

DELL

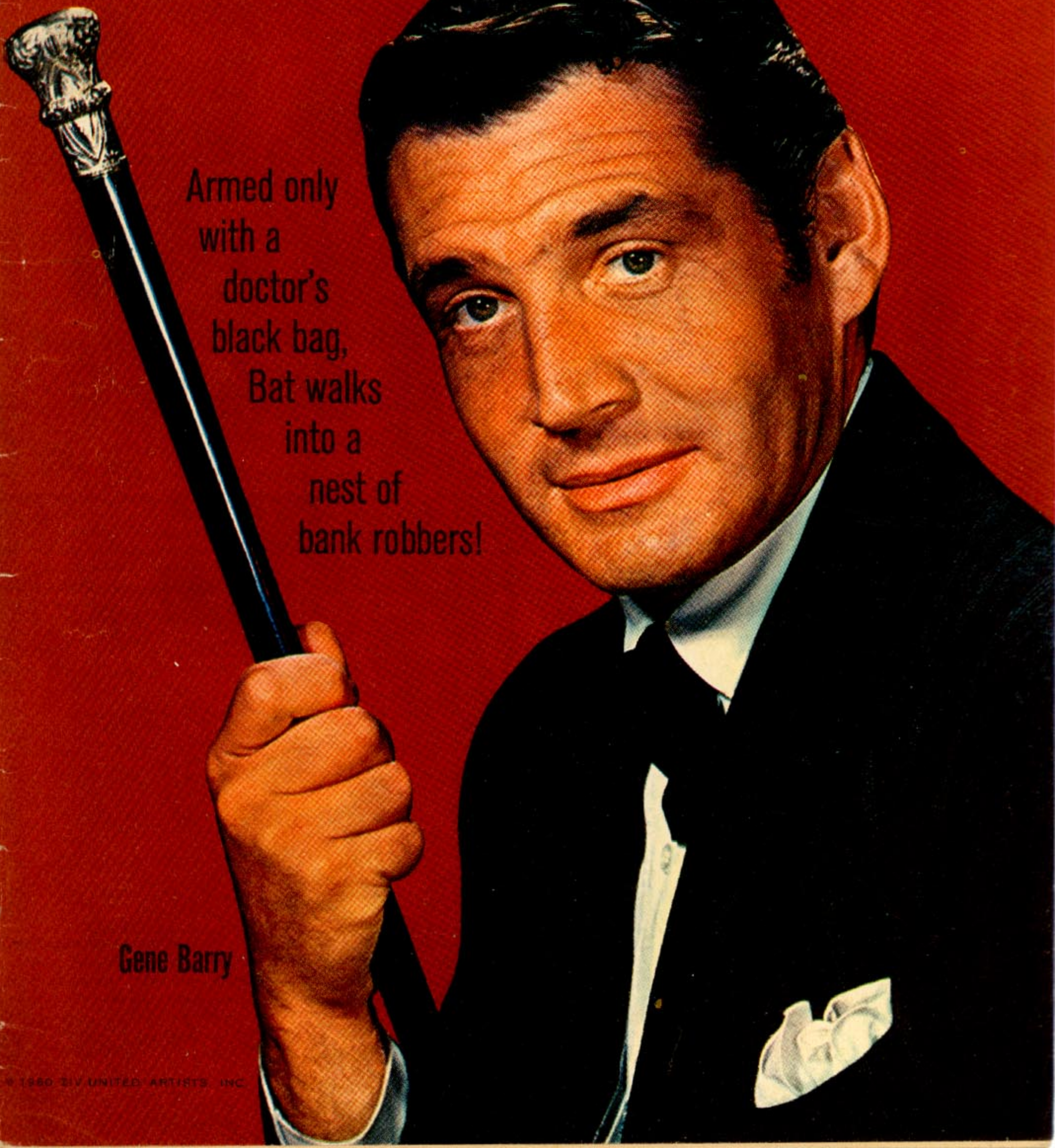
Exciting
Adventure

NOV.-JAN.
Still 10¢

BAT MASTERSON

Armed only
with a
doctor's
black bag,
Bat walks
into a
nest of
bank robbers!

Gene Barry



BAT MASTERSON



MAKE BELIEVE MEDICO



When a pursuing posse is shot up by a gang of bank robbers, Bat decides to go after the outlaws alone. Unarmed, disguised as a doctor . . .



. . . Bat allows himself to be taken to the wounded bandit leader. But just as his scheme seems to be working, his true identity is exposed!

SIDE-SADDLE BANDIT



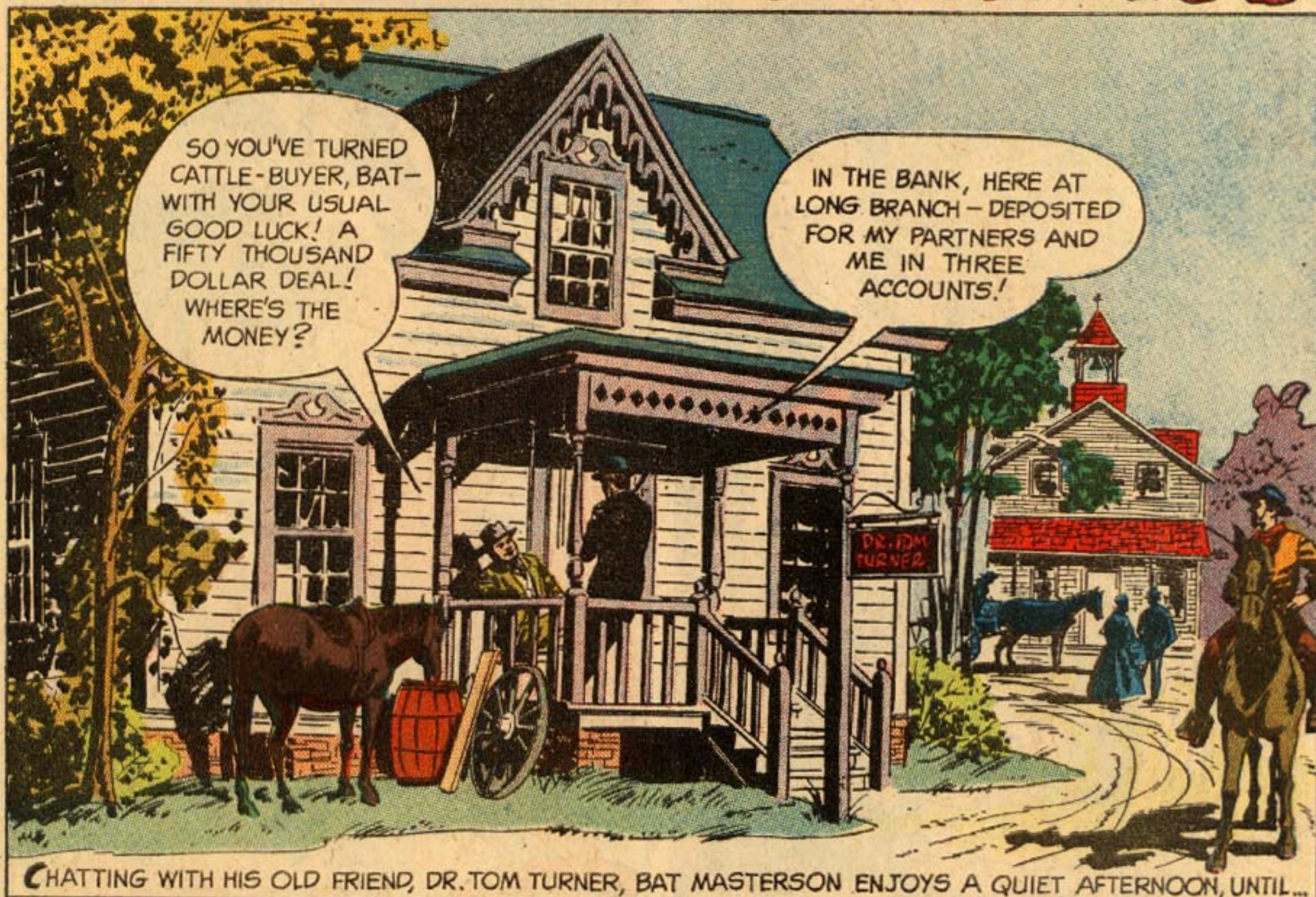
Held up by bandits in Spanish costume, Bat suspects that the robbers are masquerading in order to throw the blame on some innocent outfit.



But proving it turns out to be something else again, especially when one of the vaqueros from the suspect ranch turns up with Bat's gold watch!

BAT MASTERSON

MAKE-BELIEVE MEDICO



POSTMASTER: Please send notice on Form 3579 to 321 West 44th Street, New York 36, N. Y.
BAT MASTERSON, No. 5, Nov.-Jan., 1961. Published quarterly by Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 750 Third Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. George T. Delacorte, Jr., Publisher; Helen Meyer, President; Executive Vice-Presidents, William F. Callahan, Jr., Paul R. Lilly; Harold Clark, Vice-President-Advertising Director; Bryce L. Holland, Vice-President; Albert P. Delacorte, Treasurer. Application for second-class entry pending at the Post Office at New York, New York. Subscriptions in U.S.A. and Possessions and Canada 40c per year. Subscriptions for Pan-American and foreign countries 70c per year. Dell Subscription Service: 321 West 44th Street, New York 36, N. Y. All rights reserved throughout the world. Authorized edition. Printed in U.S.A. Designed and produced by Western Printing & Lithographing Co. Copyright © 1960, by ZIV-United Artists, Inc.

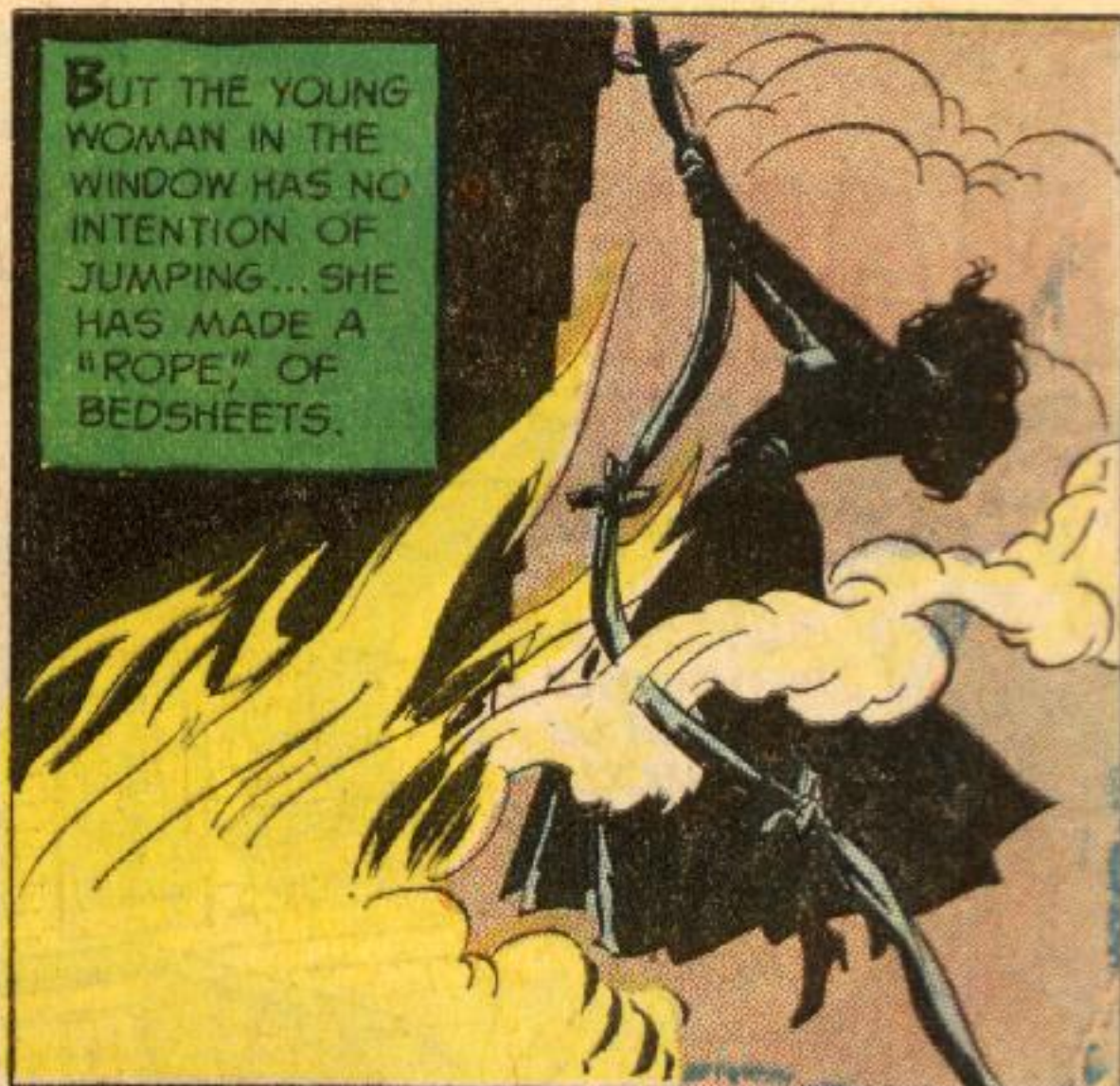
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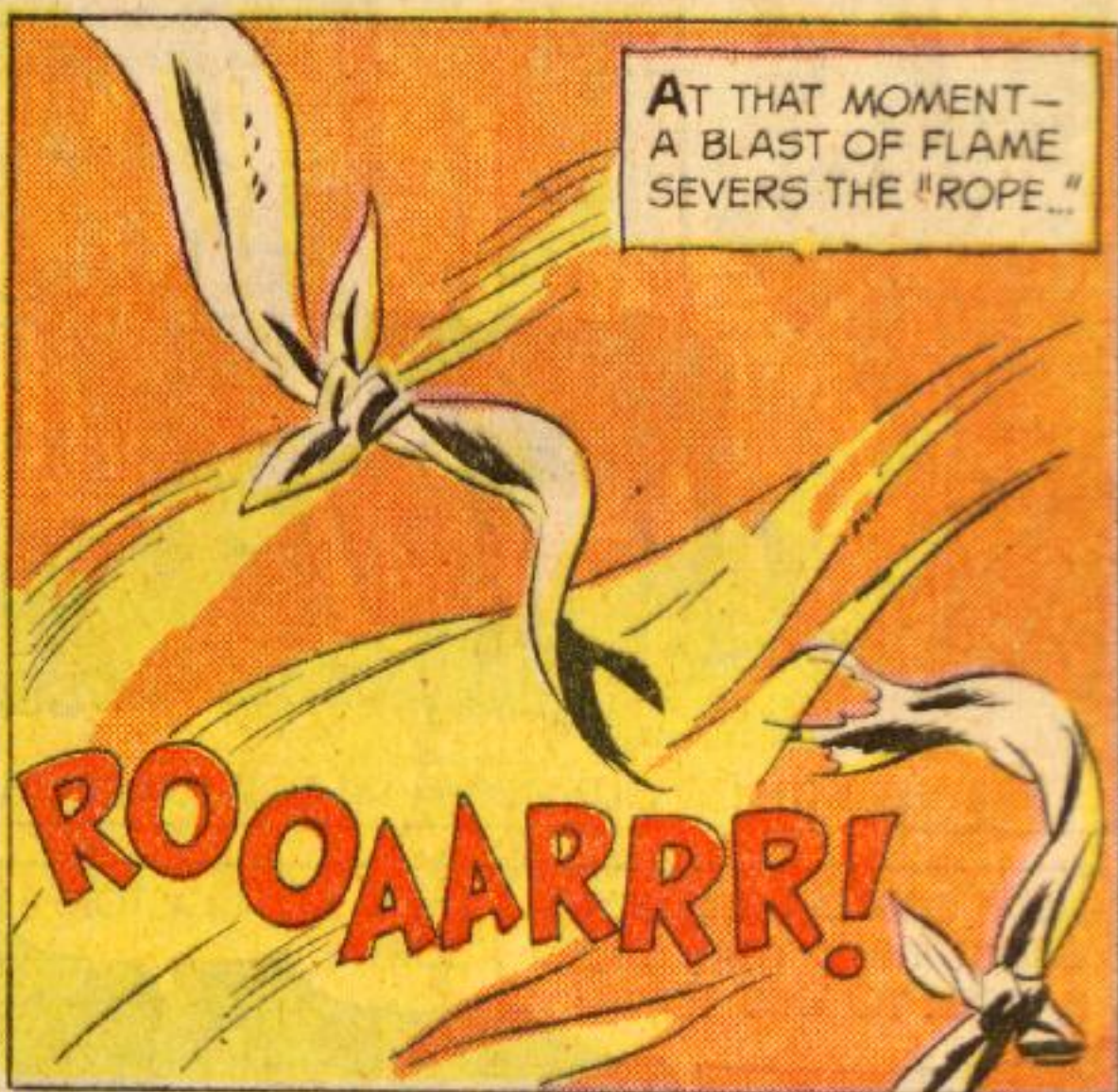


IT'S GOT TOO BIG A START!

LOOK—THERE'S A WOMAN IN THAT UPSTAIRS WINDOW! SHE'LL HAVE TO JUMP!



BUT THE YOUNG WOMAN IN THE WINDOW HAS NO INTENTION OF JUMPING... SHE HAS MADE A "ROPE" OF BEDSHEETS.



AT THAT MOMENT—A BLAST OF FLAME SEVERS THE "ROPE..."

ROOAAARRR!



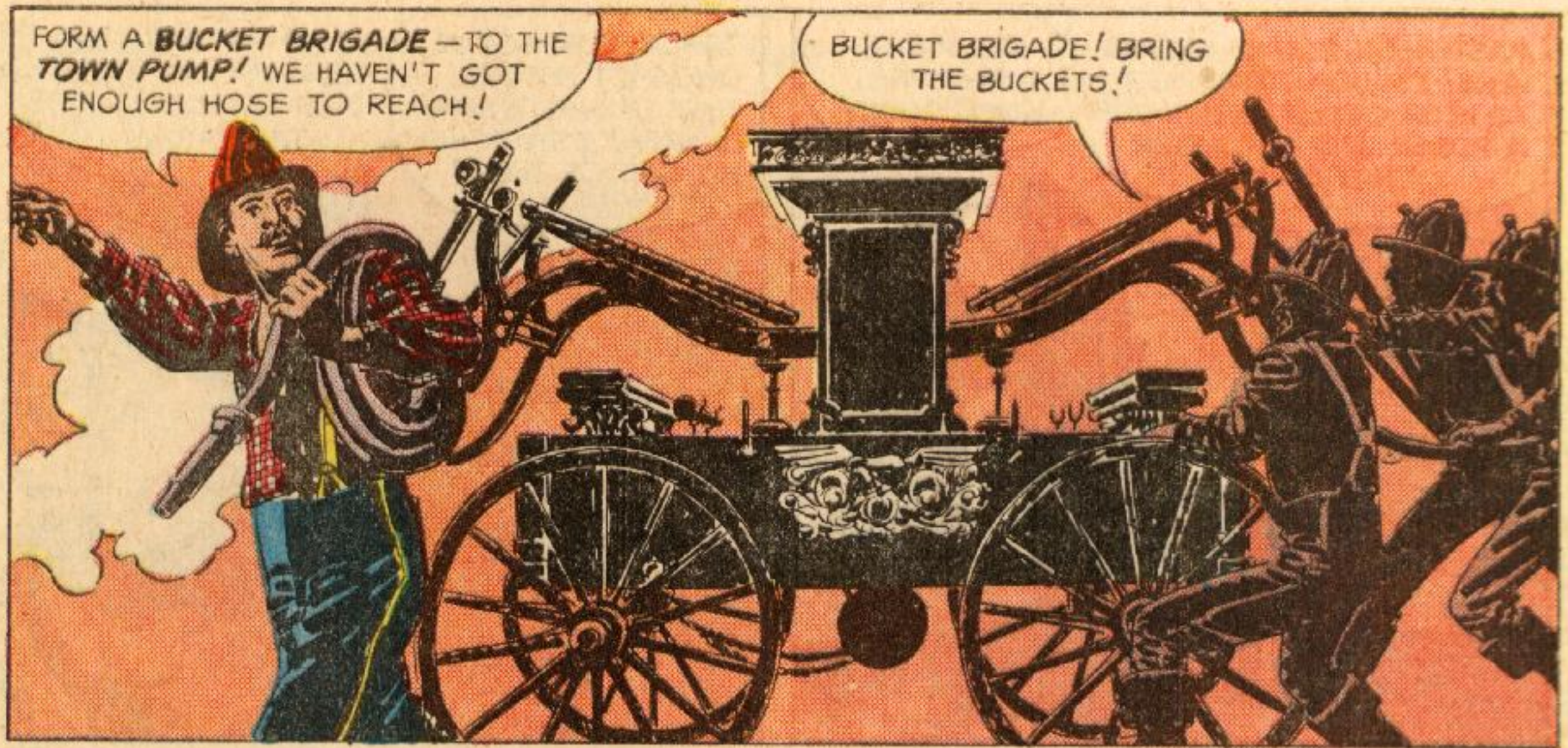
I HAVE YOU!

OH—!



WHAT MADE YOU WAIT SO LONG, MA'AM?

LOOKING TO SEE IF ANYBODY WAS TRAPPED UP THERE! THEY ALL GOT OUT I THINK!



FORM A **BUCKET BRIGADE**—TO THE **TOWN PUMP!** WE HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH HOSE TO REACH!

BUCKET BRIGADE! BRING THE BUCKETS!



BAT AND DOC ARE IN THE THICK OF IT—AND THE WHOLE TOWN HAS TURNED OUT TO HELP.

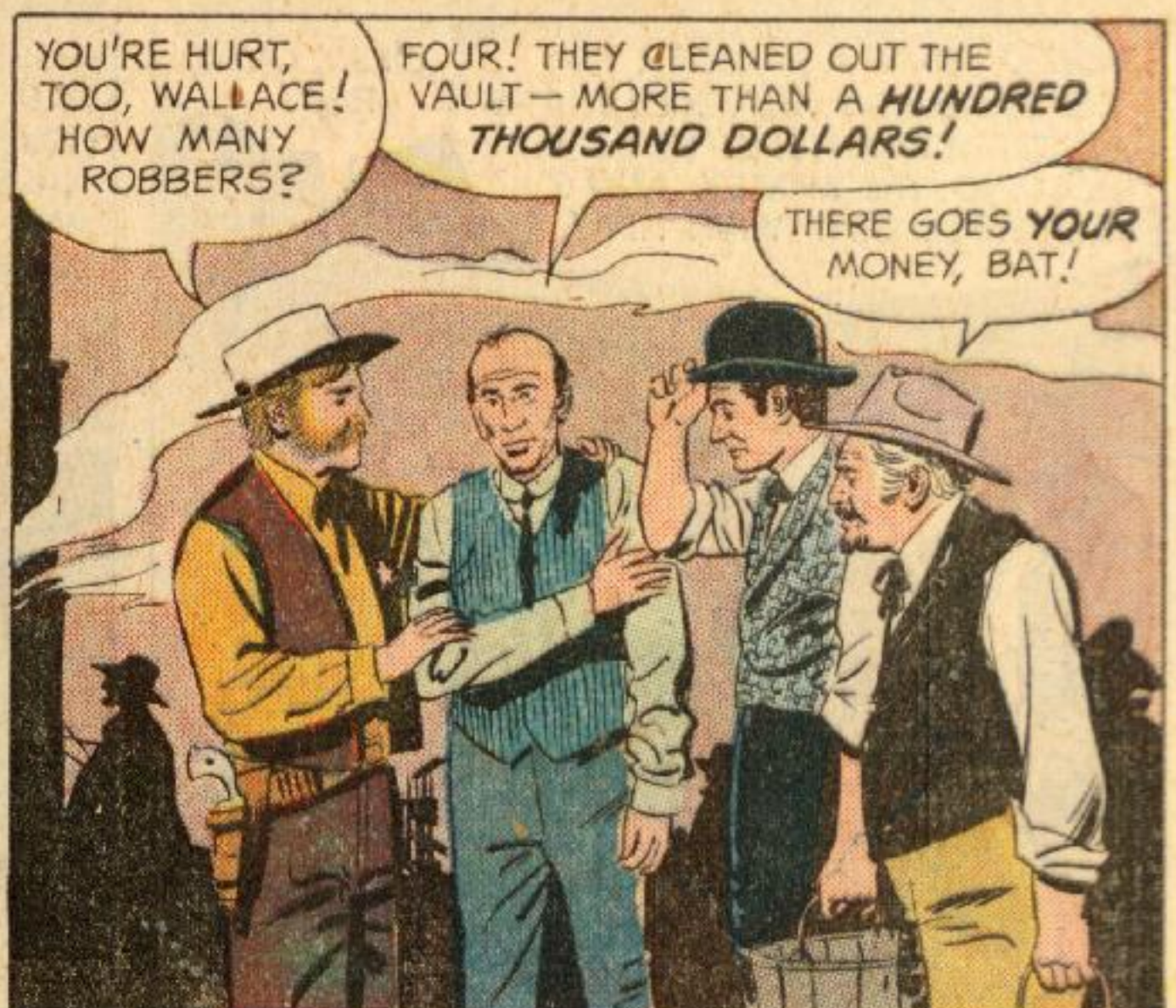
NO USE TRYING TO SAVE THE HOTEL, MASTERSON! WE'LL TRY TO WET DOWN THE BUILDINGS NEAREST IT!

