

THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE Pages 46 - 48

JIM.

(JIM gets to mopping the floor. He sings to himself as he works.)

O BYE AND BYE, BYE AND BYE.

I'M GOIN' TO LAY DOWN MY HEAVY LOAD.

I KNOW MY ROBE'S GOIN' TO FIT ME WELL.

I'M GOIN' TO LAY DOWN MY HEAVY LOAD.

I TRIED IT ON AT THE GATES OF HELL

I'M GOIN' TO LAY DOWN MY HEAVY LOAD.

HELL IS DEEP AND DARK DESPAIR

I'M GOIN' TO LAY DOWN MY HEAVY LOAD. STOP YOU SINNER AND DON'T
GO THERE I'M GOIN' TO LAY DOWN MY
HEAVY LOAD.

O BYE AND BYE, BYE AND BYE.

I'M GOIN' TO LAY DOWN MY HEAVY LOAD.

(The doors swing open. Two MEN enter. Their faces covered. One carries a shotgun over his arm. The other rests his hand on a holstered revolver, a length of thick rope coiled over his shoulder. They watch JIM for a moment as LIBERTY VALANCE enters and walks between them. There is a silence as VALANCE takes in the room.)

VALANCE. A nice place you got yourself here, Mr...

JIM. Mosten. Jim Mosten, sir.

VALANCE. Nice place, Jim. You mind if me and my boys come in for a drink?

JIM. No, sir.

(Almost before JIM's answers VALANCE passes his hat to one of the men and makes his way past JIM to a table. VALANCE sits, leaning back with his feet casually on the table. The shotgun is dropped on the bar alongside VALANCE's hat with a loud, threatening thud.)

VALANCE. So, Jim, tell me, where's the tenderfoot?

JIM. Who?

VALANCE. Take a seat with me, Jim.

(JIM doesn't move.)

Come on, Jim; have a drink with me.

(One of the MEN brings a bottle and two glasses. JIM, reluctantly, sits.)

VALANCE. So, where's the tenderfoot?

(VALANCE pours them both drinks.)

JIM. He ain't here.

VALANCE. Where is he?

JIM. He's gone out of town, sir,

VALANCE. Where?

JIM. Don't know where.

VALANCE. Take a drink.

(JIM does so, slowly,)

You play dice, Jim?

JIM. What game?

VALANCE. Charlie, bring us some dice.

(One of the MEN brings ten dice in two worn leather cups.)

How about liar's dice?

JIM. Alright.

VALANCE. You know the rules?

JIM. I believe so, sir.

(As VALANCE explains he sets up the dice and cups, using each move to explain the rules.)

VALANCE. Ten dice on the table I look at mine, you at yours. Then we bet how many of them is what number across the whole table. Each bet has to be higher till one of us calls the other's bluff. I think you're bluffin' and I call you a liar. If you bluffed, you lose a die. Easy. After you, Jim.

(They shake the dice in the cups. Once. Twice. Three times. They roll. JIM looks under his cup.)

JIM. I bet two threes.

VALANCE. (without looking) At least two threes? Easy. Three threes. So, where's the tenderfoot gone?

JIM. Three fours. Outta town; didn't say where, sir.

VALANCE. Three fives. He comin' back?

JIM. As far as I know, sir. Four fives.

VALANCE. Four fives? I don't think so. I'm callin' your bluff liar.

JIM. I got two fives.

VALANCE. (He finally lifts the cup.) I only got the one. Three fives ain't enough. Lose one.

(JIM discards one die. They roll again. Quicker this time. They both look under their cups.)

I bet there are at least two ones. So, tell me, you're the man who's been learnin' how to read?

JIM. Yes, sir.

VALANCE. You read anythin' good?

JIM. Yes, sir. Two twos.

VALANCE. Three twos. You read the newspapers?

JIM. Yes, sir.

VALANCE. You read anythin' about me? In them papers?

JIM. Yes, sir.

VALANCE. So you know who I am.

JIM. I do, sir.

VALANCE. And yet you agree to share a table with me, to share a drink, a game?

(Silence.)

It's your bet.

JIM. Three threes.

VALANCE. You know who I am and you agree to play dice with me?

JIM. I didn't feel I had a choice, sir.

VALANCE. You don't feel safe playin' dice with me, Jim?

JIM. Four sixes.

VALANCE. Four sixes? Nine dice on the table and you're sayin' four of them are sixes?
I like that, Jim, I do. I bet five sixes.