

# OFFICE COPY

THE LONE RANGER  
Created by George W. Trendle

"THE LIMIT OF THE LAW"  
Ralph Goli

*Read by*

2721-1946

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Adapted into  
screenplay "Letter"  
of the Law" -- Aug. 5, 1950  
by C.K.

Ranger 6/26/50

Tonto

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- Sheriff Jim Nines..... elderly, relentless lawman
- May..... young, nice, sheriff's daughter
- Joel Denton alias Lord Jack....young, reformed stage robber
- Sam Slater.....middle-aged, outlaw leader, tough
- Four Fingered Dick.....middle-aged, outlaw, tough
- Splitlip..... young, outlaw, tough
- Madame Spain.....elderly dancehall keeper, tough but kind.
- Tom Blackwood..... elderly, gossipy storekeeper
- Stage Driver..... Bit
- Deputy..... Bit

BILLBOARD FOR "THE LIMIT OF THE LAW"

HOOFS HALTING AS

Ranger: Tonto, we know that Sam Slater and his gang of killers came to Kiowa County after breaking prison, but we've lost their trail.

Tonto: Must be them got hide-out round here.

Ranger: We'll show ourselves openly and let them know we're hunting them. That may drive them into further fight or bring them out for a fight.

Tonto: That be plenty dangerous. Them fellers kill ten men in month.

Ranger: No matter how dangerous it is, we must stop them before they spread terror over the whole West. Come on, Silver!

Tonto: Getum up, Scout!

HOOFS STARTING AS

Annrcr: Yes, the Lone Ranger and Tonto are taking a big risk when they expose themselves to mad-dog killers and his gang Sam Slater, ~~and his gang~~ may be cunning enough to set a trap for them. They know that they have nothing to lose by two more murders. Be sure to listen, etc.

(USUAL OPENING)

Annrcr:

Tonto was in Tom Blackwood's general store in Bentenville. As the genial proprietor figured up the cost of the provisions which he had stacked on the counter for the Indian, the door opened.

(DOOR OPENS, CLOSES: STEPS COMING UP)

The man who entered wore no badge, but he could be identified as a manhunter as easily as a bloodhound. Lean and grizzled, he had gimlet eyes and a mouth that looked like a knife slit in a piece of leather. Tom Blackwood put his pencil behind his ear and greeted him--

Tom:

Howdy, sheriff. Still looking for Slater gang?

Sheriff:

Every lawman in the West has been looking for those killers since they broke jail in Colorado.

Tom:

Well, Injun, your bill is sixteen dollars, ten cents.

Tonto:

Here is money.

Tom:

A twenty-dollar gold piece, eh?

(DROPS COIN ON COUNTER)

It rings true.

Sheriff:

Maybe it does, but he don't! Redskin, how come you to have a double-eagle?

Tonto:

Why you ask?

Sheriff:

I'm Jim Niles, the law in Kiowa County!

Tom:

Oh, let him alone, sheriff! Lot's of Injuns have money these days.

Sheriff: Maybe so, but what about those provisions there? That's the kind of stuff white men eat. What's more, he didn't buy any tobacco like an honest Injun would.

Tonto: Me not smoke.

Sheriff: Where are you taking those vittles? Talk up or I'll throw you in jail.

Tom: See here, sheriff! You can't bullyrag a customer of mine just because he's a redskin.

Sheriff: You keep out of this, Tom!

Tom: He's got his rights. Injuns are wards of the Government. If you arrest him for not answering questions, I'll report you to the U. S. marshal.

Sheriff: Oh, you will? Blackwood, you're the first feller who ever butted into my business since I took office twenty years ago. I know my job. I get my men, whether they're train robbers or tramps, road agents or redskins.

Tom: You didn't get Lord Jack!

Sheriff: I'm still after that varmint!

Tom: And he's still laughing at you... Tin Star!

Sheriff: Blackwood, you...you--(BREAKS: FADING BACK) I'll remember that!

(STAMPING STEPS FADING: DOOR OPENS, CLOSES)

Tom: (SIGHS) I thought he was going to plug me!

