hill, for the mucher of the and Dawn, McNes. Cal Douglas is acquired to kind the haves and Bad Ansa declare ressure from Good that all the state of

CHAPTER XIX.

Once, when Asse Havey had been tramping all afternoon through the wintry woods with Juanita, he had pointed out a squired that set creet on a branch high above them with its tail curled up behind it. He had stopped her with a touch on the arm; then, with a smile of amissement, he handed her his rifle, with much the same manner that she might have handed him a novel in Russian, and his eyes said banteringly: "See what you can do with that."

But to his surorise who tech.

est and to regard his vow of silence as to herself whom he dumbly wor-

parsie ôf delight to her could bring-nance.

"It's right pretty, but it won't hardly work," he said. "These men will leave them guns just so long as they don't need 'em. 'I'm glad to see ye pleased —but I don't want to see ye disap-pointed."

—but I don't want to see ye disap-pointed."

A little before Christmas old Milt McBlair went to Lexington, and thero he met a heavily bearded man in rough clothes who had arrived that morning from the West. They conferred in a cheap eating house which bears a raf-ged and unwelesome appearance and is kept by an exile from the moun-tains.

He strugged his shoulders. "May he strugged his shoulders. "May he strugged his shoulders. "May he should have he should have had not have to should have he should have he

poume, eternatity done for."

"I don't aim to fall."

"Not, but ye'mought, Anse, no man hain't never questioned yore loyalty till now. I mought as well tell ye straight what talkin's goin' round."

Anse stiffened. "What is it?" he demanded.

"Some folks low that ther Haveys don't mean as much ter ye now as ther furrin' schoolteacher does. Them folks!! be pretty and ter tikin ye ain't tryin' ter please them so much as her—If yer attempts this.

Anse stood for a louerse grew taut.

Al late he leagated coolity.

"What do you think, Breck!"

"I'd trust ye till hell froze."

"All right. Then do as I tells ye, an' it! I fails! I reckons you'll be head of the Haveys in my place."

Down at the school there' was going to be a Christmas tree that year. Never before had the children of the "branch-water folks" heard of a Christmas tree. The essan of Christ's birth had always been celebrated with moonshine jug and revolver. It was dreaded in advances and mourned over in retrospect.

I'm and the school there' was going to be a christmas tree with had always been eclebrated with moonshine jug and revolver. It was dreaded in advances and mourned over in retrospect.

I'm and a standard the marviews. The honored young fir tree which was to bear a fruitage of gifts and lights had been singled out and marked to the ax. Anse Havey and Juanita and Dawn were as much excited as the children, but to lexington to buy gifts and its wonder a city.

Milt was there at college and would be returning about the same uline, so the mountain girl secretly wrote him of her coming. And even facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one of the lights and crowds in the coming. And even facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one in facing so grave a crisis, Anse Havey in one in facing so grav



ye."

Juanita Holland stood looking at the door he had closed behind him, a wild sense of tumult and uneasiness in her

Anse had been rehearsing his arguments us he rode through the steet-lashed hills, and he was deeply troubled.

The man and the boy sat on either side of the fireplace. Fenetrating gusts swept in at the broken chitaking and up through the warped floor until old Deardog. Iying at their feet, shirtered as he slept with his forepaws stretched on the hearth and the two men hitched their chairs nearer to the blaze. By the bed still stood the rifle that had been Fletch's; the rifle upon which the boy's eyes always fell and which to him was the symbol of his duty.

As Bud Anse Havey talked of the future with all the instinctife forcetal-



"I've Got to Kill a Man!"

ter be settin' in ther high cote. I hain't never a-goin' ter leave hit, an' of that jury clars him—or of they jest penitentiaries him—I'm goin' ter kill him as he sets thar in his cheer—so help me God!"

