



SmartEdit Report for

Riders of the Purple Sage

19/05/2018

Adverbs

Adverb	Sentence
only	She wished only to go on doing good and being happy.
only	“If you must arrest Venters you might have the courtesy to wait till he leaves my home. And if you do arrest him it will be adding insult to injury. It’s absurd to accuse Venters of being mixed up in that shooting fray in the village last night. He was with me at the time. Besides, he let me take charge of his guns. You’re only using this as a pretext. What do you mean to do to Venters?”
only	No welcome was in this greeting only a gruff curiosity.
only	Tull broke the spell with a laugh, a laugh without mirth, a laugh that was only a sound betraying fear.
only	“I’m only wonderin’ if Tull an’ his men’ll raise a storm down in the village,” said Lassiter, in his last weakening stand.
only	“Lassiter!... I shudder when I think of that name, of him. But when I look at the man I forget who he is—I almost like him. I remember only that he saved Bern. He has suffered. I wonder what it was—did he love a Mormon woman once? How splendidly he championed us poor misunderstood souls! Somehow he knows—much.”
only	“Indeed yes, but I’ll do it. Only we must go unseen. To-morrow, perhaps.”
only	“Jane,” he said, in gentler voice, “don’t look so. I’m not going out to murder your churchman. I’ll try to avoid him and all his men. But can’t you see I’ve reached the end of my rope? Jane, you’re a wonderful woman. Never was there a woman so unselfish and good. Only you’re blind in one way.... Listen!”
only	And as it somehow reminded him of his prospect in life, so it suddenly resembled the woman near him, only in her there were greater beauty and peril, a mystery more unsolvable, and something nameless that numbed his heart and dimmed his eye.

only	“Bern, who is Lassiter? He’s only a name to me—a terrible name.”
only	“Jane, I only heard things, rumors, stories, most of which I disbelieved. At Glaze his name was known, but none of the riders or ranchers I knew there ever met him. At Stone Bridge I never heard him mentioned. But at Sterling and villages north of there he was spoken of often. I’ve never been in a village which he had been known to visit. There were many conflicting stories about him and his doings. Some said he had shot up this and that Mormon village, and others denied it. I’m inclined to believe he has, and you know how Mormons hide the truth. But there was one feature about Lassiter upon which all agree—that he was what riders in this country call a gun-man. He’s a man with a marvelous quickness and accuracy in the use of a Colt. And now that I’ve seen him I know more. Lassiter was born without fear. I watched him with eyes which saw him my friend. I’ll never forget the moment I recognized him from what had been told me of his crouch before the draw. It was then I yelled his name. I believe that yell saved Tull’s life. At any rate, I know this, between Tull and death then there was not the breadth of the littlest hair. If he or any of his men had moved a finger downward—”
only	The sound of trotting horses had ceased, and there was silence broken only by a faint, dry pattering of cottonwood leaves in the soft night wind.
only	Once beyond the grove he entered the one and only street.
only	She asked only the divine right of all women—freedom; to love and to live as her heart willed.
only	From time to time he stopped to listen and heard only the usual familiar bark of coyote and sweep of wind and rustle of sage.
only	“Well, it’d be no news to me. I know Mormons. I’ve seen their women’s strange love en’ patience en’ sacrifice an’ silence en’ whet I call madness for their idea of God. An’ over against that I’ve seen the tricks of men. They work hand in hand, all together, an’ in the dark. No man can hold out against them, unless he takes to packin’ guns. For Mormons are slow to kill. That’s the only good I ever seen in their religion. Venters, take this from me, these Mormons ain’t just right in their minds. Else could a Mormon marry one woman when he already has a wife, an’ call it duty?”
only	Only two came up to her; those she called Night and Black Star.
only	“I only come here to remember and to pray,” she said.
only	“Bern, you’re bitter; but that’s only natural. We’ll wait to see what’s

	happened to my riders. Judkins, come to the house with me. Your wound must be attended to.”
only	There was the night ride of Tull’s, which, viewed in the light of subsequent events, had a look of his covert machinations; Oldring and his Masked Rider and his rustlers riding muffled horses; the report that Tull had ridden out that morning with his man Jerry on the trail to Glaze, the strange disappearance of Jane Withersteen’s riders, the unusually determined attempt to kill the one Gentile still in her employ, an intention frustrated, no doubt, only by Judkin’s magnificent riding of her racer, and lastly the driving of the red herd.
only	It related only to what was to happen to him in Deception Pass; and he could no more lift the veil of that mystery than tell where the trails led to in that unexplored canyon.
only	The only solution to this puzzle was that the cattle had been driven through water, and water deep enough to wet their legs.
only	“Oh, he’s only a boy!... What! Can he be Oldring’s Masked Rider?”
only	Death seemed only a matter of moments, for the bullet had gone clear through her.
only	What few tracks might have betrayed him he obliterated, so only an expert tracker could have trailed him.
only	“She was only a girl,” he soliloquized.
only	He thought only of the sadness, the truth of the moment.
only	Did he only imagine that her heart beat stronger, ever so slightly, but stronger? He pressed his ear closer to her breast.
only	And, from what he had learned in the last few days, a belief began to form in Venters’s mind that Oldring’s intimidations of the villages and the mystery of the Masked Rider, with his alleged evil deeds, and the fierce resistance offered any trailing riders, and the rustling of cattle—these things were only the craft of the rustler-chief to conceal his real life and purpose and work in Deception Pass.
only	He was only proving what the sage-riders had long said of this labyrinthine system of deceitful canyons and valleys—trails led down into Deception Pass, but no rider had ever followed them.

only	<p>“Good Heaven! Of all the holes for a rustler!... There’s a cavern under that waterfall, and a passageway leading out to a canyon beyond. Oldring hides in there. He needs only to guard a trail leading down from the sage-flat above. Little danger of this outlet to the pass being discovered. I stumbled on it by luck, after I had given up. And now I know the truth of what puzzled me most—why that cattle trail was wet!”</p>
only	<p>Returning, he had no time to spare, only now and then, between dashes, a moment when he stopped to cast sharp eyes ahead.</p>
only	<p>“Now please listen—an’ beggin’ your pardon—jest turn that deaf Mormon ear aside, an’ let me talk clear an’ plain in the other. I went around to the saloons an’ the stores an’ the loafin’ places yesterday. All your riders are in. There’s talk of a vigilance band organized to hunt down rustlers. They call themselves ‘The Riders.’ Thet’s the report—thet’s the reason given for your riders leavin’ you. Strange that only a few riders of other ranchers joined the band! An’ Tull’s man, Jerry Card—he’s the leader. I seen him en’ his hoss. He ‘ain’t been to Glaze. I’m not easy to fool on the looks of a hoss thet’s traveled the sage. Tull an’ Jerry didn’t ride to Glaze!... Well, I met Blake en’ Dorn, both good friends of mine, usually, as far as their Mormon lights will let ‘em go. But these fellers couldn’t fool me, an’ they didn’t try very hard. I asked them, straight out like a man, why they left you like thet. I didn’t forget to mention how you nursed Blake’s poor old mother when she was sick, an’ how good you was to Dorn’s kids. They looked ashamed, Miss Withersteen. An’ they jest froze up—thet dark set look thet makes them strange an’ different to me. But I could tell the difference between thet first natural twinge of conscience an’ the later look of some secret thing. An’ the difference I caught was thet they couldn’t help themselves. They hadn’t no say in the matter. They looked as if their bein’ unfaithful to you was bein’ faithful to a higher duty. An’ there’s the secret. Why it’s as plain as—as sight of my gun here.”</p>
only	<p>If she could mitigate his hatred of Mormons, or at least keep him from killing more of them, not only would she be saving her people, but also be leading back this bloodspiller to some semblance of the human.</p>
only	<p>She had abhorred his name; face to face with him, she found she feared only his deeds.</p>
only	<p>She had heard of milling stampeded cattle, and knew it was a feat accomplished by only the most daring riders.</p>
only	<p>“Only—will you let me have Black Star now an’ ride him over there an’ head off them fellers who stampeded the herd?”</p>

only	“Look at his eyes. He likes you. He’ll love you, too. How can you resist him? Oh, Lassiter, but Bells can run! It’s nip and tuck between him and Wrangle, and only Black Star can beat him. He’s too spirited a horse for a woman. Take him. He’s yours.”
only	Her intelligence told her this was only the lull before the storm, but her faith would not have it so.
only	But none of the families was prosperous, many were very poor, and some lived only by Jane Withersteen’s beneficence.
only	“I see what it means to you, and you know what it means to me. Thank you! And if better times ever come, I’ll be only too happy to work for you.”
only	There was only one room, rather dark and bare, but it was clean and neat.
only	“Wait! Mrs. Larkin, I may have told little white lies in my life, but never a lie that mattered, that hurt any one. Now believe me. I love little Fay. If I had her near me I’d grow to worship her. When I asked for her I thought only of that love.... Let me prove this. You and Fay come to live with me. I’ve such a big house, and I’m so lonely. I’ll help nurse you, take care of you. When you’re better you can work for me. I’ll keep little Fay and bring her up—without Mormon teaching. When she’s grown, if she should want to leave me, I’ll send her, and not empty-handed, back to Illinois where you came from. I promise you.”
only	Venters wanted fresh meat now more than when he had only himself to think of.
only	More than once he jerked over to seize it, only in vain, for the rabbit by renewed effort eluded his grasp.
only	They were only a few inches deep and about a foot apart.
only	“I’ll climb—I’ll see where this thing goes. If only I can find water!”
only	“A balancing rock! The cliff-dwellers never had to roll it. They died, vanished, and here the rock stands, probably little changed.... But it might serve another lonely dweller of the cliffs. I’ll hide up here somewhere, if I can only find water.”

only	“ Only birds can peep over those walls, I’ve gone Oldring one better.”
only	It was dim, only a shade lighter than the dark ramparts, but he distinguished it, and that served.
only	He remembered only to avoid a misstep and to keep his direction.
only	The rest of that night seemed to Venters only a few moments of starlight, a dark overcasting of sky, an hour or so of gray gloom, and then the lighting of dawn.
only	Only through the arch did any sunlight pass, so that all the rest of the valley lay still asleep, dark green, mysterious, shadowy, merging its level into walls as misty and soft as morning clouds.
only	Starvation in the uplands was not an unheard-of thing; he did not, however, worry at all on that score, and feared only his possible inability to supply the needs of a woman in a weakened and extremely delicate condition.
only	Venters felt sure that he was the only white man who had ever walked under the shadow of the wonderful stone bridge, down into that wonderful valley with its circle of caves and its terraced rings of silver spruce and aspens.
only	The details of his wild environment seemed the only substance of a strange dream.
only	Neither had he a name for this, only it was inexpressibly wild and sweet.
only	Venters awakened to the sound of melody that he imagined was only the haunting echo of dream music.
only	That water was the only medicine he had, and he put faith in it.
only	The fever broke on the fourth day and left her spent and shrunken, a slip of a girl with life only in her eyes.
only	“No! I never stole—or harmed any one—in all my life. I only rode and rode—”
only	“I—I want you to feel that... you see—we’ve been thrown together—and—and I want to help you—not hurt you. I thought life had been cruel

	to me, but when I think of yours I feel mean and little for my complaining. Anyway, I was a lonely outcast. And now!... I don't see very clearly what it all means. Only we are here—together. We've got to stay here, for long, surely till you are well. But you'll never go back to Oldring. And I'm sure helping you will help me, for I was sick in mind. There's something now for me to do. And if I can win back your strength—then get you away, out of this wild country—help you somehow to a happier life—just think how good that'll be for me!"
only	"I'm only going to look over the valley," he said.
only	This western curve was the only part of the valley where the walls had been split asunder, and it was a wildly rough and inaccessible corner.
only	Here again was a magnificent arch, such as formed the grand gateway to the valley, only in this instance it formed the dome of a cave instead of the span of a bridge.
only	There was only one possible place to ascend, and this was narrow and steep.
only	How many years had passed since the cliff-dwellers gazed out across the beautiful valley as he was gazing now? How long had it been since women ground grain in those polished holes? What time had rolled by since men of an unknown race lived, loved, fought, and died there? Had an enemy destroyed them? Had disease destroyed them, or only that greatest destroyer—time? Venters saw a long line of blood-red hands painted low down upon the yellow roof of stone.
only	"I liked that. As long as I can remember I've been locked up there at times, and those times were the only happy ones I ever had. It's a big cabin, high up on a cliff, and I could look out. Then I had dogs and pets I had tamed, and books. There was a spring inside, and food stored, and the men brought me fresh meat. Once I was there one whole winter."
only	"You're right. He's more than a rustler. In fact, as the men say, his rustling cattle is now only a bluff. There's gold in the canyons!"
only	Only a few days had elapsed since the hour of his encounter with Tull, yet they had been forgotten and now seemed far off, and the interval one that now appeared large and profound with incalculable change in his feelings.
only	Bess had no inkling that he had been absent from camp nearly all night, and only remarked solicitously that he appeared to be more tired than

	usual, and more in the need of sleep.
only	Woman's face, woman's eyes, woman's lips—all acutely and blindly and sweetly and terribly truthful in their betrayal! But as her fear was instinctive, so was her clinging to this one and only friend.
only	He knew what she had only half divined—that she loved him.
only	Lassiter only smiled at her.
only	"I've reasons— only one of which I need mention," she answered.
only	"It's well I got you in time, Jane Withersteen. What would your father have said to these goings-on of yours? He would have put you in a stone cage on bread and water. He would have taught you something about Mormonism. Remember, you're a born Mormon. There have been Mormons who turned heretic—damn their souls!—but no born Mormon ever left us yet. Ah, I see your shame. Your faith is not shaken. You are only a wild girl."
only	"But what's he doing here in Cottonwoods? This place isn't notorious enough for such a man. Sterling and the villages north, where there's universal gun-packing and fights every day—where there are more men like him, it seems to me they would attract him most. We're only a wild, lonely border settlement. It's only recently that the rustlers have made killings here. Nor have there been saloons till lately, nor the drifting in of outcasts. Has not this gun-man some special mission here?"
only	Only the Bishop's voice could release her.
only	"Say! It was queer for you to faint. I thought you were such a strong woman, not faintish like that. You're all right now— only some pale. I thought you'd never come to. But I'm awkward round women folks. I couldn't think of anythin'."
only	"After all, Jane, mebbe you're only blind—Mormon blind. That only can explain what's close to selfishness—"
only	"Is it vile—is it blind—is it only Mormonism to save human life? No, Lassiter, that's God's law, divine, universal for all Christians."
only	If her faith were justified, if her churchmen were trying only to intimidate her, the fact would soon be manifest, as would their failure, and then she would redouble her zeal toward them and toward what had been the best

	work of her life—work for the welfare and happiness of those among whom she lived, Mormon and Gentile alike.
only	Of all her Mormon employees about the great ranch only Jerd remained.
only	“Miss Withersteen, I make proud to say I’ve not lost a steer. Fer a good while after that stampede Lassiter milled we hed no trouble. Why, even the sage dogs left us. But it’s begun agin—thet flashin’ of lights over ridge tips, an’ queer puffin’ of smoke, en’ then at night strange whistles en’ noises. But the herd’s acted magnificent. An’ my boys, say, Miss Withersteen, they’re only kids, but I ask no better riders. I got the laugh in the village fer takin’ them out. They’re a wild lot, an’ you know boys hev more nerve than grown men, because they don’t know what danger is. I’m not denyin’ there’s danger. But they glory in it, an’ mebbe I like it myself—anyway, we’ll stick. We’re goin’ to drive the herd on the far side of the first break of Deception Pass. There’s a great round valley over there, an’ no ridges or piles of rocks to aid these stampeders. The rains are due. We’ll hev plenty of water fer a while. An’ we can hold that herd from anybody except Oldrin’. I come in fer supplies. I’ll pack a couple of burros an’ drive out after dark to-night.”
only	“Judkins, you know I’m a rich woman. I tell you I’ve few faithful friends. I’ve fallen upon evil days. God only knows what will become of me and mine! So take the gold.”
only	“Lassiter, don’t tease me now. I’m miserable—sick. Bells is fast, but he can’t stay with the blacks, and you know it. Only Wrangle can do that.”
only	“Lassiter, why do you say that so often? I know you’ve teased me at times, and I believe it’s only kindness. You’re always trying to keep my mind off worry. But you mean more by this repeated mention of my racers?”
only	“God knows you’re right!... Poor Bern, how long he’s gone! In my trouble I’ve been forgetting him. But, Lassiter, I’ve little fear for him. I’ve heard my riders say he’s as keen as a wolf.... As to your reading my thoughts—well, your suggestion makes an actual thought of what was only one of my dreams. I believe I dreamed of flying from this wild borderland, Lassiter. I’ve strange dreams. I’m not always practical and thinking of my many duties, as you said once. For instance—if I dared—if I dared I’d ask you to saddle the blacks and ride away with me—and hide me.”
only	Not only did Lassiter turn white—not only did he grow tense, not only did he lose his coolness, but also he suddenly, violently, hungrily took her into his arms and crushed her to his breast.

only	<p>“I’m always forgetting your—your feelings. I thought of you as my faithful friend. I’m always making you out more than human... only, let me say—I meant that—about riding away. I’m wretched, sick of this—this—Oh, something bitter and black grows on my heart!”</p>
only	<p>“Jane, you’re watched. There’s no single move of yours, except when you’re hid in your house, that ain’t seen by sharp eyes. The cottonwood grove’s full of creepin’, crawlin’ men. Like Indians in the grass. When you rode, which wasn’t often lately, the sage was full of sneakin’ men. At night they crawl under your windows into the court, an’ I reckon into the house. Jane Withersteen, you know, never locked a door! This here grove’s a hummin’ bee-hive of mysterious happenin’s. Jane, it ain’t so much that these soles keep out of my way as me keepin’ out of theirs. They’re goin’ to try to kill me. That’s plain. But mebbe I’m as hard to shoot in the back as in the face. So far I’ve seen fit to watch only. This all means, Jane, that you’re a marked woman. You can’t get away—not now. Mebbe later, when you’re broken, you might. But that’s sure doubtful. Jane, you’re to lose the cattle that’s left—your home an’ ranch—an’ Amber Spring. You can’t even hide a sack of gold! For it couldn’t be slipped out of the house, day or night, an’ hid or buried, let alone be rid off with. You may lose all. I’m tellin’ you, Jane, hopin’ to prepare you, if the worst does come. I told you once before about that strange power I’ve got to feel things.”</p>
only	<p>The sighing wind and the twittering quail and the singing birds, even the rare and seldom-occurring hollow crack of a sliding weathered stone, only thickened and deepened that insulated silence.</p>
only	<p>Multitudes of strange, gray frogs with white spots and black eyes lined the rocky bank and leaped only at close approach.</p>
only	<p>“Bess, you ask more than I can tell. It’s beyond me. Only there was laughter here once—and now there’s silence. There was life—and now there’s death. Men cut these little steps, made these arrow-heads and mealing-stones, plaited the ropes we found, and left their bones to crumble in our fingers. As far as time is concerned it might all have been yesterday. We’re here to-day. Maybe we’re higher in the scale of human beings—in intelligence. But who knows? We can’t be any higher in the things for which life is lived at all.”</p>
only	<p>“I didn’t mean—that about the rabbit. I—I was only trying to be—funny. Don’t leave me all alone!”</p>
only	<p>It was only wind, thought Venters.</p>
only	<p>It was only a gale, but as Venters listened, as his ears became accustomed</p>

	to the fury and strife, out of it all or through it or above it pealed low and perfectly clear and persistently uniform a strange sound that had no counterpart in all the sounds of the elements.
only	Venters could not see his companion, and knew of her presence only through the tightening hold of her hand on his arm.
only	“The world seems very far away,” he muttered, “but it’s there—and I’m not yet done with it. Perhaps I never shall be.... Only —how glorious it would be to live here always and never think again!”
only	Surprise Valley was only a little niche in the wide world whence blew that burdened wind.
only	Bess was only one of millions at the mercy of unknown motive in nature and life.
only	“Give me four days. If I’m not back in four days you’ll know I’m dead. For that only shall keep me.”
only	“I was happy—I shall be very happy. Oh, you’re so good that—that it kills me! If I think, I can’t believe it. I grow sick with wondering why. I’m only a let me say it— only a lost, nameless—girl of the rustlers. Oldring’s Girl, they called me. That you should save me—be so good and kind—want to make me happy—why, it’s beyond belief. No wonder I’m wretched at the thought of your leaving me. But I’ll be wretched and bitter no more. I promise you. If only I could repay you even a little—”
only	“I’ve faith in you. I’ll not worry until after four days. Only —because you mightn’t come—I must tell you—”
only	“You must know what—what I think of your goodness—of you. Always I’ve been tongue-tied. I seemed not to be grateful. It was deep in my heart. Even now—if I were other than I am—I couldn’t tell you. But I’m nothing— only a rustler’s girl—nameless—infamous. You’ve saved me—and I’m—I’m yours to do with as you like.... With all my heart and soul—I love you!”
only	Yet what charm against ambush and aim and enemy he seemed to bear about him! No, Jane reflected, it was not charm; only a wonderful training of eye and ear, and sense of impending peril.
only	“It’s only a cut,” said Jane.

