



## Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden

*By Jake Logan*

Download now

Read Online ➔

**Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden** By Jake Logan

### THE FINAL NOVEL IN TODAY'S LONGEST-RUNNING ACTION WESTERN!

Down on his luck in San Francisco, John Slocum takes a contract with the Central California Railroad. He's given the difficult task of locating a stolen shipment of silver worth over one hundred thousand dollars, but he catches a break when he discovers that the company's attractive secretary, Tamara, was an accomplice in the robbery. Too bad his employer would rather believe in the thief's feminine wiles than in Slocum's cold hard facts.

Fuming mad and out of work, Slocum starts looking to let off some steam. But when Tamara offers Slocum a new job—finding where the rest of the robbers stowed the loot—he has a hard time saying no to the seductive crook, or to a change of fortune. Still, Slocum knows he has to keep his cards close to the chest, or else he might end up six feet under...

↓ [Download Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden ...pdf](#)

📖 [Read Online Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden ...pdf](#)

# Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden

*By Jake Logan*

**Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden** By Jake Logan

**THE FINAL NOVEL IN TODAY'S LONGEST-RUNNING ACTION WESTERN!**

Down on his luck in San Francisco, John Slocum takes a contract with the Central California Railroad. He's given the difficult task of locating a stolen shipment of silver worth over one hundred thousand dollars, but he catches a break when he discovers that the company's attractive secretary, Tamara, was an accomplice in the robbery. Too bad his employer would rather believe in the thief's feminine wiles than in Slocum's cold hard facts.

Fuming mad and out of work, Slocum starts looking to let off some steam. But when Tamara offers Slocum a new job—finding where the rest of the robbers stowed the loot—he has a hard time saying no to the seductive crook, or to a change of fortune. Still, Slocum knows he has to keep his cards close to the chest, or else he might end up six feet under...

**Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden** By Jake Logan Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #573085 in eBooks
- Published on: 2014-11-25
- Released on: 2014-11-25
- Format: Kindle eBook

 [Download Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden ...pdf](#)

## **Editorial Review**

About the Author

**Jake Logan** is the author of the long-running Slocum western series, featuring the adventures of gunslinger John Slocum.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

“You aren’t mad at me for turning you over to Collingswood?”

“Mad? Not really. It surprised me, I have to admit.” She pressed a bit closer. He felt her hot breath against his throat and the beating of her heart through her breast and thin dress. “It is almost impossible to find a man with such integrity.”

“I worked for the railroad. I gave my word.”

“That’s what makes you so different. Too many men see a promise made as a sometime thing.”

“I don’t work for the railroad any longer.”

“No duty to either Mr. Collingswood or the Central California Railroad,” she said. “You aren’t beholden to them anymore?”

Slocum put his hands around her slender waist. He felt the heat from her body. It matched his own.

“Not a bit. What about you? You still have your job.”

“I never promised to find the silver or make sure it ended up in the bank vault owned by the railroad.”

“Do tell,” he said. He pulled her closer until they both gasped for breath.

“I want someone who can give me his word, and I’ll know he can keep it.”

“Unlike Jackson.”

“We can work together.”

“Can I trust your word?”

“We can spit in our palms and shake on it,” she said.

“That’s not good enough. I know you’re a crook.”

“What more can I do to show you I can keep my word if we agree to be partners? What can seal the contract?”

Slocum caught his breath as her hand wormed its way between their tightly pressed bodies and began inching down from his chest to his belly, and then even lower until she gripped the growing bulge at his crotch.

## Prologue

“You lied to us, Jackson.” The tall, rangy, unnaturally ashen man dressed like a placer miner hefted his rifle and moved it in his partner’s direction.

“Shut yer tater trap, Drury.” The second of the four men waiting nervously beside their horses put down his field glasses and glared at the former miner. “Jack’s not the kind to lie ’bout something this big.”

“Thanks for the vote of confidence,” Jackson said. He hitched up his gun belt as he glared at Drury. The man had been the weak link ever since he’d recruited him from the saloon along San Francisco’s treacherous Barbary Coast. If he hadn’t come along with this job, Drury would have been shanghaied for sure, all pale and shaking the way he did.

