

MORE MOTOR-RACING THRILLS by "SAMMY" DAVIS

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2<sup>5</sup>



CAPTAIN JUSTICE'S PLANE BOMBARDED FROM SPACE!—See story inside

# Lynch Law

The Rio Kid knew he was throwing away his liberty. But he had to act . . . couldn't let them hang the only man who knew his secret!

By

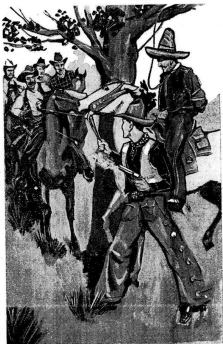
RALPH REDWAY

## Rough Justice!

THE Rio Kid hid himself from view behind the giant tree-trunk, and watched with a dark frown on his brow that grew darker. The mere sight of a station hat bobbing over the waving grass, anywhere on the wide ranges of the Lazy S Ranch, was enough to drive the Kid to cover these days. Only a week since, Mr. Carfax, foreman of the ranch, had ridden the ranges with a light heart, treating as man-safe in the knowledge that no guy in the valley of the Lariat river knew the Rio Kid by sight. But all that was changed since the Texas Rangers had located at the Lazy S.

It was days now since the Kid had been at the ranch, and it worried him a whole heap to guess what the boss and the bunch figured on his absence. But so long as Mule-Kick Hall, captain of the rangers, was there with his troop, the Kid had to ride clear. The troop he would not have cared about—but Mule-Kick knew him. No disguise was deep enough to deceive the keen eyes of Jim Hall. And once the ranger captain saw Mr. Carfax, he would know that he had found the Rio Kid, the outlaw he had hunted all over Texas. Indeed, the Kid doubted whether there was not already a spot of suspicion in Mule-Kick's mind connecting up the ranch foreman with the elusive Kid.

Glad enough the Kid would have been to raise a Lazy S puncher on the plains and get word with him, if there were no rangers about. But if he sighted a station hat it might be on the head of Mule-Kick Hall—and quick cover was the Kid's best guess. Now, twenty miles and more from the ranch, on the lonely plain at the foot of the Hatchet Hills, the Kid



had reckoned that he was fairly secure from hostile eyes. But he hunted cover behind the big tree when he spotted the station in the dim distance.

It was not the cover the Kid would have chosen—a single tall cottonwood jutting high from the plain, with a straggle of peash and juniper round its base. But the trunk was thick and wide—much more than wide enough to screen the Kid and his mount—and he reckoned it would keep him covered till he knew more about that rider.

It was from the direction of the hills that the station bobbed into view. Not likely, the Kid figured, to be a Lazy S puncher coming out of the hills—unless, indeed, the man had ridden there after stray cows. A ranger, more likely—only too well the Kid knew that Mule-Kick's men were combing the whole valley of the Lariat for him.

From behind the tree, he watched, his brow darkening more and more as he saw another and another hat bob into view, and noted that their direc-

tion was precisely towards the big tree that stood like a sentinel on the plain. The Kid loosened a gun in its holster. He did not want gun-play. He hated the idea of it, for since he had ridden a powerful and lawful trail as Morris Hall's foreman, he hoped to have done with the wild ways of the outlaw he had been. And Mule-Kick Hall, his bitter enemy, was Morris Hall's brother.

Then the Kid sighted a fourth hat—not a station, but a big Mexican sombrero. Then another station. Five men were riding in a bunch out of the hills, and one of them was a Mexican.

The Kid whistled softly. He began to get the hang of it. His pretext for leaving the ranch—the only one available—was to trail down the Mexican horse-thief who had stolen Parsonade Pete's pinto. That panchero, the Kid guessed, had hunted a hide-out in the hills. The sight of a Mexican asahero, with four station hats round it, looked as if the horse-thief had been corralled.

