ she said, ‘that I am your half-way girl? Always half-way.’

[我告訴過你幾次了，藍賽]她說，[我是你中途相會的女孩？永遠在中途。]

‘Well?’ said Ranse, with a question in his tones.

[怎麼樣了？]藍賽說，語氣帶了疑問。

‘I did,’ said Yenna, with almost a sigh. ‘I told him after dinner when I thought he would be in a good humor. Did you ever wake up a lion, Ranse, with the mistaken idea that he would be a kitten? He almost tore the ranch to pieces. It’s all up. I love my daddy, Ranse, and I’m afraid -- I’m afraid of him, too. He ordered me to promise that I’d never marry a Truesdell. I promised. That’s all. What luck do you have?’

[我說了，]艷娜說，一邊嘆氣。[我在晚飯後跟他說，我以爲他心情會好一點。藍賽，你曾經把一隻睡著的獅子搖醒，以爲牠會是隻小貓嗎？他几乎把整個牧場鬧得天翻地覆。完全就是這樣了。我愛我父親，藍賽，我也怕--怕他。他命令我答應他決不和杜家人結婚。我答應了。就是這樣。你有甚麼樣的運氣？]

‘The same,’ said Ranse, slowly. ‘I promised him that his son would never marry a Curtis. Somehow I couldn’t go against him. He’s might old. I’m sorry, Yenna.’

[一樣，]藍賽慢慢地說。[我答應他說他的兒子永遠不和柯家人結婚。不知怎地，我不能違抗他。他老了。很對不起，艷娜。]

The girl leaned in her saddle and laid one hand on Ranse’s, on the horn of his saddle.

女孩傾身把手抓住藍賽放在馬鞍頭上的手。

‘I never thought I’d like you better for giving me up,’ she said ardently, ‘but I do. I must ride back now, Ranse. I slipped out of the house and saddled Dancer myself. Good-night, neighbor.’

[我從來沒想到你放棄我我反而喜歡你，]她熱忱地說，[可是我真是這樣。我必須回去了，藍賽。我偷溜出來，自己給跳舞上馬鞍。再會，鄰居。]

‘Good-night,’ said Ranse. ‘Ride carefully over them badger holes.’

[晚安，]藍賽說。[小心騎馬，別給獾熊坑拌倒了。]

They wheeled and rode away in opposite directions. Yenna turned in her saddle and called clearly:

他們各自調轉馬頭。艷娜拿起清晰的聲音說：

‘Don’t forget I’m your half-way girl, Ranse.’

[別忘了我是你中途相會的女孩，藍賽。]

‘Damn all family feuds and inherited scraps,’ muttered Ranse vindictively to the breeze as he rode back to the Cibolo.

回到西堡途中，藍賽恨恨地向微風喃喃詛咒，[去他的家族宿怨和祖先傳下的渣子。]

Ranse turned his horse into the small pasture and went to his own room. He opened the lowest drawer of an old bureau to get out the packet of letters that Yenna had written him one summer when she had gone to Mississippi for a visit. The drawer stuck, and he yanked at it savagely -- as a man will. It came out of the bureau, and bruised both his shins -- as a drawer will. An old, folded yellow letter without an envelope fell from somewhere -- probably from where it had lodged in one of the upper drawers. Ranse took it to the lamp and read it curiously.

藍賽騎進小牧草場，回到自己房間。他打開最下層抽屜，把艷娜一年夏天到密西西比的時候寫給他的一疊信拿出來。抽屜卡住了，他大力地把它拉開--就向男人一樣。抽屜被打開，把他的兩隻下腿給擦傷了--就像用力拉抽屜會這樣。一紙發黃，沒信封的信掉下來--

可能是從上面托住的抽屜吧。藍賽移就燈下，好奇地讀。

Then he took his hat and went to one of the Mexican jacals.

之後，他拿了帽子，走到墨西哥人住的一棟房子。

‘Tia Juana,’ he said, ‘I would like to talk with you awhile.’

[巧諳孀，]他說，[我想跟妳談一會。]

An old, old Mexican woman, white-haired and wonderfully wrinkled, rose from a stool.

一位年老，皺得像胡桃核的墨西哥婦人從凳子上站起來。

‘Sit down,’ said Ranse, removing his hat and taking the one chair in the jacal. ‘Who am I, Tia Juana?’ he asked, speaking Spanish.

