

INTO THE SUNSET

BY JACKSON GREGORY



FOURTH INSTALLMENT

Barry Haverill leaves his Texas home to see the country, meets a man who has just been shot who turns out to be a cousin of his, Jesse Conroy. Barry helps take care of his wounds and Jesse gives Barry his gun, a very unusual one. When they part Barry leaves for home but finds the family is no longer there. When he is leaving he suddenly comes across a dead man who turns out to be his brother Robert. Barry starts searching for the murderer and goes into the mountains to find gold to use for continuing his search. He finds a good spot, sets gold and goes to Tylersville to get money for it. There he meets Judge Blue and his daughter, Lucy, who help him to get \$450 for his gold. Judge Blue also tells him that the gun Jesse gave him is the gun of a murderer known as the Laredo Kid. The Judge invites Barry to visit him and there Barry discovers the horse and saddle which was stolen from his brother Robert when he was killed. He finds out that it belongs to a cowboy who will return that night. He waits outside the stable and finally a rider comes up who turns out to be Jesse Conroy.

Jesse Conroy whirled, as swift as a cat, and crouched and whipped out the gun riding loosely in its holster.

"Oh, it's you, Sundown!" said Jesse. His hand was lowered. There was an irritable edge to his voice: "Yuh made me jump purty near out'n my boots, Cousin Barry."

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ry. Y'want to look out, scarin' folks like that, less'n one starts shootin' before he thinks."

"Why should you start shootin', Cousin Jesse?" asked Barry. Jesse laughed and at last slipped his gun back into its place.

"Want to sell that black horse you left here last night, Cousin Jesse?"

"What's come over yuh? I thought yuh didn't go in for hosses yuhself, likin' them long laigs better."

"That's a real nice horse," said Barry.

"What's on yore mind, Cousin Barry?" said Jesse, and again his voice was edged.

"That saddle, too," said Barry. "I was looking at it this evening. The fancy Mexico one. Where'd you happen to get that saddle, Cousin Jesse?"

Jesse answered in an off-hand way. "That saddle? It's one I picked up down to Laredo one time. Why?"

"When?" asked Barry. "You been down to Laredo since I was here?"

Jesse's answer hung fire scarcely a noticeable instant. "It's one o' my ol' saddles; I've had it two-three year."

"You lie, Cousin Jesse," said Barry steadily, and pulled his six-gun out of its holster. "That was Tex Humphreys' saddle; so was that black Tex's; and you killed my brother Robert to get them both. Killed him like a dog just for a horse and saddle. Now, if you think you've got any more killing to do—"

A man standing close behind Barry brought a Colt revolver down brutally on Barry's head, and the boy slumped down.

A commanding voice said: "Pocket your gun, Laredo! And put out that damned light. Quick about it!"

"I'm damned!" muttered Jesse Conroy. Slowly he obeyed both orders. Then through the sudden dark his voice came quietly: "What's the game this time, Judge?"

"So you killed young Haverill's brother, did you? Just for a horse and saddle!"

"Yuh're a fine one to talk," sneered Jesse. "Well, I'm not sayin' whether I killed young Haverill's brother or not, but I'd shore shot young Haverill dead if yuh hadn't knocked him out the minute yuh did."

"No," said the Judge. "No. You hear me, Laredo? I've got plans of my own for him."

"Yes?" said Jesse, and sounded frankly mystified. "Want to make me laugh? Judge Blue wastin' time over this kid? What in hell's he got that I overlooked?" He ended peeringly. "He ain't a

prince in disguise or somethin', is he?"

"Some day, Laredo," said the Judge more quietly, yet in just as deadly and cold a voice, "we'll maybe cut loose and kill each other. Now if you'll keep your shirt on I'll tell you about this young Haverill. He blew into town today with a fist full of gold with the dirt still sticking to it. And it's my pressing affair to find out where he got it."