Whether the Mexican had been

## Lynch Law

sought by Larry S. ranchers, or by the rangers, the Kid had no chance to be seen—for Pedro Diaz knew him as the Rio Kid, and there was no doubt that he would spill what he knew if he found that the Kid was called Mr. Carfax by Larry S. men. He had no cause to love the Kid, who had thrown lead at him when he had his rifle trained on the ranger captain, and sent him fleeing.

Nearer and nearer came the holding hats—and the Kid discerned faces under them and picked out the riders. They were Larry S. men—Colorado, the horse-wrangler, and three punchers—Ferdinando Pete, Carfax Joe, and Bill Saunders. All members of the bunch that obeyed the orders of Mr. Carfax so long as they knew him as Mr. Carfax—but all guys who would pull on the Rio Kid if they knew the Rio Kid!

In the midst of the fear rode the Mexican. He was tied to the pinto that belonged to Ferdinando Pete. A man riding a stolen horse in the Lariat country was in imminent peril of going up on the nearest tree, with a noose round his neck—and it was no wonder that the Mexican rode with a calvee face, dark with despair, under the immense sombrero.

For a horse-thief, the Kid had small pity. But, treated himself, he could feel a spot of compassion for a man who was roped in and cinched. But for one circumstance, the Kid would have pushed out of cover, joined the party of punchers, and taken control—but for the fact that Pedro Diaz knew him as the Kid and would spill what he knew.

In view of that, the foreman of the Larry S. could only stand pat—and wait for the horsemen to ride on and disappear in the direction of the ranch. After all, with Hall and his rangers there, the bunch were not likely to lunge the Mexican out of hand—Hall would not stand for that.

Their way to the ranch lay past the big tree. It was easy enough for the Kid, on the farther side of it, to keep out of sight while they passed. Instead of which, he realized suddenly that they were not aiming to pass—they were aiming at the tree itself. For a moment or two, it perplexed him—and then he understood. The punchers knew, as well as the Kid, that if they carried their prisoner to the ranch, the rangers would not stand for lynching him. So they were not going to take him to the ranch. His destination was the big tree, his fate a rope over one of the mighty branches.

"Oh, slicks!" muttered the Kid as the voice of Colorado reached his ears.

"Pull in, you 'uns! Ride him under a branch, and I guess I got a rope what says he won't hit any more cayuses in Texas!"

"You said it, Colorado!" came Ferdinando Pete's voice.

The horse-wrangler, loose in hand, rode under the tree, looking up for a suitable branch to throw it over.

The Kid had sunk into the trough

of pecans and juniper behind the tree, out of sight even if the punchers rode past the trunk, his hand on the handle of his Mustang, though Side-Kicker did not need that to keep him quiet.

The Kid's face was set hard. It was the duty of Mr. Carfax, foreman of the Larry S., to show up and save the life of the Mexican. But if he did his duty, the Rio Kid's secret was his own no longer. The Mexican would learn that the Rio Kid was foreman of the Larry S.—and betray what he knew!

The Kid made no sound. There was a tramping of horses on the farther side of the lowering tree. Over a mighty branch, that jutted out a dozen yards from the trunk, the horse-wrangler threw the lasso, and Bill Saunders caught the noose so it came alighting down. He slipped it over the Mexican's shoulders, and it dropped round the dusky neck. Carfax Joe, with his bowie-knife, cut the cord that fastened the horse-thief's feet under the pinto.

All that was needed now was to set the stolen horse in motion, and leave the Mexican swinging from the branch. A few moments more and the Rio Kid's secret would have been in safe keeping, but in those moments the Kid knew that he could not stand for it—that even if he had to pay the price of riding outlaw trails again, he was going to do his duty as foreman of the Larry S!

Colorado's quiet was fitting to send the pinto dashing from under the man with the rope round his neck when the Kid stepped into view round the giant trunk, and his voice rapped sharply:

"Hold in, you 'uns! I guess there ain't going to be no lynching on the Larry S!"