[坐下，]藍賽說，一邊把帽子脫掉，一邊坐在房子裏唯一的一張椅子。[我是誰，巧諳孀？]他拿西班牙話問說。

‘Don Ransom, our good friend and employer. Why do you ask?’ answered the old woman wonderingly.

[藍昇大爺，我們的好朋友和顧主。爲甚麼問呢？]老婦人疑問道。

‘Tia Juana, who am I?’ he repeated, with his stern eyes looking into hers.

[巧諳孀，我是誰？]他又問了一次，堅定的眼光盯著她。

A frightened look came in the old woman’s face. She fumbled with her black shawl.

老婦面帶懼色。她摸索著黑頭巾。

‘Who am I, Tia Juana?’ said Ranse once more.

[我是誰，巧諳孀？]藍賽再說了一次。

‘Thirty-two years I have lived on the Rancho Cibolo,’ said Tia Juana. ‘I thought to be buried under the coma mott beyond the garden before these things should be known. Close the door, Don Ransom, and I will speak. I see in your face that you know.’

[我在西堡牧場工作三十二個年頭了，]巧諳孀說，我想在這件事發作之前被埋在花園後面的灌木林裏。關起門來，藍昇大爺，從你臉色看起來你知道了。]

An hour he spent behind Tia Juana's closed door. As he was on his way back to the house Curly called to him from the wagon-shed.

他和巧諳孀在門後密談了一個鐘頭。回到場房途中，毛捲捲從馬車棚叫他。

The tramp sat on his cot, swining his feet and smoking.

流浪者坐在小床上，擺著腳，抽著菸。

'Say, sport,' he grumbled. 'This is no way to treat a man after kidnappin' him. I went up to the store and borrowed a razor from that fresh guy and had a shave. But that ain't all a man needs. Say -- can't you loosen up for about three fingers more of that booze? I never asked you to bring me to your d -- d farm.'

[怎樣，相好，]他嘮叨說。[這不是綁架人之後的待人之道。我到那店裏跟那個新鮮傢伙借了剃刀，刮了臉。可是一個人的需要比這個還多。怎樣--能不能把那老酒再讓我三個指幅？我不曾叫你把我帶來這屁--屁農場。]

'Stand up out here in the light,' said Ranse, looking at him closely.

[站到亮光這裏，]藍賽說，一邊細細看他。

Curly got up sullenly and took a step or two.

毛捲捲不樂地站起來，往前走一，兩步。

His face, now shaven smooth, seemed transformed. His hair had been combed, and it fell back from the right side of his forehead with a peculiar wave. The moonlight charitably softened the ravages of drink; and his aquiline, well-shaped nose and small, square-cleft chin almost gave distinction to his looks.

他的臉，現在刮得光滑，看來整個變了。頭髮梳好，往額頭右邊倒下，帶個奇特的波捲。月光仁慈地把黃湯的肆虐給軟化了；長得好的鷹勾鼻，和小而方正的下巴，使得他面貌顯得特出。

Ranse sat on the foot of the cot and looked at him curiously.

藍賽坐在床尾，好奇地看他。

'Where did you come from -- have you got any home or folks anywhere?'

[你是從那來的--有家庭或者親人嗎？]

‘Me? Why, I’am a dook,’ said Curly. ‘I’m Sir Reginald -- oh, cheese it. No; I don’t know anything about my ancestors. I’ve been a tramp ever since I can remember. Say, old pal, are you going to set ‘em up again tonight or not?’

[我？這，我是個斗，]毛捲捲說。[我是理政大人--噯，算了。不；我自己對我是怎麼來的一概不知道。我從有記憶起就記得我是個流浪漢。怎樣，老相好，你今天晚上還要再給我一杯還是怎樣？]

‘You answer my questions and maybe I will. How did you come to be a tramp?’

[你回答我的問題，我有可能給你。你是怎麼變成流浪漢的？]

‘Me’ answered Curly. ‘Why, I adopted that profession when I was an infant. Case of had to. First thing I can remember, I belonged to a big, lazy hobo called Beefsteak Charley. He sent me around to houses to beg. I wasn’t hardly big enough to reach the latch of a gate.’