only	“See here, lady, look at your hands now, right now. Aren’t they fine, firm, white hands? Aren’t they bloody now? Lassiter’s blood! That’s a queer thing to stain your beautiful hands. But if you could only see deeper you’d find a redder color of blood. Heart color, Jane!”
only	But was that only her fancy—he had always been a young giant—was the change one of spirit? He might have been absent for years, proven by fire and steel, grown like Lassiter, strong and cool and sure.
only	She liked him as well—nay, more, she thought, only her emotions were deadened by the long, menacing wait for the bursting storm.
only	“It must be true. But I won’t upbraid you. Only don’t rouse the devil in me by praying for Tull! I’ll try to keep cool when I meet him. That’s all. Now there’s one more thing I want to ask of you—the last. I’ve found a valley down in the Pass. It’s a wonderful place. I intend to stay there. It’s so hidden I believe no one can find it. There’s good water, and browse, and game. I want to raise corn and stock. I need to take in supplies. Will you give them to me?”
only	“I had to tell you. There’s some things a feller jest can’t keep. It’s strange you give up on hearin’ that, when all this long time you’ve been the gamest woman I ever seen. But I don’t know women. Mebbe there’s reason for you to cry. I know this—nothin’ ever rang in my soul an’ so filled it as what Venters did. I’d like to have done it, but—I’m only good for throwin’ a gun, en’ it seems you hate that.... Well, I’ll be goin’ now.”
only	“Well—some fool feller tried to stop Venters out there in the sage—an’ he only stopped lead!... I think it’ll be all right. I haven’t seen or heard of any other fellers round. Venters’ll go through safe. An’, Jane, I’ve got Bells saddled, an’ I’m going to trail Venters. Mind, I won’t show myself unless he falls foul of somebody an’ needs me. I want to see if this place where he’s goin’ is safe for him. He says nobody can track him there. I never seen the place yet I couldn’t track a man to. Now, Jane, you stay indoors while I’m gone, an’ keep close watch on Fay. Will you?”
only	Only one thing hindered him upon beginning, though it in no wise checked his delight, and that in the multiplicity of tasks planned to make a paradise out of the valley he could not choose the one with which to begin.
only	“What relief—it’s only you! How—in the name of all that’s wonderful—did you ever get here?”
only	“I reckon I’ll only stay a little while,” Lassiter was saying.

only	He asked her no questions, and only directed his attention to her while she was occupied and had no opportunity to observe his scrutiny.
only	The breaking of their solitude, though by a well-meaning friend, had not only dispelled all its dream and much of its charm, but had instilled a canker of fear.
only	He carried only his rifle, revolver, and a small quantity of bread and meat, and thus lightly burdened, he made swift progress down the slope and out into the valley.
only	His only chance to escape lay in abandoning the stolen horses and creeping away in the sage to hide.
only	Soon only a few hundred yards lay between Bells and Wrangle.
only	He bent a downward glance to try to see Wrangle's actual stride, and saw only twinkling, darting streaks and the white rush of the trail.
only	Jerry Card rode as only he could ride.
only	Only a hundred yards now stretched between Black Star and Wrangle.
only	He had come upon Bells grazing near the body of a dead rustler, the only incident of his quick ride into the village.
only	"Jud, I'm not crazy— only mad clean through," replied Venters.
only	"Thet's my bad arm. Sure it was Oldrin'. What the hell's wrong with you, anyway? Venters, I tell you somethin's wrong. You're whiter 'n a sheet. You can't be scared of the rustler. I don't believe you've got a scare in you. Wal, now, jest let me talk. You know I like to talk, an' if I'm slow I allus git there sometime. As I said, Lassiter was talkie' chummy with Oldrin'. There wasn't no hard feelin's. An' the gang wasn't payin' no pertic'lar attention. But like a cat watchin' a mouse I hed my eyes on them two fellers. It was strange to me, thet confab. I'm gittin' to think a lot, fer a feller who doesn't know much. There's been some queer deals lately an' this seemed to me the queerest. These men stood to the bar alone, an' so close their big gun-hilts butted together. I seen Oldrin' was some surprised at first, an' Lassiter was cool as ice. They talked, an' presently at somethin' Lassiter said the rustler bawled out a curse, an' then he jest fell up against the bar, an' sagged there. The gang in the saloon looked around an' laughed, an' thet's about all. Finally Oldrin' turned, and it was easy to see somethin' hed shook him. Yes, sir, thet big rustler—you know he's as broad as he is long, an' the powerfulest build of a man—yes, sir,

	<p>the nerve had been taken out of him. Then, after a little, he began to talk an' said a lot to Lassiter, an' by an' by it didn't take much of an eye to see thet Lassiter was gittin' hit hard. I never seen him anyway but cooler 'n ice—till then. He seemed to be hit harder 'n Oldrin', only he didn't roar out thet way. He jest kind of sunk in, an' looked an' looked, an' he didn't see a livin' soul in thet saloon. Then he sort of come to, an' shakin' hands—mind you, shakin' hands with Oldrin'—he went out. I couldn't help thinkin' how easy even a boy could hev dropped the great gun-man then!... Wal, the rustler stood at the bar fer a long time, en' he was seein' things far off, too; then he come to an' roared fer whisky, an' gulped a drink thet was big enough to drown me."</p>
only	<p>But was that awful spirit in the black eyes only one of vitality?</p>
only	<p>He felt only vaguely, as outside things, the ache and burn and throb of the muscles of his body.</p>
only	<p>Was that only the vitality of him—that awful light in the eyes—only the hard-dying life of a tremendously powerful brute? A broken whisper, strange as death: "MAN—WHY—DIDN'T—YOU WAIT! BESS—WAS—" And Oldring plunged face forward, dead.</p>
only	<p>Only, and once for all, he must know the truth, know the worst, stifle all these insistent doubts and subtle hopes and jealous fancies, and kill the past by knowing truly what Bess had been to Oldring.</p>
only	<p>"Never mind that. I'm all right. There's nothing for you to be scared about. Things are going to turn out just as we have planned. As soon as I'm rested we'll make a break to get out of the country. Only now, right now, I must know the truth about you."</p>
only	<p>Not only was she not bad, but good, pure, innocent above all innocence in the world—the innocence of lonely girlhood.</p>
only	<p>"Lassiter, you're right. A child should be told the absolute truth. But—is that possible? I haven't been able to do it, and all my life I've loved the truth, and I've prided myself upon being truthful. Maybe that was only egotism. I'm learning much, my friend. Some of those blinding scales have fallen from my eyes. And—and as to caring for you, I think I care a great deal. How much, how little, I couldn't say. My heart is almost broken, Lassiter. So now is not a good time to judge of affection. I can still play and be merry with Fay. I can still dream. But when I attempt serious thought I'm dazed. I don't think. I don't care any more. I don't pray!... Think of that, my friend! But in spite of my numb feeling I believe I'll rise out of all this dark agony a better woman, with greater love of man and God. I'm on the rack now; I'm senseless to all but pain, and growing dead</p>

	to that. Sooner or later I shall rise out of this stupor. I'm waiting the hour."
only	"Lassiter, I lied to you. But I beg of you—don't you lie to me. I've great respect for you. I believe you're softened toward most, perhaps all, my people except—But when I speak of your purpose, your hate, your guns, I have only him in mind. I don't believe you've changed."
only	Was she Delilah? Swiftly, conscious of only one motive—refusal to see this man called craven by his enemies—she rose, and with blundering fingers buckled the belt round his waist where it belonged.
only	"Eighteen years I've been on the trail. An' it led me to the last lonely villages of the Utah border. Eighteen years!... I feel pretty old now. I was only twenty when I hit that trail. Well, as I told you, back here a ways a Gentile said Jane Withersteen could tell me about Milly Erne an' show me her grave!"
only	She saw only this sad, gray, passion-worn man, and she heard only the faint rustling of the leaves.
only	"She's— only —strayed—out—of earshot," faltered Jane, looking at Lassiter.
only	"I want little Fay. I can't live without her. They've stolen her as they stole Milly Erne's child. I must have little Fay. I want only her. I give up. I'll go and tell Bishop Dyer—I'm broken. I'll tell him I'm ready for the yoke— only give me back Fay—and—and I'll marry Tull!"
only	"I'll give myself to you—I'll ride away with you—marry you, if only you'll spare him?"
only	"Jane, the past is dead. In my love for you I forgot the past. This thing I'm about to do ain't for myself or Milly or Fay. It's not because of anythin' that ever happened in the past, but for what is happenin' right now. It's for you!... An' listen. Since I was a boy I've never thanked God for anythin'. If there is a God—an' I've come to believe it—I thank Him now for the years that made me Lassiter!... I can reach down en' feel these big guns, en' know what I can do with them. An', Jane, only one of the miracles Dyer professes to believe in can save him!"
only	"I jest saw about all of it, Miss Withersteen, an' I'll be glad to tell you if you'll only hev patience with me," said Judkins, earnestly.
only	Facing straight ahead, seeing only the waving, shadowy sage, Jane held out her gauntleted hand, to feel it enclosed in strong clasp.

only	They let the eight calves out of the corral, and kept only two of the burros Venters had brought from Cottonwoods.
only	“Hush! Don’t cry. Our valley has only fitted us for a better life somewhere. Come!”
only	After that the descent down the slope and over the mile of scrawled, ripped, and ridged rock required only careful guidance, and Venters got the burros to level ground in a condition that caused him to congratulate himself.
only	“Oh, if we only had Wrangle!”
only	“But we’re lucky. That’s the worst of our trail passed. We’ve only men to fear now. If we get up in the sage we can hide and slip along like coyotes.”
only	It was not only his deceit to her that she visited upon him, but her betrayal by religion, by life itself.
only	“Oh no, Bern, you’ll not come. Let me go. It’s best for you to forget me. I’ve brought you only pain and dishonor.”
only	By it he divined something of what Lassiter’s revelation meant to Bess, but he knew he could only faintly understand.
only	“It does look bright. Oh, if we were only across that wide, open waste of sage!”
only	Only when Lassiter moved swiftly to execute her bidding did Venters’s clogged brain grasp at literal meanings.
only	“I’ve lost my strength. I can’t do—anything. This is hell for me! Can’t you see that? I’ve ruined you—it was through me you lost all. You’ve only Black Star and Night left. You love these horses. Oh! I know how you must love them now! And—you’re trying to give them to me. To help me out of Utah! To save the girl I love!”
only	“I’m beyond words. Only —I understand. And I’ll take the blacks.”
only	Venters feared only an accident to Black Star or Night, and skilful riding would mitigate possibility of that.

only	He had, however, only thought of the light weight Black Star was carrying and of his superior speed; he saw now that the black was being ridden as never before, except when Jerry Card lost the race to Wrangle.
only	And fame had rivaled him with only one rider, and that was the slender girl who now swung so easily with Black Star's stride.
only	Bess gazed only straight ahead.
only	The little hamlet, Glaze, a white and green patch in the vast waste of purple, lay miles down a slope much like the Cottonwoods slope, only this descended to the west.
only	"Listen!... Maybe I only imagined—Ah!"
only	"I'll go. I only mentioned that chance of my not comin' back. I'm pretty sure to come."
only	"But I reckon I won't. Only , I'll say that mercy an' goodness, such as is in you, though they're the grand things in human nature, can't be lived up to on this Utah border. Life's hell out here. You think—or you used to think—that your religion made this life heaven. Mebbe them scales on your eyes has dropped now. Jane, I wouldn't have you no different, an' that's why I'm going to try to hide you somewhere in this Pass. I'd like to hide many more women, for I've come to see there are more like you among your people. An' I'd like you to see jest how hard an' cruel this border life is. It's bloody. You'd think churches an' churchmen would make it better. They make it worse. You give names to things—bishops, elders, ministers, Mormonism, duty, faith, glory. You dream—or you're driven mad. I'm a man, an' I know. I name fanatics, followers, blind women, oppressors, thieves, ranchers, rustlers, riders. An' we have—what you've lived through these last months. It can't be helped. But it can't last always. An' remember this—some day the border'll be better, cleaner, for the ways of men like Lassiter!"
only	" Only with you!"
only	"Look back, Jane, look back. Three—four miles we've come across this valley, en' no Tull yet in sight. Only a few more miles!"
only	Perhaps he was only husbanding his strength.
only	As Jane Withersteen gazed down that long incline, walled in by crumbling

	cliffs, awaiting only the slightest jar to make them fall asunder, she saw Tull appear at the bottom and begin to climb.
suddenly	She was grasping the truth, when suddenly there came, in inward constriction, a hardening of gentle forces within her breast.
suddenly	The restless movements of Tull's men suddenly quieted down.
suddenly	And as it somehow reminded him of his prospect in life, so it suddenly resembled the woman near him, only in her there were greater beauty and peril, a mystery more unsolvable, and something nameless that numbed his heart and dimmed his eye.
suddenly	Into this peace and calm suddenly broke the high-keyed yelp of a coyote, and from far off in the darkness came the faint answering note of a trailing mate.
suddenly	Suddenly into its lower entrance flashed a bay horse.
suddenly	Suddenly Ring growled low.
suddenly	She suddenly opened eyes that transfixed Venters.
suddenly	Suddenly a low, dull murmur assailed his ears.
suddenly	Suddenly Jane's concentrated gaze caught a fleeting glint.
suddenly	It was then that Jane, suddenly understanding Lassiter's feat stared and gasped at the riding of this intrepid man.
suddenly	When Jerd led out this slender, beautifully built horse Lassiter suddenly became all eyes.
suddenly	These "sage-freighters," as they were called, hauled grain and flour and merchandise from Sterling, and Jane laughed suddenly in the midst of her humility at the thought that they were her property, as was one of the three stores for which they freighted goods.
suddenly	The mournful earnestness of her gaze suddenly shone with unutterable gratitude and wonder.
suddenly	And as suddenly Venters found her eyes beautiful as he had never seen or felt beauty.

suddenly	Venters turned out of the gorge, and suddenly paused stock-still, astounded at the scene before him.
suddenly	Venters laughed, and suddenly caught himself with a quick breath and felt again the little shock.
suddenly	Then with the wind soon came a shade and a darkening, and suddenly the valley was gray.
suddenly	Like some delicate thing suddenly exposed to blasting heat, the girl wilted; her head dropped, and into her white, wasted cheeks crept the red of shame.
suddenly	Then yawned, quite suddenly and wonderfully above him, the great cavern of the cliff-dwellers.
suddenly	It was as if she had been in a dead, hopeless clamp of inaction and feeling, and had been suddenly shot through and through with quivering animation.
suddenly	Suddenly she stepped swiftly to him, with a look and touch that drove from him any doubt of her quick intelligence or feeling.
suddenly	Yet as she thought of her great motive, of Tull, and of that other whose name she had schooled herself never to think of in connection with Milly Erne's avenger, she suddenly found she had no choice.
suddenly	What significance there was to her in the little girl's efforts to dislodge that heavy weapon! Jane Withersteen saw Fay's play and her beauty and her love as most powerful allies to her own woman's part in a game that suddenly had acquired a strange zest and a hint of danger.
suddenly	That night in the moonlit grove she summoned all her courage and, turning suddenly in the path, she faced Lassiter and leaned close to him, so that she touched him and her eyes looked up to his.
suddenly	And Jane Withersteen suddenly suffered a paralyzing affront to her consciousness of reverence by some strange, irresistible twist of thought wherein she saw this Bishop as a man.
suddenly	When he appeared it was suddenly and noiselessly out of the dark shadow of the grove.

suddenly	Then she made deliberate mention of a book in which she kept records of all pertaining to her stock, and she walked slowly toward the table, and when near the door she suddenly whirled and thrust it open.
suddenly	Not only did Lassiter turn white—not only did he grow tense, not only did he lose his coolness, but also he suddenly , violently, hungrily took her into his arms and crushed her to his breast.
suddenly	Suddenly the dense, black vault overhead split asunder to a blue-white, dazzling streak of lightning.
suddenly	Suddenly , as from roots of poisonous fire, flamed up the forgotten truth concerning her.
suddenly	Suddenly they drooped, her head fell to her knees, her hands flew to her hot cheeks.
suddenly	Suddenly he pulled his sombrero down over his bandaged head and, swinging his gun-sheaths round in front, he stepped into the alcove.
suddenly	Almost overwhelming relief surged through her, a feeling as akin to joy as any she could have been capable of in those gloomy hours of shadow, and one that suddenly stunned her with the significance of what Lassiter had come to mean to her.
suddenly	His hands were gently holding hers, and his eyes— suddenly she could no longer look into them.
suddenly	Suddenly Venters discovered that one of the two men last noted was riding Jane Withersteen’s horse Bells—the beautiful bay racer she had given to Lassiter.
suddenly	But in that red haze he saw, or seemed to see, Black Star suddenly riderless and with broken gait.
suddenly	Suddenly Venters descried a frog-like shape clinging to Wrangle’s neck.
suddenly	Suddenly it dropped, and he seemed to glide aside, to pass out of Venters’s sight.
suddenly	That silence suddenly broke to the scrape and crash of Oldring’s chair as he rose; and then, while he passed, a great gloomy figure, again the thronged room stilled in silence yet deeper.

suddenly	She had reached out for him when suddenly , as she saw him closely, something checked her, and as quickly all her joy fled, and with it her color, leaving her pale and trembling.
suddenly	He saw them flare in amaze, in gladness, with love, then suddenly strain in terrible effort of will.
suddenly	Suddenly he grasped Jane with an iron hand, and, turning his face from her gaze, he strode with her from the knoll.
suddenly	demanded Lassiter, suddenly looming darkly over her.
suddenly	“Lassiter, I do love you! It’s leaped out of my agony. It comes suddenly with a terrible blow of truth. You are a man! I never knew it till now. Some wonderful change came to me when you buckled on these guns and showed that gray, awful face. I loved you then. All my life I’ve loved, but never as now. No woman can love like a broken woman. If it were not for one thing—just one thing—and yet! I can’t speak it—I’d glory in your manhood—the lion in you that means to slay for me. Believe me—and spare Dyer. Be merciful—great as it’s in you to be great.... Oh, listen and believe—I have nothing, but I’m a woman—a beautiful woman, Lassiter—a passionate, loving woman—and I love you! Take me—hide me in some wild place—and love me and mend my broken heart. Spare him and take me away.”
suddenly	Her eyes suddenly darkened and dilated.
suddenly	Lassiter suddenly moved forward, and with the beautiful light on his face now strangely luminous, he looked at Jane and Venters and then let his soft, bright gaze rest on Bess.
suddenly	And suddenly blinded, choked by his emotions, he turned from her also.
suddenly	How easily, gracefully, naturally, Bess sat her saddle! She could ride! Suddenly Venters remembered she had said she could ride.
suddenly	Suddenly Venters was startled by a low, rumbling roar—so low that it was like the roar in a sea-shell.
suddenly	Suddenly from the mouth of the canyon just beyond her rang out a clear, sharp report of a rifle.
suddenly	Jane clasped her arms suddenly strong.

suddenly	Then, as if suddenly instinct with life, it leaped hurtlingly down to alight on the steep incline, to bound more swiftly into the air, to gather momentum, to plunge into the lofty leaning crag below.
slowly	“I reckon,” replied the rider, slowly .
slowly	Venters wheeled in his chair to regard Lassiter in amazement, and Jane slowly raised herself in white, still wonder.
slowly	The rider did not bridle him, but walked beside him, leading him by touch of hand and together they passed slowly into the shade of the cottonwoods.
slowly	“Milly Erne’s story? Well, Lassiter, I’ll tell you what I know. Milly Erne had been in Cottonwoods years when I first arrived there, and most of what I tell you happened before my arrival. I got to know her pretty well. She was a slip of a woman, and crazy on religion. I conceived an idea that I never mentioned—I thought she was at heart more Gentile than Mormon. But she passed as a Mormon, and certainly she had the Mormon woman’s locked lips. You know, in every Mormon village there are women who seem mysterious to us, but about Milly there was more than the ordinary mystery. When she came to Cottonwoods she had a beautiful little girl whom she loved passionately. Milly was not known openly in Cottonwoods as a Mormon wife. That she really was a Mormon wife I have no doubt. Perhaps the Mormon’s other wife or wives would not acknowledge Milly. Such things happen in these villages. Mormon wives wear yokes, but they get jealous. Well, whatever had brought Milly to this country—love or madness of religion—she repented of it. She gave up teaching the village school. She quit the church. And she began to fight Mormon upbringing for her baby girl. Then the Mormons put on the screws— slowly , as is their way. At last the child disappeared. ‘Lost’ was the report. The child was stolen, I know that. So do you. That wrecked Milly Erne. But she lived on in hope. She became a slave. She worked her heart and soul and life out to get back her child. She never heard of it again. Then she sank.... I can see her now, a frail thing, so transparent you could almost look through her—white like ashes—and her eyes!... Her eyes have always haunted me. She had one real friend—Jane Withersteen. But Jane couldn’t mend a broken heart, and Milly died.”
slowly	They halted afar off, squared away to look, came slowly forward with whinnies for their mistress, and doubtful snorts for the strangers and their horses.
slowly	“Well, it’s not usual for the night shift to ride in so late,” replied Venters, slowly , and his glance sought Lassiter’s.

