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# The Gunfighter

By William Bowers

- Hiya, Jimmie.  
- Hi, old-timer.  
- Give me a drink.  
- Say!

- Just give me the drink, will you?  
- You bet your life, Jimmie.

Do you know who that is? Jimmie Ringo.

Well, what do you know?

- Nice to see you again, Jimmie.  
- Thanks.

Do you remember the old Buckhorn in Paso?

- You worked there?  
- Five years ago, when Tim O'Leary had it.

He don't look so tough to me.

If he ain't so tough, there's been an awful lot of sudden natural deaths in his vicinity.

- How many do you figure?  
- 10, 12, 15. Depends upon who's telling it.  
- I bet he ain't as fast as Wyatt Earp.  
- In Dodge City they say he is.

Just two hands.

Yeah, the same number, it looks like, but...

Wait a minute, Eddie.

You ain't thinking of doing nothing foolish?

- You mean he's so tough I can't talk to him?  
- I mean this ain't no joke. That's a mean man.

I just want to see how an important fella like that handles himself. What's wrong with that?

I'm telling you, Eddie,

I wouldn't do it if I was you.

Chuck, how about a little service down here?

That's if Mr Frazzlebottom don't object.

- Eddie, don't you know who this is?  
- You mean it ain't Mr Frazzlebottom?  
- He's Jimmie Ringo, Eddie.  
- It looks like Mr Frazzlebottom to me.

You ever heard anybody kid like him?

How about a drink, Mr Frazzlebottom?

- No, thanks.  
- How's that, Mr Frazzlebottom?  
- Eddie, please...  
- Please what?

I asked the man to have a drink.

What's wrong with that?

How about it, Mr Frazzlebottom?

OK, partner.

I knew Mr Frazzlebottom

wasn't gonna pass up a free one.

Don't you understand, Eddie?

This is Jimmie Ringo.

So it's Jimmie Ringo.

Is everybody supposed to fall on their knees?

Well, you can be a little polite at least.

Mr Ringo, Chuck figures you've got extra consideration coming to you. Is that right?

Nope.

How's that, Mr Ringo? You'll have to speak up if you want me to hear you.

Why don't you button up your britches and go home?

How'd you like to try to make me, Mr Ringo?

Now listen, partner.

I come in here minding my own business.

How about letting me go out the same way?

I want to know first what you meant by that remark you just passed.

I tell you what, you just bought me a drink.

Now I'll buy you one and then we'll drop it.

Give him a drink from me.

Never mind a drink. I want to know what you meant by that remark.

- Listen, Eddie.

- I ain't talking to you! I'm talking to Mr Ringo.

I want to know what he meant by that remark he passed.

How come I gotta run into a squirt like you nearly every place I go these days?

What are you trying to do?

Show off for your friends?

- Are you ready to back up that remark?

- Ain't some of you in charge of this donkey?

- I'm telling you, Mr Ringo!

- Eddie don't mean no real harm.

Then let Eddie keep his big, ugly nose out of my business.

- Did you see that?

- Yes, sir. He drew first.

- Did you see it?

- Yeah. I saw it.

Yes, sir, I saw it. Except I'd get on out of town anyway if I was you.

Why?

Because he's got three brothers that ain't gonna care who drew first.

All right.

Everybody stay where you are.

- He's an hour ahead.

- Must be killing his horse.

Ain't doing our ones any good, either.

He can't keep it up at this rate.

That horse won't last half a day.

All right, put up your hands.

Now drop your guns,

right out there where I can see them.

Now get off your horses

and stay away from them guns.

Back up. Right back there.

Go on, boy, get out.

Get out, get out, get out.

Come on, get out.

Go on, boy, get out. Get out.

Get out, get out, get out.

- Can you walk?

- Never mind about me, bud.

You worry about yourself.

You've got three hours' walk

to Santa Fe. Get going.

I'm warning you, Ringo.

We're gonna get you yet.

- I know, I heard that before too.

- You had no right to throw down on a boy.

What was I supposed to do? Let that little boy shoot me full of holes? Get out of here.

He was no more than a kid.

He's heading straight for Cayenne.

Well, you think you can make it?

Cayenne ain't no further than Santa Fe.

Come on.

- Give me a drink.

- Are you up early or out late?

Either way you want it, partner, just so I get a drink.

Jimmie Ringo.

Where was it with you?

The Mint Saloon in Dodge City. You and Bucky Harris came in nearly every night.

- Did we ever get a drink?

- Sure.

Oh.

Sure. Sorry, Jimmie.

Here. Remember now?

Yeah. I remember now. What about something to eat? You got a cook here?

- My old woman is back there.

- You got a steak?

- I got a steak.

- A steak, eggs and a pot of black coffee.

What about a place to wash up first?

Right out on the back porch here.

I'll show you.

Never mind, I can find it.

You got a livery stable here, boy?

He's a little astonished, Jimmie.

When you get him unastonished, tell him to take care of my horse.

Don't ride him, lead him. He's all wore out.

Archie, you heard what Mr Ringo said.

- You gonna be around?

- Hurry up, Archie. Sure, I'm here all day.

- I want to have a little talk with you.

- Yes, sir.

Never mind the horse. Run over yonder and tell the marshal that Jimmie Ringo is here.

- Was it really him?

- Go on, I tell you. Run.

Will you please leave that blamed mop here?

Marshal! Jimmie Ringo is here, Marshal.

- Where?

- In the Palace Bar. You gonna shoot him?

- Who told you it was Jimmie Ringo?

- Mac. Mac knows him.

Mac called him Jimmie.

He's on the back porch, washing himself.

- Charlie?

- Yeah?

Get hold of Bud and Skeeter.