[我，]毛捲捲回答。[這，我從嬰孩起就選就這行職業。是非做不可的例子。我只記得，我是由一個叫牛排查理的懶鬼養著。他要我沿門乞討。我那時候連門門都夠不著。]

‘Did he ever tell you how he got you?’ asked Ranse.

[他告訴過你他是怎麼得到你的？]藍賽問。

‘Once when he was sober he said he bought me for an old six-shooter and six bits from a band of drunken Mexican sheep-shearers. But what’s the diff? That’s all I know.’

[有次他清醒的時候，他告訴我他拿一把舊左輪槍和六發子彈把我從一伙醉墨西哥剪羊毛的人買來的。有甚麼區別？我就知道這些。]

‘All right,’ said Ranse. ‘I’ll reckon you’re a maverick for certain. I’m going to put the Rancho Cibolo brand on you. I’ll start you to work in one of the camps tomorrow.’

[好吧，]藍賽說。[我想你確實是頭沒戶籍的小牛。我要給你烙西堡牧場的印。明天起我要你在某個牧牛營工作。]

‘Work!’ sniffed Curly, disdainfully. ‘What do you take me for? Do you think I’d chase cows, and hop-skip-and-jump around after crazy sheep like that pink-and-yellow guy at the store says these Reubs do? Forget it.’

[工作！]毛捲捲瞧不起地哼了一聲。[你把我當成甚麼？你想我寧可趕牛，在發瘋的羊群後面窮跳，就像那個粉黃色的看販賣部的傢伙說這些鹵畚們每天做的？甬想。]

‘Oh, you’ll like it when you get used to it,’ said Ranse. ‘Yes, I’ll send you up one more drink by

Pedro. I think you'll make a first-class cowpuncher before I get through with you.'

[噢，習慣就好了，]藍賽說。[是的，我會叫沛多拿杯酒給你。在我和你完了之前，你能成個一流的牛仔子。]

'Me?' said Curly. 'I pity the cows you set me to chaperon. They can go chase themselves. Don't forget my nightcap, please, boss.'

[我?]毛捲捲說。[我同情那些你送來給我當護花使者的牛。牠們各自趕自己的尾巴去吧。請別忘了我的睡前酒，老闆。]

Ranse paid a visit to the store before going to the house. Sam Revell was taking off his tan shoes regretfully and preparing for bed.

藍賽在回去之前造訪了一下販賣部。雷山姆依依不捨地脫下他的小牛皮鞋。

'Any of the boys from the San Gabriel camp riding in early in the morning?' asked Ranse.

[聖布給營明天大早有人來嗎?]藍賽問。

'Long Collins,' said Sam, briefly. 'For the mail.'

[長腿柯林，]山姆短截地說。[來拿信。]

'Tell him,' said Ranse, 'to take that tramp out to camp with him and keep him till I get there.'

[告訴他，]藍賽說，[把那流浪漢帶到營裏等我來。]

Curly was sitting on his blankets in the San Gabriel camp cursing talentedly when Ranse Truesdell rode up and dismounted on the next afternoon. The cow-punchers were ignoring the stray. He was grimy with dust and black dirt. His clothes were making their last stand in favor of the conventions.

藍賽隔天下午到聖布給營的時候，毛捲捲坐在毯子上沒命地罵。牛仔們把這隻沒戶籍的不予理會。滿是泥塵在身上結塊。衣服嘛，依舊是在面對星際大戰作最後的抵抗。

Ranse went up to Buck Rabb, the camp boss, and spoke beirfly.

藍賽走向營老闆駱公羊，剪斷地說了甚麼。

'He's a plum buzzard,' said Buck. 'He won't work, and he's the lowdownest passel of inhumanity I ever see. I didn't know what you wanted done with him, Ranse, so I just let him set. That seems to suit him. He's been condemned to death by the boys a dozen times, but I told 'em maybe you

was savin' him for torture.'

[他根本是隻禿鷹，]公羊說。[他不工作，他是我所看過最卑鄙的沒人性的一群。我不知道你要他來幹嘛，藍賽，所以就叫他自便。他倒挺喜歡。孩兒們要把他治死少說也有十次，是我跟他們說你可能留著他要來虐待吧。]

Ranse took off his coat.

