

**Former jailbird, Rig, unknowingly drives the stage when his former girl friend is killed. He is forced into caring for her three orphan kids . Protecting them and solving the mystery of a map carved on a silver cross the mother was carrying. Unknowingly defending himself from the threat of the murdering renegade Turbusio and his outlaw son Cortez. They were desperately trying to get the silver cross inscribed “Cuatro”, which was the one Rig held in his hand. Rig stated, “ Any man wearing that Turbusio tattoo is a murderer many times over and shooting him will save their family the disgrace of a son’s hanging.”**

### **The Cuatro Cross**

**“ Damnit all to hell doc, there’s nothing I could do. Bullets were flying all around me as we raced away. Are you sure she’s dead?” Doc Peters replied, “ Rig you would be dead too if you got hit in the back with a fifty caliber Whitworth bullet. Why didn’t you let’em have the damn strong box. I’ll bet there wasn’t fifty dollars in gold in it. This is Annie Slade. She sure didn’t deserve to be killed in a cheap stage hold up. Probably that damn Cortez. This sounds just like something he would do. He’ll hang for sure killing a woman. Rig you sure played hell getting her killed . Man she’s got three little kids and no husband .” Rig exclaimed, “ Jesus Christ! Doc, are you sure? I didn’t recognize her. It cain’t be. The Annie Slade I knew was a much prettier girl. She used to work at the Yellow Bird Saloon . I had some great times with her. I was trying to get money to keep up with her when I got caught stealin cows. You sure this is the same woman?” Doc replied , “Hell , she’s like you . Five years in prison sure didn’t help your looks. I’ll bet she didn’t recognize you either with that beard. I didn’t know you myself. I’d heard you got the Stage job. When did you get in?” Rig said, “ Only been here in Tucson for a week. This was my first round trip to Nogales. I never paid any attention to the passengers. Christ almighty Doc ! I didn’t kill her. I was just doin my job and got the jump . My horses were fresh. We**

easily out ran'em. When Boggs gets here tell him I went to get something to eat if he wants the story." Doc said, " Sheriff Boggs never liked Annie . Had no use for saloon girls. I'm sure you'll tell him a good story, but who's gonna tell the story to her kids and who's gonna feed them. Rig ,you and Boggs better think about that. I've never seen her with much food in her cabin. Boggs can see to a hole in Boot Hill ,but those little kids need taken care of. Maybe instead of stuffin your face , you think about those kids. You and Boggs better get some one out there. Little Jenny is mighty grown up for a seven year old but she cain't do a whole lot with them two boys." Rig sharply said, " What the hell do you expect me to do? They ain't my kids!" Doc said, "Maybe yes and maybe no Rig. I know you had a few go rounds with her after Jack was killed. Too bad she went to the saloon to work, but it happens to a lotta single girls."

Rig exploded with , " Hell no! Don't you go laying them on me. I wasn't even around when any of them was born!" Doc said, " You didn't have to be here Rig or don't you know how that works. I ain't saying you fathered them. I don't care who fathered them. They need help and you're the one that got Annie killed and I am saying that." Rig walked off cursing saying, " I need a drink!"

Later sheriff Boggs said, ' Doc Peters says you're gonna see to Annie's kids. That sure takes worry off of me." Rig exploded , " No damnit! Peters is lying. I never told him any such thing. I ain't got time for a bunch of brats. Hell, I have to borrow money to live on until I get a payday. ' Boggs said. " Doc says it was your fault she was killed and them kids need to be seen after." Rig exclaimed mad, " You too! Damnit, it wasn't me that shot her. I was just driving the stage. Of all the crazy damn ideas. What's got into you people. Blame the Butterfield Stage line why don't you . They sold her the ride . What was she doin in Nogales anyway with three kids at home?" Boggs replied, "I don't know . None of my business. Where you stayin, if I need to get your mark on my report." Rig said " Sam let me stay at the livery Barn until I can get a place. He needed a lotta horse droppin moved. That's my job when I ain't runnin. Damn, I'm beginning to wish I'd stayed in Yuma prison." Boggs said , "'You leave other folks cattle alone

**or you'll be right back there. Look I've got a double eagle in fine money at the jail, I can loan until you get paid. Come with me I'll get it. There's some other stuff too." Rig was happy to follow and get the money loan. Maybe now he could get something descent to eat.**

**At the jail Boggs said, " Put your mark right here. This is a tab for twenty dollars you owe the sheriff's office. Oh ! and here's Annie's stuff from the stage. You'll need to take it to her place with you." Rig exploded, " Damn! I told you I'm not seeing to no kids. What the hell is it with you and doc? They ain't my problem. I don't want this stuff of Annies and damnit you can keep your twenty dollars!" Boggs said, ' Ain't mine. I don't want it here and I loaned you the money not the dead Annie. You can give that stuff to her kids. Maybe there's something to eat in that bag. Them kids are probably pretty hungry by now. Annie's been gone for three days. Look, I'll run you out there in the buggy and we can see how they're doin.'" Rig replied, " Hell no Boggs . You go if you want to, I'm stayin in town." Boggs replied, ' Ok if that's how you feel, but I gotta put you in Jail until we can clear you. Somebody shot Annie and you said it weren't you, but I don't know that for sure. Maybe you and Annie had a lovers quarrel or something. You two used to run together I've heard.'" Rig exploded again with, "Christ Almighty Damn! I don't believe it. You're gonna lock me up if I don't go with you to Annie's place." Boggs said, " Yeah, I'll back off a little knowing where I can find you. Annie didn't have a horse. Sold it to buy food. It's eight miles out to her place, but you already know that don't you? It's a long walk. Let's get your stuff at Sam's and get out there. It'll only be a couple of days until we can find a home for them kids.' Rig said, ' Of all the lame brained things I ever heard of ! Boggs you ain't no sheriff, you're a damn fool. What makes you think I'll stay out there? "**  
**Boggs replied, "That eight mile walk ought to do it. Look you're tired and hungry , not thinkin right. Let's go , it'll only be for couple days and I'll get right on finding a home for them kids."**