- Where is he?  
- On the back porch, getting cleaned up.  
I ain't after any trouble, Mark. I just thought  
you'd want to know he was here.  
Sit over there, Charlie. Stand down there,  
Skeeter. Take the door, Bud.  
Just take it easy and don't try to jump him.  
Hiya, Jimmie.  
Mark.  
I'll be a son of a gun. How are you, partner?  
I'm fine, Jimmie.  
- Are you joking?  
- Nope. I'm the marshal here now.  
Well, I'll be darned.  
- These barroom loafers, your deputies?  
- Mm-hm.  
- For me?  
- Mm-hm.  
You won't be needing them.  
I ain't starting anything.  
Are you sure?  
Mark, that's the last thing I want, trouble.  
All right, boys.  
- What are you doing here, Jimmie?  
- Just about to have a drink. How about it?  
- No, thanks.  
- Marshal Mark Strett.  
Well, if that ain't a good one.  
But I'm glad for you, Mark. Mighty glad.  
Thanks. But I'm afraid  
I'm gonna have to ask you to move on.  
Why? I ain't wanted for anything  
around here, am I?  
No. I just want you out of town anyway.  
And pronto.  
- Coffee's ready.  
- Thank you, lady.  
You don't mind my having something to eat  
while we discuss this, do you?  
Matter of fact, I don't know anybody  
I'd rather talk to than you.  
- Lady, bring another cup for the marshal.  
- Yes, sir.  
How about it, Mark?

I've something I want to talk to you about.  
It looks to me like you've  
got a gossip on your staff.  
That's your public, Jimmie.  
Yeah, I'm a big man now.  
That's what you wanted, wasn't it?  
Top gun of the West.  
Yep.  
I got more people wondering when I'm gonna  
get killed than any man in the country.  
You don't sound as happy about it  
as you did the last time I saw you.  
How many is it now? 11?  
12. There's one you ain't heard about yet.  
You really keep count?  
Don't ask dumb questions, Mark.  
What's the trouble now, Jimmie?  
Somebody after you?  
- Three somebodies.  
- The law?  
No. This is personal.  
I don't want them to catch up with you here.  
I don't want them to do that anywhere.  
That's why you gotta move on right away.  
You know why I come here, don't you?  
I guess I do.  
- How is she?  
- Fine.  
- And the boy?  
- Getting on fine.  
- I want to see her, Mark.  
- Do you think she wants to see you?  
I got something important to see her about,  
and then I'll clear out. Where can I find her?  
I'm afraid I can't tell you that.  
- What do you mean, you can't tell me?  
- All right, then. Won't tell you.  
- You want a steak, Marshal?  
- No, thanks.  
- Why won't you?  
- Because nobody here knows who she is.  
She never even told the boy about you.  
They've got another name and another life.  
It looks to me like

that's the way she wants it to stay.  
Will you tell me what name  
she's going under? So as I can write to her.  
Nope. I won't tell you that either.  
Looks to me like you're taking quite a lot  
on your own responsibility, ain't you, Mark?  
I'm doing what I think is right, Jimmie. And  
I'm hoping I can make you see it that way too.  
How'd you like to see that street  
out there full of gunplay?  
I'd rather not.  
That's probably what you're gonna have  
in a couple of hours.  
Cos I ain't leaving here  
till you get ahold of Peggy for me.  
- What if she don't want to talk to you?  
- Let her do the deciding about that.  
- Will you go then, if I tell her?  
- I told you I would.  
- Just tell her, not make her do anything.  
- Just leave it to her. That's all I ask.  
You'd better wait in here, not move around  
much. I'll see what I can do about it.  
If you got any squirts around here that  
want to make a big name for themselves,  
cool them off before we run into any trouble.  
I will.  
Boys, get on away.  
Go about your business and leave Ringo  
alone. He ain't bothering anybody, is he?  
- Faster than Wyatt Earp?  
- Pa says he's the fastest.  
Jimmie Ringo could kill Wyatt Earp.  
I bet you a million dollars.  
- You seen Hunt Bromley around?  
- No. What's he done now?  
Nothing. I just want to see him.  
Pass the word around, will you?  
- Morning, Marshal.  
- Morning, Miss Helen.  
- He don't look so tough to me.  
- Yeah, yeah.  
That's the way it always starts -  
he don't look so tough to somebody.



Except with this somebody,  
it's gonna stop there.

It better. With a man like that,  
you can't come off much better than second.  
If he don't bother me, I don't bother him.

The only somebody that's bothering me  
right now is Mr Hunt Bromley.

Yeah. I forgot about that squirt.

Have you seen him already?

No. Maybe you'd better take  
a look around for him.

- Want me to bring him in?

- Just tell him I want to see him.

- But make sure he comes.

- I'll get him.

- And Charlie.

- Yeah?

Watch yourself.

Don't take any chances with that boy.

I don't aim to, Marshal.

- Morning, Charlie.

- Have you seen Hunt Bromley this morning?

- No. Not this morning.

- Tell him I'm looking for him if you see him.

Sure will, if we see him.

Huh.

Looks like it might be  
a right interesting day.

- Carrie Lou.

- Hello, Mr Mark.

- Where are all you giris going?

- We got a holiday.

None of the boys came to school this  
morning, so Miss Walsh said we could go.

- All the boys played hooky?

- Yes, sir.

Went downtown to see that bad man,  
that Jimmie Ringo, that's down there.

Come on, Carrie Lou!

Mark.

- You already heard, huh?

- Yes. The children told me.

The giris, that is.

None of the boys came this morning.

I guess they're all around the Palace Bar.  
- Little Jimmie too?  
- I suppose so.  
He's about as wild as the rest of them.  
What's Jim doing here, Mark? Do you know?  
- He says he wants to see you.  
- What about?  
- He didn't say. I thought you might know.  
- No.  
I didn't tell him anything,  
your name or anything.  
I just said I'd tell you he wants to see you  
and leave the rest to you.  
What do you think?  
I ain't thinking.  
I got nothing to say either way.  
Well...  
I won't do it.  
I can fix it for you on the quiet  
if you want to see him.  
No. I think it's better the way it is.  
Tell him I'm sorry.  
Whatever you say, Peg.  
Mark.  
How does he look?  
Just about the same, I guess.  
A little older, a little tired.  
Not as cocky as he used to be.  
Tell him I'm very sorry.  
I'll tell him.  
- Want some more coffee, Mr Ringo?  
- No, thank you, lady.  
- Tell him to bring that bottle over here.  
- Coming right up, Jimmie.  
Best stuff in the West, Old Puma Rye. Lot of  
fellas around here won't drink anything else.  
Why don't somebody chase them kids  
out of there? Ain't you got a school here?  
Sure, Jimmie, we got a school.  
I'll get them away from there.  
Get away from here and stay away.  
Come on, now, get off there.  
... broke his back,  
jumping over a railroad track.

