

EDC
TEX RITTER WESTERN
No 26

TEX RITTER

WESTERN

A CHALTON PUBLICATION

10¢

MORE STORY PAGES
featuring **YOUR**
COWBOY HERO
OF THE
SILVER SCREEN!



L'L BUCK



COLD HEARTED COYOTE!

I DECIDED I'D
GO DOWN TO THE
STREAM AND WASH
MY HOSS!



WHY? WHAT'S THE? HOSE? P?
OH, IT'S JUST A COUPLE
OF WIDE PLANKS!

SPLASH! SPLASH!



HEY, SOAKY, YEN'D
BETTER TELL YORE
FRIEND TO COME
OUT OF THE
STREAM!

WHAT
FOR?



IT'S GETTING
A MITE CHILLY!
HE'S LIKELY TO
CATCH GOLD

OH, HE
DOESN'T
HAVE TO
WORRY ABOUT
THAT!



WHY? HE DOESN'T
HAVE TO
WORRY 'BOUT
CATCHING A COLD?
WHY NOT?

BECAUSE...



...HE'S GOT
A COLD
ALREADY!



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TEX RITTER

"MURDER AT INDIAN RIVER"

ONE LATE AFTERNOON IN THE EARLY FALL, TOM HARMAN, OWNER OF THE "LAZY J" RANCH, WITHDREW HIS ENTIRE SAVINGS ACCOUNT FROM THE LOCAL BANK...

WELL, THERE SHE IS... SEVEN HUNDRED DOLLARS! I'VE FINALLY GOT ENOUGH MONEY TOGETHER TO BUY THE OLD GILMAN PLACE I'VE BEEN WANTING FOR SO LONG!

GUESS YOUR LAZY J'LL BE A RIGHT BIG BUNCH ONE OF THESE DAYS, TOM...

STAN CAMPBELL

TELLER

THAT WAS A RIGHT GOOD MEAL, GETTING LATE THOUGH... BETTER BE GETTING ON MY WAY HOME. ANNE'LL START WORRYING IF I'M TOO LATE!

LATE AS THE FULL MOON APPEARS OVER A DARK RIM OF HILLS, HARMAN COMES TO A BEND IN THE INDIAN RIVER...

HERE HE COMES! I'LL GET HIM IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RIVER WITH NO COVER AROUND...

TEX RITTER WESTERN

A MOMENT LATER, AS HARMAN STARTS TO FOLD THE SHALLOW EYE BEND...



SHOT THROUGH THE HEART, THE BENCHER PITCHES FROM HIS REARING MOUNT WITHOUT A SOUND!



TWO DAYS LATER, TEX RITTER AND HIS DEPUTY, BILL LAWTON, ARE CROSSING A CORNER OF THE APACHE RESERVATION, WHEN ...



HEY TEX... WHAT'S AIN' FLYIN' OVER THERE?

DON'T KNOW, BILL, BUT HE'S SURE MAKING A FUSS! BETTER HAVE A LOOK-SEE...

RAWR!
RAWR!

QUIET, BOY! CAN'T MAKE OUT WHO HE IS, BILL... NOT MUCH LEFT OF HIM, STAKED OUT OVER AN ANT HILL...

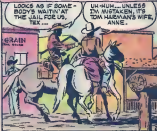


YEAH... INJUN KILLIN'!

GET MY BLANKET BOLL OFF WHITE FLASH, BILL. WE'LL WRAP UP THE BODY AND TAKE IT BACK TO TOWN, MAYBE SOMEBODY CAN IDENTIFY HIM...



AS THE TWO LAWYMEN RIDE INTO TOWN ...



LOOKS AS IF SOME-BODY'S WAITIN' AT THE JAIL FOR US, TEX ...

UH-HUH... UNLESS I'M MISTAKEN, IT'S TOM HARMAN'S WIFE, ANNE.

TEX RITTER WESTERN

SOMETHING I CAN DO FOR YOU, MRS. HAZMAN?

IT'S ABOUT MY HUSBAND, TOM, RANSOME HE CAME TO TOWN THURSDAY TO WITHDRAW SOME MONEY FROM THE BANK... AND HE HADNT COME HOME...

WHAH... I'M AFRAID I'VE ALREADY FOUND YOUR HUSBAND, MAM! BILL, DIED OUT TO THE BODDING E AND GET JESSE HAZMAN, TOM'S BROTHER... I WANT THEM BOTH TO IDENTIFY HIM... IF IT IS HAZMAN WE'VE GOT!

LATER, AFTER THE BODY... HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED...

YES, ITS DEFINITELY TOM'S WATCH AND RING, RANSOME! I'M POSITIVE OF IT!

THOSE BLASTED HUNTS! THEY THREATEND TOM...



THEY DID? WHICH...?

IT WAS LAST SPRING, TOM HAD WARNED THEM ABOUT HUNTING AND FISHING ON HIS LAND, THE LADY J IS RIGHT BESIDE THE RESERVATION, YOU KNOW. WELL, HE FINALLY RAN TWO OF THEM OFF BY SHOOTING OVER THEIR HEADS! A FEW DAYS LATER, HE RAN INTO A PARTY OF THEM... THEY TOLD HIM IF THEY CAUGHT HIM ON THESE RESERVATION, THEY KILL HIM!