**Rig argued and cursed all the way to Annie's farm house but shut up the minute he saw the kids. Three ragged dirty little kids lookin like they hadn't had good food for quite a while. Jenny the**

girl and a pair of four year old boys. They were twins. Boggs was amazed at the change in Rig after seeing the kids. He said, “ Rig see what kinda food they have. Maybe I can bring something out tomorrow.” Jenny asked, “ Where’s Mommy? She’s been gone a long time.” The little girl had tears in her eyes. Boggs replied, “ Jenny, you know me, this is mister Riggs. He’ll tell you about your mother. He’s gonna stay with you a few days. Rig use your own judgment on what you say. Did you hear me? I’ve gotta get back to town.” He was amazed at Rigs who said nothing but just waved a hand at him as he went toward the house with the kids. Boggs shouted, “ I’ll bring out some grub tomorrow!”

Rig was in shock! Those two twins were the spittin image of him as a kid. They were his, no doubt about it! The shock and realization had him ignoring Jenny as she tried to tell him they had nothing to eat but some dried apples. There were beans and potatoes, but she didn’t know how to cook’em. Rig finally heard what she said and began looking around the kitchen for things. There was half a slab of bacon hanging in a corner. Jenny was saying , “ Mommy left us hard biscuits jam and a bunch of cooked bacon, but we ate everything. She said Moses was coming over from town and he’d see to us while she was gone, but he never came. Do you know how to cook mister Rig?” Rig said, “ I make out. We’ll get some taters goin right away and I’ll carve some bacon. Can you get me some water from your rain barrel. Looks like the flower is all gone. How about some cornbread? Your mom have a can of bacon grease. Hey, what about eggs, I see chickens out back! Jenny replied “ yes sir , we have a whole basket of eggs, Chuckie and Scott help me find ‘em every day but we don’t eat’em . Mommy sells’em at the store.” Rig exclaimed , “ What did you say their names are ? The twins I mean.” Her answer turned him pale realizing where their names came from. Charles Scott Riggs convicted of cattle rustling five years ago. Thinking, “ What the hell do I do now?” as he got food going.

It was later that evening when he was glad the two boys were too young to understand their mother wouldn’t be coming home. Rig told Jenny she had died on her way home from

**Nogales. The little girl cried herself to sleep. Rig looked at the little girl as he tenderly pulled a sheet over her. He was thinking, “ No, I won’t be leaving. I’ve got kids to take care of, but whatta I do about my stage job? Give it up? I gotta have some way to make money! That walk to town, I don’t wanna do, but it’ll only be twice a week and maybe I can get a ride from the farmers comin and goin.”**

**It was the following day when he decided that the kids would go with him on his runs if he could find no one to watch over them while he was gone. “Like it or not Mister Butterfield either gave his kids a free ride or get another driver.” this was his thinking and he would insist on carrying along a rifle and belt gun. He had to make two trips a week and decided he would swing by his place and pick up the kids. The run was mostly mail and there’d be plenty of room. It was a little bit outta the way, but that eight mile walk was too much for the little guys. One thing he didn’t consider was the danger he might be putting the kids in. Their mother was killed in an attempted robbery on that run. It was an over night run and Doc Parker took pity on him agreeing to let the kids stay over night at his place on occasion. Boggs even said, ‘ I’ll put’em up in Jail Rig. They might like it.” This was the arrangement and it was difficult with all the shuffling around, but Jenny became the boss and took care of her brothers like a mother hen. It became a rare thing to have the kids on board, but it did happen occasionally.**

**Four weeks along and Rig was dickering for a horse. There was an old buggy in the tool shed at the farm. Rig worked it over. repairing split boads and greasing everything. He found harness, but it needed a lot of work. Jenny helped in everything he did and he found himself loving her more every day. She and the boys called him Poppa. He was their father and for the first time in his life taking on responsibility. Sam was a big help in finding him a horse. It had been spoiled and wouldn’t be ridden, but Rig figured he didn’t have to ride. A pulling horse is what he needed and he paid hog feed price for the horse. Unknown to Butterfield they trained his horse for him. Rig had ol’Blue, he called him, placed in the four up team between change stations and tethered the**

stage horse behind. Beginning as a wheeler, he could do nothing but go forward and pull when tickled with the whip. He was soon working as a lead and it was time to put him to work on the buggy. He borrowed a horse from Sam to walk with Blue until he accepted his role as a single buggy horse. At times things got a little exciting, but soon Jenny was driving and loved it.

“What was in the bag Annie was carrying when she was killed ?” This question coming from sheriff Boggs . Rig wondered when he would hear that question because in her bag ,he had found a roughly made silver cross, black with age. He also found a letter to Annie from Father Paul in Nogales saying how pleased he was , she had contacted him and expressing sympathy for the loss of her husband Jack. In the letter he mentioned the silver cross she was to pick up and the interest many had in buying it. He realized a number of years had passed, but he still had the cross and it would bring her a little money. He would be pleased to give it to her.”