Tonto: Me sorry me cause trouble.

- Tom: You're not to blame, Injun. But we'll both have to be on guard. Jim Niles never forgets nor forgives. He's got ice water in his veins and a jail-door padlock for a heart.
- Tonto: Me savvy.
- Tom: They say he was so strict at home that his motherless gal ran away when she was only twelve. Still, I have to admit that as far as catching and killing owlhoots goes he's a top-notch sheriff. His score would be perfect if he could catch Lord Jack.
- Tonto: Who that Lord Jack feller?
- Tom: A stage robber who worked this county seven, eight years back. He always wore a mask and got his name from the lordly way he acted. After each job he'd send the sheriff a note, defying him and calling him "Tin Star".
- Tonto: Now me see why you make him mad.
- Tom: I shouldn't have called him "Tin Star", knowing that it was like sticking a knife in an old wound, but he had me riled.
- Tonto: What you think happen to Lord Jack?
- Tom: Likely he's dead, but he could be living peaceably right here in town. I wouldn't know him, and I was a witness to his last holdup.
- Tonto: When that happen?
- Tom: I mind the exact date because it was then I first saw Bentonville. June 20, 1870, it was.

Tonto:

Ugh!

Tom:

That day I was on a stage coach bound to River City by way of Bentonville. The only other passengers were two women, a dancehall keeper called Madame Spain and a girl who said her name was May. About twenty-five miles west of here the old Concord began to bounce over a lot of rocks

MUSIC

(STAGE NOISES, INTERIOR)

Tom:

Ladies, we've hit a rough stretch of trail. You'd better hold onto something.

Madame:

That feller on the box don't know how to drive. Being on board this thing is worse than riding a broncho.

May:

I feel faint!

Madame:

You've been starving yourself, dearie. You ought to go to work for me in River City.

May:

Oh, I couldn't, madame. I'm getting off in Bentonville.

Madame:

Got any kinfolks there?

May:

Yes, but I...I don't--(HESITATES)

Madame:

You don't know if you'll be welcome. Is that it?

(WHEEL HITS ROCK:Stage Rocks)

Tom:

(UP AND BACK A LITTLE) We hit another rock!

Madame:

(UP AND BACK A LITTLE) Ugh! That confounded driver!

(WHEELS HITS ROCK)

May:

(SCREAMS)

Madame: May's falling! Catch her!

(THUD)

May: (GROANS)

Tom: She struck her head on the door handle!

Madame: I'll get her back on the seat! (EFFORT) Now hand me your canteen!

Tom: Here!...Is she badly hurt?

Madame: I've seen a lot of busted skulls in my time and I afraid she's got one. Stick your head out the window and tell that driver to hurry!

Tom: Right!(FADING BACK A LITTLE) Driver, speed it up! The girl's hurt and needs a doctor!

Driver: (BACK) Can't drive no faster! Company rules!

Tom: (BACK A LITTLE) You've got smooth going ahead!

Driver: (BACK) Can't help it! Got to follow rules!

(SHOTS)

Madame: Now what in tarnation is going on?

Tom: (UP) There's a road agent riding alongside! He's wearing a mask!

Joel: (BACK) Pull up, driver! Set your brakes!

(SHOTS)

AD LIB: WHOAS IN BACK: STAGE SLOWS TO STOP AS

Driver: (BACK)  
Don't shoot me!

Joel: (BACK) Then please do me the favor of not reaching for your gun!

Driver: (BACK) I won't!

Joel: (BACK) Now I'll be much oblidgeed if you'll come down.

Driver: (BACK) I'm coming!

(JUMP IN BACK)

Joel: (BACK) If you don't mind, I'll relieve you of that revolver!...I have it. Thank you.

(SEVERAL HORSE STEPS AT WALK COMING UP AS)

Joel: (COMING UP) Will you folks inside be so kind as to open the door and step out?

(DOOR OPENS)

Joel: I'm sorry that I have to inconvenience you but--

Madame: (CUTS IN) Look, you mealy-mouthed owlhoot! We've got a gal in here who may be dying! Take my diamonds and let the driver start this thing rolling again.