The truth was he had saved all three of his partners from different fates far worse than waiting for a train that never seemed to be on schedule. Drury had a bad drinking problem and made it worse chasing the dragon in opium dens along Dupont Gai. A stint on a China clipper’s two-year trip to the Orient as a deckhand might have improved his lot in life, but nothing would change his sour disposition or volatile anger.

As much of a naysayer as Drury was, their lookout was worse in his way. Baldy Wilson was a suck-up, and nothing Jackson said was ever wrong. When they had started planning this robbery, all Baldy wanted to do was sit around, drink, and tell everyone how great it would be to get rich, and how it was all Henry Jackson’s brilliance that was going to dump a ton of money into their laps. Jackson wanted Baldy to shut up and find out the information they needed from the railroad agent in Oakland, but Baldy had proven untrustworthy. He was as likely to spill his guts about the robbery to the station agent, boasting of the haul they would make, as he was to find the information about grades and engine speeds.

For that, Jackson had reluctantly relied on the fourth man in their small gang. Pierre Montague gave him a queasy stomach. The man’s dark eyes never blinked, always watched, and no emotion showed through. If Jackson had to pick one of the gang most likely to shoot him in the back and take his share, Montague was it. In spite of the man’s name, he wasn’t French or even Acadian. Rumor had it that his ma had no idea who his pa was, but she wanted it to be a dashing Frenchie she had met in New Orleans. Montague had been born aboard a paddle wheeler on the river, churning hard for Natchez, a father or even a namesake nowhere to be found.

Other gossip claimed that Montague had popped out of his mama’s womb and immediately kicked her into the muddy river to drown. Jackson doubted it, but given what he knew about the man, he understood how such a story could arise. Still, Montague had a way with the ladies and had romanced that general store owner’s wife into giving them supplies they could never have paid for. Not having to steal the gear and victuals made them just a tad more invisible.

After they got around to robbing the train, they had to vanish fast. While sweet-talking his own lady, he’d learned that the Central California Railroad had a low tolerance for getting robbed. There was even talk that the vice president in charge of this line from Sacramento to Oakland had personally tracked down two inept robbers by himself, skinned them alive, and then tossed them into San Francisco Bay, where the saltwater brined them up for the sharks to eat. Jackson had never caught sight of David Collingswood, but he had quite a reputation. In spite of what Tamara said about him being a pussycat, the reputation was a powerful one, though it looked as if easy living in San Francisco had turned the man soft and careless.

“You sure this train’s the one, Jackson?”

He glared at Drury.

“Why don’t you just step up on that swayback nag of yours and leave if you got doubts? Splitting the money four ways is better than five.”

“Yeah, Drury. Leave. It’s better ’n listening to you bad-mouth Jack the way you do,” piped up Baldy. “If it weren’t for him, we wouldn’t have any notion at all ’bout what the train’s carryin’. He got the information straight from the horse’s mouth.”

“Yeah,” Drury said, sneering. “That bitch of his looks more like a horse than a woman. Might be ’cuz all she says to him is *nay*.”

Jackson considered his options. Drury was egging him into a fight for some reason. It might be nothing more than a nasty disposition, or he might be angling to get acknowledgment from the others that he was the gang leader. Jackson looked at Montague and not Baldy for support. Baldy would follow whoever called himself the boss. Montague had to back any play against Drury.

He moved so Montague stood behind Drury. Only then did he square off, push back his coat to rest his hand on the side of his holster. If Drury made the slightest twitch, he’d be a dead man. Jackson had put up with the constant bitching long enough. Insulting Tamara bothered him less than the way Drury made a play to take over.

“We do all the dirty work and risk our necks, and she gets an equal share,” Drury said. “Where’s the justice in that?”

“Without her telling us about this shipment out of Virginia City, we’d still be sitting in a saloon and getting drunk, bragging on what we’ve done, not how rich we can be. How rich we *will* be.”

Drury pushed back his coat, ready to throw down. At that instant Baldy cried out, “There’s the train! I see the smoke from its stack. We got to get down there, Jack. We don’t want to miss our chance.”

“This is the steepest grade before the train gets over the hills and heads down into Oakland,” Jackson said.

“I don’t care if it’s highballin’. I can rob it blindfolded.”

“We got to ride. Now,” said Montague.

Jackson saw that Montague held his rifle so a single round from it would shatter Drury’s spine. He wished Montague would pull the trigger. Three of them could rob the train just fine.

