THE DAUNTLESS SECRET MARSHAL OF THE WILD WEST STARS IN
THE DRYGULCHING DESPERADO!!
You'll never see a real outdoorsman aim or shoot his rifle at anything but a safe, proper target... he handles his firearms with care and respect. Your Daisy is made for fun shooting. It is not a lethal weapon but... like a knife, or auto it may cause damage if handled carelessly. So do not aim or shoot at windows, street lights, song birds, pets, property or any other person... ever! Remember, carelessness causes accidents to millions of Americans every year in cars, homes, factories. So... if you are careless with your Daisy or abuse the privilege of owning one... your parents, guardian or police have the right to take it from you... and shouldn't! Don't let this happen. Be careful. Aim and shoot safe, Buddy!

MEMORIZE THE SHOOTER'S SAFETY PLEDGE!

I pledge myself to PROTECT animals, property and people in my community by always aiming and shooting my Daisy safely.

No. 317 DAISY BB GUN 'N' SCOPE TARGET OUTFIT, Complete only $7.50
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RUSH COUPON FOR FREE NEWS ON HOW TO BE A CHAMPION SHOT AND WIN MEDALS!

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I enclose unused 30¢ stamp to help cover mailing—handling cost. Rush me complete details on how to be a champion shotter and win medals with DARFSTAR

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Announcing NEW DAISY GIANT POUCH OF BULL'S-EYE BB SHOT... THE BEST SHOT TO USE IN DAISY AIR RIFLES!

176 BB SHOTS for 5¢

Daisy Manufacturing Co., DEPT. 1231, Plymouth, Michigan, U.S.A.
Rocky Lane in
X Marks the Spot

Death stalks on the heels of fortune and strikes without warning in one of the wickedest plots spawned in the mind of man—until the fearless courage of Rocky Lane and his thundering six-guns blast open the strange case of X Marks the Spot!

The Chief Marshal's Office One Afternoon

Do you send for me, Chief?

Yes, Rocky! I've got an assignment for you—a mighty tricky one!

What is it, Chief?

Some silver strikes have been made on Mesquite Flat and a boomtown has sprung up!

What's wrong with that, Chief?

Plenty! The folks who have made the big strikes have disappeared—mysteriously! Savvy?
HERE'S A LIST OF THE MISSING, ROCKY! IT'S ALL YOU'LL HAVE TO GO ON!

THANKS, CHIEF! IT'S A HELP ANYWAY!

I'LL GET GOING, CHIEF... BEFORE ANY MORE FOLKS DISAPPEAR!

GOOD LUCK, ROCKY! IF ANYONE CAN CLEAN UP THIS MESS, I RECKON IT'S YOU!

GET RAMBLING, BLACK JACK, OLD PAL! WE'VE GOT A HEAP OF TRACKS TO LAY DOWN BETWEEN HERE AND MESQUITE FLAT!

WHOEVER'S AT THE BOTTOM OF ALL THIS MUST TAKE HIMSELF FOR A MIGHTY SLEUTH TO EVEN TRY PULLING A STUNT LIKE THIS!

BUT SLICK JASPER S HAVE A WAY OF OUTSLICKING THEMSELVES IF THEY'RE GIVEN THEIR HEAD! THERE'S MESQUITE FLAT UP AHEAD!

MY FIRST STOP IS AT THE CLAIM RECORDING OFFICE TO SEE IF ALL THE MISSING FELLOWS FILED CLAIMS BEFORE THEY DISAPPEARED!

HOWDY! I'D LIKE TO LOOK OVER YOUR CLAIM FILES!

SHORE, STRANGER! HELP YOURSELF! HERE'S THE CLAIM BOOK!

WHOA, BLACK JACK! IF MY HUNCH IS RIGHT, I RECKON I'LL FIND MY FIRST LEAP IN HERE!
WHERE CAN I FIND A GENT NAMED FREESTONE, AND WHAT DOES HE LOOK LIKE?

YE’LL FIND HIM DEALING CARD AT THE RED FRONT SALOON! YE CAN’T MISS THE SLEEVY SIDERWINDER BY THE SLEEVY MUSTACHE HE WEARS.

THANKS, I’LL DROP INTO THE RED FRONT SALOON FOR A WORD WITH HIM!

A FEW MINUTES LATER, AT THE RED FRONT SALOON......

WONKY! I’M ROCKY LANE, UNDERCOVER MARSHAL! IF YOUR NAME IS FREESTONE, I AM TO HAVE A WORD WITH YOU!

ROCKY LANE, EH! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

YOU CAN SHOW ME THE DEEDS TO THE CLAIMS YOU HOLD!

SURE, LANE, WHY NOT? I’VE GOT THEM RIGHT HERE!

EVERY ONE OF THESE DEEDS HAS BEEN SIGNED WITH AN X!

SO WHAT? IT’S NOT MY FAULT IF THE GENTS I DO BUSINESS WITH CAN’T WRITE, IS IT?

I RECHN NOT, BUT IT DOES LOOK A MITE STRANGE!

HA, HA! YOU HAVEN’T GOT A THING ON ME, LAMMAY---AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET ANYTHING ON ME, SALLY?
As Rocky Lane is leaving, an exuberant prospector
struggles through the doors....

Line up at the bar, gents! I just filed a claim on the richest
strike in these parts and I aim to paint this town plumb red!

Hmm! This looks like natural bait for Freestone if he is behind
these disappearances! I aim to keep my eye on that
manny from here on in!

While outside, Rocky Lane watches, his keen eyes
missing nothing.... Freestone isn't losing any time getting
chummy with that prospector who made the big strike! and
there go those jaspers who were with Freestone! I wonder
what he said to them!

Several hours later, as a
rainstorm breaks while
the indomitable Rocky Lane
maintains his lonely vigil....

This rain has spooked me to the
bones, but it was worth it! There
they go toward the door!

I don't know where
Freestone is heading with
him, but I aim to find
out! Hmm! It looks
as if they're going to turn
that corner.

Shots... coming
from around that
corner! They just
turned! This
calls for action!

Bang! Bang!
WITH GRIM COURAGE, ROCKY LANE RETAINED CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH SHEER POWER OF WILL! HIS SIX-GUNS ROAR, BUT...

MAKE TRACKS!

BANG! BANG

CAN'T GET A GOOD SHOT AT THEM IN THIS RAIN!

SOME IN TRYING TO TRAIL THOSE SAWDUSTERS IN THIS DRIZZLING RAIN! HMM...I CAN HEAR MY HEARTBEAT! THIS POOR FELLOW IS STILL ALIVE! I'D BETTER GET HIM TO A DOCTOR.

AS THE PIERCING CALL OF THE SCREECH OWL BULLETS THROUGH THE NIGHT........

OOOOOOOOOOOO!

THE GREAT STALLION BLACKJACK FLASHES OUT OF THE NIGHT IN THUNDERING RESPONSE TO HIS MASTER'S CALL!

GOOD BOY, BLACKJACK, OLD FARM! I KNEW THAT WOULD BRING YOU IN A POWERFUL HURRY!

SET SONGS, BLACKJACK! WE CAN'T SLOW THE RACE! THIS FELLOW'S LIFE DEPENDS ON YOUR SPEED.

FASTER, BLACKJACK, THERE'S A DOCTOR'S SIGN HANGING UP YONDER! I SURE HOPE HE'S IN!

WHO'S OUT THERE?

IT'S ROCKY LANE, DOCTOR! I'VE GOT A GENT HERE WHO'S BEEN SHOT!
A FEW MINUTES LATER......

YES! HE'LL BE AS GOOD AS NEW IN A FEW DAYS! HE JUST GOT A FLESH WOUND! MUST HAVE HAD HIS HEAD WHEN HE FELL!

IN THAT CASE, I'VE GOT A MIGHTY IMPORTANT FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU... A FAVOR THAT I'LL MAKE ROUNDEL UP THE SOUTHWINDERS WHO TAIRED TO KILL HIM PLUMB EASIER!