IT'S ALL THEY CAN DO, SHERIFF! MAY SAVE THE TOWN!



SHERIFF! THE BANK'S BEEN ROBBED! CASHIER—SHOT DEAD!

WHA-AT?



YOU'RE HURT, TOO, WALLACE! HOW MANY ROBBERS?

FOUR! THEY CLEANED OUT THE VAULT—MORE THAN A **HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS!**

THERE GOES **YOUR MONEY, BAT!**

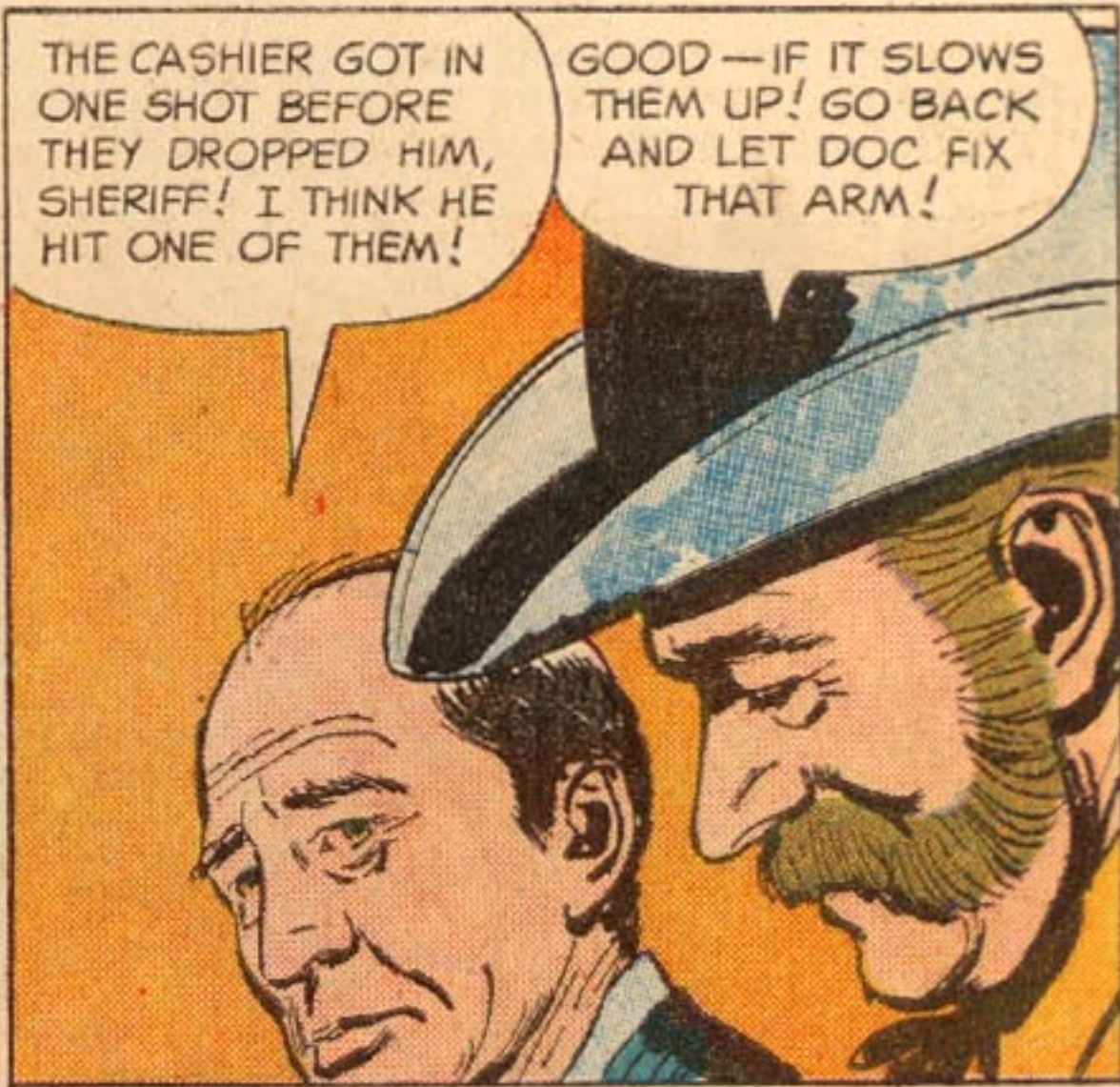
MASTERTON, YOU'RE NEEDED HERE! I'M DEPUTIZING YOU TO KEEP ORDER! I'LL RAISE A POSSE AND GET AFTER THAT GANG!

ALL RIGHT, SHERIFF! GOOD LUCK!



THE CASHIER GOT IN ONE SHOT BEFORE THEY DROPPED HIM, SHERIFF! I THINK HE HIT ONE OF THEM!

GOOD — IF IT SLOWS THEM UP! GO BACK AND LET DOC FIX THAT ARM!



MEANTIME — ON THE ROAD OUT OF TOWN.

PULL UP, BOYS! SUNDOWN'S SLIPPING! THAT CASHIER'S BULLET BROKE HIS SHOULDER! HE NEEDS HELP! **BULL** — YOU RIDE BEHIND HIM!

AW, FORGET HIM, RED! HE'LL ONLY HOLD US BACK!



YOU'D LEAVE A PARDNER TO THE HANGMAN, BLACKIE! THAT'S ABOUT YOUR STYLE! BUT I'M HOLDING THE MONEY, AND I SAY WE'LL STAY WITH HIM!

OKAY, OKAY, RED!



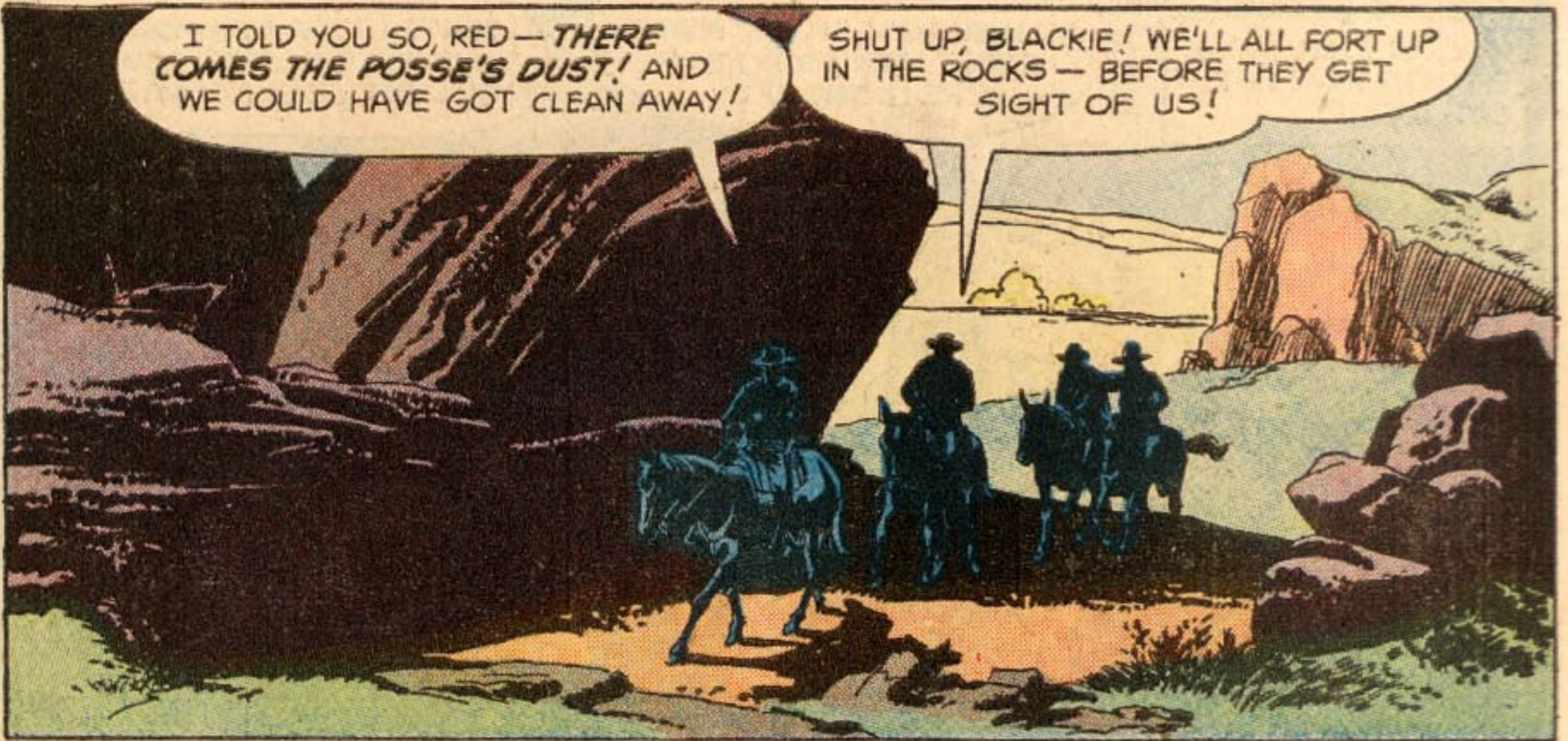
— BUT IF THAT DUMB-HEAD HAD KEPT THE CASHIER COVERED, THE GUY WOULDN'T HAVE REACHED FOR A GUN AND SHOT HIM! AND I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO KILL THE CASHIER!

YOU COULD HAVE WOUNDED HIM — BUT YOU **LIKE** KILLING TOO WELL, BLACKIE!



I TOLD YOU SO, RED — *THERE COMES THE POSSE'S DUST!* AND WE COULD HAVE GOT CLEAN AWAY!

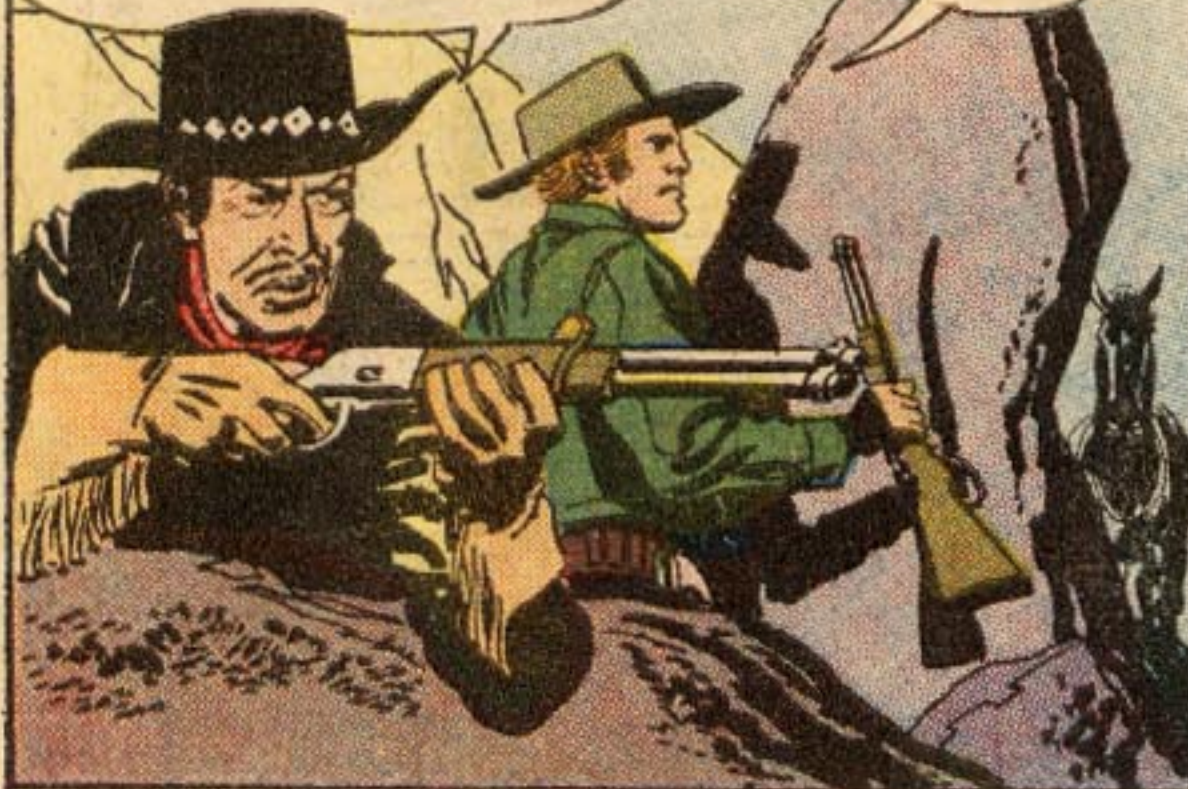
SHUT UP, BLACKIE! WE'LL ALL FORT UP IN THE ROCKS — BEFORE THEY GET SIGHT OF US!



AMONG THE BOULDERS THE THREE UNWOUNDED ROBBERS MAKE READY.

THEY'RE TURNING OFF THE ROAD! MAYBE THEY'LL GUESS WE'RE HERE AND SWING WIDE...

IF THEY START THAT — LET THEM HAVE IT!



KEEP CLEAR OF THOSE ROCKS, BOYS! THERE'S NO TELLING —



YEOW!

AMBUSH!

KRANG!

KRANG!

KRANG!



BACK IN TOWN, HEROIC EFFORTS HAVE PUT OUT THE FIRE.

NO LIVES LOST IN THAT BLAZE—
NOBODY EVEN SCORCHED!
WE'RE LUCKY, BAT!

YOU'VE LOST A FEW *POUNDS*
IN SWEAT, DOCTOR TOM!
YOU'D BETTER GET SOME REST!

REST, DID YOU SAY?
LOOK THERE, BAT!

THE POSSE! THEY'RE
BACK WITH HALF OF
THEM WOUNDED! THEY'RE
STOPPING AT YOUR
HOUSE, DOC!

WE RODE INTO A
TRAP, MASTERSON!

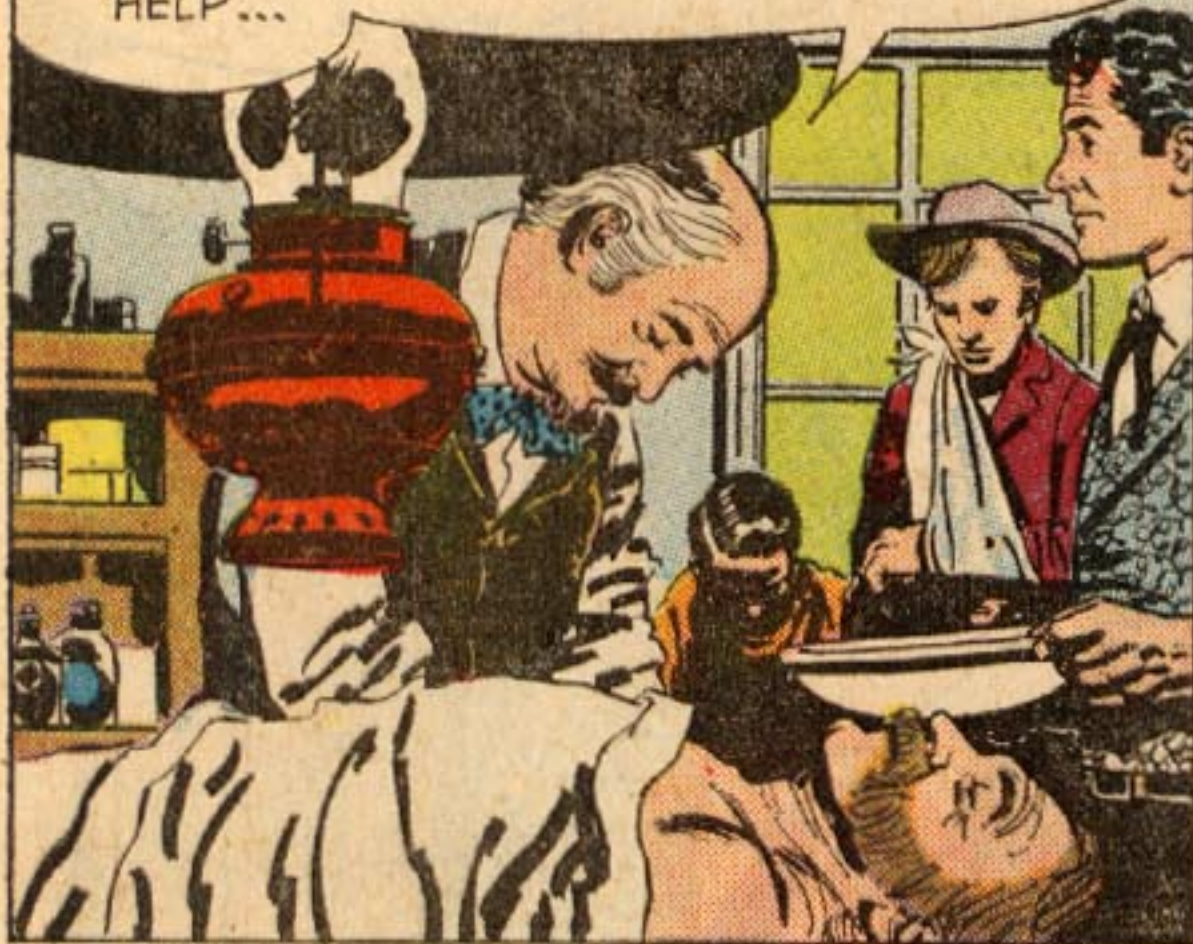
THEY ALL GOT AWAY,
THEN, SHERIFF?

THEY GOT AWAY—BUT I DON'T THINK THEY'LL
GO FAR! THEY HAD ONE GUNSHOT MAN, AND
IN THE FIGHT WE HIT ANOTHER—
SO THERE WERE ONLY TWO GUNS
IN ACTION WHEN WE PULLED OUT!

ONLY TWO
GUNS? AND
YOU PULLED
OUT?

WE HAD JUST *TWO* ABLE-BODIED MEN LEFT IN
THE POSSE! IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SUICIDE
FOR THEM TO TACKLE THE RIFLES
HIDDEN IN THE ROCKS!

BAT, YOU GO AND TEND THAT FELLOW WITH THE BULLET-HOLED ARM, WHILE I DIG OUT THIS SLUG! WE COULD USE SOME MORE GOOD HELP...



COULD YOU USE ME, DOCTOR! I'VE DONE SOME NURSING! I'M MRS. HELEN DEANE!

COME RIGHT IN AND GET BUSY, MRS. DEANE. SAY-- YOU'RE THE LADY WHO NEARLY GOT CAUGHT IN THE FIRE!



YOU'RE A STRANGER IN TOWN, MRS. DEANE!

YES, I'M A SEAMSTRESS... I'M LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO SET UP A LADIES SHOP IN LONG BRANCH.



YOU'VE DONE A FINE JOB ON ME, MR. MASTERSON-- AS GOOD AS DOC HIMSELF COULD HAVE DONE!

THAT'S YOUR IRISH BLARNEY TALKING! BUT I *HAVE* TREATED A GOOD MANY WOUNDS!



BRING THE NEXT MAN, BAT!

DID YOU *SEE* THE ROBBERS -- TO *KNOW* HOW MANY OF THEM WERE HIT, SHERIFF?

NO, MA'AM! WE LEFT THEM WITH ONLY TWO GUNS TALKING!



DOCTOR TOM, I HAVE AN IDEA THOSE ROBBERS COULD USE A MEDICO!



NOW WHAT COCKEYED SCHEME POPPED INTO YOUR HEAD, BAT? IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO CHASE UP THAT QUARTET OF KILLERS...

NOT YOU, DOCTOR TOM! I MEANT—**ME!** WITH A MEDICAL CASE IN MY HAND I COULD PASS FOR A MEDICO. I CAN TREAT BULLET WOUNDS, TOO!



YOU MEAN—THOSE BANK ROBBERS HAVE GOT FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS OF YOURS... SO YOU'D RISK A STUNT LIKE THIS TO GET IT BACK? WELL, YOU ALWAYS WERE A LITTLE CRAZY!

AND OFTEN LUCKY!



HERE YOU ARE, BAT! MY OLD MEDICAL CASE—EMPTY! PUT WHAT YOU'LL NEED IN IT! IF YOU LIVE TILL THE NEXT POSSE GOES AFTER THOSE BANDITS, THEY'LL KEEP YOU FOR A HOSTAGE... I HOPE!

THANKS!
YOU'RE **SO** ENCOURAGING!



SO LONG,
DOCTOR
TOM!

HUMPH!
LUNATIC!

GOOD LUCK—
"DOCTOR"
MASTERSON!

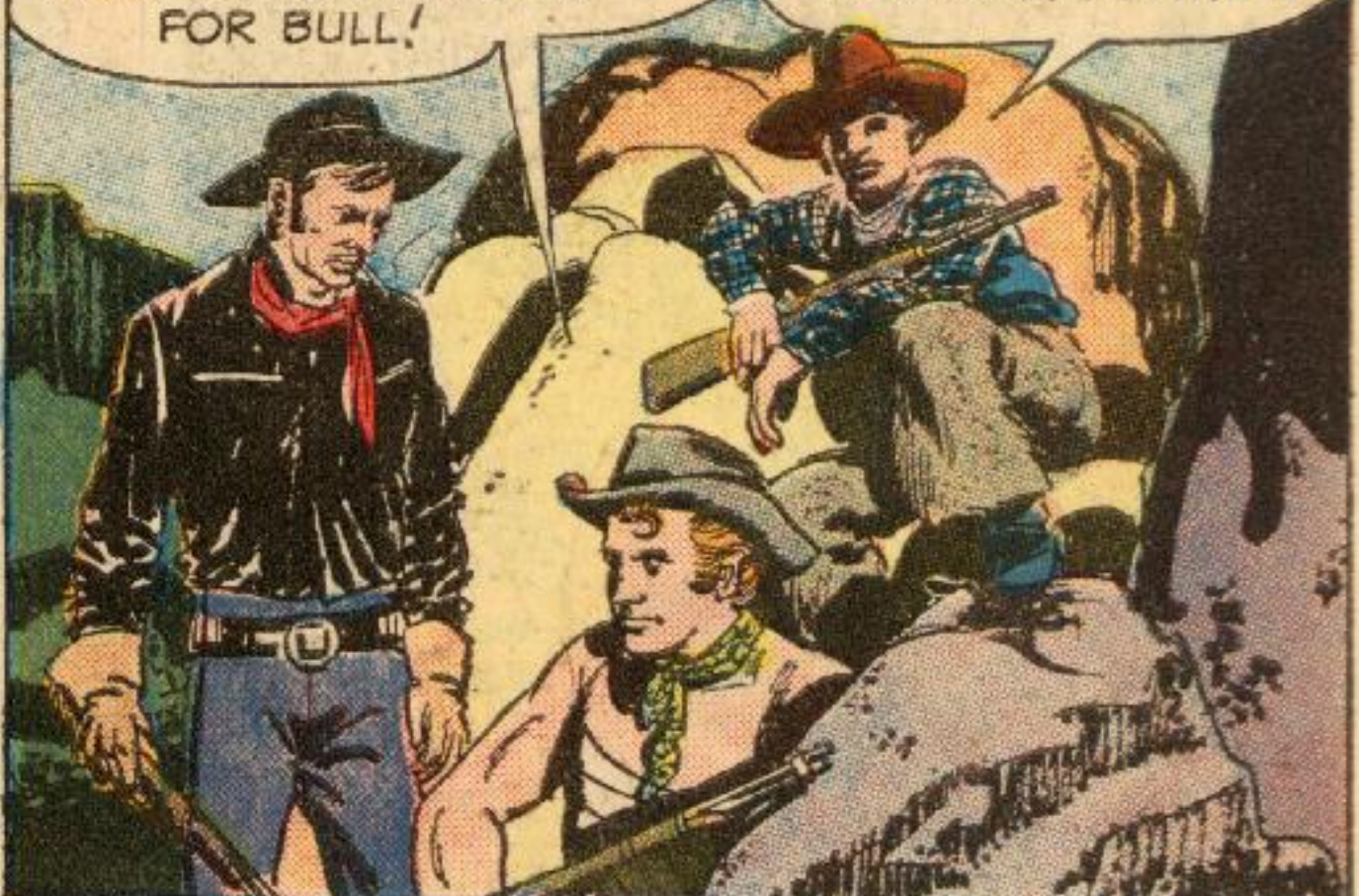


I'LL CIRCLE TOWN AND COME PAST THE GANG'S AMBUSH POINT FROM THE **OTHER DIRECTION**—SO THEY WON'T SUSPECT ANYTHING!