WE FOUND HIM ON THE RESERVATION, TEX...

YES... IT LOOKS AS IF THEY CARRIED OUT THAT THREAT! SURE, WE'LL TAKE A SIDE OUT TO THE ARAPHOE CAMP, BILL!



AN HOUR LATER, THE OFFICERS ARRIVE AT THE INDIAN CAMP...

I MUST SPEAK TO YOU ON A GRAVE MATTER, CHIEF FLYING CLOUD...

CAN IT NOT WAIT UNTIL OUR WHITE FRIEND'S HORSES ARE FED AND THEIR RIDERS HAVE SMOKED AND RESTED, TEX RITTER?



TEX RITTER WESTERN

EACH OF MY WARRIORS HAS BROKEN TEX RITTER... NONE KNOWS OF SUCH AN EVIL DEED AS YOU DESCRIBE! TOM HARMAN WAS A FRIEND OF THE ARAPAHOE AND NEVER TOLD US NOT TO HUNT OR FISH ON HIS RANCH...



...HAD HE SO SPOKEN, NO ARAPAHOE WOULD HAVE VIOLATED HIS WISH! MY PEOPLE HAVE LIVED IN PEACE WITH THE WHITE MAN, AND WISH IT TO REMAIN SO!

THE DEAD MAN'S WIFE TELLS ME A DIFFERENT STORY: FLYING CLOUD! YOU'LL HAVE TO RETURN TO TOWN WITH ME, TO...



CHIEF OF THE ARAPAHOE DOES NOT GO WITH YOU, WHITE MAN ...

WHAH... THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, YOUNG FELLOW!



TEX RITTER WESTERN



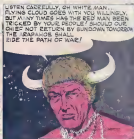
SHAKE DOWN, BOYS... AND KEEP THEIR HANDS IN SIGHT! FIRST ONE OF YOU MOVES, I SHOOT TO KILL...



THIS WAS SOME FINE ENOUGH! I SHALL GO TO FACE THIS WOMAN WHO LIES ABOUT THE APARACHE! THERE WILL BE NO MORE TROUBLE. HOLSTER YOUR WEAPON, WHITE MAN!

LEATHER YOUR GUN, BILL! CHIEF FLYING CLOUD'S WORD IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME!

IF YOU SAY SO, TEX.



LISTEN CAREFULLY, OH WHITE MAN... FLYING CLOUD GOES WITH YOU WILLINGLY, BUT MANY TIMES HAS THE RED MAN BEEN TRICKED BY YOUR PEOPLE! SHOULD OUR CHIEF NOT DETACH BY BURNDOWN TOMORROW THE APARACHE SHALL BIDE THE PATH OF WAR!



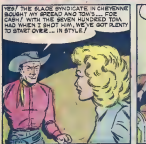
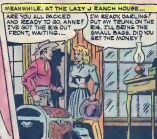
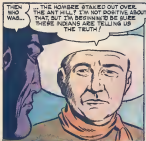
THE THREE HORSESMEN HAVE HARDLY CROSSED THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE RESERVATION AND THE LAZY J, AND ARE APPROACHING THE INDIAN DIVIDE ROAD, WHEN FURY MAKES ANOTHER DISCOVERY!



WHY... THIS IS TOM HARMAN'S BODY!

SHOT THROUGH THE HEART AND HIS UNCLE THAT BUGH...

TEX RITTER WESTERN



TEX RITTER WESTERN

TURN AROUND AND YOU'LL FIND
OUT, HARMAN! YOU'RE BOTH
UNDER ARREST FOR THE
MURDER OF TOM HARMAN!



MAYBE SO... MAYBE NOT,
RITTER! HOW FAST ARE YOU
WITH THAT GUN? YOU CARRY
AROUND, WISTER? GET OUT
OF THE WAY, ANNE...



YOU'D BETTER NOT,
JESSE... I'M FASTER
THAN YOU ARE!



SHOW ME,
WISTER...



AS THE KIDDERLY'S GUN CLEARS HIS HOLSTER,
TEX RITTER'S HAND DROPS IN SUDDEN MOVEMENT...
THERE IS THE ROAR OF THE LAWMAN'S
GUN... THE FLAT TWANG OF A BULLET
STRIKING METAL...



... AND THE KILLER IS DISARMED, BUT DESPERATION
IS A POWERFUL DRIVING FORCE AND JESSE
HARMAN IS NOT YET THROUGH...



I'LL KILL YOU WITH
MY BARE HANDS,
LANDOG...



TEX RITTER WESTERN



PLANTING HIS FEET IN HARWARD WIDRITZ, TEX RITTER USES THE GUY'S OWN FORWARD MOMENTUM TO SEND HIM FLYING UP AND OVER ...

REGAINING THEIR FEET, THE TWO MEN SILENTLY SLUG IT OUT, PUTTING EVERY DUNCE OF STRENGTH INTO THEIR BLOWS!



THEN COMES THE OPENING THE BRONZE JANGER HAS BEEN WAITING FOR ...