## Sharp Shooting!

COLORADO'S quiet came down on the flank of the pinto, and the horse leaped forward. At the same instant, the Kid's grip was on the bridle. He checked the leap, and bucked the horse—hardly in time. The Mexican, his arms bound behind him, could make no move to save himself. But for the Kid's prompt action, he would have been swept over the horse's tail and left hanging.

"Mr. Carfax!" ejaculated Colorado in astonishment. "Say, Mr. Carfax, where's you spring from?"

"I guess I been taking a rest in the shade of this lyeer tree, old-timer," said the Kid, "and I'll mention that you ain't hanging this guy so long a your foreman is around."

"You want to guess again, Mr. Carfax?" exclaimed Ferdinando Pete hotly. "Ain't that my pinto he's riding? You figure that we ain't stringing up that horse-thief, and him riding a stolen horse when we roped him in?"

There was a rebellious murmur from all four of the Larry S. men. They liked their foreman and respected him a whole heap. But they did not reckon that he was going to prevent them from lynching a horse-thief, caught riding the stolen horse.

The Mexican did not speak. His dark eyes dilated as he stared at the Rio Kid. Twice the Mexican had met up with him on Larry S. ranges, but he had never known the Kid's game there—never dreamed that he was foreman of the Larry S. He knew now!

The Kid did not look at him. The growler, he reckoned, was quiet on the uptake, and knew that it was only as foreman of the ranch that the Kid could save him. He was not likely at that moment to spill what he knew. Later, the Kid reckoned, that dogged sneak would betray him as likely as not. But at that moment the Mexican's silence was worth his life!

Colorado and his friends exchanged quick glances. The Kid was holding back the Mexican's horse, and so long as his grip was on the bridle Pedro Diaz lived. But after that quick exchange of glances the four Larry S. men pushed their horses closer. Colorado gripped his quirt hard.

"Mr. Carfax, sir," he said, "I'm asking you to let up, and let that cayuse run!"

"Forget it!" said the Kid. "I been away from the ranch a few days, Colorado—I guess I've been trailing this very piece a few—and maybe Mr. Hall has made you foreman in my place? If he has, old-timer, you can give me orders! Put me wise!"

"Aw, can it!" greeted Colorado. "You're my foreman, Mr. Carfax, and I'll tell a man I'm proud to jump to your orders. But we ain't letting off this dogged horse-thief—no, sir!"

"You don't aim to take that horse-thief to the ranch?" said the Kid. "No," said Colorado emphatically. "I guess the rangers might want him. Mule-Kick Hall sure wouldn't stand for stringing him up over the corral gate. I guess this outlaw-wad's good enough for him."

"I'll say the rangers want him," said Bill. "Mebbe you ain't heard about it, Mr. Carfax, you being away from the ranch, but they do allow that that growler drew a bead on Mule-Kick Hall, out on the prairie, and would sure have given him his ticket for soap only that frothing, the Rio Kid, hopped in and put paid to him. He sure is a queer case, that Kid—and Mule-Kick after him with a rope—"

"That Kid," said Mr. Carfax, "is sure a dogged horsehead, and then some! But I guess I ain't chewing the rag about that Kid! I'm telling you, a your foreman, to let up on this guy—"

"We ain't letting up on that dogged horse-thief, not so's you'd notice it," roared Colorado. "I ain't no bunch for trouble with you, Mr. Carfax, you being my foreman, but we're going to string up that growler on this lyeer outlaw-wad."

"And I'm just whispering that you ain't," said the Kid coolly, and he tightened his grip on the pinto's reins, holding the horse still. "Now, you guys, best it, and go look for them cows. I guess Seth Hawk, the marshall along to Hitchet, will be

glad to see this paleot, and find a place for him in the calaboose."

"Calaboose nothing!" roared the horse-wrangler. "He's going up, and I've got a gun here what says the same. Let go that cayuse, gal-darn you!"