Jesse whistled softly. "An' I might have killed him before yuh found out!" Then, eager and alert, he added, "But Judge, he'll be lookin' up his folks, across to yore new ranch; an' he'll be tellin' the crowd all he knows—"

"He won't be seeing anybody but me for a while," said the Judge. "I'm keeping him shut away. In the mornin', if he's feeling like travelin', I'll put him on a horse, tell him we're headed for the ranch, and hand him over to you. And you'll be over at the shack in Encina Canon. You and I will work this together, Kid. And when we've won it, I'm paying you off, and yuh're handing back to me what's mine—and after that if we ever meet up again—Well, fill your hand, Kid, that's all."

Jesse laughed tauntingly. "There's one more thing, Judge," he said. "I got a good look at the girl the other day. When I hand yuh back what's yore'n, yuh're goin' to hand me the girl along with the res' of my pay. I got a hankerin'—Judge, I'd marry her even!"

For a while it was very still there at the stable. After a while the Judge drew a long breath. He said in a voice which was not quite so steady: "Yuh're getting a swell-head, Laredo. It's a disease that's sometimes fatal. Better slow down."

But the Laredo Kid, reckless and arrogant young devil, mocked him drawingly.

"Better be on your way, Laredo. And if you're not just trying to be funny—Marry her? Well, we'll see later. Tomorrow evening early I'll be at Encina Canon, and young Haverill will be with me. We'll talk. And one thing more: better get rid of that horse and saddle tonight."

"I'm on my way in two shags," returned the other. "Drag your man off and shut the door go's I can have a light. Maybe yuh'd better shine a light on him now to make shore whether he ain't playin' possum."

"I've had a hand on him all the time," said the Judge. "He's out cold. Get going, Kid. Y' adios."

Barry regained consciousness lying fully dressed on the bed which earlier he had been averse to musing. There was a cold wet towel on his head and the Judge stood over him.

"Well, young Haverill," he said. "Alive, are you?"

"What happened?" said Barry, confused.

"I got up for a drink of water," said the Judge, "and thought I saw someone prowling outside under my window. I went out to see about it and was just in time to see you standing in the stable door talking to somebody; and just when it looked like shooting some other fellow jumped up behind you and knocked you out cold with a club. Then they were off like a shot, the two of them. What was it all about?"

"The man in the barn, with the lantern—Know him, Judge?"

"Can't say that I do," answered the Judge. "He was by here a month or so ago, looking for work. That's all I know about him. Who is he?"

"I don't know much about him myself. I met up with him not long ago; he told me his name was Jesse Conroy and we sort of figured out we were relations."

"What were you two getting ready to fight about?"

Barry shut his eyes and lay still a moment. Without opening them he said, "My head hurts, Judge; it's hard thinking straight."

The Judge nodded understandingly.

It was nearly an hour later when Barry had his second visitor. A slight white figure bent over him. It was Lucy in a long nightgown with something thrown over her shoulders. As he reared up on his elbow she said, "Sh!" almost at his ear.

Incoherent at first, her rushing words only perplexed him anew. But he caught, "Go! Oh, go quickly! Get up and go! You must—You can, can't you? You're not hurt too badly, are you?"

He sat on the edge of the bed and Lucy's face was so close to his own that, in what dim light filtered in from the stars, he could see her eyes in a white face, and her eyes were big with fright. Even her voice, whispering as it was, was charged with terror.

It came in a wild jumble of words. There were things which she wanted to hold back, which she had not thought that she could speak of to anyone, and yet in her frantic state before she was through he had nearly the whole story.

First of all, she had known that the Judge lied this afternoon when he told Barry that Zachary Blount had taken Barry's sister out of town—for Lucy herself had seen Zachary and the Judge together going into a store just before the Judge joined her to

drive home. And she had seen and overheard what occurred at the stable.

"He—that man—your cousin, he is the Laredo Kid!" she told Barry fearfully. And then she told the rest of it, and ended with her frantic plea: "You'll go! Oh, Barry, I'm afraid—Promise me!"

"Yes," said Barry, and slipped from the bed, groping for his hat and the new carbine. "I'll slip out and go now."

She clutched him, and whispered shiveringly. "I'm scared to death, Barry."

