



**Paolo Nelli**  
**GOLDEN BOOT**

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English sample translation available

**“The plot and the characters are so compelling you can’t put the book down. The style is direct, inventive and rich of very apt literary references. With simple strokes, Nelli creates atmosphere and conveys emotions. The hazard of bringing together American western and Greek tragedy is managed with such ability that the result is a magnificent novel”** (Simonetta Agnello Hornby)

Golden Boot, once a thriving mining village, now lies forgotten and almost lifeless in the torrid desert with just a bunch of cowboys and persistent diggers with their families. It is stirred from its inevitable torpor by the appearance from the dusty horizon of a cart driven by a man: Reverend Ralph, whose mission is to bring God back to this forsaken village. Reverend Ralph begins by enlisting the help of the village men to rebuild the church, but his even crazier idea is to involve the entire village in a stage production of the Greek tragedy *Medea*. All of this is seen through the eyes of fourteen-year-old Chuck who, to his father’s shame, spends his time isolated in books and poetry or learning the skill of boot making from wise old Bill, rather than learning how to hold a gun. When Chuck’s father is killed by his partner Dalton, and Dalton seems to lay claim to his father’s place by his mother’s side, the tragedy performed on stage suddenly appears to be a mirror image of what is happening in reality, with Chuck’s mother’s Angela in the role of Medea. In this context Chuck has his own role to play: to seek revenge like a man.

A novel tinged with the Wild West in which the classical myth of Medea is merged with Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: Chuck refuses to accept his fate and walks away without firing a single shot. Perhaps he will keep on reading Keats’ sonnets or he will make clean and beautifully crafted boots, which will leave unusual footprints in a world that is rarely clean and beautiful.