



COWBOY STAR OF THE MOVIES

No. 21

TIM HOLT

10¢



THE GHOST RIDER in "SPECIAL WITNESS"

— RED MASK in "THE POOL OF DEATH"

S - D L O K I . 15



TIM HOLT

WHY TWO HARD-FACED GUNNERS WITH A JOB RECORD AS LONG AS A LADDER FIND THAT THEIR STOLEN MONEY IS ON TIM HOLT'S T-R RANCH? THEY REALIZE THAT THEY HAVE TO GET TIM HOLT OUT OF THE WAY BEFORE THEY CAN HOPE TO PUT SUREBET HANDS ON THEIR HIDDEN FORTUNE!

BUT WITH THE DISGUISE OF TIM HOLT REVEALED COMES TO LIFE! AND IN AN UNEXPECTED BLOOD CANYON, REDMASK AND THE KILLERS COME TO DEATH BEING FOR CONTROL OF WHAT LIES BENEATH —

"THE POOL OF PERIL"



"THUNDER, BUT IT'S HOT! I'LL BE GLAD WHEN WE REACH BLACK MESA!"

"AFTER WE GET THERE—IT'S AN EASY LIFE FOR US!"



"WHEN WE HELD UP THE GREENHORN BANK AND MADE OFF WITH THAT MONEY, I NEVER THOUGHT IT'D BE ZEVY WEARD BEFORE WE SPENT IT!"

"THE HED IT GOOD — HOBBOYYLL FIND IT! LET'S SHUTS!"

TIM HOLT

SOME DAYS LATER ON THE SOUTHERN END OF THE GRAZING RANGE, HIGH ABOVE THE ROCKY PLATES OF BLACK MESA —



WE'VE GOOD IDEA TO BUILDING POOL, BEN THE AREA COUNTRY TUN, NOW WE CAN BE FOR DRIVING THE CATTLE WE'VE DRIVED THROUGH BARBACQUE PASS, A DRAINING OF WATER!
 MAYBE IT'S A GOOD IDEA — AND MAYBE IT'S NOT!



WHAT YOU HEAR — THAT YOU ARE BE EAT GOOD WHEAT? ARE YOU CRAZY?
 NOT WITH THE SUN-HAPPY RAINBOWS FALLING DOWN AT US! GET UP! GET UP! THAT SADDLE, ONY!



I'VEE BEEN THEM DOWN WITH MY RIFLE, TIM! YOU GO UP BEHIND THEM!
 I SURE WILL! KEEPING ME OFF MY OWN PROPERTY! I WANT TO GET MY HANDS ON THOSE HORSES!



GET READY YOU THOSE-HAPPY HORSES! I'M COMING DOWN!
 HERE'S ONE OF EM MEN! GET HIM!



TRUSTING IN JEREMIA TIM CHOPS DOWN WITH BOTH BARRELS!
 HE SHOT THE OTHER PLUMB — OUTA MY HAND!
 ARE — YOU!



YOU CAN'T USE YOUR FISTS WITH GUNS IN THEM, GENTS — AND I WANT TO SEE HOW GOOD YOU ARE IN A SHOCKDOWN, DRAG-OUT FIGHT. ...!



TIM HOLT



I'LL KNOCK YOU DOWN, THEN DRAG YOU OUT —!

KEEP YOUR CHIN UP, CHIMP! I GOT MY BUN...!

YOW!



I GOT HIM!

YOU'VE PULLED A ROCK, HOMBERS — AND HERE IT IS!



SHANTYAAA!

LOOKS LIKE BOWDY YOU HOMBERS ARE OUT OF ACTION, NOW.



I'M FLAME SORRY ABOUT THIS, STRANGER. WE MISTOOK YUH FOR TWO OTHER HOMBERS WHO'VE BEEN AFTER US FOR OVER A WEEK!

THAT EXPLANATION DOESN'T SEEM TRUE! YOU THREW DOWN ON US!



WELL, WE DO! BUT HE HAS SO ROCKING MAD, SO BROODING BY THE TWO SUN-HAPPY BARNERS FOLLOWING US TO KICK US THAT WE SHOT WITHOUT CHECKING UP! IT'S A LOT TO ASK — BUT CAN YUH FORGET WHAT WE DO?

WE'LL MARRY YOU BE ENTITLED TO ONE! ANGSTAKE! BUT YOU'VE GOT TO REMEMBER! GET OFF MY GANCH!



AS I'VE DECLARED HIS FRIENDSHIP AND GRANTING HIS HAND DRING A BULLET INTO THIS ROCKET —!

THANKS, BING! YOU'RE A DOOSONE SQUARE BUNT! I WON'T FORGET THIS!

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! GET MOVING —!



I SAW YOU DROP THAT BULLET — WITH ALL OUR HARDY IN IT — INTO HOLT'S ROCKET! WHY?

TELL YUH WHEN WE HIT TOWN COME ON! POG DUST!

TIM HOLT

SCENE AGAIN LATER IN TOWN—

TIM, I KNOW THIS IS SILLY—BUT DID YOU JUST HOLD UP AND ROB TWO GENTS RIDING THROUGH MASSACRE PASS?

QUIT TRYING TO ROB ME, SHERIFF! YOU KNOW ME BETTER THAN THAT!



THEY SAID YOU DID SAID YOU TOOK THEIR WALLET, AND PUT IT IN YOUR POCKET. WIND? WIND? I TAKE A LOOK?