The horse-wrangler of the Lazy S pulled his gun. The three punchers reached for their hardware at the same moment. Tempers were hot, and getting hotter. The flash of hope that had come into the Mexican's swarthy face died out again.

But even as the enraged horse-wrangler lifted his Colt there was a sudden roar of a six-gun from the Kid's hip. His right hand held the pistol's bridle—it was with the left he fired from the hip—but the Rio Kid could always plant his lead where he wanted it. Colorado gave a roar of pain and rage as the Colt was shot from his hand, taking a strip of skin with it. He clasped his right hand with his left, roaring.

The smoking gun, in the Kid's steady left, looked at the other three, with their guns half-drawn. Over it the Kid's eyes were like blue flames.

"Pack them guns!"

His voice came like a whip-lash! Guns were jammed back into holsters, in haste.

"Stick 'em up!" snapped the Kid.

"Say, Mr. Carfax——" gasped Bill.

"Stick 'em up!" roared the Kid, and up went the punchers' hands over their stations.

"Now, you ginks!" snapped the foreman of the Lazy S. "I guess you got to side, and ride pronto. You hear me? Keep your hands up, you ornery ginks, and hit the horizon, and hit it quick! I'm telling you that if you don't keep reaching for the sky I'll fix you a few! Beat it!"

The revolved gun and the blaze in the foreman's eyes over it settled the matter for the Lazy S punchers. Wheeling their broncs, riding with their knees, their hands over their stations, they rode away.

Not till the bunch of riders dipped from view behind a fold of the prairie and vanished did the Kid holster his gun and turn to the Mexican.

"Trust Me, Senor!"

"SENOR——" muttered the Mexican.

"Can it, you!" snapped the Rio Kid.

His brow was black and bitter. He had saved the life of the Mexican; saved the horse-chieft, to tell what he knew, far and wide, and to put all the Lariat valley wise to the fact that Mr. Carfax, foreman of the Lazy S, was the hunted outlaw of the Rio Grande.

The Kid called himself a gink and a hound-dog. He had studied the law-eyes of Mule-Kick Hall, played a double game for life and death successfully, and now he had thrown it all down to save a worthless life. And yet, bitter as was his mood, he knew that he would have done the same again—he would not have stood pat while a man was lynched, when it was his duty as foreman to keep his bunch in lawful order. But his lead

at the Mexican horse-chieft was dark and grim. The Kid had no less for guessers, best of all for a hand-diller, and it got his goat surely to have pulled a gun on a Lazy S man, to save such a cayote.

He called to his mustang, and mounted in savage silence, taking the rope by which the punchers had led the Pinto, and leading it after him, as he rode. He rode without a look at the bound man, but the Mexican's black eyes dashed at him continually.

It was Diaz who broke the silence at last, when several long miles had passed under the thundering hoofs. The Kid was taking a northerly direction, away from the ranch, and that trail, if followed far enough, would lead him to the cow-town of Hatchet. The Lazy S punchers, enraged as they were by losing their prisoner, had no doubt that their foreman intended to ride into Hatchet, and hand the horse-chieft over to the town marshal. But the Mexican could not believe so—knowing what he could spill to the marshal of Hatchet.

"Senor, what is your game?" broke out Pedro. "You have saved my life, and even Pedro of Cochilla is not ungrateful. I desire never to be nearer death." He shivered, as if he could still feel the clinging noose round his dusky neck. "But you will not ride me into Hatchet, senor the Kid?"

The Rio Kid gave a hard laugh.

"I guess if you spilled it to Seth Hawk that the foreman of the Lazy S was the Rio Kid, he would sooner tote me into the calaboose than you," he said. "Nip! You ain't for Hatchet—I guess you ain't spreading no news of me in that burg."

"But what——"

"I guess you'll soon be wise to it!" said the Kid grimly. "Pack it up, Pedro—I ain't no horse for chewing the rag with you."