I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, BLACKIE—YOU'D LIKE TO SPLIT THE MONEY NOW, AND RIDE OUT! BUT YOU'D BE CAUGHT—**WITHOUT MY BRAINS TO PLAN FOR YOU!** THE SAME GOES FOR BULL!

RED IS RIGHT, BLACKIE!
WE STICK TOGETHER!



ALL RIGHT, BULL, HELP ME UP! BLACKIE, TAKE A LOOK DOWN THE ROAD—AND THEN BRING UP THE HORSES!

OKAY! BUT WITH YOU **AND** SUNDOWN HURT, WE CAN'T GET FAR!



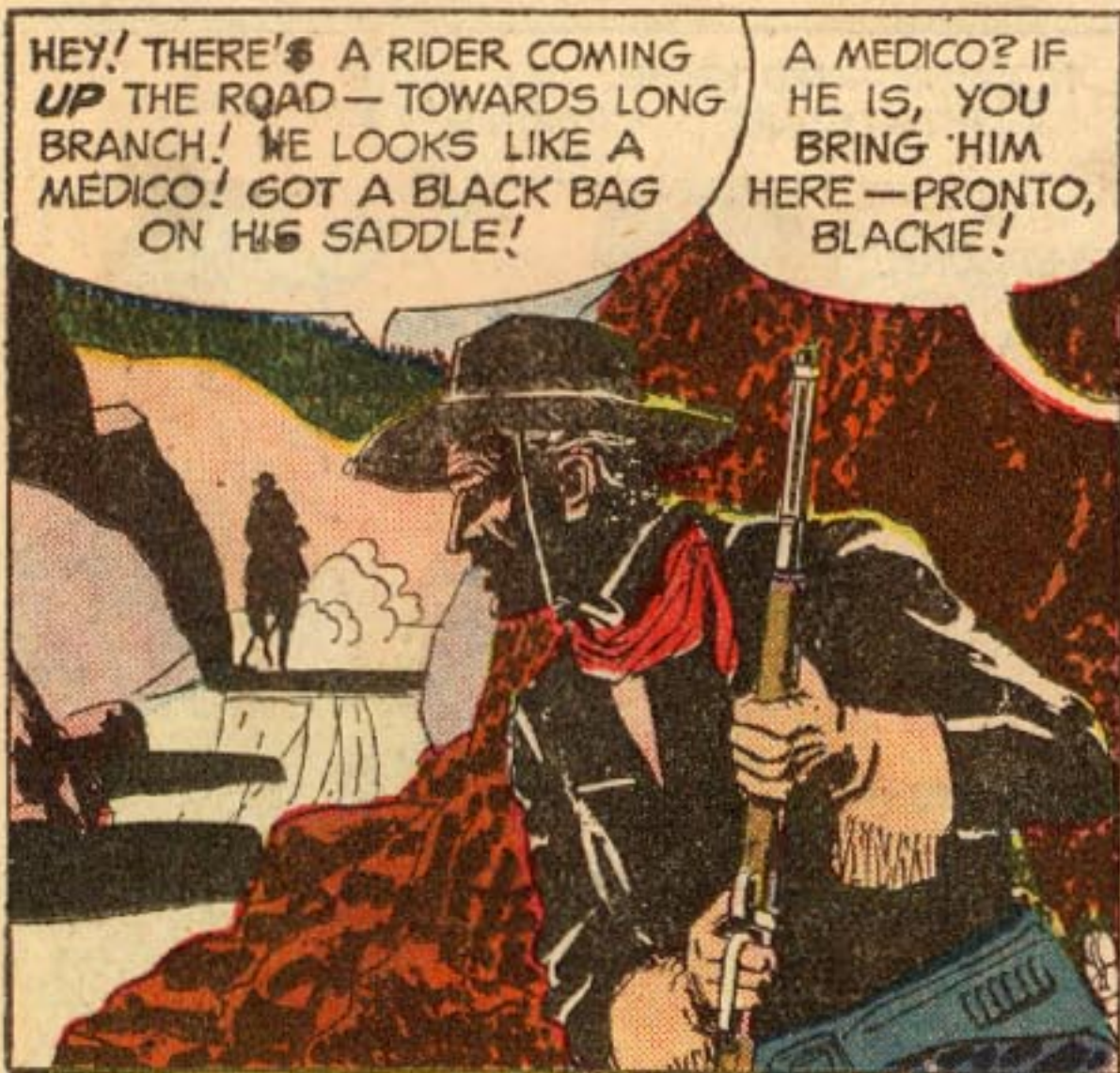
RED, YOU'RE IN NO SHAPE TO RIDE—WITH THOSE BROKEN RIBS!

I—UH!—I'VE GOT TO, BULL!



HEY! THERE'S A RIDER COMING **UP** THE ROAD—TOWARDS LONG BRANCH! HE LOOKS LIKE A MEDICO! GOT A BLACK BAG ON HIS SADDLE!

A MEDICO? IF HE IS, YOU BRING HIM HERE—PRONTO, BLACKIE!



THEY'RE TAKING THE BAIT! HERE COMES ONE OF THE GANG TO PICK ME UP!



YOU'VE GOT A CASE, DOC—RIGHT NOW! COME WITH ME!

BUT—BUT I'M EXPECTED IN LONG BRANCH—BEFORE DARK!



FORGET IT! I'M BRINGING YOU WITH ME—DEAD OR ALIVE—THOUGH A **DEAD** MEDICO WON'T DO MY FRIENDS MUCH GOOD! NOW RIDE AHEAD OF ME—TOWARDS THOSE ROCKS!

WELL—I GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE!





THERE'S YOUR PATIENTS, DOC! GET BUSY!
AND MAYBE — JUST **MAYBE** — YOU'LL
LIVE AS LONG AS THEY DO!

FAIR ENOUGH! I'VE NEVER
LOST A PATIENT YET!



LET'S HAVE
A LOOK—!

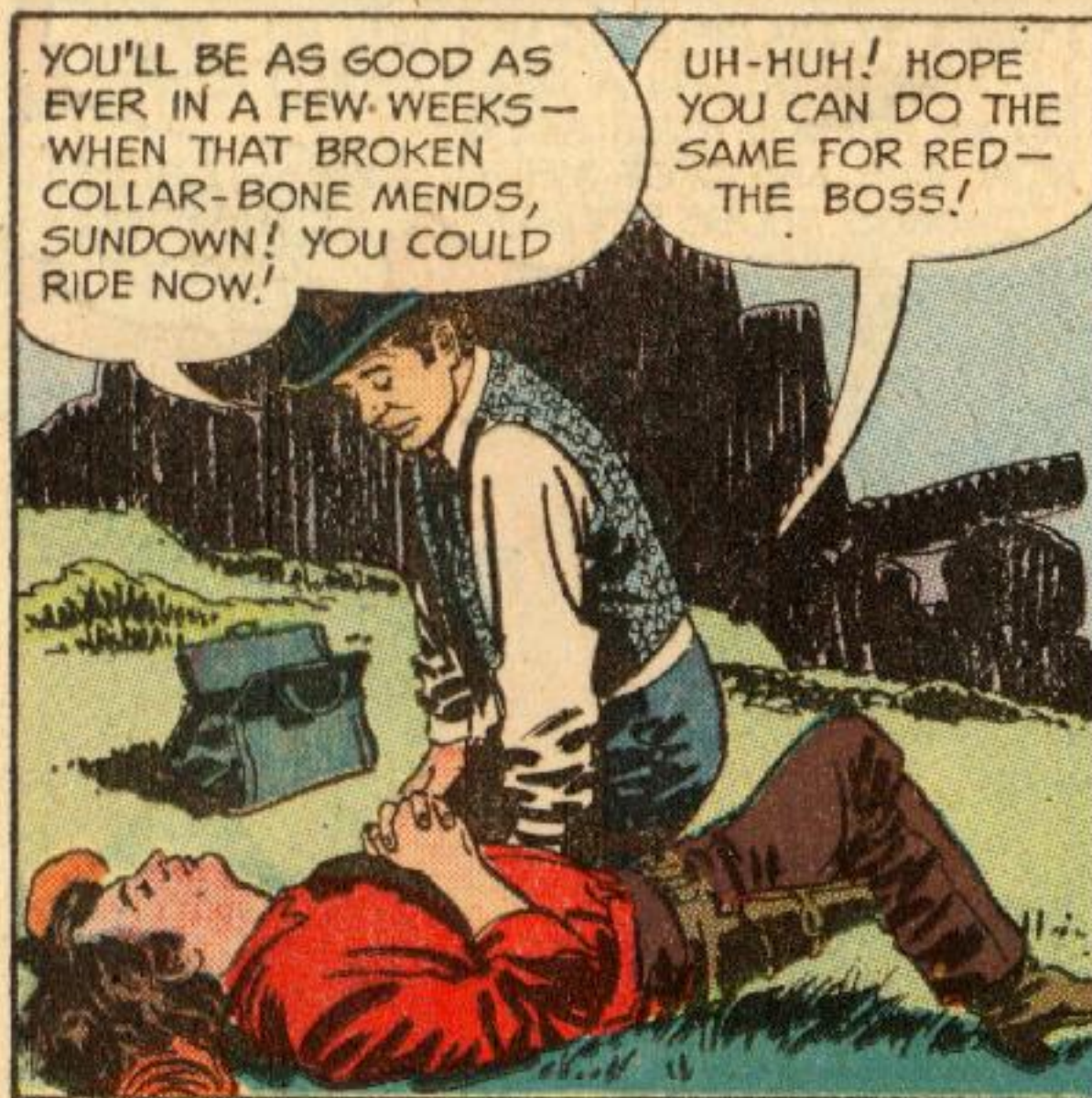
NO! YOU TEND
TO SUNDOWN
FIRST, DOC!

AND BEFORE
THAT I'M GOING
TO MAKE SURE
YOU HAVEN'T GOT
A GUN ON YOU!
STAND UP!



NO GUN — NO KNIFE! ALL
RIGHT — START DOCTORING!

WITH
PLEASURE!



YOU'LL BE AS GOOD AS
EVER IN A FEW WEEKS—
WHEN THAT BROKEN
COLLAR-BONE MENDS,
SUNDOWN! YOU COULD
RIDE NOW!

UH-HUH! HOPE
YOU CAN DO THE
SAME FOR RED—
THE BOSS!



YOU'VE GOT TWO SPLINTERED
RIBS, RED! THIS IS GOING
TO HURT! IF YOU'D LIKE
SOME CHLOROFORM—?

NO! I AIM TO
KEEP AWAKE!
GO RIGHT AHEAD!



HOLD EVERYTHING!

LIZA!

AH! MRS. DEANE!



I'M MRS. **RED** BARLOW - NOT "MRS. DEANE" ANY MORE, MR. BAT MASTERSON!

BAT MASTERSON! HIM? WHY, I'LL KILL THE LOW-DOWN SNEAKY-



YOU'LL KILL **NOBODY**, BLACKIE WEIR! BAT MASTERSON CAN DOCTOR WOUNDS - I'VE SEEN HIM DO IT, IN TOWN! BUT WE'LL WATCH TO SEE HE PLAYS NO TRICKS! THAT'S ALL!

ARRGH!



GET ON WITH IT, BAT! JUST DON'T LET MY MAN BLEED TO DEATH - IF YOU WANT TO LIVE!

A DOCTOR CAN ONLY DO HIS BEST, MRS. BARLOW!



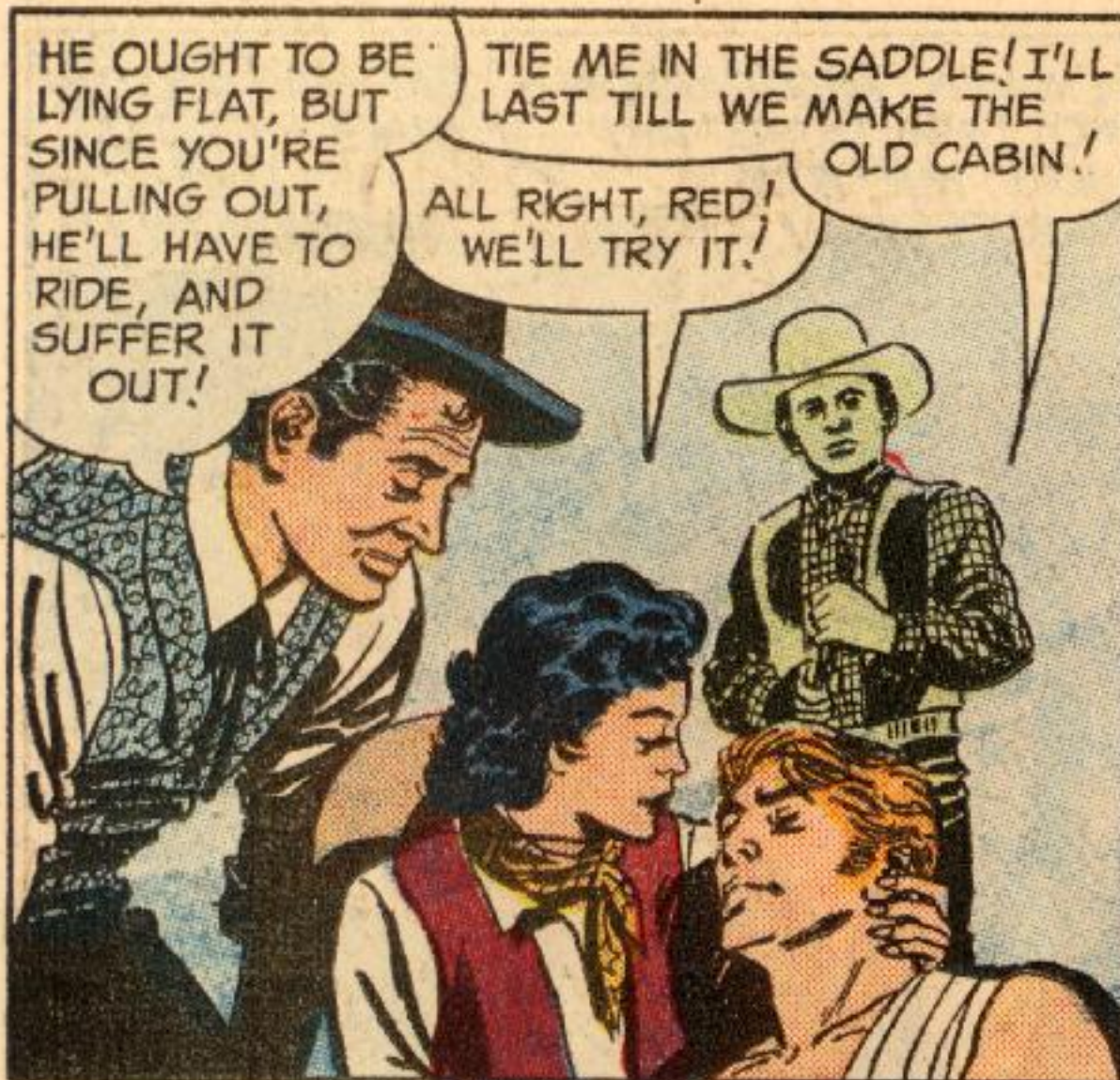
OF COURSE, YOU SET THE FIRE IN THE HOTEL, MRS. BARLOW? CLEVER WAY TO DRAW EVERYONE AWAY FROM THE BANK!

DON'T TALK! TEND TO YOUR WORK!



THE SPLINTERS ARE OUT AND THE WOUND IS PLUGGED! BANDAGES NOW, PLEASE!

YES - YES, OF COURSE!



HE OUGHT TO BE LYING FLAT, BUT SINCE YOU'RE PULLING OUT, HE'LL HAVE TO RIDE, AND SUFFER IT OUT!

TIE ME IN THE SADDLE! I'LL LAST TILL WE MAKE THE OLD CABIN!

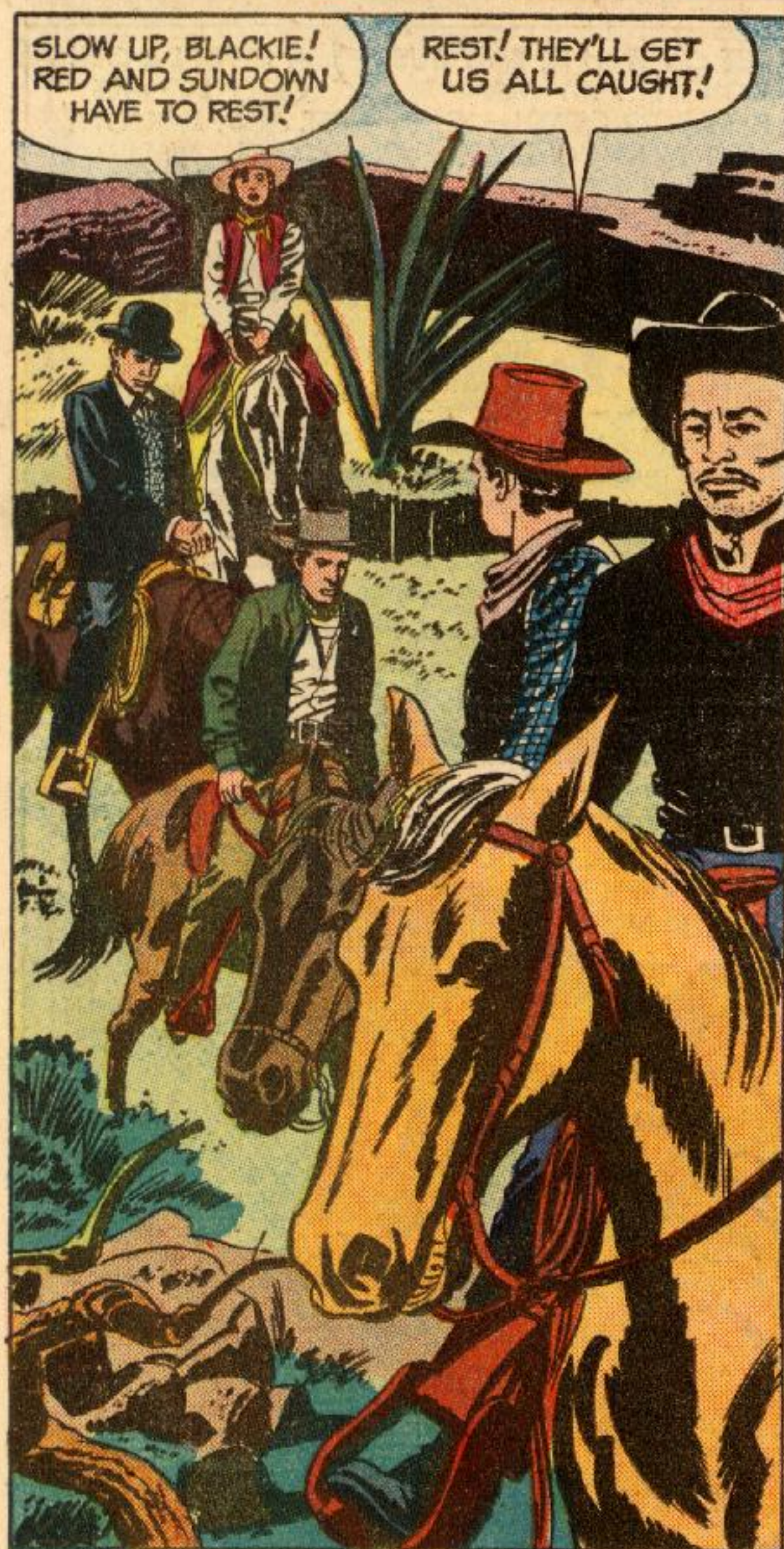
ALL RIGHT, RED! WE'LL TRY IT!



YOU'LL LEAD THE WAY, BLACKIE ... BULL RIDES NEXT— THEN SUNDOWN, RED AND BAT MASTERSON ... I'LL RIDE HERD ON YOU ALL AND CARRY THE MONEY! AND I'M WEARING RED'S GUN!

ANYTHING WRONG WITH THAT, BLACKIE?

UH—NO! IT'S OKAY FOR NOW!



SLOW UP, BLACKIE! RED AND SUNDOWN HAVE TO REST!

REST! THEY'LL GET US ALL CAUGHT!



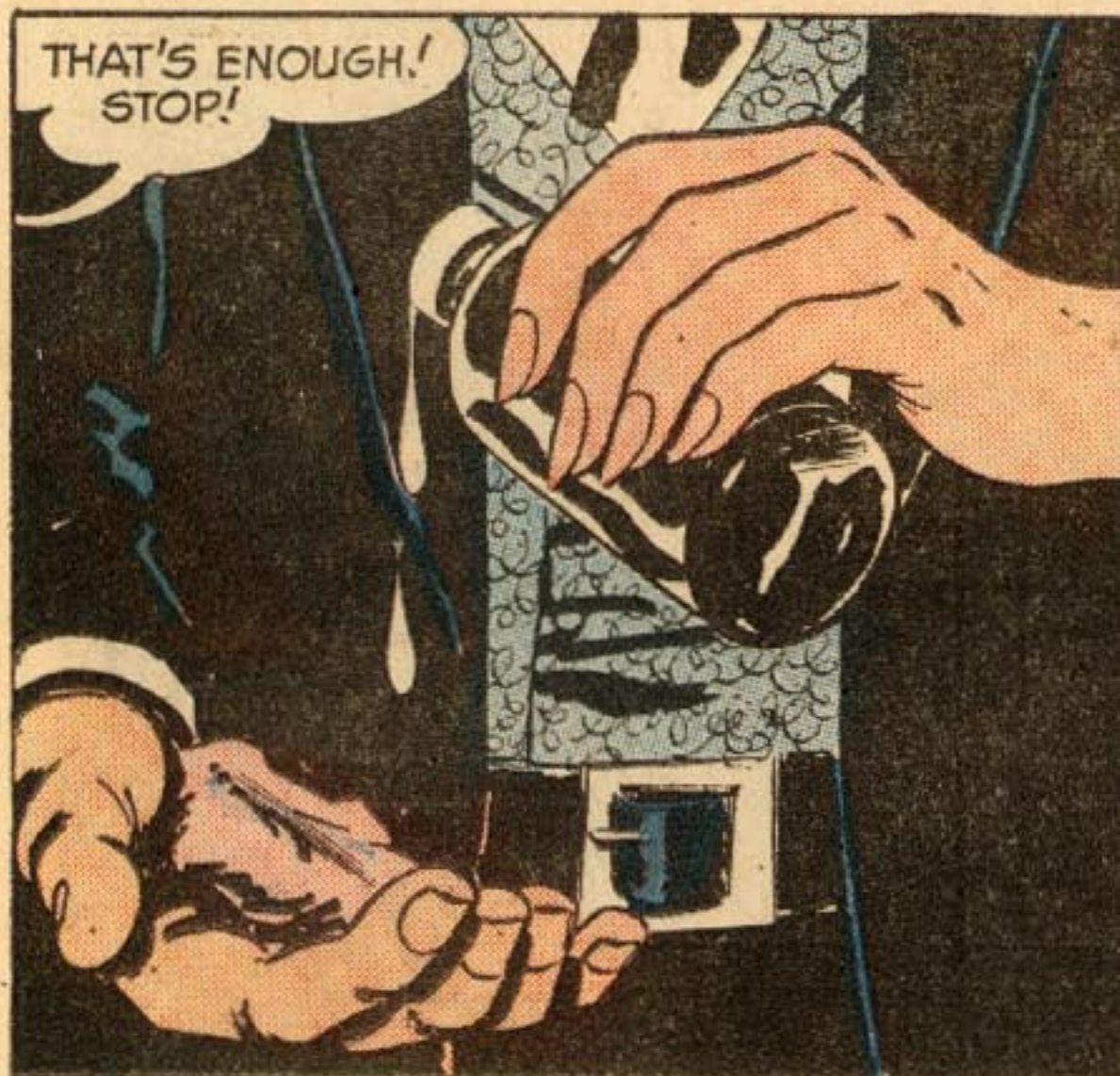
BAT—RED'S PAIN IS TERRIBLE! CAN'T WE DO SOMETHING TO EASE IT?