Stay away, please. Don't come back.

Jimmie Walsh! Now, just you wait  
till your mother hears about this.

- But we're not hurting anybody, Mrs Devlin.

- You wait till I tell her you're at the saloon.

- Morning, Mrs Devlin.

- Morning. It's simply an outrage.

That murderer is sitting over in that saloon  
like an honoured guest,  
and the children are running wild.

I completely agree with you.

And five pounds of sugar.

And did you see all those loafers?

- You'd think it was Deadwood.

- Mark Strett'll get him out soon.

Soon? How long is a murderer supposed to  
be entertained? How much are the potatoes?

Eight cents a peck. Two for 15.

- Half a peck.

- You know who'll do something?

- Mrs Pennyfeather.

- Exactly. Will you go with me to talk to her?

I will. Soon as I get

some of these lovely onions.

- What about you, Mrs Cooper?

- I'd like to meet her.

- Morning, ladies.

- Good morning, Mr Marlowe.

Twist of tobacco, George.

What's all the excitement?

- It's that murderer, of course.

- What murderer?

- That Jimmie Ringo. Haven't you heard?

- Where's Jimmie Ringo?

Sitting right over there in the Palace Bar,  
just as big as you please.

We're going straight

to Mrs Pennyfeather right now.

Hiya, Jerry.

What'd you forget?

What are you going to do?

Jerry!

Jimmie Ringo's in the Palace Bar. When he  
comes out, he's going to get this in the face.

- Have you gone crazy?
- Get your hand off that door.
- That's murder.
- And when he killed Roy?
- You're not even sure that was Ringo.
- He was in the bunch.

But you don't know that.

That's just what people said.

Please don't get us in any more trouble.

We've got all straightened out now.

You're wasting your breath, Alice. All I know is, Ringo killed my boy and I will kill Ringo.

Just as soon as he walks out that door.

- Did that boy take care of my horse?
- Getting cleaned up right now, Jimmie.

Here he comes!

Never do that again, Alice. Never!

I know what I'm doing  
and I'm gonna do it.

Confound that boy.

Archie? Say, any of you fellas seen Archie?

Yeah, Mac. He just went  
to the store a minute ago.

Archie. Archie!

- Here I am, Mac.
- See when Mr Ringo's horse will be ready.
- And hurry up, Archie.
- All right, Mac.
- Mac, Ringo don't look so tough to me.
- Then go in there and take a punch at him.

For what? I ain't got nothing against the man.

Here's the marshal. He'll shoot Ringo.

He can't. He don't even carry a gun.

Why aren't you kids in school?

Nothing doing, Jimmie. She says  
she's sorry but that's all there is to it.

- Did you say it was important?
- I told her what I told you,  
and offered to fix it up for her on the quiet  
if she wanted to see you.
- What else?
- What else what?

Are you sure you didn't talk against me?

Who's asking the dumb questions now?

Didn't she give no explanation at all?  
What explanation could she give  
that you don't already know?  
If I could only talk to her  
for just a few minutes.  
How does she look, Mark?  
Just about the same, I guess.  
A little older but just as pretty.  
- Did you see my boy?  
- No. He's on the loose today.  
- What do you mean?  
- Do you hear those boys on the street?  
Yeah.  
He's one of them.  
Which one, Mark?  
Well, I...  
I don't see him right now.  
If that ain't a fine way to bring up a kid,  
hanging around a saloon!  
- Ain't you got a school in this town?  
- Yep.  
We've got a school here.  
You broke it up, partner.  
They all come down to see Jimmie Ringo.  
The big gun. The great hero.  
Does my... Does my kid  
think I'm kind of a hero?  
Nope. As a matter of fact,  
I understand he's a Wyatt Earp man.  
- Earp? You ought to have taught him better.  
- Me? Where was you all this time?  
I beg your pardon, both of you gentlemen,  
for interrupting you,  
but this is a serious situation for me, Marshal.  
What is it?  
The truth of the matter, sir,  
is that Wes Fuller is burning my house down.  
- What's he doing that for?  
- Well...  
he just felt like it, Marshal. That's the only  
excuse in the world he's got. Just felt like it.  
- Drunk?  
- He certainly don't act altogether cold sober.  
We'll go and see what we can do.

Wait outside.

Yes, sir.

And thank you too, sir, Mr Ringo. It ain't like me to interrupt two gentlemen like you.

- Go on out, I said.

- Yes, sir.

- Are you moving on now?

- I guess so.

- Sorry it had to be like this, Jimmie.

- It's not your fault.

Watch yourself, partner.

If I write to you, will you give her a message?

- You bet.

- Thanks, Mark.

- I'll be seeing you, Jimmie.

- I hope so. But don't lay no money on it.

I'll be seeing you, all right.

- How much, Mac?

- No charge. It's an honour to have you.

Thanks.

Here he comes!

Don't grab this from your wife.

It's an honour and a pleasure,

Jimmie. Yes, sir.

We're old-timers, you know, you and me.

Jimmie!

Molly.

- I didn't know you were here.

- You must be about the only one in town.

- I work late so I sleep late.

- Work where?

- Here.

- What do you mean?

I'm a singer.

You've heard of singers, haven't you?

Want to buy me a little drink?

Sure, kid. Sure. But why?

Gotta live, haven't you?

But where's Bucky?

- Didn't you hear?

- Hear what?

Buck was killed six months ago in Abilene.

No, I didn't hear.

I'm sorry, Molly. Who did it?

I don't know. He was found in an alley,  
shot through the back of the head.

Didn't he...

Didn't he leave you anything?

A horse and a saddle,  
two guns and fifteen dollars.

I never heard a word about it, Molly.

Have you seen Peg?

Nope.

- Do you?

- Whenever I can.

Doesn't do a schoolteacher any good  
to be seen with a barroom singer, you know.

Come on over here for a minute.

There's something I want to ask you.

Peggy wouldn't see me. Is it somebody else?

- You ought to know better than that.

- I don't. It's been a long time.

- There'll never be anybody else for Peg.

- Anybody else tried?

Of course. Pretty girl like that.

Young squirt named

Hunt Bromley got after her.

Boy, you should have heard her tell him off.

- What did he do to her?