slowly	He rode along the edge of the stream which wound toward the western end of the slowly looming mounds of stone.
slowly	Ring sniffed the air, turned slowly in his tracks with a whine, and then growled.
slowly	Venters cunningly sank, slowly trying to merge into sage-brush.
slowly	The Masked Rider huddled over his pommel slowly swaying to one side, and then, with a faint, strange cry, slipped out of the saddle.
slowly	Slowly she relaxed and sank partly back.
slowly	The gentle smile that she liked, which made of him another person, slowly overspread his face.
slowly	He dropped his head, and, slowly lengthening, he bent one foreleg, then the other, and sank to his knees.
slowly	Bringing her field-glass into use, she moved it slowly from left to right, which action swept the whole herd into range.
slowly	It swung slowly and stubbornly, yet surely, and gradually assumed a long, beautiful curve of moving white.
slowly	“Why, let’s see,” he replied, slowly .
slowly	Slowly split from the parent rock by the weathering process, and carved and sculptured by ages of wind and rain, they waited their moment.
slowly	It tipped a little downward and hung balancing for a long instant, slowly returned, rocked slightly, groaned, and settled back to its former position.
slowly	Here he knelt and deposited the girl gently, feet first and slowly laid her out full length.
slowly	“I shot you,” he said, slowly , “and I want you to get well so I shall not have killed a woman. But—for your own sake, too—”
slowly	He spoke slowly , choosing his words carefully, and he essayed a perfectly casual manner, and pretended to be busy assorting pieces of pottery.

slowly	Day by day Venters watched the white of her face slowly change to brown, and the wasted cheeks fill out by imperceptible degrees.
slowly	asked Bess, slowly .
slowly	It appeared that the mother, from the time of her arrival at Withersteen House, had relaxed and was slowly losing her hold on life.
slowly	"It's Mrs. Larkin's little girl," replied Jane, slowly .
slowly	If that secret, intangible power closed its coils round her again, if that great invisible hand moved here and there and everywhere, slowly paralyzing her with its mystery and its inconceivable sway over her affairs, then she would know beyond doubt that it was not chance, nor jealousy, nor intimidation, nor ministerial wrath at her revolt, but a cold and calculating policy thought out long before she was born, a dark, immutable will of whose empire she and all that was hers was but an atom.
slowly	Then she made deliberate mention of a book in which she kept records of all pertaining to her stock, and she walked slowly toward the table, and when near the door she suddenly whirled and thrust it open.
slowly	"That white stuff was bone," said Venters, slowly .
slowly	Bess stared as if she had not heard aright, slowly blushed, and completely lost her poise in happy confusion.
slowly	"Hello, Venters! I'm makin' you a visit," said Lassiter, slowly .
slowly	"You wild devil," said Venters, as he slowly pulled Wrangle up.
slowly	After looking to his rifle and ascertaining that it was in working order, he watched, and as he watched, slowly the force of a bitter fierceness, long dormant, gathered ready to flame into life.
slowly	Slowly Wrangle closed the gap down to a quarter of a mile, and crept closer and closer.
slowly	Slowly Oldring sank to his knees, and the hand, dragging at the gun, fell away.
slowly	Slowly the green of Cottonwoods sank behind the slope, and at last a

	wavering line of purple sage met the blue of sky.
slowly	He heard himself repeating: “OLDRING, BESS IS ALIVE! BUT SHE’S DEAD TO YOU,” and he felt himself jerk, and his ears throbbed to the thunder of a gun, and he saw the giant sink slowly to his knees.
slowly	All day he rode slowly and cautiously up the Pass, taking time to peer around corners, to pick out hard ground and grassy patches, and to make sure there was no one in pursuit.
slowly	Venters slowly let go of her.
slowly	The low voice ceased, and Lassiter slowly turned his sombrero round and round, and appeared to be counting the silver ornaments on the band.
slowly	An exquisite rose flush—a glow—shone from her face as she slowly began to rise from her knees.
slowly	It grew all the time, though very slowly .
slowly	And, gazing forward at the dogs, at Lassiter’s limping horse, at the blood on his face, at the rocks growing nearer, last at Fay’s golden hair, the ice left her veins, and slowly , strangely, she gained hold of strength that she believed would see her to the safety Lassiter promised.
slowly	He moved slowly .
presently	“I’ll tell you presently ,” replied Tull.
presently	Presently as something like calmness returned, she went to Lassiter’s weary horse.
presently	“Ma’am,” he began, presently , “I reckon your kindness of heart makes you overlook things. Perhaps I ain’t well known hereabouts, but back up North there’s Mormons who’d rest uneasy in their graves at the idea of me sittin’ to table with you.”
presently	Presently he descried two mounted men riding toward him.
presently	Presently a low jumble of rocks loomed up darkly somewhat to his right, and, turning that way, he whistled softly.
presently	He saw him, presently , a little way off in the sage, and went to fetch him.

presently	“I reckon so. There’ll be hell down there, presently. ”
presently	he exclaimed, presently , in husky accents.
presently	Soon Jane left the trail and rode into the sage, and presently she dismounted and threw her bridle.
presently	Venters began presently to believe that the rifle reports had not penetrated into the recesses of the canyon, and felt safe for the immediate present.
presently	Presently Venters went out to the opening, caught the horse and, leading him through the thicket, unsaddled him and tied him with a long halter.
presently	“She’ll go, presently, ” he said, “and be out of agony—thank God!”
presently	“I reckon you’ll hear no more such talk from me,” Lassiter went on, presently.
presently	Lassiter was not long in catching up, and presently they were riding side by side.
presently	Presently she raised it to greet Lassiter with something like a smile.
presently	Presently , as the head of the white line reached a point opposite to where Jane stood, Lassiter spurred his black into a run.
presently	Presently , as logical thought returned, her appeal confirmed his first impression—that she was more unfortunate than bad—and he experienced a sensation of gladness.
presently	But it presently seemed singular why this rabbit, that might have escaped downward, chose to ascend the slope.
presently	Presently he snapped at one end of the rabbit and refused to let go.
presently	It flashed over him that he had made a mistake which presently she would explain.
presently	Here the woods began to show open glades and brooks running down from the slope, and presently he emerged from shade into the sunshine

	of a meadow.
presently	“Hope it’ll hold water,” he said, presently .
presently	Presently he hit upon the plan of going while she was asleep.
presently	Presently she appeared and walked under the spruce.
presently	These held her for some time, but presently , true to childish fickleness, she left off playing with them to look for something else.
presently	So these warm July days were free of worry, and soon Jane hoped she had passed the crisis; and for her to hope was presently to trust, and then to believe.
presently	Lassiter asked, presently halting before her.
presently	Presently Jane began to act her little part, to laugh and play with Fay, to talk of horses and cattle to Lassiter.
presently	Presently she heard him speaking low at first, then in louder accents emphasized by the thumping of his rifle on the stones.
presently	Out of it all he presently evolved these things: he must go to Cottonwoods; he must bring supplies back to Surprise Valley; he must cultivate the soil and raise corn and stock, and, most imperative of all, he must decide the future of the girl who loved him and whom he loved.
presently	“Whoa, Wrangle, old boy! Come down. Easy now. So—so—so. You’re home, old boy, and presently you can have a drink of water you’ll remember.”
presently	“No one rider—could hev done more—Miss Withersteen,” he went on, presently .
presently	Moreover, it presently developed that Lassiter had returned in a mood of singular sadness and preoccupation.
presently	“Son, tell me all about this,” presently said Lassiter as he seated himself on a stone and wiped his moist brow.
presently	“Now—what’s wrong with you? You’re keeping something from me. Well, I’ve got a secret, too, and I intend to tell it presently .”

presently	He followed the sorrel into the narrowing split between the walls, and presently had to desist because he could not see a foot in advance.
presently	Presently Venters remembered positively that Jerry had been leading Night on the right-hand side of the trail.
presently	Black Star presently labored to his feet with a heave and a groan, shook himself, and snorted for water.
presently	<p>“Thet’s my bad arm. Sure it was Oldrin’. What the hell’s wrong with you, anyway? Venters, I tell you somethin’s wrong. You’re whiter ‘n a sheet. You can’t be scared of the rustler. I don’t believe you’ve got a scare in you. Wal, now, jest let me talk. You know I like to talk, an’ if I’m slow I allus git there sometime. As I said, Lassiter was talkie’ chummy with Oldrin’. There wasn’t no hard feelin’s. An’ the gang wasn’t payin’ no pertic’lar attention. But like a cat watchin’ a mouse I hed my eyes on them two fellers. It was strange to me, thet confab. I’m gittin’ to think a lot, fer a feller who doesn’t know much. There’s been some queer deals lately an’ this seemed to me the queerest. These men stood to the bar alone, an’ so close their big gun-hilts butted together. I seen Oldrin’ was some surprised at first, an’ Lassiter was cool as ice. They talked, an’ presently at somethin’ Lassiter said the rustler bawled out a curse, an’ then he jest fell up against the bar, an’ sagged there. The gang in the saloon looked around an’ laughed, an’ thet’s about all. Finally Oldrin’ turned, and it was easy to see somethin’ hed shook him. Yes, sir, thet big rustler—you know he’s as broad as he is long, an’ the powerfulest build of a man—yes, sir, the nerve had been taken out of him. Then, after a little, he began to talk an’ said a lot to Lassiter, an’ by an’ by it didn’t take much of an eye to see thet Lassiter was gittin’ hit hard. I never seen him anyway but cooler ‘n ice—till then. He seemed to be hit harder ‘n Oldrin’, only he didn’t roar out thet way. He jest kind of sunk in, an’ looked an’ looked, an’ he didn’t see a livin’ soul in thet saloon. Then he sort of come to, an’ shakin’ hands—mind you, shakin’ hands with Oldrin’—he went out. I couldn’t help thinkin’ how easy even a boy could hev dropped the great gun-man then!... Wal, the rustler stood at the bar fer a long time, en’ he was seein’ things far off, too; then he come to an’ roared fer whisky, an’ gulped a drink thet was big enough to drown me.”</p>
presently	He knew what she would do presently ; she would make some magnificent amend for her anger; she would give some manifestation of her love; probably all in a moment, as she had loved Milly Erne, so would she love Elizabeth Erne.
presently	It struck Venters, presently , after he had glanced up from time to time, that Bess was drawing away from him as he had expected.

presently	And presently they came to a dense thicket of slender trees, through which they passed to rich, green grass and water.
swiftly	The outgoing riders moved swiftly , came sharply into sight as they topped a ridge to show wild and black above the horizon, and then passed down, dimming into the purple of the sage.
swiftly	Keeping close to the edge of the cottonwoods, he went swiftly and silently westward.
swiftly	For about this man there was mystery, he seldom rode through the village, and when he did ride through it was swiftly ; riders seldom met by day on the sage, but wherever he rode there always followed deeds as dark and mysterious as the mask he wore.
swiftly	Swiftly yet watchfully he made his way through the canyon to the oval and out to the cattle trail.
swiftly	He smiled as if he meant that bad news came swiftly enough without being presaged by speech.
swiftly	The long, white, bobbing line of steers streaked swiftly through the sage, and a funnel-shaped dust-cloud arose at a low angle.
swiftly	The dull rumble of thousands of hoofs deepened into continuous low thunder, and as the steers swept swiftly closer the thunder became a heavy roll.
swiftly	Therefore he climbed swiftly .
swiftly	The next ascent took grip of fingers as well as toes, but he climbed steadily, swiftly , to reach the projecting corner, and slipped around it.
swiftly	Venters waited no longer, and turned swiftly to retrace his steps.
swiftly	Then followed scraping of claws and pattering of feet; and out of the gray gloom below him swiftly climbed the dogs to reach his side and pass beyond.
swiftly	Suddenly she stepped swiftly to him, with a look and touch that drove from him any doubt of her quick intelligence or feeling.
swiftly	Swiftly , resolutely he put out of mind all of her life except what had been

	spent with him.
swiftly	Venters trembled, and then swiftly turned his gaze from her face—from her eyes.
swiftly	“Yes, I had to speak to you,” he said, swiftly .
swiftly	The clouds spread over the valley, rolling swiftly and low, and twilight faded into a sweeping darkness.
swiftly	Then the storm burst with a succession of ropes and streaks and shafts of lightning, playing continuously, filling the valley with a broken radiance; and the cracking shots followed each other swiftly till the echoes blended in one fearful, deafening crash.
swiftly	Thus guided, Venters swiftly gazed ahead to make out a dust-clouded, dark group of horsemen riding down the slope.
swiftly	The fleeing rider presented a broad target for a rifle, but he was moving swiftly forward and bobbing up and down.
swiftly	Then Venters’s gaze passed to the tables, and swiftly it swept over the hard-featured gamesters, to alight upon the huge, shaggy, black head of the rustler chief.
swiftly	Bounding swiftly away, Venters fled around the corner, across the street, and, leaping a hedge, he ran through yard, orchard, and garden to the sage.
swiftly	He strode swiftly , turning from time to time to scan the slope for riders.
swiftly	Was she Delilah? Swiftly , conscious of only one motive—refusal to see this man called craven by his enemies—she rose, and with blundering fingers buckled the belt round his waist where it belonged.
swiftly	She watched the shadows lengthen down the slope; she felt the cool west wind sweeping by from the rear; and she wondered at low, yellow clouds sailing swiftly over her and beyond.
swiftly	Only when Lassiter moved swiftly to execute her bidding did Venters’s clogged brain grasp at literal meanings.
swiftly	Black Star and Night, answering to spur, swept swiftly westward along the

	white, slow-rising, sage-bordered trail.
swiftly	Then, as if suddenly instinct with life, it leaped hurtlingly down to alight on the steep incline, to bound more swiftly into the air, to gather momentum, to plunge into the lofty leaning crag below.
forever	“Venters, will you leave Cottonwoods at once and forever ?”
forever	But it was not these which held her, rather the intensity of his gaze, a strained weariness, a piercing wistfulness of keen, gray sight, as if the man was forever looking for that which he never found.
forever	Crags and pinnacles, splintered cliffs, and leaning shafts and monuments, would have thundered down to block forever the outlet to Deception Pass.
forever	Balancing Rock loomed huge, cold in the gray light of dawn, a thing without life, yet it spoke silently to Venters: “I am waiting to plunge down, to shatter and crash, roar and boom, to bury your trail, and close forever the outlet to Deception Pass!”
forever	Transformed in the shadowy light, it took shape and dimensions of a spectral god waiting—waiting for the moment to hurl himself down upon the tottering walls and close forever the outlet to Deception Pass.
forever	She kept close to him whenever opportunity afforded; and she was forever playfully, yet passionately underneath the surface, fighting him for possession of the great black guns.
forever	So bitter certainty claimed her at last, and trust fled Withersteen House and fled forever .
forever	Like Balancing Rock, which waited darkly over the steep gorge, ready to close forever the outlet to Deception Pass, that nameless thing, as certain yet intangible as fate, must fall and close forever all doubts and fears of the future.
forever	“Look at this rock. It’s balanced here—balanced perfectly. You know I told you the cliff-dwellers cut the rock, and why. But they’re gone and the rock waits. Can’t you see—feel how it waits here? I moved it once, and I’ll never dare again. A strong heave would start it. Then it would fall and bang, and smash that crag, and jar the walls, and close forever the outlet to Deception Pass!”

forever	“Ah! When you come back I’ll steal up here and push and push with all my might to roll the rock and close forever the outlet to the Pass!”
forever	Nevertheless that could not forever avail against secret attack.
forever	“ Forever? ”
forever	“ Forever! ”
forever	“But Blake—poor Blake! He’s gone forever! ... Be prepared, Jane.”
forever	“You’d close the outlet forever! ”
forever	One flashing thought tore in hot temptation through his mind—why not climb up into the gorge, roll Balancing Rock down the trail, and close forever the outlet to Deception Pass? “That was the beast in me—showing his teeth!”
forever	She rode out of the court beside Judkins, through the grove, across the wide lane into the sage, and she realized that she was leaving Withersteen House forever , and she did not look back.
forever	She did not seem to think of the past of what she left forever , but of the color and mystery and wildness of the sage-slope leading down to Deception Pass, and of the future.
forever	As in a dream when he felt himself falling yet knew he would never fall, so he saw this long-standing thunderbolt of the little stone-men plunge down to close forever the outlet to Deception Pass.
forever	“ Forever, ” replied Jane.
forever	The outlet to Deception Pass closed forever .
forward	Jane impulsively stepped forward .
forward	With a wave of his hand, enjoining silence, Tull stepped forward in such a way that he concealed Venters.
forward	They halted afar off, squared away to look, came slowly forward with whinnies for their mistress, and doubtful snorts for the strangers and their horses.

forward	The rustler bent forward , as if keenly peering ahead.
forward	It sagged at each forward movement he made, but he balanced himself lightly during the interval when he lacked the support of a taut rope.
forward	As he stepped forward with a half-formed thought that she was absorbed in watching for his return, she turned her head and saw him.
forward	Venters bent forward swinging with the horse, and gripped his rifle.
forward	Venters raised his rifle, ready to take snap shots, and waited for favorable opportunity when Bells was out of line with the forward horses.
forward	The fleeing rider presented a broad target for a rifle, but he was moving swiftly forward and bobbing up and down.
forward	Venters leaned forward to put his hand on Wrangle's neck, then backward to put it on his flank.
forward	And now, with a ringing, wild snort, he seemed to double up in muscular convulsions and to shoot forward with an impetus that almost unseated Venters.
forward	Jerry Card was bent forward with his teeth fast in the front of Wrangle's nose! Venters saw it, and there flashed over him a memory of this trick of a few desperate riders.
forward	whispered Venters, stepping forward and throwing up the rifle.
forward	Oldring kicked a chair out of his way and lunged forward with a stamp of heavy boot that jarred the floor.
forward	"Man—why—didn't—you—wait? Bess—was—" Oldring's whisper died under his beard, and with a heavy lurch he fell forward .
forward	Was that only the vitality of him—that awful light in the eyes—only the hard-dying life of a tremendously powerful brute? A broken whisper, strange as death: "MAN—WHY—DIDN'T—YOU WAIT! BESS—WAS—" And Oldring plunged face forward , dead.
forward	Lassiter suddenly moved forward , and with the beautiful light on his face now strangely luminous, he looked at Jane and Venters and then let his soft, bright gaze rest on Bess.