TEX RITTER WESTERN

YOU'RE RIGHT, I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! BUT NOT YOU, ANNE! A WOMAN WOULD JUST HOLD ME BACK, NOW...!

JESSE... NO!



T-TEX ISN'T DEAD, BILL... JUST KNOCKED OUT! JESSE HARMAN... SHOT... ME...



NBODY IN SIGHT BEHIND ME YET! WON'T GO CLEAR TO THE FORD... SWIM THE RIVER, RIGHT HERE... HEAD FOR THE BORDER...



SUDDENLY THE FURTRIE'S HORSE PUTS HIS HOOV IN A CORNER HOLE AND STUMBLES, SENDING HARMAN SPLINLING FORWARD!



I... I'M IN QUICKSAND! I'M SINKING! OY, NO...!





TOO LATE, TEX...



YES, YOU'RE RIGHT... HE'S GONE ...



HIS HORSE HAS A BROKEN LEG. PUT HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY. BILL, WE'LL RETURN THE SADDLE TO THE LAZY J ON THE WAY BACK TO TOWN.

ALL RIGHT, TEX...

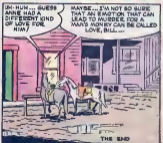


WHY IS IT THE GOOD GUYS LIKE TOM HARMAN, WHO NEVER DO ANYBODY ANY HARM, HAVE TO TAKE IT IN THE RECK FROM PEOPLE LIKE ANNE AND JESSE, TEX?

GUESS IT'S BECAUSE THEY ARE GOOD... SO THEY TRUST EVERYONE ELSE.



PROBABLY IF JESSE HADN'T MOVED DOWN HERE AND BOUGHT THE BREAD NEXT TO TOM'S, EVERYTHING WOULD'VE BEEN FINE. BUT HE DID, AND TOM TRUSTED HIM AND NEVER HAD ANYTHING BUT A BROTHER'S LOVE FOR HIM ...



UH-HUH... GUESS ANNE HAD A DIFFERENT KIND OF LOVE FOR HIM!

MAYBE... I'M NOT SO SURE THAT AN EMBROIDERER THAT CAN LEAD TO MURDER FOR A MAN'S MONEY CAN BE CALLED LOVE, BILL...

RIDING THE RANGE
with
TEX RITTER



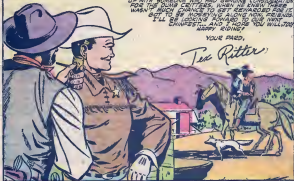
I SURE GOT A KICK OUT OF THESE LIZ' RELAYING SESSIONS WE HAVE... I HOPE YOU ENJOY OUR FORTNIGHTLY AS MUCH AS I DO. AT A LITTLE EARLY HOUR THIS MORNING THE BELLS RANG ACROSS THE MEADOW. OLD BENY HAD SOME CHOICE MEAT TO MAKE AN STEAKS. FIRST HEY! BANG! AT HOME. WHILE I WAS SLEEPING DOWN BY THE FISHING, WHEN THE OLD FELLER WANTED THEM TO STAY, THOSE BANNERS LAUNCHED OFF THEIR HEAVY BRONCS AND WENT RIGHT INSIDE WITHOUT SO MUCH AS GLANCING BACK AT THEIR HEAVY, BARBERRY ANIMALS. A HOLE TO BE MADE, I WASN'T ASKING FOR THE LINDSEY'S MARRIAGE TO BEAT ALL. GET OUT, THE OLD COYOTE CAME LINGING OUT TO THE BARN, WITH A HOWL, HE STARTED BEATING THEM AND LOSING. WHEN THEY'VE EATEN THEIR FILL, HE BEGGING THEM CAREFULLY... AS IF THEY WERE TO BE HUNG.

THE NEW MARRIAGE WAS THIS WADDER BOKE OFF WITHOUT EVEN BOTHERING TO THANK THE OLD GUY... BUT I BEGON THE RANCHER GET ALL THE BEASTS HE WANTED FROM THE WAY THOSE TWO HORSES NUTTLED HIM AS THEY WERE BEING SADDLED.

THESE ARE FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE LIKE THOSE YOUR MARRIAGES... AND MY HEAVY STOCKY FEEL INTO THE FUNDING THE OLD BELLS SIGNED. I BEGON, IT WAS A SENSING MESSAGE TO MEET UP WITH SOMEONE WHO HAD SENSING COMMERCIATION FOR THE BULLS OFFERS. WHEN HE CAME HERE FOR THE BULLS OFFERS TO GET SADDLED FOR IT, I WASN'T TO BE MOVING ALONG AND BEING. I'LL BE LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR NEXT CONTEST... AND I HOPE YOU WILL TOO. HAPPY SIGNED!

YOUR FRED,

Tex Ritter





KILL THE NESTER

FRED CAMMER reined up sharply and stared at the door of his two-room cabin. His big hands trembled. If he had been asked whether that was chased by rage or fear, he couldn't have answered.

"Combustion," he might have drawled in his word-saving manner of speech.