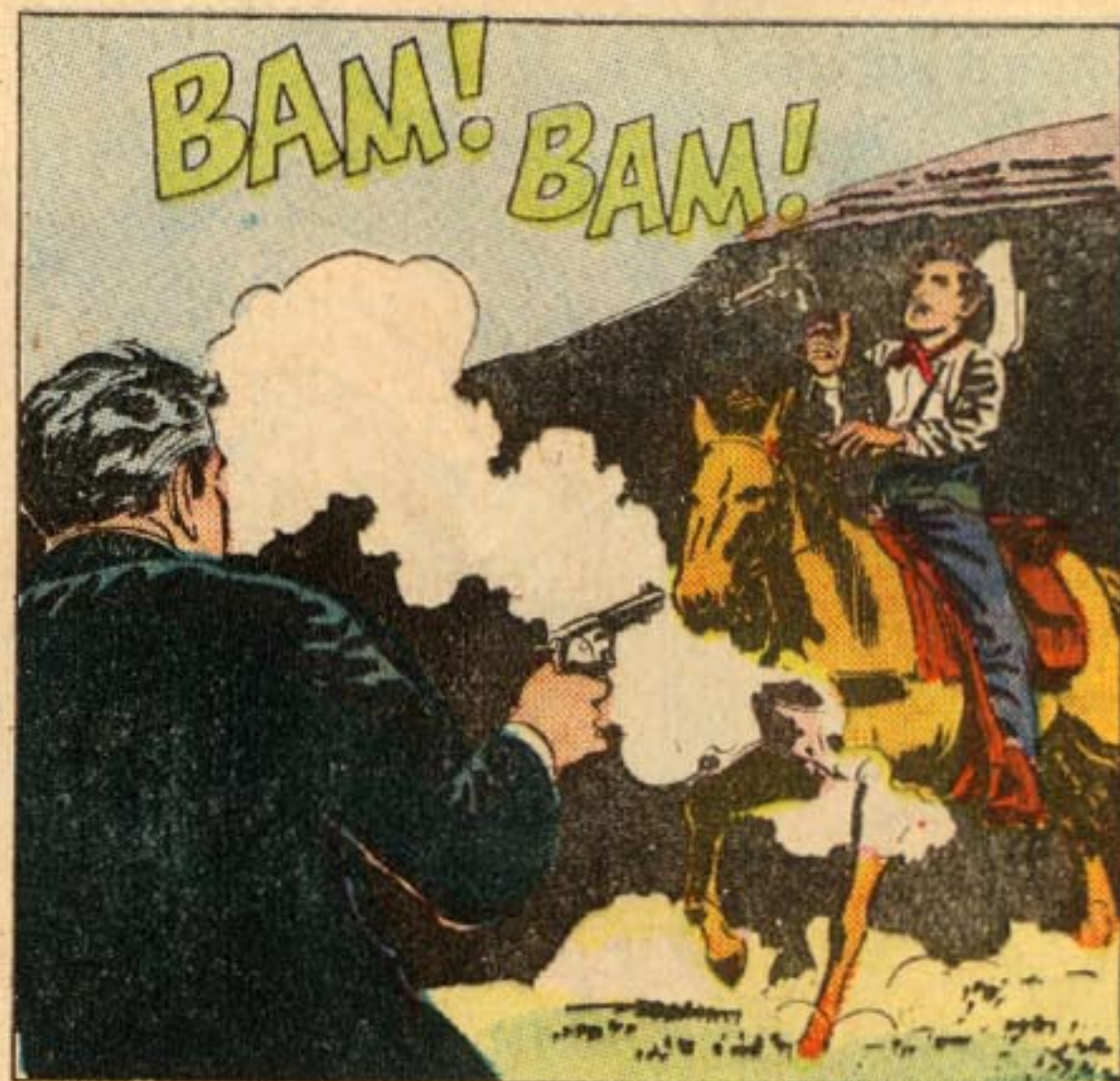
YES— A WHIFF OF CHLOROFORM WOULD HELP A LOT! JUST A LITTLE OF IT!

MMMMMH!



YOU'LL HAVE TO HELP ME WITH IT, LIZA! COME HERE!





"Softspoken" Smith

THE NEXT DANCE

AT A COW-TOWN DANCE, LOVELY JULIA HALE CONFIDES HER TROUBLE TO SOFTSPOKEN SMITH.

UNCLE SAM, I WONDER IF JIM MAYNARD WILL **EVER** GET UP THE COURAGE TO ASK ME TO MARRY HIM! I DON'T MEAN THAT HE HASN'T GOT **FIGHTING** COURAGE — BECAUSE HE HAS PLENTY OF THAT! BUT — OH **YOU** KNOW!

UH-HUH! I KNOW, JULIA!



A BLACKSMITH LIKE ME CAN WELD IRON — BUT NOT **HEARTS**!

YOU COULD — IF YOU GOT THEM **HOT** ENOUGH! — SHH! HERE'S JIM!



BY YINGO! THERE BEN A GIRL LIKE I BEN LOOKING FOR!



"BULL" BRONSON — DRIPPING WET AND TRACKING MUD ON THE DANCE FLOOR! JUST LIKE HIM! HE'S PRIMED FOR TROUBLE, SMITH!

PRIMED AND COCKED, JOE!

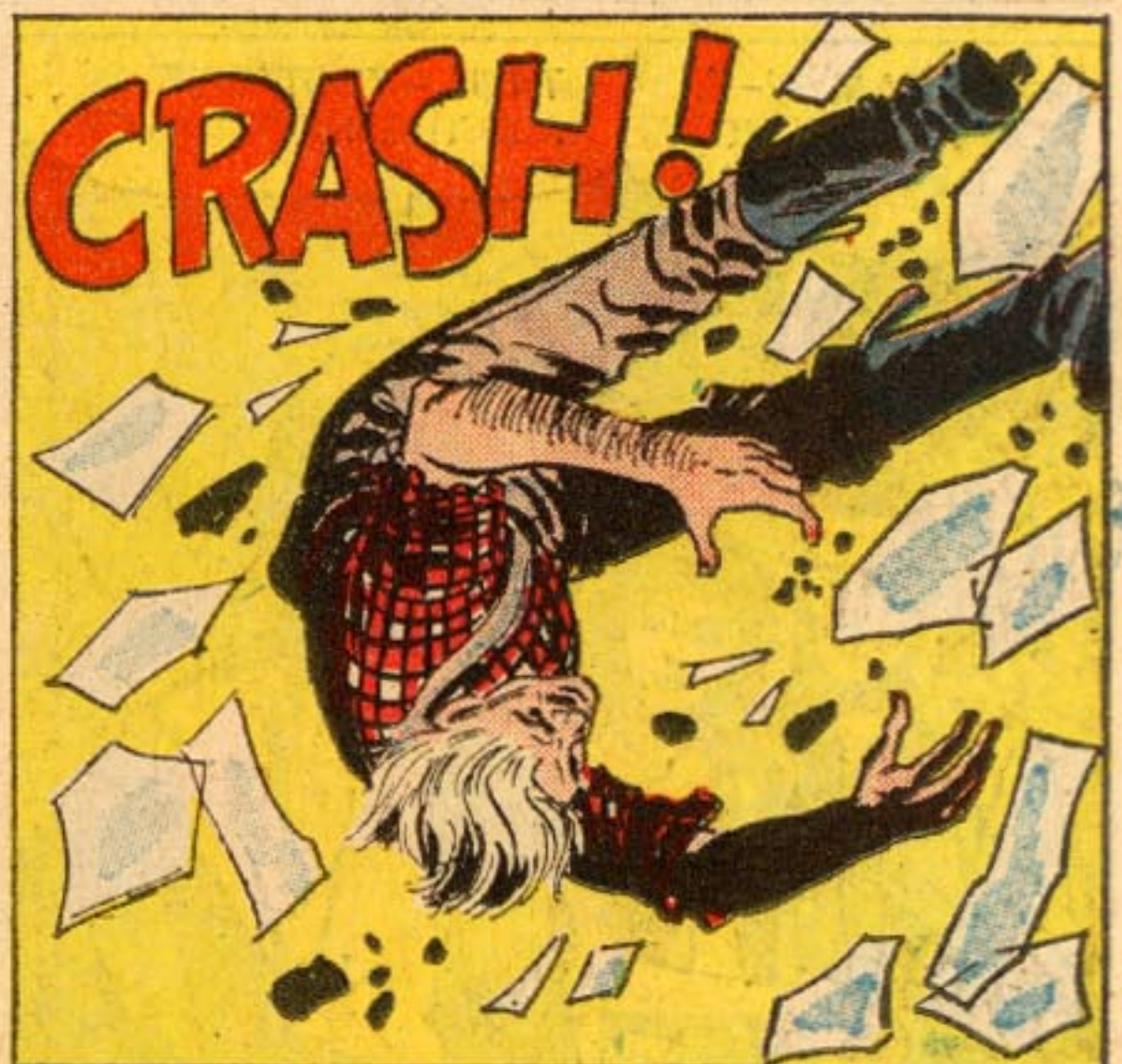
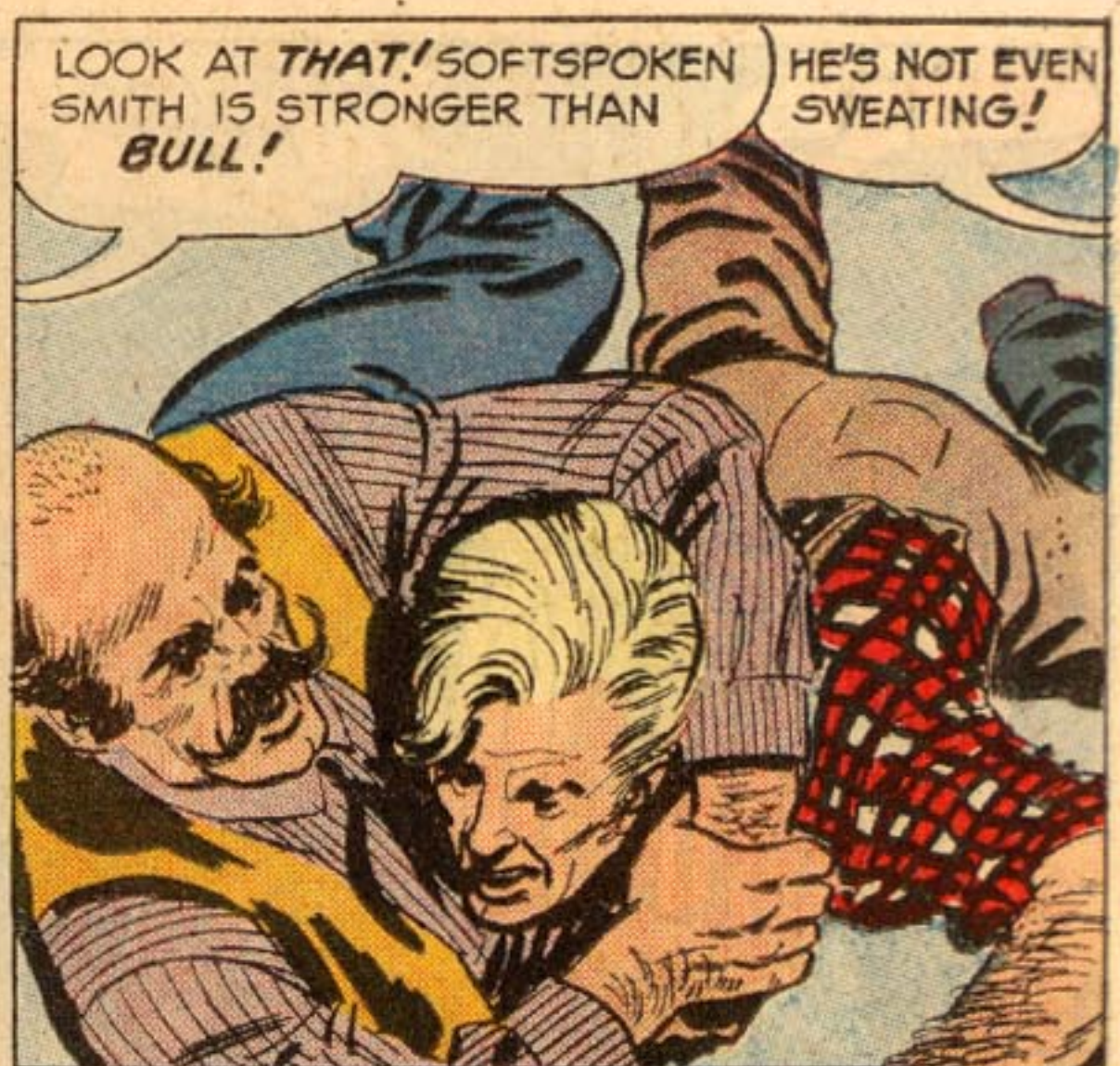
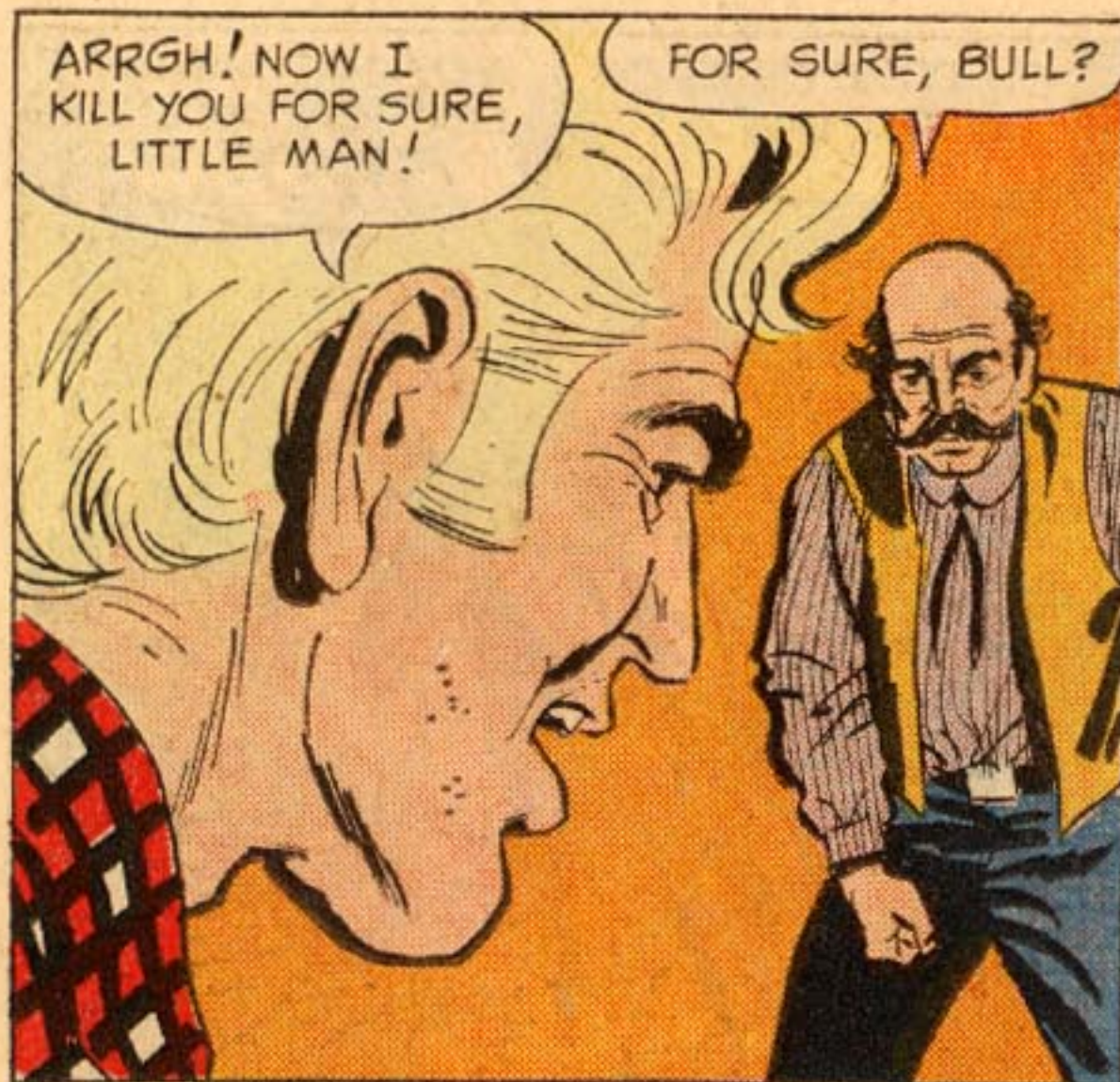


THIS BEN **MY** DANCE, LITTLE MAN!

YOU LOCO STEER!









HAW, HAW,
HAW!

OH, COME ON BACK
TO THE DANCE!

NO! ONE THROW
LIKE THAT BEN
PLENTY!



UNCLE SAM, I-I
DON'T KNOW HOW
TO THANK YOU!

THEN—JUST GIVE
ME THE NEXT DANCE!

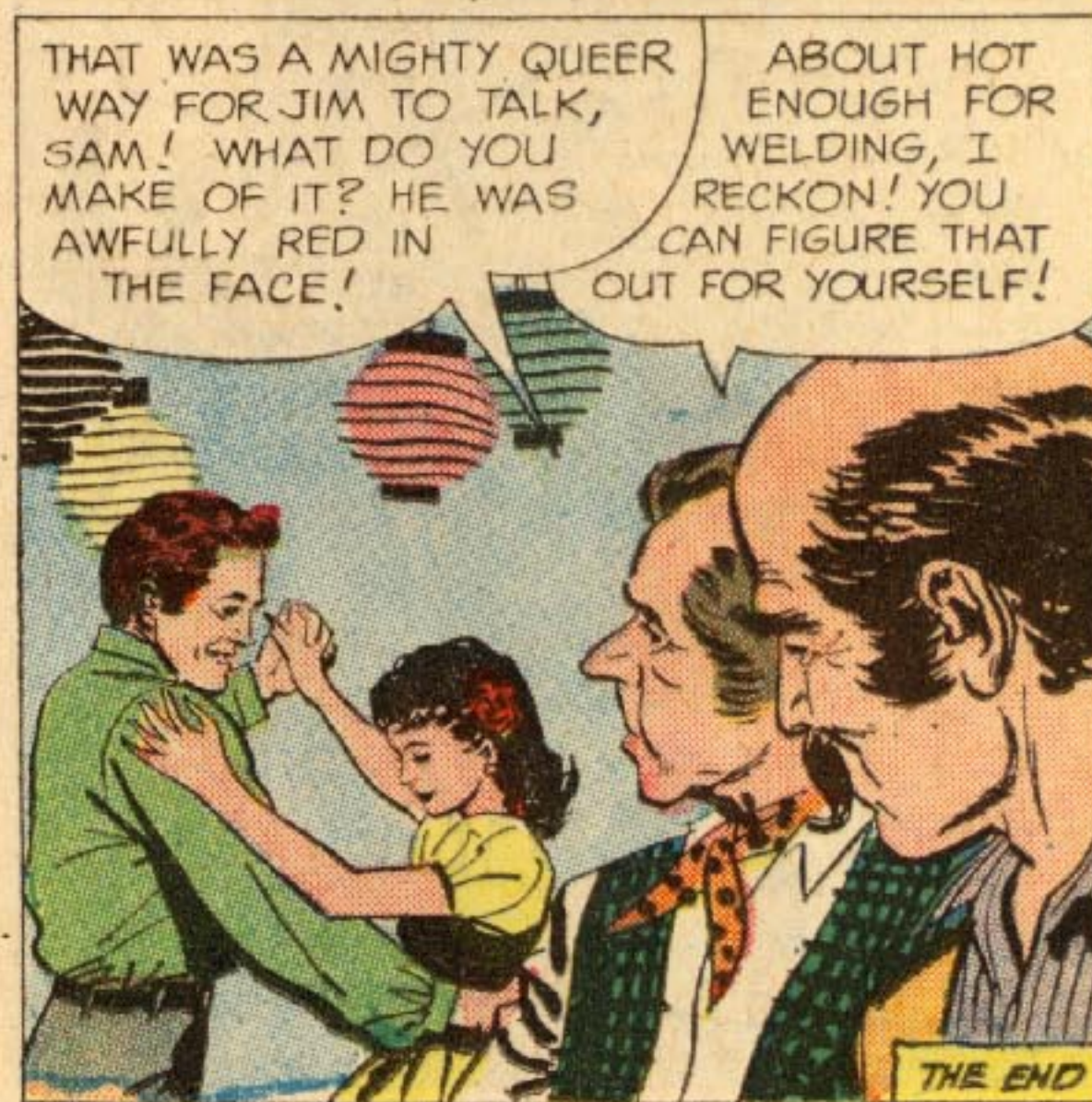


NO, SAM! THE NEXT DANCE
IS *MINE*—IF I HAVE TO
GET THROWN THROUGH
TWO HITCHING RAILS
TO GET IT!

YOU'VE GOT A
REASON, JIM?
JULIA'S NOT
WEARING YOUR
BRAND!



THE REASON IS—I'M
NOT WAITING ANY
LONGER! THAT'S ALL,
SAM! YOU CAN HAVE
THE *NEXT* DANCE!

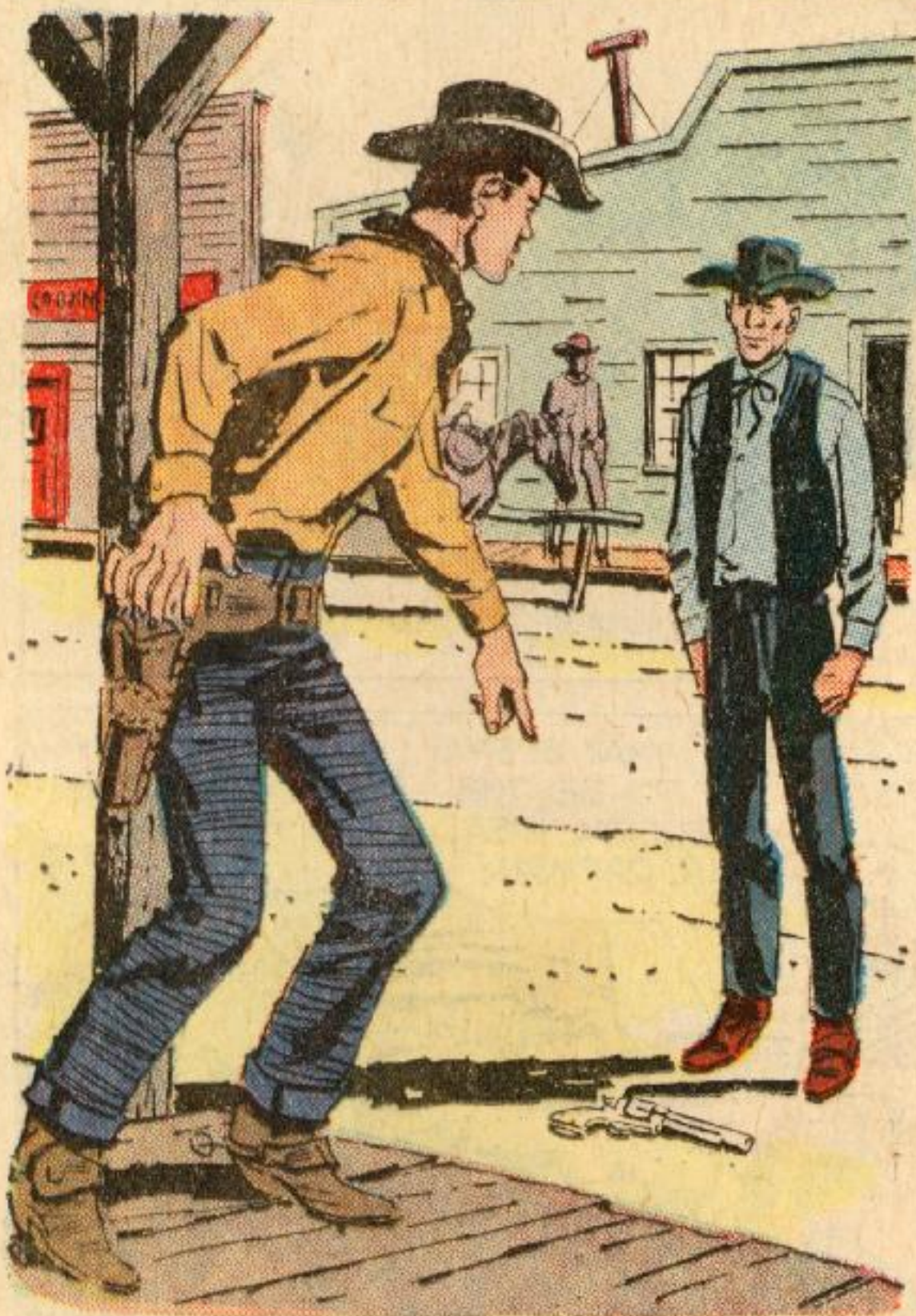


THAT WAS A MIGHTY QUEER
WAY FOR JIM TO TALK,
SAM! WHAT DO YOU
MAKE OF IT? HE WAS
AWFULLY RED IN
THE FACE!

ABOUT HOT
ENOUGH FOR
WELDING, I
RECKON! YOU
CAN FIGURE THAT
OUT FOR YOURSELF!

THE END

a man of PEACE



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The man who rode slowly into town on that still summer day carried no gun. He was middle-aged and his face had a lean hardness, but his years set on him lightly. He rode tall in the saddle, with every movement an easy flow of muscle.

His glance ranged ahead of him as he rode, searching out the sun-bleached buildings of the town with an intensity that seemed odd. It was only another trail-side town with its handful of saloons and mercantile houses, yet this man's curiously eager glance appraised it as though it were the last abiding place of man on earth.