Rig was curious and wondering if Annie had been killed because of the cross. He was also interested in where she had gotten Thirty dollars in gold coin, that was also in the bag with her personal items. Rig decided to appear dumb about the cross, and said, “ Just some clothes and personal items. There was thirty dollars in gold coins and that was it. I was surprised to find the money.” Boggs replied,” She got the money from me. I bought Jack Slade’s two pistols from her. Gave her two double eagles so she could make this trip to Nogales. A trip she wanted to make ever since Jack was killed. Five years is a long time , but she needed to go awful bad, I guess. She sure was thrilled to get my money. Rig , we just never know what tomorrow will bring. How’re the kids doing by the way. Been meaning to come out there. Doc and I are still lookin for a home for those kids.”

Rig said, “ Boggs I’ve decided to stay around and make a home for them. They need a home and so do I . The place belonged to Jack. He had proved up on it, so Annie’s kids now own the place. They’re great kids . I’m gonna be their Daddy as long as they want me. I guess they kinda grew on me some. You know pretty much how things have been going. They’ve been

through enough.” Boggs said, “ Doc Pete will sure be pleased . I know I am. They’re real well behaved and Rigg, they love you man. They all call you their Poppa. That ought to keep you outta trouble.” Rig replied, “ Yeah, outta trouble! I’ve got all I can handle making a home for them. No Boggs , I’m all they’ve got and I don’t plan on putting that at risk. I do have a question . Annie went to Nogales to see a Father Paul. Why would she do that?”

Boggs replied, ‘ Mostly rumors and campfire tales, I think., but the stories say, Some how that Vasquez Mission in Nogales was robbed by two of the Turbusio Bandits. They took the place over at night , killed a couple staying there and got away with a good number of mission art works . Most of it was Franciscan hand made silver. Jack Slade was sheriff of north Nogales on the American side and managed to locate the two Bandits involved. During a shoot out , he recovered all of the stolen silver returning it to Father Paul at the mission. Unfortunately he was wounded and taken in by Father Paul. He lingered for weeks finally dying from his wounds. At that time Annie was living on the Slade Ranch with their daughter Jenny. They had planned on relocating to Nogales and this happened before the move could be made. Annie had always been a little wild and being a good looker she was chased by many of the rounder cowhands looking for a good time . You , of all people should know all about that. Her story down hill is kinda tragic. Doc and I were both hoping this trip to Nogales was something that would put her on her feet again. Instead, it put her in her grave. We were told nothing and it’s just a guess that Jack left Annie something valuable in the possession of Father Paul. I’ve written him requesting any information he could give me. I’ll get word to you if I hear anything.”

What Rig and Boggs had little knowledge of was the history behind the killing of Annie. A Mule train Massacre in 1780 by , it was said,Yaqui indians happened between the towns of Nogales and Senora , Mexico. A Mule Train of treasure was being transported to Senora, for eventual shipment to Spain. It was said to be over a hundred gold bars at twelve pounds each and

**upward of two hundred silver bars , Twelve of which, were smelted in the shape of a cross and bearing a number. Every member of the train was killed and the treasure has never been found. Some of the less valuable pieces over the years became donations to local missions.**

**The Mexican raider, Turbusio, a Seminole half breed renegade and murderer was attacking an encampment of Yaqui's. He wounded a young man that wore a perfectly hand crafted cross of silver. In fear for his life the young Yaqui passed on to Turbusio his grand father's story of the Mule Train massacre where his cross came from. He also described twelve silver crosses that were covered with religious inscriptions. The one numbered Cuatro contained rough inscriptions like a map. The young man described a cave where the silver crosses were hidden , but the location he described was a lie to fool them and gain his freedom. Turbusio, terribly angered, recaptured and tortured the young man finally shooting him and left to die. The young man , desperately wounded, but still living, managed to get the Twelve Cross location to Father Paul before he died. The one numbered Cuatro with inscriptions like a map; Turbusio had taken this to be a map to the treasure from the massacre. He desperately wanted that Cuatro cross.**

**It was here that the Jack Slade story began. Turbusio had two of his men rob the Mission when he learned of the crosses being on display there. They were of low grade silver and not considered too valuable and the theft was easy. . Once returned, Father Paul offered Jack the rough cast number as a reward for his recovery of the stolen art works. It was not display suitable for the mission. It was ugly and of poor grade, but still worth money. Jack asked father Paul to hold it for his wife Annie. She would come to Nogales and pick it up . It was the Cuatro Cross. Turburio had pleaded with Father Paul to sell him the ugly silver cross and failing that to please notify him when Annie came to receive it. He would make her a generous offer. Father Paul insured they were safely hidden. It was years later that he was to learn the whereabouts of Annie Slade and make contact with her.**

**Unknowingly, Father Paul had Annie killed .Thinking he was doing her a favor, he contacted a friend of Turbusio to get her a quick sale for that silver cross. Turbusio, was a thief before anything else. Why pay good money when he could stop the stage and take the cross. This was the plan.**

**What only Turbusio knew, was Annie's death was an accident. It was pure fate that placed Rig in Nogales with a stage coach for her ill fated trip home. He would never know that the bullet that killed Annie was meant for him as driver of the stage coach. Tubursio had no intention of killing her. It was the pitching of the stage that put the bullet through the back of the stage below the driver's seat. Turbusio had been seated to shoot the Stage driver stopping the coach. It was a bad location he had chosen. Too many scrub trees and brush for a clear view as the coach approached and finally having to try shooting after it passed his position. He and his son Cortez had attempted the robbery alone because they didn't want news to get out why they were after a poor looking silver cross. They both returned to Mexico Nogales to let things die down, but Turbusio still dreamed of that treasure.**