- Nothing.

Nothing, really. Just a barroom loafer trying  
to move in on a woman without a husband.

You know the kind.

- Do you see Jimmie too?

- Whenever I see her.

- What kind of a boy is he?

- He's a good kid. Peg takes good care of him.

- What is he? Big or little?

- Big. About right for eight.

Eight and a half.

- Look, do you want me to talk to Peg?

- Mark already talked to her. She said no.

Let me talk to her.

Are you in some kind of a hurry?

- If there's a chance, I'll stick around.

- You stay right here. I'll get her for you.

- Don't take too long. I'm behind schedule.

- I won't be long.

Hiya, Hunt.

Deal me out.

Deal me back in again.

- I'll bet two bits.

- That finishes me.

I don't want no more of it.

- Your deal, Joe.

- Sit in for a couple of hands, Johnny?

With cards I made?

I wouldn't want to do that.

What do they mean,

playing cards on a day like this?

- Looks like any other day to me.

- You mean you ain't heard?

- Heard what?

- You ain't heard who's in town?

Do you have to put your foot on my chair?

We ain't been out of here since Tuesday.

- Who is it?

- Jimmie Ringo.

- Jimmie Ringo?

- Uh-huh.

What is Jimmie Ringo doing in Cayenne?

- Sitting right up there at the Palace Bar.

- Now?

- Yeah. We just left him there.

- What does he look like?

He don't look much different

from a lot of other fellas.

He looks mighty average

to be such a big man.

- About as big as they come, I guess.

- How many hands has he got?

I never counted them.

He's got two hands, just like anybody else.

And somebody's gonna make a big name

for himself by proving that's all he's got.

A big name, right on his tombstone.

It's gotta come sooner or later.

You don't expect him to go on forever.

So far as I'm concerned, he can.

Do you reckon he's still up there?

Wait. You're good,

but maybe you ain't that good.



- How do you know I ain't?

- If you ain't, can I have your saddle?

Very funny.

What I mean, Hunt, you ain't ever really killed anybody like he has.

What do you know? You don't know everything I've done or every place I've been.

But you ain't ever been any place but Abilene, have you?

Come on, let's go up and take a look at this big, important man.

- I ain't finished cutting your hair yet.

- I'll come back.

He ain't too sociable.

Might not like people looking at him.

- He can get used to it. What about it, lke?

- I got a wife and a couple of kids, Hunt.

I'd better not either.

I got a mother who's my sole support.

Suit yourself, yellow-bellies.

He never was much fun to have around, anyway.

Rye.

- Jimmie!

- You're Jimmie Walsh, ain't you?

- Ain't that your ma calling you?

- Jimmie, come here right this minute.

- Just a minute, Ma.

- If you don't come here, I'll skin you alive.

Aw, shucks! Tell me which one gets killed, will you? But, Ma, the other fellas will see it.

I don't care what the other boys do.

You're coming home with me.

Jimmie Ringo's there and so is Hunt.

Somebody's gonna get shot. I want to see it.

Since when do I have to drink second-grade whisky here, Mac?

- That's the brand you always drink, Hunt.

- This whisky has been watered.

No, it ain't, Hunt.

You know I don't water my whisky.

If I say it's watered, it's watered.

I'll prove it to you.

Give everybody a drink out of that bottle

and let's see what they say.

- There ain't a thing the matter with it.

- Did you hear what I said, or not?

I heard.

And don't forget the gentleman at the table.

I'd like to have his opinion too.

Please, let's don't have no trouble here now.

I'll ask him myself.

I want you to settle a little argument.

Why should I?

- You've a reputation for settling arguments.

- Only my own.

You could say this one included you in a way.

I say Mac waters his whisky.

Then you're kind of dumb

to be drinking here, ain't you?

- Taste this and tell me what you think.

- Don't trouble yourself.

You ain't very sociable, are you?

Maybe if you got to know me a little better.

I don't have to know you any better.

Looks to me like there's a squirt like you in every town in the West. Get away from here.

That's kind of strong talk, ain't it, Mr Ringo?

- You're Hunt Bromley, ain't you?

- Yeah. You heard of me already?

Yeah, I heard about you. I heard

you're a cheap, no-good barroom loafer.

If I didn't have something on my mind, I'd take those guns and slap you cross-eyed.

You're asking for trouble, Mr Ringo.

You already got it, partner.

Cos I got a gun on you under this table and it's pointing smack at your belly.

Now, you gonna get out of here, or not?

I'm kind of disappointed in you, Mr Ringo.

We heard a lot about you, but I guess they forgot to tell us about the gun under the table.

The older you grow, the more you learn, son.

Now turn around and head for the door.

Keep moving and don't do

anything sudden with your hands.

- I'll be seeing you, Mr Ringo.

- All the way outside, sonny.

What on earth?

We need three horses quick, Mr Barlow.

Can you let us have them?

I don't see any reason why not.

Marty, saddle up Prince, Fanny and Dan for these men right away.

- You got some guns too?

- I guess I have, but what are you fellas up to?

- How far is it to Cayenne?

- It's about an hour's ride.

If you start now,

you could make it by ten o'clock easy.

But ain't you gonna tell me what's going on?

We're after Jimmie Ringo.

Jimmie Ringo?

I was the only fella in town that didn't see him.

- What's the matter?

- Ma won't let me see Jimmie Ringo.

You bet I won't. You're going straight up to your room until that man's left this town.

- I don't want to go to my room.

- I don't care what you want to do.

Please, Mom.

Now you stay in there. And don't let me hear another word out of you about it.

Did you ever hear of anything so terrible?

It's like the town's gone crazy.

- He's here just to see you.

- Have you talked to him?

I just left him. Why don't you see him, if only for a few minutes?

Molly, what good would it do?

- It's all over now, you know that.

- Not for him. He's still crazy about you.

He was crazy about me before, but that didn't stop him from being the person he was.

He scares me, Molly. He really does.

He might have scared you then but not now.

He's different.

How different?

The way Bucky was different that last year.

You know, not wild any more. Just sorry.

And what good did it do Bucky?