THOSE TWO?... WIND? NO, SHERIFF—SEARCH ME!



WIND? WIND? I KNOW WHAT TO SAY!

WILL I KNOW WHAT TO SAY? — ARREST HIM! HE'S A CROOK!



OH, THAT'S YOUR CHANCE TO GET AWAY? AWAY? AWAY!

CATT, WHAT'S THE BIG DOOHS!



I DON'T LIVE TO HIDE AWAY FROM TROUBLE—BUT I THINK I CAN GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE BETTER OUT OF JAIL THAN IN IT!



HE MIGHT GET AWAY THAT EASY!

NOT WHILE WE CARRY BRANCOLES!

DOOHS! BY HORSE SHE'S ROB THROVING ME OFF!



AND I AM FOR LENDING RIGHT ON YOU! PLEASE TO FORGIVE ME! ARE YOU?

GLURK!



AWWWW!

TIM HOLT

ALONG WITH ALONG THE ARD WALTERS OF DEY BOAR BAZARD, IN A TINY TUNNEL? DON'T BRACK.

WALTERS TIM HOLT CAN'T RIDE AROUND HIS OWN RANGE ANY MORE, WITH THE GIBNET OUT LOCKING FOR HIM - BUT REDMASK IS FREE TO RIDE ANYWHERE...



I DON'T KNOW WHY THOSE HONORS FRAMED ME WITH THE SHERRIF, BUT THERE MUST BE SOME REASON WHY THEY WANT ME OUT OF THE WAY! HUH! - THEY SHOT AT CHITZ AND HE NEAR THAT REGGATION POOL! MAYBE I'D BETTER RIDE OVER THERE...



AT THE POOL ITSELF...

FIRST THING WE WANT TO DO IS BUILD OURSELVES SOME LINDRINES - TO KEEP NOSEY COMPARNSERS OUT OF OUR HAIR!

THAT'S WHY WE BOUGHT ALL THAT GUNPOWDER AND TIN CONTAINERS, HUH?

STRETCH THAT ROPE TIGHT, LINT, SOON AS A MAN OR A HORSE HITS IT, THE ROPE'LL SET THE PLANT AN' STRIKE TO SHRAPING, AND THAT SHRAP WILL BLOW THE TIN OF GUNPOWDER SKY HIGH!



NOBODY CAN COME SWAMPIN' UP ON US NOW! SO - LET'S GO!

I JUST HOPE OUR LOOT IS STILL THERE!



DRIVING UNDER THE COOL, BLUE WATER OF THE POOL, THE TWO MEN SWAMPING SWAMPING UNDER AN OVERHANGING LIP OF ROCK THAT SHELTERS THEM FROM ONE MORE GUNNER'S EYE...

IT'S HERE, LINT! NOBODY FOUND IT, LOOK THERE!



WERE BUCK! BUCK!

THUNDERATION! THERE WULD BE CLOSE INTO A HUNDRED THOUSAND IN GOLD AND CASH HERE, FIFTY THOUSAND EACH! YAHOO!



TIM HOLT



TIM HOLT



NEVER MIND WHO IT IS —
GET HIM!

HOW COULD WE MISS
AT THIS DISTANCE?



BLAMM! BLAMM!

YOU COULD
JUST —
LOAF THIS!

With athletic ability, he makes
landings on his hands — and launches
out with both feet!



I SLIPPED ON THE WET FLOOR
ON FALLING — AGAIN! BENT
ON THOSE SPARE HANDLES!



THE CASE ROCKS AND SHAKES WITH
THE EARTHQUAKE! BUT CLOUDS ROCKET
UPWARD, THROUGH THE SHIFTING MISTS
OF LINDBERG, A YARD CREEP OUT
RESEMBLY...



OH!... GET UP AND TAKE
THESE ROCKS OFF ME! MY BACK—
HURTS... OH! YOU HEAR ME?
GET UP...

BUT ONE MANHOLE DOES NOT MOVE! WITH A GUN LAY COLLAPSED
AND ONLY THE DRYING PORTING OF LINDBERG MOVED IN THE
BLASTED CRACKS...



TIM HOLT



TIM HOLT

WHEN A DEADLY SUTTER HEATHER
HOWLS SO MUCH AS TO LEAVE
HOW MUCH HOT LEAD CAN
CARRY—

WHEN A GROUP OF HARD-FIGHTING
HARD-DRIVING ROAD AGENTS LAY
CARSIDE PLANS TO ROBE THE KING
COUNTRY STATIONARY—

TIM HOLT STEPS IN WITH SHARPER
GLAD AND HANGING HOOPS, TO
LAY A TRAP THAT BACKFIRED IT—

TARGET HIT!



At a Saturday night dance in the town of Ballet—

YOU ARE SO LIGHT AS A THREESTLE
BUCKET! ONE! BY! BE'S GREAT PLEASURE
TO DANCING WITH YOU!



LOOK!
AN' OIL—
BEN THAT
FRED'S ARM!

YOU'D BE
ONLY DANCING
WITH HER!

DO NOT
LET THAT
SO HOT
TENDER OF
YOUR'S EYES,
OUR PLANS.

BE
BE
CARE-
FUL!



TIM HOLT





TIM HOLT



EEEEKK!

SORRY MAMA—
BUT YOU'VE GOT TO
BE A MAMA!



