


# The Phantom

BY JACK MCGARR



He was a killer all right, and now the whole countryside was up in arms against him. He always fell upon his victims without a moment's notice, and as yet nobody had so much as caught a glimpse of him. He was simply a shadowy "Phantom," yet everybody was acutely aware of his existence, because of the havoc he left behind. Many a lonely farmhouse had been prey to his robberies, and if he was offered the slightest bit of resistance, his victims were murdered in cold blood.

Many a body was found lying in a cold welter of gore after a recent raid of the "Phantom." Like an Indian, he came around in the early gray dawn, struck down his victims, and was gone.

Up to now his hideout hadn't been discovered, but at last it was thought to have been found. The suspected place was an old deserted farmhouse called the "Waggoner place." It had long since been abandoned by its original owners and, as is usual, the rumor that the place was haunted had arisen. Thus it had been left strictly alone, and for this reason it was thought the Phantom was "holed up" there.


A posse was formed, whose intention it was to surround the Waggoner place to make sure he didn't get away. If he was there, they meant to get him this time. An hour before sunset was the time set for the posse to start closing in. Meanwhile, everyone was in a high state of excitement while awaiting the eventful hour.

Guns were oiled and fully loaded with newly-bought ammunition, and all possemen had a grim sort of determination about them. If the Phantom was caught, he was going to get the same fate he had meted out to so many of his victims. All the men were laboring under an intense nervous strain as the time came to close in. Each realized that he might not return unscathed.

Just as the sun started its descent toward the horizon, the posse started closing in. Tall weeds had grown up in profusion around the old farm and through these the men moved warily towards their objective. Judkins, a

cold-hearted rancher who had been victimized more than once by the Phantom, first caught sight of him. The Phantom was placidly taking a nap on the ramshackle old porch, entirely unsuspecting of his approaching doom.

The orders given out were that the Phantom was to be taken dead or alive; so Judkins, being consumed with hate, decided to take advantage of this and not give him a chance to get away. He raised his rifle, took careful aim, and squeezed the trigger.



With blood spurting from his side, the Phantom leaped to his feet, and ran behind the house seeking an avenue of escape. But he got no further than the old windmill when he dropped. His body began writhing while deathly moans came from his mouth. Slowly a welter of blood oozed around the limp and twitching body, while the sun, seemingly dyed blood red by this tragedy, slowly dipped below the horizon. Still the hard-hearted Judkins wasn't satisfied, for he was still consumed with the one thought—revenge! Again he raised his rifle, and pumped two more bullets into the slowly jerking body. One could hear the dull thud of bullets striking flesh while the shots echoed and re-echoed from the old barn and house. A last mournful sound escaped from the figure lying there in its own life blood. Then suddenly as if wishing to say something, the "Phantom" slowly raised his head, looked straight at Judkins, and then fell back without uttering a sound. A last shudder ran through the body and then it lay still.

The birds ceased their singing, as if paying a last silent tribute to death. A chain rattled dismally on the windmill like the toll of a funeral bell, as if saying: "He who lives by the sword shall die by it."

Meanwhile, the rest of the posse, hearing the shots, had rushed toward the house. Slowly and silently, one by one, they all passed by the still figure lying on the crimson-stained ground. Something awe-inspiring and fearful about death causes man to be quiet in its presence. At length, one of the men broke the silence remarking, "Well that's the end of another mean sheep-killing dog."

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decided that Mary should tell the poor deluded boy the truth of the situation. Smiling he explained to her that the fruits of their plans were ready for a round-up. He was caught unexpectedly when she said, "But, Otto, I was just going to tell you: Three-Gun and I are going to be married, and we want you to be best man!"

What the Aggie will wear: Gold watch and chain draped across the pawn shop counter.

The shorter the bathing suit the longer the men look.

Here's a new simile—as useless as a glass eye at a key-hole.

Europe's greatest need is boundry lines with zippers.

"Paw?"

"Now what?"

"Why didn't Noah swat both the flies when he had such a good chance."

Repairman: "Shall I install a loud or soft horn, sir?"

Aggie: "Just one with a dirty sneer."

Jane: "I sent my husband to the hospital because of his knee.

Mary: "Did he have water on it?"

Jane: "No, his private secretary."

A conductor is afraid of no one—he tells them all where to get off.