Fred sat tall in the saddle. His shoulders were broad, his face bore a strong, rock-like quality. His hands were big and tough. He appeared not to be the type of man who would scare easily and yet, as he stared at his door, there was a second when ice gripped his heart.

On that door was his death warrant. Nothing as crude and straightforward as a scrawled note, but nevertheless a message that spelled his doom as surely as if it had been printed in black letters ten feet high.

It was there, a bird's nest, impaled against the door by a long-bladed knife.

Fred Cammer sat still and looked at it. A flood of emotions surged through his brain and heart. That he had long expected it didn't ease the shock. To him the message on the door read, "Kill the nester."

"Like a wrench!" he said aloud and his shoulders shook with mirthless, near-hysterical laughter. Then he leaped from his horse and tore the knife savagely from the door and hurled it to the ground.

"Trouble, Fred?" asked a voice behind him.

Fred turned. The U. S. Marshal, astride his big, white stallion, was looking down at him.

Wordlessly, Fred pointed at the nest and knife on the ground.

"Notice to vacate, eh?" said the Marshal gravely. "You aim to leave?"

Fred shook his head from side to side.

"I saw smoke in the sky, thought there might be trouble and rode on out," said the Marshal.

"Barn burned," responded Fred.

"Knew who did 'it? Want to make any charges?" asked the Marshal.

Fred laughed, bitterly.

His barn had been burned, his fences cut. Horses had trampled his corn. But he had no

proof of anything, nothing the law could help him with.

The Marshal spoke again to the taciturn farmer. "Boy, I admire your courage, but I won't say it's not downright foolish. True, you've got the law on your side. I know you have government papers that say this land is yours. I know you mind your own business and abide by the law. You're not hurting anybody. But cattlemen somehow just can't abide nesters and there are some mighty mean cattlemen sometimes."

The lawman paused. He wasn't naming names, but Fred Cammer knew he was referring to Bradley Duke, the local beef baron, and his men. Bradley Duke was a gun-slinging cattle king who had a reputation for killing anything or anybody who got in his way. Many a nester who'd tried to oppose him had become buzzard bait.

"I won't stand for murder," continued the Marshal. "I'll clamp down on anybody, nester or cattleman, I find getting out of line. But this is a mighty big country and sometimes murder is hard to prove. If you're determined to stay here, I'll do what I can for you, boy, but you're going to have to be ready to protect yourself. Be careful."

"Thanks," said Fred, grimly, as the Marshal turned his mount and rode away.

Fred entered the cabin and threw himself on his bunk, his hands behind his head. He stared at the rough hewn ceiling. A stranger might have thought this the gesture of despair; of a man who had given up who was lying down waiting for death to come and get him. But anyone who knew Fred Cammer would have known better. He was thinking. He was planning. His body was relaxed, but his mind was active. No matter what the odds, Fred would go down fighting.

As he stared at the ceiling, he tried to visualize what Bradley Duke would do next. Dry gulching was the likeliest possibility. Somewhere, hidden partially by a rock, a rifle would gleam. Then a bullet would drive into the back,

of Fred's head. That was the pattern. That was what was believed to have happened to other nesters.

"Well, maybe I can beat Bradley Duke at his own game," thought Fred at last. He eased his lanky frame up from the bunk and left the cabin.

Still lying in the corn patch where horsemen had knocked it over was the partly broken frame of a scarecrow. It had been one of the first things the nester had erected on his "farm."

"Doesn't scare anything," he once explained to the Marshal, "but it's company."

Carrying the scarecrow, he led his horse into a shed and started working. Presently he led the horse out again and, seated in the saddle, was a reasonably accurate facsimile of himself. Stuffed and padded and lashed to the saddle was a dummy in Fred's hat, shirt and pants.

"From a distance it'll look all right," Fred told himself. He led his decoy through the gate and sent the obedient horse ambling down the trail toward town. Fred himself climbed and clambered up rocks to the ledge overlooking the road. He carried a shotgun.

As he neared the top he worked cautiously, making sure that no crumbled rock was dislodged by his footsteps. He found a crack between two jutting rocks and peered cautiously through. He saw what he had anticipated. Lying low on a ledge not twenty feet away was Bradley Duke, his rifle barrel gleaming. Duke had his back to Fred, his eyes on the narrow trail. Off to the left a tiny cloud of dust was getting larger. Fred's faithful horse was coming along as scheduled, carrying the dummy.

"The cat! He wouldn't even give a man a fighting chance," thought Fred.

"Here comes the nester, right on schedule," thought Duke. "How can these greenhorns be so dumb?"

Fred made himself as comfortable as possible, keeping the shotgun ready. "As soon as he fires at the dummy, I'll have him dead to rights," he thought. He watched patiently.

Presently the steady clomp-clomp of the horse could be heard and then Duke raised his gun a little, began jacking careful aim.

"Oh, no! Not that angle! Liable to hit the horse!" Fred was unaware he had spoken aloud.

Duke whirled and fired.

Despite a slug in his shoulder, Fred leaped and covered the several feet in two jumps. His big fist caught the side of Bradley Duke's jaw before the cattle king could shoot again. Just to make sure, Fred slammed his other fist against the man's nose. Duke sprawled on the ledge, his rifle clattering on the rocks.