NO TIME TO STAND ON
CEREMONY! I'LL TAKE THE
BASH WAY DOWN!



AND SO HALF AN HOUR LATER—
THE SHAKEN OFF GALLENT'S TRIGGER
HAPPY DALLS. NOW IF I COULD
ONLY FIND — OFF-ON!



CHITO!

HEY-HEY! ALL YOU, I AM BE TIRED
AND FEELS I AM LIKE TO SLEEP
HERE. BARREL, SEE'S GOOD PLACE
TO SLEEP, TIM, YOU EVER
TRY IT?



STOP BEING SILLY,
COME ON, I WANT
TO TALK TO THE
SHERIFF!

I AM DO NOTHING, TIM!
HONEST! I AM JUST BE
TIRED
AND GO
TO SLEEP!

HONKY-TIM

AS SHERIFF GATES SCOWLS BLACKLY, TIM
APPROXS TOMAS GALLENT'S SQUIRE.



BUT DON'T BE ALARMED, SHERIFF.
CHITO HERE IS GOING TO GETTING
THOSE DAW-DOOT'S "BAR" BRIDGE IT
SHOULD
GO OFF!

WHO—
WHAT?



CHITO HAS A HOT-TEMPERED DAW-SLICE
NAMED TOMAS GALLENT'S HUNTING HIM!
ONCE TOMAS SEES CHITO, HELL START
SHOOTING! ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS MAKE
CHITO SIDE A WILE AWAY OF THE
STRASSBOACH! TOMAS HATE'S JE
CHITO, THE STRASS DIVER IS WANTED
—AND YOU AND I
AFFAIR!

AT
OF AN
HOLLY
DANGER
AND!

TIM HOLT



BECAUSE THAT TIM IS POOLING, OTTO RODES OUT OF TOWN ON HIS MISSION...



AT THAT MOMENT, AROUND THE BEND OF THE FALLS —



MEANWHILE, IN THE TOWN OF BULLY...





SOME MILES FROM THE SCENE OF CHITO'S WILD RIDE.



Meanwhile—





I TOLD THE SHERIFF I'D RIDE THREE FAST SHOTS AND THREE SLOW AS A SNAIL! I ONLY HOPE HE HEARS THEM!



Following Tim driving straight down toward the quarry, several desperadoes surround the stagecoach...

BUT WHETHER THEY HEAR HE OR NOT, THE GUY TO DO WHAT I CAN TO STOP THAT ROBBERY!



SEE HOW YOU BENT LIKE A LITTLE OF TWIST!

GRRR!

GET HIM! YIK!

Keep like the wind the sheriff and his posse sweep over the canyon floor and down the clustered squabblers...

WE JUST HEARD YOUR SIGNAL A FEW MINUTES AGO, TH...!

TAKE CHARGE SHERIFF! I WANT TO FIND CHITS!



SOME MINUTES LATER, IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS —



I'VE FOUND YOU NOW, PEST! HERE COMES MY BULLETS!

LOOKS LIKE I GOT HERE JUST IN TIME!



COME OUT, CHIT! YOU'RE SURE NOW!

SOME MINUTES LATER —

GET A MOVE ON! AREN'T YOU COMING TO THE DANCE IN TOWN TONIGHT?



NOT ME! I AM NEARLY GOING TO DANCE WITH A GIRL AGAIN — UNTIL I AM FOR SURE THAT SHE HAS NO BOY FRIENDS! I AM LEARN MY LESSON! AT 20 — 21!

the GHOST RIDER

IN THE
SPECTRAL

THE SPECTRAL WITNESS!

BEFORE, IN THE GUN GUILD OF THE GHOST RIDER, ANSWERS A BURNING CHALLENGE — AND, WITH NEW AND OLD CLUES, FIGHTS A FIGHT TO PROVE THAT ONLY THE SPECTRAL FIGHTER FOR JUSTICE HAS THE GUN IN HIS GUNNY.



IN THE BACKROOMS OF HART LINDEN'S LAW OFFICE...

OLD MAN LINDEN IS ON HIS WAY HOME FROM THE NEXT TOWN — AND HE'S GOT PAPERS ON HIM TO PROVE THAT I SWEAR I'D WIN HIS LAW CASE LAST YEAR. YOU'RE PICKED. HE'D STEVEN — YOU'RE THE MAN WHO'S GOING TO STOP HIM.



YOU PUSH ME A ROAD AGENT, PER? BE SURE YOU GET HIS MONEY, BOY! I'LL LOOK LIKE THAT'S YOUR MAIN PURPOSE YOU CAN KEEP. WHAT DOUGH YOU FINK UP, BUT I WANT THOSE PAPERS — GET IT?

I GOTCHA, BOSS!



HATED A HORRIFYING SPOT ALONG THE ROAD. A BLACK BLOODLESS NIGHT BLOTS OUT THE FRAME...

BLACK AS PITCH? THESE COULDN'T BE A BETTER NIGHT FOR THIS?

WAST TALK — TELL BRACH ALL RIGHT!

ALL RIGHT, YOU — THIS IS A STYLISH REACH!





TIM HOLT

RED STEVENS
WILL TAKE STEVENS
TO HIS CASE,
SAY T JUDG.