Joel: Madame, I never take anything from a passenger. I rather expected to carry off the Wells Fargo box that's under the back seat, but if the young lady is injured--

Madame: You can see that she's hurt bad. We've got to rush her to River City where there's a good sawbone

(RUNNING STEPS FADING OUT IN B. G.)

Tom: The driver's running away! He's gone into the brush

Joel: Perhaps he'll come back if I go.

Madame: Not if I know the polecat! He won't stop running this side of Bentonville!

Joel: Mister, do you think you can drive this outfit?

Tom: I'm not even a good hand with two horses, let alone six.



Joel: In that case I'll hitch my horse behind and take the lines myself!

## MUSIC

Tom: So Lord Jack climbed on the box and we really rolled! Right through Bentonville we went with him still wearing his mask. Course he was seen. Sheriff Niles and a posse took after us, but we beat them to River City by a few minutes.

Tonto: What happen then?

Tom: Lord Jack and I took the girl into Madame Spain's dancehall while she ran for a doctor. The road agent should have dusted out right then, but I could see that he was sort of taken up by May. He waited to hear what the doc had to say.

Tonto: What doctor say?

Tom: May wasn't hurt near as much as we figured. By that time the posse was in town. Lord Jack had to shoot his way out and in the fracas he put a plug into the sheriff's arm. If he has ever been seen since, nobody knows it or has told about it. Soon as May got well she vamoosed like him.

Tonto: That strange story. Now me go.

Tom: Here's your change. Call again if you keep out of jail!

## MUSIC: INTERLUDE

Anncr: A short time later Tonto rejoined the Lone Ranger at a camp in the nearby hills. He repeated the story of Lord Jack and told of his encounter with the man said the sheriff. After a moment's reflection, the masked

- Ranger: Tonto, I planned to tell the sheriff that we had traced Sam Slater and his gang into Kiowa County, but it now appears that such a step would only get us into trouble with him.
- Tonto: Better we work alone.
- Ranger: It's strange that the outlaws left a clear trail this far, then suddenly began using every dodge known to hunted men. They've thrown us off the track.
- Tonto: Maybe them find out we follow trail.
- Ranger: That's possible, but why did they come here? They by-passed the badlands, a natural hide-out.
- Tonto: Must be them got better hide-out close by.
- Ranger: Remember, they served five years behind bars before breaking out. Previous to their imprisonment they always took to the badlands when they were hunted.
- Tonto: That make it look like them got friends here.
- Ranger: I think that's the answer. Right now they may be staying on some ranch instead of concealing themselves in a cave or shack.
- Tonto: What we do?
- Ranger: We'll ride every trail around here, showing ourselves and letting it be known that we've after the gang. That may frighten them into running again or bring them out for a fight.
- Tonto: Them fellers already kill ten men.

Ranger: I know it may cost us our lives, but they must be stopped before they spread their reign of terror all over the West. Get mounted! Here, Silver!

(HORSE NICKERS:HOOFS UP)

AD LIB: MOUNTING AND RIDEAWAY

MUSIC:INTERLUDE

Annrcr: As the Lone Ranger and his Indian friend put his dangerous plan into operation, a rancher who lived several miles beyond the line dividing Kiowa county from another county and state, put down a newspaper he had been reading in the kitchen of his home. He was Joel Denton. Turning to his attractive young wife, he said—

Joel: May, is Billy boy asleep?

May: Yes, dear. Why?

Joel: I don't want him to hear what I'm going to say... I've been reading about the Slater gang. I knew Sam Slater in the old days when I was Lord Jack. He once visited this ranch.

May: I don't see why that should worry you, Joel.

Joel: The trail of murder those killers are leaving leads this way.

May: They wouldn't dare come here.

Joel: Maybe not, but I ought to send you and Billy away until they're caught.

May: (BITTERLY) Away where? To my father, the great Sheriff Niles?

Joel: You were on your way back to him that day we met.

May: I was hungry and desperate. That bump on the head saved me the shame of having him slam the door in my face. And it gave me Madame Spain's friendship and your love.

Joel: Your father is still hunting for me.