forward	Venters leaned forward in passionate remorse.
forward	She looked neither back nor at the running riders, and bent forward over Black Star's neck and studied the ground ahead.
forward	"It's something sweet to look forward to. Bess, it's like all the future looks to me."
forward	And, gazing forward at the dogs, at Lassiter's limping horse, at the blood on his face, at the rocks growing nearer, last at Fay's golden hair, the ice left her veins, and slowly, strangely, she gained hold of strength that she believed would see her to the safety Lassiter promised.
forward	Looking forward , she saw more valley to the right, and to the left a towering cliff.
likely	"It might be. But I think not—that fellow was coming in. One of your riders, more likely . Yes, I see him clearly now. And there's another."
likely	"By this time the riders of the night shift know what happened to-day. But Lassiter will likely keep out of their way."
likely	"What was she to Oldring? Rustlers don't have wives nor sisters nor daughters. She was bad—that's all. But somehow... well, she may not have willingly become the companion of rustlers. That prayer of hers to God for mercy!... Life is strange and cruel. I wonder if other members of Oldring's gang are women? Likely enough. But what was his game? Oldring's Mask Rider! A name to make villagers hide and lock their doors. A name credited with a dozen murders, a hundred forays, and a thousand stealings of cattle. What part did the girl have in this? It may have served Oldring to create mystery."
likely	"Miss Withersteen, let me get what boys I can gather, an' hold the white herd. It's on the slope now, not ten miles out—three thousand head, an' all steers. They're wild, an' likely to stampede at the pop of a jack-rabbit's ears. We'll camp right with them, en' try to hold them."
likely	"There's some specks an' dust way off toward the village. Mebbe that's Judkins an' his boys. It ain't likely he'll get here in time to help. You'd better hold Black Star here on this high ridge."
likely	He regretted the loss of her cattle; he assured her that the vigilantes which had been organized would soon rout the rustlers; when that had

	been accomplished her riders would likely return to her.
likely	It was fear of being alone, due, he concluded, most likely to her weakened condition.
likely	Had the men who hounded her hidden in her grove, taken to the rifle to rid her of Lassiter, her last friend? It was probable—it was likely .
likely	“I don’t know where Jerb is. Bolted, most likely ,” replied Lassiter, as he took her through the stone door.
likely	He had to grow into the habit of passing from one dreamy pleasure to another, like a bee going from flower to flower in the valley, and he found this wandering habit likely to extend to his labors.
likely	Still she would not have been likely to scream at sight of either; and the barking of the dogs was ominous.
likely	Instead of hunting cattle tracks he had likely spent a goodly portion of his life tracking men.
likely	“Tull wasn’t around when I broke loose. By now he’s likely on our trail with his riders.”
likely	“Venters, ride straight on up the slope,” Lassiter was saying, “an if you don’t meet any riders keep on till you’re a few miles from the village, then cut off in the sage an’ go round to the trail. But you’ll most likely meet riders with Tull. Jest keep right on till you’re jest out of gunshot an’ then make your cut-off into the sage. They’ll ride after you, but it won’t be no use. You can ride, an’ Bess can ride. When you’re out of reach turn on round to the west, an’ hit the trail somewhere. Save the hosses all you can, but don’t be afraid. Black Star and Night are good for a hundred miles before sundown, if you have to push them. You can get to Sterlin’ by night if you want. But better make it along about to-morrow mornin’. When you get through the notch on the Glaze trail, swing to the right. You’ll be able to see both Glaze an’ Stone Bridge. Keep away from them villages. You won’t run no risk of meetin’ any of Oldrin’s rustlers from Sterlin’ on. You’ll find water in them deep hollows north of the Notch. There’s an old trail there, not much used, en’ it leads to Sterlin’. That’s your trail. An’ one thing more. If Tull pushes you—or keeps on persistent-like, for a few miles—jest let the blacks out an’ lose him an’ his riders.”
likely	“Son, it ain’t likely —it ain’t likely . Well, Bess Oldrin’—Masked Rider—Elizabeth Erne—now you climb on Black Star. I’ve heard you could ride. Well, every rider loves a good horse. An’, lass, there never was but one

	that could beat Black Star.”
likely	“ Likely enough. But that ain’t my game. An’ I’d like to know, in case I don’t come back, what you’ll do.”
likely	“I reckon. But, Jane, we’ve still got the game in our hands. They’re ridin’ tired hosses. Venters likely give them a chase. He wouldn’t forget that. An’ we’ve fresh hosses.”
surely	“Tull would be— surely .”
surely	“To-morrow surely . I’ll watch for Lassiter and ride in with him.”
surely	For beyond a mile of the bare, hummocky rock began the valley of sage, and the mouths of canyons, one of which surely was another gateway into the pass.
surely	Otherwise she would surely not have lived so long.
surely	It swung slowly and stubbornly, yet surely , and gradually assumed a long, beautiful curve of moving white.
surely	“You’re so good. Since my husband’s been gone what would have become of Fay and me but for you? It was about Fay that I wanted to speak to you. This time I thought surely I’d die, and I was worried about Fay. Well, I’ll be around all right shortly, but my strength’s gone and I won’t live long. So I may as well speak now. You remember you’ve been asking me to let you take Fay and bring her up as your daughter?”
surely	He reached it and the protruding shelf, and then, entering the black shade of the notch, he moved blindly but surely to the place where he had left the saddle-bags.
surely	“I—I want you to feel that... you see—we’ve been thrown together—and—and I want to help you—not hurt you. I thought life had been cruel to me, but when I think of yours I feel mean and little for my complaining. Anyway, I was a lonely outcast. And now!... I don’t see very clearly what it all means. Only we are here—together. We’ve got to stay here, for long, surely till you are well. But you’ll never go back to Oldring. And I’m sure helping you will help me, for I was sick in mind. There’s something now for me to do. And if I can win back your strength—then get you away, out of this wild country—help you somehow to a happier life—just think how good that’ll be for me!”

surely	“But, Lassiter, I would give freely—all I own to avert this—this wretched thing. If I gave—that would leave me with faith still. Surely my—my churchmen think of my soul? If I lose my trust in them—”
surely	“I did, surely ,” replied he.
surely	Wrangle it was surely , but shaggy and wild-eyed, and sage-streaked, with dust-caked lather staining his flanks.
surely	“But, Jane, maybe Lassiter’s hint is extreme. Bad as your prospects are, you’ll surely never come to the running point.”
surely	He had certainly brought a hundred times more than he had gone for; enough, surely , for years, perhaps to make permanent home in the valley.
surely	Five riders, surely rustlers, were left.
surely	It spoke so surely of the facts that neither Card nor the rustler actually knew their danger.
surely	He was now seventy miles from Cottonwoods, and, he believed, close to the canyon where the cattle trail must surely turn off and go down into the Pass.
surely	“Wait! Don’t go! Oh, hear a last word!... May a more just and merciful God than the God I was taught to worship judge me—forgive me—save me! For I can no longer keep silent!... Lassiter, in pleading for Dyer I’ve been pleading more for my father. My father was a Mormon master, close to the leaders of the church. It was my father who sent Dyer out to proselyte. It was my father who had the blue-ice eye and the beard of gold. It was my father you got trace of in the past years. Truly, Dyer ruined Milly Erne—dragged her from her home—to Utah—to Cottonwoods. But it was for my father! If Milly Erne was ever wife of a Mormon that Mormon was my father! I never knew—never will know whether or not she was a wife. Blind I may be, Lassiter—fanatically faithful to a false religion I may have been but I know justice, and my father is beyond human justice. Surely he is meeting just punishment—somewhere. Always it has appalled me—the thought of your killing Dyer for my father’s sins. So I have prayed!”
softly	Presently a low jumble of rocks loomed up darkly somewhat to his right, and, turning that way, he whistled softly .
softly	“Ring—Whitie—come,” he called, softly .

softly	Venters heard a murmuring moan that one moment swelled to a pitch almost softly shrill and the next lulled to a low, almost inaudible sigh.
softly	Venters took the rabbit and, holding the dog near him, stole softly on.
softly	Venters went softly to look at the girl.
softly	Venters sought his own bed of fragrant boughs; and as he lay back, somehow grateful for the comfort and safety, the night seemed to steal away from him and he sank softly into intangible space and rest and slumber.
softly	With that he began to pace the court, and his silver spurs jangled musically, and the great gun-sheaths softly brushed against his leather chaps.
softly	“Lassiter is with Mrs. Larkin. She is ill. I’ll call him,” answered Jane, and going to the door she softly called for the rider.
softly	Murmuring water drew their steps down into a shallow shaded ravine where a brown brook brawled softly over mossy stones.
softly	As he spoke the west wind softly blew in his face.
softly	Always it brought softly to him strange, sweet tidings of far-off things.
softly	softly called Lassiter.
softly	Sunset and twilight gave way to night, and the canyon bird whistled its melancholy notes, and the wind sang softly in the cliffs, and the camp-fire blazed and burned down to red embers.
softly	Venters whistled softly , began a slow approach, and then called.
softly	“Yes, that’s Milly,” said Lassiter, softly .
softly	“Bern, the trip’s as good as made. It’ll be safe—easy. It’ll be a glorious ride,” she said, softly .
gradually	That year, 1871, had marked a change which had been gradually coming in the lives of the peace-loving Mormons of the border.

gradually	Wrangle settled gradually into an easy swinging canter, and Venters's thoughts, now that the rush and flurry of the start were past, and the long miles stretched before him, reverted to a calm reckoning of late singular coincidences.
gradually	Gradually the trees and caves and objects low down turned black, and this blackness moved up the walls till night enfolded the pass, while day still lingered above.
gradually	He heard the click of iron-shod hoofs on stone, the coarse laughter of men, and then voices gradually dying away.
gradually	A faint roar of trampling hoofs came to Jane's ears, and gradually swelled; low, rolling clouds of dust began to rise above the sage.
gradually	It swung slowly and stubbornly, yet surely, and gradually assumed a long, beautiful curve of moving white.
gradually	Movement went on in the outer circle, and that, too, gradually stilled.
gradually	Gradually it came to him that the distinction was not one he saw, but one he felt.
gradually	Gradually her confidence overcame his backwardness, and he had the temerity to stroke her golden curls with a great hand.
gradually	Daily he grew more gentle and kind, and gradually developed a quaintly merry mood.
gradually	Gradually , however, as Venters and Bess knelt low, holding the dogs, the beavers emerged to swim with logs and gnaw at cottonwoods and pat mud walls with their paddle-like tails, and, glossy and shiny in the sun, to go on with their strange, persistent industry.
gradually	Always it had been that, when he entered the court or the hall, she had experienced a distinctly sickening but gradually lessening shock at sight of the huge black guns swinging at his sides.
gradually	In his descent to the valley, Venters's emotion, roused to stirring pitch by the recital of his love story, quieted gradually , and in its place came a sober, thoughtful mood.

gradually	“I reckon you know. I wonder what goes on in Fay’s mind when she sees part of the truth with the wise eyes of a child, an’ wantin’ to know more, meets with strange falseness from you? Wait! You are false in a way, though you’re the best woman I ever knew. What I want to say is this. Fay has taken you’re pretendin’ to—to care for me for the thing it looks on the face. An’ her little formin’ mind asks questions. An’ the answers she gets are different from the looks of things. So she’ll grow up gradually takin’ on that falseness, an’ be like the rest of the women, an’ men, too. An’ the truth of this falseness to life is proved by your appearin’ to love me when you don’t. Things aren’t what they seem.”
gradually	Gradually , however, as time passed, it began to enlarge, to creep down the slope, to encroach upon the intervening distance.
perfectly	“True? Yes, perfectly true,” she answered.
perfectly	He called them Ring and Whitie; they were sheep-dogs, half collie, half deerhound, superb in build, perfectly trained.
perfectly	The first was soft dead black, the other glittering black, and they were perfectly matched in size, both being high and long-bodied, wide through the shoulders, with lithe, powerful legs.
perfectly	Yet, though she could not have spoken aloud all she meant, she was perfectly honest with herself.
perfectly	The cliff-dwellers, driven by dreaded enemies to this last stand, had cunningly cut the rock until it balanced perfectly , ready to be dislodged by strong hands.
perfectly	“No, people don’t starve easily. I’ve discovered that. You must lie perfectly still and rest and sleep—for days.”
perfectly	Very carefully he lifted her to see that the wound in her back had closed perfectly .
perfectly	He spoke slowly, choosing his words carefully, and he essayed a perfectly casual manner, and pretended to be busy assorting pieces of pottery.
perfectly	“We’re perfectly safe here, Bess.”
perfectly	It was only a gale, but as Venters listened, as his ears became accustomed to the fury and strife, out of it all or through it or above it pealed low and perfectly clear and persistently uniform a strange sound that had no

	counterpart in all the sounds of the elements.
perfectly	“Look at this rock. It’s balanced here—balanced perfectly . You know I told you the cliff-dwellers cut the rock, and why. But they’re gone and the rock waits. Can’t you see—feel how it waits here? I moved it once, and I’ll never dare again. A strong heave would start it. Then it would fall and bang, and smash that crag, and jar the walls, and close forever the outlet to Deception Pass!”
perfectly	“I reckon that’d be perfectly natural,” replied the rider.
perfectly	He espied Wrangle at the lower end of the cove and approached him in a perfectly natural manner.
scarcely	So that at twenty-eight she scarcely thought at all of her wonderful influence for good in the little community where her father had left her practically its beneficent landlord, but cared most for the dream and the assurance and the allurements of her beauty.
scarcely	Waiting had been his chief occupation for months, and he scarcely knew what he waited for unless it was the passing of the hours.
scarcely	He was now looking east at an immense round boxed corner of canyon down which tumbled a thin, white veil of water, scarcely twenty yards wide.
scarcely	That day he scarcely went from her side for a moment, except to run for fresh, cool water; and he did not eat.
scarcely	She was like a stripling of a boy; the bright, small head scarcely reached his shoulder.
scarcely	During all these waiting days Venters, with the exception of the afternoon when he had built the gate in the gorge, had scarcely gone out of sight of camp and never out of hearing.
scarcely	Venters exercised his usual care in the matter of hiding tracks from the outlet, yet it took him scarcely an hour to reach Oldring’s cattle.
scarcely	During all these visits he had scarcely a word to say, though he watched her and played absent-mindedly with Fay.
scarcely	She scarcely knew him, for he had changed the tattered garments, and she missed the dark beard and long hair.

scarcely	Upon her return toward the house she went by the lane to the stables, and she had scarcely entered the great open space with its corrals and sheds when she saw Lassiter hurriedly approaching.
scarcely	Then she had wandered through the deep grass, her tiny feet scarcely turning a fragile blade, and she had dreamed beside some old faded flowers.
scarcely	He scarcely caught her meaning, but the peculiar tone of her voice caused him instantly to rise, and he saw Bess on her knees before an open pack which he recognized as the one given him by Jane.
scarcely	Those few miles had scarcely warmed the black, but Venters wished to save him.
instantly	They were riding along the border of the sage, and instantly he knew the hoofs of the horses were muffled.
instantly	All that was calm and cool about Lassiter instantly vanished.
instantly	asked Jane, instantly worried.
instantly	Instantly , as if dazed, weakened, he released her.
instantly	Instantly an echo resounded with clapping crash.
instantly	Whereupon the resurging reality of the present, as if in irony of his wish, steeped him instantly in contending thought.
instantly	he exclaimed, instantly .
instantly	"I am his daughter," she replied, instantly .
instantly	"Where is he? Tell me— instantly ."
instantly	He scarcely caught her meaning, but the peculiar tone of her voice caused him instantly to rise, and he saw Bess on her knees before an open pack which he recognized as the one given him by Jane.
instantly	"You're right," replied Venters, instantly .

instantly	And instantly , as if by some divine insight, he knew himself in the remaking—tried, found wanting; but stronger, better, surer—and he wheeled to Jane Withersteen, eager, joyous, passionate, wild, exalted.
instantly	But instantly he returned alone, and half ran, half slipped down to her.
passionately	exclaimed Venters, passionately .
passionately	“Milly Erne’s story? Well, Lassiter, I’ll tell you what I know. Milly Erne had been in Cottonwoods years when I first arrived there, and most of what I tell you happened before my arrival. I got to know her pretty well. She was a slip of a woman, and crazy on religion. I conceived an idea that I never mentioned—I thought she was at heart more Gentile than Mormon. But she passed as a Mormon, and certainly she had the Mormon woman’s locked lips. You know, in every Mormon village there are women who seem mysterious to us, but about Milly there was more than the ordinary mystery. When she came to Cottonwoods she had a beautiful little girl whom she loved passionately . Milly was not known openly in Cottonwoods as a Mormon wife. That she really was a Mormon wife I have no doubt. Perhaps the Mormon’s other wife or wives would not acknowledge Milly. Such things happen in these villages. Mormon wives wear yokes, but they get jealous. Well, whatever had brought Milly to this country—love or madness of religion—she repented of it. She gave up teaching the village school. She quit the church. And she began to fight Mormon upbringing for her baby girl. Then the Mormons put on the screws—slowly, as is their way. At last the child disappeared. ‘Lost’ was the report. The child was stolen, I know that. So do you. That wrecked Milly Erne. But she lived on in hope. She became a slave. She worked her heart and soul and life out to get back her child. She never heard of it again. Then she sank.... I can see her now, a frail thing, so transparent you could almost look through her—white like ashes—and her eyes!... Her eyes have always haunted me. She had one real friend—Jane Withersteen. But Jane couldn’t mend a broken heart, and Milly died.”
passionately	Yet that was not because she was unwelcome; here she was gratefully received by the women, passionately by the children.
passionately	She kept close to him whenever opportunity afforded; and she was forever playfully, yet passionately underneath the surface, fighting him for possession of the great black guns.
passionately	Passionately devoted as she was to her religion, she had yet refused to marry a Mormon.
passionately	he cried, passionately .

passionately	Passionately and reproachfully and wonderingly Jane had refused even to entertain such an idea.
passionately	Jane found herself weeping passionately .
passionately	cried Venters, passionately .
passionately	With a passionately awakening start he grasped her hands and drew her close.
passionately	cried Venters, passionately .
passionately	went on Venters, passionately .
hurriedly	questioned Tull, hurriedly .
hurriedly	It was not now her usual half-conscious vain obsession that actuated her as she hurriedly changed her riding-dress to one of white, and then looked long at the stately form with its gracious contours, at the fair face with its strong chin and full firm lips, at the dark-blue, proud, and passionate eyes.
hurriedly	Hurriedly he glanced about for a place to hide.
hurriedly	The clank of iron hoofs upon the stone courtyard drew her hurriedly from her retirement.
hurriedly	"Look here, Carson," went on Jane, hurriedly , and now her cheeks were burning.
hurriedly	Hurriedly he approached, intending to advise her to lie down again, to tell her that perhaps she might overtax her strength.
hurriedly	queried Jane, hurriedly .
hurriedly	Upon her return toward the house she went by the lane to the stables, and she had scarcely entered the great open space with its corrals and sheds when she saw Lassiter hurriedly approaching.
hurriedly	He said good-by to Bess in a voice gentle and somewhat broken, and turned hurriedly away.

hurriedly	“I know—I remember. But I never thought—” he went on, hurriedly , huskily.
hurriedly	asked Jane, hurriedly glancing round the shady knoll.
hurriedly	Hurriedly he strapped on the saddle-bags, gave quick glance to girths and cinches and stirrups, then leaped astride.
finally	Perhaps Oldring had another range farther on up the pass, and from there drove the cattle to distant Utah towns where he was little known But Venters came finally to doubt this.
finally	And she tossed there while her fury burned and burned, and finally burned itself out.
finally	Finally he surmounted it, surprised to find the walls still several hundred feet high, and a narrow gorge leading down on the other side.
finally	And through the watches of that sleepless night Jane Withersteen, in fear and sorrow and doubt, came finally to believe that if she must throw herself into Lassiter’s arms to make him abide by “Thou shalt not kill!”
finally	They spied and listened; they received and sent secret messengers; and they stole Jane’s books and records, and finally the papers that were deeds of her possessions.
finally	“You are a woman, fine en’ big an’ strong, an’ your heart matches your size. But in mind you’re a child. I’ll say a little more—then I’m done. I’ll never mention this again. Among many thousands of women you’re one who has bucked against your churchmen. They tried you out, an’ failed of persuasion, an’ finally of threats. You meet now the cold steel of a will as far from Christlike as the universe is wide. You’re to be broken. Your body’s to be held, given to some man, made, if possible, to bring children into the world. But your soul?... What do they care for your soul?”
finally	The purple cloud-bank darkened the lower edge of the setting sun, crept up and up, obscuring its fiery red heart, and finally passed over the last ruddy crescent of its upper rim.
finally	When finally he lay wearily down under the silver spruces, resting from the strain of dragging packs and burros up the slope and through the entrance to Surprise Valley, he had leisure to think, and a great deal of the time went in regretting that he had not been frank with his loyal

	friend, Jane Withersteen.
finally	Finally Venters concluded Wrangle had grazed far enough, and, taking his lasso, he went to fetch him back.
finally	<p>“Thet’s my bad arm. Sure it was Oldrin’. What the hell’s wrong with you, anyway? Venters, I tell you somethin’s wrong. You’re whiter ‘n a sheet. You can’t be scared of the rustler. I don’t believe you’ve got a scare in you. Wal, now, jest let me talk. You know I like to talk, an’ if I’m slow I allus git there sometime. As I said, Lassiter was talkie’ chummy with Oldrin’. There wasn’t no hard feelin’s. An’ the gang wasn’t payin’ no pertic’lar attention. But like a cat watchin’ a mouse I hed my eyes on them two fellers. It was strange to me, thet confab. I’m gittin’ to think a lot, fer a feller who doesn’t know much. There’s been some queer deals lately an’ this seemed to me the queerest. These men stood to the bar alone, an’ so close their big gun-hilts butted together. I seen Oldrin’ was some surprised at first, an’ Lassiter was cool as ice. They talked, an’ presently at somethin’ Lassiter said the rustler bawled out a curse, an’ then he jest fell up against the bar, an’ sagged there. The gang in the saloon looked around an’ laughed, an’ thet’s about all. Finally Oldrin’ turned, and it was easy to see somethin’ hed shook him. Yes, sir, thet big rustler—you know he’s as broad as he is long, an’ the powerfulest build of a man—yes, sir, the nerve had been taken out of him. Then, after a little, he began to talk an’ said a lot to Lassiter, an’ by an’ by it didn’t take much of an eye to see thet Lassiter was gittin’ hit hard. I never seen him anyway but cooler ‘n ice—till then. He seemed to be hit harder ‘n Oldrin’, only he didn’t roar out thet way. He jest kind of sunk in, an’ looked an’ looked, an’ he didn’t see a livin’ soul in thet saloon. Then he sort of come to, an’ shakin’ hands—mind you, shakin’ hands with Oldrin’—he went out. I couldn’t help thinkin’ how easy even a boy could hev dropped the great gun-man then!... Wal, the rustler stood at the bar fer a long time, en’ he was seein’ things far off, too; then he come to an’ roared fer whisky, an’ gulped a drink thet was big enough to drown me.”</p>
finally	<p>“Before you was born your father made a mortal enemy of a Mormon named Dyer. They was both ministers an’ come to be rivals. Dyer stole your mother away from her home. She gave birth to you in Texas eighteen years ago. Then she was taken to Utah, from place to place, an’ finally to the last border settlement—Cottonwoods. You was about three years old when you was taken away from Milly. She never knew what had become of you. But she lived a good while hopin’ and prayin’ to have you again. Then she gave up an’ died. An’ I may as well put in here your father died ten years ago. Well, I spent my time tracin’ Milly, an’ some months back I landed in Cottonwoods. An’ jest lately I learned all about you. I had a talk with Oldrin’ an’ told him you was dead, an’ he told me what I had so long been wantin’ to know. It was Dyer, of course, who stole you from Milly. Part reason he was sore because Milly refused to give you Mormon teachin’, but mostly he still hated Frank Erne so infernally that he made a</p>