“Might be you got it right for a change, Jackson,” said Drury. “Let’s find out if there’s so much as a silver dollar on the train.”

“I’m seein’ a whale of a lot of trouble,” Baldy said, his eyes pressed to the lenses of his field glasses. “There must be a half-dozen armed guards on top of the train. Never seen ’em ride like that before.”

“The grade’s close to three percent. That’ll shake them up,” Jackson said, shoving Drury out of the way. The back of his neck prickled as he waited for the man to back-shoot him. When the expected bullet never came, he said, “We know what to do. Don’t worry about the guards. Montague will take them out. Right, Pierre?”

All he got from the man was a grunt. Montague moved forward, flopped on his belly, and levered in a round. He took a slow breath, let it out, and fired. Jackson saw a guard on the roof of the mail car jerk about and fall off the train, hidden by the cars. On the far side was a steep cliff. If the guard tumbled down that, he was a goner, even if Montague’s shot had only wounded him.

Montague wasted no more time. He fired slowly, accurately, taking out a guard with every shot. Where the man had learned to shoot like that hardly mattered to Jackson. Not riding into the gun barrels of a half-dozen railroad guards did. He galloped hard. The engineer had twigged to the robbery and had his fireman working overtime to feed the boiler. Jackson had asked around enough to know the engineer had a better chance of blowing a valve than he did of gaining speed on this steep slope.

Keeping low, he ducked a few rounds making their way toward him. Montague proved himself to be a real sharpshooter. No guard got a second shot at any of the men galloping for the mail car. When the sniper's rifle fell silent, Jackson knew they were almost rich. All that separated them from a couple hundred dollars each in silver was a thin wooden door.

"Open up and we won't hurt you," Jackson called out, trotting alongside the slow-moving train. "We just want what you're carryin'."

A shrill scream like that of a frightened woman came from inside the car. Then holes began appearing in the door as the mail clerk foolishly fired through the wood.

Jackson counted. At six, he motioned to Drury and Baldy. They shot off the lock on the door and swung it back along its track as Jackson rode up and shoved his six-gun into the frightened clerk's face. The man was hardly out of his teens. From the look of his face, he had either a bad case of acne or a mild one of smallpox. Each pimple had turned fiery red in his fear. The man's eyes were big and wide, and a bit of drool worked from the corner of his mouth.

"Drop it or I'll drop you."

The clerk looked down to see how he fumbled with the six-shooter in his hands. He was trying to load it without opening the gate. All the shells had tumbled to the floor and rattled about as the train ground to a halt. Montague was still doing his job, getting the drop on the engineer and his brakeman.

"Don't kill me!"

"Get the coupling," Jackson bellowed. The words had barely left his lips when the metallic grinding told him Montague had done his part again.

The locomotive pulled a lighter load now and shot forward, hit the top of the grade, and vanished over the summit in seconds. What he hadn't counted on was the mail car and caboose, once free of the rest of the train, rolling back downhill. For a moment, the mail car stood still, then began the inexorable trip back down the steep hill it had just scaled.

"Get on the car. Set the brake! It's rollin' away from us!"

Jackson's order accomplished nothing. Both Drury and Baldy were on the ground. Montague had dismounted to work at the coupler. He let out a loud curse and started riding after the escaping cars. Jackson rode close enough to see the metal rungs driven into the front of the car. He had done some bulldogging in his day and figured this couldn't be much different. He judged the distance, got his toes square in the stirrups, and launched himself.

He misjudged the distance and crashed into the car, sliding down the rough wall. Frantically, he grabbed for the ladder. At the last possible instant his fingers curled around a rung. The rusted metal cut into his hand, but he hung on grimly. With a powerful jerk, he swung himself around. His toes dragged along the ties and cinders in the roadbed. Every time he hit one of the ties, he was almost jolted from his grip. Through sheer

will, he got one foot under him and kicked hard. This sent him up high enough to grab a second rung. From there he pulled himself up far enough to secure a foothold. In seconds he scrambled up to the roof and found the handle for the car's handbrake.