None, I guess. But I liked it.  
If only he'd have stayed away.  
Is it somebody else, Peggy?  
Of course not. You know it's not.  
Not Mark?  
Mark?  
- Why do ask that?  
- Is it?  
I've never even thought of Mark like that.  
Of course not.  
- You think he never thought of you like that?  
- I doubt it.  
Mark's just...  
Well, Mark's just Mark. He's Jim's friend.  
You must be out of your mind.  
Then it's still Jim, isn't it?  
I guess so.  
I guess it always will be.  
How would you like to see  
Ringo and Wyatt Earp square off?  
I wouldn't want to be  
in the same town when that happened.  
I still say he's yellow. I gave him the chance  
to show how good he was, didn't I?  
You reckon he didn't have  
a gun under the table after all?  
I heard that. But both his hands were out of  
sight, he could have been holding anything.  
It took lots of nerve, though, to bluff like that.  
- What would you have done? Looked?  
- I wouldn't even have been there.  
He was the one that ducked out  
of a showdown not me.  
- You ain't going back?  
- I ain't leaving town, if that's what you mean.  
Marshal wants to see you.  
Didn't you get the message?  
Yeah, I got it. I'll see him.  
When I get the time.  
He says now.  
Looks like everybody's  
drawing behind your back.  
All the smart ones.  
Come on down the marshal's office.

I'll be right behind you.  
Just you wait until Mrs Pennyfeather  
hears about this situation.  
There he is. Charlie's got him!  
Aw, shucks! That's just Hunt Bromley.  
Ringo wouldn't spit on Hunt Bromley.  
Come on.  
What do you want with me?  
Sit down. Didn't you get my message?  
I'm here, ain't I?  
How come you tried  
to pick a fight with Ringo?  
You don't have to worry about me.  
I can take care of myself.  
I wish I had \$100 for every blabbermouth  
I've heard say that.  
He's yellow. I learned that much anyway.  
All right, then, Buffalo Bill. I see it ain't no use  
to warn you, so I'm gonna tell you.  
Either I lock you up in a cell until he's gone,  
or you get out of town for the rest of day.  
- Which is it gonna be?  
- Me get out of town? What about him?  
When you're the marshal you can do  
the deciding, meanwhile let me handle it.  
Now, what do you like? The cell or the road?  
Looks like you're being  
careful about that killer.  
I just don't want any great, big, terrible men  
like you scaring him to death.  
- How long you known Ringo?  
- You want to be locked up?  
- No.  
- Then get going. South.  
I don't want to see you back around here  
before sundown. Understand?  
You didn't say how long you knew Ringo.  
If you ain't out of town in five minutes,  
I'll have to take them guns away from you.  
- Don't ever try that, Mark.  
- I won't try it, I'll do it.  
I got my mind made up now.  
I'm gonna keep peace here today if I have  
to lock up every gunny in town to do it.

Where's your badge?

Put it on. This is official. I want you to take this scatter-gun and sit in the Palace with it. If Hunt or any other troublemaker comes, let him have it.

What's Ringo gonna think, me with a shotgun?

Tell him I sent you.

How long have you known Ringo, Mark?

I'm gonna keep Hunt company for a mile or so.

- I'll be back in a few minutes.

- Yes, sir.

Mr Ringo, I...

I'm Charlie Norris, Mr Ringo.

Mark Strett's deputy.

- Mark wants me to sit shotgun at the door.

- With what?

I didn't bring it in with me because I didn't want you to get the wrong idea.

- Who is he?

- He's the deputy, like he says.

- Where's Mark?

- He had to go out.

He'll be along in a few minutes.

All right, get your gun.

We'll have a drink at the bar.

Thank you, Mr Ringo.

Is that clock right?

Not more than five or ten minutes out either way.

- Mind if I ask you a question?

- Not if you don't mind if I don't answer it.

Who would you say

was the toughest man you ever saw?

I'll tell you the second toughest.

Bucky Harris.

- You ever tangle with him?

- Of course not. Bucky was my friend.

Take it you don't want me

to ask you again who was the first toughest.

Looks like your business is on the outside.

That don't worry me none. Wait till tomorrow.

- After I'm gone, huh?

- This place'll be famous. It'll be like a shrine.  
I'll probably have to put on  
two more bartenders.  
Maybe I ought to charge you a fee.  
You name it, Jimmie, and it's yours.

- Are you serious?  
- Why not? You done it.  
- All right, I'll take it.  
- It's a deal. Who's gonna collect for you?  
I'll let you know before I leave.  
- Where you going?  
- I can't stand waiting. I'll take a look around.  
All right, but I gotta stay with you.  
- How much do you get paid for this job?  
- 60 a month. Why?  
- It ain't enough.  
- What happened?  
There's a fella with a gun  
in one of them windows across the street.  
If I hadn't seen the sun flash on it,  
you might've got it.  
- Which window?  
- Stay away from the door.  
- You wait here.  
- But you ain't supposed to leave here.  
I gotta get the gun away from that fella.  
He'll mess up this whole business.  
- Who do you reckon it is?  
- I don't know. But I ought to go after him.  
- Why don't you?  
- Mark said stay here.  
I ain't got orders  
covering a situation like this.  
Anyway, he's still in there.  
Jerry, please. Won't you give it up, please?  
Nothing is going to bring Roy back  
and that's all we're thinking about.  
Go outside and take a look.  
If you want to find out who's getting ready  
to shoot through that door, look yourself.  
- You're the man in charge of peace.  
- Peace, the man says.  
- You better get out of here.  
- It's my life too, Jerry.

Go over to Ella Mae's and stay there.  
Keep your mouth shut.  
All right.  
Don't move. Drop that gun.  
Drop it.  
Put your hands up.  
Kick it away from you.  
Further away.  
Now stand up.  
Now, turn around.  
Let's see what you look like.  
I ought to blow your head off,  
laying for me like that.  
- Can I put my hands down?  
- Sure. Just don't try anything funny.  
- What's the idea?  
- My name is Marlowe. You don't remember?  
- No.  
- You don't remember Roy Marlowe?  
Come on, keep talking.  
What are you getting at?  
Roy Marlowe was my son. You killed him.  
I never killed any Roy Marlowe.  
I never even heard of him.  
You killed him all right,  
but you don't even remember it.  
You're crazy to think I wouldn't remember it.  
Are you sure?  
You're not safe running around loose.  
You've gotta be locked up. Come on.  
Open it.  
Now, move ahead of me.  
Back stairs.  
To the marshal's office.  
You think I ought to go across there?  
- Mark told you to stay here, didn't he?  
- Thank you.  
It looks like we've gotta  
serve ourselves today. Come on.  
- Where is he?  
- He ought to be here.  
I am Mrs August Pennyfeather.  
- How do you do, Mrs Pennyfeather?  
- We are here to see Marshal Mark Strett.