The Kid rode on, leading the Pinto. Leaving the gramy plains behind, he rode into a wide, rocky canyon of the Hatchet Hills. The hoofs rang on hard rock as he rode onward. For a mile or more up the rugged cañon, the Kid rode, and then he pulled in the grey mustang. Dismounting, he tethered Side-Kicker to a stunted pine, and then, drawing his knife, he stepped to the Mexican. Pedro's black eyes dilated at the fearful thought that his silence was to be secured in the way that he might have adapted himself in the Kid's place. The Kid, reading the thought in his face, laughed strangely.

"You deggared greaser," he said, "you figure I've brought you here to spill your juice—I guess if that was my game, I'd have left the Lazy S boys to string you up! Forget it!"

The keen edge of the bowie-knife glided over the rope that bound the Mexican's arms. Pedro, a free man, dismounted from the Pinto, and the Kid tethered the bronc with Side-Kicker. When he turned back to the Mexican and faced him, the Mexican stood breathing hard. He could not understand the Kid's purpose.

"I guess," said the Kid quietly, "that I got to put you wise, Pedro,

I'll say that no galoot will ever know what happened here, except the one of us that rides away. Listen to me. You sure know now that the Rio Kid is called Carfax on the Lazy S, and that he's foreman of the ranch. My game is up there, if you spill it, and I guess you will! I've been riding clear of the ranch till the rangers pull out. I've sure ridden into my home-town, Prio, a ride of ninety miles, to let them get the news that the Rio Kid is back on his old stamping-ground, and set Jim Hall a-riding—and I'm telling you, greaser, that it looked good—and it all goes for nothing, because I was such a loused moonhead as to horn in and save you from the rope."

The Kid laughed bitterly, and drew the two long-barreled Colts from their low-slung holsters. Taking one by the butt, he took the other by the barrel, and held it out to the staring Mexican.

"You got me?" he snapped. "If I load Mule-Kick Hall, I'm riding the Lazy S ranges as Carfax, foreman, and no deggared Mexican ain't going to put the Lariat valley wise about that. I guess if you was the guy with the gat, you wouldn't give a galoot an even break—but that ain't my way. Get a grip on that gun!"

The Mexican did not stir. He stood watching the Kid's tense face, a strange look in his black eyes.

"Deggare you?" snapped the Kid. "Ain't you got no savvy? I tell you, Pedro Diaz, both of us ain't riding out of this canyon. Get a grip on that gat! It's you or me, and an even break!"

He held out the six-gun by the long barrel. But Pedro Diaz did not lift a hand to take it. He shook his head.

"What's got you, hunder?" exclaimed the Kid, in intense exasperation. "Ain't I offering you an even break—man to man, and gat to gat? Ain't that good enough for a Mexican horse-chieft?"

"No, senor," said Pedro Diaz softly, "for two good reasons. Gun-play with the Rio Kid is too much like sudden death for my taste, senor. And I will not pull trigger on the calblers who saved me from the rope. Pack your guns, or shoot me through the head. But if I live I will keep your secret—and the day may come, senor, when I can repay what you have done. But if you will not take my word, my life is in your hands, Kid!"

The Mexican folded his arms across his chest. For a long minute the Kid stood looking at him. Then, in silence, he holstered the six-guns. He pointed to the Pinto.

"Ride!" he said briefly.

Diaz stepped to the horse. He mounted, and shook out the reins. The Kid watched him, in grim silence.

"Trust me, senor," he said. "I am silent. I ride out of the Lariat country—I ride to the east, and I shall never be seen again on the Lariat river. I come on the trail of Mule-Kick Hall, but I will pick up his trail again on the banks of the Rio Grande. Adios, senor!" With a clatter of hoofs, the Mexican dashed away down the canyon.

## Lynch Law

The Rio Kid drew a deep breath. He knew that his secret was still safe—and it he best Mule-Kick Hall, Mr. Carfax was going to remain foreman of the Lazy 8, his secret unsafe and unsuspected.

