

FALLEN REIGN

FADE IN:

EXT. TRACKS - DAY

Sun sets over sleigh-scarred hills of a Kansas wintry tableau. A red-engine steam locomotive whips cars along threads of black track.

**SUPERIMPOSE: "WICHITA, 1895".**

EXT. TRAIN DEPOT - DAY

Man in Black (KISER, who we'll meet later) steps off the train and strolls down the plank.

EXT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - DAY

Glorified rustler's cabin. A calm paste of snow sticks to the roof. Spurts of gusts humble men, horses and wagons--except for KISER, 50s, iron-built and impervious to the cold--stands puffing on a nib of cigarette opposite Claudia's place.

INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - DAY

CLAUDIA, 48, rises from her sick bed, housecoats then drapes herself in a blanket. She drags downstairs.

CLAUDIA  
Coming! Coming!

Claudia looks through the front window then goes to the door.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)  
Yes?

No answer. Peels open the door. No one.

EXT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

Lone one room schoolhouse nests atop a splash of snow. Ice patches glisten along a otherwise gray entry path.

INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

Scratched along a wall length blackboard in white chalk dust is an innumerable string of words "I will not bring a gun to school...I will not bring a gun to school..."

REINA GERARD, 19, but appears older in her erect petticoat and tight hair bun. She's a bulwark of bluff and sternness, but after substituting for Miss Claudia today, the kids prove they'd had the upper hand. But Reina has the ringleader...

ZANDER SELMAN, 10, slouches under a dunce cap on a stool facing a corner of the room. It's his scrawl that's written across the board.

Reina reaches into her desk and slides Zander's COLT revolver out, she grips the handle, points it to the floor, cups it, releases the cylinder, tilts it and drops the bullets in her hand. She deposits them into her apron pocket.

ZANDER  
Are those my bullets?

Reina lays the revolver on the desk and picks up a large wooden spoon.

REINA  
Put out your hand.

ZANDER  
Ma'am?

WHACK!

REINA  
Speak when spoken to!

Reina puts the spoon on her desk.

ZANDER  
Ma'am?

REINA  
Yes, Mister Selman.

ZANDER  
Ma folks gonna kill me if I don't bring my gun home.

REINA  
Should've thought about that when you brought it. And pointing it at--

ZANDER  
Pa said you can't make us perform with no niggers, pageant or no...

REINA  
Stick out your hand.

ZANDER  
Nigger ain't a cuss word--

WHACK!

REINA  
 That's a word we don't use in Miss  
 Claudia's classroom.

Reina goes to her desk and opens the drawer...

ZANDER  
 Ma'am. Pa'll be mad if I come home  
 without his gun--

REINA  
 I heard you before.

ZANDER  
 And my bullets?

REINA  
 I'm gonna charge your father a  
 quarter for every bullet. A quarter  
 for every cuss-word you've uttered.  
 By the time we're through the whole  
 pageant'll be paid for. Now sit and  
 be quiet.

ZANDER  
 For how long?

Reina walks over to him. He puts out his hand palm up. She  
 waits. Zanders turns his hand over. She WHACKS it. She  
 returns to her desk.

ZANDER (CONT'D)  
 Ma'am?  
 (pause)  
 Ma'am?

REINA  
 I guess I hafta find somethin' else  
 for you to do. Clean erasers maybe?

ZANDER  
 Ma'am, there's a man outside.  
 (pause)  
 With a mustache.

REINA  
 How can you see a mustache when  
 you're facing the corner?

ZANDER

Same man as Miss Claudia showed  
around the classroom a few months  
ago. Kids said it was yo pa.

Reina stands. Couldn't be.

REINA

Daddy?

Reina goes to the window and presses her face to the glass  
then goes to the door.

REINA (CONT'D)

Daddy!

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE - DAY

Reina trips along the pavement then runs around the school.  
She goes up the school stairs. Stands in the doorway. Waits.

INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Zander stands at the door with an empty bucket. Reina sits at  
the desk reading.

REINA

Clean the chalkboard!

Zander raises the pail.

REINA (CONT'D)

What?

ZANDER

Pumps frozen.

Beat.

ZANDER (CONT'D)

Can I leave now?

Reina lowers the book. Uses the book to push the gun to the  
edge of the desk. Zander drops the pail and scoops up the  
gun.