"Then I'll talk outspoken. Ter try ter convict these men in cote means to take a desporate chance. Ye can't take a desporaret chance? Ye can't take a desporaret chance? Ye can't take a desporaret chance? Ye can't than'dly succeed, an' if ye falls ye've plumb, eternally done for."

"But, Anse," she argued, "my work that needs that was convincing.

"I'd on't aim to fail."

"No; but ye mought. Anse, no man hain't never questioned yore loyally till now. I mought as well tell yes straight what talkin's goin' round."

Anne ediffened. "What is it!" and the went on, quiet for the mought of t

and a breathless tensity seemed to hold the whole group in fixed tautication. There were several clumps of men standing about, all armed, and every face wore the same expression of waiting sternness.

A gasp of premonition rose to Juanita's lips as she caught the sinister applit of suppense in the atmosphere. Then Milk McBriar stepped down from the smoker vestbule, followed by another man.

As the two turned in opposite directions on the smower-overed platform, one of the men who had been standing with Bad Anse Hawy laid a hand on the shoulder of the clean-shaven arrival and said in a clear voice: "Luke Thiston, I want by for their murder of Fletch McNash."

Old Milk McBriar, for once startled out of his case-hardened self-control, wheeled and demanded off; "What McBriar, I want by our bulleyers were blazing and his face worked with passionate for;".

A deputy answered him: "An Milk McBriar, I wants you too, on, an indictment fer accessory ter mirder."

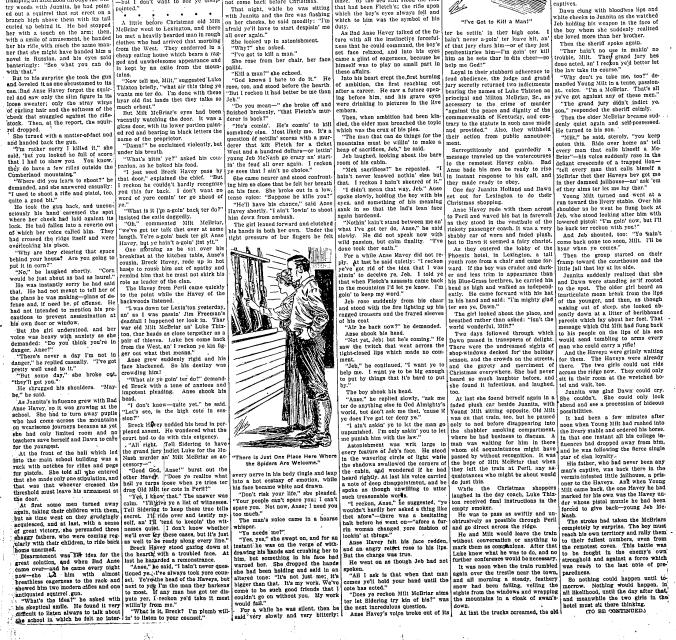
Juanita feld Daw's spasmodic fingers clutch her arm and her own knees grow suddenly weak. She heard a clatter of parcels as Young Milk dropped them in the snow and leaped forward, his eyes kindling and his right hand frantically clawing at the buttons of overcoat and coat. But hefore be could draw, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, bending forward to a half could fire, Jeb McNash had wheeled to face him, be his face.

Haveys, armed and grim of visage, now began drawing close about the

now began drawing close about the captives.

Dawn clung with bloodless lips and white checks to Juanita as she watched Jeb holding his weapon in the face of the boy whom she suddenly realized she loved more than her brother.





heart.
""That's the sort of friend I am,"
she repeated to herself. CHAPTER XX.

There still remained the task of winning young Jeb's assent to bis plan, and Anne Harvy foresaw a subsborn hattle there. Jeb had been reading law that winter; reading by the light of a log fire through long and lonely evenings in a smoke-darkened cabin. When Anne Havey called from the stile one night, the boy laid a battered Blackstone on his thin knee and called out: "Come in, Anne, and pull up a cheer!"

Anne had been rehearsing his argu-

Anse had been rehearsing his argu-