## The Rangers Hit the Trail!

"THEY foreman of yours ain't rode in yet, Morris."

"He sure ain't, Jim, and it's got me guessing."

Mule-Kick Hall, standing in the piazza of the Lazy 8 ranch-house, was staring out across the prairie. Far in the distance, a horseman could be seen spurring towards the ranch, too far off as yet for recognition. The keen eyes of the captain of the Texas Rangers were fixed on the rider.

"Maybe that's Carfax hitting the ranch," said Morris Hall, as his eyes fell on the approaching horseman. "I guess I'd be glad to see him. I should surely hate to hear that that horse-thief had got him."

"It sure is queer how I miss seeing that foreman," said Mule-Kick Hall slowly, his eyes on his brother's face. "He was off'n the ranch when I rode in, and he ain't showed up since. Nigh I loaded down with my men on the Apache range he had been there—but he lit out just before we rode up."

"He was back the day you got that cack on the cakers from the Rio Kid," said the rancher. "You'd have met up with him then; but he rode out with the bunch to hunt the prairie for that strayin'."

"Sure," said Hall slowly. "And it was a queer coincidence that the only time he was on the ranch since I been here, the Rio Kid was around. We sure do seem to be playing hide-and-seek, that foreman of yours and me. I guess I'd like to show the rog with him a piece. From what you tell me, he struck this ranch about the time the Kid had been seen in Hatchet—late the same day, so I figure it out."

"You said it!" agreed the rancher. If Mule-Kick was giving him a hint, he did not see the hint. "But I guess he never saw anything of that driving from the Rio Grande, or he sure would have spilled it."

"That ain't Carfax," went on Mr. Hall, as the horseman rode into clearer view. "That's my horse-wrangler—and he sure does look well!"

Mule-Kick glanced curiously at the horse-wrangler as he rode up to the ranch. Until the rider came into closer view, Morris Hall had guessed that it might be Carfax riding in—but Mule-Kick Hall had felt in his very bones that it was not. He had a strong hunch that Carfax would never hit the ranch while the rangers were there. But why not, unless a vague suspicion lurking in his mind had some foundation?

Colorado did look hopping mad. He had his neckerchief tied round his right hand, as if it had sustained some injury. Mule-Kick was little interested, but the rancher rose from his

reeker and leaned over the piazza rail, calling to the horse-wrangler as he rode in at the gate:

"Say, what's got you, Colorado?"

Colorado rode his horse up to the piazza, his face red with rage.

"I guess, Mr. Hall, that I'm asking for my time!" howled the horse-wrangler. "I'll tell a man, I ain't calling that guy Carfax my foreman no more!"

Mule-Kick's eyes glistened.

"You seen that guy?" he asked sharply. "He ain't been seen on the ranch for days."

"I sure seen him!" roared Colorado. "We roped in that Mexican horse-thief what lifted Panhandle's pants, and we was going to string him up to a cottonwood, and Carfax larned in. I pulled a gun—and he got me from the hip!"

"You deggoned headhead!" snapped the rancher. "You pulled a gun on dy foreman? I guess you don't want to ask for your time, Colorado. You're fired!"

"Where's Carfax now?" asked Mule-Kick.

"Here'd I know, when we had to ride, under his deggoned gun, with our hands up?" roared Colorado. "But I guess he hit for Hatchet to hand that Mexican over to the marshals. We was stringing him up—"

"Mr. Carfax sure wouldn't stand for a lynching," said the rancher. "You was roking for it through your moss head, Colorado, if you pulled a gun on him. You got off easy with a scratch on your gun hand. And I'm telling you you're fired—unless Carfax asks me particular to let up on you!"

Colorado, with a snarl of rage, wheeled his horse and rode across to the bunkhouse, the rancher frowning after him. Morris Hall turned to his brother.

"You got news of Carfax now," he said. "I reckon he's been on the trail of that horse-thief, and now he's got him he will sure ride him into Hatchet and hand him over to Seth Hawk. I guess he'll hit the ranch to-night."