ZANDER (CONT'D)

Can I have my bullets?

He stands for an expectant moment. Reina goes back to her  
book.

REINA  
You can have the corner or you can  
leave.

ZANDER  
I swear I really did see a man--

REINA  
Corner!

ZANDER  
I'm goin'! I'm goin'! But, what am  
I gonna tell pa when he asks--

REINA  
One...two...thr--

Reina snatches up the wooden spoon. Zander skitters out the door.

EXT. SCHOOLHOUSE - DAY

Reina yanks at the cast iron arm of a pitcher pump forcing it down. Not a drop. She picks up the bucket and heads to the WELL. Reina slips. Bullets scatter. She picks up the bullets and forces them back into her pocket.

THE WELL

A few feet from the well, a pair of LARGE HANDS (Kiser's) grabs Reina by scruff and skirt and skates her headlong into the large well mouth.

Reina's in free fall until her leg entwines with the well-rope. She pendulums into the well wall. She feels her wrist SNAP as she braces impact.

As she dangles, the bullets PLUNK. PLUNK. PLUNK into the well bottom.

In an upside down eternity Reina swings speechless.

A shadow covers the well's mouth.

ZANDER  
Ma'am?  
(pause)  
You okay?

Reina braces.

REINA  
Help!

ZANDER  
You stuck?

REINA  
Yes!

Beat.

ZANDER  
Can I have my bullets now?

Reina dangles.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE: "FALLEN REIGN"

INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - DAY

SHERIFF COOKS, 50s, carries Reina up the stairs and gently lays her on a bed.

DR. SUSSMAN, 60s, pulls up a chair and leans over Reina's body adjusting the chest-piece and diaphragm of the stethoscope.

Claudia weeps in a corner.

**SUPERIMPOSE: THREE DAYS EARLIER**

EXT. TRAIN JUNCTION - DAY

DONNA GERARD, 58, and DR. SNEED, 56, await as a the Red Engine blows to a stop.

INT. PRIVATE CAR - DAY

Donna and Sneed sit opposite HIRAM DUNSON, 62, his lawyer, FIELDING, 58. Kiser sits with his back to the group but you get the feeling he's not missing a word.

Donna hands Hiram the folded WILL. Hiram hands it to Fielding.

Fielding examines it.

HIRAM  
Will it work.

FIELDING

Might.

HIRAM

(to Donna)

Senior coming?

SNEED

We made sure this time he's--

Donna raises her hand. Sneed clams.

DONNA

My husband has taken a turn for the worse. I've sent Little Vic a telegram apprising him.

HIRAM

Little Vic'll be on the train?

DONNA

Tomorrow.

HIRAM

Good. Wake me at Gerardstown.

INT. THADDEUS BARNES LAW OFFICE - DAY

Donna, Sneed, Hiram and Fielding sit as THADDEUS BARNES, 60s, lip-reads the will. Kiser stares out the back window.

BARNES

Declared incompetent?

SNEED

Apoplexy. Says it right there.

Barnes runs his finger over a paragraph or two.

BARNES

Ah. Yes. See it now. And you want power of attorney?

DONNA

Yes.

(pause)

It's absolutely necessary for us to follow his wishes.

BARNES

Absolutely.

Beat.



SNEED

He's health has rapidly  
deteriorated...I...we...had hoped  
he'd have the strength to be here.

BARNES

Yes. Yes. But there's a problem.

Barnes stands and goes to a filing cabinet. He fishes through  
the files.

BARNES (CONT'D)

Ah. Here it is. Few months back  
Senior had this made. He being of  
compos mentis.

FIELDING

May I?

BARNES

By all means.

Hands Fielding a will.

BARNES (CONT'D)

So I don't understand why I wasn't  
consulted afterwards?

Fielding compares the two wills. Nods.

BARNES (CONT'D)

Sent a copy of that to Little Vic.

Hiram rises. Looks at Donna and Sneed. Taps Kiser on the  
shoulder and the three men leave.

Donna and Sneed remain seated. Barnes goes to the door.

BARNES (CONT'D)

Good doing business with ya, Mr.  
Dunson!

EXT. PLATFORM - DAY

On the platform sits ELLISON WHITNEY, 50s, Lincolnesque,  
shoulder-stooped and twisted under fierce gesticulations  
(often clapping his hands to punctuate thought).