May: I know, but he believes in the letter of the law. He stays in his county and state. He never saw Lord Jack's face, did he?

Joel: No, but I'll always be in danger as long as he's a lawman and keeps digging around.

May: It isn't fair! You've reformed! You paid back every cent you took! You slaved night and day for years to do it!

Joel: Even if Wells Fargo refuses to prosecute me, I'm liable to twenty years in prison on a charge of shooting your father. He'd call it wounding with intent to murder, though it wasn't.

May: Sometimes I almost wish that you had killed him! He never had any feeling for me. He's just a machine-- a law machine. He never forgets an outlaw's face after seeing it once, but I doubt that he'd know me if we ever met again.

(DOOR OPENS: STEPS COMING IN)

Sam: (COMING UP) Howdy, Lord Jack!

Joel: Sam Slater!

Sam: (UP) And his boys! (DOOR CLOSES)

(STEPS STOP)

Sam: Meet Four Fingered Dick, Commanche Bill, the Powder River Kid and Splitlip.

Joel: What do you fellows want?

Sam: You've been reading the paper, Pardner. Can't you guess?

Joel: Don't call me "pardner". I never belonged to your gang of killers or any other gang.

Sam: Maybe not, but once you had to have my help in getting rid of some Wells Fargo gold.

Joel: Wells Fargo has been paid back. I'm going straight.

Four Fingers: That's all the better for us. Nobody'll think of looking for us on an honest John's spread.

Joel: You can't stay here!

Sam: Ten six-shooters and five rifles say we do. We're cowhands you hired, savvy? And if a feller in a mask or an Injun come snooping around here, let us know about it pronto?

Joel: Do you mean that you're being followed.

Sam: We don't know for sure. Once when we doubled back and watched our trail we spotted a masked hombre and a redskin. They rode too fast for us to bushwhack them.

Four Fingers: We've been covering our tracks since then.

(BARE FEET PADDING UP)

Billy: (COMING UP) Mama, I saw a bear in the bedroom!

(STEPS STOP)

- Man: No, you didn't, Billy. You just imagined it.
- Billy: Who are those fellows? They look like real bad men.
- May: Never mind them! I'm taking you right back to bed.  
(STEPS FADING BACK)
- Billy: (FADING BACK) You can't fool me! I know they're bad!  
(DOOR CLOSES)
- Sam: (CHUCKLES) Fellers, his lordship has a wife and kid! If he wants them to stay on top of the ground, he'll have to string along with us.
- Joel: If you lay a hand on them, I'll--(HESITATES)
- Sam: You'll what?
- Joel: Nothing. Just leave them alone and I'll hide you.  
MUSIC: INTERLUDE
- Annecr: It was a week later when the Lone Ranger and Tonto camped for a night in a ranch district beyond the state-county line. They had crossed the unmarked boundary without knowing it and were within a few miles of Joel Denton's spread. On the following morning they rode on again, but as they reached a clump of bushes a short distance from the camp site the masked man drew rein--  
(HOOFS COMING TO HALT)
- Ranger: Pull up, Tonto!
- AD LIB: WHOAS
- Tonto: What you see, Kemo Sabay?
- Ranger: Someone left a horse standing here last night.
- Tonto: Ugh! Him get down, watch us long time. There is is mark where him rest rifle.

Ranger: It's a good thing one of us was awake all the time.  
Otherwise he might have crept in close enough to shoot us.

Tonto: Maybe him one of outlaws.

Ranger: We'll trail him and find out.

AD LIB: RIDEAWAY

MUSIC:INTERLUDE

Anner: A short time later the fugitive killer known as Splitlip burst into Joel Denton's bunkhouse where the other members of the gang had slept while he watched the trail to the ranch. Rousing them, he reported--

Splitlip: Fellers, the masked man and Injun are headed this way.

Sam: How do you know?

Splitlip: I found their camp and watched it all night. After pulling out this morning I doubled back and saw them again. They were tracking me but I didn't get a chance to plug them.

Sam: That's all the better. We'll trap that masked feller alive.

Splitlip: Alive? What for?