"He was aiming to murder me, all right, but I don't know whether I've got a case," mused Fred, aloud.

"You've got a case, all right," said a voice behind him. "I saw the whole thing." It was the Marshal.

Not being as word-bruful as the nester, the Marshal readily explained that he, too, had figured out that Duke would probably try to dry gulch Fred. He admitted he had been surprised to discover Fred in the role of snail rather than stalked. He said he had lain low in the rocks, awaiting developments, but had had his gun ready to prevent any killings.

"There's no doubt," continued the Marshal, "but what I can get Bradley Duke convicted of attempted murder. It's an open and shut case and people around here have been getting a mite tired of his high-handed ways. He'll go to jail, all right."

"That's good," said Fred. "Then maybe I can run my little spread in peace."

"I doubt it," said the Marshal, dryly. "You'll be in jail, too."

"What?"

"There can be no doubt you were going to shoot Duke in the back if you hadn't got worried and excited about your horse," said the lawman, pointing at Fred's shotgun. "Attempted murder's as bad for one as it is for another. I like you personally, boy, but the law's the law. You were aiming to shoot him and you'll go to jail, too."

Fred laughed.

"What's so funny?" demanded the Marshal.

"Look at my gun," suggested Fred.

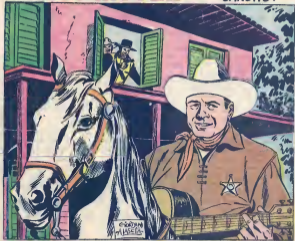
The Marshal did so. "Well, I'll be hanged!" he exclaimed. "It's not loaded! Empty! Well, well, I guess you can't accuse a man of wanting to shoot somebody if his gun isn't even loaded!"

"No, I never wanted to shoot anybody," agreed Fred. "I just want to live and let live."

THE END

TEX RITTER

and THE MURDERING BANDITS!



ACROSS THE BORDER, IN MEXICO ...

COME AGAIN, SORRY TEX, IT WAS A GREAT LEASURE HAVING YOU AS MY GUEST!

IT WAS GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, JUAN! NOW I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO THE STATES! BUSINESS COME.



BUTER ...

WE STILL HAVE QUITE A DISTANCE BEFORE WE CROSS THE BORDER, WHITE FLASH, AND IT'S GETTING LATE, WE'LL SLEEP AT THIS INN TILL MORNING AND START OUT FRESH THEN!



TEX RITTER WESTERN



THERE'S A STABLE BEHIND THIS INN WHERE YOU CAN STAY FOR THE NIGHT. WHITE FLASH!

WHY THE HELL DOES IT LOOK LIKE RANGER TEX RITTER? I DON'T LIKE THIS AT ALL!



...AND I BETCHA THE BOSS WON'T EITHER. FO RITTER HISE SH UP FRONT!



RANGER! WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' HERE? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ON YOUR WAY TO SANGRETO THAT GOLD ACROSS THE BORDER FOR US!

I LEFT MORNING FROM HERE, BOSS! TEX RITTERS IN JOHN SAID GETTING ACROSS THE STREET IN THE BORDER CITY INN!



OHAY, YELLOW-HEED! I'LL GET ONE OF THE OTHER BOYS TO SANGRETO IT ACROSS! WHO'LL VOLUNTEER?

NOT ME!

NOT ME EITHER, GAZ!



IF THE LOCAL SHERIFF DIDN'T SUSPECT ME OF BEING THE LEADER OF THIS GOLD SHAGGERS GANG, I'D TAKE IT ACROSS MYSELF!

WE GOT TO GET OUT OF TEX RITTER OR OUR WAGGERS WOULD BE IN TROUBLE!



I WANT ONE OF YOU TO LEAVE THIS NOTE AT THE INN FOR TEX RITTER. THEN GO FIND PABLO DEL VEGAS AND BRING HIM BACK HERE!

PABLO DEL VEGAS? HE'S THE NEAREST KILLER IN THE PART OF MEXICO! I'M BEGINNING TO CRACK ON!



LATER... KILLING HOWEVER IS AN INTERESTING PASTIME, BUT I DO NOT WISH TO ASK IT WITH TEX RITTER! HE IS TOO GOOD A SHOT!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, FRANKO! I'VE ARRANGED IT SO ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS GO ON ONE SIDE OF THE INN AND YOU CAN PICK HIM UP AS HE COMES OUT IN A FEW MINUTES!

TEX KITTER WESTERN



TEX RITTER WESTERN



TEX RITTER WESTERN

MEANWHILE, AT THE STABLES BEHIND THE INN...

I RECKON THE ONLY WAY I'LL EVER GET TEX IS TO SET UP A REAL DEATH TRAP FOR HIM!

RITTER'S TOO SMART TO FALL FOR ANY TRAP!



ANY TRAP, YES! BUT NOT THE TRAP I'VE HOOKED OUT! TEX RITTER LOVES THIS HORSE, WHITE FLASH, AND HE'D DO ANYTHING FOR HIM!

SO WHAT?