NAME IT, ROCKY, AND IT'S GRANTED!

THANKS! JUST KEEP YOUR PATIENT HERE WITH YOU FOR A FEW DAYS - OUT OF SIGHT! NOW I RECKON I'LL BE GOING!

SURE, ROCKY! I DON'T SAY WHAT YOU'VE GOT UP YOUR SLEEVE, BUT I'LL DO IT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

TO SEE AN UNTERTAKER ABOUT A TRIP TO BOOT HILL FOR A DATE WITH A SOUTHWINDER!

NEXT DAY, AT BOOT HILL ..........

TUT, TUT, POOR FELLOW! CUT DOWN BY AN ASSASSIN'S BULLET JUST WHEN HE HAD SO MUCH TO LIVE FOR... TOO! OH WELL! ONE MAN'S LOSS IS ANOTHER MAN'S GAIN, I RECKON!

MEANING THAT I BOUGHT THE RIGHTS TO HIS CLAIM JUST BEFORE HE -ER-WENT! I RECKON WHOEVER KILLED HIM MUST HAVE ROBBED THE POOR FELLOW OF THE CASH I GAVE HIM FOR IT!

MEANING WHAT, MISTER?

SIGNED WITH AN X, EH? I THOUGHT SO!

LET ME SEE THAT OBD!

YEP! THE POOR FELLOW COULDN'T WRITE! HAVE YOU ANY CLUES AS TO WHO KILLED HIM?
ENOUGH OF THEM TO PUT THE
SIDEWINDERS BEHIND THIS
JAIL WITHIN THE NEXT DAY
OR SO! GET RAMBLING,
BLACK JACK! WE'VE
GOT TRACKS TO
MAKE!

HEH, HEH! YOU'RE A BIGGER
FOOL, ROCKY LANE, THAN I
THOUGHT YOU WERE!
YOU'LL NEVER GET
ME! HEH, HEH!

SEVERAL SECONDS LATER......

MAKE A SOUND AND I'LL DRILL
YUH, DOC! YUH'RE FORMING YORE
BRONG AND RIDING WITH ME
OUT TO TAKE CARE OF A
PARD OF
MEN, AND
NO
QUESTIONS
ASKED! SAVVY?

D-DON'T S-SHOOT! I'LL GO
WITH YOU!

FEW MINUTES LATER.............

THERE THEY GO. ON THE WAY BACK
TO THE HIDE-OUT, I RECKON THEY'LL
LEAVE A MIGHTY BROAD TRAIL FOR
US TO FOLLOW! EASY, BLACK JACK,
OLD PARD! WE'LL LET THEM GET
PLUMB OUT OF SIGHT!

I STANK EVERYTHING ON THE
HUNCH THAT I HIT ONE OF THOSE
VARMINTS WITH MY SIX-GUN FIRE
LAST NIGHT, AND IT LOOKS AS IF
I PLAYED MY HAND PLUMB RIGHT!

"THAT MUST BE THEIR
HIDE-OUT! WHOA, BLACK
JACK! NOW TO BURST
AND GET THE
DROP ON THOSE
MAVERICKS!

REACH-YOU SIDEWINDERS,
I'VE GOT YOU COVERED!"
ROCKY LANE WESTERN

TAKE THEIR GUNS, DOC! I'M TAKING THEM TO JAIL, THEN I'M HITTING THE TRAIL TO BRING IN FREESTONE—the owlhoot behind all this!

SUDDENLY...WITHOUT WARNING!

DROP THOSE GUNS, ROCKY LANE! I'VE GOT A BEND ON YOU!

STRAIN THEM UP BY THEIR WRISTS TO AN OVERHEAD BEAM MEN! I AIM TO MAKE THESE MEDDLING HOMES WISH THEY WERE NEVER BORN!

NOT EVEN ROCKY LANE IS GOING TO KEEP ME FROM CONTROLLING ALL THE SILVER LODES IN THESE PARTS! HA, HA! GET YOUR PRAYERS STARTED, ROCKY, BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING TO PLUMB NEED THEM!

SO LONG, ROCKY LANE! THESE FLAMES'LL COOK YOUR GOOSE WHILE I TAKE CARE OF ANOTHER LITTLE MATTER! HA, HA! I AIM TO PLAY IT SAFE!

THERE THEY GO! I'VE GOT A MIGHTY STRONG LUNCH JUST WHERE THEY'RE HEADING TO! NOW TO CALL BLACK JACK, OOOOOGGGGGGGG!

GOOD BOY, BLACK JACK! BITE THROUGH THESE ROPES PRONTO, OLD PARD!

CLIPPETY CLOP!
CLIPPETY CLOP!
GOOD WORM, BLACK JACK! NOW TO RIDE IF MY SIX-GUNS, FREE THE DOG AND WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY—TO PLAY A HUNCH!

DON'T THANK ME! THANK A DRUG NAMED BLACK JACK! UP YOU COME!

A SPLIT SECOND LATER, THE FLAMING CABIN COLLAPSES WITH A TENDEROUS CRASH!

WHREW! THAT WAS A MITE CLOSE! GET YOUR HORSE, DOG, AND MEET ME AT THE JAIL-HOUSE! HAVE THE PROSPECTOR WITH YOU!

CRASH!

LET'S GO, BLACK JACK! I'VE GOT A HUNCH THOSE POLECATS ARE AIMING TO BURN DOWN THE CLAIM RECORDING OFFICE AND THEN FILE "FRESH" CLAIMS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR HANDS!

BUT I AM ON BEATING THE VARIANTS TO THE PUNCH—THAT'S THEIR GAME: FASTER, BLACK JACK! THERE'S MESQUITE WOnder!

THIS END OF MY ROPE IS TIED HARD TO MY SADDLE-HORN! NOW TO BUILD A BIG NOOSE AND GET READY TO JUMP FOR THE ROOF OF THE CLAIM RECORDING OFFICE! NOT A SIGN OF FREESTONE AND HIS VARIANTS, SO I RECKON WE'RE IN TIME, OLD PARITION!

MADE IT! NOW TO WAIT FOR THOSE SIDEWINDERS TO SHOW UP AND GIVE THEM THE SURPRISE OF THEIR LIVES!
A FEW MINUTES LATER \--------
HERE THEY COME--JUST AS I
RECKONED THEY WOULD!

ALL RIGHT, MEN: SET
THE TORCHES TO THE
BUILDING!

A\AS ROCKY LANE DEFTLY TOSSES
HIS LARIAT AND GIVES BLACK
JACK A SOFT COMMAND\------
GOT THEM!FULL
BLACK JACK,
OLD PAD!

HUM?

W-WE'RE
BEING
HAULED
UP IN THE
AIR!

BANG!
BANG!
THESE SHOTS WILL
BRING THE SHERIFF
ON THE RUN--HERE
HE COMES.

HELP! TURN US
LOOSE! WE'RE BEING
SQUEEZED TO
DEATH!

WHAT IN
THUNDERATION'S
GOING ON
NYAH?

A FEW SECONDS LATER, ROCKY LANE TIGHTENS THE
NOOSE OF JUSTICE AROUND THE RENEGADES' NECKS.

THOSE ARE THE
POLICE WHO TRIED
TO KILL ME!

NO! NO! TAKE THEM
AWAY--I'LL
CONFESS! I SAW
THAT PROSPECTOR
BURIED--OR I'M
GOING LOCO!

LOCK THEM UP,
SHERIFF--YOU WERE
PLUMB LOCO.
FREESTONE, WHEN
YOU THOUGHT YOU
COULD BEAT
THE LAW!

SPECIAL OFFER!
YOU...
CAN GET
'ROCKY'S'
PICTURE WITH "BLACK JACK"
AUTOGRAPHED TO YOU PERSONALLY!

SEND FOR IT TODAY!

Enclose this coupon and 25c for one LARGE photo of "ROCKY" and "BLACK JACK" autographed to you personally.