I GOT THEM PAPERS, BOSS—
BUT I HAD THEM ALL THRU'D
DOGGERS! THEN I HAD 'EM
WITH THEM GHOST RIDERS, TOO—
BUT I GOT AWAY... B—BUT HE
SAYS HE DID IT, BOSS—T'WH
GHOST RIDE SAYS I / MY
MASH 'WUZ OFF?



WE'LL PUT THE FINGER ON ME,
BOSS! THEM GHOST RIDERS
KNOWS HOW AS I'D T'RAVEL!
WHAT'LL I DO P'WANT'S
I DO?

CUT YOUR
BLABBERING,
STEVE! HE'S
CALM DOWN,
YOU FOOL!



AS LONG AS IT WAS
ONLY THE GHOST
RIDE WHO SAW YOU DO
IT, THERE'S NOTHING
TO WORRY ABOUT, HE
CAN'T PIN A THING ON
YOU—UNDERSTAND?
JUST LEAVE
EVERYTHING
TO ME...!



WELL, SURE, WHEN THE SHERIFF AND
T JUDG. RETURNS FROM VIEWING UP
THE BODY OF T'WANS

WANT THEM—T'WANS
A NOTE STUCK T'WH
DOOR WITH A CHARGER!
NOW WHO COLLEA
DOES THAT?

WELL, SURE,
THEY DOING
ABOUT ON
THE JOB
WELL—

I DON'T KNOW SHERIFF—
LET'S SEE WHAT IT SAYS.



WELL, I'LL BE
DURNED!

THE GHOST RIDER'S
USUALLY RIGHT,
SHERIFF, I THINK
WE OUGHT TO PICK
UP RED STEVENS—
I JUST SAW HIM
GO INTO THE
SALOON WITH
WALTON JUDG.



WHAT YOU
SAY T'WH THIS,
RED STEVENS?

DON'T SAY T'WH, RED—
I'LL HANDLE THIS! SHERIFF,
YOU CAN'T PIN THAT MURDER
ON RED STEVENS WITHOUT A
SINGLE WITNESS, WITHOUT
EVIDENCE!

NO WITNESSES!
WELL, AND T'WH
GHOST RIDERS?

I'M SURPRISED
BY YOU, SHERIFF.
THE GHOST RIDER
HAS AN UNDETERMINED
OUTLAW—AND A
LEGAL WITNESS MUST
CLEARLY IDENTIFY
SINGLELY, EVERYBODY
KNOWS THAT THE BOTS
COULD BE A LIE, IT WON'T
HOLD UP IN A COURT
OF LAW!



TIM HOLT



MAN: LOOK HERE, JED— THE GHOST FINGER IS A GHOST AND GHOSTS DON'T TELL LIES!

HOWEVER, EDUCATOR Amy Brown CAN TAKE US UP IN A WHITE SWEAT AND CALL HERSELF A GHOST. I TELL YOU THE GHOST FINGER IS A BASTER AND HE OUTLAW WHO'S AFRAID TO REVEAL HIS REALITY!



WHY COME THAT GUY SPOOK ALWAYS NEEDS DARKNESS FOR HIS TRICKS. I LIKED HIS PRANK— THAT'S WHAT I WANT, EVEN IF HE WAS A GHOST — NO COURT SHOULD SPOIL THE EVIDENCE OF SOMEONE WHO WASN'T EVEN ALIVE! IT'S NOT LEGAL!



NO, GHOST— I'M WILLING TO BET THAT OUTLAW GHOST BRED HELD TRAPS HIMSELF AND IS TRYING TO PIN THE BLAME ON POOR INNOCENT ME BECAUSE...

MESS! SO, BUT JUST THE SAME...



... I'M ARRESTIN' YUH ON SUSPICION— ANYWAY! YUH HUH DEFEND YOURSELF AT TUAL HEARIN' TOMORROW!

LEAVE EVERYTHING TO ME, NED— THIS CASE IS A CINCH!



LATER, AFTER NED STEVENS WAS AWAY FOR A MIN...

I'M NOT TROUBLED, DEE. JED'S RIGHT— THIS HERE CASE'LL FALL THROUGH BECAUSE I LACK EVIDENCE — LEGAL EVIDENCE. THAT IS, UNLESS...

UNLESS NED STEVENS CONFESSES HIS OWN GUILT — RIGHT?



GET AWAY, AT THE BACK ROOM OF THE CANTON LAUNDRY.

OH-OH-OH-OH. HOW CAN HE MAKE NED STEVENS CONFESS HIS GUILT?

SUCH BE HARD JOB, BILLY BUXTON. — AM TELLIN' NED HE'S JOB FOR UNDOUBTABLE GHOST FINGER — YEH?



I WOULD HAVE TO APPEAR AT THE TRIAL AS THE GHOST FINGER. IN JED'S MINDSET, IN SUCH A WAY TO CONVINCE STEVENS THAT I REALLY AM A GHOST, I'D HAVE TO SCARE HIM INTO CONFESSING! I'M GOING TO NEED SOME BRAND NEW TRICKS, BING BONG!

HEHEHE!

TIM HOLT

OBSERVE, MEX FURY — CHEESECLOTH/ OUR PROBLEM IS SOLVED! THE HONORABLE GHOST RIDER WILL APPEAR AT THE COURT TOMORROW AND HE WILL BRING HORROR INTO THE HEARTS OF ALL EVIL ONES!