**He and his son began making plans to locate the Cuatro Cross. There had been no mention of it in any accounts of the killing of Annie Slade. Rig, the stage coach driver was the only answer. Maybe he had the cross or maybe the sheriff. They began gathering information on both men. Being outlaws they came to the conclusion that sheriff Boggs had stolen the cross from Annie's possessions and probably had it locked in his Jail Safe. They began making plans to rob the sheriff's office. Cortez son of Turbusio was a wanted killer and outlaw. Though not as well known as his Father, there was a reward out for him Dead or Alive. He wasn't worried, his sketch on the wanted poster could easily match a thousand Mexicans his size. He took the name Peblo Verdugo and went to Tucson, claiming to be on his way to Phoenix. He planned to report a phony stolen horse story to Sheriff Boggs so he could look over the Jail and figure out how best to rob it. He had no idea that he was riding a horse carrying**

**the Bar D or what most folks called the Hatchet brand. It was one of many stolen by the Turbusio gang members.**

**They were all good horses and Cortez had selected the best looking one. He had not considered the fact that it was stolen from the Hatchet Ranch north west of Nogales. Boggs had half a dozen reports over the past two years concerning stolen horses and here standing at his hitch rail could be one. Casually he asked questions of Cortez and took note of his being well armed. Riding a stolen horse and asking about another one. Bogg's said, " Mister Verdugo, I think I can help you with that stolen horse you're looking for." In great surprise Cortez spun around to find Boggs holding a cocked pistol And saying, " Don't move ! Mister you're under arrest! That's a stolen horse you're riding! You better have a good story. I'm taking your gun. Don't make things difficult. Get in that cell." Cortez pleaded that he had borrowed the horse from a friend. Boggs replied , " Mister I don't think the Hatchet folks will consider you a friend. Horse stealing carries a hanging . You know that." Cortez had a first hand opportunity to see the sheriff's safe and the inside of Jail. This was not going as planned. It would be a week before Turburio would hear that his son was locked up for horse stealing and could face a hanging. Any search for the Cuatro Cross was gonna have to wait. He had a Jail break to plan.**

**It was on a stage run while leaving the kids in town, that Rig found that Boggs had a Mexican horse thief locked up. They couldn't stay at the Jail, Rig would take them with him. The kids loved going along. While talking to Boggs , Rig could easily see the cell where Cortez was locked up. Like most days in Tucson , it was sweltering hot and the jail was not built for comfort of the inmates. Cortez was without a shirt and Rig made a startling discovery. There was a small cross tattooed over his heart. Rig said, " Bogg's can we go outside? I need to tell you something. Cain't talk in here . Too hot." Boggs followed him outside curious to hear what Rig wanted. Rig said, " Didn't wanna say anything in there, but the Turbusio Raiders all carry a cross tattoo over their heart. I saw a couple in prison. That man you've got locked up is a gang member and fit's the description of Cortez**

**,Turbusio's son. Bogg's you may have a big catch in there and you're gonna need a couple of Deputies. You can expect an attempted Jail Break. Before you ask. No I've got three kids to worry about. Get yourself a couple of old soldiers, according to the prisoners that I met, old soldiers don't show fear. No one wants to brace one in a gunfight. You might get lucky and kill one but it's gonna cost you too; if you live through it. You'll find that most welcome a little extra money . There must be fifty you know of here in town. Get a couple of those. You won't lose a prisoner, but you may need a few holes in Boot Hill. Oh! and one big thing don't tie their hands with any talk of arresting anyone. That's a sure fire way to get your Deputies killed." Boggs shocked exclaimed, " My God! Never entered my mind and I see that cross every day or so. Damn Rig , I'm sure glad you warned me! I'll get ol'Smokey Jiles and Tom Colder. You're right. I wouldn't wanna brace either one of them . There's a good reason they made it to be fifty years old. Rig, I'm sure glad you came by. You've got me worried some. I'll get some men here right away. Knowing Turbusio, he could try a Jail break in broad daylight." Rig said, " The talk in Prison says daybreak is the best time for a Jail break Surprise and no saddled horses helps for a getaway. Turbusio may not be that smart, but you can bet your roll there'll be a jail break attempt if that man is Cortez. You might alert the folks to try and keep the streets clear. When is a Territorial Judge coming through Tucson?" Boggs said , " That won't happen. Gotta take the prisoners to Chandler for Trial. We put leg chains on all before loading in a closed hog wagon and we travel non stop. The lucky ones go to Yuma like you did. Other's don't make it past Boot Hill. Chandler is a Hang town. I'll get him on the road as soon as I can. Horse stealing is bad enough to get him hung and if he is Cortez, He'll be a real prize."**

**Neither Boggs or Rig knew how close they were to describing what was in Turbusio's mind. What they didn't figure on was the number of Raiders he would send to free Cortez. it was two days after his talk with Boggs that Rig learned in Nogales that a virtual army of fourteen bandits had been seen gathered just south of town . It was rumored that it was**

**Turbusio's band of outlaws. Rig was scared. That Band would terrorize Tucson and no one would be safe.**

**He passed this information on to Boggs and said , “ The word around Nogales is that you have Cortez in your Jail. Get him on the road to Chandler immediately and let it be known that any attempt to free him will mean his instant death. His guards will be directed to shoot him at the first indication of an attack. This should throw a little wrinkle into Turbusio's attempt of a Jail break. This might hold him off and plan for a jail break in Chandler. He probably don't know, but it'll take an Army to get inside the Chandler Garrison. His fourteen bandits aren't half enough. The big problem is, there's no way to identify your prisoner as Cortez when he goes to trial or even charge him with horse stealing. Turbusio is his own worst enemy. If he'd let things go their course Cortez would most likely be set free for lack of evidence.” Boggs was shocked and really concerned. He realized that Rig was right and asked, “ Rig, if I get a coach and four deputies , can you make a run up to Chandler with me. You seem to know just how a criminal like Turbusio thinks and I'll agree to killing the prisoner at first sign of an attack. I won't do it of course, but the threat might hold off Turbusio. You make good sense and I'd love to have you with me. You'll miss a couple runs to Nogales, but I'll cover the loss for you. If we can prove he is Cortez, you'll be in for a big reward. Whatta you say? ” Rig replied, “ Boggs, I've got three kids to think of. I'm all they've got, but everyday is risky driving that stage. Yeah, I'll side you on the trip and I'll tell you, I'll gladly shoot Cortez for you . it won't bother me at all executing a murderer, especially since it was probably him that killed Annie Slade. Ok, when do we leave with Cortez, the sooner the better.”**