ELLISON

People applaud Hiram Dunson. Don't!  
People who applaud him are lazy-  
minded, complacent poltroons who  
disperse the working class!

His magnetism sucks in the sea of attendees.

ELLISON (CONT'D)  
 Hiram is a robber baron. A cloven-  
 foot. Spawn itself. With his  
 legions of Pinkertons...Pinkerton  
 just another name for murderer!  
 (CLAP)

A couple of rough PLANTS, 40s, push their way to the lip of  
 the platform.

ELLISON (CONT'D)  
 Get on and off his trains like a  
 stupefied herd. You didn't low when  
 your comrades lost their jobs to  
 this son of a...well I can't say  
 with ladies present...but I can say  
 he don't deserve no railroad!

PLANT #1  
 Shoot straight, Whitney!

PLANT #2  
 Tell 'em like you tell yo ole lady!

Ellison ignores the hecklers and turns to VIC.

ELLISON  
 You're a dead man, Vic. That's how  
 you gotta think when you try to  
 help the commoner.

VIC  
 (scoffs)  
 Dead?

ELLISON  
 Don't sell to the Devil! Cuz the  
 Devil bails on the bargain!

Ellison turns to the crowd.

ELLISON (CONT'D)  
 Sell to the devil?

CROWD  
 No!

ELLISON  
 What do we do?

CROWD  
 Strike!

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Road near the crowd. Hiram, TAPS the roof of the carriage. It stops. Hiram's son, SKYLAR, 32, shrinks back from the window, avoiding crowd-pries. Kiser, on horseback, trots alongside Hiram's carriage.

EXT. PLATFORM - DAY

Ellison points to the carriage.

ELLISON

There's the ole Pharisee! Will he get outta his carriage and baptize himself with us commoners? Daren't!

Vic comes to the lectern.

VIC

Thank you, El. And thank you Women's Temperance. Suffragettes. All. Unlike my colleague here I'm not much for speeches. I'm just the money...

Cheers, jeers and laughter erupt from the mass.

VIC (CONT'D)

But I give my solemn pledge to the Negro and the Woman...the dispossessed and the downtrodden...that I will never sell my railroad to likes of a scoundrel like Hiram Dunson as it's now in my power!

CHEERS. Crowd WAVES RED SCARVES.

VIC beckons to Wu Li uncovers one of a cage of three birds. Wu Li extracts a pigeon and cossets it to VIC. VIC slings the bird into the air.

INT. HIRAM'S CARRIAGE - DAY

Skylar looks at the crowd then slumps.

SKYLAR

I'll never get his consent.

HIRAM

We'll get his consent, don't worry.

Skylar nods. Hiram reaches across and buttons Skylar's coat.

HIRAM (CONT'D)

I've known Senior a long time. We served together. He was a brevet when I was a corporal.

SKYLAR

I know. You've told me...

Weinger LAUGHS while reading the Gerardstown paper.

HIRAM

I rose quick in the ranks and made a name for myself. Made Senior's adjutant...

(to Weinger)

What do you keep snickering about?

WEINGER

Nuthin'.

HIRAM

Well shuddup about nuthin'!

Weinger tries to suppress the urge. Snickers.

HIRAM (CONT'D)

What's so damn funny?

WEINGER

Gerardstown's editorial's really layin' into you.

HIRAM

Let's hear it.

WEINGER

You really don't wanna--

Hiram cocks back his seat. Weinger falters.

WEINGER (CONT'D)

(scans)

Umm...Lets see. Can't read that...or that...or that...

(looks up from paper)

Definitely not that!

HIRAM

You done editorializing the editorial? What else?

WEINGER  
An illustration.

HIRAM  
Of?

WEINGER  
A corpulent jack yankin' up houses,  
towns and railroads and stuffin' em  
in his mouth.

Hiram leans forward--the aura of threat drapes him like a duster. His eyes say I ain't unacquainted with killing.

HIRAM  
Gimme!

Weinger gingers it over.

Hiram tears the sheets and balls them up.

HIRAM (CONT'D)  
Open your mouth.

WEINGER  
Boss?

HIRAM  
Open your fuckin' mouth.

Weinger opens his mouth.

Hiram crams a paper-wad in Weinger's mouth.

HIRAM (CONT'D)  
Chew!

Kiser leans in the window.

