



The FEUD at SINGLE SHOT

By Luke Short

THIRD INSTALLMENT

"We have no money, Dave. The two men we've got left haven't been paid regularly in a year." A sudden huskiness caught her throat.

"Never mind," Dave said quietly. "We've got the land and the water and the grass. Banks loan money, so we'll have cattle."

"The bank has loaned money, Dave," Mary said. "They won't loan us any more. A good slice of the paper is due in a few days, too." Her voice was suddenly bitter. "That's another present for you, Dave, from a loving sister."

"Stop it, Mary," Dave said softly. "I hate to hear you bitter like that."

They fell into single file now as the road narrowed between two canyons and slanted steeply uphill. He remembered the place. These were the small badlands that announced the deep gently sloping plateau—the Soledad Bench—on which the D Bar T, his spread, was located.

He recognized each landmark. Mary was ahead of him and he spoke to her softly. "Don't

worry, sis. The black days haven't come to the Turners yet. Not for

A spouting mushroom of fire winced from the high rim-rock and Dave felt a searing slap on the top of his head that swept him off his horse into falling unconsciousness.

Rosy's gun streaked up in coughing savage lances of flame. Mary was kneeling by Dave as Rosy fought his horse quiet and leaped off.

Rosy struck a match. In its light they could see a raw smear of red on the top of Dave's head, the blood oozing out from under the thick, black hair. Rosy put his ear to Dave's chest.

"Pumpin' like a locomotive," he announced cheerfully. Mary was sobbing softly.

"It's all right, Miss Mary," Rosy gulped. "If they killed him, I reckon I'd just go hog wild."

Mary nodded. "So—so would I."

"There's a hombre up on the hill, I think. I'm goin' to take a peeper. He'll come to pretty quick."

Rosy scrambled up the steep canyon wall. On the rim he saw a sprawled, prone figure, resting face downward on the stock of a shotgun. Rosy struck a match. He was a thick-set man, dressed in soiled denim pants, greasy shirt and tattered vest.

He was unshaven and just where the stubble of beard ceased to grow on his neck, a thin stream of blood trickled. He was dead. Rosy let the match die and peered off into the night, listening.

A scraping hoof gave him the clue he was waiting for and he walked over to a ground-haltered horse. He led the horse over to the rim-rock, loaded the man across the saddle and after walking south for a hundred yards found the arroyo which led down to the road.

Mary was waiting for him. Rosy struck a match, wondering if the man would turn out to be some one she knew. Mary peered at the man and Rosy let the flame die quickly.

"Is it one of them nesters?" he asked.

"I've never seen him before," Rosy shrugged. "Reckon you

can lead this horse? I'll put Dave up in front of me and lead his horse. How far we got to go?"

"Three miles."

The Turner ranch lay on the sheltered side of a large draw with sloping grassy sides which served as a windbreak. Tall sycamores mushroomed up in the black night, hiding everything about the house but the two apocryphal and lighted windows.

No one greeted them as they dismounted. Rosy took Dave in his arms and followed Mary into the house. They entered a broad, low-ceiled room, a huge fireplace at one end. Rosy did not see the man seated in a chair before the fire as he laid Dave on a davenport.

"Well, Mary," the man drawled.

Rosy looked up. The speaker was young, perhaps thirty, with a dark, coolly appraising face. He was dressed in whipcord breeches and shiny boots, slouched comfortably on his backbone in the easy chair.

"Oh, Ted," Mary said, a little catch of fear in her voice. "Some one shot Dave—!" She looked at Rosy and flushed a little. "Excuse me. Mr. Rand, my husband, Ted Winters."

Winters nodded lazily. "Welcome, Rand."

"Howdy," Rosy said. He looked curiously at Mary.

"I wanted to surprise Dave," she said, flushing a little deeper. "What happened?" Winters drawled.

He lounged out of his chair and came over beside Rosy, looking down at the unconscious figure on the davenport. Mary left for the kitchen.