His back screaming in protest, he fought to turn the rusted wheel. He dug his toes into the roof, got purchase, and finally felt the brake turn a fraction of an inch. Another, another, and then it broke free. He almost pitched from the roof as the wheel made a half circuit. Then he felt the metal grinding down into the wheels. Tortured hot metal smells rose, and a shower of sparks from the wheels shot back toward his three partners. They veered away to keep from being set on fire.

Then he heard cries of fear from the caboose. The three men riding in it jumped, hit the ground with loud thuds, and lay still. A second later the mail clerk shot from the door beneath Jackson's feet. His scream continued for quite a spell. He had picked the wrong spot to escape and had jumped out over a fifty-foot drop into a rocky ravine. Jackson tried to see what happened to the clerk, then decided his stomach wasn't up for seeing guts and brains smeared all over the hillside.

He pushed harder on the brake to slow the deadly downhill slide. The mail car came to a grating halt, but it was still coupled to the caboose. Jackson barely jumped before the caboose tipped over and derailed, taking part of the mail car with it. From the far side of the railroad tracks, Jackson sat up and stared. It looked as if a giant hand had reached down from the sky and plucked away the back half of the mail car, leaving the front still on its wheels on the tracks.

"You all right, Jack?"

"Yeah, I am." Jackson got to his feet. Baldy handed down his reins. "That was one hell of a wreck."

"We mighta lost the vault over the cliff," grumbled Drury. "You could have kept everything all upright on the tracks."

Jackson touched the six-shooter in his holster. A single shot would be all it took, but he saw that Drury was ready for such a move. Even with all the money from the mail car waiting for them, he stirred up trouble. His dark eyes looked like burning coals set in a pasty white face.

Montague rode up, then jumped into what remained of the car. By the time Jackson reached the torn-off rear of the car, Montague had opened the vault.

"How'd you do that so fast?" Jackson hopped up. "I reckoned it would take us an hour to open the vault if the mail clerk wouldn't do it." He snorted. There wasn't any way the mail clerk would open anything, including his own coffin lid.

"It was smashed open." Montague's voice was small, tiny, timid.

"What's wrong? The vault empty?" Jackson pushed past his partner and stared. "Oh, sweet Jesus."

Drury and Baldy joined them. They all stared at the take, then at each other.

"There must be a ton of silver there," Baldy finally said. "We're rich. Dammit, we're rich!"

He began dancing around, whooping, hollering, and swatting his floppy-brimmed hat against his thigh.

"Why're you so quiet? Both of you?" Drury went to the safe and ran his fingers over the silver bars stacked inside. "I know metal. This is the real thing. What's wrong?"

“There must be a couple hundred bars there,” Montague said. “How are we gonna take it all?”

Jackson sucked in his breath. This was an embarrassment of riches he had never expected. From what Tamara had said, the shipment would be good, maybe a few hundred dollars. He had hoped for a thousand. But this?

“What’s your problem? We struck the mother lode,” Drury said, happy for the first time.

“You got a pack mule with you? No? Well, neither do I. None of us expected to be starin’ at so much silver.”

“Must be three, four hundred pounds,” Montague said, moving the bars and judging the weight, then doing a quick count in the huge vault. “More like half a ton.”

“So?”

“So how are you going to strap on an extra two-hundred pounds of silver bars and ride your horse, too? The horse’d die under you before we reached the bottom of the hill.”

“We can take what we can carry,” Montague said. Then he and Jackson locked eyes.

The same thought went through both their heads. Jackson wasn’t going to leave so much as a speck of silver dust behind. Montague had the same feeling. They had risked their lives for this and wanted to get as much as possible.

But his horse barely carried him at a hundred and twenty pounds. More than doubling the weight would make it bowlegged within a mile and dead from strain in two.

“We can’t leave it. That’s just not . . . right.” Montague sucked in a deep breath. “What are we gonna do, Jackson?”

“I don’t know.”

“You said we ain’t got much time. The engineer’s gonna find a telegraph wire alongside the tracks and send a message.”

It was a risky job climbing a telegraph pole and hooking a loop around the strung telegraph wire. Somehow this made a connection so a man who knew Morse code could send along a warning. Jackson had tried to find out if anyone on this train knew the technique. Even if they did, they had to send a coded message. As malingerers, telegraph operators were about the worst. They had a valuable skill and seldom got fired, no matter how bad their misdeeds. Even if the operator received a message about the train robbery, it might be a spell before the information got passed along to the law.