WHEN RITTER FINDS WHITE FLASH GONE, HE'S GOING TOH LOOK FOR HIM TO RAISE IT EGGY FREE, RITTER, HE LEAVES A TRAIL OF CATS FOR HIM TO FOLLOW!

I GET IT! WHEN TEX FINDS HIS HORSE WHEN HE HIDE HIM, HE'LL BE HUNTING TO GET HIM; A GREAT IDEA, BOSS! I KNOW AN OLD BARN IN THE HILLS WE CAN HIDE OUT IN!



AND WHEN TEX REACHES THE STABLES...

WHITE FLASH IS GONE! IT LOOKS AS IF WHOEVER'S STOLEN HIM LEAD FOOD TO LURE HIM AWAY!...



...AND LEFT A TRAIL OF CATS WHICH I INTEND TO FOLLOW ... FRONT!



THE TRAIL SEEMS TO LEAD DIRECTLY TO THAT BARN!



TEX RITTER WESTERN

GET UNDER THAT HORSE, QUICK! WHEN SOMEBODY RITTERS HIM, IF I DON'T GET THE DROP ON HIM, WHEN HE ENTERS, YOU BRASSER, JUMP HIM FROM THE FRONT!

DON'T WORRY, BOSS! HE WON'T GET AWAY THIS TIME! WE'RE FOUR AGAINST ONE!



SOMETHING'S WRONG! THIS TRAIL OF COPS LED HERE, TOO PERFECTLY TO HAVE BEEN DROPPED ACCIDENTLY! I'LL LOOK INSIDE FROM THE BACK BEFORE I GO IN!



I WAS RIGHT! SOMEONE'S HINTING NEAR THE BARN DOOR TO PULL ME AS I ENTER. WHITE FLASH WAS MENTORING JUST TO LEAD ME INTO THIS TRAP!



THAT BITTER MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FIRST ATTEMPT ON MY LIFE, TOO! I'M NOT GOING TO BE CAUGHT OFF GUARD AGAIN!



JUMPING SAGEBRUSH! THERE'S A WHOLE GANG UP HERE!

IT'S BITTER! HE MUST'VE CAUGHT ON IT WAS A TRAP! FLEE ON HIM...QUICK!



NO! HE'S LOCKED HIM GOOD! WE'VE GOT HIM DOWN!



TEX RITTER WESTERN



TEX IS DOWN... BUT NOT OUT!



WHILE MY MENFOLK ARE BATTLING WITH RITTER, IT'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO GET OUT OF HERE!



IT DOESN'T TAKE TEX RITTER LONG TO CLEAN UP THE SNAKEDDERS!



THESE THREE ARE IN NO CONDITION TO RUN AWAY SO I CAN LEAVE THEM JUST WHERE THEY ARE!



NOW TO CATCH UP WITH THAT CROTTER! HE'S PROBABLY THE HEAD OF THE GANG!



(GULP!) IT'S TEX RITTER! HE MUST'VE BATTLED UP MY GANG! I'LL KILL HIM!



"I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE SO ANGRIOUS TO KILL ME..."

BANG!

TEX RITTER WESTERN



AND WHEN I GET THROUGH WITH YOU, I'LL PICK THEM UP AND WE'LL ALL HEAD BACK TO THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE!



... UNTIL, AT THE LOCAL MEXICAN JAILHOUSE ...

AND EVEN THOUGH WE SUSPECTED ONE OF BEING THE HEAD OF THE GOLD SMUGGLERS, HE NEVER WAS ABLE TO COOPER WITH THE GOONS UNTIL YOU BROUGHT HIM IN!



AS YOU SAW WHEN I SEARCHED HIM, I FOUND PORTIONS OF GOLD ON HIM. THANKS TO YOU, TEX, WE'RE EXPANDED UP THE WHOLE GANG!

I'M RIGHTLY GLAD TO HAVE BEEN OF SERVICE, EVEN THOUGH I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING WHEN I TROUDED THESE MURDERERS!



IT SHOWS YOU WANT A GUILTY CONSCIENCE CAN DO! WHEN THEY SAH ME THEY ASSURED I WAS OUT LOOKING FORTHEN ... AND IN TRYING TO GET RID OF ME, THEY GOT THEMSELVES IN JAIL!



I DECIDE WE WON'T BE NEEDIN' IN PARDON ANY MORE, LET'S HEAD FOR HOME, WHITE FLASH!

🎵 OH, I'M A GUY BACK TO MY WESTERN PRIDE! 🎵
🎵 OH, I'M A GUY BACK TO MY WESTERN PRIDE! 🎵



RUSTY HALL

TOOT!

NEIGHHH!

HERE'S YOUR MONEY, MR. HALL! THAT HORSE IS WORTH EVERY DOLLAR OF THE PRICE YOU'RE ASKING FOR, MR.!

PARDNER! THE BEST HORSE THAT EVER LIVED!

RUSTY HALL... AND PARDNER!

There's a combination that is known throughout the West! No one would have believed that the day would ever come when final payment forever would be sold by these two! Yet here is the amazing story of what happens when...

RUSTY HALL SELLS PARDNER!

RUSTY HALL IS SITES BIRD AS SWIFT-FALLING RIGHT CLARKS THE DEAR...