NAME: ........................................

ADDRESS: ....................................

(If you want 5 LARGE pictures of "ROCKY" and "BLACK JACK" all autographed to you personally, enclose $1.00 Address: ROCKY LANE, 4024
North Radford Ave., North Hollywood, Calif.)
HOWDY, PARDS:

IT'S MIGHTY GOOD TO BE RIDING YOUR WAY ONCE AGAIN AND I WANT TO THANK YOU PARDS FOR ALL THOSE GREAT LETTERS YOU'VE BEEN SENDING TO ME, BLACK JACK AND I SURE APPRECIATE THEM!

ON THE WAY OVER I MET BOB HANNERS. HE'S LOOKING PRETTY WELL NOW, BUT IT TOOK A HARD LESSON TO DO IT. YOU SEE, FRIENDS, BOB WAS ONE OF THOSE FOOLISH CRITTERS WHO BELIEVED A BODY COULD STAY STRONG AND HEALTHY BY EATING ONLY FANCY CAKES AND COOKIES, CANDY AND AN OCCASIONAL HOT DOG. WELL, PARTNERS, NOT THAT THOSE THINGS AREN'T FINE --- IN THEIR PLACE, BUT AS A STEADY DIET THEY JUST DON'T HOLD UP.

WHEN MEALTIME ARRIVED, BOB HANNERS WOULD JUST SKIP THE MEAT AND VEGETABLES TO GET AT THE DESSERT. SURE, LOTS OF HANDS TOLD HIM THAT A BODY NEEDED GOOD, STRONG SOUPS AND MEATS, MILK, EGGS AND VEGETABLES, BUT BOB WAS JUST A THICK-HEADED BROOMTAIL. THEN IT HAPPENED.

HE AND FRANK DODDS WERE HIGH IN THE HILLS DURING A WEEK OF TERRIFIC CLOUDBURSTS. THE RAIN WEAKENED THE GROUND AND THEY JUST ESCAPED BEING CAUGHT IN A LANDSLIDE THAT LEFT THEM STRANDED IN A WET CAVE ON EAGLE PASS. IT WAS DAYS BEFORE THEY COULD BE REACHED. IN THAT WEEK, BOB AND FRANK HAD TO LIVE ON THE STRENGTH THAT THEIR BODIES HAD STORED FROM YEARS OF PROPER NOURISHMENT. FRANK CAME THROUGH ALL RIGHT, BUT IN BOB'S CASE, THERE WAS NO STOREHOUSE OF STRENGTH. THE YEARS OF SKIPPING THE GOOD FOOD FOR THE FANCY DESSERTS CAUGHT UP TO BOB. HE GREW SO WEAK THAT WHEN RESCUERS FINALLY REACHED THE CAVE, HE HAD TO BE CARRIED DOWN.

WELL, PARTNERS, SINCE THEN, BOB'S LEARNED THE NECESSITY OF SENSIBLE EATING AND THAT FANCY FOODS AND CANDY SNACKS ARE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR STRENGTH-BUILDING, VITAMIN-FILLED MEAT, MILK, POTATOES AND VEGETABLES --- NO MORE THAN A PLOW HORSE IS A SUBSTITUTE FOR A FAST PINTO!

THAT'S SOMETHING I THINK EVERY COWHAND FROM COAST TO COAST OUGHT TO REMEMBER.

BUT NOW, PARDS, I'LL BE MOSEYING ON. IT'S BEEN MIGHTY FINE RAISING IN YOUR CORRAL AND I'LL BE RIDING BY NEXT MONTH AGAIN! TILL THEN, BLACK JACK AND YOUR PARDS,

Allan "Rocky" Lane
and
BLACK JACK U
JEPPERS, LOOK HOW EXCITED ALL THOSE COWPOKES ARE THAT THE CIRCUS IS COMING TUH TOWN! WAL, I RECKON I'LL GIVE THEM SOMETHING TUH GET EXCITED BOUT RIGHT NOW!

HOWDY, SAGEBRUSH! HAVE YUH HEARD THE GOOD NEWS? THE CIRCUS IS COMING TUH TOWN!

WHAT! YUH WUZ WITH THE CIRCUS?

THAT'S RIGHT! GOSH WE NEVER KNEW THAT! WHAT DID YUH DO AT THE CIRCUS?

THAT Doesn'T GET ME EXCITED! DON'T YUH HOMBRÉS KNOW I USED TUH BE WITH THE CIRCUS?

YUH FELLERS KNOW THE HOMBRE WHO KEPPS HIS HEAD IN THE LION'S MOUTH FER FIVE MINUTES?

SHORE! (GASP) DON'T TELL US YUH DID THAT?

NO--I WUZ THE FELLER WHO HELD THE WATCH AND TIMED HIM!
Here's where I keep my "TOP SECRET" stuff!

MAKE A TREASURE CHEST with Scotch Cellaphane Tape

TAKE A CARDBOARD BOX or carton and make a hinged lid for it with "Scotch" Cellaphane Tape. Run the tape the length of the lid for maximum strength.

COVER THE BOX with bright wrapping paper or construction paper, taping it in place with cellophane tape. Use different paper for covering lid.

MAKE A LATCH for the lid this way. Put two strips of tape on the box as shown, then put a strip on the lid, doubling over the end to use as a tab.

DECORATE your Treasure Chest with cutouts from magazines—trains, animals, cowboys, dolls. Strips of transparent cellophane tape will hold 'em in place.

FREE!
Send for your copy of "Tracks with Taps", new booklet full of playtime ideas. Wraka Dept FC-11, Minnesota Mining & Mfg Co., St. Paul 6, Minn., enclosing the plain tab from a roll of "Scotch" Cellaphane Tape.

Transparent as glass
Seals without adhering

LET'S GO IN THIS RESTAURANT AND EAT, LORING!

WHY?
BECAUSE IT WORKS BOTH WAYS!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY ONLY EAT IN RESTAURANTS WHAT THROCK'S MUSIC BECAUSE IT WORKS BOTH WAYS!

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE IF THEY HAVE MUSIC OR NOT?

I ONLY DINE IN RESTAURANTS WHAT MUSIC IS PROVIDED.

...AND SOMETIMES THE FOOD HELPS ME FORGET THE MUSIC!
As he races through the hills, Secret Marshal Rocky Lane's mind flashes back to headquarters the day before......

I get it, Chief. I'm to pick up the prisoner, Wily Dawson, at Redrock Jail and take him to the County Prison in Dexter.

Right, Rocky! Dawson's a slick varmint and we're afraid his men might try to spring him from jail! The County Prison is the place for him!

All right, Chief! Black Jack and I will high-tail it for Redrock!

Sheriff Todd, in Redrock, is expecting a Marshal to pick up Dawson at three o'clock tomorrow! Good luck, Rocky!

And so Rocky races toward Redrock when suddenly......

Hey, Thar, partner....HELP ME! I need help! Someone's in trouble! Let's see what's the matter!
IT'S MY PAL--HE'S BEEN CAUGHT UNDER A BOULDER THAT CAME DOWN ON US AS WE WERE PROSPECTIN'. HE'S RIGHT BEHIND THESE ROCKS.

THAR HE IS, FRIEND!

OHHH-- HELP ME!

ALL RIGHT, PARTNER! I'LL GIVE YOU A HAND FREEING HIM!

WE'LL HAVE YOU FREE IN A--OW!

THAT'S ALL FOR YOU, MARSHAL!

HE FELL FOR IT LIKE A BABY!

HE SHORE DID! I'LL GIVE HIM ANOTHER FOR GOOD MEASURE!

BUT EVEN WITH A COWARDLY, SNEAK ATTACK, ROCKY LANE IS NOT EASILY CAPTURED AND....

SAYS YOU, YOU NO-GOOD, SNEAKING DRYGULCHERS!

HEYYYYYY-- OOOOPS!

WHAAAAAA!

AND HERE'S SOMETHING FOR YOU, POLECAT!