Sam: I aim to find out who he is before we kill him. Here's what we'll do...

MUSIC:INTERLUDE

Anner: The curtain falls on the first act of our Lone Ranger adventure. Before we continue with the next exciting scenes, please permit us to pause for just a moment.

COMMERCIAL

Anner: Hunted by the Lone Ranger and Tonto, a gang of escaped convicts planned to trap them on a ranch owned by Joel Denton, a reformed stage robber. The masked man and Indian rode into a cottonwood grove and sighted the ranch buildings. They pulled up.

(HOOFS COMING TO HALT)

AD LIB: WHOAS

Ranger: Tonto, the trail of the man who stalked us last night seems to lead directly to that ranch.

Tonto: What we do?

Ranger: You stay here with the horses. I'll scout around the place on foot. The banks of that creek over there will hide me until I reach the corral. (DISMOUNTS)

Tonto: How soon you come back?

Ranger: If I'm not back within an hour or you hear shots you'll know I'm having trouble.

Tonto: Me come plenty fast. Adios!

(STEPS FADING OUT)

Ranger: (FADING BACK) Adios!

MUSIC: INTERLUDE

Anner: Meanwhile, the cunning Slater had anticipated that the creek would be used as an approach to the ranch buildings. He and Splitlip had posted themselves in a blacksmith shop, the window of which commanded a view of the stream. The other outlaws lay hidden ~~XXXX~~ on top of a hay stack close to the corral fence. As the Lone Ranger reached a point just outside the corral fence and crawled up the creek bank, Splitlip clutched the gang leader's arm--



Spotlip: (SOTTO) There he is!

Sam: (SOTTO) We'll give him time to get a few yards from the creek. Then we'll fire behind him so he can't turn back.

Splitlip: I s<sub>2</sub>vvy. The hay stack is the only place he can take cover!

Sam: Right! We'll drive him to it and the other boys can jump him. Now let's open fire!

(SHOTS)

MUSIC UP

Annecr: Out-flanked by the gunmen in the blacksmith shop, the Lone Ranger could only break for the protection of the hay pile!

(RUNNING STEPS:SHOTS)

Bullets kicked up the dust at his heels as he ran. Dodging around the stack, he dropped to one knee and sent two bullets through the shop window.

(STEPS STOP: SHOTS)

With the roar of his guns drowing out all lesser sounds, the masked man failed to hear the stir above him as as the outlaws on top of the stack cast off the thin layer of hay which had covered them! Then Commanche Bill hurtled down upon him, striking him squarely on the shoulders with booted feet!

(THUD)

Ranger: (GRUNTS)

Annecr: The Lone Ranger went down, arms outstretched, but he still clutched his twin Colts! An instant later the Powder River Kid and Four Fingered Dick dropped from their hiding place and pinioned his arms to the ground. Slater and Splitlip ran out of the shop.

(RUNNING STEPS APPROACHING)

Sam: (COMING UP) Make him let go of his six-shooters!

(STEPS STOP)

Four Fingers: I'll break his knuckles with my gun barrel!

(BLOWS)

Four Fingers: Let go, feller!

Ranger: I have!

Sam: (UP) Now pull him up on his feet!

Four Fingers: Bill! Kid! Help me! (EFFORT) There he is, Sam!

Sam: Stand still, feller, or I'll drill you!

Ranger: What do you want with me?

Sam: I'll ask the questions after I take your mask off!

(RUNNING STEPS APPROACHING)

Joel: (COMING UP) What's going on there?

(STEPS STOP)

Sam: We've got the masked man! After I find out who he is, you'll have a burying job to do for us...Lord Jack!

Joel: That's what you think!

Annex: As he spoke, the former highwayman, who had appeared to be unarmed, side-stepped, jerked a forty-five from inside his shirt and jammed the muzzle against Slater's back.

Joel: Slater, drop your gun! Tell your killers to do the same!

Sam: You double-crossing polecat! You'll pay for this!

Joel: Drop those guns!

Sam: There goes mine! Drop yours, boys!