**Boggs replied, “ No , I won't hear of that. The man could be innocent.” Rig stated, “ Any man wearing that tattoo is a murderer many times over and shooting will save their family the disgrace of a son's hanging. You know Boggs, you're a good man, but it's because of men like you that Yuma is full of murderers instead of Boot Hill. Every one is laughing at the law as their best friend. Yeah , I'll side you to a point but no guarantees if things**

**go south on us. I've got three little ones to protect and raise. I'll go along but you better understand if it comes to root hog or die, I'm gonna put Cortez in the roots."**

**Excitement was running high in Tucson. Secrets are hard to keep and news of Cortez in Jail was soon on everyone's lips. Men were collecting in the saloons and soon a little drinking and arguments began between some cowhands and Mexicans. Bogg's was called out when things got nasty at the Stockman's Saloon and Roadhouse. Two young drunk cowhands were threatening to shoot a Mexican cowhand that favored Cortez. When Bogg's entered, he shouted " Hold it! You two , drop your guns! Now!" they did but it wasn't in Bogg's favor. One of the pistols was a single action colt discharging as it hit the floor. Boggs screamed as the bullet hit his foot . Everything stopped as he fell to the floor clutching his leg. The Bar keep and two others ran to his side. In much pain , Boggs was cursing the two ranch hands as he was helped getting his boot off. The bullet had cut through his instep and filling his boot with blood. Doc Peter's was called and came running.**

**It was almost midnight when the foot had been cleaned and bandaged. Boggs was cursing when Peter's said, " It's just a bad cut, but you're gonna have to be off it for a week at least. Rig told me of your plan to move Cortez. I agreed to keep his kids for a few days, but man; this can really get bad now. You cain't take Cortez to Chandler . You better get Rig in here and get some other plan put together, but you ain't going nowhere. That foot gets infected and mister you lose a foot. I'll run out in the morning and get Rig, but you just better plan on staying right here . Cuss all you want to, but here you stay."**

**The following morning Rig listened to Bogg's cursing and said, " We don't have a chance stopping that bunch coming in here even if you turn Cortez loose. I been studyin what to do since Doc told me of the shooting. I don't wanna do it ,but gimme a damn Badge and a letter to the man in Chandler I have to deliver Coretez to. I'll get Smokey and Tom Colder. We'll take that hog wagon of yours and get on the trail and Bogg's I ain't promising you nothing. That bunch of murderers come to Tucson**

**and nobody is safe. You better get ready to do some killing if we don't make it to Chandler. Turbusio will tare this town apart and there's probably a lotta Mexicans here that'll help him out. Better wish us luck, we'll be leaving right away. Thanks Doc and tell the kids not to worry ol' Poppa will be gittin back in a few days. Boggs let's get that letter and badge together. I wanna get outta here."**

**Later that day, he told Smokey and Tom his plans. He had three extra horses saddled and ready to go. They would be trailed behind the wagon. In the event they saw no chance if they were attacked, Cortez would be shot and they would get away on the saddle horses and return to Tucson for the certain attack by Turbusio. Both were surprised at his willingness to kill the prisoner, but agreed it was the best plan considering how outnumbered they would be. It would be suicide to try and fight. Rig said, " I'm not concerned with killing Cortez, it's three little kids back in Tucson I'm concerned about. To me he's just a murdering Raider that probably killed these kids mother. He'll die just as easily as she did.' Smokey said, " Rig you're my kinda lawman. The hell with the criminal , let's protect the victims. I wish more lawmen were like that." Rig said, ' I'm gonna do something that you might question. You two stay with the wagon and I'm gonna ride ahead. I've got The sheriff's glass and I'm hoping to see trouble before it hits us. I don't want you to think I'm runnin out on you. I want you two to let Cortez overhear our plan to kill him. I might help us at some point." Tom said, " Ok and Don't worry about that riding ahead Rig, you make a better target than we do. It's a good plan."**

**They traveled all night and as dawn approached, Rig rode back to the wagon for some jerky and water for breakfast. He also changed horses. Cortez had been quiet , maybe knowing his father would set him free, but he had overheard Smokey and Tom talking about killing him in the event of an attack. He offered Tom a bribe to free him and here's where Cortez made a grave mistake. Tom played him along until he wrote him a paper promising him five hundred dollars for his release. The note was to his father Turbusio and it was signed Cortez. He of course, had**

**no intention of ever paying the money, but he never realized that note could convict him with his signature. Rig was pleased to get that note and thanked Tom and Smokey for their work. Cortez was livid when he realized Tom was leading him on and made many angry threats to kill him.**

**Smokey and Tom had taken turns on watch and both had a little sleep. Rig was weary but used to missing sleep. Dozing in the saddle he almost missed a dust cloud east of the trail. Worried that it might be Turbusio, he rode to a near rise and used the glass. “ Yeah!,” It was a group of riders traveling at a steady lope going north. Looked like a dozen or more and four rider less horses, probably pack horses. Worried he wanted to follow , but knew that he couldn’t , it might be a ruse to pull him off. What were they up to? It didn’t make him feel any better. He decided to tell Tom and Smokey that he would ride out a good ways and watch them catch up. This might give him a fore warning of trouble to come.**