OUCH!

LOOKS AS IF THE BOYS NEED HELP-- C'MON!

RECKON I ROODE INTO A HORNET'S NEST!

RUSH HIM!

SOCK!
ROCKY LANE WESTERN

THAT'S ENOUGH OUT OF YOU, LAKE! THIS'LL HOLD YAH A SPELL!

TIGHT-LIPS WILSON--WWUH!

CRACK!

HE RECOGNIZED ME, ALL RIGHT! BUT YOU RECOGNIZED HIM, TOO, TIGHT-LIPS, WHICH MADE IT EASY FOR US! WE KNEW A MARSHAL'D BE RIDING THIS WAY TOWARD REDROCK, BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW WHICH ONE!

THIS IS ONE TIME WHEN SENDING THE BEST SECRET MARSHAL WAS A MISTAKE! C'MON, LET'S GET HIS CREDENTIALS AND GIT OUT OF HERE!

RIGHT, TIGHT-LIPS! WE DON'T WANT TO BE LATE TO KEEP HIS APPOINTMENT--HAW-HAW-HAW!

LATER, IN REDROCK....

I'VE COME FOR THE PRISONER, WILY DWARSH, SHERIFF! HERE ARE MY CREDENTIALS!

ROCKY LANE! THIS IS AN HONOR! I'VE SURE HEARD PLENTY 'BOUT YOU, MARSHAL!

I'LL GET THE PRISONER, MARSHAL! MEEP YORE EYE ON HIM! HE'S EARNED HIS NAME--WILY!

I WILL, SHERIFF! I'VE BROUGHT SOME DEPUTIES WITH ME! BUT HURRY! WE WANT TO GET TO THE COUNTY PRISON AFORE DARK!

MEANWHILE, IN THE HILLS...

OOOH, MY HEAD! SAY-- MY PAPERS! THOSE DRY-GULCHERS TOOK THEM! I'VE GOT TO GET TO REDROCK!

BUT WHEN ROCKY RACES INTO REDROCK.....

BUT I TURNED THE PRISONER OVER TO THOSE GALLOWS ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES AGO!

IT'S MY FAULT, SHERIFF! I WALKED INTO A TRAP! YOU'RE NOT TO BLAME! THEY PRESENTED PROPER CREDENTIALS!
ROCKY LANE WESTERN

But I should've known that the real Rocky Lane wouldn't have needed a posse of deputies to handle one prisoner! Well, now the damage has been done! Wily Dawson has been freed by his men! We've got to figure a way to get him back!

The polecat, Sheriff Reed thought he had him blocked off up at Valley Ridge!

But the next few days, Wily Dawson rambles, living up to his name!

Wily Dawson—dropped down on us with his varmints at Gully Pass!

When one day, in Redrock...

Sheriff—hold it! That varmint over there—That's Tight-Lips Wilson! He was with Dawson's men when they duggled me! Then let's nab the mangy coyote and find out where Dawson's hide-out is!

Conscience, and we were tipped off. He intended to strike here at four corners. That coyuse deliberately tripped us up again!

You can say that again, Sheriff! But I'll figure a way to nab him yet!

Rocky, that broom-tail is leading us a high and mighty chase!

No, he'll never talk. I know that from the first time I sent him to jail! That's how he got the name Tight-Lips!

I've been thinking, Sheriff, of the way Dawson had his men diggled me! Two can play at that game!

Then what can we do? We can't just let him slip away from us!
TIGHT-LIPS WILSON IS IN TOWN TO SEE WHAT INFORMATION HE CAN GATHER FOR DAVISON'S NEXT RAID! MEANWHILE, YOU CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES AND GET A CLOSED WAGON! THEN, BIZZLE—BIZZLE—BIZZLE!

YEP, GO ON—I'M LISTENING!

SOON AFTER, IN THE FOOTHILLS OUTSIDE REDROCK...

SEE HIM YET, ROCKY? FROM HERE YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE THE ROAD FROM REDROCK!

THERE'S A RIDER COMING ALONG NOW!

IT'S TIGHT-LIPS WILSON! HE'S RIDING OUT OF TOWN NOW!

GOOD! GET INTO THE WAGON AND I'LL CROSS HIS TRAIL BY LOW RIDGE!

OKAY, SHERIFF! YOU KNOW THE PLAN! STAY A MITE AHEAD OF HIM SO HE CAN SEE YOU TILL WE GET DEEPER INTO THE HILLS!

RIGHT! AND THEN WE'LL PUT SOME SALT ON THAT VULTURE'S TAIL! GIDDAP—!

SOON AFTER, DEEPER IN THE HILLS, THE WAGON HALTS, AND.....

HALOOGO, THERE—PARTNER! CAN YOU COME OVER? I NEED SOME HELP, FRIEND!

THAT'S IT, PARTNER—RIGHT OVER HERE! I'M AFRAID I'M IN A LITTLE TROUBLE!

HE'S COMING OVER! SO FAR SO GOOD!
What's your trouble, partner?

It's my front axle. She's mighty loose and I'm afraid she'll be comin' off any minute. I thought you might give me some help.

I don't fix wagons. I only meant you might know the nearest place in these hills I could take the wagon to have the axle tightened.

Confidentially, I'm shipping a wagonful of money to the bank at four corners. I wouldn't like to be stuck in these hills with a bum axle with that wily Dawson on the loose!

That wagon's full o' money. Well, that's different, partner!

I know a place you can get that axle fixed right quick. Just follow me.

Thanks! The bank shipped the money in this wagon. Figuring Dawson'd hit the stage. I'd sure hate to see things go wrong. Just lead the way, partner!

And soon, deeper in the hills...

This the place, partner? It doesn't look as if I can get an axle fixed here.

That's where you're wrong, partner! We'll fix your wagon for good here!

Reach... and no tricks! Hey, wily, this here Hannys got a wagonful o' money the bank was trainin' to sneak by us!

What's that...? Well, nice goin', tight-lips!

And if it ain't my old pal, the sheriff, wearin' a new get-up! This is a double pleasure! Watch him, tight-lips, while I open this wagon!

I've got him, wily! You got the money out o' this crate!
But when Dawson opens the doors of the wagon...

Surprise, you ornery Polecat!

Wha...Owww!

Wham!

And in the moment of surprise, Sheriff Teeb sails into instant action!

Now we'll square accounts with you slick coyotes!

It's Rocky Lane...Uuhh!

THUD!

I'll teach you owlhoots to diggugl me!

Pow!

GET THE...OW!

I'll finish you, Lane!

Guess again!

That'll be enough from you, Dawson!

Owww...my hand!

That's it, reach for the sky—all of you! These coyotes are ready for a nice, quiet jail now, Sheriff! Let's get them to Oah!

Right, Rocky! I've got one more candidate here!

The next day, at the county prison in Dexter...

Thanks for helping me bring wily Dawson here, Sheriff! We did better than I expected, getting his henchmen, too!

And you did it by turning the same ruse on him. He had his men pull on you! No wonder the name Rocky Lane is feared by every outlaw in the West!
I had the most terrible dream last night. I dreamed I sneaked into my boss' ranch house last night and stole all his silverware!

Doctor! Doctor! You've got to help me! I'm scared!

Doctor: What's wrong?

Doctor Diddle M.D. (in the background)

Doctor: I'll admit it was a strange dream, but why should it scare you?

What am I going to do with all this silverware?

(Gulp!) Yum actually took it. How could you do such a thing?

I didn't know what I was doing. I did it in my sleep! I had so many hot dogs to eat before I went to bed, it must have made me do strange things like walking in my sleep!

How many hot dogs did you eat?

Woof! Woof!

What?
I MEAN FIFTEEN! I HAD SO MANY HOT DOGS IT'S EASIER FOR ME TO BARK THAN TALK!

WELL, YUH CAN'T KEEP THAT SILVERWARE! THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO...