IF WE CAN GET THE DAY OF THE TRIAL / THE VERY ELEMENTS SEEM TO CONSPIRE TO SET THE SCENE OF THE GHOST RIDER FOR OUT OF THE BARE BONES. ANONYMOUS CLERKS A GREAT SUCCESS, BRANDING ITS GHOSTLY IDEAS BY HITCHHIKING THE CIVIL BUILDINGS AND COURTHOUSE. THE JOB IS A FITTING CLOAK FOR THE GHOST RIDER WHO MAY BE THE MOST SEVERELY ACCUSED SCUM OF THE COURT HOUSE —

THE ROOF WILL HELP THE ILLUSION...



YOUR HONOR, THE DEFENSE HAS FAILED TO PRODUCE A SINGLE RUBED OF LEGAL EVIDENCE THAT MR STEVENS WAS INVOLVED IN THE MURDER OF TRAINS. THIS CASE OUGHT TO BE DISMISSED!

I'M BEGINNING TO THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, JUDD.



NOW TO PUT ON THE CHEESECLOTH CAPE. IT WAS A WONDERFUL IDEA TO PAINT BARS ON IT, JUST HEAVY ENOUGH TO SEE. THEN, TO SLIP INSIDE THAT WINDOW...



THE BARE, HANGING PARTLY ON THE CHEESECLOTH CAPE, WERE MIXED WITH THE CIVIL BARS OF THE WINDOW AND — AWED BY THE SHINING LIGHTS OF THE ROOF — IT APPEARS TO THE HONORABLE COURT FROM THAT THE GHOST RIDER IS — TRANSPARENT!

CONFESS, MR STEVENS! CONFESS YOUR CRIME OF MURDER! I SPEAK FOR THE DEAD! I SPEAK FOR THE MURDERED TRAINS WHO CANNOT REST!

WHY I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH HIM! HE'S LIKE A LUCID! YES HE IS!



TIM HOLT





VERY WELL— THEN I SHALL TRY— BEWARE, JUDD— BEWARE!

WAAAA!



AND YOU SHALL FLY, TOO— WITH MY HELP!



AND AN ANGRY CROWD WANTS BLOOD.

HERE HE IS! HIS PUNISHMENT AWAILS THE MERE WORD OF THE LAW!

BY GOLLY, GHOST RIDER— YOU SHOULD SOUND THE GUN, TELL ME NOW— ARE YOU REALLY A GHOST?!



AND— AS THOUGH IN ANSWER TO THE GHOST'S QUESTION— THERE IS ANOTHER BURNING FLASH OF LIGHT, BRILLIANTLY ILLUMINATING THE GATE HIS MIST!

I-I O-O-G-G-ESSS THAT ANSWERS YOUR QUESTION, ALL RIGHT!



AN EXTRA BLOWPIPE CAPSULE WILL COME IN handy NOW AND THEN! THAT FLASH AND SMOKE SHOULD ME LONG ENOUGH TO GET AWAY THROUGH THIS HOUSE— NOW, TO STAY THIS COSTUME IN SOME BUSHES AND...



I GUESS I GOT LEFT BEHIND IN THE BUSH, BARRON, BUT, IT LOOKS AS THOUGH YOU GOT JUDD.

THE GHOST RIDER GOT 'EM, YES! HE TURNED THEM WADNET OVER THE US— AND THEN DISAPPEARED IN A FLASH OF LIGHT!



YUP, YES A GHOST, ALL RIGHT! THESE GUYS AIN'T NO DOUBT ANYMORE ABOUT THAT! AN' I'M SURE 'GLAD HE'S ON OUR SIDE...!

TRAIL IN THE SKY

THE MAN on the blue grails moved his gunhand, tossing the horse into a sidestep. His gunhand lifted, and the heavy Colt .45 jumped and spat lead. A packrat, running from danger to danger, leaped convulsively, tumbled, and lay still.

Link Calloway laughed and looked at the man with the star-badge on his vest. "One shot. Good shooting, I call it." He shoved the smoking gun into the holster and moved on, beside the deputy sheriff, along the trail that thrust straight ahead between two red mesas.

The deputy nodded soberly. He had been impressed with the speed of this stranger's gunhand. Impressed, and vaguely troubled. He knew most of the men who could draw and shoot like that. One of them was married at Dodge City; Ben Hasterson. Another had tamed Abilene; Wild Bill Hickok. Then there was the fleshy Texan, Hardin; the lawman, Billy Tipton; the cold killer, Longley. But this laughing stranger was new to the deputy. He had never heard of Link Calloway, and he worried.

They went together through the lava rim-rock country, under a hot sun, past the yuccas and cacti, moving steadily at a canter. By sundown, they came in sight of the few buildings that marked the cow trail town of Downhill. Inside an hour, they were swarming from their saddles in front of the town's biggest hotel.

The deputy stood with Calloway a moment, framed in the light peering out the front door. Calloway was saying, "I'm stopping over for a few days — if I like the town and its liquor. Maybe then I'll be shifting on . . ."

"You don't aim to be drawing and shooting runs in town, do you?" asked the deputy, looking at the worn grip of the heavy Colt.

Calloway chuckled. "I do my shootin' in the open. Rattlesnakes and pack rats, mostly. Sometimes a gopher. Maybe a prairie dog, if I'm lucky. I don't go shootin' at humans."