**Later in the afternoon he rode to a small hill and was surprised to find that he almost rode into the Raiders. Figuring ench across the road. Tom and Smokey would not be there with the wagon until after dark. There were no trees to fall and block the road so Turbusio was digging a trench. This operation meant that their wagon was being watched and knowing they would be traveling after dark, it was going to be an effort to wreck the wagon. This meant to Rig that they would be shot at after dark with Turbusio planning to scare them into a run and wreck at the ditch . This meant the bulk of his men would be at the ditch waiting to over power and kill them before they could harm Cortez. It was a good plan if he had no knowledge of it. He raced back to the wagon.**

**Once there he explained to Tom and Smokey what was being planned. He said, “Turbusio has had us watched every minute of our trip. He knows every move we make, but right now he’s with his men digging a ditch across the trail north and cain’t possibly see what we’re doing. His plan is to wreck our wagon , or stop us at the ditch where his men can swarm us and free Cortez before we can put a bullet in him. His is a good plan and**

**we'd run right into it. I'm hoping we can out smart him , now knowing what's a head of us. Here's what I hope we can do. It's gonna be tricky and we won't have a lotta time. We're gonna keep going as if we had no idea what lies ahead, but at twilight we're gonna pull off the road and put Cortez on one of the wagon horses and make a run to Chandler. We're only twenty two miles out and with good luck, we should make it by dawn. I know he's gonna figure on bailing off the horse at some point, but I think I've got an answer for that. Smokey and Tom couldn't see how he could get Cortez on a horse with leg irons on. Rig said, " I'm gonna release one leg and lock that iron to the harness hames and collar of the team horse; he bails off and we ain't stopping. What ever's left of him we'll turn in at Chandler. I think he'll be hanging on with teeth and nails." Smokey shook his head saying, " Rig , you're the kind of lawman we need a lot of. Cortez will be so worried about falling and getting dragged to death, he'll forget he might be hung in Chandler."**

**It was midnight when Turbusio found he'd been out smarted and Rig's crew was far up the road with Cortez. He immediately packed up and followed as fast as his horses and men would permit. Knowing he'd never catch them now , he had to make other plans of how to get in the Garrison to free his son. It was later that day when he saw the impossibility of attacking . He didn't have the army it would take to get inside. It was in one of the local saloons that he hatched a plan.**

**There were a number of soldiers there enjoying the evening. He was thinking, " Maybe get a uniform and get in as a soldier."One in particular interested him. It was a drunk Sergeant Andre Rubio,with a swarthy completion similar to his own . His uniform seemed pretty dirty for a Sergeant's , but Trubusio figured as a drunk it was normal. His army Tag and identification would fit twenty men or more in Chandler. Satisfied that he could easily get through the gate and enter the Garrison as Sergeant Rubio. Unfortunately Rubio passed out drunk and two other soldiers picked him up and practically carried him to the Garrison. Trubusio asked one of his men to question the bartender about Rubio. It was a little later he learned that Rubio**

was a frequent customer and would probably be back in a couple of days. Rubio was a gambler known for fleecing young recruits and a very quarrelsome soldier starting many fights. Twice he had been demoted for fighting and banned from carrying a gun in town. Turbusio didn't care about the man's reputation and quickly decided this was the man he needed to be to get inside the Gates. He would stay over a couple of days and try to capture or kill Rubio for his uniform and identity. The gate guards were quite familiar with his drunken condition coming in at night. He planned to go in the gate and try to hold the gate guards hostage allowing him to hold open the Garrison for his fourteen men to take over and free Cortez. He and his men enjoyed the evening while Cortez sat locked in a cell.

Rig had brought Cortez in that morning and been verbally abused by a Captain Small for the manner his prisoner had been treated in getting him there. Rig said, " Captain, he's lucky we even bothered. This is Cortez , son of Turbusio the raiding murderer from Nogales that killed the mother of my kids. I wanted to shoot him and save myself a trip, but sheriff Boggs of Tucson objected. You wanna handle him with kid gloves and pat him on the head. You folks turn him loose and I'll put a bullet in it." The Captain replied, " Mister we're civilized. I'm sure this man couldn't be that bad." Rig replied , " You must be one of those Eastern officers that never saw the results of these Raiders . A house burned with women and kids locked inside. Yeah, go ahead with your ideas of criminal treatment and hope you live long enough to see your mistakes. Don't trust Cortez for a minute or he'll be wearing a dead captain's uniform. Yours!! He's your problem now. We need sleep."

The following day Rig met Judge Weaver presenting to him the paper signed by Cortez, witnessed by Smokey Jiles and Tom Colder. Weaver said, ' Mister Riggings you've done the Territory a major service in bringing this criminal to Justice. This paper will see him hanged. You and your men will receive the five hundred dollar reward when he hangs. Do you have any idea where the Raider Turbusio , his father could be located, there's a thousand dollar reward posted for him dead or alive." Rig said, "

**Yes sir Judge, he followed us right here to Chandler. We were lucky to out run him with Cortez. He's probably making plans right now to try a rescue of him. I told this Captain Small to treat Cortez as the Murdering killer deserves." Weaver said, " Yes , I've heard he tried an escape last night when Captain Small took him to the sick room to doctor his ankle where the foot chains had scraped it raw and bleeding. Captain Small is lucky to be alive. Fortunately there was a trooper there that quickly put Cortez down and back in chains. He'll be wearing them now until they're traded for a rope around his neck. He's under a three man guard day and night by my orders." Rig said, " Glad to hear that Judge. It'll be a great relief to folks around Tucson to know Justice is still alive in the Territory."**