藍賽脫掉外衣。

'I've got a hard job before me, Buck, I reckon, but it has to be done. I've got to make a man out of that thing. That's what I've come to the camp for.'

[我有個難題目要做，公羊，我想，可是非做不可。我必須把那東西造就成個人。我就是為這個來營裏的。]

He went up to Curly.

他走向毛捲捲。

'Brother,' he said, 'don't you think if you had a bath it would allow you to take a seat in the company of your fellow-man with less injustice to the atmosphere?'

[老弟，]他說，[假如你洗個澡的話，你想是不是能和你的同類坐在一起的時候，少給空氣污染一點？]

'Run away, farmer,' said Curly, sardonically. 'Willie will send for nurse when he feels like having his tub.'

[走開，農夫，]毛捲捲諷刺地說。[小弟弟要洗澡的話，自己會叫奶孃。]

The charco, or water hoke, was twelve yards away. Ranse took one of Curly's ankles and dragged him like a sack of potatoes to the brink. Ten with the strength and sleight of a hammer-thrower he hurled the offending member of society far into the lake.

水洞在十二呎遠的地方。藍賽拿起毛捲捲的一個腳鴨子，一把像袋馬鈴薯一樣拖到水邊。然後，拿出打鐵鎚的一樣的氣力和動作，夯不啣噏地把這位社會的敗類一筋斗裁進水塘裏面。

Curly crawled out and up the bank spluttering like a porpoise.

毛捲捲爬出來到岸邊，噴水噴得像隻烏龜。

Ranse met him with a piece of soap and a coarse towel in his hands.

藍賽在岸邊拿了肥皂和粗毛巾迎著。

‘Go to the other end of the lake and use this,’ he said. ‘Buck will give you some dry clothes at the wagon.’

[到水洞另一頭去用這個，]他說。[公羊在篷車會給你些乾衣服。]

The tramp obeyed without protest. By the time supper was ready he had returned to camp. He was hardly to be recognized in his new blue shirt and brown duck clothes. Ranse observed him out of the corner of his eye.

流浪人毫不反抗地聽從。晚飯準備好的時候，他回到營。穿著新藍色襯衫和棕鴨色褲子，簡直判若兩人。藍賽側著冷眼觀察他。

‘Lord, I hope he ain’t a coward,’ he was saying to himself. ‘I hope he won’t turn out to be a coward.’

[老天，我希望他不是懦夫，]他自言自語地說。[我希望他不會是個懦夫。]

His doubts were soon allayed. Curly walked straight to where he stood. His light-blue eyes were blazing.

他的疑團馬上化解了。毛捲捲一箭步走到他站的地方，淺藍色眼睛發火。

‘Now I’m clean,’ he said, meaningly, ‘maybe you’ll talk to me. Think you’ve got a picnic here, do you? You clodhoppers think you can run over a man because you know he can’t get away. All right. Now, what do you think of that?’

[我現在乾淨了，]他說，當真地，[你可能要跟我講話。你以為能拿我當消遣？你們這群無賴以為我走不了，就可以任你們施為。好吧，你認為這個怎樣？]

Curly planted a stinging slap against Ranse’s left cheek. The print of his hand stood out a dull red against the tan.

毛捲捲給藍賽的左頰辣辣地賞了個巴掌。手印紅紅地烙在棕色臉皮上。

Ranse smiled happily.

藍賽高興地微笑。

The cow-punchers talk to this day fo the battle that followed.

仔子們到今天還談那天隨後的一場架。

Somewhere in his restless tour of the cities Curly had acquired the art of self-defence. The ranchman was equipped only with the splendid strength and equilibrium of perfect health and the endurance conferred by decent living. The two attributes nearly matched. There were no formal rounds. At last the fibre of the clean liver prevailed. The last time Curly went down from one of the ranchman's awkward but powerful blows he remained on the grass, but looking up with an unquenched eye.

毛捲捲在各市鎮流浪的時候學得防身之術。牛人只是氣力超然，由於健康而動作平穩，再加上生活適切，毅力極佳。真是英雄不打不相識，好似棋逢對手。雖然沒有真正的賽局。最終的時候由五臟六腑乾淨的一方獲勝。最後是牛人慳扭的一記猛拳把毛捲捲打倒草地，再也爬不起來，他只好朝上乾瞪眼，心有餘而力不足。

Ranse went to the water barrel and washed the red from a cut on his chin in the stream from the faucet.

