

Escape

by Tom Fassbender

Lothario Jones rounded the corner and skidded to a stop, trying to catch his breath. He was in a tight spot. The Journeymen were still hot on his trail. His Danger Pistol was out of radium pellets. And his once-full Bag of Tricks was now empty, except for Brother Barnacle's final invention — the unpredictable Colorado Button. This odd device, heavy despite its small size, was the ultimate escape clause, a one-shot, one-way trip to somewhere in Colorado. But where, exactly? No one knew. No one alive, anyway.

Heavy footfalls echoed down the alley behind him. Lothario knew he was out of time and took off running again, risking a quick glance over his shoulder. The Chef was right at his back, swinging the deadly Carbonic Cleaver in a vicious, sideways arc.

Lothario ducked, hesitating for just a moment, then slapped the button hard, hoping he landed in Pueblo. Sparks exploded out of the dense metal box. He swore as cold heat raced up his arm. He drew in a sharp breath, starting to panic, and then, in a flash ... he was gone.