**Rig was anxious to leave and get back to his three kids. Tom and Smokey were agreeable and they made plans to hold over another night and leave for Tucson the next morning. Leaving town they were seen by Turbusio and four men sent to follow and kill all three. Rig had a feeling like someone was watching him and frequently looked behind him for a dust cloud. He couldn't shake the feeling and just figured he'd been under too much strain . There was no dust behind him, but Smokey said, ' Rig , let's run the horses a bit. We did that in the war to find out if we were followed. Those following will have to gallop their horses also to keep up and boom! You have a dust cloud Letting you know there's somebody back there." Rig said , " Smart thinking , let's get to it!' fifteen minutes later he said, " Great job Smokey , we're being followed. It has to be Turbusio or some of his Raiders. We cain't travel worried about camping or an ambush to kill us. Smokey, Tom's a little younger than you and a pretty good rider. When we get another couple miles out , I think we'll set up our own ambush. Right now we'll travel at a walk until we hit a sage brush field. Smokey and I will drop off and you take all three horses and race down the trail a couple of miles. We're gonna set here in the brush and wait. If it's Turbusio or some of his well armed Raiders, we're gonna get rid of a threat if we can . I hope when you come riding back we've got the job done, but have your gun out anyway." Smokey said, " Rig, I sure**

like the way you think. We could have used you in every skirmish we had in Tennessee during the War. Might not have lost so many boys with Officers trying to make names for themselves.” Rig said , “I was trained by the best in Yuma prison. I heard every tale a hundred times over and I have come to think like a killer. Set yourself up to win at any cost and that’s how you stay alive. Almost every war survivor in there told the same story and that’s why they were still alive in or out of prison.”

A quarter mile further on and Rig said , “ Bail off Smokey! You take that side and I’ll take this one. Lay your guns out and check the loads. We’re gonna open the dance at thirty yards or so. Don’t be squeamish. These are hard core killers that never gave their victims a chance . Shoot’em like you would rattlesnakes.” Smokey said, “ Reminds me of the war Rig. Don’t worry about me. You take those on the left and I’ll get the one’s on the right.” Rig said, “ Ok Tom get to it . I don’t want them to see you and the empty saddles.”

Tom took off at a hard gallop as Rig cocked his rifle. Shortly they saw the riders coming and Rig got his rifle in position to shoot. Suddenly at fifty yards out the riders all pulled up and bailed off their horses. Something had given the ambush away and Rig cursed as he and Smokey opened up. Two riders went down , but bullets began flying in their direction from the other two Raiders. Rig yelled, “ Smokey, stay down ! Hold your fire. They’ve got good cover. Sit tight for a minute. I got an idea hang on.’ Quickly Rig checked the wind direction and satisfied he set the sage brush on fire, billows of smoke raced toward the Raiders location spooking their horses standing ground tied. They were racing away from the smoke. Rig yelled, “ Grab you stuff Smokey and let’s go meet Tom.”

Smokey yelled back, ‘ Got hit Rig! Need help.’ Rig ran to him asking where did you get hit?’ Smokey replied , “Left leg . Bleeding it’s numb. Maybe broke.” Rig said, ‘ Damn ! Gotta get you outta here. The brush may burn over to here. Let me pick you up. Smokey you don’t weigh much. Can you stand on the other leg? As Smokey tried to say , “No” pain and shock over came him and he fainted. Rig knowing he was unconscious grabbed him by

**the shoulders and drug him down the road to a clear spot with no sage brush. Once there. He realized the only thing protecting them was the heavy smoke and hoped the Raiders were running from the fire. It was here that Tom found them as Rig put a tight wrap on Smokey's leg. Rig said , " Hell of a note Tom . The Raiders spotted us and jumped from their horses. We cain't move Smokey without a wagon. How are you with horses. We need that hog wagon . It's only ten miles or so down the trail . All the rigging is there for one horse and use another to help carry the wagon tongue. Probably have to rig up a gypsy hitch to get back here. Can you do that and I'll stay here with Smokey. There's still two Raiders out there.'**

**Tom said . ' Ben raised with'em Rig . I'll do what I can. I'll leave you two saddle bags with water, but it'll take a day and half maybe to get back here. " Rig said, " Let's do it! Take the horses and go ,I'll stay here . Help me get him off the road a little ways. Cain't leave him out here to be seen by the killers and I don't want them seeing a horse. I'll be Ok Tom just do the best you can." Rig watched Tom disappear in the distance as he thought about his three little kids and the danger he had put himself in with Cortez. Should have just put a bullet in his head and he wouldn't be here a target for the killers with nowhere to hide. He was thinking, " That's the trouble with being a good man out here. They usually die young. I wonder what the killers will be doing. Gotta try and figure them. If they know I'm here, they'll be coming to kill."**

**There was no sign of the two Raiders. The fire had burned itself out before it had gone a hundred yards. Smokey came awake in pain just as dark approached and Rig filled him in on what they were gonna do. The leg didn't appear to be broken , but useless to try and walk on. Rig said, ' Gotta problem Smoke. There's two killers still out there. The two we knocked down are still laying in the trail. Maybe the others headed back walking to Chandler, but I don't know that for sure. Can you make it here, if I go and see if they're still around. ' Smokey said, " Pain Rig. It's hell but go ahead, I'll try not to yell out." Rig replied, " I'm gonna move west a hundred yards or so. When that moon comes up and**

**makes some light those killers will be moving. If I can skylight them against the moon, I'll get a shot maybe." An hour later he returned saying, " They're gone . from the tracks in the sand I could see, it looked like they were running from the fire. Smokey we'll just have to tough it out until Tom gets back here. I'm wondering what Turbusio is doing now. He wasn't one of the four Raiders." The following day was murder for Smokey, but Rig did what he could to keep his face in the shade. It was great relief, to see that Gypsy rig of a hog wagon coming down the trail.**