They left it that way, there in the baroque lamplight of the Downhill Hotel. The deputy nodded and tramped across to his office. Link Calloway watched him move through the early dusk, eyes narrowed calculatingly. He thought, *I got to be plumb easy about this job. I can't just walk into the bank and hold it up. This has to be different! It had been a mistake*

to show his gunhand's speed, back there on the trail. But shooting at animals was a habit. "Besh!" he snorted, "all sheriffs in the same. If they think you got a fast gun, they start gattin' ideas! I've thought about this Downhill Bank job too long to talk at it now!"

He moved up the creaky board steps of the hotel. After a good meal, he would feel better. He would go over his plans once more, to make sure he had omitted nothing . . .

Link Calloway remained in Downhill for two weeks. He was easy and friendly. He had a way of talking with the barkeep at the Oasis, and with Mrs. Trent, who owned the millinery shop by the OK corral. He built a hole for the Lewney twins, and went hunting with the punchers off the Haabhoric range. At night, he played poker in the Oasis, with fair luck. He fished a thick roll of bills, and admitted to everyone that he had worked hard for it, and was taking his easy at the moment.

"No sense in working for a living until all this runs out," he would laugh, as he displayed his bulging wallet.

His poker friends said of him, "He'll never live on his poker winnings. He bluffs too easy . . ."

The cowpunchers chuckled, remembering the swiftly drawn Colt and the deadly accuracy that had dropped a mountain lion with a bullet through its eye. "He can go beauty ridin', collectin' on wolves, if things go bad . . ."

And Link Calloway laughed and played poker, and waited. His plans were perfect. He had gone over them often enough, and knew there was no flaw.

He robbed the bank on Monday morning, just after the doors opened. He came in with his springy stride, a Colt in his hand, and his eyes were hard as he waved the long revolver barrel at the frightened clerk. His movements, as he scooped greenbacks into a little black sack, were deft and sure. There was even a little pity in his eyes when he slammed the gunbarrel down on the clerk's head.

Link came out of the bank, and closed the door, his alert eyes scanning the empty street. He passed there, lighting a cigarette, not hurrying. So easy, he told himself, as he went to draw attention. With a wave of the hand at the deputy sheriff, he swung up into the

saddle of the blue grulla and toed him northward, toward the slopes of Crabapple Mountain.

He rode easily until the grulla hit the top of the hogback ridge above the town. Then he leaned forward, body tucking. Between set lips he rasped, "Now — let's high-tail!"

The blue grulla could run. Its long slim legs flashed and pounded in a gait that took him up out of the grassy grass country and into the foothills of the Crabapple range. Calloway knew the grulla could maintain this pace for hours. He had been careful when he raised the grulla from a colt. He was the pole of a savvy, trained and pampered. The grulla could outrun anything in horseflesh.

"Let 'em try tracking me," he told the saddle. He unslung a wide blanket that was attached by leather thongs to the cantle of his saddle. Drugging the blanket, Indian-fashion, behind him, he rubbed out the hoofmarks of the grulla as he rode.

When he was high in the cañons north of town, he gathered the blanket and wrapped it, still riding. The cañon floor was of rock and stone, packed hard by centuries of baking. A horse's hoofs left no mark here. And further on, where the lava flats lay, he had marked a course for himself.

All that day he rode steadily. At night, he made a cold camp, eating jerked beef and biscuits. The cold waters of a mountain stream did him instead of coffee. He lay down and stared up at the stars, and counted himself a rich man.

Dawn found him in the saddle, moving onward, across the lava flats, down through a narrow trail of solid rock cut out by eons ancient earthquake. For hours, he had been travelling along lava and rock. There was no way for anyone to track him. Even an Apache would be at a loss on this solid bottom!

Calloway touched the bulging black sack. There was over eleven thousand dollars in that sack. More than enough to buy him a little

ranch up in Idaho or Montana! Other men had made themselves rich by robbing, and then losing themselves in this wide western land. So would Link Calloway!

"I'll have to change my name, sure enough," he muttered, letting the grulla walk. "But maybe that's a good thing. Ought to have a solid sort of handle. Maybe Clement Hayes . . . or Jasper Hanson . . . something like that."

On the evening of his third day out of Dewdney, he lit a fire and fried bacon and made himself hot biscuits and beans, and coffee. He ate until he had to loosen his belt, then drew out a Wharling stogie, and lit it. He blew smoke idly, tilted the black sack, and opened it. He counted the money. Twelve thousand, eight hundred and fifteen dollars, all told.

He chuckled, "Enough for a ranch, and some good stock horses. Might even buy some of them pre-fanged Herefords I been hearin' 'bout. Get me a wife, Sartin' down."

It was a nice thought. He smoked the stogie to the end, tossed it into the fire and stretched.

He was in the middle of a yawn when the deputy sheriff and the sheriff leaned in the campfire that flashed redly on their drawn pistols. Behind them, moving carefully forward, were a number of Haskin's men. Link Calloway stared, gulped, and rubbed at his eyes.

He whispered, "You couldn't have tracked me! I left no tracks!"

The deputy said coldly, "We didn't have to track you. You left your trail . . . up in the sky!"

Calloway gawked. The deputy went on, "You forget your habit of drawin' an' shootin' rattlers and peavin' dogs an' gophers? Dead animals attract buzzards! Every once in a while we'd see a couple of 'em swoop out of nowhere, circle around in the air a few times, then dip down. It was almost like havin' somebody pointin' the way you went!"