Annecr: Splitlip, Commanche Bill and Four Fingered Dick obeyed, but the Powder River Kid, heedless of his leader's safety, fired twice from the hip.

(TWO SHOTS)

Both Joel Denton and Slater fell.

Sam and Joel: SIMULTANEOUS GROANS

(BODY FALLS)

Four Fingers: Kid, you shot them both!

Annecr: Taking advantage of the Powder River Kid's momentary dismay, the Lone Ranger pivoted and drove a fist against his jaw.

(BLOW)

As the Kid toppled, the masked man scooped up his guns which had remained on the ground.

Ranger: Stand where you are! Keep your hands frozen!

(HOOFS APPROACHING)

Tonto: (COMING UP) You fellers move, me shoot!

AD LIB: WHOAS

(HOOFS HALT)

Ranger: Tonto, see to those men who were shot! I'll watch the others.

Tonto: Me look. (DISMOUNTS)

(RUNNING STEPS APPROACHING)

May: (COMING UP) Joel! Joel!

(STEPS STOP)

May: (SOBS) Oh, my darling! Why didn't you stay in the house?

Tonto: This feller only got nick on head. Him coming to.

May: That's Sam Slater and those men there belong to his gang. But my husband-- (BREAKS)

Tonto: Me sorry, but him hurt plenty bad, Need Doctor.

Ranger: Tonto, carry him into the house and do what you can to save his life. Then we'll tie these outlaws on their horses and while I take them to the sheriff in Bentonville you go after a doctor.

May: Get Doctor Haskins in River City! That's the nearest town! And tell Madame Spain at the the dancehall that I need her help!

Tonto: Me savvy.

MUSIC: INTERLUDE

Annecr: It was after dark when the Lone Ranger herded his sullen prisoners into the main street of Bentonville. At the sight of the strange cavalcade, the ever-alert Sheriff Niles, who had been standing in front of a cafe, stepped into the street, gun in hand.

(HOOFS APPROACHING)

Sheriff: (CALLS) Here, you fellers! I'm the sheriff! Pull up in the light by this hitch rack!

Ranger: (COMING UP) Steady, sheriff! You're the man I want to see.

AD LIB: WHOAS  
(HOOFS HALT)

Sheriff: What kind of an outfit is this? Say, you've got a mask on! What's that for?

Ranger: It helps me serve justice. These prisoners are Sam Slater and his killers.

Sheriff: What! The Slater gang!

Ranger: You've certainly read their descriptions.

Sheriff: A hundred times. (PAUSE) Yes, I recognize the varmints. Where in tarnation did you get them?

Ranger: A friend and I had trailed them for several weeks. We found them about ten miles east of River City.

Sheriff: That's across the state-county line and out of my jurisdiction.

Ranger: We didn't know where the line was. But I don't see that it matters. They're wanted in a dozen counties and two states for murder.

Sheriff: That's so. I'll hold them until they can be extradited.

Sar: Sheriff, I'll tell you where we got captured. It was on Joel Denton's ranch. That double-crosser used to be the road agent they called Lord Jack.

Sheriff: (EXULTANT) Lord Jack! I knew I'd get that high faluting owlhoot ~~XXXXXXXX~~ sometime! Soon as I jail you critters I'll pick up a deputy across the line and go after him!

Ranger: Sheriff, those prisoners are some of the most dangerous men alive. Do you need any help in jailing them?

Sheriff: Mister, I don't cotton to other fellers doing a lawman's work. I don't need help or advice either.

Ranger: I see. Come on, Silver!

(HOOFS FADING)

MUSIC: INTERLUDE

- Annecr: Several hours later the Lone Ranger stood in the living room of the Denton ranch house. With him were Tonto, Mrs. Denton, Madame Spain and the doctor. As the Indian had prepared the dancehall keeper and physician for his appearance, his mask excited no comment. All eyes were fixed on Joel Denton, who lay on a bed just beyond the open door of an adjoining room. The doctor was saying--
- Doctor: There's a chance that he'll recover, but he must not be disturbed.
- Ranger: Is he conscious, doctor?
- Doctor: Not right now. But he has regained and lost consciousness several times.
- Ranger: Then you people had better know right now that officers may arrive at any moment to arrest him. Slater identified him to Sheriff Niles as a former stage robber called Lord Jack.
- May: (SOBS) It isn't right! Joel has squared himself!
- Madame: Hush, dearie! Your boy will hear you. Where is he?
- May: The Mexican cook is keeping him in the kitchen.
- Ranger: Mrs. Denton, why did your husband become an outlaw?
- May: He hated Wells Fargo and Sheriff Niles. Eight or nine years ago the express company started a stage line in opposition to one run by his father, who was forced into debt. When the debt came due his father lacked just a little of being able to pay off.