He ain't here now, ma'am.  
I don't know just where he is.  
We will wait.  
Yes, ma'am, do.  
Won't you have a chair?  
Who are you? A deputy?  
No. Just a friend.  
He wouldn't be over there  
arresting that murderer, would he?  
- No, ma'am, I don't think he is.  
- Doesn't he intend to?  
That I couldn't say, ma'am.  
I ain't sure just what he's gonna do about it.  
He'd better be making up  
his mind pretty soon.  
This is not Deadwood or Tombstone.  
This is a law-abiding community.  
We want no murderers running through our  
streets, shooting our women and children.  
He ain't exactly running through the streets.  
- He's a murderer, isn't he?  
- Is he?  
- What else, pray tell, after all those killings?  
- I mean, maybe he don't think he is.  
- Then he must be a fool too.  
- I'm just guessing,  
but maybe he figures  
it was either him or them.  
What do you mean?  
I mean, maybe there was  
some misunderstandings,  
and it was either him or them  
that was gonna get killed.  
50 misunderstandings in a row?  
Not 50, ma'am. Nowheres near it.  
It was a lot nearer 15 than 50,  
and I can tell you that for a fact.  
What are you trying to do? Take up for him?  
No, ma'am. No indeed, not me.  
Don't you think something  
should be done about him?  
Absolutely. He ought to be arrested  
or run out of town, or something.  
He ought to be hung.

Yes, ma'am. There's a lot to be said  
for that point of view too.

- Good morning, ladies.
- Good morning, Marshal.
- You're late.
- Late?

Yes, ma'am. I figured  
you'd be around long before now.

- What do you intend to do about the man?
- Nothing, ma'am.

You're going to allow him to sit in that saloon  
as he pleases, demoralising the whole town?

The trouble ain't been him demoralising  
the town. It's the town demoralising him.

Some fellajust tried to demoralise him  
with a Winchester. Is that what you mean?

We are here simply to remind you that it is  
your sworn duty to keep peace in Cayenne.

That's right. And that's what I am aiming  
to do to the best of my ability.

Moreover, we, the ladies of Cayenne,  
regard it an outrage that this man Ringo,  
a notorious murderer,  
should be received practically with honour  
and allowed to sit in state  
in our finest saloon.

So now we demand, Mr Marshal,  
that you do something about it immediately.  
Such as what, ma'am?

Either arrest him or chase him out of town.

- What do you think?
  - He's planning to leave anyway, ain't he?
- That's the way I understand it.

What do you figure would happen  
if I tried to chase him out?

I don't think you could do it  
and keep the peace at the same time.

- That's what I thought.
- Can't you arrest him?
- He's done nothing here to be arrested for.
- Isn't he wanted?
- Not by me, ma'am.
- I'm just a stranger here myself, ma'am.

If you was to ask me,

I'd say hold off for another hour.  
Don't do anything that might make trouble  
until, say, half past ten.  
If he ain't gone by then,  
let the marshal go to work on him.  
- Shoot him down like a dog.  
- Exactly, ma'am.  
That sounds very sensible.  
What do you say, ladies?  
Then that's the way we'll have it.  
Thank you very much.  
- That's a very reasonable, intelligent idea.  
- Don't thank me. Thank Mr Ringo.  
But of course.  
Thank you very much, Mr Ringo.  
Mr Ringo?!  
Ladies! Ladies, please!  
- I saw Molly. She said she'd talk to Peggy.  
- I know. She's down there now.  
- I'd better get back to the Palace.  
- Where's Marlowe?  
- Who?  
- The fella in the window.  
I arrested him for you. He's back there.  
Are you gonna let him out?  
Not until you leave town.  
Wait a minute. I'm going with you.  
I forgot something, Mark.  
- Where was your boy killed?  
- You don't know?  
What would I be asking you for if I knew?  
Tulsa.  
Wasn't me, partner. I've never  
even been in the territory in my life.  
- When will them brothers be here?  
- I've got plenty of time.  
I hope so. I hope you ain't miscalculated.  
They're on foot. I chased off their horses.  
They'll do good if they're here by eleven.  
- I've seen better fights at a prayer meeting.  
- They ain't got as much spirit.  
Go for his eyes.  
Jake, is that horse in any shape  
to go again today?

No, I don't think so, Mark.

He's near worn down to a nubbin.

- You got a fresh one here?

- I guess so. Why?

Have him at the back door of the Palace  
in 15 minutes, saddled with Ringo's stuff.

Give him some grub and water  
and charge it to the county.

All right, Mark.

Anybody working here today?

Too busy to work today.

- Hiya, Mac.

- Tommy. Glad to see you.

- Looks like Saturday.

- How's Ellen?

Fine, thanks. Give me a rye.

- What'll Ellen say?

- She said I could have one if it was dusty.

- Wife don't like him to drink.

- Don't blame her.

She knows I'm all over that sort of thing.

Too much work to do these days.

- Join me?

- Thanks. I'll have the same thing.

- What you got, a ranch?

- We got it the first year we was married.

It ain't very big but it's coming along.

Married the cutest little girl you ever saw.

But did she settle this rounder down?

That's her, all right.

Little, but oh my!

- How many head of cattle you got?

- About 400. Started at 50.

- Got horses too?

- We ain't got many.

You need more outside help than we can  
afford for horses, but I guess we got about 30.

- Sounds like a right nice start.

- That's the way her and I figured it.

Takes hard work to make anything out of  
a place that little, but we don't mind.

Grazing land's good, there's plenty of water,  
so we're better off than many.

We broke even last year.