MOVE, PARDNER! WE'VE GOT TO REACH THE BAR & RANCH SOON OR WE'LL BE SKIPPED OUT TOMORRT!

CRASHED! THE SHARP BARK OF A WINDCHESTER PIPE CUTS THROUGH THE AIR!

BAM!

HEY!



TEX RITTER WESTERN

THE INSTANT BUFFY BALL HIT THE GROUND HIS CREEK REFLEXES CAME INTO PLAY. A BIRD LEAPS INTO HIS HAND...



BUT HE WON'T GET ANOTHER CHANCE!



UHF! HE SAID THE GUN CUTS HIS HAND!



NO USE TALKING TO FIGHT! COME AND GET ME, YOU SLAYED RUSTLER!



WHY... WHY WOULD NO RUSTLER! YOU'RE THE BUFFY BALL!



FEEL ANGRY! IS THIS THE WAY YOU GREET YOUR GUESTS? I WAS HEADING FOR YOUR BIRD IN SEARCH WHEN THAT BULLET OF YOURS NEARLY STOPPED ME!

I ONLY FIRED A WARNING SHOT! I WOULDN'T WANT TO KILL EVEN AN ORDINARY RUSTLER! BUT THE WAY YOU GOT THE DROP ON ME, I'M SURE GLAD IT WASN'T ANYBODY ELSE!



OUR HORSES WILL THINK WE'RE SCARED! THEY'RE REALLY TAKING OVER!

TAKE IT EASY, BENTY! THIS HORSE IS A FRIEND OF YOURS!



DON'T BE ANGRY WITH BENTY, RUSTLER! SUBJECT FIGHTS FOR HIS MASTER THE WAY YOU WERE FIGHTING FOR ME!

TEX RITTER WESTERN



DINER AT THE SAGE'S RANCH ...

WHO ARE THESE RUSTLERS YOU'RE DINING FOR, FRED?

I HATE 'EM, RUSTY! MARY AND I STARTED WITH ONLY A SMALL SPREAD! WE BOUGHT IT UP OVER THE YEARS. BYO A REAL FINE HOME RANCH!

ABOUT A YEAR AGO WE STARTED MISSING SOME OF OUR BEST GOOD HAYES AND WHEATCORN! LATELY THE RUSTLERS HAVE BEEN GETTING BOLD! THE LAST RAID CUT OUT TWENTY OF MY BEST STOCK!



I CAN'T AFFORD ANOTHER LOSS LIKE THAT! IT'D WIFE BE OUT! WE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO MEET THE NEXT PAYMENT ON OUR MORTGAGE! ONE NEXT WEEK!

WOULD YOU MIND IF I PUT UP HERE FOR A SPELL? MARRIE, I COULD HELP YOU OUT WITH THE CHECKS ---- AND THAT RELIEVES ANY RUSTLERS!



YOU LEAVE MY OLD BEGGAR BUSTER! I reckon you're just the man to handle rustlers! I sure appreciate this!

Thanks, Fred! We've been having a long time! If you have to see you love your spread!



FOR THREE NIGHTS RUSTY WILL HELP HIS FRIEND KEEP WATCH, AND THEN ----

SLIPPETY-
CLOP - CLOP -
CLOP!

WHAT IS THAT?

HOOFBEATS! GOOD HORSES! TEN! SOUNDING LIKE A DOZEN HERE!



IT'S THE RUSTLERS! THEY'RE SCALPING ANOTHER RAID!

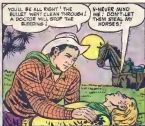
LET'S GO!



MOMENTS LATER, RUSTY WILL AND HIS FRIEND RIDE HEADLONG INTO THE MIDDLE OF A BLAZING GUN BATTLE!

SHOOT 'EM OUT OF THEIR SADDLES!

TEX RITTER WESTERN



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PEOP' GONNA TO DO! I KNOW IT, RUFFY! HE CAN'T FIGHT ANY-MORE, SON THAT HE KNOWS WERE GONNA TO COME THE BUNCH!

COURAGE, WIFE! WADDER WON'T COME IT!



WE'RE BEATEN, RUFFY! IT'S NO USE! WE HAVEN'T ANY STOCK, AND NO MONEY TO MEET THE MORTGAGE!

LEAVE THAT TO ME! I'LL FIND THE MONEY, SOMEBODY!



AND WHEN MORNING COMES—

RIGHTY BOUND HORSE FLESH, WE, HALL! YES, SURE; A REAL THOROUGHBRED!

HOW MUCH WILL YOU PAY ME FOR HIM?

HENRY FRONK! I BUY AND SELL HORSES!



HOW ABOUT THREE HUNDRED?

I NEED THREE FIFTY—CASH! YOU'LL GET THAT MUCH FOR FRONK'S, A LOT OF PEOPLE KNOW WHAT HE CAN DO; AND THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW, FRONK, WILL CONVINCE RIGHTY QUICK!



IT'S A DEAL, WE, HALL!

GOOD! I NEED THE MONEY RIGHT AWAY, I'VE GOT TO PAY OFF A MORTGAGE ON THE BAY B! BUT TO APPRECIATE IT, IF I COULD HAVE A FEW MINUTES ALONE WITH FRONK, HERE!