藍賽走到水桶那裏，就水龍頭擦下巴上的一道傷口。

On his face was a grin of satisfaction.

他喜形於色地笑了。

Much benefit might accrue to educators and moralists if they could know the details of the curriculum of reclamation through which Ranse put his waif during the month that he spent in the San Gabriel camp. The ranchman had no fine theories to work out -- perhaps his whole stock of pedagogy embraced only a knowledge of horse-breaking and a belief in heredity.

假如教育家和鼓勵士氣的人知道藍賽和他的僕從在那聖布給的一個月的感化教育的細節，必定能受益非淺。牛人其實沒甚麼大不了的理論--他只懂得馴服馬匹和相信遺傳而已。

The cow-punchers saw that their boss was trying to make a man out of the strange animal that he had sent among them; and they tacitly organized themselves into a faculty of assistants. But their system was their own.

牛仔們看到他們老闆想把這隻送到營來的奇異動物打造成人的時候，他們很有默契地自組助教團相助。只是教學系統另成一格。

Curly's first lesson stuck. He became on friendly and then on intimate terms with soap and water. And the thing that pleased Ranse most was that his 'subject' held his ground at each successive higher step. But the steps were sometimes far apart.

毛捲捲的第一課札下了根。他起先就和肥皂和水建立友好關係，隨後這關係更形親密。最

令藍賽高興的是他的[被監護人]每上一階便牢牢守住。只是有時候要許久才上得一階。

Once he got at the quart bottle of whisky kept sacredly in the grub tent for rattlesnake bites, and spent sixteen hours on the grass, magnificently drunk. But when he staggered to this feat his first move was to find his soap and towel and start for the charco. And once, when a treat came from the ranch in the form of a basket of fresh tomatoes and young onions, Curly devoured the entire consignment before the punchers reached the camp at supper time.

有一次他拿起特地放在廚房車的四分之一加侖威士忌，那是專為救響尾蛇咬傷準備的，被他一口喝得不剩一滴，然後躺在草地裏整整十六個鐘頭。可是一但搖搖擺擺地爬起來，他第一個動作是去找他的肥皂和毛巾，到水塘洗澡。還有一次，牧場特地為牧牛營加菜，拿了一籃新鮮蕃茄和嫩洋蔥來，也是給毛捲捲一口吃得精光，牛仔們回來吃晚飯的時候，連個影子都沒看到。

And then the punchers punished him in their own way. For three days they did not speak to him, except to reply to his own questions or remarks. And they spoke with absolute and unfailing politeness. They played tricks on one another; they pounded one another hurtfully and affectionately; they heaped upon one another's heads friendly curses and obloquy, but they were polite to Curly. He saw it, and it strung him as much as Ranse hoped it would.

之後，仔子們懲罰他，也是方式獨特。整整三天不跟他講話，除非是回答他問題，或者為他講了些甚麼。他們跟他講話的時候，是絕對的有禮貌，而且咬文嚼字。他們互相捶打，彼此拿髒話當醍醐般灌頂，對毛捲捲倒是溫文有禮。他看在眼裏，心裏實在不是滋味，藍賽就是要他難過。

Then came a night that brought a cold, wet norther. Wilson, the youngest of the outfit, had lain in camp two day, ill with a fever. When Joe got up at daylight to begin breakfast he found Curly sitting asleep against a wheel of the grub wagon with only a saddle blanket around him, while Curly's blankets were stretched over Wilson to protect him from the rain and wind.

有個晚上北風大作。威爾遜，營裏最小年紀的，為了風寒臥病兩天了。喬早晨起來做早飯的時候，他看到毛捲捲靠著車輪坐在地上睡覺，身上只圍了一張馬鞍毯子，自己的毛毯蓋在威爾遜身上，使他不為風雨侵犯。

Three nights after that Curly rolled himself in his blanket and went to sleep. Then the other punchers rose up softly and began to make preparations. Ranse saw Long Collins tie a rope to the horn of a saddle. Others were getting out their six-shooters.