"Lookin' for somethin', jasper?"

The words came tersely from the mouth of a young man in cowboy garb who stepped out from a group of loungers in front of the Gold Strike Saloon.

"That's right, boy," the older man said. "I'm looking for something." He stopped his horse and dismounted.

"Lookin' for what?" the youngster demanded. He wore two guns, hung low, and his thumbs were stuck in his belt with an ease of manner that said he knew how to use them. "Lookin' for what?"

"For myself," the older man told him.

"That's a loco answer." The young man's eyes narrowed. "Don't I know you?"

"Do you?"

"The Pimo Kid!"

"That's right."

"I saw you kill a man at Rhiolite."

"He drew first—"

"A mistake I won't make." The youngster went into a gun-crouch. "Go ahead, Pimo. You draw first."

"I'm not carrying a gun," the Pimo Kid said. His voice was tired and his face looked older.

The young man sneered. "You're getting old, Pimo, losing your gun. Here, use one of mine." The youngster tossed a gun at Pimo. It fell at his feet in the dust. "Pick it up."

"I don't live by the gun any more," Pimo said.

"I do," the younger man said.

"Are you a glory-gunner, boy?"

"You could call it that. I think I can beat you. If I do I've beaten the best. Then I'll be the best. Pick up the gun."

"No."

"Then I'll make you." The youngster moved in with a truculent swagger.

Swiftly he lifted his six-shooter to gun-whip the Pimo Kid. That was his last mistake. The Kid stepped inside the vicious slash of the gun barrel, and doubled the young man with a fist to his stomach, then lifted him on his heels with one to his jaw.

He followed it up with a punch that put the young man on his back in the dust. Pimo stepped on his wrist as he would on a rattler, removed the gun from his hand and tossed it between two wooden buildings.

"There's lots of ways to fight, boy," Pimo said, "if that's what you want. You don't have to do it with guns. Now stand aside for a man of peace."

The Pimo Kid got on his horse and rode slowly down the street.

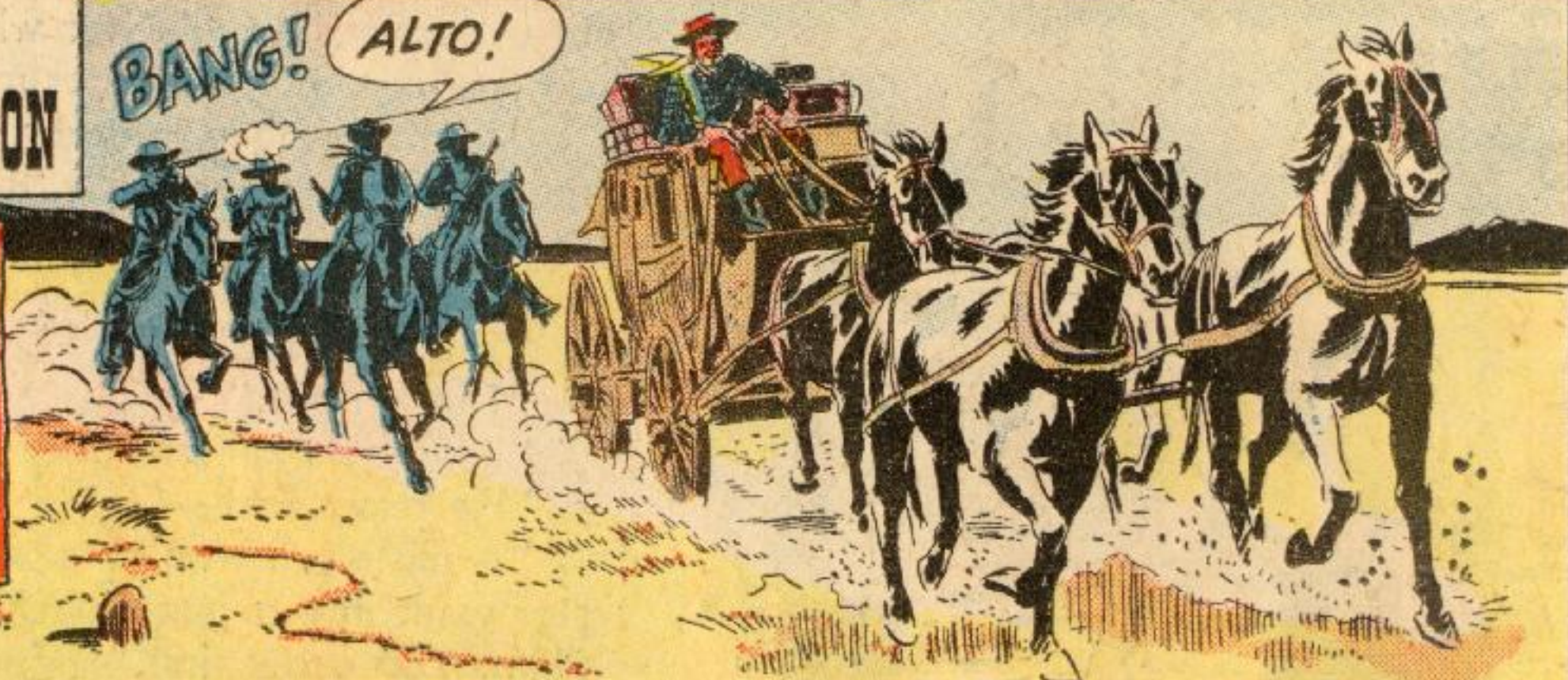


BAT MASTERSON

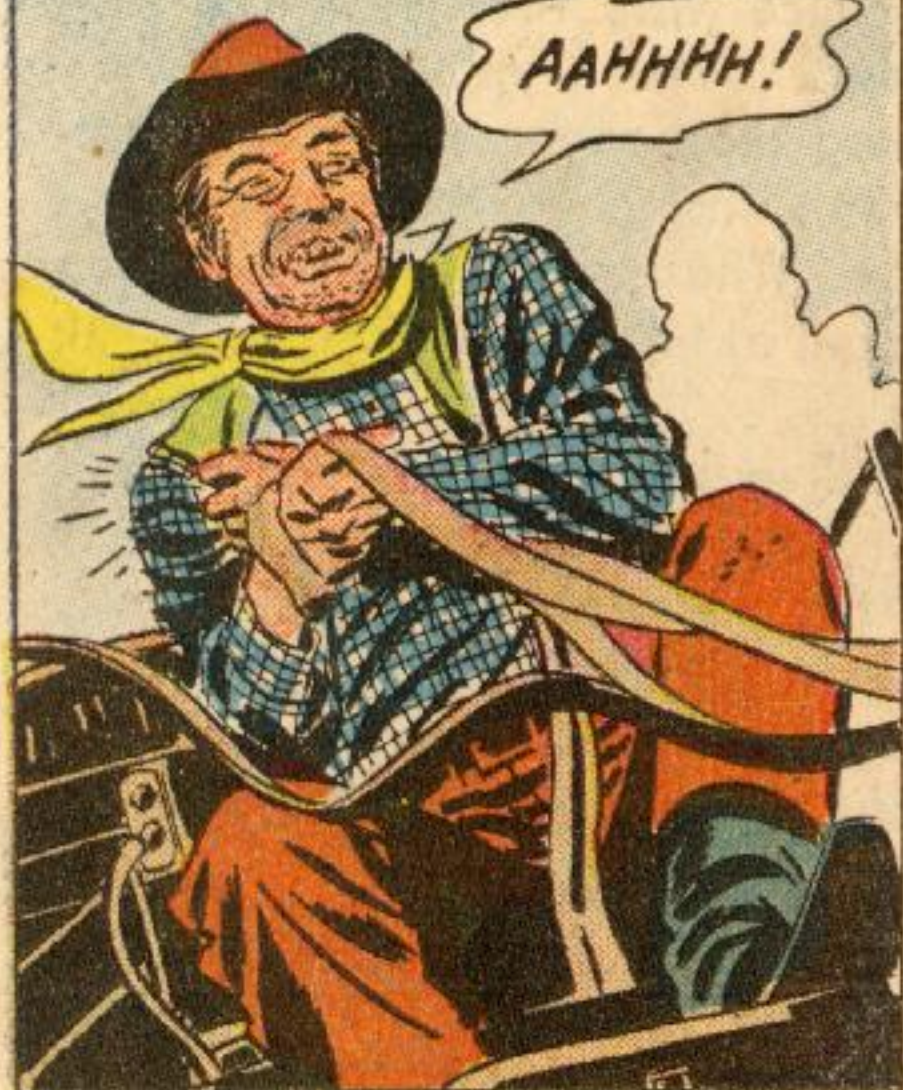
SIDE-SADDLE BANDIT

BANG! ALTO!

NEARING THE TOWN OF GYPSUM SPRINGS, THE MORNING STAGE RUNS INTO TROUBLE...



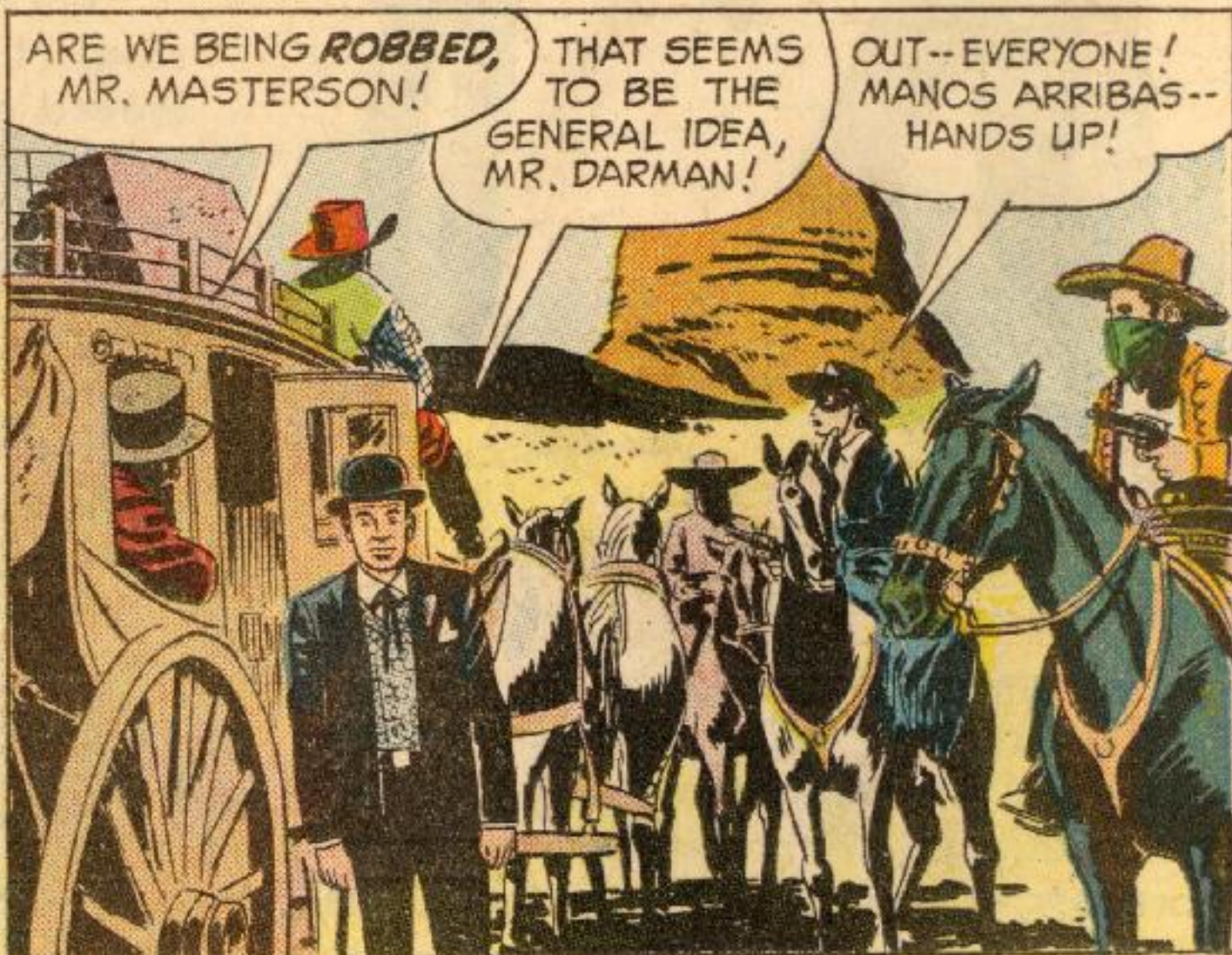
AAHHHH!



ARE WE BEING *ROBBED*, MR. MASTERSON!

THAT SEEMS TO BE THE GENERAL IDEA, MR. DARMAN!

OUT--EVERYONE! MANOS ARRIBAS-- HANDS UP!



THE MONEY BOX-- KICK IT DOWN, HOMBRE!

UH--ALL RIGHT-- IF I CAN!

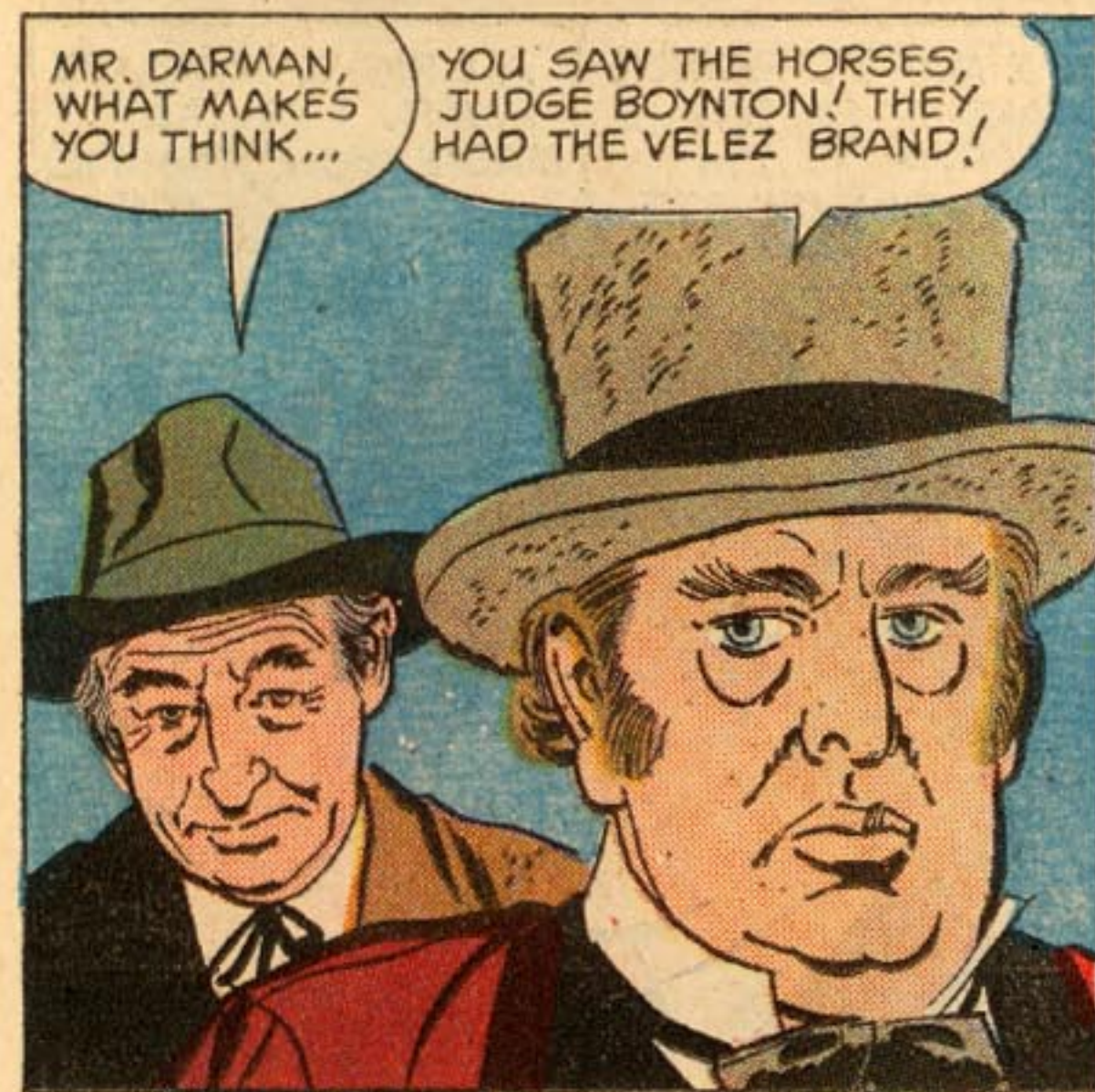


THERE IT IS!

CABRON! BOBO!



CLUNK!





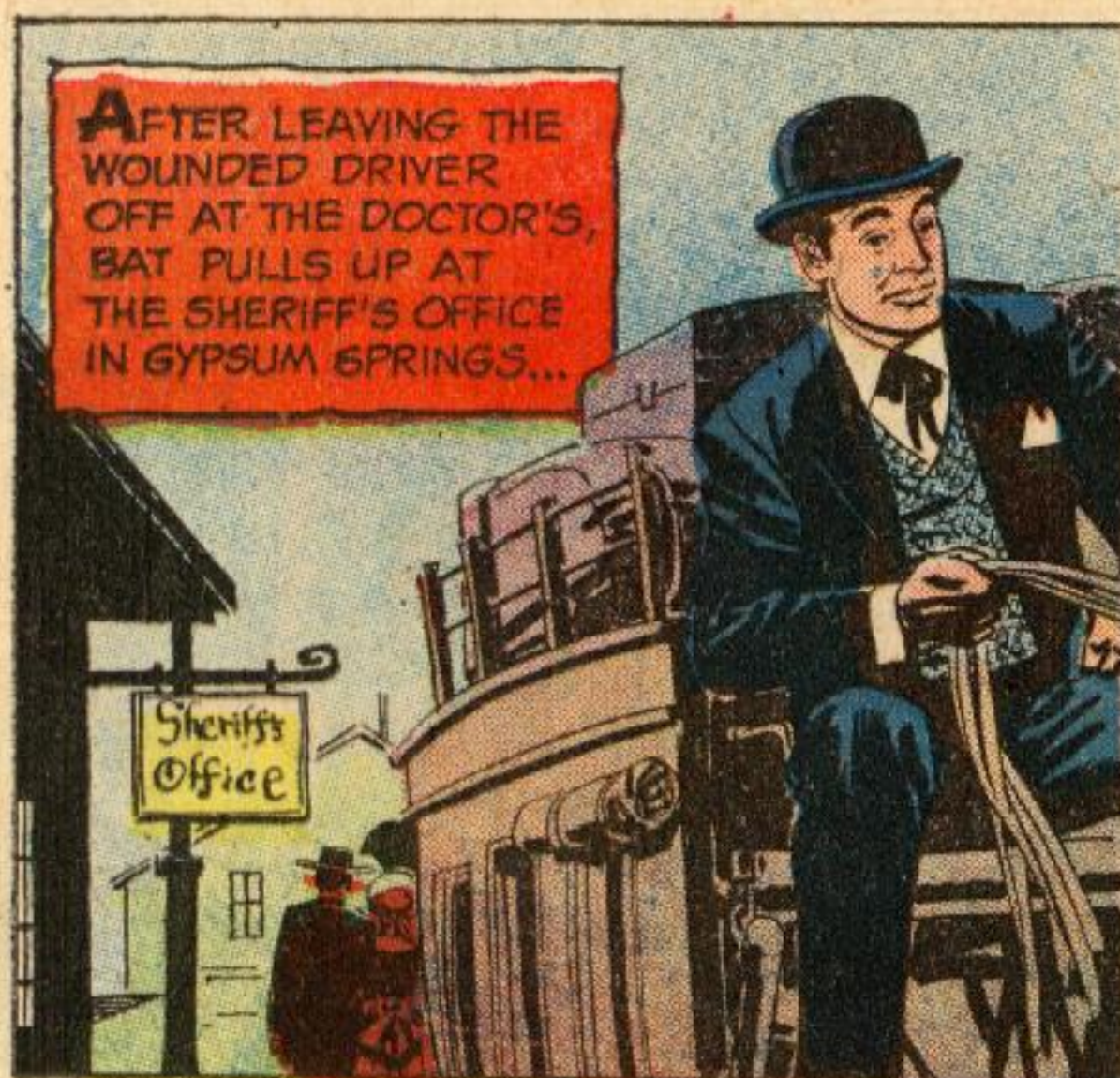
YOUR ARM? I CAN STOP THE BLEEDING TILL WE GET TO TOWN!

THANKS! YOU'LL HAVE TO DRIVE, TOO, MR. MASTERSON!

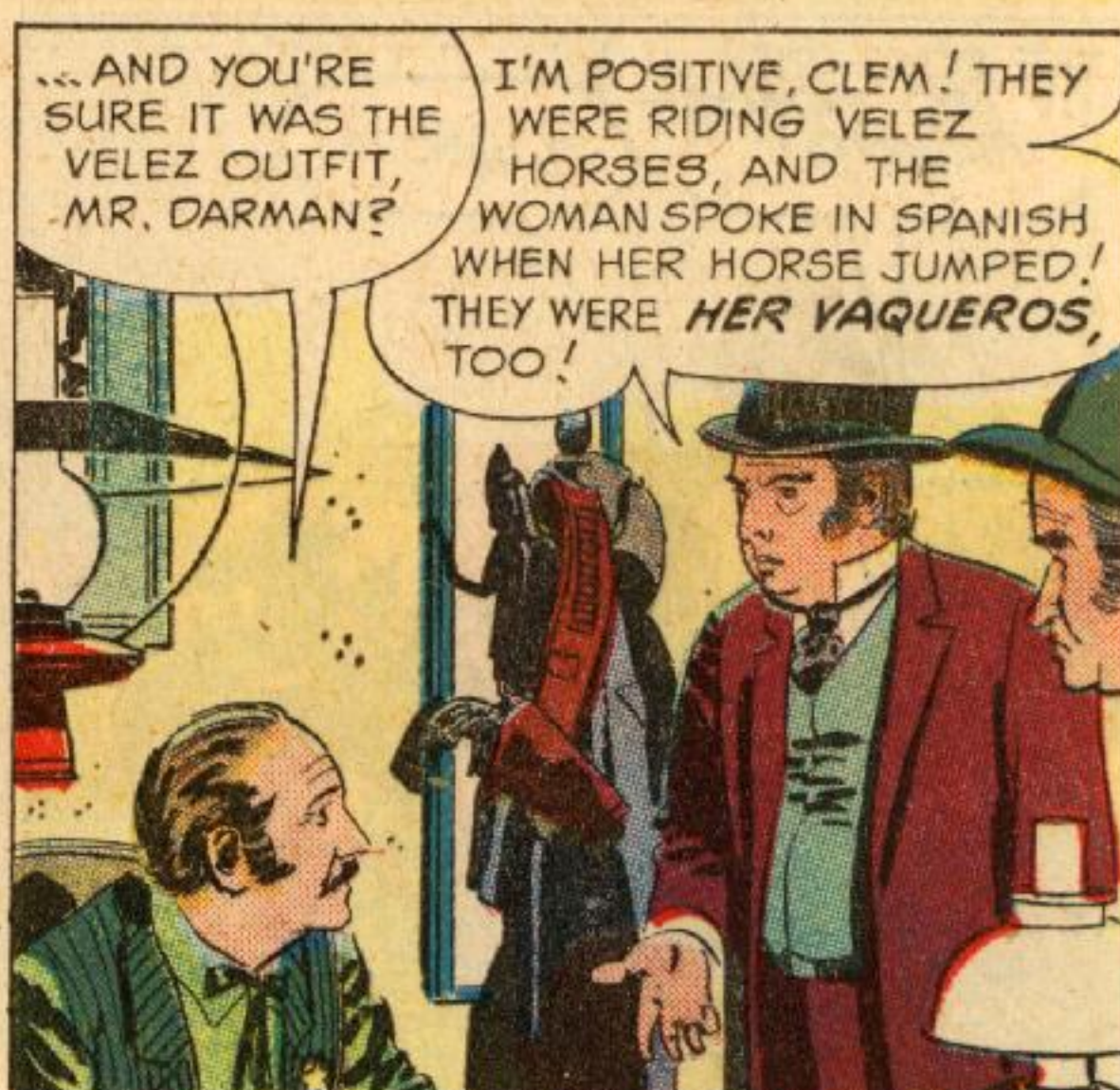


DID YOU RECOGNIZE THE BRAND ON THOSE HORSES?

IT'S THE VELEZ BRAND, LIKE MR. DARMAN SAYS! I'VE HEARD MARIA VELEZ WAS BROKE, BUT I NEVER THOUGHT **HER** KIND WOULD TURN STAGE ROBBER! PROUD OLD SPANISH FAMILY!