	<p>deal with Oldrin' to take you an' bring you up as an infamous rustler an' rustler's girl. The idea was to break Frank Erne's heart if he ever came to Utah—to show him his daughter with a band of low rustlers. Well—Oldrin' took you, brought you up from childhood, an' then made you his Masked Rider. He made you infamous. He kept that part of the contract, but he learned to love you as a daughter an' never let any but his own men know you was a girl. I heard him say that with my own ears, an' I saw his big eyes grow dim. He told me how he had guarded you always, kept you locked up in his absence, was always at your side or near you on those rides that made you famous on the sage. He said he an' an old rustler whom he trusted had taught you how to read an' write. They selected the books for you. Dyer had wanted you brought up the vilest of the vile! An' Oldrin' brought you up the innocentest of the innocent. He said you didn't know what vileness was. I can hear his big voice tremble now as he said it. He told me how the men—rustlers an' outlaws—who from time to time tried to approach you familiarly—he told me how he shot them dead. I'm tellin' you this 'specially because you've showed such shame—sayin' you was nameless an' all that. Nothin' on earth can be wronger than that idea of yours. An' the truth of it is here. Oldrin' swore to me that if Dyer died, releasin' the contract, he intended to hunt up your father an' give you back to him. It seems Oldrin' wasn't all bad, en' he sure loved you.”</p>
finally	Venters laughed grimly at the thought of what Tull's rage would be when he finally discovered the trick.
carefully	At Lassiter's low whistle the black horse whinnied, and carefully picked his blind way out of the grove.
carefully	He climbed over rough, broken rock, picking his way carefully , and then went down.
carefully	He slipped his rifle under her, and, lifting her carefully upon it, he began to retrace his steps.
carefully	Opening her blouse, he untied the scarf, and carefully picked away the sage leaves from the wound in her shoulder.
carefully	As he began to wash the blood stains from her breast and carefully rebandage the wound, he was vaguely conscious of a strange, grave happiness in the thought that she might live.
carefully	He carefully cleaned and reloaded his guns.
carefully	Once more he carefully placed the girl at his feet.

carefully	Very carefully he lifted her to see that the wound in her back had closed perfectly.
carefully	Then he drew the blanket carefully over her and returned to the camp-fire.
carefully	He spoke slowly, choosing his words carefully , and he essayed a perfectly casual manner, and pretended to be busy assorting pieces of pottery.
carefully	She dropped on her knees close to where he sat, and, carefully depositing the black bundle, she held out her hands.
easily	Where did that broad trail come down into the pass, and where did it lead? Venters knew he wasted time in pondering the question, but it held a fascination not easily dispelled.
easily	Venters felt that he could not rest easily till he had secured the other rustler's horse; so, taking his rifle and calling for Ring, he set out.
easily	"I don't like the looks of them big steers. But you can never tell. Cattle sometimes stampede as easily as buffalo. Any little flash or move will start them. A rider gettin' down an' walkin' toward them sometimes will make them jump an' fly. Then again nothin' seems to scare them. But I reckon that white flare will do the biz. It's a new one on me, an' I've seen some ridin' an' rustlin'. It jest takes one of them God-fearin' Mormons to think of devilish tricks."
easily	He easily descried Wrangle through the gloom, but the others were not in sight.
easily	"No, people don't starve easily . I've discovered that. You must lie perfectly still and rest and sleep—for days."
easily	These facilitated climbing, and as he went up he thought how easily this vanished race of men might once have held that stronghold against an army.
easily	Even without the mask she had once worn she would easily have been recognized as Oldring's Rider.
easily	Card and his companion were now half a mile or more in advance, riding easily down the slope.
easily	Not improbably he reasoned that the powerful sorrel could more easily

	overtake Bells in the heavier going outside of the trail.
easily	How easily , gracefully, naturally, Bess sat her saddle! She could ride! Suddenly Venters remembered she had said she could ride.
easily	And fame had rivaled him with only one rider, and that was the slender girl who now swung so easily with Black Star's stride.
sharply	"If you don't go it means your ruin," he said, sharply .
sharply	The outgoing riders moved swiftly, came sharply into sight as they topped a ridge to show wild and black above the horizon, and then passed down, dimming into the purple of the sage.
sharply	queried Venters, sharply .
sharply	These were ruined walls of yellow sandstone, and so split and splintered, so overhanging with great sections of balancing rim, so impending with tremendous crumbling crags, that Venters caught his breath sharply , and, appalled, he instinctively recoiled as if a step upward might jar the ponderous cliffs from their foundation.
sharply	"Here! Come, Whitie—Ring," he repeated, this time sharply .
sharply	"Tell me," ordered Bishop Dyer, sharply .
sharply	Several little white puffs of smoke appeared sharply against the black background of riders and horses, and shots rang out.
sharply	Then Venters shook Black Star's bridle, and, sharply trotting, led the other horses to the center of the village.
sharply	questioned Venters, sharply .
sharply	Lassiter led the swift flight across the wide space, over washes, through sage, into a narrow canyon where the rapid clatter of hoofs rapped sharply from the walls.
certainly	"I'd never thought of that. Poor fellow! he certainly needs some one to love him."
certainly	" Certainly . There's the trough."

certainly	<p>“Milly Erne’s story? Well, Lassiter, I’ll tell you what I know. Milly Erne had been in Cottonwoods years when I first arrived there, and most of what I tell you happened before my arrival. I got to know her pretty well. She was a slip of a woman, and crazy on religion. I conceived an idea that I never mentioned—I thought she was at heart more Gentile than Mormon. But she passed as a Mormon, and certainly she had the Mormon woman’s locked lips. You know, in every Mormon village there are women who seem mysterious to us, but about Milly there was more than the ordinary mystery. When she came to Cottonwoods she had a beautiful little girl whom she loved passionately. Milly was not known openly in Cottonwoods as a Mormon wife. That she really was a Mormon wife I have no doubt. Perhaps the Mormon’s other wife or wives would not acknowledge Milly. Such things happen in these villages. Mormon wives wear yokes, but they get jealous. Well, whatever had brought Milly to this country—love or madness of religion—she repented of it. She gave up teaching the village school. She quit the church. And she began to fight Mormon upbringing for her baby girl. Then the Mormons put on the screws—slowly, as is their way. At last the child disappeared. ‘Lost’ was the report. The child was stolen, I know that. So do you. That wrecked Milly Erne. But she lived on in hope. She became a slave. She worked her heart and soul and life out to get back her child. She never heard of it again. Then she sank.... I can see her now, a frail thing, so transparent you could almost look through her—white like ashes—and her eyes!... Her eyes have always haunted me. She had one real friend—Jane Withersteen. But Jane couldn’t mend a broken heart, and Milly died.”</p>
certainly	<p>She might never be able to marry a man of her choice, but she certainly never would become the wife of Tull.</p>
certainly	<p>Certainly he could not then decide her future.</p>
certainly	<p>He had certainly brought a hundred times more than he had gone for; enough, surely, for years, perhaps to make permanent home in the valley.</p>
certainly	<p>After Venters’s words and one quick look at Lassiter, her agitation stilled, and, though she was shy, if she were conscious of anything out of the ordinary in the situation, certainly she did not show it.</p>
certainly	<p>In his mind perhaps, as certainly as in Venters’s, this moment was the beginning of the real race.</p>
certainly	<p>“Certainly he did.”</p>
really	<p>“Milly Erne’s story? Well, Lassiter, I’ll tell you what I know. Milly Erne had been in Cottonwoods years when I first arrived there, and most of what I</p>

	<p>tell you happened before my arrival. I got to know her pretty well. She was a slip of a woman, and crazy on religion. I conceived an idea that I never mentioned—I thought she was at heart more Gentile than Mormon. But she passed as a Mormon, and certainly she had the Mormon woman’s locked lips. You know, in every Mormon village there are women who seem mysterious to us, but about Milly there was more than the ordinary mystery. When she came to Cottonwoods she had a beautiful little girl whom she loved passionately. Milly was not known openly in Cottonwoods as a Mormon wife. That she really was a Mormon wife I have no doubt. Perhaps the Mormon’s other wife or wives would not acknowledge Milly. Such things happen in these villages. Mormon wives wear yokes, but they get jealous. Well, whatever had brought Milly to this country—love or madness of religion—she repented of it. She gave up teaching the village school. She quit the church. And she began to fight Mormon upbringing for her baby girl. Then the Mormons put on the screws—slowly, as is their way. At last the child disappeared. ‘Lost’ was the report. The child was stolen, I know that. So do you. That wrecked Milly Erne. But she lived on in hope. She became a slave. She worked her heart and soul and life out to get back her child. She never heard of it again. Then she sank.... I can see her now, a frail thing, so transparent you could almost look through her—white like ashes—and her eyes!... Her eyes have always haunted me. She had one real friend—Jane Withersteen. But Jane couldn’t mend a broken heart, and Milly died.”</p>
really	<p>The swing of this fiery horse recalled to Venters days that were not really long past, when he rode into the sage as the leader of Jane Withersteen’s riders.</p>
really	<p>“I knew it—I recognized your figure—and mask, for I saw you once. Yet I can’t believe it!... But you never were really that rustler, as we riders knew him? A thief—a marauder—a kidnapper of women—a murderer of sleeping riders!”</p>
really	<p>“Why, son,” was Lassiter’s reply, “this breakin’ of Miss Withersteen may seem bad to you, but it ain’t bad—yet. Some of these wall-eyed fellers who look jest as if they was walkin’ in the shadow of Christ himself, right down the sunny road, now they can think of things en’ do things that are really hell-bent.”</p>
really	<p>“I thought so much of them—tried so hard to be good to them. And not one was true. You’ve made it easy to forgive. Perhaps many of them really feel as you do, but dare not return to me. Still, Blake, I hesitate to take you back. Yet I want you so much.”</p>
really	<p>Another clearer, keener gaze assured Venters that Black Star was really riderless.</p>

really	It had always haunted him, and now he wondered if he were really to get through the outlet before the huge stone thundered down.
really	“Oh, Bess! I know Lassiter speaks the truth. For when I shot Oldring he dropped to his knees and fought with unearthly power to speak. And he said: ‘Man—why—didn’t—you—wait? Bess was—’ Then he fell dead. And I’ve been haunted by his look and words. Oh, Bess, what a strange, splendid thing for Oldring to do! It all seems impossible. But, dear, you really are not what you thought.”
really	The best they could do, no doubt, had been to get near enough to recognize who really rode the blacks.
gently	Then, gently lifting her upon a blanket, he folded the sides over her.
gently	Gently he laid her back.
gently	Then he leaned against a stone breast-high to him and gently released the girl from his hold.
gently	Here he knelt and deposited the girl gently , feet first and slowly laid her out full length.
gently	“I must see your wounds now,” he said, gently .
gently	Venters gently put her from him and steadied her upon her feet; and all the while his blood raced wild, and a thrilling tingle unsteadied his nerve, and something—that he had seen and felt in her—that he could not understand—seemed very close to him, warm and rich as a fragrant breath, sweet as nothing had ever before been sweet to him.
gently	His hands were gently holding hers, and his eyes—suddenly she could no longer look into them.
gently	Venters took hold of her gently , though masterfully, forced her to meet his eyes.
gently	Gently he touched her arm and turned her to face the others, and then outspread his great hand to disclose a shiny, battered gold locket.
moreover	It had the same comfort as was manifested in the home-like outer court; moreover , it was warm and rich in soft hues.

moreover	Moreover , to Venters the presence of the masked rider with Oldring seemed especially ominous.
moreover	Moreover , he did not care.
moreover	Moreover , it established in her mind a fact that there existed actually other than selfish reasons for her wanting to see him.
moreover	Moreover , it presently developed that Lassiter had returned in a mood of singular sadness and preoccupation.
moreover	Moreover , he fancied that she grew more eager, youthful, and sweet; and he marked that it was far easier to watch her and listen to her than it was to work.
moreover	Lassiter's visit, moreover , had a disquieting effect upon Bess, and Venters fancied that she entertained the same thought as to future seclusion.
moreover	Moreover , shooting from Wrangle's back was shooting from a thunderbolt.
absolutely	"Oh, your faith and your excuses! You can't see what I know—and if you did see it you'd not admit it to save your life. That's the Mormon of you. These elders and bishops will do absolutely any deed to go on building up the power and wealth of their church, their empire. Think of what they've done to the Gentiles here, to me—think of Milly Erne's fate!"
absolutely	Beyond question he seemed unutterably aloof from all knowledge of pressure being brought to bear upon her, absolutely guiltless of any connection with secret power over riders, with night journeys, with rustlers and stampedes of cattle.
absolutely	"Miss Withersteen, it's a liberty on my part to speak so, but I know you pretty well—know you'll never give in. I wouldn't if I were you. And I—I must—Something makes me tell you the worst is yet to come. That's all. I absolutely can't say more. Will you take me back—let me ride for you—show everybody what I mean?"
absolutely	"Lassiter!... What on earth do you mean? I'm an absolutely free woman."
absolutely	"You ain't absolutely anythin' of the kind.... I reckon I've got to tell you!"

absolutely	“Then listen!... Saving you, I saved myself. Living here in this valley with you, I’ve found myself. I’ve learned to think while I was dreaming. I never troubled myself about God. But God, or some wonderful spirit, has whispered to me here. I absolutely deny the truth of what you say about yourself. I can’t explain it. There are things too deep to tell. Whatever the terrible wrongs you’ve suffered, God holds you blameless. I see that—feel that in you every moment you are near me. I’ve a mother and a sister ‘way back in Illinois. If I could I’d take you to them—to-morrow.”
absolutely	Danger for her had been absolutely out of his mind.
absolutely	It was something to think over, something to warm his heart, but for the present it had absolutely to be forgotten so that all his mind could be addressed to the trip so fraught with danger.
darkly	Presently a low jumble of rocks loomed up darkly somewhat to his right, and, turning that way, he whistled softly.
darkly	Jane’s passionate, unheeding zeal began to loom darkly .
darkly	Like Balancing Rock, which waited darkly over the steep gorge, ready to close forever the outlet to Deception Pass, that nameless thing, as certain yet intangible as fate, must fall and close forever all doubts and fears of the future.
darkly	“Lassiter, I’ll be hard to stop,” returned Venters, darkly .
darkly	And when Judkins put in appearance, riding a lame horse, and dismounted with the cramp of a rider, his dust-covered figure and his darkly grim, almost dazed expression told Jane of dire calamity.
darkly	Clouds scudded across the sky and their shadows sailed darkly down the sunny slope.
darkly	demanded Lassiter, suddenly looming darkly over her.
darkly	It changed form; it swayed it nodded darkly ; and at last, in his heightened fancy, he saw it heave and roll.
quickly	She clasped his hand, turned quickly away, and went down a lane with the rider.
quickly	Venters looked quickly from the fallen rustlers to the canyon where the others had disappeared.

quickly	He reflected on the fact that clean wounds closed quickly in the healing upland air.
quickly	Quickly she brought her glass to bear on the spot.
quickly	Night came there quickly after the sinking of the sun.
quickly	asked Jane, quickly .
quickly	She had reached out for him when suddenly, as she saw him closely, something checked her, and as quickly all her joy fled, and with it her color, leaving her pale and trembling.
quickly	Then followed a piercingly high yell of anguish, quickly breaking.
infinitely	But in her it had infinitely more—a revelation of mortal spirit.
infinitely	Few as the words were, Jane knew how infinitely much they implied.
infinitely	How could Lassiter smile so at a child when he had made so many children fatherless? But he did smile, and to the gentleness she had seen a few times he added something that was infinitely sad and sweet.
infinitely	He saw in them infinitely more than he saw in his dreams.
infinitely	And now Lassiter never advised it again, grew sadder and quieter in his contemplation of the child, and infinitely more gentle and loving.
infinitely	For Jane Withersteen the child was an answer to prayer, a blessing, a possession infinitely more precious than all she had lost.
infinitely	Blanched in moonlight, the sage yet seemed to hold its hue of purple and was infinitely more wild and lonely.
infinitely	Out of the east or north from remote distance, breathed an infinitely low, continuously long sound—deep, weird, detonating, thundering, deadening—dying.
lightly	Lifting her lightly , he ascertained that the same was true of the hole where the bullet had come out.

lightly	Jane slipped her left foot in the stirrup, swung lightly into the saddle, and Black Star rose with a ringing stamp.
lightly	“Bishop, the guilt is mine. I’ll come to you and confess,” Jane replied, lightly ; but she felt the undercurrent of her words.
lightly	Yet how many years had they leaned there without falling! At the bottom of the incline was an immense heap of weathered sandstone all crumbling to dust, but there were no huge rocks as large as houses, such as rested so lightly and frightfully above, waiting patiently and inevitably to crash down.
lightly	It sagged at each forward movement he made, but he balanced himself lightly during the interval when he lacked the support of a taut rope.
lightly	She said it lightly , but in the undercurrent of her voice was a heavier note, a ring deeper than any ever given mere play of words.
lightly	He carried only his rifle, revolver, and a small quantity of bread and meat, and thus lightly burdened, he made swift progress down the slope and out into the valley.
lightly	“How can you tell it so lightly ?”
actually	For the first time in years he found himself doubting his rider’s skill in finding tracks, and his memory of what he had actually seen.
actually	Moreover, it established in her mind a fact that there existed actually other than selfish reasons for her wanting to see him.
actually	The iron and stone quality that she had early suspected in him had actually cropped out as an impregnable barrier.
actually	On Sunday she remained absent from the service—for the second time in years—and though she did not actually suffer there was a dead-lock of feelings deep within her, and the waiting for a balance to fall on either side was almost as bad as suffering.
actually	Venters grew concerned over the possibility that these horsemen would actually ride down on him before he had a chance to tell what to expect.
actually	It spoke so surely of the facts that neither Card nor the rustler actually knew their danger.

actually	That little crime-stained rider was actually thinking of his horses, husbanding their speed, handling them with knowledge of years, glorying in their beautiful, swift, racing stride, and wanting them to win the race when his own life hung suspended in quivering balance.
actually	Had Jane's troubles made her insane? Lassiter, too, acted queerly, all at once beginning to turn his sombrero round in hands that actually shook.
closely	For a moment he closely regarded Tull and his comrades, and then, halting in his slow walk, he seemed to relax.
closely	But his eyes were keen and used to the dark, and by peering closely he recognized the huge bulk and black-bearded visage of Oldring and the lithe, supple form of the rustler's lieutenant, a masked rider.
closely	Following closely , the rustlers rode into this white mist, showing in bold black relief for an instant, and then they vanished.
closely	Lifting the girl, he stepped upward, closely attending to the nature of the path under his feet.
closely	She had reached out for him when suddenly, as she saw him closely , something checked her, and as quickly all her joy fled, and with it her color, leaving her pale and trembling.
closely	And she clasped his head tenderly in her arms and pressed it closely to her throbbing breast.
closely	Jane closely watched her steps and climbed behind Lassiter.
wholly	The rider stepped away from her, moving out with the same slow, measured stride in which he had approached, and the fact that his action placed her wholly to one side, and him no nearer to Tull and his men, had a penetrating significance.
wholly	When Venters rapidly strode toward the Masked Rider not even the cold nausea that gripped him could wholly banish curiosity.
wholly	If she were to influence him it must be wholly through womanly allurements.
wholly	If she could not wholly control Lassiter, then what she could do might put off the fatal day.