THE END

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TIM HOLT

AS RED-MASK



AT NOON IN THE SQUARE, THE ROY OF RED-MASK WILL BE SEEN! SUCH IS THE BOAST OF EL TERROR, BANDIT KILLER, WHOSE COUNTRY AND CREDIT HAVE MADE HIM FEARED AND HATED IN THE LAND SOUTH OF THE 40 PARADES!

RED-MASK WHO? THE PRIME LOOT? RED-MASK WHO FIGHTS THE CRUEL AND FEROCEOUS EL TERROR? RED-MASK? CHAMPION OF JUSTICE?—TO BE SEIZED, TO BE MADE A TARGET FOR BULLETS AND KNIVES?—VINNY THE BULL OF THE SAN PABLO ANGRIBY TELL OUT!

"THE UNMASKING OF RED-MASK!"

IN THE LITTLE TOWN OF SAN PABLO THE LOCAL BULL IS A CONSCIENTIOUS MAN AS BONES HE REQUESTED AN LUNCH EXACTLY AT NOON—





"JE TERROR! CAPTAIN AM! I
WELL HAVE YOU FREE BEN ONE
LITTLE BENTAM! SET WAS
BABY FOR JUAN TO HAD YOU
ALL. THE BARRERS ARE FOOL
OF EL TERROR'S CAPTURE BY
RED-BLASH!



"I DO NOT WANT TO
GO, JUAN. I BLAKE IT
HERE!

"SOUL? MAMMA JEE!
YOU HAD LOSTING YOUR
WIND! ARE YOU
CRAZY?"



"I'M NOT CRAZY! I'VE BEEN
THROWING! SHE EES TERE'S MOY—
WHEN I AM BEN JAL, I AM BING
RED BARR! STILL I CAN SEE AN
EYERING, AN ANYBODY
WILL BLAME ME!"

"BUT—
WHY,
TERROR?"



"BECAUSE I AM GOING TO
GET RED BARR, THEN MAN
HAD EES BUT HE IS JAL? I
HEAR, I WILL KILL SLOWLY...
TRUNG SEVERAL DAYS...
USING HOT FRES AN' DILL
KNIVES! BUT I WILL GET
HIM! NOW—LISTEN TO
MY PLANS..."



"ABOUT MY ESCAPEMENT AFTER
THE BARRERS STOLE HAS LEFT
BAY WIELD..."

"WHAAAAA!"

"SOON—
MAY SWOOP
YOU!"



"AN HE WILL SHOOT
YOU TOO, DEWEE—
CHASS YOU ARE
BING SWARTT!"

"O-DONT
SHOOT ME!
I'LL DO
ANYTHING
YOU SAY..."



"SOON WOULD AWAY BEING LAF THE WIND COMES A GREAT
GOLDEN REDDARRED GULLOON! ON HE SWOOP—TIN HOLT
HEADING THE DARE OF RED BARR!"

"THEY'RE ABOUT THROUGH ROBBER THE
BARRERS STOLE, LISTENING! UP YOU GO!
WE CAN'T WASTE ANY MORE
TIME!"

TIM HOLT



TIM HOLT



SO YOU CAN GET TO YOUR MARTIN! EVEN FASTER, I WILL BELIEVE YOUR HORSES OF THE STOLEN MONEY AND SOLD THEY CARRY—!



HOURS LATER IN THE JAIL CELL AT SAN PABLO—
RED-MASK! ALWAYS RED-MASK! HE SEE LIKE A THORN IN MY SIDE! HOW DARE HE KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO ROBBER THE STAGE, HAH?

I DO NOT KNOW EL TERROR!



ONLY YOU AND I KNOW THOSE PLANS, UNFL! YOU TOLD THOSE MEN! SURELY! WHICH WERE YOU TELL OF THEM? AH? ANSWER, RED!

NO ONE, EL TERROR! ONLY SOMEONE OVER-HEARD ME AT THE CAFE WHERE I SPOKE TO THESE MEN!



BEHIND BARS? WE WILL PLAN OUR NEXT ROBBERY THE SAME WAY, YOU WILL TELL THE MEN IN THESE CAFE, AND WHEN YOU DO... YOU WILL SEE WHO LISTENING TO YOU! EYE! SURELY!



FIVE HOURS LATER IN THE SNAKE-CHARMED RED TOWN INN.

YOU UNDERSTAND, BUT TOMORROW YOU ROB THE NODDY BANK! AT THREE O'CLOCK!



BUT THIS PRETTY ANGELINA SEE A SPY FOR REDDIE RED-MASK! LAST TIME SHE WAS CLEANING THE TABLE NEARBY ALSO! I THEREIN I FOLLOW HER!



WHENEVER THAT ANGELINA EVER FOLLOW HER ANGELINA SADDLES HER PONY AND THERE OFF INTO THE NIGHT...

I MUST TELL BRON RED-MASK WHY I HATE OVERHEARD! HE WILL STOP THESE BAD EL TERROR!

TIM HOLT

Months later, dead in the hills above San Pablo...



WHY DO YOU RISK YOUR LIFE TO BRING ME THIS NEWS?

ANYONE IN SAN PABLO WOULD DO IT! WE FEAR AND HATE THE BAD EL TERROR! YOU ARE GOOD! YOU SAVE US FROM HIM AND HIS MEN!