三天之後，毛捲捲抱自己的毛毯蒙頭睡覺去了。其他的仔子靜悄悄地爬起來，開始準備。藍賽看見長腿柯林把一截繩子綁到馬鞍頭上。其餘的拿出左輪槍準備射擊。

'Boys,' said Ranse, 'I'm much obliged. I was hoping you would. But I didn't like to ask.'

[孩兒們，]藍賽說，[承謝了。我很希望你們這麼做。只是遲遲不便開口。]

Half a dozen six-shooters began to pop -- awful yells rent the air -- Long collins galloped wildly across Curly's bed, dragging the saddle after him. That was merely their way of gently awaking their victim. Then they hazed him for an hour, carefully and ridiculously, after the code of cow camps. Whenever he uttered protest they held him stretched over a roll of blankets and thrashed him woefully with a pair of leather leggins.

五，六支手槍開始乒兵作響--仔子們野狼般亂叫--長腿柯林粗野地跳過毛捲捲睡的床，後面拖著馬鞍。這只是他們親切地叫醒倒霉鬼的方式。然後他們整整鬧了他一個鐘頭，這是牧牛營的畢業典禮。每當他反抗的時候，他們硬把他壓在一捲毯子上，無情地拿一條皮套褲打他。

And all this meant that Curly had won his spurs, that he was receiving the punchers' accolade. Nevermore would they be polite to him. But he would be their 'pardner' and stirrup-brother, foot to foot.

這所意味的是毛捲捲已經贏得仔子的資格，正在接受仔子們給他的榮耀。他們不會再對他假仙假鬼，文質彬彬地。從今天起，他將是他們的[伙計]，馬蹬子裏的拜把兄弟，不折不扣地。

When the fooling was ended all hands made a raid on Joe's big coffeepot by the fire for a Java nightcap. Ranse watched the new knight carefully to see if he understood and was worthy. Curly limped with his cup of coffee to a log and sat upon it. Long Collins followed and sat by his side. Buck Rabb went and sat at the other. Curly -- grinned.

這陣子胡鬧停止之後，大伙一齊到喬的廚房車，圍著營火喝他們的爪哇國睡前酒。藍賽冷眼觀察這位剛剛被封爵的仔子，看他是否了解，是否夠格。毛捲捲跛著腳一跳一跳地走到一截樹幹的地方坐下。長腿柯林跟著他，坐在他旁邊。駱公羊坐在另外一邊。毛捲捲--笑了。

And then Ranse furnished Curly with mounts and saddle and equipment, and turned him over to Buck Rabb, instructing him to finish the job.

之後，藍賽給毛捲捲裝備馬匹和馬鞍，和其他傢伙，把他交給駱公羊，繼續完成他的工作。

Three weeks later Ranse rode from the ranch into Rabb's camp, which was then in Snake Valley. The boys were saddling for the day's ride. He sought out Long Collins among them.

三星期後，藍賽回到老駱管的營子，那時候遷移到蛇谷的地方。孩兒們正準備出發做一天的工作。他把長腿柯林找來。

‘How about that bronco?’ he asked.

[那匹野馬怎麼樣？]

Long Collins grinned.

長腿柯林裂開嘴笑。

‘Reach out your hand, Ranse Truesdell,’ he said, ‘and you’ll touch him. And you can shake his’n, too, if you like, for he’s plumb white and there’s none better in no camp.’

[伸出手來，杜藍賽，]他說，[就能碰到他。你喜歡還可以跟他握手，因為他徹頭徹尾是塊材料，打燈籠也找不著的。]

Ranse looked again at the clear-faced, bronzed, smiling cow-puncher who stood at Collins’s side. Could that be Curly? He held out his hand, and Curly grasped it with the muscles of a bronco-buster.

藍賽刮目再看一看這位臉刮得乾淨，皮膚晒得健康，面帶微笑的牛仔站在柯林旁邊。這會是毛捲捲嗎？他伸出手，毛捲捲一把抓住，馴服野馬的人才有這般肌肉結實。

‘I want you at the ranch,’ said Ranse.

[你跟我到牧場來，]藍賽說。

‘All right, sport,’ said Curly, heartily. ‘But I want to come back again. Say, pal, this is a dandy farm. And I don’t want any better fun than hustlin’ cows with this bunch of guys. They’re all to the merry merry.’