AFTER LEAVING THE WOUNDED DRIVER OFF AT THE DOCTOR'S, BAT PULLS UP AT THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN GYPSUM SPRINGS...



...AND YOU'RE SURE IT WAS THE VELEZ OUTFIT, MR. DARMAN?

I'M POSITIVE, CLEM! THEY WERE RIDING VELEZ HORSES, AND THE WOMAN SPOKE IN SPANISH WHEN HER HORSE JUMPED! THEY WERE **HER VAQUEROS**, TOO!



NOW SEE HERE! THEY ALL WORE MASKS! IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO RECOGNIZE ANYONE! AND I'M SURE MARIA VELEZ WOULD NEVER--

JUDGE BOYNTON, I'M NOT ACCUSING ANYBODY... YET!



IF I MAY, I'D RATHER MAKE MY REPORT IN PRIVATE! I'M HERE ON BUSINESS I DON'T WANT GENERALLY KNOWN!

ALL RIGHT, MR. MASTERSON!

YOU'RE JUST WASTING TIME, CLEM! GET OUT THERE AND ARREST HER!

I'M EMPLOYED BY THE RAILROAD WHICH IS BUILDING OUT THIS WAY... TO SIZE UP THE ATTITUDE OF THE LAND OWNERS! NATURALLY...

NATURALLY, YOU DON'T WANT IT PUBLISHED YET! NOW, WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO REPORT ABOUT THE ROBBERY?



FIRST, THE BRANDS ON THE HORSES WERE PUT ON WITH BURNT CORK OR SOMETHING THAT **SMEARED!** SECOND, THE WOMAN BANDIT WASN'T USED TO RIDING A HORSE! THIRD, SHE SPOKE ENGLISH WITH A HEAVY ACCENT!



IF YOU'RE RIGHT, SHE **WASN'T** MARIA VELEZ! SHE HAS RIDDEN A HORSE SINCE SHE COULD WALK AND SHE SPEAKS **PERFECT** ENGLISH! STILL, I'D BETTER RIDE OUT THERE AND HAVE A LOOK AROUND!

YOU DON'T MIND IF I COME ALONG?



WE'RE ON VELEZ LAND NOW! SHE'LL BE THE LARGEST OWNER YOU'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH IF THE RAILROAD COMES THROUGH GYPSUM SPRING!



...AND YOU THINK MY MEN AND I ROBBED A STAGECOACH, SHERIFF?

THE LAW DOESN'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS, SEÑORA VELEZ! IT TRIES TO FIND FACTS! THAT'S WHY I'D LIKE TO TAKE A LOOK AROUND!



I'LL HAVE ONE OF MY MEN ACCOMPANY YOU, SHERIFF!

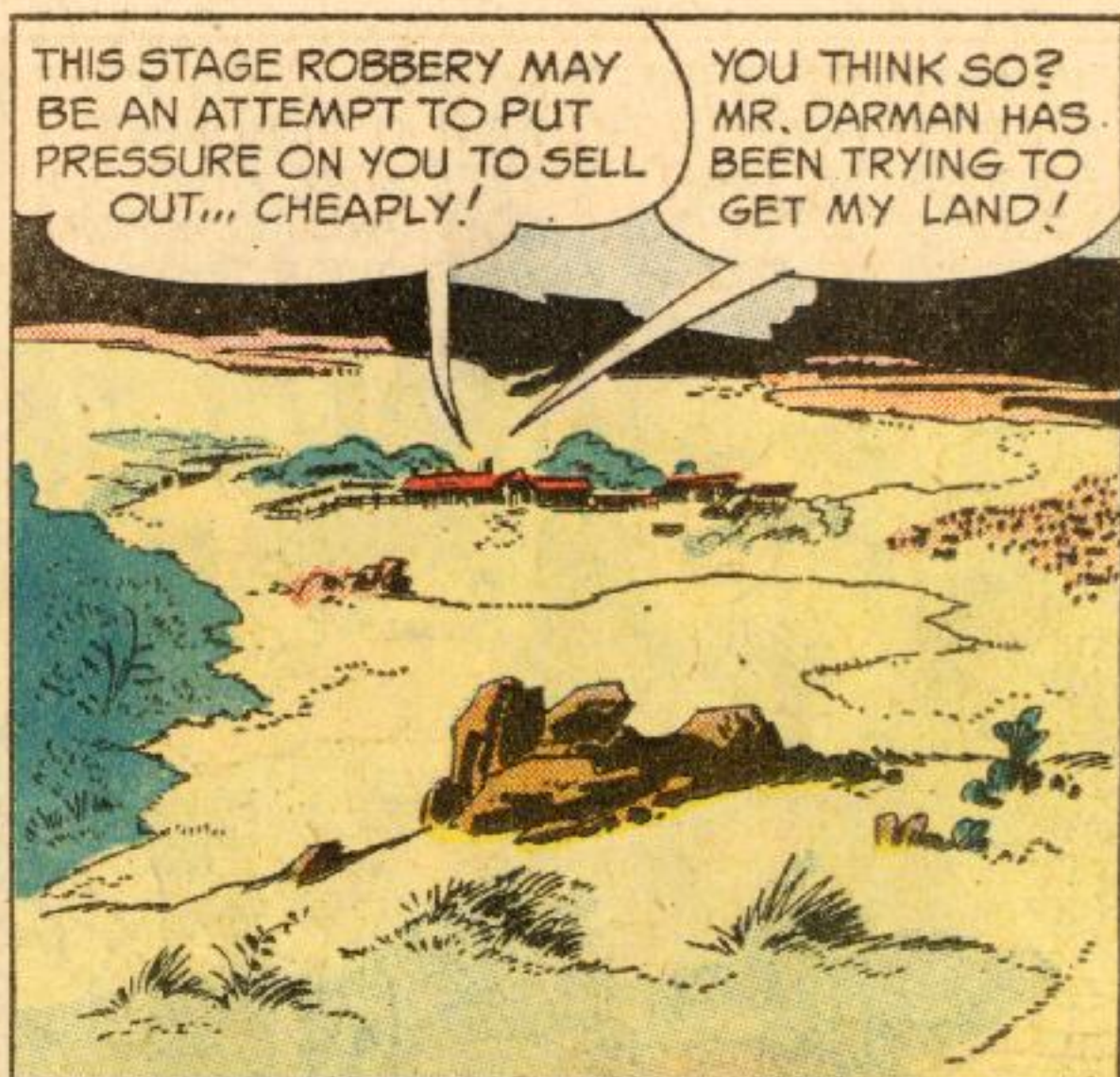
IF IT'S ANY CONSOLATION TO YOU, SEÑORA, I **DON'T** THINK YOU HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT!





I REPRESENT THE NEW RAILROAD WHICH MAY SOME DAY COME TO GYPSUM SPRINGS, SEÑORA... THAT IS, IF WE CAN PURCHASE A RIGHT-OF-WAY THROUGH YOUR PROPERTY!

I SEE! THE RAILROAD WOULD MEAN PROSPERITY FOR THIS COUNTRY! YES, I WOULD SELL A RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR ANY REASONABLE PRICE!



THIS STAGE ROBBERY MAY BE AN ATTEMPT TO PUT PRESSURE ON YOU TO SELL OUT... CHEAPLY!

YOU THINK SO? MR. DARMAN HAS BEEN TRYING TO GET MY LAND!



CASE DARMAN?

YES, HIS BANK HELD A MORTGAGE ON RANCHO VELEZ! WHEN I REFUSED TO SELL IT TO HIM HE THREATENED TO FORECLOSE! I GATHERED MY CATTLE TO PAY HIM OFF, AND THEN...



AND THEN, SEÑORA?

THAT NIGHT CATTLE THIEVES ATTACKED! BUT MY LOYAL **Vaqueros** DROVE THEM OFF! THE RANCHO VELEZ OWES NOBODY NOW, BUT...



...IT COSTS SO MUCH TO KEEP THE RANCH GOING, I MAY HAVE TO GO INTO DEBT AGAIN. SO FAR I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PAY THE VAQUEROS REGULARLY! SOON THEIR LOYALTY MAY BE TESTED AGAIN...

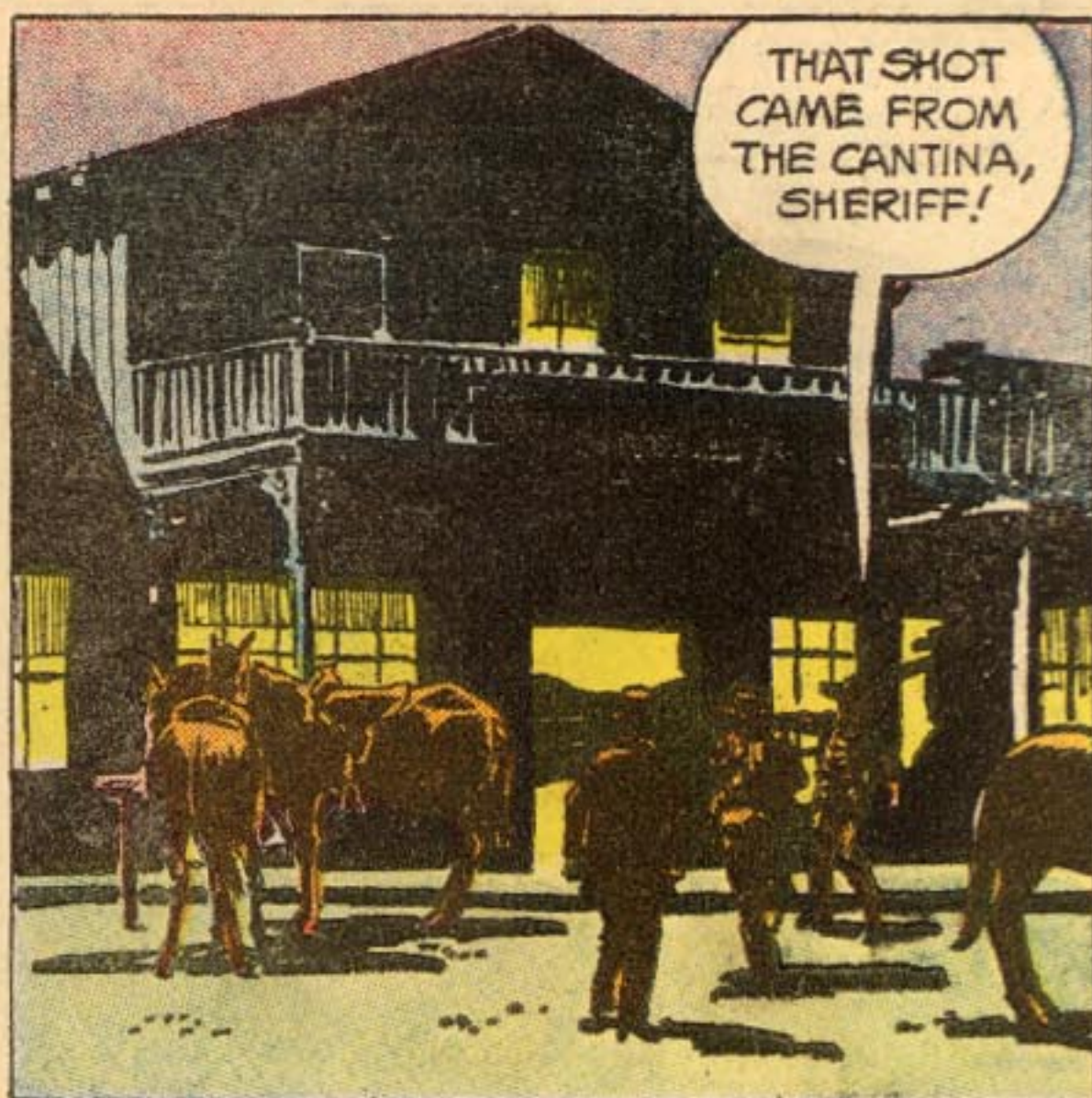
THE MONEY FOR THE RIGHT-OF-WAY WILL SOLVE ALL THAT!

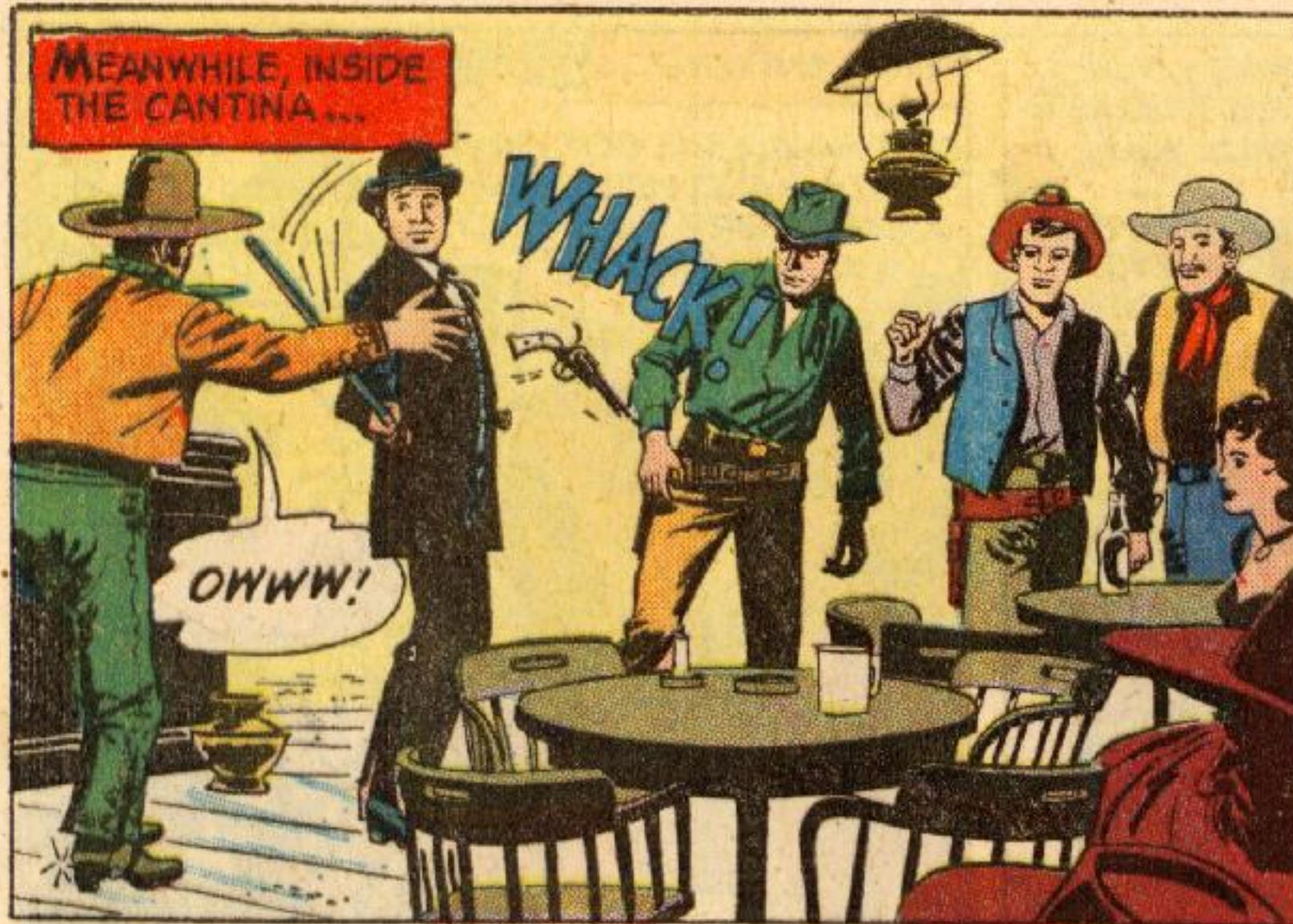


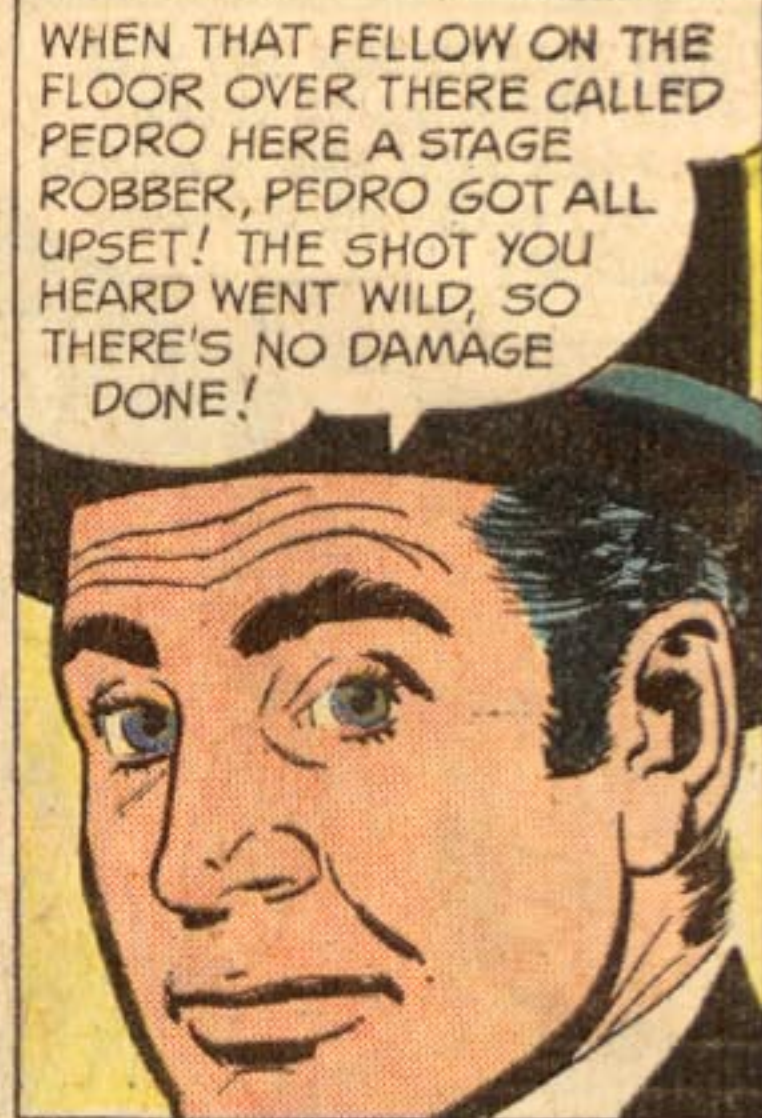
I FOUND THIS IN ONE OF THE OUTBUILDINGS! IT'S THE **EXPRESS BOX** TAKEN FROM THE STAGE THIS MORNING! **EMPTY!**

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

NOTHING, SEÑORA! IT PROVES NOTHING!







WHEN THAT FELLOW ON THE FLOOR OVER THERE CALLED PEDRO HERE A STAGE ROBBER, PEDRO GOT ALL UPSET! THE SHOT YOU HEARD WENT WILD, SO THERE'S NO DAMAGE DONE!



NO DAMAGE, EH? I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO LOCK PEDRO UP FOR CREATING A DISTURBANCE!

SEÑOR SHERIFF...



SEÑOR SHERIFF, YOU OUGHT TO KNOW THAT PEDRO WAS SPENDING DINERO LIKE A MAN OF WEALTH!

THANKS LUCIA! THAT MAY MEAN SOMETHING!

WHAT IS THERE ABOUT THAT WOMAN THAT SEEMS SO FAMILIAR?



SI, SEÑOR SHERIFF, I HAD MUCH MONEY TO SPEND! SEÑORA VELEZ GAVE US OUR PAY ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO!

HUH! WHAT'S THIS?



PRETTY FANCY WATCH-- FOR A VAQUERO!

MY GOLD WATCH!

WELL, MASTERSON, DO YOU STILL THINK MARIA VELEZ AND HER MEN HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE STAGE HOLDUP?

PEDRO, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT WATCH?



I BOUGHT IT-- THIS EVENING -- FROM ONE OF THE NEW COWHANDS WHO JUST CAME TO TOWN!

A LIKELY STORY!

IT'S POSSIBLE, SHERIFF!

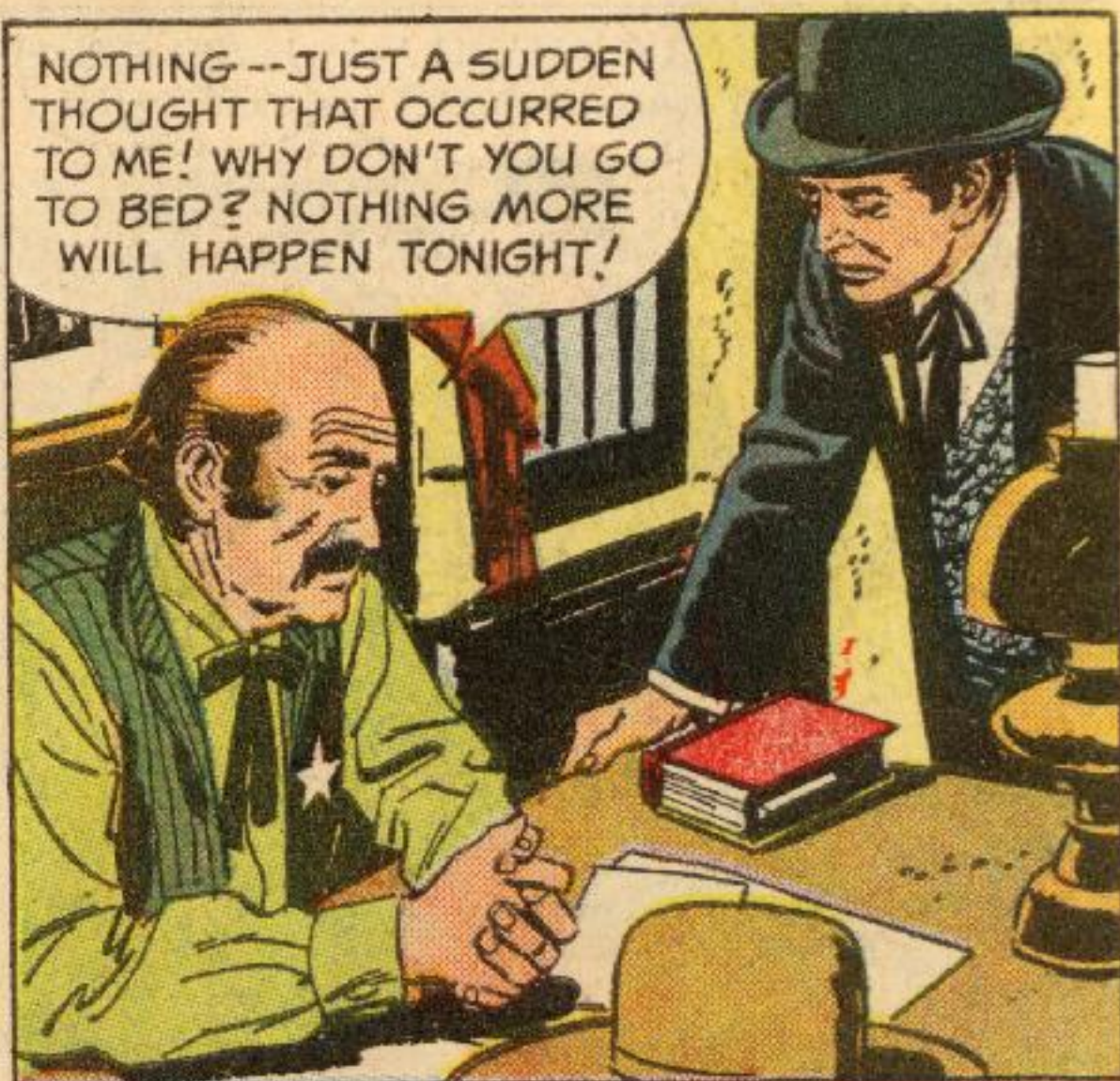


MASTERSON, YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO PROTECT MARIA VELEZ EVER SINCE YOU CAME HERE! IT WAS YOU WHO SAID THE WOMAN BANDIT WASN'T A GOOD RIDER! IT WAS YOU WHO NOTICED THAT THE BRANDS...

WHAT ABOUT THE BRANDS?



NOTHING--JUST A SUDDEN THOUGHT THAT OCCURRED TO ME! WHY DON'T YOU GO TO BED? NOTHING MORE WILL HAPPEN TONIGHT!