HIRAM (CONT'D)  
You find out where the Vic's eldest  
is?

KISER  
Wichita.

Weinger gags clearing the newspaper from his mouth.

KISER (CONT'D)  
What's the matter with him?

HIRAM

Bit off more than he could chew.  
 (hands Kiser envelope)  
 Give this to Cooks.

INT. TOPEKA HOTEL PARLOR - DAY

Temperance-tolled empty barroom. BAR TENDER, 50s, cleans a glass as he watches Vic and Ellison sitting at a table.

Bar Tender comes over and wipes the table.

ELLISON

Gerardstown's infested. Full of  
 Hiram's spies.

Glances over at the Bar Tender who busies himself elsewhere.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

Senior use to harass the shit of  
 us...Populists. Unionists.  
 Suffragists. Didn't matter as long  
 as it had an "-ist" at the end.

Ellison leans in.

ELLISON (CONT'D)

I think we can break him with a  
 strike. With your help. You've been  
 saying if you ever got control of  
 the railroad...

VIC

I know.

ELLISON

I don't wish no ill on your father.  
 None. Remember what we swore at KU?  
 Our time!

VIC

Our time?

ELLISON

If we cripple Dunson and have the  
 peoples railroad. We get behind  
 Bryan. And we'll be unstoppable.  
 Washington'll shit!

Bar Tender drops a glass which CRASHES to the floor. Vic eyes him.

VIC  
We'll talk about this later.

Ellison turns toward the bar.

ELLISON  
Yeah. I think you're right.  
(pause)  
Seen Rose?

VIC  
No.

ELLISON  
The cause can wait. Go see Rose.

Ellison pours himself and Vic another.

ELLISON (CONT'D)  
Don't blame yourself. I'd go insane  
too if I immersed myself in savage  
cultures.

VIC  
Sure.

ELLISON  
Know Ole Grover Cleveland'll shit  
when we march on Washington!

They raise glasses.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

A PREGNANT WOMAN (HART), 28, and her FIANCE (WEINGER), 38,  
sit opposite Vic and Wu Li. Between Vic and Wu is a covered  
bird cage.

WEINGER  
(sotto voce)  
We both know who the father is and  
it ain't me!

HART  
Please! Not here!

Vic stops writing on cigarette paper then rolls it tightly.

VIC  
Excuse me. I'm Victor Gerard. And I  
couldn't help but overhearing your  
conversation. Is there something I  
can help you with?

WEINGER

You can help by minding your own  
damn business! Come on...we're  
getting off!

Weinger twists Hart's arm and yanks her down the aisle and  
off the train. Vic looks after. Looks at Wu.

VIC

Not good. Not at all.

Vic opens the cage, fields the bird and pushes the rolled  
paper into its boot. Places pigeon back in cage. Does same to  
the other caged bird.

VIC (CONT'D)

We're getting off here also.

WU LI

Sir?

EXT. TRAIN DEPOT - DAY

Empty depot. Wu waits as Vic paces the platform. His targets  
(Weinger and Hart) are about two hundred yards to the rear of  
the train. By their gestures their still fighting.

Vic eyes follow the shrinking figures as they disappear  
behind a rise.

Hart's whipping a RED SCARF.

Vic removes his overcoat and hands it to Wu.

VIC

See if there's a sheriff or  
constable and have him meet me on  
the tracks.

WU LI

Should I take the cage?

Vic looks at the cage.

VIC

No. I'll take it.

Glances down the track. Lifts the cage.

VIC (CONT'D)

It's probably nothing, but better  
safe than sorry. Keep the coat  
safe.



Vic steps onto the tracks with the cage.

VIC (CONT'D)

Wu!

Wu stops.

VIC (CONT'D)

Deposit box key's in the coat lining...keep it safe!

Wu nods.

EXT. TRACKS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Victor picks up a red scarf. Looks around. No one. Places the cage on the track ties.

CRACK!

A gun shot humbles him.

He bends over the birdcage. Fingers the latch and opens the cage door.

VIC

Shoo. Shoo.

One bird flutters onto the tracks. The other stays in the cage.

EXT. SNOWY FIELD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A HOMER PIGEON dips and flutters over railroad tracks then splashes into a bank of snow.

For a moment it appears lifeless. Then flutters to it's feet. It has a small bullet wound to the chest.