Ranger:

Please, go on, of this county and state.

May:

The sheriff was ordered to serve foreclosure papers. Mr. Denton could have raised the rest of the money in just a few minutes, but the sheriff wouldn't give him an extra second. It was the law, he said. So Joel's father was ruined and died of a broken heart.

Ranger:

I see.

Madame:

Mister, that sheriff is Mrs. Denton's father! He never gave her a real home or had any real feeling for her. She had to live at the jail with him and he treated her so much like another prisoner that she had to run away.

Joel:

(BACK) GROANS

Doctor:

Not so loud, madame!

Madame:

(LOWERS VOICE) I brought May and Joel together and put them on the right road. But just let that old curmudgeon come! I've got a big surprise for him!

(HOOFS FADING IN OUTSIDE)

May:

He's coming now!

Ranger:

Doctor, we'd better meet him on the porch.

(WHOAS OUTSIDE:HOOFS HALT)

Doctor:

Yes, let's do.

(DOOR OPENS, CLOSSES:SEVERAL STEPS)

Ranger:

(CALLS) Who's there?

(STEPS APPROACHING)

Sheriff:

(COMING UP) Sheriff Niles of Kiowa County and Deputy Blakeslee of this county and state.

(STEPS STOP)

- Sheriff: (UP) Oh, it's you, masked man! Deputy, he's the feller who captured the Slater gang here on Joel Denton's place.
- Ranger: Joel Denton was chiefly responsible for the capture. He saved my life and in so doing was so severely wounded that he may die.
- Sheriff: I don't care what he did today. I want him for crimes he committed years ago.
- Doctor: Sheriff, as Joel's physician, I can't let you arrest him now. The shock might be fatal.
- Sheriff: Doc, you're obstructing justice. Let us in!!
- Ranger: Perhaps you'd better, doctor.
- Doctor: All right, but if he kills my patient I'll see that he's charged with homicide.
- (SEVERAL STEPS: DOOR OPENS, CLOSES)
- Sheriff: Where is he?
- Doctor: Right there, but he's unconscious. How can you serve a warrant on a man in his condition.
- Sheriff: We'll wait till he comes to or dies.
- Deputy: Sheriff Niles, I don't like this business.
- Sheriff: You do your duty, deputy, or I'll report you.
- Madame: Listen, you old sidewinder, you haven't got a thing on Joel.
- Sheriff: He's wanted on ten counts of stage robbery.
- Madame: Not any more. Read this letter I just got today.



- Sheriff: H-m-m...From Wells Fargo, eh?
- Madame: I've been dealing with them on Joel's account. He's paid off every cent he took and they've promised not to prosecute him. In that letter they offer him a job as special agent hunting stage and train robbers.
- Sheriff: A company that makes lawmen out of outlaws ought to be put out of business!
- Madame: Now take that deputy and get out!
- Sheriff: Not so fast! I want Joel Denton for something else and it's something you can't fix! Here's a warrant.
- Ranger: How does it read?
- ( PAPER RUSTLES )
- Sheriff: Well, it says that on June 20, ~~1870~~ 1870. John Doe alias Lord Jack did feloniously wound Sheriff Jim Niles of Kiowa County while said sheriff was performing his duty.
- Ranger: It seems to be in order.
- Sheriff: After this deputy arrests Denton I'll have him extradited and prosecuted to the limit of the law.
- Ranger: Sheriff, did you ever hear it said that the quality of mercy is not strained.
- Sheriff: Nope, but the law's no sieve the way I enforce it!
- May: You're not human!
- Sheriff: I'm a lawman, lady!