"Some whippoorwill on the dry-gulch," Rosy said. "This side of the bridge."

"The devil!" Winters exclaimed. "Who?"

"I dunno. He's out there on a horse now. Take a look at him and see if you know him."

"You mean you got him?"

"Dead," Rosy said dryly. Mary returned with the basin containing warm water and a mild disinfectant. She knelt by Dave and bathed the wound, her face white.

"Ted, it was awful," she said in a low voice. The disinfectant was biting into the raw flesh of Dave's wound and he groaned and writhed under the pain. His eyelids fluttered, then opened.

"What happened? Somebody shot at me."

"Some whippoorwill up in the rocks tried to blow your 'head off," Rosy said grinning.

Dave nodded weakly and shifted his eyes to Winters.

"You the doc?" Dave asked him.

"No, Dave. This is Ted Winters, my husband," Mary said. "I wanted to keep it a secret and surprise you."

"Well, sis, this is a surprise," Dave stretched his arm out to Winters and they shook hands. Dave smiled weakly. "You got the best girl I ever knew, Winters."

"I know it," Winters replied. He put his arm around Mary's shoulder and she hugged him tightly.

"How do you feel?" Mary asked.

"Good. I'll be up tomorrow. What was this all about?"

"He's out there dead—on a horse," Winters said.

"Who was he?"

"I'm going out and take a look," Winters said. "I'll put up your horses while I'm at it." He left by the front door and Mary

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE
Having qualified as administrator of the estate of Sanford Lee Johnson, late of Wilkes County, State of North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of April, 1938, or this notice will be placed in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the said estate will make immediate payment.

This 28th day of April, 1938.
D. W. MARLOW,
Administrator of the Estate of Sanford Lee Johnson, deceased.
A. H. CASEY,
Attorney
6-6-6t(M)

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and Dave looked at each other. "You little devil!" Dave said. "I didn't want it all to come at once." Mary replied, laughing shyly. "Can you walk to bed? We can talk it over in the morning."

Dave nodded. Leaning on a Rosy's shoulder, he walked with dragging footsteps down the middle corridor of the one-story house. Mary opened a door to a bedroom, containing a broad white bed in one corner, a cot in the opposite corner, and a simple, unpainted chest of drawers.

"Mr. Rand, you have the room next door—or you can sleep here on the cot. We're just across the hall."

Mary bade them both good night, and left the room. Rosy sat on the cot, drew a Durham sack from his pocket and rolled a cigarette slowly then looked up at Dave.

"I'm hittin' the grit tomorrow, pardner," he announced calmly. Dave stifled the surprise in his eyes.

"What's the matter?" he asked presently. "Is it what Mary said about our bein' broke?"

Rosy's eyes dropped evasively. "It ain't that. I reckon I ain't ready to settle down yet. I want to wear out a couple more saddles before I pick me a corral."

"And leave me here, stuck with a bunch of land-grabbin' nesters, a water-thievin' fool, a proddy sheriff, and a bushwhack-in?" Dave said.

"All right, you red-headed rannie, we'll go together. Tomorrow mornin'."

"And leave things this way for Mary?" Rosy asked.

"If you go, I go," Dave said firmly.

Rosy regarded him a moment. "Look here. It's this way. I'm goin' because I don't hanker livin' in off folks that ain't got enough to spare. I'd stay, but my work would bring you in nothin' and you'd feel bad because you couldn't pay me wages."

"Part of that's true," Dave said. "But give us a chance. We still got everything we ever had and one day we'll have her where she was. We planned this thing out together and then you run out on me. All right. I can run out on Mary."

"You jughead, you will not," Rosy growled. He crossed to Dave's bed and gently shoved him back into a lying position. "Stick up your foot and I'll pull them boots off."