It becomes momentarily airborne determined to make it to Gerardstown a mile in the distance, then the bird plummets below the tree line.

A FARM BOY, 11, sleds up. He picks up the bird.

FARM BOY

Where'd you come from?

The Farm Boy notices the leg cannister. The boys runs off with the bird in his arms.

Some distance, beyond the tree line, Hart and Weinger with a handful of Pinkertons, peck along the tracks.

INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

SHERIFF COOKS, 54, lobs off a hunk of Claudia's CHERRY PIE and while the filling bleeds onto the plate, he drizzles coffee into a mug.

COOKS

Pies excellent as ever. Don't know how you do cherries in the winter?

DINING ROOM

Claudia dabs at Reina's black eye. DR. SUSSMAN, 60, examines Reina's arm cast.

CLAUDIA

Jars of pitted sour cherries in syrup. Did you wash the fork? I don't want you gettin' my cold.

COOKS

Washed? I licked it clean.

Sussman eensy-weensy's up the cast with his thumb and forefinger.

CLAUDIA

Awright. Warned ya. Reina, don't make a fuss. Let the doctor finish.

SUSSMAN

Hold still, please.

REINA

So you ain't gonna do nuthin' 'bout somebody pushing me into the well?

COOKS

Now 'fore you go writin' your daddy 'bout that. That's not what I said.

CLAUDIA

I shudder when I think of what could've happened to you!

COOKS

I'm just sayin' there could be other explanations is all.

Cooks picks up Reina's SUITCASE and waddles to the front door.

COOKS (CONT'D)  
Watch. I'm Reina carrying a bucket.

Cooks vaudevilles opening the front door.

COOKS (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Whoa!

Several THUDS punctuated by a CRASH.

CLAUDIA  
My god!

Cooks re-enters.

COOKS  
I'm a stickler for illustratin'. I nearly broke ma neck comin' here this evening. The wind. The ice.

REINA  
Someone grabbed me from behind and threw me into the well.

COOKS  
Well, if you could give me a description of this miscreant, I'll arrest him, Miss Gerard.

REINA  
Zander Selman said he had a mustache...that the man looked like my father.

COOKS  
Nowhere in the state of Kansas, can you arrest nobody, colored or white, for having a mustache. Especially, on the testimony of a third-grader.

REINA  
I'm not talkin' about the testimony of a third-grader. I'm talkin' about these hateful people here!

COOKS  
Miss Gerard, folks resent your pa trying to turn Wichita into Kansas City or Chicago. People here ain't like people there.

REINA

That's why we're having a pageant--  
put black and white together. This  
town could be a better town. But,  
for people like you who don't  
believe it could ever happen...

(to Sussman)

Are we done here?

SUSSMAN

Yes.

Reina stands.

REINA

I'm goin' to the church. I'll show  
you how Colored folk and White folk  
can get along. At least on  
Christmas.

CLAUDIA

Do you think that's wise? Doctor?

SUSSMAN

Should be fine. Arm'll heal.

CLAUDIA

I mean with this weather.

SUSSMAN

Brisk weather won't harm the  
mending.

CLAUDIA

If the cold gets in the marrow.

SUSSMAN

Old wives tale.

REINA

That settles it.

COOKS

Miss, Gerard, I'd advise  
against it...

CLAUDIA

Reina! Don't go to the  
church!

Reina leaves.

Claudia goes to follow. Cooks grabs her.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

I promised her father--

COOKS

Best remember what you promised  
Dunson!

There's a KNOCK at the door. Cooks releases Claudia's arm.

MESSENGER (O.S.)

Telegram!

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A torn, twisted CHRISTMAS BANNER hangs from the front of the church. Zander and several white third-graders sling snowballs.

REINA

Zander! Zander Selman!

Zander and the kids scatter.

ZANDER

Pa says you owe us bullets!

REINA

Get over here!

He balks and scurries off.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Reina hurries down the center aisle and onto the makeshift stage behind the pulpit. CRUSHED CAMEL LEGS. DECAPITATED WISE MEN all form part of Nativity mess. On the skein in black paint is "No Niggers".

Reina steps on piss-stained straw. Holds her nose.

REINA

Christ!

Reina upturns a MANGER and picks up the BABY JESUS DOLL. From the back church door comes a CLAP.

