

A BULLET HAS TAKEN ANOTHER GOOD, HARDWORKING FATHER AND HUSBAND FROM HIS FAMILY.


I ONLY MET RICK COOLIDGE THREE DAYS AGO WHEN HE INVITED TONTO AND I INTO HIS HOME FOR A WARM MEAL AND TO MEET HIS FAMILY. THEY'RE GOOD PEOPLE THAT DESERVED BETTER THAN THIS.

WE CAME TO RED RIVER BECAUSE RICK COOLIDGE ASKED US TO LOOK INTO A SERIES OF STAGECOACH AND BANK ROBBERIES THAT WERE BANKRUPTING THE TOWN.


RICK'S FAMILY AND MANY OTHER RANCHERS DESPERATELY NEED THE BANK'S INSURANCE COMPANY TO REIMBURSE THEIR SAVINGS IF THEY'RE GOING TO BE ABLE TO KEEP THEIR RANCHES GOING THROUGH THE COMING WINTER.

LIFE IS HARD ENOUGH WITHOUT THIEVES AND CUTTHROATS ADDING TO A PERSON'S PROBLEMS. THE WORST OF IT, THE PART THAT'S KEPT ME UP THREE NIGHTS STRAIGHT, IS RICK TOOK A BULLET THAT WAS MEANT FOR ME.


THREE NIGHTS AGO.




THE SHOOTER LIT OUT FAST AND WAS A GOOD DISTANCE AWAY BY THE TIME TONTO FOUND HIS HIDING SPOT.




THE CASING WAS BIGGER THAN ANYTHING WE'D SEEN.



THERE WAS NO MYSTERY ABOUT WHO FIRED IT.



I FOUND TWO SETS OF TRACKS.



ONE MAN LIT THE FIRE AND THE OTHER SHOT THIS.

AND FROM A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE.

PROBABLY A WITWORTH OR KERR. MAYBE EVEN A KENTUCKY RIFLE.

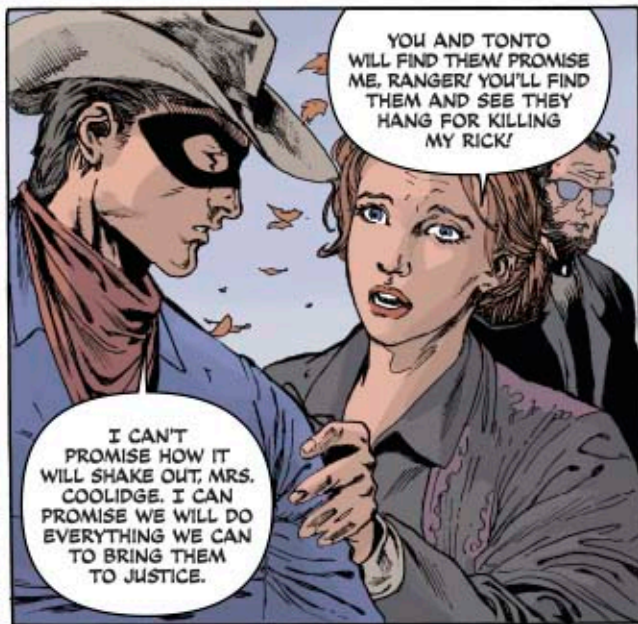


THE CHOICE OF RIFLE AND THE HAND ROLLED AMMUNITION WITH THE SYMBOL ENGRAVED ON IT MEANS THE KILLER OR KILLERS WANT PEOPLE TO REMEMBER THEM.



IT ALSO SAYS THEY'RE NOT AFRAID OF GETTING CAUGHT.

RANGER!



YOU AND TONTO WILL FIND THEM! PROMISE ME, RANGER! YOU'LL FIND THEM AND SEE THEY HANG FOR KILLING MY RICK!

I CAN'T PROMISE HOW IT WILL SHAKE OUT, MRS. COOLIDGE. I CAN PROMISE WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO BRING THEM TO JUSTICE.