wholly	It was not wholly with intent that she leaned toward him, for the look of his eyes and the feel of his hands made her weak.
wholly	“Well, why not?... To dream is happiness! But let me just once see this clearly wholly ; then I can go on dreaming till the thing falls. I’ve got to tell Jane Withersteen. I’ve dangerous trips to take. I’ve work here to make comfort for this girl. She’s mine. I’ll fight to keep her safe from that old life. I’ve already seen her forget it. I love her. And if a beast ever rises in me I’ll burn my hand off before I lay it on her with shameful intent. And, by God! sooner or later I’ll kill the man who hid her and kept her in Deception Pass!”
wholly	Instead he found the racer partially if not wholly recovered.
deliberately	Venters said it deliberately and would not release her as she started back.
deliberately	“Why the name? I understand Oldring made you ride. But the black mask—the mystery—the things laid to your hands—the threats in your infamous name—the night-riding credited to you—the evil deeds deliberately blamed on you and acknowledged by rustlers—even Oldring himself! Why? Tell me why?”
deliberately	And she stooped to artifices that she knew were unworthy of her, but which she deliberately chose to employ.
deliberately	“He drew on you first, and you deliberately shot to cripple him—you wouldn’t kill him—you—Lassiter?”
deliberately	“There’s no woman,” went on Venters, deliberately holding her glance with his.
deliberately	When they were within three hundred yards he deliberately led Wrangle out into the trail.
deliberately	Deliberately he picked out the one rider with a carbine, and killed him.
fiery	The swing of this fiery horse recalled to Venters days that were not really long past, when he rode into the sage as the leader of Jane Withersteen’s riders.
fiery	All in a flash, beyond her control there had been in her a birth of fiery hate.
fiery	The purple cloud-bank darkened the lower edge of the setting sun, crept

	up and up, obscuring its fiery red heart, and finally passed over the last ruddy crescent of its upper rim.
fiery	No time in the long period of fiery moments and sudden shocks had Jane Withersteen ever beheld Lassiter as calm and serene and cool as then.
fiery	The strength in him then—the thing rife in him that was not hate, but something as remorseless—might have been the fiery fruition of a whole lifetime of vengeful quest.
fiery	The fire that had blistered him and the cold which had frozen him now united in one torturing possession of his mind and heart, and like a fiery steed with ice-shod feet, ranged his being, ran rioting through his blood, trampling the resurging good, dragging ever at the evil.
fiery	Her breast labored; she began to feel as if little points of fiery steel were penetrating her side into her lungs.
rapidly	When Venters rapidly strode toward the Masked Rider not even the cold nausea that gripped him could wholly banish curiosity.
rapidly	He rapidly surveyed the sage to the north and made out no animate object.
rapidly	In those ensuing days, however, it became clear as clearest light that Bess was rapidly regaining strength; that, unless reminded of her long association with Oldring, she seemed to have forgotten it; that, like an Indian who lives solely from moment to moment, she was utterly absorbed in the present.
rapidly	But as he plunged by, rapidly getting into his stride, Venters made a perfect throw with the rope.
rapidly	In the third he caught up with the now galloping Night and began to gain rapidly on the other black.
rapidly	Rapidly he took off the saddle and bridle.
rapidly	Jane Withersteen watched him, fascinated but uncomprehending and she saw him rapidly saddle Black Star and Night.
simply	“Nonsense! I simply ask you to come to see me when you find time.”

simply	Fay rewarded his boldness with a smile, and when he had gone to the extreme of closing that great hand over her little brown one, she said, simply , "I like oo!"
simply	The first of these things required tremendous effort, the last one, concerning Bess, seemed simply and naturally easy of accomplishment.
simply	"Well, Bess, the fact is I've been dreaming a lot. This valley makes a fellow dream. So I forced myself to think. We can't live this way much longer. Soon I'll simply have to go to Cottonwoods. We need a whole pack train of supplies. I can get—"
simply	Wrangle did not seem so wild as simply perverse.
simply	"Black Star an' Night are ready," he said, simply .
simply	Venters, unable to speak for consternation, and bewildered out of all sense of what he ought or ought not to do, simply stared at Jane.
safely	And if he should ever succeed in getting Bess safely away from these immediate perils, he feared the sharp eyes of women and their tongues, the big outside world with its problems of existence.
safely	"Can you go safely ?"
safely	As Lassiter had reported to Jane, Venters "went through" safely , and after a toilsome journey reached the peaceful shelter of Surprise Valley.
safely	He composed himself to rest and eat some bread and meat, while he waited for a sufficient time to elapse so that he could safely give the horses a drink.
safely	Then, when they had safely gotten out of that wild country to take up a new and an absorbing life, she would forget, she would be happy, and through that, in the years to come, he could not but find life worth living.
safely	"Bess, here's the bad place, the place I told you about, with the cut steps. You start down, leading your burro. Take your time and hold on to him if you slip. I've got a rope on him and a half-hitch on this point of rock, so I can let him down safely . Coming up here was a killing job. But it'll be easy going down."
safely	"Never fear, Bess. He'll outwit Tull. He'll get away and hide her safely . He might climb into Surprise Valley, but I don't think he'll go so far."

lately	She wondered if the unrest and strife that had lately come to the little village of Cottonwoods was to involve her.
lately	“But what’s he doing here in Cottonwoods? This place isn’t notorious enough for such a man. Sterling and the villages north, where there’s universal gun-packing and fights every day—where there are more men like him, it seems to me they would attract him most. We’re only a wild, lonely border settlement. It’s only recently that the rustlers have made killings here. Nor have there been saloons till lately , nor the drifting in of outcasts. Has not this gun-man some special mission here?”
lately	“My name’s Blake. I’m a Mormon and a rider. Lately I quit Miss Withersteen. I’ve come to beg her to take me back. Now I don’t know you; but I know—what you are. So I’ve this to say to your face. It would never occur to this woman to imagine—let alone suspect me to be a spy. She couldn’t think it might just be a low plot to come here and shoot you in the back. Jane Withersteen hasn’t that kind of a mind.... Well, I’ve not come for that. I want to help her—to pull a bridle along with Judkins and—and you. The thing is—do you believe me?”
lately	“Jane, you’re watched. There’s no single move of yours, except when you’re hid in your house, that ain’t seen by sharp eyes. The cottonwood grove’s full of creepin’, crawlin’ men. Like Indians in the grass. When you rode, which wasn’t often lately , the sage was full of sneakin’ men. At night they crawl under your windows into the court, an’ I reckon into the house. Jane Withersteen, you know, never locked a door! This here grove’s a hummin’ bee-hive of mysterious happenin’s. Jane, it ain’t so much that these soles keep out of my way as me keepin’ out of theirs. They’re goin’ to try to kill me. That’s plain. But mebbe I’m as hard to shoot in the back as in the face. So far I’ve seen fit to watch only. This all means, Jane, that you’re a marked woman. You can’t get away—not now. Mebbe later, when you’re broken, you might. But that’s sure doubtful. Jane, you’re to lose the cattle that’s left—your home an’ ranch—an’ Amber Spring. You can’t even hide a sack of gold! For it couldn’t be slipped out of the house, day or night, an’ hid or buried, let alone be rid off with. You may lose all. I’m tellin’ you, Jane, hopin’ to prepare you, if the worst does come. I told you once before about that strange power I’ve got to feel things.”
lately	“Thet’s my bad arm. Sure it was Oldrin’. What the hell’s wrong with you, anyway? Venters, I tell you somethin’s wrong. You’re whiter ‘n a sheet. You can’t be scared of the rustler. I don’t believe you’ve got a scare in you. Wal, now, jest let me talk. You know I like to talk, an’ if I’m slow I allus git there sometime. As I said, Lassiter was talkie’ chummy with Oldrin’. There wasn’t no hard feelin’s. An’ the gang wasn’t payin’ no pertic’lar attention. But like a cat watchin’ a mouse I hed my eyes on them two fellers. It was

	<p>strange to me, thet confab. I'm gittin' to think a lot, fer a feller who doesn't know much. There's been some queer deals lately an' this seemed to me the queerest. These men stood to the bar alone, an' so close their big gun-hilts butted together. I seen Oldrin' was some surprised at first, an' Lassiter was cool as ice. They talked, an' presently at somethin' Lassiter said the rustler bawled out a curse, an' then he jest fell up against the bar, an' sagged there. The gang in the saloon looked around an' laughed, an' thet's about all. Finally Oldrin' turned, and it was easy to see somethin' hed shook him. Yes, sir, thet big rustler—you know he's as broad as he is long, an' the powerfulest build of a man—yes, sir, the nerve had been taken out of him. Then, after a little, he began to talk an' said a lot to Lassiter, an' by an' by it didn't take much of an eye to see thet Lassiter was gittin' hit hard. I never seen him anyway but cooler 'n ice—till then. He seemed to be hit harder 'n Oldrin', only he didn't roar out thet way. He jest kind of sunk in, an' looked an' looked, an' he didn't see a livin' soul in thet saloon. Then he sort of come to, an' shakin' hands—mind you, shakin' hands with Oldrin'—he went out. I couldn't help thinkin' how easy even a boy could hev dropped the great gun-man then!... Wal, the rustler stood at the bar fer a long time, en' he was seein' things far off, too; then he come to an' roared fer whisky, an' gulped a drink thet was big enough to drown me."</p>
lately	<p>"Before you was born your father made a mortal enemy of a Mormon named Dyer. They was both ministers an' come to be rivals. Dyer stole your mother away from her home. She gave birth to you in Texas eighteen years ago. Then she was taken to Utah, from place to place, an' finally to the last border settlement—Cottonwoods. You was about three years old when you was taken away from Milly. She never knew what had become of you. But she lived a good while hopin' and prayin' to have you again. Then she gave up an' died. An' I may as well put in here your father died ten years ago. Well, I spent my time tracin' Milly, an' some months back I landed in Cottonwoods. An' jest lately I learned all about you. I had a talk with Oldrin' an' told him you was dead, an' he told me what I had so long been wantin' to know. It was Dyer, of course, who stole you from Milly. Part reason he was sore because Milly refused to give you Mormon teachin', but mostly he still hated Frank Erne so infernally that he made a deal with Oldrin' to take you an' bring you up as an infamous rustler an' rustler's girl. The idea was to break Frank Erne's heart if he ever came to Utah—to show him his daughter with a band of low rustlers. Well—Oldrin' took you, brought you up from childhood, an' then made you his Masked Rider. He made you infamous. He kept that part of the contract, but he learned to love you as a daughter an' never let any but his own men know you was a girl. I heard him say that with my own ears, an' I saw his big eyes grow dim. He told me how he had guarded you always, kept you locked up in his absence, was always at your side or near you on those rides that made you famous on the sage. He said he an' an old rustler whom he trusted had taught you how to read an' write. They selected the books for you. Dyer had wanted you brought up the vilest of the vile! An' Oldrin' brought you up the innocentest of the innocent. He</p>

	said you didn't know what vileness was. I can hear his big voice tremble now as he said it. He told me how the men—rustlers an' outlaws—who from time to time tried to approach you familiarly—he told me how he shot them dead. I'm tellin' you this 'specially because you've showed such shame—sayin' you was nameless an' all that. Nothin' on earth can be wronger than that idea of yours. An' the truth of it is here. Oldrin' swore to me that if Dyer died, releasin' the contract, he intended to hunt up your father an' give you back to him. It seems Oldrin' wasn't all bad, en' he sure loved you.”
clearly	“It might be. But I think not—that fellow was coming in. One of your riders, more likely. Yes, I see him clearly now. And there's another.”
clearly	“I—I want you to feel that... you see—we've been thrown together—and—and I want to help you—not hurt you. I thought life had been cruel to me, but when I think of yours I feel mean and little for my complaining. Anyway, I was a lonely outcast. And now!... I don't see very clearly what it all means. Only we are here—together. We've got to stay here, for long, surely till you are well. But you'll never go back to Oldring. And I'm sure helping you will help me, for I was sick in mind. There's something now for me to do. And if I can win back your strength—then get you away, out of this wild country—help you somehow to a happier life—just think how good that'll be for me!”
clearly	Still he had to think, and he found it difficult to think clearly .
clearly	Venters stubbornly resisted the entering into his mind of an insistent thought that, clearly realized, might have made it plain to him that he did not want to leave Surprise Valley at all.
clearly	“Well, why not?... To dream is happiness! But let me just once see this clearly wholly; then I can go on dreaming till the thing falls. I've got to tell Jane Withersteen. I've dangerous trips to take. I've work here to make comfort for this girl. She's mine. I'll fight to keep her safe from that old life. I've already seen her forget it. I love her. And if a beast ever rises in me I'll burn my hand off before I lay it on her with shameful intent. And, by God! sooner or later I'll kill the man who hid her and kept her in Deception Pass!”
clearly	It sang clearly the song of love.
evidently	Their horses were tired, and they had several pack animals; evidently they had traveled far.
evidently	And Ring evidently regarded this as an injury to himself, especially as he had carried the heavier load.

evidently	The shaking of the high grass told him of the running of animals, what species he could not tell, but from Ring's manifest desire to have a chase they were evidently some kind wilder than rabbits.
evidently	Whatever Fay seemed to be searching for in Lassiter's sun-reddened face and quiet eyes she evidently found.
evidently	When he got near enough, Wrangle evidently recognized him, but was too wild to stand.
evidently	Venters noted that Tull and the line of horsemen, perhaps ten or twelve in number, stopped several times and evidently looked hard down the slope.
wildly	The horse snorted wildly and plunged away, dragging the rustler through the sage.
wildly	This western curve was the only part of the valley where the walls had been split asunder, and it was a wildly rough and inaccessible corner.
wildly	The dark spruces were tipped with glimmering lights; the aspens bent low in the winds, as waves in a tempest at sea; the forest of oaks tossed wildly and shone with gleams of fire.
wildly	No doubt, Card, with his life at stake, gloried in that race, perhaps more wildly than Venters.
wildly	"Bern, you're weak—trembling—you talk wildly ," cried Bess.
wildly	Fay pranced off wildly , joyous over freedom that had not been granted her for weeks.
probably	"A balancing rock! The cliff-dwellers never had to roll it. They died, vanished, and here the rock stands, probably little changed.... But it might serve another lonely dweller of the cliffs. I'll hide up here somewhere, if I can only find water."
probably	She hated the life she had led, that she probably had been compelled to lead.
probably	Jane reflected that one hundred and twenty miles, with probably a great deal of climbing on foot, all in three days, was enough to tire any rider.

probably	The rider on Bells would probably drop behind and take to the sage.
probably	He knew what she would do presently; she would make some magnificent amend for her anger; she would give some manifestation of her love; probably all in a moment, as she had loved Milly Erne, so would she love Elizabeth Erne.
probably	Lassiter had gone off, yielding to his incurable blood lust, probably to his own death; and she was sorry, but there was no feeling in her sorrow.
exceedingly	Though exceedingly tired, he was yet loath to yield to lassitude, but this night it was not from listening, watchful vigilance; it was from a desire to realize his position.
exceedingly	Here was an exceedingly heavy burden, but Venters was powerful—he could take up a sack of grain and with ease pitch it over a pack-saddle—and he made long distance without resting.
exceedingly	Blake’s brown face turned exceedingly pale.
exceedingly	When they got back to camp the afternoon was closing, and it was exceedingly sultry.
exceedingly	But he was exceedingly sensitive, and quivered at every touch and sound.
exceedingly	Yet, despite these considerations, making the shot exceedingly difficult, Venters’s confidence, like his implacability, saw a speedy and fatal termination of that rustler’s race.
nearly	To rekindle the spark that had nearly flickered out, to nourish the little life and vitality that remained in her, was Venters’s problem.
nearly	Bess had no inkling that he had been absent from camp nearly all night, and only remarked solicitously that he appeared to be more tired than usual, and more in the need of sleep.
nearly	Her sharp action nearly knocked down a woman who had undoubtedly been listening.
nearly	Then Wrangle, plunging in fright, lifted Venters and nearly threw him.
nearly	Wrangle’s great race was nearly won—and run.

nearly	She lifted her face closer and closer to his, until their lips nearly touched, and she hung upon his neck, and with strength almost spent pressed and still pressed her palpitating body to his.
terribly	Woman's face, woman's eyes, woman's lips—all acutely and blindly and sweetly and terribly truthful in their betrayal! But as her fear was instinctive, so was her clinging to this one and only friend.
terribly	"True— terribly true, I fear."
terribly	"But, Blake—how terribly you might suffer for that!"
terribly	There was something terribly wrong with her soul, something terribly wrong with her churchmen and her religion.
terribly	Men like Tull had been shot, but had one ever been so terribly denounced in public? Over-mounting her horror, an uncontrollable, quivering passion shook her very soul.
tightly	Nevertheless, he tore sageleaves from a bush, and, pressing them tightly over her wounds, he bound the black scarf round her shoulder, tying it securely under her arm.
tightly	She made a fierce, passionate movement, clutched the glass tightly , shook as with the passing of a spasm, and then dropped her head.
tightly	He kept close watch over her, and at the least indication of restlessness, that he knew led to tossing and rolling of the body, he held her tightly , so no violent move could reopen her wounds.
tightly	Bess shrank closer to him and closer, found his hands, and pressed them tightly over her ears, and dropped her face upon his shoulder, and hid her eyes.
tightly	She stood with parted, quivering lips, with hands tightly clasping the locket to her heaving breast.
equally	Equally as difficult was the task of deceiving the Gentiles, for they were as proud as they were poor.
equally	That climb up under the rugged, menacing brows of the broken cliffs, in the face of a grim, leaning boulder that seemed to be weary of its age-

	long wavering, was a tax on strength and nerve that Venters felt equally with something sweet and strangely exulting in its accomplishment.
equally	Whatever the power of his deadly intent toward Mormons, that passion now had a rival, the one equally burning and consuming.
equally	Idle and keen perceptions guided them equally .
equally	His stride was almost twice that of an ordinary horse; and his endurance was equally remarkable.
singularly	There, beside his horse, stood Lassiter, his dark apparel and the great black gun-sheaths contrasting singularly with his gentle smile.
singularly	Venters's faculties seemed singularly acute.
singularly	Fay, also, must have found that smile singularly winning.
singularly	Once, long before, on the night Venters had carried Bess through the canyon and up into Surprise Valley, he had experienced the strangeness of faculties singularly , tinglingly acute.
singularly	"Open it," he said, with a singularly rich voice.
wonderfully	There had been dry seasons, accumulations of dust, wind-blown seeds, and cedars rose wonderfully out of solid rock.
wonderfully	Here, in the stone wall, had been wonderfully carved by wind or washed by water several deep caves above the level of the terrace.
wonderfully	Then yawned, quite suddenly and wonderfully above him, the great cavern of the cliff-dwellers.
wonderfully	The rustler's broad brow, his large black eyes, his sweeping beard, as dark as the wing of a raven, his enormous width of shoulder and depth of chest, his whole splendid presence so wonderfully charged with vitality and force and strength, seemed to afford Venters an unutterable fiendish joy because for that magnificent manhood and life he meant cold and sudden death.
wonderfully	Jane was amazed at a wonderfully smooth and steep incline leading up between ruined, splintered, toppling walls.

steadily	The next ascent took grip of fingers as well as toes, but he climbed steadily , swiftly, to reach the projecting corner, and slipped around it.
steadily	Her eyes watched him steadily for a moment and then closed.
steadily	She made no reply, but watched him steadily as he opened her blouse and untied the bandage.
steadily	Her eyes were unusually expressive, and they regarded him steadily ; she was unconscious of that mirroring of her emotions and they shone with gratefulness and interest and wonder and sadness.
steadily	Steadily the wind strengthened and constantly the strange sound changed.
coldly	Venters's agitated face grew coldly set and the bronze changed
coldly	Perceptions flashed upon him, the faint, cold touch of the breeze, a cold, silvery tinkle of flowing water, a cold sun shining out of a cold sky, song of birds and laugh of children, coldly distant.
coldly	"Lassiter, would you kill me? I'm fighting my last fight for the principles of my youth—love of religion, love of father. You don't know—you can't guess the truth, and I can't speak ill. I'm losing all. I'm changing. All I've gone through is nothing to this hour. Pity me—help me in my weakness. You're strong again—oh, so cruelly, coldly strong! You're killing me. I see you—feel you as some other Lassiter! My master, be merciful—spare him!"
coldly	When he reached her side again he was pale, and his lips were set in a hard line, and his gray eyes glittered coldly .
seemingly	Her smiles and tears seemingly dazed him.
seemingly	Seemingly there was silence of longer duration than all her former life.
seemingly	The roar of the wind, with its strange knell and the re-crashing echoes, mingled with the roar of the flooding rain, and all seemingly were deadened and drowned in a world of sound.
seemingly	All the rest of that world was seemingly smooth, undulating sage, with no ragged lines of canyons to accentuate its wildness.