[好的，朋友，]毛捲捲朗爽地說。[可是我要回來。這個，朋友，這是個時髦的農場。和這票傢伙一起趕牛最愜意不過。這群老天派來的快樂天使。]

At the Cibolo ranch-house they dismounted. Ranse bade Curly wait at the door of the living room. He walked inside. Old ‘Kiowa’ Truesdell was reading at a table.

他們在西堡牧場場房一同下馬。藍賽叫毛捲捲在起居室門口等等。他走到裏面。老杜[奇奧瓦]正在閱讀。

‘Good-morning, Mr. Truesdell,’ said Ranse.

[早安，杜先生，]藍賽說。

The old man turned his white head quickly.

老人把雪白的頭快快一轉。

‘How is this?’ he began. ‘Why do you call me “Mr.--”?’

[怎麼回事?]他說。[爲甚麼你稱我<--先生>?]

When he looked at Ranse’s face he stopped, and the hand that held his newspaper shook slightly.

他看到藍賽的臉的時候就停了，拿著報紙的手微微顫抖。

‘Boy,’ he said slowly, ‘how did you find it out?’

[孩子，]他慢聲地說，[你怎麼發現的?]

‘It’s all right,’ said Ranse, with a smile. ‘I made Tia Juana tell me. It was kind of by accident, but it’s all right.’

[沒事，]藍賽說，一邊笑。[我叫巧語孀說給我聽的。說起來是個意外，可是沒有關係。]

‘You’ve been like a son to me’ said old ‘Kiowa,’ trembling.

[你一直像我的親生兒子一樣，]老[奇奧瓦，]顫抖地說。

‘Tia Juana told me all about it,’ said Ranse. ‘She told me how you adopted me when I was knee-high to a puddle duck out of a wagon train of prospectors that was bound West. And she told me how the kid -- your own kid, you know -- got lost or was run away with. And she said it was the same day that the sheep-shearers got on a bender and left the ranch.’

[巧語孀都告訴我了，]藍賽說。[她說我在膝蓋這麼高的時候你領養了我，我是那時候一群往西部淘金的篷車隊裏一個潦倒人家的小孩。她告訴我那個--你自己--的小孩在一群剪羊毛的喝酒胡鬧離開牧場的同一天走失了。]

‘Our boy strayed from the house when he was two years old,’ said the old man. ‘And then along came these emigrant wagons with a youngster they didn’t want; and we took you. I never intended you to know, Ranse. We never heard of our boy again.’

[我們的小孩兩歲的時候丟掉了，]老人說。[然後，這些遷移的篷車隊裏有個小孩他們不要。我們把你領了來。我從來不想讓你知道，藍賽。我們再也沒聽說我們自己小孩的消息。]

‘He is right outside, unless I’m mighty mistaken,’ said Ranse, opening the door and beckoning.

[他就在外頭，除非我看錯了，]藍賽說，一面打開門招手。

Curly walked in.

毛捲捲走進來。

No one could have doubted. The old man and the young had the same sweep of hair, the same nose, chin, line of face, and prominent light-blue eyes.

沒有人會看錯。老人和年輕人有一樣的髮波，一模一樣的鼻子，下巴，輪廓，和大大的淺藍色眼睛。

Old 'Kiowa' rose eagerly.

老[奇奧瓦]熱心地站起來。

Curly looked about the room curiously. A puzzled expression came over his face. He pointed to the wall opposite.

毛捲捲好奇地四下看。臉上呈現出迷惑的表情。他指向對面的牆上。

'Where's the tick-tock?' he asked, absentmindedly.

[滴滴噠到那裏去了?]他漫不經心地問。

'The clock,' cried old 'Kiowa' loudly. 'The eight-day clock used ot stand there. Why--'

[那座鐘，]老[奇奧瓦]大聲說。[那座以前掛在牆上的八天鐘。怎--]

He turned to Ranse, but Ranse was not there.

他轉身找藍賽，可是藍賽已經不在那兒。

Already a hundred yards away, Vaminos, the good flea-bitten dun, was bearing him eastward like a racer through dust and chaparral towards the Rancho de los Olmos.

一百碼遠的地方，飛鳴兒，這匹蚤斑灰馬早背著他像賽馬一樣，往東直衝飛揚的塵土和莢芭樂樹林，飛往鷗馬牧場。