THIS IS THE MOST PAINFUL MOMENT IN RUFFY HALL'S LONG CAREER, IT IS A MOMENT REPAINT WITH HAND WADDER.

YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU, FRONK? WE CAN GET ALONG... WITHOUT EACH OTHER, SOMEBODY, IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN SAVE FRONK WADDER'S LIFE!



OUR TEXAS WILL CROSS AGAIN, FRONK, SOMEBODY, IN CARE OF IT! AND AND YOU KNOW THAT, WHATEVER HAPPENS, I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU! NEVER!



NEEIGH!

TEX RITTER WESTERN



GOOD TEX RITTER!

FRED'S SUFFERING PEACEFULLY, ANGRY! I TOLD HIM THAT STORY ABOUT YOUR HAVING BECOME BACK THE WICKED HORSEMAN! HE BELIEVED ME WHEN I SHOWED HIM THE MORTGAGE PAID UP!

GOOD, MARY! HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW!



I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'LL SAY WHEN HE FINDS OUT HOW YOU REALLY RAN THE MONEY! HOW CAN HE EVER FORGET YOUR ANGRY?

IT'S NO MATTER, MARY! MR. FRANK PROMISED ME THAT FREDMAN WOULD GET THE BEST OF CARE! THAT'S WHAT MATTERS MOST!

THE NEXT MORNING FREDMAN IS BROUGHT DOWN TO THE STABLE TO MARY'S SHIPMENT. SUDDENLY HE SPOTS THE FAMILIAR FIGURE OF ... RINTY!



HEY!



EEEEYOW!

LEARNING AND LEARNING OUT WITH HIS FRONT HOOPS, FREDMAN ACTS THE ROLE OF AN ATTACKER AND DIVES OFF THE BAR HOLDING RINTY!



LET ME OUTTA HERE! THIS CROSS IS A BARR!



STOP THEM, NOW, RINTY! DON'T LET THOSE HORSES GET AWAY!

TEX RITTER WESTERN

DAY RANGER AND SIXTY NOON
BRACE UP THE RUGGERS—
STREET AS AN ARSON, PRO-
NEE LEADS THE WAY BACK TO
THE BALL & BARCH



"SUFFY, LOOK!
WAS THAT
YOUR HORSE?"

"I'LL SAY IT IS!
AND THERE'S SWEET
WITH HIM!"



"BUT THE SIXTYLERS TOOK
SIXTY, I DON'T
UNDERSTAND HOW RANGER
FOUND HIM AGAIN!"

"THE SIXTYLERS
CHANGED SIXTY'S
BRAND— WITH A
SIXING IRON!
LOOK HERE!"



"THEY COMPLETED THE
S AND MADE IT AN @!
THE BALL & BARCH:
WHY THAT'S THE BRAND
THAT NEDDY ARCHER
WORE UNDER!"

"RANGER SUGGESTED THE
YOUTH WHEN HE SAW
SIXTY, I RECKON THAT'S
WHY HE HIGHLIGHTED IT
BACK TO ME!"



"RIDE TO TOWN AND CALL THE SHERIFF, SUFFY! HE
GONNA BRACK WITH PROSECUTE TO BRING ME
CAME FROM!"



THE TRICKERS

"SAIL UP THAT HORSE GUY! GET
THE TRAIL HORSES— FAST! WE'LL
LEAVE WITHOUT THOSE TWO
HORSES THAT ESCAPED!"

"WHAT'S
THE GOON,
MR. PROBE?"



"ALRIGHT! THAT SCARBYO'LL CHECK UP ON THOSE
SIXTERS YOU'RE SAYING? THEY MIGHT FIND
OUT THAT THEY'RE SIXTIED STOCK— WITH
CHANGED BRANDS!"

"WELL, YES— UMHH!"



TEX RITTER WESTERN



!?!?!: QUIZ ?!

1. THE MYTHOLOGICAL FIGURE, PROMETHEUS, BROUGHT FIRE TO MAN.
TRUE..... FALSE.....
2. LOUISIANA ONCE BELONGED TO FRANCE.
TRUE..... FALSE.....
3. IF AN ENGLISHMAN SAYS 'THE PARTY'S A BNAKE', HE MEANS IT'S ROTTEN.
TRUE..... FALSE.....



4. SINCE THE FIRST U.S. POSTAGE STAMP WAS PRINTED, THERE HAVE BEEN 700 DIFFERENT TYPES ISSUED.
TRUE..... FALSE.....
5. FISH CAN HEAR.
TRUE..... FALSE.....



ANSWERS:

1. TRUE, 2. TRUE, 3. FALSE, 4. TRUE, 5. FALSE

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MOLASSES MOUTH



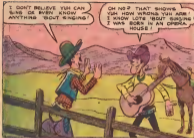
IN THE DARK



WARBLING WALLY AND HOLLY



TEX RITTER WESTERN



COMING COMIC ATTRACTIONS

**LASH
LARUE
WESTERN**



10¢ SOON TO APPEAR AT YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND 10¢