**Tom had made a flying trip traveling non stop, and got back at daybreak on the second day. He had cut up two saddles making a make shift harness for the second horse and Rig praised him for his work . They headed back for Tucson with Smokey laying on a bed of cutgrass and small brush. Travel was slow and Smokey suffered through the bumps and bangs without complaint. Rig felt the rough ride himself and tried to assure Smokey that he'd personally see to his comfort once they reached Tucson. His seven year old nurse, Jenny would take care of him.**

**Three days later and Rig is telling Boggs of their trip that almost turned into tragedy and how Cortez had signed his own death warrant with that note Smokey and Tom had fooled him into signing. Boggs was well pleased and asked, " What about Turbusio , is he still in Chandler?" Rig replied. " I don't know. He sent his killers after us like I told you. We'll probably be hearing something when the weekly stage gets in." Rig was surprised when Boggs said, ' Got an answer from Father Paul in Nogales. He talks about a silver cross number Cuatro that he gave to Annie. It should have been in her bag." Rig replied, "Yeah, it's pretty ugly ,a sand casting with some inscriptions on the back." Boggs said, " Turbusio wanted that Cross badly. He must have thought it pretty valuable. Father Paul say's he cain't understand anyone wanting it. The inscriptions on back are a map showing the location of the original Jesuits Tropic Mission . This mission was the original source of the gold and silver bars stolen when Jack Slade was serving as a lawman in North Nogales on the American side of the town. Father Paul say's the Tropic**

mission, was north of Sierra Vista in the Wrighton mountains and there hasn't been mining in that area for a hundred years or more." Rig exclaimed, " I'll be damned. Boggs that's it! The mission location is where the crosses were made. You just made my five years in Yuma pay off! Every mission chapel sat over a ground vault of church treasure. I've heard a thousand stories of treasures found beneath these Spanish Chapels. It's a known fact that every Spanish Mission near Tucson was wiped out by the Yaqui Indians . I'll bet anything Boggs, that the Tropico chapel hides a load of treasures probably surrounded by the bones of Spanish workers. The Indians never valued soft metal of any kind. Why don't you take a trip with me and we'll split what we find. You might get to spend the next few years sitting on your porch enjoying the sun downs." Boggs said , " Rig that's crazy! If what you say is true , I'd sure like to give up hauling drunks around. Mister you're on! I'll join you. It sounds like a chance in a million."

It was a month later when Rig and his three kids with sheriff Boggs sat out for an adventure in the Wrighton mountains. Many questions had come up concerning Trubusio and his raiders. The gang had been killed off or disbanded, but no one knew what ever happened to Trubusio. The thousand dollar reward for him had never been paid. It had become a great mystery that was never solved.

In Chandler following the sighting and planning of taking Sergeant Rubio's identity in order to get inside the Garrison; Turbusio had to wait almost a full week for Rubio to show up again. His men had been on constant lookout for the sergeant and when he was spotted coming from the mercantile late one evening two of the raiders grabbed him and quickly subdued him with a hard blow to his head. Stripped of his uniform, he was left almost naked in the alley by the store. The blow to his head had caused bleeding and made spots in his uniform. Turbusio was upset with the stains , but over a hundred and thirty dollars in the uniform soothed his feelings.

He made his plans for the following day to wait until evening and make his attempt to enter and attack the Garrison.

**He was down four men he had sent to kill Rig and his men, but figured ten and himself could do the job. It was nearing nine o'clock curfew and he set up his armed squad to storm in when he had the gate guards disarmed. Turbusio, hid two guns under his uniform and boldly walked to the guard shack outside the entry gate and presented his identification card. Upon announcing his name two guards grabbed him wrestling him to the ground. He was quickly disarmed, hand cuffed and taken to a lock up cell. Completely stunned, he learned that Sergeant Rubio was charged with the murder of a Mercantile clerk two days before. Protesting his innocence, he didn't dare identify himself as Turbusio and wouldn't have been believed anyway. The real Andre Rubio never recovered from a coma brought on by that hard blow to his head and died.**

**A short two weeks following his arrest Turbusio appeared before Judge Weaver who banged his gavel down saying, "Sergeant Andre Rubio, you have been found guilty of the robbery and murder of Jonas Howard, twenty five year old clerk at the Chandler Mercantile. Convicting evidence, two eyewitnesses, blood on your uniform and the hundred and thirty dollars taken from the mercantile cash box. It is the judgment of this court that on the morning of the twenty sixth of this month you are to be hanged by the neck until you are dead. May God have mercy on your soul."**

**Weeks later, a Tucson news paper carried the story that the Raider and murdering killer Cortez was hung at the Army Garrison in Chandler on the twenty sixth of August. Also hung on that date was the convicted murderer Sergeant Andre Rubio.**

**The End**

#### **Epilogue:**

**The Chapel mission was a wealthy adventure. Both Rig and sheriff Boggs brought home a treasure chest of finely crafted silver and gold church ornaments together with two more silver sand castings of a crucifix. Smokey and Tom found work with Rig developing the Slade Horse ranch. Rig said to Boggs years**

**later , “ Heading up to Santa Fe to deliver a cavy of horses. If you wanna go along, the kids and I would enjoy having you with us. I sell these horses and I’m gonna risk a hundred on that Devil’s Roulette wheel I’ve heard about. You might wanna bring along a few dollars to risk yourself.” Boggs replied, “ Rig , that’s crazy, there’s thirty six numbers on that wheel. What makes you think you can beat it? “ Rig replied, “ I’m betting it all on one spin on number four, you know Cuatro!”**