EXT. REAR CHURCH - DAY

WHITE CHURCH ROBES lie piled on the stoop. Reina sees MADDY JACKSON, 50s, tugging two black kids down a snowy path.

Beyond is a MOUNTED BUFFALO SOLDIER (CYRUS BANKSTON), 40s, on a black horse.

His complexion dark as sealskin under rows of finger-waved silver locks, his eyes a lifeless stare of attention.

In the distance, a train of wagons, covered and uncovered line the Arkansas River's opposite bank. PAP SINGLETON, 60, stands on a raft at the near bank.

REINA  
Stop! You hear me!

Reina rushes down and cuts Maddy off. Maddy is momentarily shocked at Reina's appearance.

REINA (CONT'D)  
Who destroyed the creche?

MADDY  
I didn't do it.

REINA  
But you know who did.

MADDY  
I don't want no trouble.

REINA  
Their names! Give me their--

MADDY  
No ma'am--

REINA  
My father--

MADDY  
We tried...can't change evil with  
no singin'...no pageant, Miss  
Gerard--

REINA  
My father will make these people  
pay for this!

MADDY  
Gotta get these childrens to  
safety. Wichita ain't safe.

REINA  
See this arm? Look at my eye! I got  
this helpin' your people!

MADDY  
No ma'am! You did it for yoself!  
Ease yo own conscience!

REINA

I did it to bring people together--

MADDY

God told me it wouldn't work! Now,  
look at these kids. They scared.  
None of the kids wanna sing in them  
white people's church!

(pause)

White men here say they gonna burn  
us outta shanty town if we don't  
get outta Wichita. Pap say he  
tired...this is his last  
exodus...then what we gonna do?

Maddy pulls the children around Reina and continues down the path.

REINA

We can put up a curtain! No one  
will see them...they can sing there  
from behind. It'd be a shame not to  
hear their beautiful voices?

Maddy shakes her head.

REINA (CONT'D)

I'll send a telegraph. My father'll  
send guards! They'll protect you!

Maddy continues to the raft.

REINA (CONT'D)

We got your kids into our school--  
isn't that something?

The horse and rider SPLASH along the bank as Pap lifts the children onto the raft.

REINA (CONT'D)

You owe me a song, Mrs. Jackson!  
I'm not leaving this spot until I  
get at least that!

Maddy looks to Pap. Pap nods.

Maddy turns. Her voice is guttural. Flecks of snow fall like bark mulch. Frosty breath. The cavalry horse, ears drawn, STAMPS and WHINNIES.

MADDY

(singing)

*You must walk this longsome vally  
gotta walk it fo' yoself nobody  
else can walk it fo' you gotta walk  
it fo' yoself...*

Maddy ends the song from the raft.

Cooks walks up to Reina. Claudia is close on his heels.

REINA

Sheriff I want somethin' done bout  
this vandalism!

COOKS

I'm very sorry to inform you...

Cooks hands Reina a TELEGRAPH.

INSERT:

"Gerardstown, KS Dec 05-1895

We deeply regret to inform you Victor Gerard Junior  
officially reported killed on tracks near Topeka station Dec  
first eighteen ninety five "

BACK TO SCENE:

Reina falls to her knees.

INT. GERARDSTOWN HOTEL - DAY

Hiram smokes. Skylar tests his reflection in front the  
mirror. Goes to the window opposite.

SKYLAR

My eyebrows are uneven.

HIRAM

Sit down somewhere, you're makin'  
me nervous.

SKYLAR

Hart and Weinger are comin'.

Hart and Weinger enter. Hart we recognize as the pregnant  
woman now less so. Weinger swings a birdcage aloft.



HIRAM  
What the hell is that?

WEINGER  
Birdcage.

HIRAM  
I can see it's a damn birdcage.  
What the hell you bring it for?

WEINGER  
Its done. We shot him, see!

HART  
I shot him.

WEINGER  
It was pretty. Should've seen him  
stagger along the tracks. Then he  
opens this cage, see, and holds up  
this bird, see, and you know what  
happens?

HIRAM  
No, what happens?

WEINGER  
Nothin'. The birds all shot to hell  
too. But I gotcha this. It was on  
the bird.

Hands him a capsule. Hiram turns it over in his hand,  
thumbing the leather strap. Kiser enters.

HIRAM  
How was Wichita?

KISER  
Slow.