Mule-Kick Hall made no answer. He leaned from the rail and called to a ranger who was rubbing down his horse by the corral.

"You, Austin Jud! I want you to ride into Hatchet and ask the marshals if Mr. Carfax has handed over a Mexican horse-thief. And if you see Carfax, put him wise that I'd be glad to see him here."

In three minutes Austin Jud was riding up the Hatchet trail at a gallop. Mule-Kick Hall watched the cloud of dust disappear towards the horizon. If Carfax had handed over the horse-thief—if Carfax came riding back to the ranch—Mule-Kick reckoned he would have to take a crack on himself, for it would look as if his letter deal with the Rio Kid was leading him to fancy things. But if Carfax was the Kid, he might have reasons for not handing over the horse-thief, and he would not come riding back to the ranch!

Mule-Kick could only wait, al-

though the news from Frio, far to the north-east, called him on a new trail. For the news had come that the Rio Kid had been seen in his old haunts—that he had been sighting up Frio, his home town. Big was he there now? In the days that Mr. Carfax had been absent from the ranch the Kid had had time to ride to Frio and back—to throw dust in the eyes of the bandits!

It was at a late hour that night that Austin Jud rode back from Hatchet. Late as it was, Mule-Kick was waiting in the piazza for the news. It was what, when he heard it, he knew that he had expected. Carfax had not been seen in Hatchet that day. Seth Hawk had received no prisoner, and Jud had seen and heard nothing of the foreman.

"Give the boss the word, Jud," said Mule-Kick. "Seshlin up at dawn to ride for Frio. I guess we're through here!"

Mule-Kick Hall figured that as long as his rangers were at the ranch, Mr. Carfax would never be seen there, but that when it was known that the rangers were gone, Mr. Carfax would ride in.

And he reckoned, too, that he would give the guy ample time to burn in at the Lazy 8, before he rode back and located him there!

**A** RNINGING "hi-yi!" from a dozen packmen greeted the foreman as he rode in at the gate of the Lazy 8, and Mr. Carfax yelled back cheerfully. He was glad to be back at the Lazy 8—back from that long trail of the Mexican horse-thief, as the bunch figured. Mr. Carfax was not likely to mention that, from safe cover, he had watched the rangers ride in the early morning, so that he had given them a day to ride clear before he located in at the ranch.

"Say, what's hitting you, Colorado, old-timer?" asked Mr. Carfax, as the horse-wrangler gave him a glare. He slipped from the mustang's saddle, smiling. "You don't want to have a grinch, hombre, because your foreman wouldn't stand for a lynching. I guess some foreman would fire you for pulling a gun, but I sure ain't got my bunch to part with a good man like you. Forget it, feller!"

"That deggoned horse-thief done get away!" growled the horse-wrangler. "And Panhandle sure has lost his pants!"

"Correct!" admitted Mr. Carfax. "The last I saw of that greaser he was killing the horizon on Panhandle's cymie. And I'll say it comes to me to search my pants for a hundred dollars to fix up Panhandle for losing that cymie. That go, Pete?"

"Sure!" grinned Panhandle. "I'm earning up," said Mr. Carfax gravely. "that you guys can call me a moshhead and a big still, after me telling that greaser so long, and you guys getting him, and me losing him and a stolen horse along with him! But I can't stand here chewing the rag. I got to see Jim Hall."

(Continued on page 27)

## Lynch Law

(Continued from page 20)

"You're too late, Mr. Carfax," said the horse-ranger. "The rangers hit the trail this morning, and I guess they're thirty miles on the way to Frio now. They got news that the

Big Kid has been shooting up the town there!"

Mr. Carfax smiled and nodded, and led his Mustang into the corral. It was good to be back at the Lazy S, and Mr. Carfax was feeling very good. He would have felt less good had he been aware that the captain of the

rangers was already riding the back trail under the falling dark!

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