Sounds mighty good.  
Have one with me.  
No, thanks. One is what she said.  
Much obliged to you, though. So long, Mac.  
- So long, Tommy. Tell Ellen hello for me.  
- Yeah, I'll tell her.  
Nice fella, Tommy.  
Kinda getting on towards time, ain't it?  
- I'll give her till the last minute.  
- You don't wanna draw it too close.  
I gotta hear something,  
no matter how close I draw it.  
If Molly ain't back pretty soon...  
She told me about Bucky.  
Never heard it before.  
I guess he never knew what hit him.  
It's a fine life, ain't it?  
Just trying to stay alive.  
Not really living, not enjoying anything,  
not getting anywhere.  
- Just trying to keep from getting killed.  
- That's what Bucky used to say.  
Just waiting to get knocked off  
by some tough kid.  
Like the kind of kid I was.  
And the truth of the matter is,  
it don't pay much either.

**Here I am:**

I ain't even got a good watch.  
- How'd you get out of it, Mark?  
- I just quit.  
It ain't that easy. How'd you do it, really?  
Remember when the gang  
split up after that bank?  
- We didn't split up. They scattered us.  
- Well, anyway.  
Some of us put into  
Prairie City to get supplies.  
But the word was out.  
You should have seen what we walked into.  
Yeah, I heard.  
- Did you hear about the little girl?  
- No.

I got sick when I saw her.

- Who did it?

- It could have been me as well as anybody.

- You don't know that.

- It don't matter. I was there.

So when we got back to the hills,

I kept a-going.

I kept on a-going until I got here

and I asked a man for a job.

Didn't anybody ever say anything?

I wasn't as prominent as you are.

- It's funny, ain't it?

- What?

That was the time

I could've kept on a-going too.

I could've rode right on back to Peggy.

I used to wonder about going back

and giving myself up.

I finally argued myself

out of that one, thank goodness.

- Mark?

- Yeah?

- I've got that horse out here.

- Be there in a minute, Jake.

Well...

I guess it ain't much use

my waiting around here any longer.

You can write to me

and I'll give it to her if you want.

It won't do any good.

She's got her mind made up.

No place she could reach you, I reckon.

No.

I don't know where I am gonna be.

- So long, Mac.

- Do you have to be going already?

Yes. I gotta see a fella up the line.

What about your cut of the business?

Who do you want me to give it to?

Who's the prettiest girl in town?

I used to admire the banker's daughter, but

I might have been influenced by her money.

There's Frankie Mae. And the schoolteacher.

Give it to the schoolteacher. I've always

had a weakness for schoolteachers.  
Put it in an envelope without any note  
or anything, and drop it on her desk.  
Schoolteacher. Consider it done.  
It's been a real pleasure to see you again.  
I often think of the good old days in Dodge  
City, with you and Bucky and the others.  
Them was the good old days.  
Come on, Jimmie.  
I don't think people have fun  
like they used to. Do you?  
No.  
Jim, got a minute or two?  
You look fine, honey.  
I'm doing all right.  
I... come here just to see you, you know.  
I know. Mark told me.  
But I just didn't know what to do, Jim.  
It's all right now.  
- How's Jimmie?  
- He's a lot like you, I'm afraid.  
Don't you think you'd better do  
something about that quick?  
I was justjoking.  
He's a little wild, like all kids,  
but he's a good boy.  
D'you know he's out in front now?  
I took him away once, but it looks like  
the whole town's crazy today.  
- I never saw anything like it.  
- I looked out there.  
I couldn't see no kid that looked like me.  
He's still there, I'm afraid.  
- Mark and Molly tell you what I want?  
- No.  
I wanna get away from here.  
I wanna get out of this part of the country.  
See if we can't find us a little ranch, maybe.  
You and me and Jimmie.  
- If only you'd thought of this before.  
- We can still do it.  
I could go to California or the Northwest,  
where they ain't never heard of me.  
See if I couldn't find us a little place. Then

you and Jimmie could come on out later.  
They would never know who we were. We  
could be safe out there the rest of our lives.  
When did you get this idea, Jim?  
I didn't get it. It just kinda come over me.  
The way getting older comes over you.  
All of a sudden, you look at things different  
than the way you did five years ago.  
All of a sudden, I knew this was  
the only thing in the world I wanted.  
You and me and Jimmie,  
together on a little place somewhere.  
It's a wonderful idea, Jim.  
It's wonderful, but it's no use.

- Why not?
- It's too late.
- Why? Mark done it.
- Eight years ago.

But you couldn't. Not now.  
You're too well known.  
The only reason Mark doesn't arrest you  
is that he's Mark and you're his friend.  
But you can't depend  
on things like that forever.  
One of these days, the federal officers'll  
pick up your trail. That'll be the end of it.  
They'll never give up, not as long as you live.  
What about South America? We can meet  
in New Orleans, get on a boat and...

What's the matter, Peggy?  
Don't you love me?

- You didn't have to ask that.
- I've changed, you know.

I'm different now, Peg. I just want  
to be somewhere. Don't you understand?  
Look, darling.  
If it were just you and me, I'd do it.  
I'd go with you this very minute  
anywhere in the world you wanted to go.  
But it's not just you and me.  
There's Jimmie too.

- We can take him with us.
- No, Jim.

We could run and hide



and dodge the law the rest of our lives.

Not a little boy like him.

He wouldn't understand. Don't you see?

Jimmie.

- Give me another minute, will you?

- It's quarter past ten, Jimmie.

It's all right. I've got time, they're walking.

They could have run some too, you know.

All right. Just one more minute.

- Somebody's after you.

- Never mind that. Listen.

A year from now, if I come back,  
if I've been all right the whole year,  
will you talk to me about it?

- No, it's no use. It's too late.

- Just talk to me, that's all.

Maybe you'll feel different.

Something might have happened.

Nobody knows what can happen in a year.

But you gotta say

you'll talk to me about it again.

I will.

We can make it, honey. We can make it.

You just wait and see.

- Where are you, Grandma?

- Look...

Listen to me, Mark.

I got to have five minutes more.

You ain't got the time.

I know what I'm doing. Those guys don't have  
any horses. What are they gonna do? Fly?

- What do you want five minutes for?

- I want to see my kid.

- No, you can't.

- Now look...

I'm sorry but my mind is made up.

So get him, honey.

I don't care how you do it

but get him in this room.

- Are you trying to mess everything up?

- I just want to see my kid.

- How can I fix it so he won't know?

- You can do it. You'll think of something.

But I ain't leaving until I see him.