I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* I'M GOING TO DO. I CAN'T RUN THIS RANCH *WITHOUT* THE MONEY WE'RE OWED FROM THE BANK.

YOU SEE HOW MANY MOUTHS I HAVE TO FEED, NOT COUNTING THE MEN WE EMPLOY.



YOUR CHILDREN WILL *NOT* STARVE. THAT I CAN PROMISE YOU.

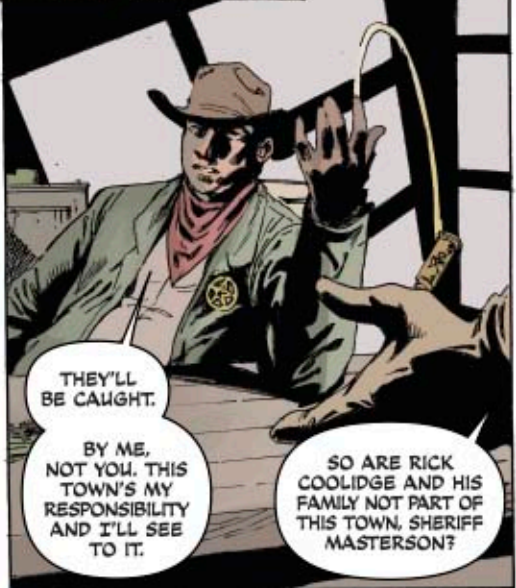


"THE VERY SAME PEOPLE YOU'RE HUNTING KILLED RICK COOLIDGE IN COLD BLOOD."



IT DOESN'T SEEM SMART TO BE LEAVING EVIDENCE LYIN' ABOUT.

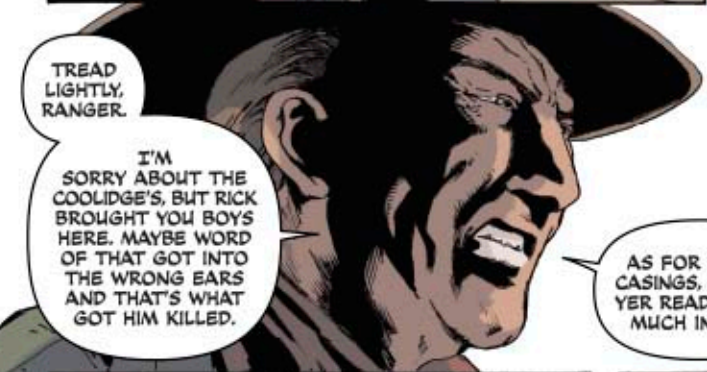
IT IS BRAZEN AND FEARLESS. ALMOST LIKE THEY KNOW THEY CANNOT BE CAUGHT.



THEY'LL BE CAUGHT.

BY ME, NOT YOU. THIS TOWN'S MY RESPONSIBILITY AND I'LL SEE TO IT.

SO ARE RICK COOLIDGE AND HIS FAMILY NOT PART OF THIS TOWN, SHERIFF MASTERSON?



TREAD LIGHTLY, RANGER.

I'M SORRY ABOUT THE COOLIDGE'S, BUT RICK BROUGHT YOU BOYS HERE. MAYBE WORD OF THAT GOT INTO THE WRONG EARS AND THAT'S WHAT GOT HIM KILLED.

AS FOR THESE CASINGS, I THINK YER READIN' TOO MUCH INTO IT.



I DISAGREE.



THOUGHT YOU MIGHT.

ANYONE YOU KNOW ROLL THEIR OWN AMMO?



CHECK WITH THE HAYES BOYS UP THE SOUTH RIDGE.

THEY GOT A LITTLE HOMETOWN BUSINESS, AMMO, KNIVES AND ASSORTED THINGS OF THAT NATURE.

PAY THEM A VISIT IF YOU LIKE. I GOT WORK TO DO.



THE HAYES BROTHERS MAY NOT APPRECIATE VISITORS.

I AGREE.

STILL, WE HAVE TO TALK TO THEM.

KEEP OUT!



HELLO? IS ANYONE HERE?

I DON'T LIKE THIS.