- May: Don't you know me?
- Sheriff: Why should I? I don't pay attention to women.
- May: I'm your daughter, May! I'm married to Joel!
- Sheriff: May!...Yes, I can see it now!...So I'm the father of an outlaw's wife!
- May: I know it won't do any good to plead with you, but--
- Sheriff: (INTERRUPTS) You're right! It won't!
- Joel: (BACK, Faint) May...let me...let me see Billy...
- May: (FADING BACK) Come on, doctor!
- Doctor: (BACK) I'll close the door!
- (DOOR CLOSES)
- Sheriff: Deputy, he's come to! Now's our chance! Come on and make the arrest!
- Ranger: One moment! I'd like to say something!
- Sheriff: Say it, masked man, but talk fast!
- Ranger: Sheriff, you're a good lawman. You take a lot of pride in your record. You have a strong sense of duty. But can you find it in your heart to wreck the lives of your daughter and son-in-law, perhaps even kill him?
- Sheriff: It's the law!
- Ranger: The law has its limits. It's now the twentieth of June, 1877. By my watch it's a minute to twelve midnight. It's the same time by the grandfather clock in the corner.
- Sheriff: What of it?

- Ranger: In your state there is a statute of limitations on all crimes except murder. It <sup>RUNS OUT IN</sup> ~~occurs~~ seven years. After midnight tonight you can't arrest Denton, <sub>FOR A CRIME COMMITTED OVER SEVEN YEARS AGO</sub>
- Sheriff: By jing, you're right! Deputy, we'll have to act fast!
- Ranger: I could have delayed the serving of that warrant until it was too late. But I want you to make this decision yourself.
- (DOOR OPENS)
- May: (BACK) I'll get Billy right away, darling)
- (DOOR CLOSES)
- May: (COMING UP) Madame, what shall I do? Billy mustn't know.
- Madame: Get him!
- May: (FADING BACK) ALL right.
- (DOOR OPENS)
- May: (BACK) Come out of the kitchen, Billy. Your daddy wants you.
- Billy: (COMING UP) Mama, who's that man with a mask on?
- May: (COMING UP) He's a friend, dear.
- Billy: (UP) Who's that man there?
- May: (BITTERLY) He's your grandpa, Billy. He's a great sheriff. He always gets his man.
- Billy: I didn't know I had a granpa.
- Sheriff: GRUNTS
- Billy: Grandpa, you must be like my daddy. He caught five real bad men today and...and they shot him. My daddy's brave. He's good, too.

Sheriff:

GRUNTS.

Deputy:

(SOTTO) Sheriff, it's five seconds of twelve!

Billy:

Grandpa, why don't you say something?

(CLOCK BEGINS TO STRIKE TWELVE)

Sheriff:

Billy, I reckon I'm something like that grandfather clock. I had to wait to hour to say anything.

Billy:

(LAUGHS) You're funny, grandpa. What's that paper in your hand?

Sheriff:

That? Why it's nothing of any account. I'm tearing it up right now.

(PAPER TEARING)

Billy:

Where's your badge, grandpa?

Sheriff:

Grandson, I'll tell you. Once there was an outlaw who called me Tin Star and it made me right mad. So I threw my star away.

Billy:

I'll bet you got him!

Sheriff:

Nope, I never did... and never will!

(CLOCK STOPS STRIKING)

(DOOR OPENS, CLOSES)

Doctor:

(COMING UP) May, your husband's getting a natural sleep now. He'll recover if nothing happens.

Sheriff:

Nothing will, Doc.

Ranger:

(SOTTO) Come on, Tonto.

Sheriff:

Masked man--

(DOOR OPENS, CLOSES)

Sheriff:

Why, he and the Injun are gone! I knew the Injun wasn't any ordinary redskin first time I saw him.

Madame: The masked man isn't any ordinary feller either.

Sheriff: You mean you know who he is?

Madame: The Injun told me. He's the Lone Ranger!

Ranger: (BACK) HI-YO-SILVER-AWAY!