HIRAM  
Got you a place by our friend  
there.

KISER  
Barnes?

Kiser goes to the window.

KISER (CONT'D)  
Looks like he's closing up shop.

HIRAM  
Not with one more client.

Kiser looks at Hiram. Exits.

EXT. THADDEUS BARNES LAW OFFICE - DAY

Barnes locks the door. Kiser approaches.

BARNES  
Closing for lunch.

KISER  
This won't take long. Got a few  
legal matters I need to discuss.

Barnes hesitates. Then sets his down his attaché.

BARNES  
Okay. Long as its quick.

KISER  
Don't worry, it'll be.

They enter the office.

INT. CLAUDIA'S HOUSE - ROOM - DAY

Claudia packs clothes into wardrobe steamer. Reina's moist eyes follow Claudia's repetitions. Claudia stops.

CLAUDIA  
Don't lose yourself. You lose  
yourself--you end up like your  
mother...in the asylum where she  
took her own life! You don't want  
that, do you?

Reina stares but doesn't roust.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)  
Poor baby. But you gotta dry your  
eyes and harden your face. You go  
bury your daddy and take care of  
your sister. Here...

Claudia stuffs an envelope into Reina's overcoat.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)  
Give this letter to Ellison  
Whitney. This is as much as I know  
on Dunson. Never thought it'd come  
to harm...

Reina nods.

Cooks stands outside the door listening.

COOKS (O.S.)  
 Claudia! Miss Reina! Hurry or we'll  
 miss the train!

CLAUDIA  
 You Gerards have always been good  
 to me. Hush this away!

Reina nods. Claudia grabs her by the shoulders.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)  
 (kisses her)  
 You'll pull together? I'll  
 telegraph your grandfather and tell  
 him you're coming.

Claudia goes into the closet. She returns with a veil.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)  
 This was my daughter's. You're so  
 pretty. People like to gawk.

COOKS  
 We ready? Here. Let me do that.

He buckles the portmanteau and helps Reina with her coat.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Cooks and Claudia stand on the platform as the train pulls  
 away from the station. Cooks grabs Claudia's hand and  
 squeezes hard.

CLAUDIA  
 Please!

Cooks takes a few envelopes from his pocket. Claudia  
 recognizes the letter she put in Reina's overcoat.

He squeezes harder, CRUSHING HER FINGERS.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

Train rattles on. Reina fishes in her overcoat. Searches  
 pockets again. A PORTER passes.

REINA  
 Porter!

PORTER

Yes mum?

REINA

I had some letters in my coat and now they're missing.

PORTER

I ain't seen no letters, mum. I can search around--

REINA

Please do!

EXT. GERARDSTOWN NEWSPAPER - DAY

Duke halts a horse in front of the Gerardstown Newspaper.

Arnie leans out from an upper window.

ARNIE

Wagon ready?

DUKE

Yessuh, wagon's ready.

ARNIE

Reina's train'll be here shortly.

DUKE

Yessuh.

Arnie disappears. Farm Boy runs up to Duke.

FARM BOY

Missuh Duke?

Duke scans the boy.

DUKE

That's right.

FARM BOY

Daddy said come and see if dis is yo bird.

Farm Boy untucks the pigeon from his coveralls.

DUKE

He dead?

FARM BOY

Nah. But, got a bullet in his chest though.

DUKE

Lemme see.

FARM BOY

I took this off him. It was too heavy for him to fly with. It was strapped to his leg.

Duke nods and takes the small canister from Farm Boy, unscrews the cap and takes out the rolled note.

DUKE

Here. You find any more birds. Bring 'em to me. I'll give you double.

Farm Boy nods, takes the coins and leaves. Arnie stumbles trying to lock the factory door. He's sauced.

ARNIE

What'd that boy want?

DUKE

Sell me this here bird. Told 'em I had enough already. Bird 'bout dead.

ARNIE

Ain't that the fuckin' truth. That reminds me. When we get back, I want all those birds and all the cages off the roof.

DUKE

Yessuh. Already done. Mrs. Donna wanted them gone on account they was Mr. Victors' and on account Miss Wynnde was always hangin' about on the roof fiddlin'--

ARNIE

Okay! Okay! I don't need a life story! Quit jaw-jackin' and help me up.