... YUH'VE GOT TO RETURN IT AND TELL YORE BOSS THE WHOLE STORY SO HE'LL UNDERSTAND YUH DIDN'T STEAL IT!

BUT I CAN'T GO BACK TO THE RANCH HOUSE UNTIL I FIND A HITCHING POST!

BUT YUH DON'T HAVE ANY HORSE!

OH, YES I HAVE! IT'S AT THE HITCHING POST I'M LOOKING FOR!

NOW HOW COULD YUH FORGET WHERE YUH LEFT YORE HORSE?

IF YUH GOT A HORSE, I'LL SHOW YUH HOW EASY IT IS TO DO!

NEVER MIND! I'LL TAKE YORE WORD FOR IT! NOW WE BETTER GET BACK TO YORE BOSS' PLACE BEFORE HE HAS THE SHERIFF OUT LOOKING FOR THE SILVERWARE!

DOES YORE BOSS AT LEAST LIKE YUH, SLIM?

OH SURE! ONLY THE OTHER DAY HE INVITED ME OUT!

REALLY?

YES! OF COURSE I HAPPENED TO BE IN HIS HOUSE AT THE TIME! HE INVITED ME TO GET OUT OF IT!
Yuh actually mean he’s sore at yuh then! Why?
Because I reminded him that “he who hesitates is lost”!

But that’s a famous expression! Why should he get angry over that?
He didn’t like the way I reworded it!

Reworded “he who hesitates is lost”? How?
I told him “he’s one guy I hope gets lost without hesitation”!

But that’s no way to talk to yore boss! What made yuh say a thing like that?
He said I was the ace of all his cowhands!

What’s bad about that? He said I was the jack ace!

Yuh must have done something to make him say that!
All I did was suggest a good business for him to go into!

What kind of business? I suggested he open a clothing store in a nudist colony!
ROCKY LANE WESTERN

But what good is a clothing store in a nudist colony?

There wouldn't be any competition!

I don't blame him fer getting mad. That's the stupidest suggestion I ever heard.

You're just as bad as my boss! Yuh wouldn't recognize a good idea if yuh fell over it. Why, I suggested rubbing a cow's teeth and he got angry!

Rub a cow's teeth? What for?

To get dental cream!

I can see you've got a mind of yore own!

That's right!

And I know why too! No one else would have it!

Anyone who'd say that must have a heart of stone—and a head to match!

NEVER MIND MY HEAD! USE YORES AND SEE IF Yuh CAN FIND YORE HORSE.

I think that's the one, but it's so long ago that I left him. Yuh can't be sure.

How could it be so long ago?

When I left him I went into a revolving door and spent a month looking fer the door knob.

I think it'll be safer all around if I hitch yuh up and let yore horse look fer yuh instead. I'll return the silverware myself.

This is the end.
Vicious greed, the motivating force behind most crimes and deadly violence, caused the giant brute, jawbusting back, to squeeze and crush smaller, peaceable men! Yet even the fearless, fighting, undercover marshal, ROCKY LANE, is powerless to stop him, for he operates within the law... until he is blasted out of bounds by a terrific explosion!

As Rocky rides toward the unequal fight... I warned yuh, Meeker, you're trespassing! If yuh won't pay the toll or get off my property, I'll put yuh off! But... ahhhh!

Toll Bridge - No Pedestrians

Dynamite, Black Jack! We're doomed!

Hee-hee, that's the end of Rocky Lane!
Hey! What's going on? I'm protecting my property! That's what!

You knocked that hombre plumb unconscious! He's falling into Crazy Snake River! He'll be drowned in the rapids!

That's his lookout, not mine!

Well, it's my lookout! I don't aim to stand by and let him drown! Stand aside so black jack and I can get to the middle of the bridge to dive into deep water!

Yuh don't get on the bridge till yuh form over ten dollars!

This is an emergency! Up, black jack!

Hey!!???

The sudden, daring maneuver takes the big man by surprise!

Yuh ornery, trespassing varmint! Come back and pay the toll or I'll gun yuh down!

Up and over, black jack! It's a long dive!

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Rocky and black jack escape the deadly lead, but are they leading to greater peril?

Loco galoot! He and his horse will be smashed to a pancake!
ROCKY LANE WESTERN

ROCKY WORKS DESPERATELY, GIVING THE NEARLY DROWNED MAN ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION!

POOR MAN! HE SWALLOWED A BARREL OF WATER!

EASY, BOY! WE'VE GOT HIM!

YOU SEE, THERE'S A PASSEL OF US SMALL RANCHERS STAKED OUT ON LONELY ISLAND. HIGH BRIDGE IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN GET BACK AND FORTH TO TOWN. NOW JAWBUSTER WANTS TO TOLL US TEN DOLLARS A TRIP, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD THAT!

IT'S A PUBLIC BRIDGE, ISN'T IT?

YES, BUT JAWBUSTER CLAIMS TO HAVE THE LAW ON HIS SIDE!

I'LL GO UP TO MR. JAWBUSTER AND SEE ABOUT THAT! YOU REST HERE UNTIL I RETURN!

DON'T CROSS HIM, STRANGER! WE'LL BUST YOU IN LITTLE PIECES!
LATER, ROCKY CONFRONTS JAWBUSTER!

WHAT'S THE IDEA OF CHARGING TOLL ON A PUBLIC BRIDGE?

I ANSWER FOOL QUESTIONS FROM FOOL PEOPLE ONLY ONE WAY. WITH MY FISTS!

YOU MISSED!

UNNGGHHH!

SWISH!

NOW ANSWER THE QUESTION! IT'S THE LAW THAT'S ASKING. I'M ROCKY LANE, UNDERCOVER MARSHAL!

DON'T SHOOT! EVERYTHING'S PERFECTLY LEGAL! LET ME EXPLAIN!

SEE THIS DEED? THE BRIDGE IS PUBLIC, BUT I OWN THE LAND HERE AT THE APPROACH! NOBODY CAN GET ON THE BRIDGE WITHOUT CROSSING MY LAND!

SO IF YOU'RE A LAWMAN, YOU'RE ON MY SIDE, ROCKY LANE! NO! NO!

I UPHELD THE LAW, BUT THAT DOESN'T KEEP ME FROM THINKING YOU'RE A SHYLOCK. YOU'LL HEAR FROM ME LATER, JAWBUSTER!

ROCKY RIDES AWAY SLOWLY, THOUGHTFULLY!

THE LONELY ISLAND RANCHERS ARE IN A BAD POSITION! HIGH BRIDGE IS THE ONLY WAY THEY CAN CROSS TREACHEROUS CRAZY SNAKE RIVER. THAT TOLL COULD BLEED THEM BROKE IN NO TIME!

ROCKY RETURNS TO MEEKER!

DID YOU SEE HIM? WHAT'S UP? CAN WE MAKE HIM LET US USE THE BRIDGE FREE?

NO, THE TOLL'S LEGAL ENOUGH. WE PUT OVER A SHREWDER DEAL! WE'LL HAVE TO THINK OF SOME OTHER WAY TO CROSS THE RIVER!
ROARY LANE WESTERN

But there's no other way! We can't use rowboats! The rapids are too strong, and we have to get back to our families and ranches!

How many of you, lonely island ranchers are on this side of the bridge right now?

Most of us! We came over early to do our banning and to get supplies! When we came across, there was no toll sign up!

Round up all the men! Then meet me here! I've got a plan!

The lonely islanders meet at the river bank! Rocky outlines his plan, then......

It'll never work! I say let's storm Jawbuster and Gun him down! No, no! He'd kill us before we got near him!

Boys, I say let's try Rocky's plan! It's the only way we've got a chance!

Rocky's plan is put to work! Soon the woods rings with the sound of swinging axes......

It won't work! I think it will! I've got confidence in Rocky Lane!

Meanwhile......

You ain't getting much bridge business, boss!

Ha, ha! Don't worry! The lonely islanders can't hold out long! They'll soon kneecle under and sell me their island! That's what I want! It's the richest grazing land around!