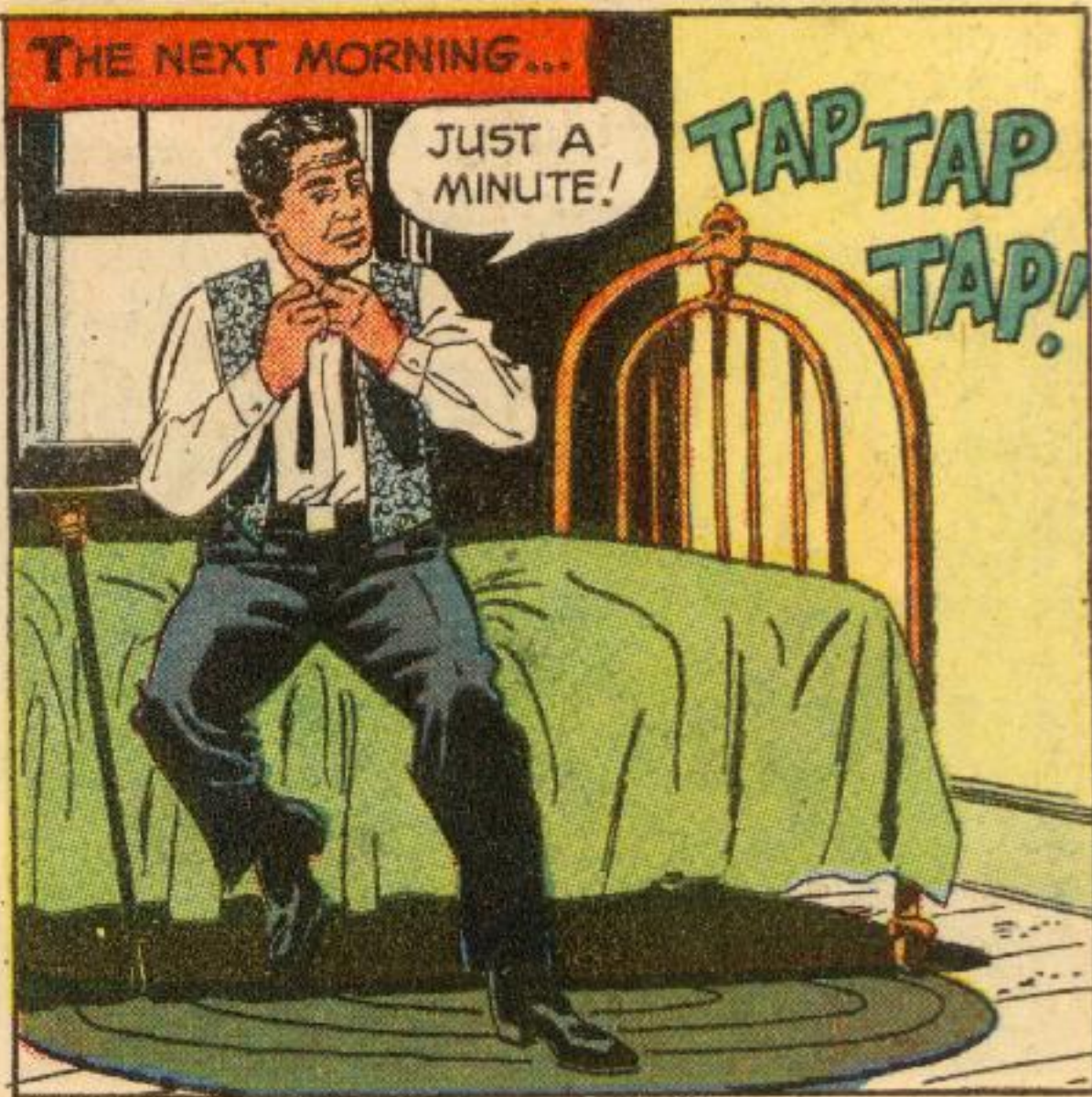
WHAT DID SHERIFF KERR MEAN ABOUT THE BRANDS? AND WHY DO I KEEP THINKING THERE'S SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT THE CANTINA SINGER? WELL, MAYBE IT WILL ALL SEEM CLEARER AFTER A NIGHT'S REST!



THE NEXT MORNING...

JUST A MINUTE!

TAP TAP TAP!



SEÑOR MASTERSON, LA SEÑORA VELEZ SENT ME TO TELL YOU THAT FOUR OF OUR HORSES WEARING THE VELEZ BRAND HAVE BEEN STOLEN! IT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT WHEN THE WIND COVERED THEIR TRACKS!

WE'D BETTER TELL THE SHERIFF!

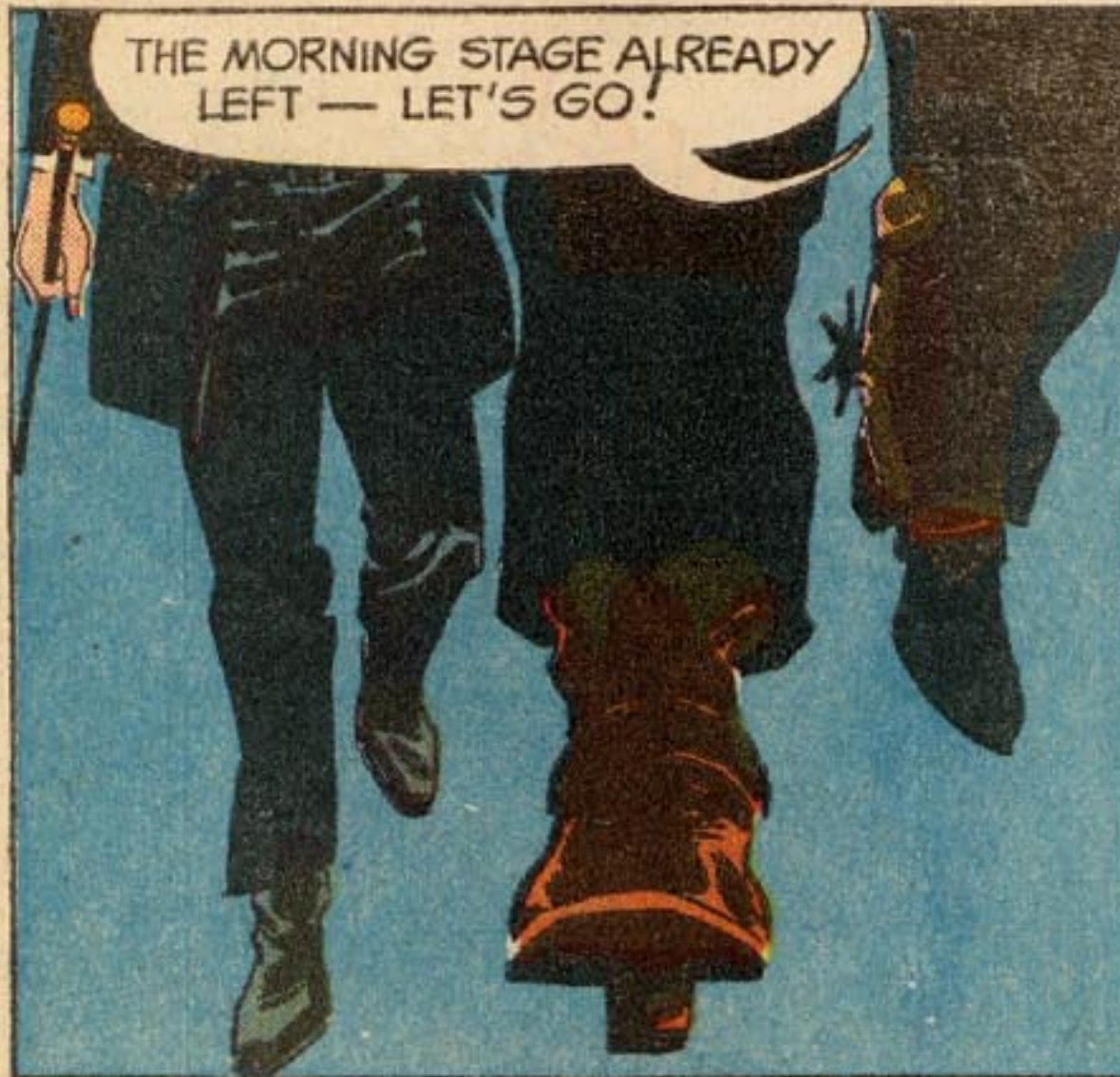


YOU SAY FOUR HORSES HAVE BEEN STOLEN, EH?

THAT'S RIGHT, SHERIFF, AND YOU CAN BET THEY'LL BE USED TO HOLD UP THE STAGE! WHEN DOES THE NEXT ONE LEAVE?



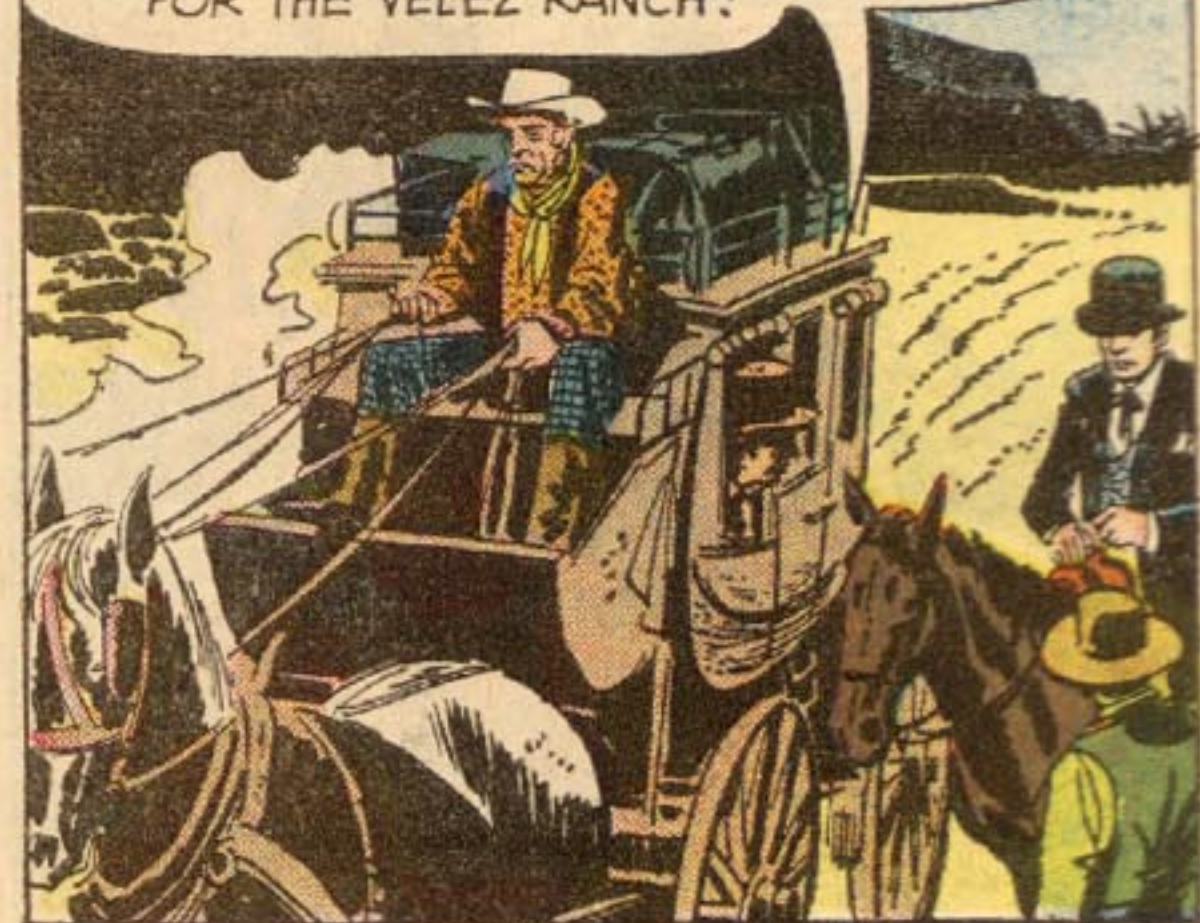
THE MORNING STAGE ALREADY LEFT — LET'S GO!

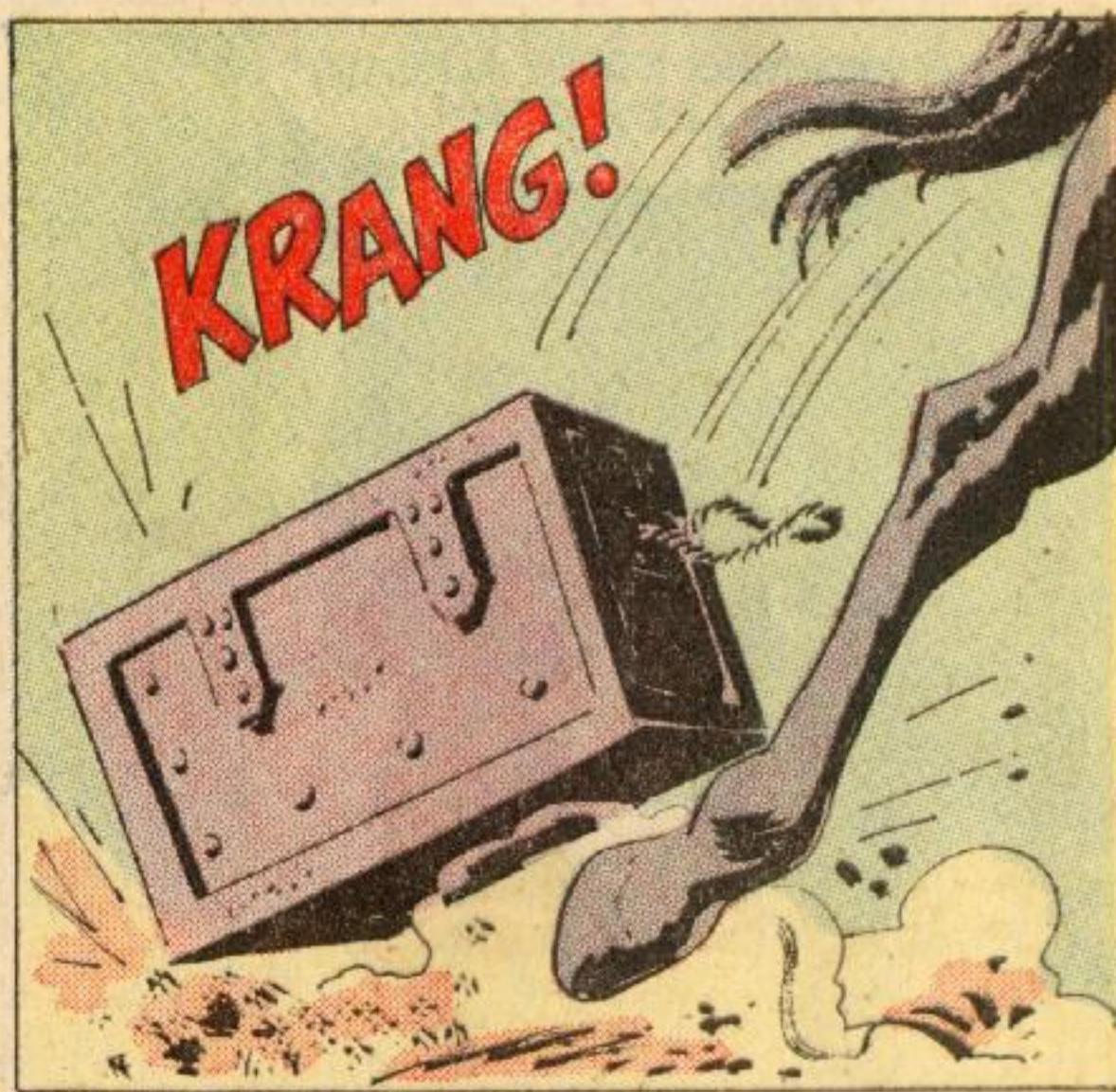


THE STAGE -- IT'S COMING BACK! LOOKS LIKE WE'RE TOO LATE!



ROBBED AGAIN! THREE MEN AND A WOMAN... ALL FOUR HORSES BORE THE VELEZ BRAND! THEY GOT AWAY WITH THIRTY THOUSAND IN THE MONEY BOX -- AND HEADED FOR THE VELEZ RANCH!

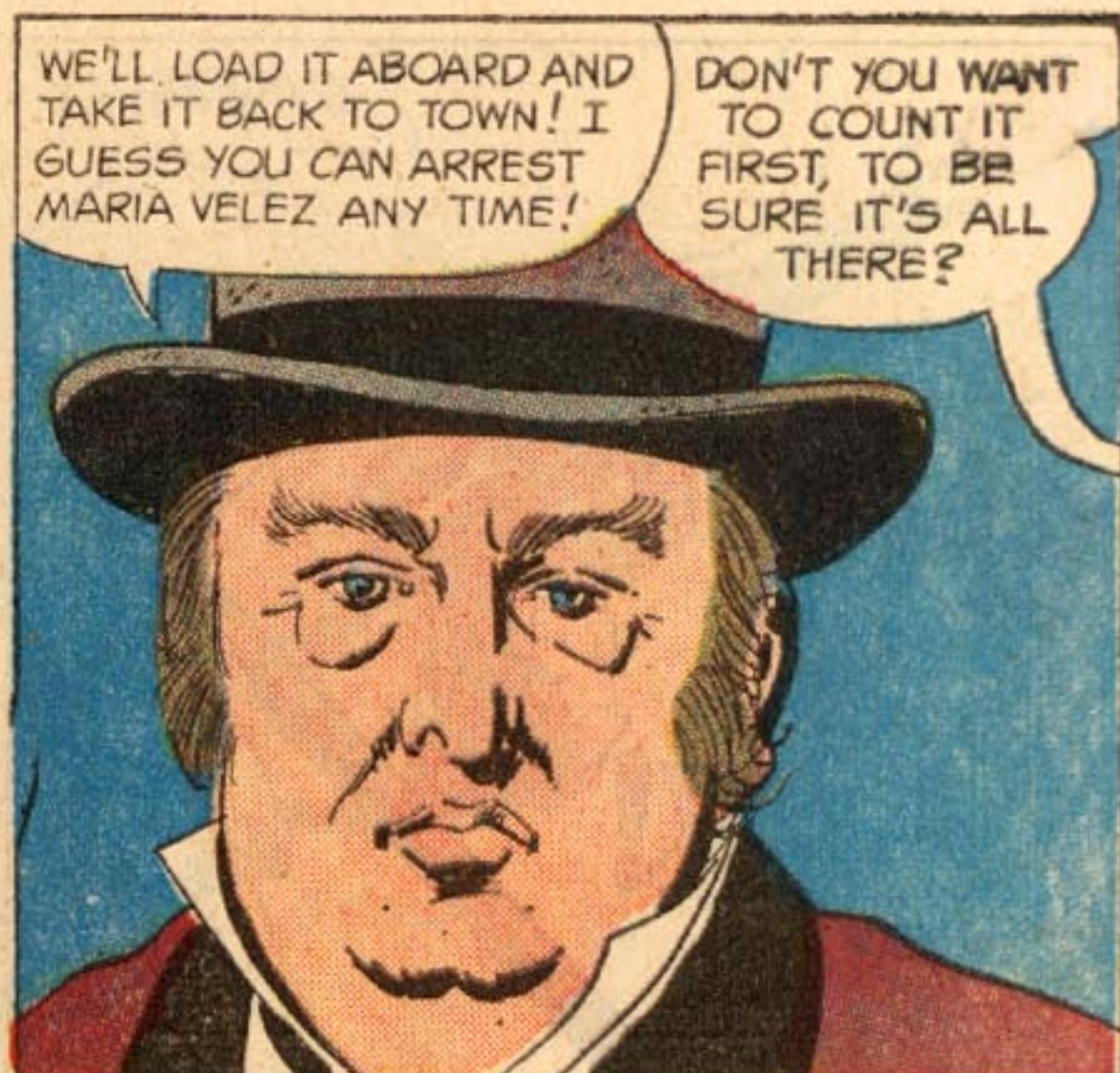






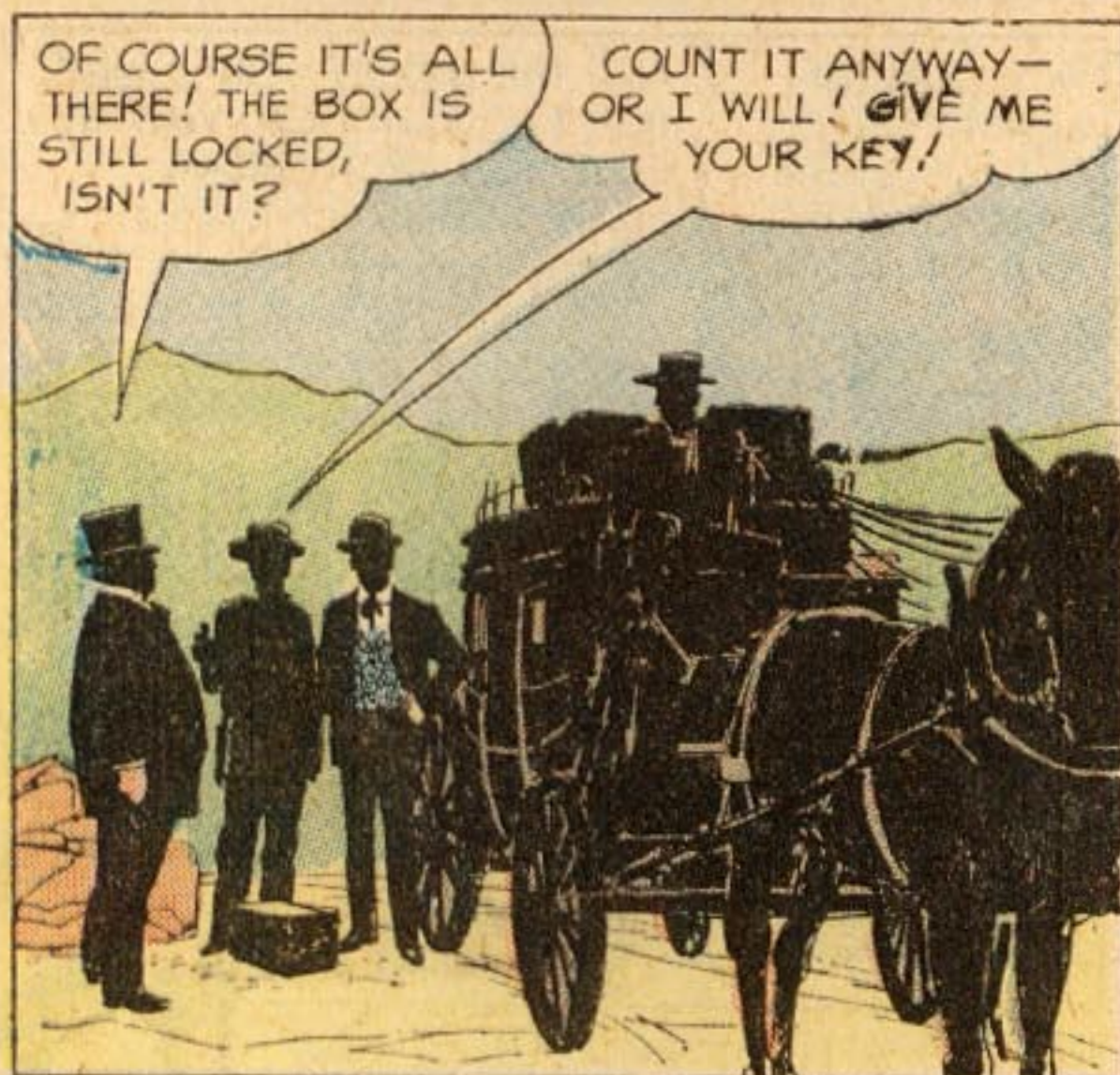
YOU LET THE VELEZ WOMAN GET AWAY?

YES, BUT WE RECOVERED YOUR THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!