SO THESE ARE WHERE HE HIDES OUT, HAN? SET EYES GOOD THERE TO KNOW! A LOT VERY GOOD! SHE TELLS HIM OF THE ROBBERY... WHICH EYES ALSO GOOD!



Next morning, great placards plaster the walls of San Pablo's public buildings! People gather together, strangely protesting...



CAUTION!

TERROREN REEFMA WILL BE STOPPED BY ME, THE GREAT EL TERROR AS THE CHURCH-BELL TOLL ADOX HOUR! I WILL PULL THE MASK FROM HIS FACE!

BUT EL TERROR EYES BEEN JAILED!

THAT DOES NOT MATTER! HE EYES LIKE A MAGGOT! HE WILL COME OUT OF JAIL WHEN HE WANTS!



WAL HA! HOW DELIGHTFUL! YOU ARE SURE YOU CAN FIND THESE HIDEOUT OF RED-WALK AGAIN?

WEEH MY EYES SHUT! BY TONIGHT, HE WILL BE OUR PRISONER!

Months later, in hiding -



LIFT UP YOUR HANDS, SAVAGE!

WAP WEEH! THEE! REEHE!



BUT WAS VERY EASY! EL TERROR PLANS THINGS WELL!

EVEN TO RED-WALK! HE WERE! CATCH REE! SURE NOW!



AND - PLEASE HE COMES NOW!

I AM ALMOST SORRY FOR REE! EVEN REE HE TAKES OUR LOOT AWAY - HE WERE STILL LOSE OUT!



SOONLY THE NIGHT RIDERS FEARFULLY THE REMOVED PEOPLE OF SAN RAFAEL DARNED TO ASK QUESTIONS IN TINY WHISPERED...



WAS RED-MASK CAPTURED?
BES SET TRUE?

WELL EL TERROR
ESCAPE TODAY
ONLY!

TOMORROW AT
HIGH NOON, WE
WELL KNOW
ALL! 'N'

AND IN A TINY ROOM OF A SMALL HOTEL ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE TOWN...



SOON YOU
WELL HAVE
NO PLANNED
TO HIDE YOUR
FACE!

BUT WE
WELL
ALL
KNOW
WHAT
YOU LOOK
LIKE!

AT LEAST—LET
ME GET
PRESENTABLE!
GIVE ME A BRUSH
—A NEEDLE TO
SEW MY TORN
SHIRT! SOME
POLISH FOR
MY BOOTS...

THROUGH THE GAPS OF THE CURTAINS, RED-MASK MAKES HIS FINAL ARRANGEMENTS...



MADE NO ATTEMPT
TO ESCAPE! WE
WELL HOUND YOU
BUT WELL DO NOT
GO TO TRY...

I WON'T I
WANT EL TERROR
TO SEE MY
FACE AS MUCH
AS HE WANTS
TO!

AS THE CHURCH BELLS CLANG THE HOUR OF HIGH NOON...



EL TERROR IS RELEASED FROM PRISON...



FREE THE SILENCE IF YOU
CAN!
JIM! WE MAY HAVE HIS OLD
POST BACK—BUT HE BEHAVES
WEIRDLY!

EL! 'N'

AND RED-MASK WALKS SLOWLY THROUGH THE BOHEMIAN CITY'S STREETS SURROUNDED BY HANGING BANDITS...



RED-MASK:

IS IT
REALLY
YOU?

NOA STILL HE
SEEMS! NOW
SAY!

CLIPPING WITH TRIUMPH, EL TERROR PUTS OUT HIS HANDS TO THE RED MASK, PREPARING TO RIP IT LOOSE!



NOW, SHOW RED-MASK, WE WELL SEE
WHAT YOUR FACE SEE LIKE!

TIM HOLT

A SLOWLY WELLS STREAM OF HORROR BURSTS FROM THE CROWD AS THE MASK FALLS AWAY...



YOU SEE? I AM A DEAD MAN—DEAD AND HUNDRED HEADS! I AM THE ORIGINAL RED-WASH... COME BACK TO FIGHT FOR JUSTICE!

STUNNED WITH HORROR AND ANGERING... TERROR STUMBLES BACKWARD—LET HIS RED-WASH STAY!



NOW THAT YOU'VE SEEN MY FACE... LET ME SEE YOURS WITH MY FIST HOLDING IT UP!

ALBERT!



OH PEOPLE OF SAN PABLO! FIGHT!

GET HANG THAT IS ONLY SOME HOLYEN ON HIS FACE!

SHOO! YES! WE'LL SEE IF HE'S DEAD THEN!

IF YOU HORRORS ARE IN SO MUCH OF A HURRY DON'T LET ME DETAIN YOU!

LOOK OUT!



WELL UP PEOPLE OF SAN PABLO! FIGHT EL TERROR! IF YOU MUST YOUR FEAR YOU WILL OVERCOME IT!

SI! SI!

FIGHT!

FIGHT EL TERROR!



PIG!

DOG OF A RAIDER!

LIAR! CHEAT! THIEF!

NO MORE! YOU'VE LOST YOUR DIGNITY! OHY! GOSH!!



I THINK EL TERROR WILL BE ONLY TOO GLAD TO STAY IN jail FOR QUITS A WHILE— AND ALL THE REST OF HIS GANG IN WITH HIM TO KEEP HIM COMPANY!

THE END

Tom Hall

Harley J. ...

Harley J. ...