Curses! They're building a pontoon bridge! It's almost finished, and they're being directed by Rocky Lane!

Hey, boss! Look here! They're up to something!

Come on! We'll stop that!
Jawbuster and his henchmen put his evil plan to work:
This boat will float downstream, lodge against the pontoons, and blow that bridge to bits!

Swiftly, the boat moves toward its target:
Hurrah! The bridge is finished!
We can go home now without paying toll!
Rocky Lane should have the honor of being the first one to cross!

We'll test the bridge, Black Jack. Say, look at that loose rowboat, and smoke coming from it! Maybe some lazy Jasper is lying under that canvas, smoking a corn cob.

Keeno! We busted the bridge and got rid of Rocky Lane, too!

When the coast is clear, Jawbuster inspects the results of his nefarious scheme:
Look, boys! This ragged shirt is all that's left of Rocky Lane, the middlebrow marshal!

You were mighty smart, boss, to dynamite the bridge!
Those lonesome islanders will know better than to cross you now!

Yep! And the law can't prove we did it!

Suddenly...
But the law can prove it—from your confession!

Rocky Lane! You're alive!
AS IF ON SIGNAL, THE LONELY ISLAND RANCHERS POP UP FROM HIDING PLACES TO BLOCK RETREAT...

NOW, JAWBUSTER, YOU'RE IN FOR A FIGHT!
I'M RUNNING! NO YOU'RE NOT!

HERE'S SOMETHING THAT'LL GIVE YOU A BANG!

AGGHHH!
CRACK!

I QUIT! I QUIT! MY JAW FEELS BUSTED!

YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO RECOVER IN JAIL! YOU SEE, I RIPPED UP MY SHIRT AND STRAINED IT WITH RED BERRIES, FIGURING THAT WOULD DRAW A CONFESSION FROM YOU OF ATTEMPTED MURDER!

THANKS, ROCKY! WITH JAWBUSTER IN JAIL, WE WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE USING HIGH BRIDGE.
MY! YOU SURE HIT HIM!

HE MADE ME ANGRY! IF I HADN'T SEEN THAT SMOKE IN TIME TO JUMP, THE BLAST MIGHT HAVE INJURED BLACK JACK!

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A COMIC MAGAZINE! DIRECTLY FROM TELEVISION!
CAPTAIN VIDEO
10¢ ON NEWSSTANDS ACROSS THE NATION 10¢
You know, fards, honor and horses go together! When a rancher has a horse that wins an honor, it makes him feel a heap better than if he won it himself!

Horses are honored in many ways! When some great general dies, and the folks want to make a statue in his memory, the sculptor just naturally sets him up on his horse!

And back in the days of the Roman Empire, the emperor Caligula didn't spare the horses when it came to honoring his bronc! He honored him by making him consul of Rome!

But I reckon no bronc ever received more honor than Cortez's bronc! He was worshipped as a god by the Aztec Indians!

Honor doesn't necessarily mean blue ribbons and laurel wreaths! There is an honor which our masters bestow on us that is priceless!

And as for me—I wouldn't swap places with any bronc that ever lived! Having Rocky Lane for a pard is the greatest honor I could have!
Gopher face

THE MAD HATTER!

Hey, Gopherface, that's no way yuh be sitting around in jest yore long red flannels! Why don't yuh put some clothes on?

Wal, if that's the case, why are yuh wearing yore hat?

Oh...

...Somebody might come!

Aww, why should I? Nobody ever comes tuk see me.

So, that's it!
ROAMY and JULIE

OUR ENGAGEMENT IS OFF, ROAMY, AND DON'T YUH DARE ASK ME TO RETURN YORE RING!
I WON'T JULIE—BUT THE FINANCE COMPANY WILL!

WHAT! YUH MEAN TO SAY YUH GAVE ME A RING THAT YUH DIDN'T PAY FOR?
LISTEN, THE ONLY KIND OF A RING I CAN AFFORD IS A RING ON THE TELEPHONE!

SAY, COME TO THINK OF IT, THE FIRST TIME I PROPOSED TO YUH, YUH DIDN'T HEAR ME!
THAT'S RIGHT!

THEN HOW COME YUH HEARD ME WHEN I SHOWED YUH THAT DIAMOND RING?
YUN POOL...

--- I'M NOT STONE DEAD!
(GASP) !!!

--- I'M NOT STONE DEAD!
(GASP) !!!
IF YUH DON'T MARRY ME, JULIE, I'LL TAKE A ROPE AND HANG MYSELF IN YORE FRONT YARD!

YUH CAN'T DO THAT!

WHY NOT?
BECAUSE...

--- MY FATHER DOESN'T WANT YUH HANGING AROUND!

(SIGH) I SUPPOSE I'LL NEVER MARRY NOW.

(DON'T BE SILLY! JUST BECAUSE I TURNED YUH DOWN DOESN'T MEAN OTHER GIRLS WILL DO THE SAME!

SHORE IT DOES! IF YUH WON'T HAVE ME, WHO WILL?

(GULP) ???

(Oh no!)

BARD JAMSEY IS BEGGING ME TO MARRY HIM.

AW, GET WISE TO YORESELF, JULIE! HE'S JUST AFTER YORE FATHER'S MONEY!

BUT SO ARE YUH.

YEY ---
--- BUT I SAW YUH FIRST!

(GASP) !!!!

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE! THE MAN I'M GOING TO MARRY MUST BE UPRIGHT AND SQUARE!

UPRIGHT AND SQUARE? YUH DON'T WANT A HUSBAND——

--- YUH WANT A PIANO!

(LULP) !!!!

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN! I WANT A BIG STRONG MAN!

THAT'S ME! YUH'VE SEEN ME IN A BATHING SUIT! MY MUSCLES ARE ROCKS!

YUH MEAN PEBBLES!

(GULP) !!!!

OH YEAH! I'LL MATCH MY ARMS WITH ANYONE, JOE LOUIS, JACK DEMPSEY......

HOLD ON! HOW CAN YUH MATCH YORE ARMS WITH THEM......

--- WHEN YORE OWN ARMS DON'T EVEN MATCH EACH OTHER!

(GULP) !!!!

---
Anyway, you're not the right match for me.

Why not?

Well, after all, I went to finishing school for fifteen years. Jeepers, what were you doing all that time?

Finishing school!

(Groan) !!!!

Aw, let's make up, Julie! Give me another chance!

No! We're through!

Yuh'll change yore mind! I'll be around tonight!

If you do, my father will play the auto show game with yuh!

Huh? If I come around, yore father will play the auto show game with me?

That's right... He'll kick yuh where he auto, but it won't show!

(Gulp) !!!!
COWARD'S COMEBACK
By Tracy Lee

The older man nodded again. "Yep, I thought Holdan would figure like that. Truth is he don't want any doings with Bart Maxwell or his brothers."

Larry said, "Don't know as I blame him, Dad. They're killers, every one of 'em. Ain't anything in the oath says a peace officer has got to commit suicide."

The Sheriff turned his bleak old eyas on his son. For a moment their glances locked and held, then the younger man looked away. He shuffled to the door without again looking at his father. "See you later, Dad. I got to get over to the livery barn and see about my roan."

He was gone. Jed watched him go down the sun-parched street, out of sight, then went to his desk and sat down. From the holster, tied with yellow thong low on his leg, he took his old single action Colt. For a long time he sat there, staring at the worn butt, the places on the barrel where the finish had flaked away. An old gun, and a good one. He had always intended that Larry should have it one day, when he cashed in his chips for good. Now he wasn't so sure. He didn't want a coward to have that gun—not even his own son!