Or it might be in the hands of a sheriff right now.

Jackson eyed the mountain of silver bars. A dozen ideas flashed through his head.

“We can toss the bars over the cliff and come get them later,” he said.

“Like hell I will,” said Drury. “What’s to keep you from getting there first and taking it all?”

“Or you?” said Baldy. “You and a dozen pack mules would be more ’n up to the chore.”



"You haven't looked over the side," Montague said. "That's a sheer drop. You got any notion how to reach the bottom?"

"I don't, and even if we figured it out, we couldn't heave the silver out far enough to get all the way down. There'd be silver strewn the whole way down for the railroad dicks to recover."

"We don't have much choice, not if we want to take it all."

"What's your plan, Jack?" Baldy looked eagerly at his boss.

"We load our horses with as much as they'll carry, get down the mountainside, then split up. Hide the silver wherever you like or try to make it away with your horse loaded down. Whatever we do, we scatter to the four winds."

"You want to know where I'm gonna hide my share?" Baldy frowned as the other three glared at him.

"Don't tell us," Jackson said. "Keep it a secret. If one of us gets caught, the other three's stashes will be safe."

"What if all of us are caught?" Drury thrust out his chin belligerently.

"Then you'll get a chance to shoot it out, like you been itchin' to do. Or we can all watch one another get our necks stretched. Men died in this robbery."

"We didn't kill 'em," protested Baldy. "They jumped on their own. 'Cept the ones Montague shot."

"I'm not going to argue that with a jury," Montague said. He bent to the task of moving the silver bars to the edge of the car.

Jackson saw him fetch his horse and begin working to use the saddle blanket and his duster as a way of keeping the metal bars on his horse's back. Montague had started back for another load when Jackson joined in. He said nothing as Drury and Baldy began moving their share of the silver, too.

Every second dragged like an eternity. He expected the sound of a steam whistle on a train bringing the railroad bulls.

"I can't load the rest," complained Drury. "My horse's belly's about draggin' on the ground."

Jackson tugged on his horse's reins.

"Do what you want."

"See you in hell, Jackson!" Drury shouted, then returned to the final few silver bars still in the vault.

Jackson saw that Montague and Baldy were already ahead of him, heading down the hillside. He reached the level spot where a couple canyons branched away. Montague had already disappeared down one. With luck he wouldn't follow the one the other man already had. Or he could keep moving and hunt for a different place to go, but this looked chancy. Baldy had stopped and eyed him, as if waiting for orders.

Deciding it was for the best, Jackson motioned for Baldy Wilson to take one of the routes away. He kept going for another couple miles, his horse increasingly tired by the heavy load. Jackson tried to guess how much he had piled on. It might be as much as two hundred pounds. He thought he had three thousand

dollars' worth of silver bullion bouncing along a couple feet away.

His anxiety at being found by the railroad bulls finally wore him down. He found a railroad way marker, then cut across country to find a spot to bury the silver for later retrieval. As he went, he drew a map for Tamara. He didn't mind splitting his take in half with her since what remained was ten times what he'd expected to steal.

It was almost dawn when he found a decent spot to begin burying his treasure. Jackson slept until noon, had a meal, finished his map, and then cut across country away from the railroad tracks to find a way to San Francisco that wouldn't expose him to what might be the biggest posse in the history of California hunting for the silver.

He didn't know for certain if the engineer had even sent out the news of the theft, but it made him feel better thinking he was the biggest, baddest outlaw ever.

1

John Slocum took a step back, brought up his fists, and took the measure of his opponent. The man moved like a bull and looked like one, only uglier. His eyebrows grew together, giving him a fierce look when he squinted. His dull brown eyes darted about, not studying Slocum as much as the men gathered in a ring around them. When Slocum saw the man's interest was more on the bets being placed than the fight, he moved fast. With two quick steps, he shoved his shoulder into the bull man's, knocking him off balance. As the man tried to regain his feet, Slocum launched a short punch to the heart that traveled less than six inches.

He felt the impact all the way up to his shoulder. Slocum swung his left hand up and over the man's flailing arm and crushed his fist into an exposed temple. Like a bull shot behind the ear, the man's eyes rolled up in his head as he crumpled to the dock, where he lay twitching feebly.

