

# The Los Angeles Silhouette Club

## Ambushes and Tough Guys

By: Jim Taylor

We had been having trouble on the ranch with burglaries, robbery, violence and some beatings for several weeks. Some of the residents had been violently beaten and several of them were cut rather badly during the course of a couple fights that took place. The trouble seemed to be caused by one individual who delighted in terrorizing others. This individual seemingly had no fear of reprisal or respect for the law or the property of others. He came and went as he pleased and wreaked havoc where ever he chose. If there was something he wanted he just came and took it. When any of the residents tried to withstand him he would fight. And as I said, during the fights several were cut rather badly. So far no one had died, but the situation appeared heading in that direction.

Since no one seemed able to stop him I decided to take matters into my own hands. I figured I would be justified (in my own mind at least) in doing whatever I had to do to take care of this guy. I did not tell anyone what I was about to do. The less said the better. And at this late date any evidence that may have remained of the ensuing events is long gone.

I waited until one evening when there was no moon and my family was gone, visiting friends. I shut off all the lights in the house and left only the light on the porch burning. As far as anyone could tell we were all away from the place. On the porch I placed an object I hoped would be of much value to the terrorist. (For that is what he was.) Then I sat in the darkened living room my gun loaded and ready. I had the hammer cocked so I could shoot quickly, for I figured I would get one chance only.

Let me say here that with some individuals I have no moral compunctions to give them any warning at all. Their lifestyle and criminal activities have removed from them the right to "fair play". You may not agree with me, and that is OK. I am simply telling you the moral choice I have made.

I sat there in the dark for the better part of the evening, pondering if I would have the nerve to follow through if he did indeed show himself. About 10 PM there was a stir and in a moment the thief slipped up onto the porch, checking out the goods. Without thinking I brought the gun up, got a quick sight picture on his head and fired.

At the shot he dropped without a sound, thrashed around in the yard and rolled off the small hill into my horse corral. I grabbed a flashlight and ran out to find him. Checking all around I could see the tracks and marks but not much blood. Apparently my shot through the screen door had deflected the bullet

enough that it was not a fatal wound. Investigating the next morning confirmed my worst fears. He had gotten away.

No one was reported needing medical attention at anyplace in town. I kept my ears open but did not hear any rumors or stories. After several weeks I figured maybe he took the hint and moved to a safer part of the world. As far as I was concerned it was over and done.

Then one morning when my two young daughters were playing in the yard I happened to glance out the back window and there he was! He had sneaked up through the grass was hiding near the edge of our yard, eyeballing my daughters! I thought, "This is IT!" and went and got a rifle. Running a shell into the chamber I eased around the corner of the house and lined up the sights on his chest. He had not seen me and the shot was a complete surprise to him. At the shot he leaped about 2 feet into the air and then took off into the brush.

I tracked him about 200 yards and lost him when the tracks came out onto a road. The tracks were digging in deeply as he ran. You could see the claw marks clearly. I found some fur where he went through thick brush. But I never found him or saw him again.

Big cats are hard to kill, even housecats. And while we had a number of big feral cats come onto the ranch, this had to be the toughest one I ever saw.

He never returned so I figure the shot must have done him. He was a tough old tomcat, I will give him that.

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