Reluctantly, forcing his mind, he recalled all the long history of the boy's weakness. The time they had been after the renegade Apaches, burning and killing across the countryside, and Larry had disappeared just before the fight, only to turn up later with a story of losing his way. They'd cornered that road agent up near Nogales, in a deadly gun duel, and Larry had again turned up missing. There were many other incidents—too many for the thing to be a mistake, an accident. No, his son was a coward, sura enough. A lump grew in the old man's throat and his eyes fell hot and swallow. Where had he failed? Where, in a life dedicated to upholding this law, to making the West fit for decent folk to live in, had he failed his own flesh and blood? Then, with the suddenly strong purpose of a man of action, of resource, he got the thing. There was other work to do. Important work. The Maxwell gang had to be rounded up. It was his job, and to do it he must lay a trap.

A week later all was in readiness. Word had been deliberately circulated that in the bank, lying in the pitifully vulnerable vault,
was a hoard of gold specie. Twenty thousand dollars! To make the bait more inviting, and to conceal the smell of a trap, Jed actually sent for a thousand in gold from another bank, and scattered it in top layers in the specie bags. Soon, he knew, the word would pass like wildfire into the surrounding country, to the hills where the killers waited just a chance.

As the days passed, Jed watched his son get more and more nervous. Every day, during banking hours, they lay concealed across the street from the bank, heavily armed, waiting for the men that never came.

"If the Maxwells are coming," Larry complained, "I wish they'd come ahead. Gets a man's nerve tight as rawhide, this waiting. Been ten days now and not a sight of 'em.

"Maybe they won't ever come," Jed told him. "Maybe they smelled trap and lit out for other parts. They're smart hombres, from what I hear." As he spoke he saw his son's face light up, and new bitterness crawled in him. He's hoping I'm right, Jed thought. He's hoping he don't have to face gunfire ever! Suddenly tenderness and sorrow swept away his anger. His boy was in trouble, sure enough. You couldn't dodge gunfights forever, not in this country, and a coward never won a fair fight. If Larry didn't learn pretty soon, didn't conquer his fear, he would be easy prey for any third rate gunman that happened along and forced him to fight.

When the Maxwell gang struck, they almost out-fought old Jed. Instead of swooping in during the day, to make a quick haul amid a spatter of shots, and a fast getaway, they came in the middle of the night.

Jed was drowsing in the office when he heard the shots. From across the room Larry roused and looked at his Dad in sudden alarm.

"What's that?" he cried. "Sounded like it came from down by the bank."

The old man was already out of the office, in his shirt sleeves, running with the Colt ready in his hand. He hugged the ragged shadows of store fronts, keeping under cover, and peered down the moon-bright street. Horses stood before the door of the bank, moving uneasily, nuzzling the still figure that lay stretched nearby. Jed saw it was old man Fellows, the cashier who had been working late. Dead. Then the door of the bank swung back and there was a spate of hurrying figures, made dark and sinister by the bright moon. Masks, black as the shadows, covered the faces of the men. They ran for the horses carrying small canvas bags, and as they ran Jed heard on man give a brutal laugh.

Jed fired. His lead took the foremost runner in his stride, doubled him over, sent him sliding on his face in the dust. The bag he held broke and gold gleamed mellow in the moonlight. Still another man tried for his horse, and Jed's slug broke his arm. There was shouting and curses as the men realized they could not mount and escape until the deadly gun in the shadows was silenced. Lead began to come Jed's way, singing past his ears, pocking the horse trough behind which he now lay. A stream of water gurgled and fell to the dust before him.

Jed was firing under the trough now, sweeping the shadows in the bank facade with the searching, probing, biting slugs from his old Colt. He had them, he knew, but he couldn't hold them forever. One of them would flank him soon, or a lucky shot would get him. Where was Larry? If the boy was there they would have a real chance. They could do the flanking, Jed holding the bandits down while Larry took them from another direction. Even with the thought a bullet flicked past his arm, taking cloth and a little skin with it. The pain of the bullet was nothing; the pain of Larry's not being there to help his Dad was unbearable. Sick despair rose in him and, for a moment, he didn't care that the bandits were running, closing in, trying to circle around to get him. Larry...

Then, out of the corner of his eye, Jed saw his son. Saw him back there, skulking in the shadows, his gun yet unheated. He was watching his father fight, maybe die. He was so afraid, so bound up with fear and trembling! Jed felt sorrow for his son even in that desperate moment. And then he acted—he gambled everything to break the iron grip of cowardice.

Jed rolled over into the moonlight. He clutching his stomach and moaned. "They got me, Larry! G-got me! Please, son! D-don't let them get away with it!" And he wasted, listening. There was a moment of deadly quiet. Then new gunfire began to blast the shadows apart as Larry, his young face white and set, ready for action, came out of the darkness and began to walk toward the door of the bank. The guns in his hands were speaking in a deadly rhythm. As he passed the spot where Jed lay the old man heard his son say, "It's all right, Dad. I'll get 'em for you!" And Jed rolled, was on his feet, and across the street and into the fight.

When the dying was over and the Maxwell boys quit, and while Jed and his son were having their wounds treated, there was a moment of awkward silence. Larry looked curiously at his Dad. "I sure thought you were killed, Dad. The way you sounded."

Jed grinned back at him. "Rokon maybe I did, Larry. A fellow does and says funny things when lead bites him. Why, I didn't get anything but a scratch." As though anything, he thought, could hurt a man who has just found his son again. And this time for keeps.

THE END
DID THE OLD HOUSE, NAILED SHUT AND TIGHTLY BOARDED UP, CONTAIN JUST AN ECCENTRIC SOURDOUGH PLAYING A MACABRE JOKE ON THE WORLD? OR WAS THERE REALLY A KILLER POISED TO STRIKE? ROCKY FINDS THE ANSWER AS HE SOLVES... DEATH'S HOAX!

AT THE CHIEF MARSHAL'S HEADQUARTERS...

WAKE UP, ROCKY! RISE AND SHINE! THERE'S WORK TO DO!

EH... OH, WHAT'S UP, CHIEF!

SORRY TO BREAK UP YOUR SLEEP, ROCKY, BUT THIS LETTER JUST CAME FROM A RANCHER NAMED BENJAMIN UP IN REDWOOD COUNTY! HE ASKS FOR IMMEDIATE AID! SAYS HE'S GOING TO BE KILLED UNLESS HE GETS PROTECTION!

I'LL HAVE BLACK JACK SADDLED AND READY IN A FEW MINUTES, CHIEF!

SOON AFTER...

BENTON WROTE THAT HIS PLACE IS FIVE MILES PAST MESA RIVER! TAKE THE FIRST RIGHT TURN! GOOD LUCK, ROCKY!

RIGHT, CHIEF! BLACK JACK AND I'LL DO OUR BEST TO GET THERE IN A HURRY AND GIVE BENTON THE PROTECTION HE ASKS FOR!
LATER THAT MORNING--
This must be the place--it's the only one around here.

BUT IT SURE LOOKS AS IF NOBODY LIVES HERE! The whole place is boarded up tight as a sow's skin!

But suddenly--
Bang! Bang! Bang!

Somebody's home, all right! And I'm a sitting duck out here in the open!

Hey, there--hold your fire! I'm from the marshal's office!

You are, eh? Wal, I'm not fallin' for any tricks! You'll have to prove that I stand up and walk this way with your hands up!

All right, I'm coming!

If you're really a marshal, toss your badge on the porch!

That's near enough--toss your badge, if you've got one!

There it is, partner!

Moments later--
All right, come in--git a move on it!
ROCKY LANE WESTERN

YOU'RE BENTON, I TAKE IT, THE MAN WHO SENT THAT LETTER FOR HELP TO HEADQUARTERS! ROCKY LANE'S MY NAME!

YEP, I'M BENTON, BUT DON'T STAND IN THE DOORWAY GABBIN' GIT INSIDE AFORE THEY GIT ME!

ALL RIGHT, FRIEND -- JUST TAKE IT EASY! WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

FER MONTHS AND MONTHS I'VE BEEN GETTING LETTERS NEAR EVERY DAY, SAYING I'M A-GOING TO BE KILLED! SOMEONE WANTS TO KILL ME SO THEY CAN BUY THE VALUABLE LAND I OWN!