The crowd had been cheering and jeering. It went utterly silent now that the favorite had been vanquished so quickly.

"You took out Bully Boy with one punch," the man holding the bets said in a choked voice. "Ain't nobody ever done that before."

"I hit him twice," Slocum said. He faced the man and plucked the greenbacks from his fist.

"Wait, you can't—" The man swallowed hard and went pale under the caked grime that had turned his face almost black from weeks of not bathing.

Slocum counted out the money he had been promised and held up the rest for the crowd to see.

"Who bet on me?"

For a long second no one said anything. Then one man in the back held up his hand. Or what remained of it. Three fingers were missing, leaving only his index finger and thumb.

"Come get your winnings." Slocum waited for the man to push through the crowd. Grumbles were muffled but grew when Slocum handed all the money to the lone winner.

"First time I was smart 'nuff to back a winner," the man said, taking the money between thumb and

forefinger. He stuffed the money into his pocket.

Slocum waited for the trouble to start, but having the man beside him changed the way the crowd acted. Still grumbling, they slowly drifted away until only the gambler and the winner remained.

“You owe me. I set up the fight,” said the gambler.

“You owe Bully Boy,” the man beside Slocum said. “This the first time he’s been beat, ain’t it?”

“Me and you, we can make a boatload of money,” the gambler said to Slocum. “Lose the next one and set up for a rematch and we’ll clean the lot of them out of every dime they’ve ever earned or stole.”

“Not interested,” Slocum said, turning away.

“Hell, you could get rich. What’s the matter with you? Don’t you like the idea of winnin’ so much money?”

The gambler saw Slocum’s expression and snorted in disgust, then went to the fallen fighter and kicked him to see if he got any response. The fighter moaned, and his eyelids flickered. He was still out like a light. Then the gambler bent, grabbed Bully Boy by the shoulders, and dragged him to the edge of the dock. Panting from the exertion, the gambler tipped his fighter over the edge to land with a loud splash ten feet below in San Francisco Bay.

“Why’d you do that?” Slocum asked.

“He lost. He ain’t no good to me now. I hope he gets et by the fishes.”

The man beside Slocum laughed.

“More likely, he’ll pizzen the fishes.”

The gambler started to ask Slocum once more to fight for him, then saw the answer etched in every line on his angular face. Without looking back, the gambler stalked off, muttering to himself about having to go back to three-card monte to make a living.

“You do handle yourself with aplomb,” said the two-fingered man.

“What happened to your hand? You a fighter?” Slocum asked.

The man held up his finger and thumb and wiggled them.

“Bein’ a sailor’s a right dangerous way to live. I got all caught up in rigging and fell off a slippery spar. Part of me hit the deck. Some of me stayed aloft in the rigging.”

The man studied Slocum hard, then said, “I ain’t up for a job I heard about, but you got the look of a man who can handle himself if I put in a good recommendation.”

Slocum shrugged. He had hunted for work along the Embarcadero for a week and hadn’t turned up anything. Shipping was light at the moment, and the dockworkers who had jobs protected them jealously. The foremen weren’t inclined to take on new workers when they couldn’t keep their old hands busy.

He had come to San Francisco on a horse that had died under him as he rode into Portsmouth Square. His fortune had gone downhill from there. The dives along the Barbary Coast were death traps he had wisely

avoided. Nobody unknown to the barkeepers or owners escaped without getting their gut filled with Mickey Finns before being spirited off to the ships anchored in the harbor. There might not have been much call for dockhands but the ships' captains had an insatiable appetite for new deckhands. Once aboard a ship, the shanghaied landlubber found himself impressed into service for two years or better. Once the drug from the drink wore off, a shanghaied sailor had a long walk back.

Rather than drink there, Slocum had stayed closer to the center of town. He had passed by Russian Hill once, had taken a look at the Union Club on Nob Hill, and watched the fancy carriages with their well-dressed men and beautiful women decked out in jewels rattle by. Footsore and down to his last nickel, Slocum had considered a robbery to get back on his feet. Not a one of the carriages didn't also have a pair of armed guards riding close behind.