"Then come with me—"

She seemed for a moment, while their hands were locked so tightly together, to be of a mind to go with him. But, "No," she said, "I'll be all right. Anyhow, for a while. Until the Laredo Kid comes back and—Oh, Barry! He wants me!"

Barry said, "I won't go without you!"

"You must! You must, Barry! And quick!"

"Then I'll come back—"

"Listen! I sometimes ride back on the mountain to look at the sunset. There's a trail up to Lookout; it's a plateau behind the house with the cliffs cutting across it. Meet me there, Barry—at sunset—"

"Tomorrow?"

"No-o. Not so soon. They may be watching for you. In three days, Barry?"

The evening appointed for the meeting with Lucy found him at Lookout Point, high on the mountain side above the Judge's fine house, hidden in a brushy thicket from which he could watch the steep zigzag trail.

Dark came and there was no sign of Lucy. He waited an hour, then withdrew higher up into the mountains. He came back each sunset time; on his third coming he saw something which had been here all the time, waiting for him, passing unnoticed.

Dear Barry, if anybody finds this it will be you, because no one ever comes up here. I am writing this the very next day after you left. I am to be taken away this very day—and I don't know why and I don't even know where! Oh, I hope you are all right! And, Barry, I do wish I had gone with you. You will come back when it is safe, won't you?

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REPORT OF CONDITION OF THE BANK OF ELKIN of Elkin in the State of North Carolina at the close of business on June 30, 1939.

ASSETS	
Loans and discounts	\$263,857.91
United States Government obligations, direct and guaranteed	33,066.73
Obligations of States and political subdivisions	97,934.31
Cash, balances with other banks, including reserve balances, and cash items in process of collection	274,305.73
Bank premises owned \$20,000.00, furniture and fixtures \$3,966.51	23,966.51
Other assets	1,317.79
TOTAL ASSETS	\$694,448.98

LIABILITIES	
Demand deposits of individuals, partnerships, and corporations	\$340,117.05
Time deposits of individuals, partnerships, and corporations	150,929.24
Deposits of United States Government (including postal savings)	11,900.00
Deposits of States and political subdivisions	39,885.22
Deposits of banks	20,574.74
Other deposits (certified and officers' checks, etc.)	1,697.51
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$564,903.76
Other liabilities	18,139.82
TOTAL LIABILITIES (not including subordinated obligations shown below)	\$583,043.58

CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	
Capital*	\$ 50,000.00
Surplus	25,000.00
Undivided profits	14,590.63
Reserves (and retirement account for preferred capital)	21,814.77
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	\$111,405.40

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS \$694,448.98
 *This bank's capital consists of first preferred stock with total par value of \$25,000.00 total retirable value \$25,000.00; and common stock with total par value of \$25,000.00.

MEMORANDA	
Pledged assets (and securities loaned) (book value):	
(a) U. S. Government obligations, direct and guaranteed, pledged to secure deposits and other liabilities	\$ 9,005.80
(b) Other assets pledged to secure deposits and other liabilities (including notes and bills rediscounted and securities sold under repurchase agreement)	60,203.21
(c) TOTAL	\$ 69,209.01
Secured and preferred liabilities:	
(a) Deposits secured by pledged assets pursuant to requirements of law	\$ 50,619.09
(c) TOTAL	\$ 50,619.09
(a) On date of report the required legal reserve against deposits of this bank was	\$ 68,452.64
(b) Assets reported above which were eligible as legal reserve amounted to	274,305.73

I, Garland Johnson, Vice-President, of the above-named bank, do solemnly swear that the above statement is true, and that it fully and correctly represents the true state of the several matters herein contained and set forth, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

GARLAND JOHNSON, Vice-President.

Correct.—Attest:
 R. C. LEWELLYN,
 B. F. FOLGER, JR.,
 J. R. POINDEXTER,
 Directors.

State of North Carolina, County of Surry, ss:
 Sworn to and subscribed before me this 10th day of July, 1939, and I hereby certify that I am not an officer or director of this bank.

FRANK SALE, Notary Public.
 My Commission expires November 18, 1939.

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