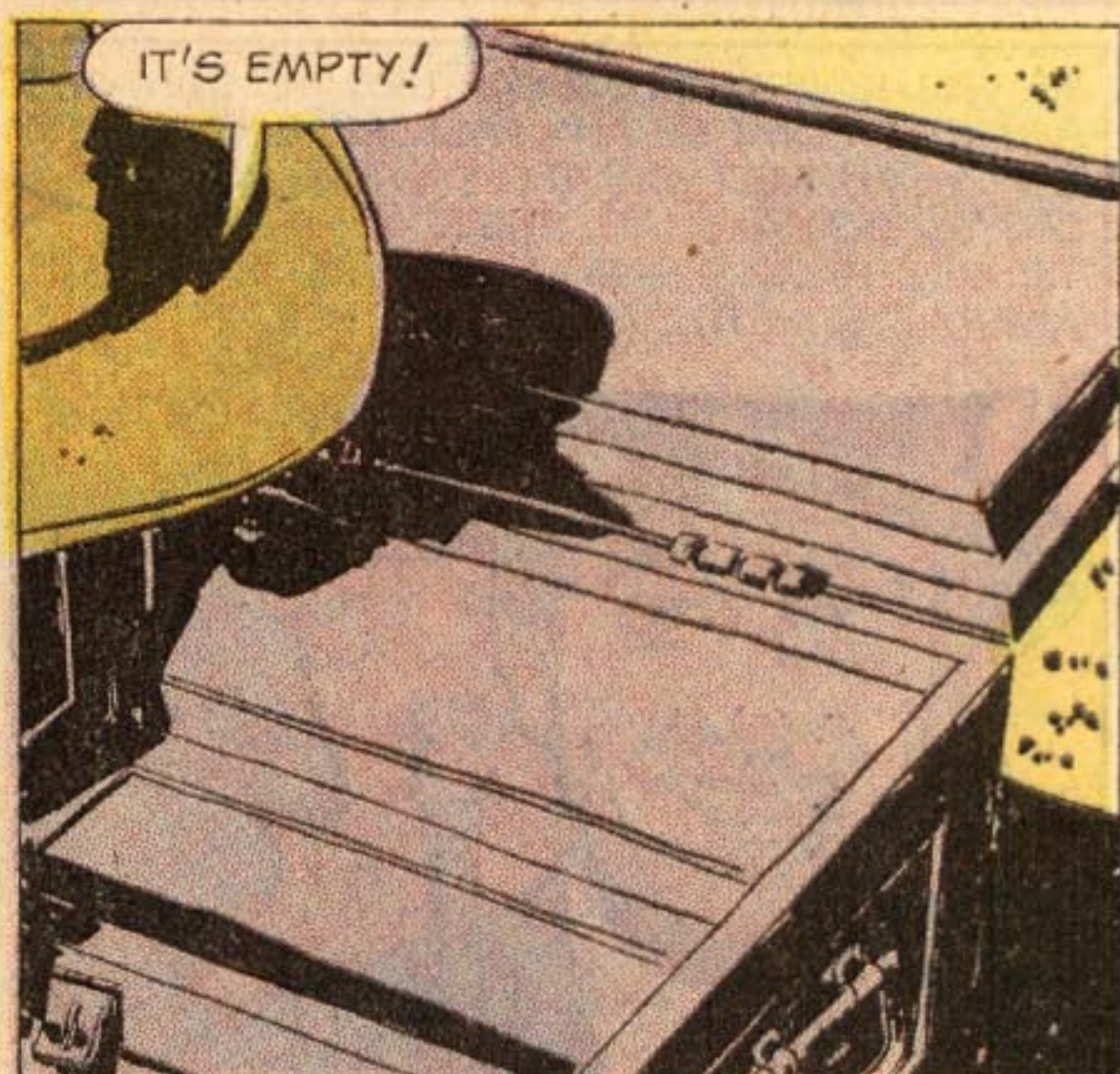
WE'LL LOAD IT ABOARD AND TAKE IT BACK TO TOWN! I GUESS YOU CAN ARREST MARIA VELEZ ANY TIME!

DON'T YOU WANT TO COUNT IT FIRST, TO BE SURE IT'S ALL THERE?



OF COURSE IT'S ALL THERE! THE BOX IS STILL LOCKED, ISN'T IT?

COUNT IT ANYWAY—OR I WILL! GIVE ME YOUR KEY!



IT'S EMPTY!

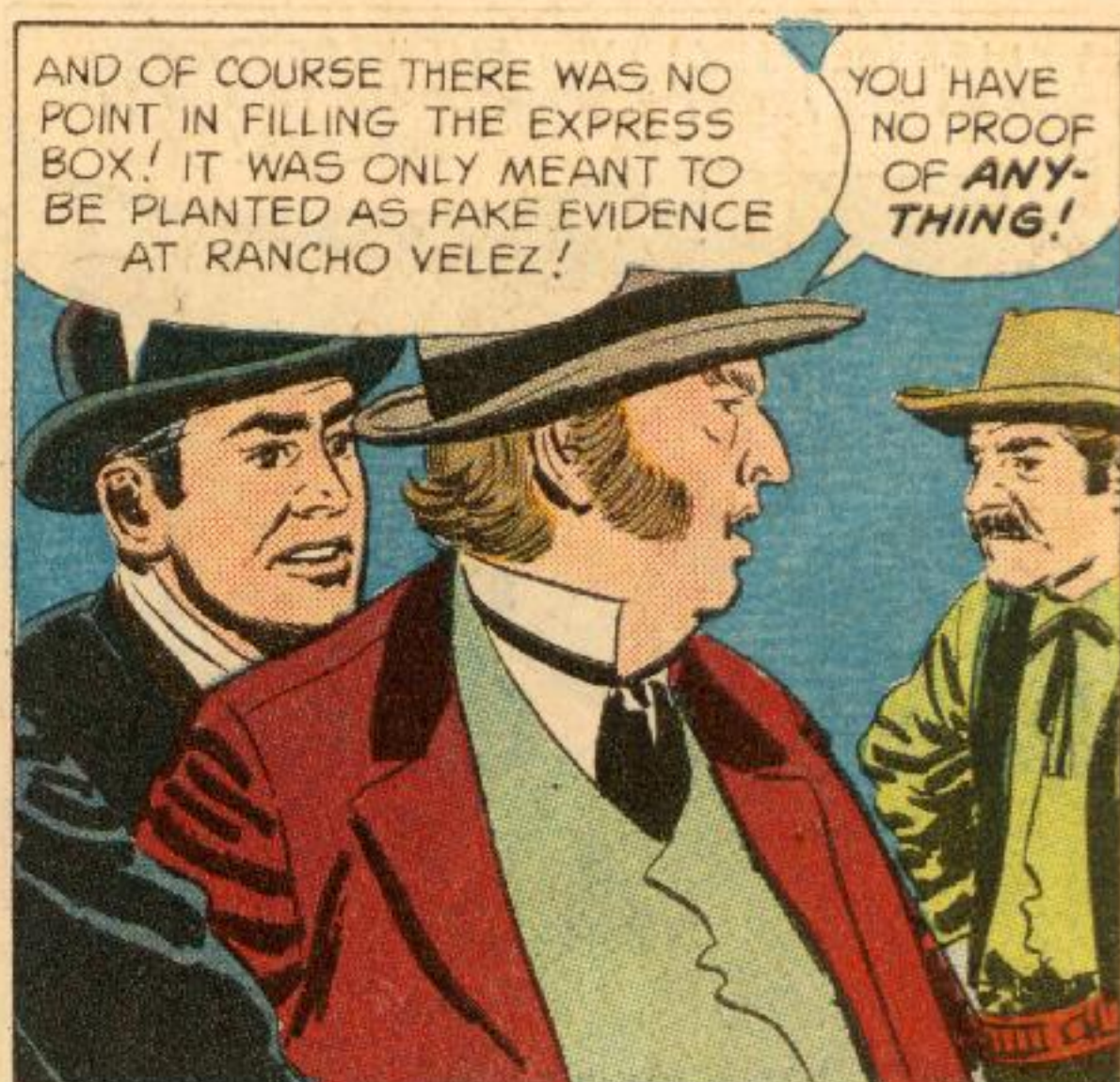


YES, IT'S EMPTY— BUT FINDING OUT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD! WHEN THEY FIND THE THREE OF YOU DEAD, IT'LL BE BLAMED ON THE VELEZ CREW! JUST ONE THING I WANT TO KNOW, SHERIFF! WHAT MADE YOU SUSPICIOUS OF ME?



IT WAS WHEN YOU REMINDED ME THAT **ONLY** MASTERSON HAD NOTICED THE CHARCOAL SMEARS ON THE HORSES' BRANDS! HE TOLD ME **THAT** IN PRIVATE!

VERY CLEVER! AND NOW—



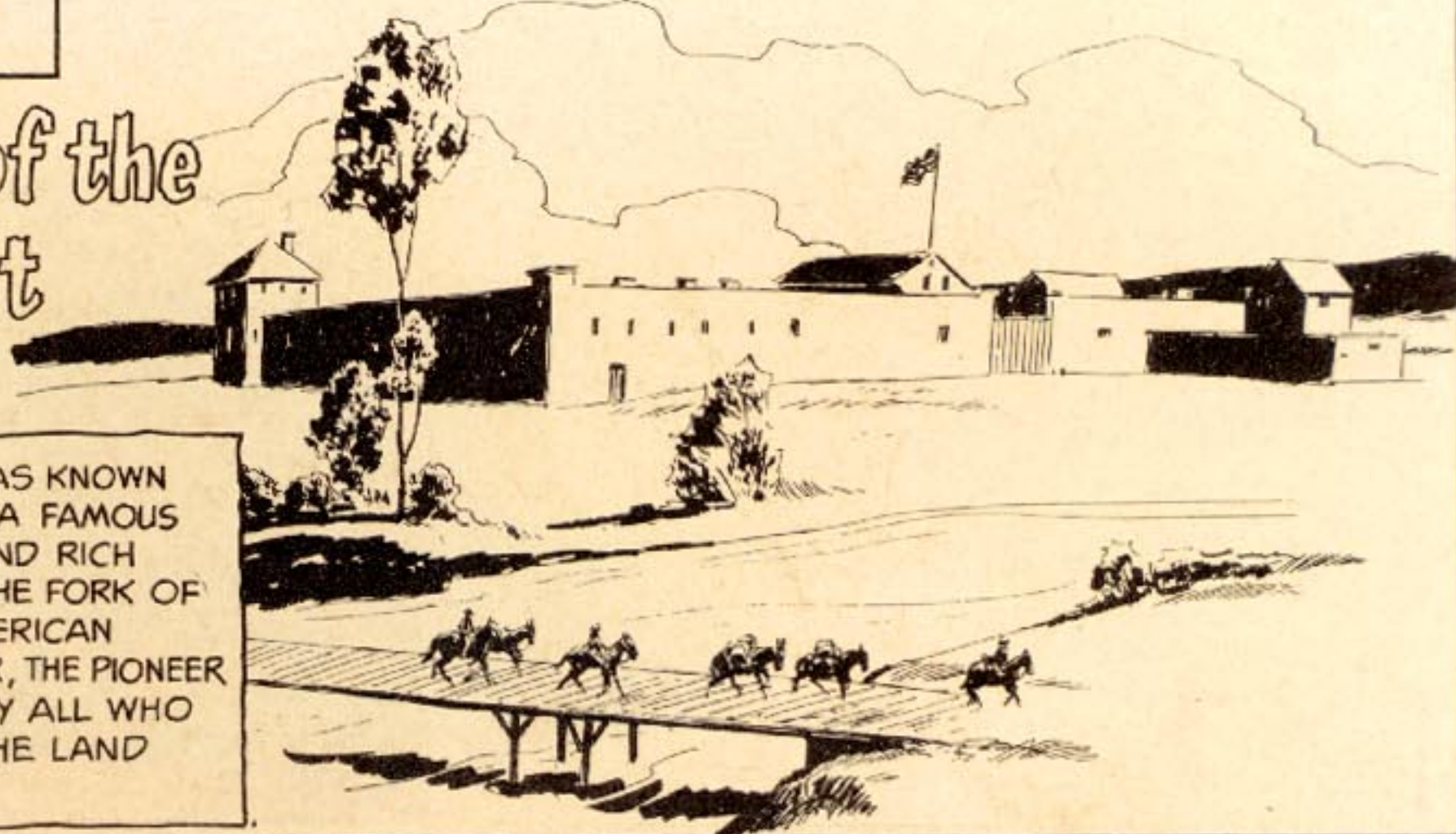
A PLEDGE **DELL COMIC** TO PARENTS

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Landmarks of the Old West

SUTTER'S MILL

IN 1849, **SUTTER'S FORT** WAS KNOWN THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA — A FAMOUS TRADING POST, A GREAT AND RICH FARMING ENTERPRISE, AT THE FORK OF THE SACRAMENTO AND AMERICAN RIVERS...AND JOHN SUTTER, THE PIONEER OWNER, WAS HONORED BY ALL WHO KNEW HIM! HE LOVED THE LAND AND IT LOVED HIM.



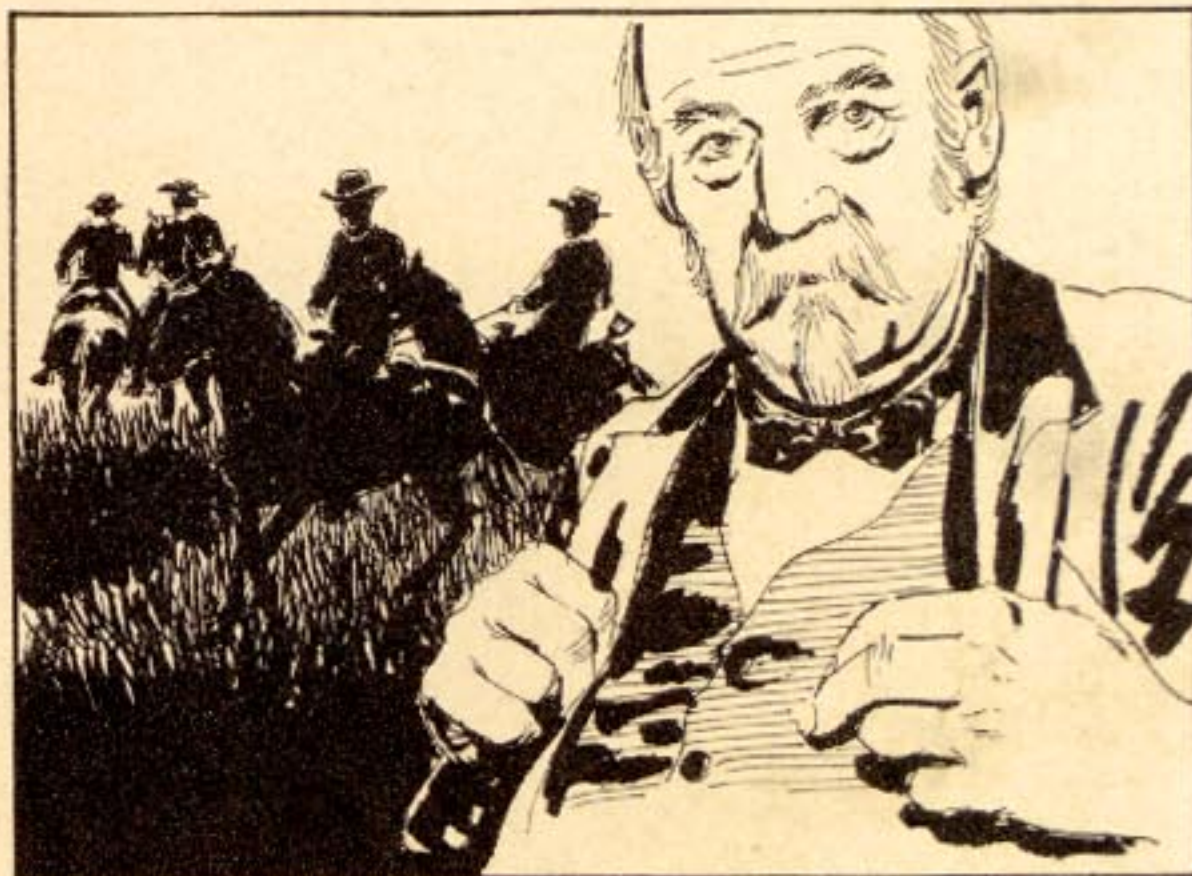
ONE DAY, IN THE TAILRACE OF SUTTER'S NEW SAWMILL, HIS FOREMAN, JIM MARSHALL, PICKED UP A HANDFUL OF STRANGELY HEAVY "GRAVEL" — AND FOUND **GOLD** — WHERE NONE HAD BEEN SUSPECTED BEFORE!



SUCH NEWS TRAVELS AROUND THE WORLD — EVEN WITHOUT THE HELP OF RADIO! AND FROM THE EAST — FROM THE NORTH — FROM THE SOUTH, THE "FORTY-NINERS" FLOCKED TO **SUTTER'S MILL!**



LIKE MURDER, A GOLD STRIKE "WILL OUT!" IT CANNOT BE KEPT SECRET, AND THE STRIKE AT SUTTER'S MILL PROVED TO BE ONE OF THE GREATEST! IT DREW MEN FROM EVERYWHERE — TO TAKE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF GOLD OUT OF CALIFORNIA EARTH! ALL KINDS OF MEN!



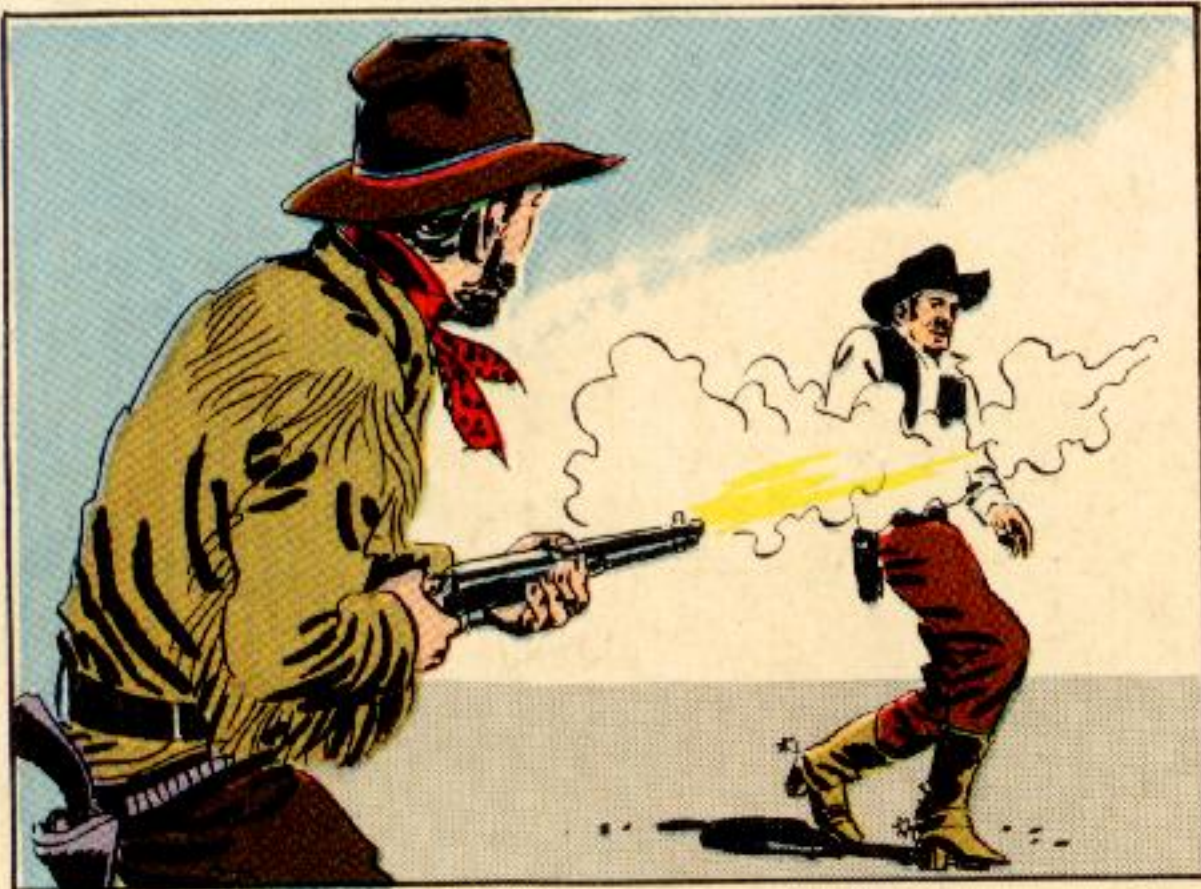
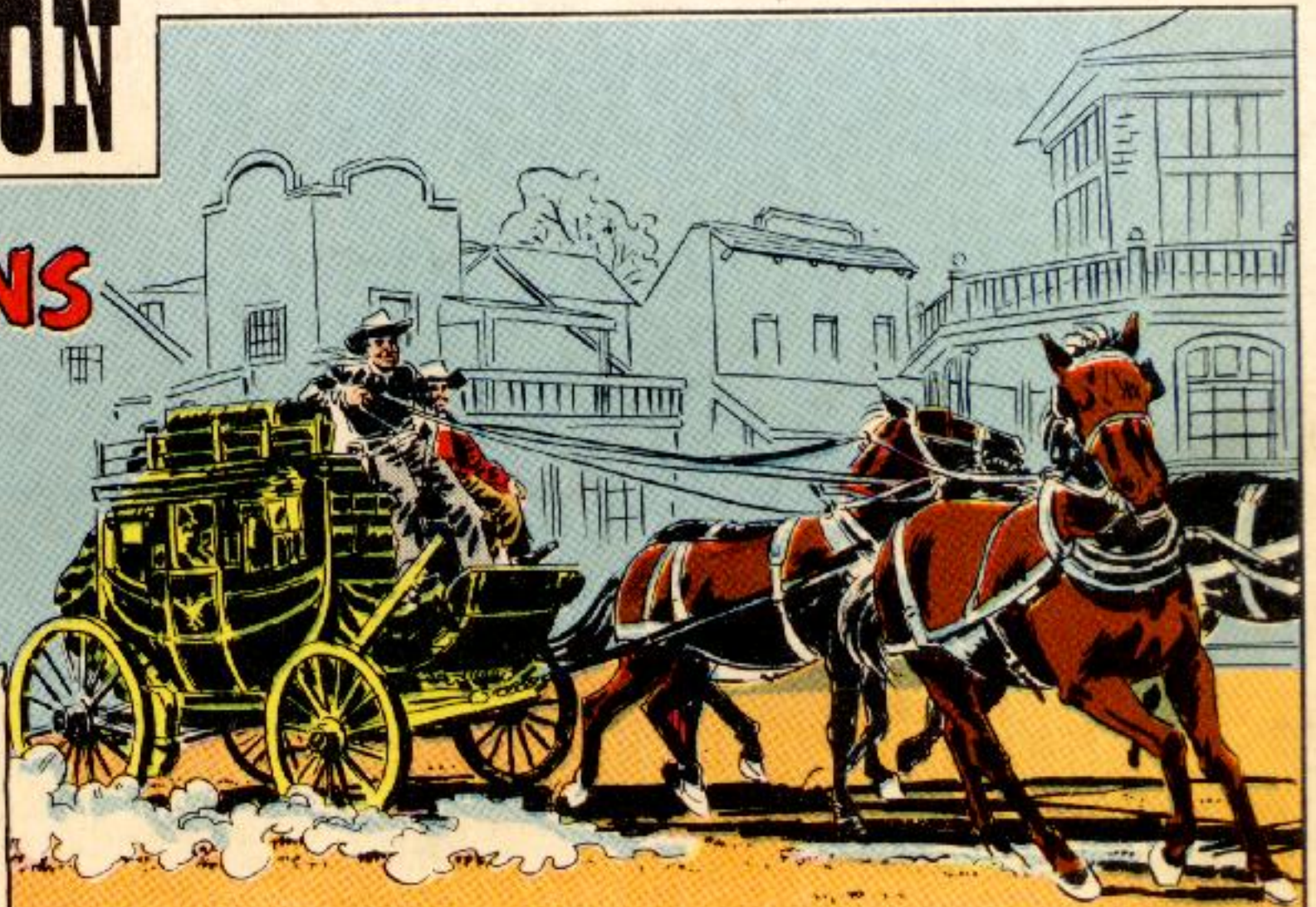
BITTERLY JOHN SUTTER WATCHED THE GOLD SEEKERS TRAMPLE HIS FARM LAND — BRING ALL HIS BUSINESS TO A STOP — RUIN HIM, FOR THE GOLD THEY HOPED TO FIND. TODAY AN OFFICIAL MARKER SHOWS WHERE HIS SAWMILL STOOD — AND ALL HIS WEALTH WAS DESTROYED, BY A HANDFUL OF GOLDEN GRAVEL.

BAT MASTERSON

ROARING TOWNS OF THE OLD WEST

CHEYENNE, WYOMING

BEFORE THE RAILROAD CAME, **JULESBURG** WAS A RAW FRONTIER COMMUNITY, DOMINATED BY THE OVERLAND STAGE STATION, AND THE DIVISION SUPERINTENDENT—GUNMAN JACK SLADE.



SLADE, A BOASTFUL ALCOHOLIC, TRADED HOT LEAD WITH SHOTGUN-ARMED JULES RENI—AND CAME OFF SECOND BEST... RECOVERING, HE LATER NAILED JULES' EARS TO THE JAIL DOOR.



JULESBURG BECAME OFFICIALLY **CHEYENNE**, WHEN THE FIRST "IRON HORSE" TO PULL INTO TOWN DISPLAYED A SIGNBOARD WITH THE NEW NAME OF ITS DESTINATION! THE CROWD WHICH HAD GATHERED TO CELEBRATE FELL GLUMLY SILENT!



CHEYENNE, CENTER OF THE POWDER RIVER CATTLE COUNTRY, GREW FAST—AND GUNS STILL ROARED IN ITS STREETS... COWBOYS' YELLS COMPETED WITH THE STEAM-POWERED HOOTING OF RAILROAD ENGINES.



CHEYENNE, TODAY'S FAMOUS RODEO CITY, WAS NAMED FOR THE CHEYENNE INDIAN "DOG-SOLDIERS" WHOSE YELPING WAR-WHOOP SUGGESTED THE BARKING OF DOGS, AND WHOSE DESCENDANTS STILL CELEBRATE THE "OLD DAYS" IN COSTUME.