Dave and Rosy were up before sunrise the next morning. Save for his paleness, Dave seemed none the worse for the events of the night before. After building a fire in the big kitchen range, he and Rosy strolled out to look the place over.

The house was as it had always been and always would be, so long as any one was living in it. It was a stone affair with a low, sloping, slate roof.

The buildings were different. The board cook-shack was empty, its windows gray and filled with cobwebs. The adobe bunkhouse, bricks showing in places where the mud plaster had cracked off, lay between the cook-shack and corrals.

The barn itself seemed falling to pieces, its door sagging, wisps of hay sticking out the weathered cracks. The corrals were awry, some of their bars down.

They looked at the horses, perhaps a dozen in all. They were fat, but uncareful for and shaggy. "Which horse was Little Bo-peep ridin'?" Dave looked for the brand.

"Naked as a baby," he announced. "That don't help."

At that moment, Mary called them. She had breakfast nearly ready. Dave looked at the round table in the kitchen and noticed five places.

"Who's comin' for breakfast, sis?" he asked.

"No one," Mary said brightly. "Those are for the hands."

Dave was silent a moment. "You cookin' for the hands?"

Both were well aware of that tradition that dictated that the rancher's wife did not wait on, cook for, or serve the ranch hands.

"Of course," Mary said lightly. "We haven't had a cook for three years, Dave."

"Can I do anything?" Rosy asked uncomfortably.

Mary laughed. "You can, Mr. Rand. I haven't much wood and there's none

NOTICE OF SUMMONS
North Carolina, Wilkes County.
J. S. Bray vs. A. O. Bray.
The defendant, A. O. Bray, will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Wilkes county in which the plaintiff seeks to recover judgment against the defendant on a money demand as evidenced by notes set forth in the complaint; and,

The said A. O. Bray will further take notice that a writ of attachment has issued against—
1 lot in Brushy Mountain township and approximately 65 acres of land in New Castle township; and,

The defendant will further take notice that he is required to appear before the Clerk of the Superior Court of Wilkes county at his office in the courthouse in Wilkesboro, N. C., on or before the 20th day of June, 1938, and answer or demur to the complaint of the plaintiff or the relief asked for will be granted.

This 19th day of May, 1938.
C. C. HAYES,
6-18-4t(M) Clerk Superior Court



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split. Would you mind splitting enough to get through breakfast on?"

"Not Mr. Rand to you, ma'am," Rosy said. "I ain't ever been called anything but Rosy all my life."

"All right, Rosy. Then I'm Mary to you, and not ma'am. The wood is out at the end of the cook-shack."

Rosy dodged out the door, and Mary and Dave were alone. Mary's face was clouded. Mary looked up at him.

"Rotten homecoming, isn't it?" she said.

Dave nodded. "Seeing a ranch in this shape almost makes me want to howl. You must have a couple of prime knotheads for hands, sis."

"It's Tad, Dave. He's been running the place for two years now, ever since old Link died. But he's a mining man, Dave, not a rancher. He's pulled us through the best he knows how, and I

guess he'd be the first to admit that he hasn't done a good job."

"Where is he this mornin'?"

"Around the place?"

Mary was still bending over the range. "He's in bed," she said quietly. "He's a city man and thinks we're barbarians to get up with the sun."

(Continued next week)

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"NEWS FAMINE"
Damascus, Syria. Newspapers in Damascus and other cities of Syria called for a general strike today in protest against the government's refusal to consider a free press. The newspapers suspended publication in an effort to force the government to guarantee freedom of the press by a law against famine.

ADMINISTRATOR'S NOTICE
Having qualified as administrator of the estate of A. A. Finley, late of Wilkes County, N. C., this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of deceased to present them to the undersigned at North Wilkesboro, N. C., on or before the 9th day of May, 1938, or this notice will be placed in bar of recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment.

This 9th day of May, 1938.
A. G. FINLEY,
Administrator of the estate of A. Finley, deceased. 6-18-4t(M)

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