silently	Silently she went into the house, to return with a heavy cartridge-belt and gun-filled sheath and a long rifle; these she handed to him, and as he buckled on the belt she stood before him in silent eloquence.
silently	Keeping close to the edge of the cottonwoods, he went swiftly and silently westward.
silently	Balancing Rock loomed huge, cold in the gray light of dawn, a thing without life, yet it spoke silently to Venters: "I am waiting to plunge down, to shatter and crash, roar and boom, to bury your trail, and close forever the outlet to Deception Pass!"
silently	Silently they went about their household duties, and secretly they went about the underhand work to which they had been bidden.
especially	Moreover, to Venters the presence of the masked rider with Oldring seemed especially ominous.
especially	And Ring evidently regarded this as an injury to himself, especially as he had carried the heavier load.
especially	She might be the famous Masked Rider of the uplands, she might resemble a boy; but her outline, her little hands and feet, her hair, her big eyes and tremulous lips, and especially a something that Venters felt as a subtle essence rather than what he saw, proclaimed her sex.
especially	"Take, for instance, that idea of yours last night when you wanted my guns. It was good an' beautiful, an' showed your heart—but—why, Jane, it was crazy. Mind I'm assumin' that life to me is as sweet as to any other man. An' to preserve that life is each man's first an' closest thought. Where would any man be on this border without guns? Where, especially , would Lassiter be? Well, I'd be under the sage with thousands of other men now livin' an' sure better men than me. Gun-packin' in the West since the Civil War has growed into a kind of moral law. An' out here on this border it's the difference between a man an' somethin' not a man. Look what your takin' Venters's guns from him all but made him! Why, your churchmen carry guns. Tull has killed a man an' drawed on others. Your Bishop has shot a half dozen men, an' it wasn't through prayers of his that they recovered. An' to-day he'd have shot me if he'd been quick enough on the draw. Could I walk or ride down into Cottonwoods without my guns? This is a wild time, Jane Withersteen, this year of our Lord eighteen seventy-one."
exactly	"Me an' Oldrin' wasn't exactly strangers some years back when he drove cattle into Bostil's Ford, at the head of the Rio Virgin. But he got harassed there an' now he drives some place else."

exactly	“Will you come into the grove? It ain’t jest exactly safe for me to be seen here.”
exactly	His affection for Jane Withersteen had not changed in the least; nevertheless, he seemed to view it from another angle and see it as another thing—what, he could not exactly define.
exactly	The door opened, and she saw him, the old Lassiter, slow, easy, gentle, cool, yet not exactly the same Lassiter.
curiously	inquired the rider, curiously .
curiously	When Bishop Dyer’s voice did cleave the silence it was high, curiously shrill, and on the point of breaking.
curiously	Lassiter examined the huge rock, listened to Venters’s idea of its position and suggestion, and curiously placed a strong hand upon it.
curiously	inquired Venters, curiously .
keenly	The rustler bent forward, as if keenly peering ahead.
keenly	He scanned the oval as keenly as if hunting for antelope.
keenly	As Venters went thundering by he peered keenly into the sage, but caught no sign of the man.
keenly	In the long, tense pause, strung keenly as a tight wire, he sat motionless on Black Star.
slightly	Did he only imagine that her heart beat stronger, ever so slightly , but stronger? He pressed his ear closer to her breast.
slightly	It tipped a little downward and hung balancing for a long instant, slowly returned, rocked slightly , groaned, and settled back to its former position.
slightly	This time he noted that she could raise her head slightly without his help.
slightly	She felt calm, slightly cold, strong as she had not been strong since the first shadow fell upon her.

earnestly	“Miss Withersteen, it’s all simple enough,” said Judkins, earnestly .
earnestly	“Listen,” he said, earnestly .
earnestly	“Jud, I’ll bet he does,” replied Venters, earnestly .
earnestly	“I jest saw about all of it, Miss Withersteen, an’ I’ll be glad to tell you if you’ll only hev patience with me,” said Judkins, earnestly .
dimly	Dimly , as through a yellow veil, Jane saw Lassiter press the leaders inward to close the gap in the sage.
dimly	The shade of the cliff above obscured the point he wanted to gain, but he could see dimly a few feet before him.
dimly	The rider, Jerry Card, appeared a mere dot bobbing dimly .
dimly	He watched the stars and the moving shadows, and always his glance returned to the girl’s dimly pale face.
blindly	He reached it and the protruding shelf, and then, entering the black shade of the notch, he moved blindly but surely to the place where he had left the saddle-bags.
blindly	Woman’s face, woman’s eyes, woman’s lips—all acutely and blindly and sweetly and terribly truthful in their betrayal! But as her fear was instinctive, so was her clinging to this one and only friend.
blindly	whispered Jane, blindly holding up her hands.
blindly	she whispered, blindly .
utterly	This sad-eyed girl was so utterly different from what it would have been reason to believe such a remarkable life would have made her.
utterly	In those ensuing days, however, it became clear as clearest light that Bess was rapidly regaining strength; that, unless reminded of her long association with Oldring, she seemed to have forgotten it; that, like an Indian who lives solely from moment to moment, she was utterly absorbed in the present.

utterly	Her excitement and joy were spurs, inspirations; but she was utterly impracticable in her ideas, and she flitted from one plan to another with bewildering vacillation.
utterly	It was a deadly mood, utterly foreign to his nature, engendered, fostered, and released by the wild passions of wild men in a wild country.
occasionally	Occasionally he tried to piece together the several stages of strange experience and to make a whole.
occasionally	During the preparation and eating of dinner Lassiter listened mostly, as was his wont, and occasionally he spoke in his quaint and dry way.
occasionally	Venters pulled him in occasionally , and walked him up the stretches of rising ground and along the soft washes.
occasionally	They put the blacks to the long, swinging rider's canter, and at times pulled them to a trot, and occasionally to a walk.
grimly	"This'll be a bad day for Venters unless you deny that," returned Tull, grimly .
grimly	"Wrangle, the race's on," said Venters, grimly .
grimly	Venters laughed grimly at the thought of what Tull's rage would be when he finally discovered the trick.
indoors	"No, ma'am, an' thanks again. I never sleep indoors . An' even if I did there's that gatherin' storm in the village below. No, no. I'll go to the sage. I hope you won't suffer none for your kindness to me."
indoors	"Well—some fool feller tried to stop Venters out there in the sage—an' he only stopped lead!... I think it'll be all right. I haven't seen or heard of any other fellers round. Venters'll go through safe. An', Jane, I've got Bells saddled, an' I'm going to trail Venters. Mind, I won't show myself unless he falls foul of somebody an' needs me. I want to see if this place where he's goin' is safe for him. He says nobody can track him there. I never seen the place yet I couldn't track a man to. Now, Jane, you stay indoors while I'm gone, an' keep close watch on Fay. Will you?"
indoors	On the morning of the second day after Judkins's recital, during which time Jane remained indoors a prey to regret and sorrow for the boy riders, and a new and now strangely insistent fear for her own person, she again heard what she had missed more than she dared honestly

	confess—the soft, jingling step of Lassiter.
readily	He came readily out of the barn, but once in the yard he broke from Venters, and plunged about with ears laid back.
readily	It was not long before he came to a low place, and here Wrangle readily climbed up.
readily	He dropped his long ears and stood readily to be saddled and bridled.
cautiously	He reined Wrangle to a walk, halted now and then to listen, and then proceeded cautiously with shifting and alert gaze.
cautiously	Venters rose cautiously and looked over the sage.
cautiously	All day he rode slowly and cautiously up the Pass, taking time to peer around corners, to pick out hard ground and grassy patches, and to make sure there was no one in pursuit.
directly	The rustlers—four—five—seven—eight in all, were approaching, but not directly in line with him.
directly	Lassiter had ridden parallel with her position, turned toward her, then aside, and now he was riding directly away from her, all the time pushing the head of that bobbing line inward.
directly	It was serrated, and between two spears of rock, directly in line with his position, showed a zigzag crack that at night would let through the gleam of sky.
securely	Nevertheless, he tore sageleaves from a bush, and, pressing them tightly over her wounds, he bound the black scarf round her shoulder, tying it securely under her arm.
securely	Then he gathered the girl up, and, holding her securely in his left arm, he began to climb, at every few steps jerking his right hand upward along the lasso.
securely	He roped one, securely tied its feet, and swung it over his shoulder.
plainly	It seemed to him that when night fell black he could see her white face so much more plainly .

plainly	Round and round Bells he walked, plainly weakening all the time in his determination not to take one of Jane's favorite racers.
plainly	Plainly he heard the bullet thud.
heavily	Had Venters met these dark-clothed, dark-visaged, heavily armed men anywhere in Utah, let alone in this robbers' retreat, he would have recognized them as rustlers.
heavily	He had proceeded for perhaps a couple of miles when Wrangle stopped with a suddenness that threw Venters heavily against the pommel.
heavily	Judkins paused in his narrative, breathing heavily while he wiped his perspiring brow.
daily	Jerd came to her with the key of the great door of the stone stable, and to make his daily report about the horses.
daily	One of his daily duties was to give Black Star and Night and the other racers a ten-mile run.
daily	Daily he grew more gentle and kind, and gradually developed a quaintly merry mood.
entirely	As the circle of sage lessened the steers began to bawl, and when it closed entirely there came a great upheaval in the center, and a terrible thumping of heads and clicking of horns.
entirely	was a divine word, entirely free from any church or creed.
entirely	It was entirely beyond Venters to see any luck in that meeting.
sadly	Earlier in the day he had dismissed an inexplicable feeling of change; but now, when there was no longer demand on his cunning and strength and he had time to think, he could not catch the illusive thing that had sadly perplexed as well as elevated his spirit.
sadly	"No, Lassiter," she replied, sadly and low.
sadly	The girl who had sadly called herself nameless and nothing had been marvelously transformed in the moment of his avowal of love.
extremely	Starvation in the uplands was not an unheard-of thing; he did not,

	however, worry at all on that score, and feared only his possible inability to supply the needs of a woman in a weakened and extremely delicate condition.
extremely	There were tangled thickets of wild plum-trees and other thorny growths that made passage extremely laborious.
extremely	He appeared to be extremely fatigued.
mostly	“Perhaps to keep me from running away. I always threatened that. Mostly , though, because the men got drunk at the villages. But they were always good to me. I wasn’t afraid.”
mostly	During the preparation and eating of dinner Lassiter listened mostly , as was his wont, and occasionally he spoke in his quaint and dry way.
mostly	“Before you was born your father made a mortal enemy of a Mormon named Dyer. They was both ministers an’ come to be rivals. Dyer stole your mother away from her home. She gave birth to you in Texas eighteen years ago. Then she was taken to Utah, from place to place, an’ finally to the last border settlement—Cottonwoods. You was about three years old when you was taken away from Milly. She never knew what had become of you. But she lived a good while hopin’ and prayin’ to have you again. Then she gave up an’ died. An’ I may as well put in here your father died ten years ago. Well, I spent my time tracin’ Milly, an’ some months back I landed in Cottonwoods. An’ jest lately I learned all about you. I had a talk with Oldrin’ an’ told him you was dead, an’ he told me what I had so long been wantin’ to know. It was Dyer, of course, who stole you from Milly. Part reason he was sore because Milly refused to give you Mormon teachin’, but mostly he still hated Frank Erne so infernally that he made a deal with Oldrin’ to take you an’ bring you up as an infamous rustler an’ rustler’s girl. The idea was to break Frank Erne’s heart if he ever came to Utah—to show him his daughter with a band of low rustlers. Well—Oldrin’ took you, brought you up from childhood, an’ then made you his Masked Rider. He made you infamous. He kept that part of the contract, but he learned to love you as a daughter an’ never let any but his own men know you was a girl. I heard him say that with my own ears, an’ I saw his big eyes grow dim. He told me how he had guarded you always, kept you locked up in his absence, was always at your side or near you on those rides that made you famous on the sage. He said he an’ an old rustler whom he trusted had taught you how to read an’ write. They selected the books for you. Dyer had wanted you brought up the vilest of the vile! An’ Oldrin’ brought you up the innocentest of the innocent. He said you didn’t know what vileness was. I can hear his big voice tremble now as he said it. He told me how the men—rustlers an’ outlaws—who from time to time tried to approach you familiarly—he told me how he shot them dead. I’m tellin’ you this ‘specially because you’ve showed

	such shame—sayin’ you was nameless an’ all that. Nothin’ on earth can be wronger than that idea of yours. An’ the truth of it is here. Oldrin’ swore to me that if Dyer died, releasin’ the contract, he intended to hunt up your father an’ give you back to him. It seems Oldrin’ wasn’t all bad, en’ he sure loved you.”
completely	Little Fay completely filled a long aching void in her heart.
completely	Bess stared as if she had not heard aright, slowly blushed, and completely lost her poise in happy confusion.
completely	“That’s good. Well, well! I’m completely dumfounded. It was my idea that no man could track me in here.”
possibly	Fay was as delightfully wet as she could possibly wish to get.
possibly	But this bearded, longhaired, unkempt man, who wore ragged clothes patched with pieces of skin, and boots that showed bare legs and feet—this dusty, dark, and wild rider could not possibly be Venters.
possibly	Venters meant to sheer out into the sage before Tull could possibly be sure who rode the blacks.
meanwhile	Meanwhile , abiding a day of judgment, she fought ceaselessly to deny the bitter drops in her cup, to tear back the slow, the intangibly slow growth of a hot, corrosive lichen eating into her heart.
meanwhile	Meanwhile , she had resumed her walks through the grove with little Fay.
meanwhile	Meanwhile , she would add to their store of gold.
patiently	“That’ll do from you. Understand, you’ll not be allowed to hold this boy to a friendship that’s offensive to your Bishop. Jane Withersteen, your father left you wealth and power. It has turned your head. You haven’t yet come to see the place of Mormon women. We’ve reasoned with you, borne with you. We’ve patiently waited. We’ve let you have your fling, which is more than I ever saw granted to a Mormon woman. But you haven’t come to your senses. Now, once for all, you can’t have any further friendship with Venters. He’s going to be whipped, and he’s got to leave Utah!”
patiently	Yet how many years had they leaned there without falling! At the bottom of the incline was an immense heap of weathered sandstone all crumbling to dust, but there were no huge rocks as large as houses, such

	as rested so lightly and frightfully above, waiting patiently and inevitably to crash down.
barely	But there was something more in him, barely hidden, a something personal and sinister, a deep of himself, an engulfing abyss.
barely	The girl lay barely visible in the dimness.
kindly	The deliberate speech marked the rider's further change, this time from kindly interest to an awakening menace.
kindly	Larkin at once took kindly to the gentle Lassiter, and, without ever asking who or what he was, praised him to Jane.
deeply	Venters appeared too deeply moved to speak the gratitude his face expressed.
deeply	"Jane Withersteen, may Heaven bless you! I've been deeply grateful to you. But because you're a Mormon I never felt close to you till now. I don't know much about religion as religion, but your God and my God are the same."
dearly	"Just think! Men like Lassiter and you have no home, no comfort, no rest, no place to lay your weary heads. Well!... Let us be patient. Tull's anger may cool, and time may help us. You might do some service to the village—who can tell? Suppose you discovered the long-unknown hiding-place of Oldring and his band, and told it to my riders? That would disarm Tull's ugly hints and put you in favor. For years my riders have trailed the tracks of stolen cattle. You know as well as I how dearly we've paid for our ranges in this wild country. Oldring drives our cattle down into the network of deceiving canyons, and somewhere far to the north or east he drives them up and out to Utah markets. If you will spend time in Deception Pass try to find the trails."
dearly	"Lassiter, whatever my intention in the beginning, Fay loves you dearly —and I—I've grown to—to like you."
stealthily	And he skulked about her home, gripping a gun stealthily as an Indian, a man without place or people or purpose.
stealthily	She saw him shake his tall form erect, look at her strangely and steadfastly, and then, noiselessly, stealthily slip away amid the rocks and trees.

joyously	The spring gushed forth in a swirling torrent, and leaped down joyously to make its swift way along a willow-skirted channel.
joyously	he cried, joyously .
usually	“Cattle are usually quiet after dark. Still, I’ve known even a coyote to stampede your white herd.”
usually	“Now please listen—an’ beggin’ your pardon—jest turn that deaf Mormon ear aside, an’ let me talk clear an’ plain in the other. I went around to the saloons an’ the stores an’ the loafin’ places yesterday. All your riders are in. There’s talk of a vigilance band organized to hunt down rustlers. They call themselves ‘The Riders.’ That’s the report—that’s the reason given for your riders leavin’ you. Strange that only a few riders of other ranchers joined the band! An’ Tull’s man, Jerry Card—he’s the leader. I seen him en’ his hoss. He ‘ain’t been to Glaze. I’m not easy to fool on the looks of a hoss that’s traveled the sage. Tull an’ Jerry didn’t ride to Glaze!... Well, I met Blake en’ Dorn, both good friends of mine, usually , as far as their Mormon lights will let ‘em go. But these fellers couldn’t fool me, an’ they didn’t try very hard. I asked them, straight out like a man, why they left you like that. I didn’t forget to mention how you nursed Blake’s poor old mother when she was sick, an’ how good you was to Dorn’s kids. They looked ashamed, Miss Withersteen. An’ they jest froze up—that dark set look that makes them strange an’ different to me. But I could tell the difference between that first natural twinge of conscience an’ the later look of some secret thing. An’ the difference I caught was that they couldn’t help themselves. They hadn’t no say in the matter. They looked as if their bein’ unfaithful to you was bein’ faithful to a higher duty. An’ there’s the secret. Why it’s as plain as—as sight of my gun here.”
cunningly	Venters cunningly sank, slowly trying to merge into sage-brush.
cunningly	The cliff-dwellers, driven by dreaded enemies to this last stand, had cunningly cut the rock until it balanced perfectly, ready to be dislodged by strong hands.
vaguely	As he began to wash the blood stains from her breast and carefully rebandage the wound, he was vaguely conscious of a strange, grave happiness in the thought that she might live.
vaguely	He felt only vaguely , as outside things, the ache and burn and throb of the muscles of his body.
formerly	Oldring’s more frequent visits had resulted in new saloons, and where there had formerly been one raid or shooting fray in the little hamlets

	there were now many.
formerly	Formerly it had been a shed; now it was a home.
solely	She did not believe that Tull had been actuated solely by his minister's zeal to save her soul.
solely	In those ensuing days, however, it became clear as clearest light that Bess was rapidly regaining strength; that, unless reminded of her long association with Oldring, she seemed to have forgotten it; that, like an Indian who lives solely from moment to moment, she was utterly absorbed in the present.
impatiently	repeated Jane, impatiently .
impatiently	"No, no," replied Jane, impatiently .
hardly	"I said I was prepared for anything; but that was hardly true. But why would they—anybody stampede my cattle?"
hardly	He could hardly wait for her to come out.
madly	And the dust-blinded wild followers plunged on madly in the tracks of their leaders.
madly	"I did, Bess, and I hate myself for it. But you know I never dreamed he was your father. I thought he'd wronged you. I killed him when I was madly jealous."
beautifully	When Jerd led out this slender, beautifully built horse Lassiter suddenly became all eyes.
beautifully	There was a high wind blowing, and the sage tossed and waved and colored beautifully from light to dark.
anxiously	asked Jane, anxiously .
anxiously	Upon his return he was amazed and somewhat anxiously concerned to see his invalid sitting with her back to a corner of the cave and her bare feet swinging out.
shortly	"You're so good. Since my husband's been gone what would have become of Fay and me but for you? It was about Fay that I wanted to