I--I DON'T DARE GO OUT! I STOCKED ALL TH'ET CANNED FOOD, BUT I'M RUNNING LOW NOW, THAT'S WHY I SENT FOR A MARSHAL! I NEED PROTECTION!

HERE, MARSHAL--HERE'S ONE O' THE LETTERS I GOT YESTERDAY! I--I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE! I'M TOO NERVOUS NOW!

YOURE TELLING ME?

I RECKON YOU NEED PROTECTION, ALL RIGHT, I'LL STAY HERE TILL THE HOMBRE SENDING YOU THESE LETTERS IS CAUGHT! MEANWHILE, TRY TO GET HOLD OF YOURSELF!

THANKS, MARSHAL! I'LL TRY, I'VE AN EXTRA COT! YOU CAN SLEEP ON THAT!

POOR BENTON! HE'S SUCH A BUNDLE OF NERVES HE EVEN SLEEPS WITH HIS RIFLE! BUT IT'S BEEN MIGHTY QUIET ALL NIGHT!

LATER, THAT NIGHT--

Benton: You will be killed! You can't escape your fate!
THE NIGHT'S NEAR OVER AND THERE HASN'T BEEN A SIGN OF ANYONE GUNNING FOR BENTON—-(YAWN)!

AND WHEN MORNIN' COMES I'VE BEEN THINKING, BENTON, THAT SINCE THE VARMINT DIDN'T SHOW UP LAST NIGHT, I'LL GO INTO TOWN TO TRY TO GET A LEAD ON HIM. IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS!

YOU—-YOU MEAN YOU'RE A-GOING TO LEAVE ME ALONE, MARSHAL?

BUT YOU'LL COME BACK, MARSHAL... PROMISE ME!

I'LL COME BACK, BENTON! YOU'LL BE SAFE SO LONG AS YOU STAY IN HERE! NOBODY COULD GET IN THE WAY YOU HAVE THE PLACE BOARDED UP!

MARSHAL, BENTON'S BEEN SAYING THE SAME THING 'BOUT THOSE LETTERS FOR MONTHS NOW! HE'S HAD EVERYBODY IN TOWN UP THERE PROTECTING HIM AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER!

WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT A KILLER Sending A Man Warning Letters?

HAW-HAW--YOU TELL HIM, JED! HAW-HAW! HE FOOL THE MARSHAL'S OFFICE!

HEY, BOYS-- Did you-- HO-HO-- Hear that? -- Benten's asked the Marshal's Office fer protection--HO-HO-HO!

HA-HA-HA!

HAW-HAW!
Are you saying that Benton’s a crank? That’s exactly what I’m saying! Hank, here, will tell yuh the same thing. Everybody in town will. Benton writes those letters himself, we think.

That’s it, Marshal! He finally wrote to you after folks here got tired running to his ranch because of his false alarms! No killer ever appeared!

Hmmm!

Thanks—much obliged for the information! I’m going to have a talk with Benton now. Jest ask him if the killer ever tried to git him in all the months he’s been talking about those letters.

It’s clear the whole town’s convinced Benton’s only an old crackpot trying to bring attention to himself. I’ll find out if they’re right.

Soon, back at Benton’s ranch—

No! He hasn’t. But I’m sure he will! He keeps sending me these letters! I got this one after you’d left for town.

Your time is up, Benton.

All right, Benton. I knew you wouldn’t walk out on me. I’ll go fix us some vittles now!
The town's convinced he's a crank, but I can't go without giving him another chance!

That night—Looks like a terrific thunderstorm outside! Better get some sleep, Benton! I'll stand watch!

I... I can't ever sleep through a thunderstorm!

Suddenly—What was that? I... I don't know! It came from upstairs!

I'll find out pronto! You'd better stay down here, Benton!

Y... yes, all right.

Krassh!

But when Rocky dashes into the room... Oh, it was only these crates Benton had stacked against the window! The vibration of the thunder must've toppled them!

The window's still tightly locked and boarded! Nobody came in! That's for sure! I'd better get down and reassure Benton before he collapses!

And when morning comes... Your killer didn't show up again last night, Benton! That's the way it always happens, isn't it?

Yep, marsh-shal... he just never shows up somehow! But he keeps sending me those letters.
But he—he'll come! Marshal! you've got to stay with me! I need protection!

Sorry, Benton! I'll have to be leaving! I think you'll be all right here!

I reckon the folks in town were right! Benton's just out to draw attention to himself! Well, a marshal's got plenty more important things to do than humming a broomtail like that!

But as Rocky saddles up alongside the house—footprints! Someone was here last night sneaking around the house! He forgot the rain-soaked ground would leave his prints!

I reckon whoever it was left after seeing I was still here! Now I'm really puzzled! Is Benton just a crank—-or are those letters the real thing?!

I sure don't know, but I've an idea how I might find out the truth about this thing! Chon, Black Jack, we've work to do!

Soon after, in town—-we knew you'd realize it yourself, Marshal! so long...

So long, friends! I found out you were right about Benton! The joke was on me—be seeing you, sometime!

But that night—-

Now I'll just wait and see! Benton's holed up inside! If there's a killer, he'll have to try to get in!

Suddenly—-

Oh, oh! shots! I've got to get in there, pronto!

HELP!

bang!

bang!
Rocky Lane Western

I noticed the boards over this window are lighter than the others! Here goes!

It's the marshal — with!

AND NOT ANY TID BOOY! PD SHY!

WHAM...

CRASH!

POW!

The jig's up! I'm hotting!

A secret door built in the wall at the back of the house! So, that's how the varmints got in without my seeing them!

Not so fast, you buck maverick!

Ugh!

There, hold you till I get you and your partner to the sheriff! Your scheme was mighty slick — but your play is over!

And later, after the varmints are safe in jail...

So Freeman discovered the secret door in my house. I never knew about from a set of old plans he found before he bought the place. Then he and his partner started their plan to do me in and take over my land.

Exactly! They wanted you to appear just a crank who wanted people's attention.

When they reckoned this was set in people's minds, they entered by the secret door to kill you with your own gun. So I figured you'd naturally figure you'd done yourself in. Sure, cause they'd gotten folks to think me loco already! But, thanks to you, Rocky Lane, I can live a happy life again!
Hey Gang!
Let's build these electric motor powered models! It's easy with Mechanix Illustrated full size plans!

Buick Convertible
Here's your chance to make this accurate 13-inch Buick model complete with seats and white wall tires! Powered with a little electric motor connected to flashlight batteries in the body, you can steer this model in any direction or make it go straight! And these full size plans are so easy to follow that even if you've never built a model you can make this snappy model. Plans cost only 25 cents, postpaid. Order Plan No. 397.

Narfstar

Chevrolet
Here's a 13-inch buick model of the world's most popular automobile - the Chevrolet Nominal Alux powered with a battery driven motor, this 'Chvy' looks just like the real car! Building from these accurate full size plans is as easy as ABC. Plans cost only 25 cents. Send for your set today, Order Plan No. 407.

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  - Matched Lenses
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  - Has Gene Autry’s signature
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- **Red Ryder Cowboy Carbine**
  - Looks, feels, and shoots like a Western Saddle Carbine
  - Extra trigger: 1000 shots
  - Sell one order plus $2.00

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  - Your choice of Bride or Bride’s maids with movable eyes
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- **Cinderella Wrist Watch**
  - Comes packed in beautiful gift box
  - Guaranteed for boys and girls
  - Sell one order plus $2.00

- **3 Piece Softball Set**
  - A baseball set
  - Comes packed in a beautiful towel
  - Sell one order plus $3.00

- **Ingram Cigar Antler Pock Watch**
  - For men and boys
  - Sold with a Lucky Cowboy Coin
  - Sell one order plus $1.98

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Dept. 455, Lancaster, Pa.

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Our 33rd Year

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Dept. 455, Lancaster, Pa.

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My choice of prize is

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