Alone, me and him, right here in this room.

I don't care if there's 300 brothers.

Can you hurry it up?

I'll try.

It's been eight years

since I've seen my own kid.

And it ain't gonna be another eight years

before I see him again.

You wait here. I'm surely glad

you don't drop in every morning.

- Where's Charlie?

- Stepped outside.

- Tell him to come in here right away.

- Sure.

Jimmie. Jimmie Walsh. Jimmie!

- Ain't that your ma calling?

- Yes, sir.

Come here. Hurry, Jimmie.

But, Ma! All the other fellas...

Never mind the other fellas. Molly wants

to tell you something. Come on with me.

- Do you know his horse?

- I know it.

- Who learned you to bust into a room?

- Nobody.

Don't ever do it again. You knock first and

wait till somebody answers. Understand?

Yes, sir.

Now, shut the door.

Miss Molly Harris said you wanted to see me.

- Yeah. That's right.

- What about?

I'll tell you in a minute.

- How old are you?

- Nine.

- You're eight and a half.

- How'd you know?

I've got my ways.

- What grade are you in?

- Third. Honest.

You know what grade I was in

when I was your age?

- What?

- The seventh.

- At eight and a half?  
- Well... I was in the sixth, anyway.  
You was in the sixth grade  
at eight and a half?  
I wasn't far from it.  
Are you really Jimmie Ringo?  
Sure I am. What do you mean?  
How come you didn't draw  
when I kicked in that door?  
Draw on an unarmed man?  
I never did that in my life.  
You gotta give everybody  
a fair chance, don't you?  
Did you ever meet Wyatt Earp?  
Yeah. I seen him once or twice.  
Was he the toughest man you ever saw?  
In the bunch I ran with, we'd have spanked  
Wyatt Earp's britches with his own pistol.  
- Really?  
- The real tough ones would laugh at Earp.  
- Who is the toughest one you ever saw?  
- You mean the real toughest?  
Yes, sir. Besides you.  
I guess I've never seen anybody any tougher  
than a fella you've got here in your own town.  
- Fella by the name of Mark Strett.  
- Marshal Mark Strett?  
- He's the toughest man I ever met.  
- But he don't even carry a gun.  
He don't have to, son.  
He can handle them barehanded.  
And we've been calling him a softy.  
All I can say is,  
don't you ever tangle with that softy.  
No, sir.  
What's the matter?  
Nothing.  
- I thought Jimmie Ringo was in here.  
- He was. Had a drink where you're standing.  
- Ain't left town, has he?  
- Not yet. He got held up back there.  
Well.  
You watch here.  
Now I'll tell you what I wanted with you.

You see them kids out front?

- Yes.

- Why ain't they in school?

We come down to see what's going on.

They got no business hanging around by a saloon. I want you to get them out of there.

- But I don't know if I can or not.

- What do you mean, you don't know?

When I asked for somebody to handle this, Miss Harris said you're the smartest kid here.

- That's why I've sent for you.

- I'll try.

Don't try. You do it. You get them boys out of there the way Mark Strett would. Understand?

- Yes, sir.

- That's a good boy.

Guess we picked out the right fella.

He's all right.

You got a good boy, Mrs Walsh.

Take a look outside, Molly.

Get ready.

All clear.

Goodbye, ma'am.

You take good care of yourself.

Goodbye.

Goodbye, son.

Goodbye. I hope I see you again sometime.

- What about next year?

- Will you really?

You be watching for me, a year from today.

- Sorry, Jimmie.

- Sorry?

A year ain't nothing.

I can hide out that long. Look out for her.

- You bet.

- I'm much obliged to you, Mark.

That's all right, partner.

Looks like you're gonna make it after all.

Here he comes.

- I got Charlie out to head them off.

- Keep an eye on the kid for me.

- I'll watch him.

- I'll see you a year from now.

What you fellas doing up there?

Drop them guns. Drop them!  
Is that you, Charlie?  
Come on down here.  
These the fellas you meant?  
Come on out, you fellas.  
These them?  
Yeah. That's two of them.  
I told you you was wasting your time.  
Much obliged, Charlie.  
If I was you, I'd hit Mark for a raise. So long.  
How about it, Ringo?  
Get his foot out of the stirrup.  
I ought to give you this  
square in the belly, both barrels.  
- Hunt Bromley got Ringo.  
- Hunt Bromley got Ringo.  
- No! No, Jimmie.  
- Please, Ma.  
Hear that? Hunt Bromley shot Ringo.  
Please, Ma, please!  
We gotta go back, please!  
No, Jimmie, no. Come on.  
We've got to go home.  
Come on, get away. Don't gawk at him.  
We got the doctor coming.  
Just lay still and you'll be all right.  
That boy... Hunt.  
- We got him. He ain't getting away with it.  
- No.  
I drew first. I was ahead of him.  
I seen it. You don't have to say that.  
I seen who drew first.  
You heard what I said, Mark. I drew first.  
Now don't argue with me.  
I know what I'm doing.  
You don't have to do me no favours, pappy.  
Keep your mouth shut.  
If I was doing you a favour...  
I'd let them hang you right now  
and get it all over with.  
But I don't want you to get off that light.  
I want you to go on being a big, tough gunny.  
I want you to... see what it means  
to have to live like a big, tough gunny.

So don't thank me yet, partner.

You'll see what I mean.

Just...

wait.

Now, you look h...

- Don't say anything, Hunt. Don't talk to me.

- You can't...

Don't talk to me, I tell you.

Or I'll kill you if you do. You understand?

Now, listen to me, yellow-belly.

Ringo's fixed you good. You're gonna get it exactly like you gave it to him.

Because there's a thousand cheap squirts like you waiting right now for the chance to kill

the man that killed Jimmie Ringo.

But it ain't gonna be here, sonny.

Not in my territory. So get going now.

Get killed somewhere else.

And that's just the beginning, tough boy.

I'm awful sorry but there ain't no more room.

Ain't another seat left in the place.

- Is Mark inside?

- Yes, ma'am. He's inside.

Would you tell him

Mrs Ringo would like to see him?

- Mrs Jimmie Ringo?

- Mrs Jimmie Ringo.

And his boy.

Yes, ma'am, Mrs Ringo.

Come on in, Peggy.