	<p>speak to you. This time I thought surely I'd die, and I was worried about Fay. Well, I'll be around all right shortly, but my strength's gone and I won't live long. So I may as well speak now. You remember you've been asking me to let you take Fay and bring her up as your daughter?"</p>
shortly	<p>Venters spoke shortly with a kind of ring in his voice.</p>
honestly	<p>"Well, that makes it all right with me," he went on, honestly.</p>
honestly	<p>On the morning of the second day after Judkins's recital, during which time Jane remained indoors a prey to regret and sorrow for the boy riders, and a new and now strangely insistent fear for her own person, she again heard what she had missed more than she dared honestly confess—the soft, jingling step of Lassiter.</p>
carelessly	<p>The little houses were there, the smoke-blackened stains of fires, the pieces of pottery scattered about cold hearths, the stone hatchets; and stone pestles and mealing-stones lay beside round holes polished by years of grinding maize—lay there as if they had been carelessly dropped yesterday.</p>
carelessly	<p>he asked, carelessly.</p>
startlingly	<p>The thought was startlingly new.</p>
startlingly	<p>A startlingly swift change in the nature of her agitation made him reproach himself for his abruptness.</p>
thoughtfully	<p>"I shouldn't wonder," replied Venters, thoughtfully.</p>
thoughtfully	<p>Then around the camp-fire and through the morning meal he was silent; afterward he strolled thoughtfully off alone along the terrace.</p>
assuredly	<p>Verification of his suspicions in regard to Tull's underhand work—for the deal with Oldring made by Jerry Card assuredly had its inception in the Mormon Elder's brain, and had been accomplished through his orders—revived in Venters a memory of hatred that had been smothered by press of other emotions.</p>
assuredly	<p>"Assuredly. The more you take the better you'll please me—and perhaps the less my—my enemies will get."</p>
sweetly	<p>Woman's face, woman's eyes, woman's lips—all acutely and blindly and sweetly and terribly truthful in their betrayal! But as her fear was</p>

	instinctive, so was her clinging to this one and only friend.
sweetly	The wind sweetly fanned Venters’s hot face.
incessantly	She prattled incessantly .
incessantly	The lightning played incessantly , streaking down through opaque darkness of rain.
gleefully	Clatter of hoofs distracted Fay and interrupted the scolding she was gleefully receiving from Jane.
gleefully	They peeped down into the dark holes of the kivas, and Bess gleefully dropped a stone and waited for the long-coming hollow sound to rise.
quicker	“So that’s troublin’ you. I reckon it needn’t. You see it was this way. I come round the house an’ seen that fat party an’ heard him talkin’ loud. Then he seen me, an’ very impolite goes straight for his gun. He oughtn’t have tried to throw a gun on me—whatever his reason was. For that’s meetin’ me on my own grounds. I’ve seen runnin’ molasses that was quicker ‘n him. Now I didn’t know who he was, visitor or friend or relation of yours, though I seen he was a Mormon all over, an’ I couldn’t get serious about shootin’. So I winged him—put a bullet through his arm as he was pullin’ at his gun. An’ he dropped the gun there, an’ a little blood. I told him he’d introduced himself sufficient, an’ to please move out of my vicinity. An’ he went.”
quicker	She heard the panting of Lassiter and the quicker panting of the dogs.
positively	Lassiter was right; he never made mistakes; he would not have told her unless he positively knew.
positively	Presently Venters remembered positively that Jerry had been leading Night on the right-hand side of the trail.
eagerly	Then a singular thought confronted her that made her hold up this simple ruse—which hurt her, though it was well justified—against the deceit she had wittingly and eagerly used toward Lassiter.
eagerly	she asked, eagerly .
nervously	“Blake,” interrupted Jane, nervously anxious to terminate a colloquy that she perceived was an ordeal for him.

nervously	cried Bess, nervously .
violently	Not only did Lassiter turn white—not only did he grow tense, not only did he lose his coolness, but also he suddenly, violently , hungrily took her into his arms and crushed her to his breast.
violently	cried Venters, violently .
freely	“But, Lassiter, I would give freely —all I own to avert this—this wretched thing. If I gave—that would leave me with faith still. Surely my—my churchmen think of my soul? If I lose my trust in them—”
freely	“I’m glad that’s over,” he said, breathing more freely .
shyly	They fluttered among the branches overhead and some left off their songs to flit down and shyly hop near the twittering quail.
shyly	“Call me—Elizabeth,” she said, shyly .
majestically	He and Bess began one thing, to leave it; to begin another, to leave that; and then do nothing but lie under the spruces and watch the great cloud-sails majestically move along the ramparts, and dream and dream.
majestically	Shafts and monuments and sections of wall fell majestically .
constantly	Steadily the wind strengthened and constantly the strange sound changed.
constantly	The horses could run as well there, but keen eyesight and judgment must constantly be used by the riders in choosing ground.
continuously	Then the storm burst with a succession of ropes and streaks and shafts of lightning, playing continuously , filling the valley with a broken radiance; and the cracking shots followed each other swiftly till the echoes blended in one fearful, deafening crash.
continuously	Out of the east or north from remote distance, breathed an infinitely low, continuously long sound—deep, weird, detonating, thundering, deadening—dying.
naturally	The first of these things required tremendous effort, the last one, concerning Bess, seemed simply and naturally easy of accomplishment.

naturally	How easily, gracefully, naturally , Bess sat her saddle! She could ride! Suddenly Venters remembered she had said she could ride.
badly	"I heard the shot; I knew it was meant for you. Let me see—you can't be badly injured?"
badly	She brought him brandy and food, and while he partook of refreshments, of which he appeared badly in need, she asked no questions.
wearily	When finally he lay wearily down under the silver spruces, resting from the strain of dragging packs and burros up the slope and through the entrance to Surprise Valley, he had leisure to think, and a great deal of the time went in regretting that he had not been frank with his loyal friend, Jane Withersteen.
wearily	Night wearily lay down in the dust and rolled, proving himself not yet spent.
furthermore	Furthermore , Bess reverted to a wistful sadness that he had not observed in her since her recovery.
furthermore	Furthermore , he hoped his speaking out would induce her to unburden her own mind.
cruelly	Cruelly he struck his spurs into Wrangle's flanks.
cruelly	"Lassiter, would you kill me? I'm fighting my last fight for the principles of my youth—love of religion, love of father. You don't know—you can't guess the truth, and I can't speak ill. I'm losing all. I'm changing. All I've gone through is nothing to this hour. Pity me—help me in my weakness. You're strong again—oh, so cruelly , coldly strong! You're killing me. I see you—feel you as some other Lassiter! My master, be merciful—spare him!"
partially	Instead he found the racer partially if not wholly recovered.
partially	He recovered partially , enough to see Lassiter standing with a glad smile and Jane riveted in astonishment.
truly	Only, and once for all, he must know the truth, know the worst, stifle all these insistent doubts and subtle hopes and jealous fancies, and kill the past by knowing truly what Bess had been to Oldring.
truly	"Wait! Don't go! Oh, hear a last word!... May a more just and merciful

	<p>God than the God I was taught to worship judge me—forgive me—save me! For I can no longer keep silent!... Lassiter, in pleading for Dyer I've been pleading more for my father. My father was a Mormon master, close to the leaders of the church. It was my father who sent Dyer out to proselyte. It was my father who had the blue-ice eye and the beard of gold. It was my father you got trace of in the past years. Truly, Dyer ruined Milly Erne—dragged her from her home—to Utah—to Cottonwoods. But it was for my father! If Milly Erne was ever wife of a Mormon that Mormon was my father! I never knew—never will know whether or not she was a wife. Blind I may be, Lassiter—fanatically faithful to a false religion I may have been but I know justice, and my father is beyond human justice. Surely he is meeting just punishment—somewhere. Always it has appalled me—the thought of your killing Dyer for my father's sins. So I have prayed!"</p>
habitually	<p>But as he buckled it over the one he habitually wore his hands became steady.</p>
habitually	<p>And this work was in order with the precaution habitually observed by him.</p>
noisily	<p>The dusty-booted and long-spurred riders clanked noisily into the grove of cottonwoods and disappeared in the shade.</p>
tensely	<p>asked Tull, tensely.</p>
harshly	<p>"Then I'll have you whipped within an inch of your life," replied Tull, harshly.</p>
dastardly	<p>"Oh! Don't whip him! It would be dastardly!"</p>
unnaturally	<p>"To take revenge on a horse! Lassiter, the men of my creed are unnaturally cruel. To my everlasting sorrow I confess it. They have been driven, hated, scourged till their hearts have hardened. But we women hope and pray for the time when our men will soften."</p>
lively	<p>The home of Jane Withersteen stood in a circle of cottonwoods, and was a flat, long, red-stone structure with a covered court in the center through which flowed a lively stream of amber-colored water.</p>
splendidly	<p>"Lassiter!... I shudder when I think of that name, of him. But when I look at the man I forget who he is—I almost like him. I remember only that he saved Bern. He has suffered. I wonder what it was—did he love a Mormon woman once? How splendidly he championed us poor misunderstood souls! Somehow he knows—much."</p>

bitterly	And in that wild covert Venters shut his eyes under the great white stars and intense vaulted blue, bitterly comparing their loneliness to his own, and fell asleep.
accordingly	It seemed that in his fallen fortunes these dogs understood the nature of their value to him, and governed their affection and faithfulness accordingly .
openly	“Milly Erne’s story? Well, Lassiter, I’ll tell you what I know. Milly Erne had been in Cottonwoods years when I first arrived there, and most of what I tell you happened before my arrival. I got to know her pretty well. She was a slip of a woman, and crazy on religion. I conceived an idea that I never mentioned—I thought she was at heart more Gentile than Mormon. But she passed as a Mormon, and certainly she had the Mormon woman’s locked lips. You know, in every Mormon village there are women who seem mysterious to us, but about Milly there was more than the ordinary mystery. When she came to Cottonwoods she had a beautiful little girl whom she loved passionately. Milly was not known openly in Cottonwoods as a Mormon wife. That she really was a Mormon wife I have no doubt. Perhaps the Mormon’s other wife or wives would not acknowledge Milly. Such things happen in these villages. Mormon wives wear yokes, but they get jealous. Well, whatever had brought Milly to this country—love or madness of religion—she repented of it. She gave up teaching the village school. She quit the church. And she began to fight Mormon upbringing for her baby girl. Then the Mormons put on the screws—slowly, as is their way. At last the child disappeared. ‘Lost’ was the report. The child was stolen, I know that. So do you. That wrecked Milly Erne. But she lived on in hope. She became a slave. She worked her heart and soul and life out to get back her child. She never heard of it again. Then she sank.... I can see her now, a frail thing, so transparent you could almost look through her—white like ashes—and her eyes!... Her eyes have always haunted me. She had one real friend—Jane Withersteen. But Jane couldn’t mend a broken heart, and Milly died.”
brightly	She was brightly smiling, and her greeting was warmly cordial.
warmly	She was brightly smiling, and her greeting was warmly cordial.
lastly	There was the night ride of Tull’s, which, viewed in the light of subsequent events, had a look of his covert machinations; Oldring and his Masked Rider and his rustlers riding muffled horses; the report that Tull had ridden out that morning with his man Jerry on the trail to Glaze, the strange disappearance of Jane Withersteen’s riders, the unusually determined attempt to kill the one Gentile still in her employ, an intention frustrated, no doubt, only by Judkin’s magnificent riding of her

	racer, and lastly the driving of the red herd.
immeasurably	It was then that he reached forth to feel Ring or Whitie, immeasurably grateful for the love and companionship of two dogs.
unexpectedly	This was unexpectedly easy.
willingly	“What was she to Oldring? Rustlers don’t have wives nor sisters nor daughters. She was bad—that’s all. But somehow... well, she may not have willingly become the companion of rustlers. That prayer of hers to God for mercy!... Life is strange and cruel. I wonder if other members of Oldring’s gang are women? Likely enough. But what was his game? Oldring’s Mask Rider! A name to make villagers hide and lock their doors. A name credited with a dozen murders, a hundred forays, and a thousand stealings of cattle. What part did the girl have in this? It may have served Oldring to create mystery.”
indubitably	If Venters had not been indubitably certain that he had entered the right canyon his astonishment would not have been so great.
presumably	But here the canyon ended, and presumably the trails also.
meantime	Meantime , at the ranch, when Judkins’s news had sent Venters on the trail of the rustlers, Jane Withersteen led the injured man to her house and with skilled fingers dressed the gunshot wound in his arm.
hitherto	She shrank from black depths hitherto unsuspected.
seriously	“Lassiter! Are you paying me compliments? But, seriously I’ve made up my mind not to be miserable. I’ve lost much, and I’ll lose more. Nevertheless, I won’t be sour, and I hope I’ll never be unhappy—again.”
compactly	The stragglers were restless; the more compactly massed steers were browsing.
proudly	There were many wooden-shuttered windows, and one pretentious window of glass proudly curtained in white.
reluctantly	Some of the men and boys had a few stray cattle, others obtained such intermittent employment as the Mormons reluctantly tendered them.
gratefully	Yet that was not because she was unwelcome; here she was gratefully received by the women, passionately by the children.

outdoors	Fay was a child of outdoors , of the garden and ditch and field, and she was dirty and ragged.
boldly	He did not, however, venture boldly out into the open sage, but clung to the right-hand wall and went along that till its perpendicular line broke into the long incline of bare stone.
generally	The fact that rabbits generally ran uphill was not new to him.
frightfully	Yet how many years had they leaned there without falling! At the bottom of the incline was an immense heap of weathered sandstone all crumbling to dust, but there were no huge rocks as large as houses, such as rested so lightly and frightfully above, waiting patiently and inevitably to crash down.
inevitably	Yet how many years had they leaned there without falling! At the bottom of the incline was an immense heap of weathered sandstone all crumbling to dust, but there were no huge rocks as large as houses, such as rested so lightly and frightfully above, waiting patiently and inevitably to crash down.
loftily	Silver spruces bordered the base of a precipitous wall that rose loftily .
vastly	But then, awaiting her death and thinking of her comfort were vastly different matters.
stupidly	Her spurs, that he had stupidly neglected to remove, consisted of silver frames and gold chains, and the rowels, large as silver dollars, were fancifully engraved.
densely	Around the red perpendicular walls, except under the great arc of stone, ran a terrace fringed at the cliff-base by silver spruces; below that first terrace sloped another wider one densely overgrown with aspens, and the center of the valley was a level circle of oaks and alders, with the glittering green line of willows and cottonwood dividing it in half.
particularly	It was a particularly rich, furry pelt with a beautiful white tail.
greedily	She awoke stronger from each short slumber; she ate greedily , and she moved about in her bed of boughs; and always, it seemed to Venters, her eyes followed him.
markedly	She made a pathetic figure drooping there, with her sunny hair contrasting so markedly with her white, wasted cheeks and her hands

	listlessly clasped and her little bare feet propped in the framework of the rude seat.
awkwardly	The cheery salutation he had ready for her died unborn and he tumbled the pieces of pottery awkwardly on the grass while some unfamiliar, deep-seated emotion, mixed with pity and glad assurance of his power to succor her, held him dumb.
perpetually	In the days that followed, Venters balanced perpetually in mind this haunting conception of innocence over against the cold and sickening fact of an unintentional yet actual gift.
subtly	All about her and the present there in Surprise Valley, and the dim yet subtly impending future, fascinated Venters and made him thoughtful as all his lonely vigils in the sage had not.
chiefly	Chiefly it was the present that he wished to dwell upon; but it was the call of the future which stirred him to action.
acutely	Woman's face, woman's eyes, woman's lips—all acutely and blindly and sweetly and terribly truthful in their betrayal! But as her fear was instinctive, so was her clinging to this one and only friend.
quaintly	Daily he grew more gentle and kind, and gradually developed a quaintly merry mood.
playfully	She kept close to him whenever opportunity afforded; and she was forever playfully , yet passionately underneath the surface, fighting him for possession of the great black guns.
delightfully	Fay was as delightfully wet as she could possibly wish to get.
recently	"But what's he doing here in Cottonwoods? This place isn't notorious enough for such a man. Sterling and the villages north, where there's universal gun-packing and fights every day—where there are more men like him, it seems to me they would attract him most. We're only a wild, lonely border settlement. It's only recently that the rustlers have made killings here. Nor have there been saloons till lately, nor the drifting in of outcasts. Has not this gun-man some special mission here?"
sternly	"Hester," said Jane, sternly , "you may go home, and you need not come back."
hungrily	Not only did Lassiter turn white—not only did he grow tense, not only did

	he lose his coolness, but also he suddenly, violently, hungrily took her into his arms and crushed her to his breast.
harmoniously	She fitted harmoniously into that wonderful setting; she was like Surprise Valley—wild and beautiful.
hugely	The bank of clouds now swept hugely out of the western sky.
persistently	It was only a gale, but as Venters listened, as his ears became accustomed to the fury and strife, out of it all or through it or above it pealed low and perfectly clear and persistently uniform a strange sound that had no counterpart in all the sounds of the elements.
reproachfully	Passionately and reproachfully and wonderingly Jane had refused even to entertain such an idea.
defiantly	She seemed to feel that she was defiantly flinging the wealth of her love in the face of misfortune and of hate.
fervently	No day passed but she prayed for all—and most fervently for her enemies.
cowardly	Revolver shots had of late cracked from different parts of the grove—spies taking snap-shots at Lassiter from a cowardly distance! But a rifle report meant more.
powerfully	He appeared taller, wider of shoulder, deeper-chested, more powerfully built.
briefly	Briefly , in few words, Jane outlined the circumstances of her undoing in the weeks of his absence.
continually	But, he kept continually recalling, when he had stood once more face to face with her and had been shocked at the change in her and had heard the details of her adversity, he had not had the heart to tell her of the closer interest which had entered his life.
consequently	His attempt to cheer her out of it resulted in dismal failure, and consequently in a darkening of his own mood.
covertly	Another day went by, in which he worked less and pondered more and all the time covertly watched Bess.

eventually	The plan eventually decided upon by the lovers was for Venters to go to the village, secure a horse and some kind of a disguise for Bess, or at least less striking apparel than her present garb, and to return post-haste to the valley.
hauntingly	Long after he had left her, all down through the outlet to the Pass, the clinging clasp of her arms, the sweetness of her lips, and the sense of a new and exquisite birth of character in her remained hauntingly and thrillingly in his mind.
merely	The range was great for revolvers, but whether the shots were meant to kill or merely to check advance, they were enough to fire that waiting ferocity in Venters.
shrilly	Wrangle snorted shrilly and bolted into the sage.
appreciably	In a few miles of that swinging canter Wrangle had crept appreciably closer to the three horses.
dangerously	But Jerry returned the shot, and his ball struck dangerously close in the dust at Wrangle's flying feet.
faithfully	Far up the white trail Night came trotting faithfully down.
sufficiently	In a moment he had recovered sufficiently to have a care for Wrangle.
tremendously	Was that only the vitality of him—that awful light in the eyes—only the hard-dying life of a tremendously powerful brute? A broken whisper, strange as death: "MAN—WHY—DIDN'T—YOU WAIT! BESS—WAS—" And Oldring plunged face forward, dead.
frankly	"I'll tell you anything you want to know," she replied, frankly .
fiercely	he panted, fiercely .
tenderly	And she clasped his head tenderly in her arms and pressed it closely to her throbbing breast.
intently	Jane, leaning toward him, sat as if petrified, listening intently , waiting to hear more.
differently	"I give up my purpose. I've come to see an' feel differently . I can't help poor Milly. An' I've outgrown revenge. I've come to see I can be no

	judge for men. I can't kill a man jest for hate. Hate ain't the same with me since I loved you and little Fay."
ruthlessly	Who was this man with the face gray as death, with eyes that would have made her shriek had she the strength, with the strange, ruthlessly bitter lips? Where was the gentle Lassiter? What was this presence in the hall, about him, about her—this cold, invisible presence?
awfully	"Yes, it's ended, Jane," he was saying, so awfully quiet and cool and implacable, "an' I'm goin' to make a little call. I'll lock you in here, an' when I get back have the saddle-bags full of meat an bread. An' be ready to ride!"
vainly	She sprang up in despairing, breaking spirit, and encircled his neck with her arms, and held him in an embrace that he strove vainly to loosen.
rightfully	Again for Jane Withersteen came the spinning of her brain in darkness, and as she whirled in endless chaos she seemed to be falling at the feet of a luminous figure—a man—Lassiter—who had saved her from herself, who could not be changed, who would slay rightfully .
weakly	Her voice broke weakly .
fluently	Judkins mumbled thanks that he could not speak fluently , and his eyes flashed.
dreamily	"Bess, we have enough to live here all our lives," he said once, dreamily .
coolly	"I reckon this meetin's the luckiest thing that ever happened to you an' to me—an' to Jane—an' to Bess," said Lassiter, coolly .
queerly	Had Jane's troubles made her insane? Lassiter, too, acted queerly , all at once beginning to turn his sombrero round in hands that actually shook.
gracefully	How easily, gracefully , naturally, Bess sat her saddle! She could ride! Suddenly Venters remembered she had said she could ride.
obediently	The burros obediently wheeled and started down the break with little cautious steps, but Lassiter had to leash the whining dogs and lead them.
emotionally	She was still strong in body, but emotionally tired.
busily	Dull revolver shots—hoarse yells—pound of hoofs—shrill neighs of

	<p>horses—commingling of echoes—and again silence! Lassiter must be busily engaged, thought Jane, and no chill trembled over her, no blanching tightened her skin.</p>
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