Slocum had eventually come to the docks and gotten into the fight. The gambler had taken one look at his rangy, emaciated frame and had thought he would be an easy opponent for Bully Boy. For ten dollars, Slocum would have let himself get pounded on, but a glance at the other fighter had revealed more muscle than skill.

"My name's Underwood. Julius Underwood, late of Boston and other points north in New England."

"You're a ways from home."

"You are, too. I got me a good ear for accents. South Carolina? No, wait, Georgia."

"Why'd you bet on me?"

"Odds. The longer the odds, the bigger the payoff."

Slocum laughed at this. Underwood had no confidence in his abilities but put money down on all the longshots in the hope of getting rich quick. Slocum wasn't averse to making such a bet himself, but he needed more than a ghost of a chance to win. He had to see some talent, some hope, have a tad of conviction to place such a wager.

Had Underwood seen that in him, in spite of what the two-fingered sailor said?

"Wish I had money to bet on myself." Slocum touched the ten dollars in his vest pocket. "Time for me to get some food."

"I'll buy you a drink if you'll listen to me for five minutes."

Underwood was sturdy, but he had other injuries besides his hand from the way he dragged his left leg just a mite. Additional evidence came in his cough, deep and rattling. When he spat, bloody phlegm hit the street.

"You're the one who looks like he needs a drink."

"That I do. Good thing my employer don't mind if I knock back a shot or two while I'm workin'."

"You're on the job?"

"You can say that. You're no sailor or stevedore. I been on or by the sea long enough to know that. No, I make you out to be a cowboy. A wrangler down on his luck." Underwood peered around to Slocum's left hip, where his Colt Navy was slung. "Or maybe from the way you fight and the worn grips on that hogleg, you might be a shootist."

“Not that. If you’re looking for someone to kill for you, keep hunting.”

“Not that, no, sir, not that. My job’s to recruit, it’s true, but for a real job. A good one with the railroad.”

“I’ve done some work on a railroad, but not around here. Not in California.”

“We got plenny of them Celestials to do the hard work. You ever see any of ’em at work? I do declare, they’re scrawny little things, and they do the work of three men. Each of ’em, eatin’ nothin’ more ’n a bowl of rice a day. I was up in the hills when they was goin’ across Las Trampas Ridge in the early days. They got a way of swingin’ down sheer rock walls in baskets and chiselin’ out a roadbed. Damnedest thing you ever did see.”

“I haven’t heard of any railroads being built around here.”

“Nope, you wouldn’t. We got all the track laid we need for another fifty years. It’s not that kind of job I’m recruitin’ for.”

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Nancy Fisher:**

What do you about book? It is not important along with you? Or just adding material when you really need something to explain what the one you have problem? How about your free time? Or are you busy individual? If you don't have spare time to accomplish others business, it is make you feel bored faster. And you have spare time? What did you do? Everyone has many questions above. They have to answer that question due to the fact just their can do which. It said that about publication. Book is familiar in each person. Yes, it is correct. Because start from on kindergarten until university need this particular Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden to read.

#### **Brandy Brobst:**

This book untitled Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden to be one of several books that will best seller in this year, this is because when you read this publication you can get a lot of benefit into it. You will easily to buy that book in the book retail outlet or you can order it by using online. The publisher of this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more readily to read this book, as you can read this book in your Cell phone. So there is no reason to your account to past this guide from your list.

#### **Phyllis Wilder:**

You can spend your free time to study this book this book. This Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden is simple to develop you can read it in the recreation area, in the beach, train in addition to soon. If you did not have got much space to bring the actual printed book, you can buy often the e-book. It is make you quicker to read it. You can save often the book in your smart phone. Therefore there are a lot of benefits that you will get when you buy this book.

**Danielle Hawkins:**

Is it an individual who having spare time after that spend it whole day simply by watching television programs or just lying down on the bed? Do you need something new? This Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden can be the answer, oh how comes? A book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your time by reading in this fresh era is common not a geek activity. So what these textbooks have than the others?

**Download and Read Online Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By  
Jake Logan #X3O9IT5217G**

## **Read Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By Jake Logan for online ebook**

Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By Jake Logan Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By Jake Logan books to read online.

### **Online Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By Jake Logan ebook PDF download**

**Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By Jake Logan Doc**

**Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By Jake Logan Mobipocket**

**Slocum 430: Slocum's Silver Burden By Jake Logan EPub**