EXT. GERARDSTOWN DEPOT - DAY

The depot is heavy with humanity. Suffragettes with signs "Votes for Women" and "Mass Meeting" while others hoist American flags. Unionists parade "Support your local worker" and "Equality".

Pinkerton guards stroll along the tracks toward a RED TRAIN on the Hiram Line where SOLDIERS sit on cowcatchers.

Reina disembarks, a sling on her arm and a tulle veil masking her black eye.

Arnie, Duke and Sneed move across the platform to Reina.

ARNIE

Reina!

Reina is followed by a porter who is lugging her trunk along.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

(to Duke)

Get her trunk.

DUKE

Yessuh.

Duke takes the steamer from the porter and puts it on his back.

REINA

Why isn't grandfather here to meet me?

SNEED

Your grandparents are with Mr. Dunson--

ARNIE

Heard 'bout your fallin' in a well. Donna thought it best for us to come. Sneed, here, can look at your arm--

REINA

I don't want Doctor Sneed to look at any part of me. I want to see my father.

SNEED

Undertaker hasn't finished preparing the body.

ARNIE  
Nasty sight. Not fit for young  
ladies' eyes--

REINA  
I want to see my father!

Duke sways under the weight of the steamer and buckles.

ARNIE  
Watch out!

The steamer teeters and knocks Arnie off balance. The trunk  
CLANKS to the ground and Reina's clothes spume out.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
Sonofabitch!

Duke reaches down to help Arnie to his feet.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
Nevermind me! Just get all this  
shit up...

Duke picks a bundle. FEMALE UNDER GARMENTS dangle. Arnie eyes  
Duke's black hands then elbows Duke back.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
Nevermind! I got it!

He stuffs the clothes into the steamer but after several  
heaves, can't close it. Duke has an armload of clothes.

DUKE  
What about these?

ARNIE  
Just give 'em!

Duke piles clothes in Arnie's arms. Close on Duke as slips a  
piece of paper Reina's steamer. Arnie totters over the  
steamer. Falls on it. Duke lifts Arnie.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
I don't need no help, dammit!

Duke leans on the lid and buckles the strap.

EXT. PARKER AGENCY - DAY

Parker Agency abuts a bughouse with batwing doors separated  
by a sliver of alley. A fire escapes ascends from the alley.

INT. PARKER AGENCY - DAY

BRAND MCCULLOUGH, 28, leans against the Agency door. He's staring at the FUNERAL PARLOR across the street.

BRAND  
So, I was hired to watch a corpse?

KISER (O.S.)  
  
You won't be watchin' a corpse!  
You'll be watchin' the goings and  
comings of other people watchin' a  
corpse!  
(beat)  
Keep your eyes open and your mouth  
shut.

BRAND  
Ah. Detective work.

KISER  
Report don't interfere. You're new.  
Don't get your ass into a tangle.

KISER shoves past him and disappears.

BRAND  
Report don't interfere.

BRAND'S POV

Duke halts the horse and buggy outside the funeral parlor. Reina rushes out followed by Sneed and Uncle Arnie. Reina's dress gets caught in a spoke. Arnie struggles to free the dress. Brand and Reina's eyes meet.

BACK TO SCENE:

EXT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

Reina, Arnie and Doctor Sneed enter the anteroom.

REINA  
I want to see my father...alone.

SNEED  
I don't think that's wise...



INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

The UNDERTAKER'S WIFE, 60s, greets Reina.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
May I help you?

REINA  
I'm Reina.

Undertaker's wife nods.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
I know who you are. Follow me.

Undertaker's wife and Reina disappears behind a thick curtain and enter the main chamber.

MAIN CHAMBER

Undertaker's Wife whispers to UNDERTAKER, 60s. Undertaker motions to Reina.

UNDERTAKER  
My condolences, Miss. I'm sorry I'm not finished, my dear.

REINA  
I want to see all.

UNDERTAKER  
All?

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
Go on. It's her father.

UNDERTAKER  
Hush, woman.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
Miss Gerard I found most of his body myself. Not those Pinkertons.

UNDERTAKER  
Hush!

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
I'll speak when I'm ready!

UNDERTAKER  
Woman!

## OUTSIDE THE CURTAIN

Arnie stands next to the curtain listening. Sneed shakes pitcher water into a glass. Sneed uncorks a AMPOULE and empties the contents into the glass.

ARNIE

What's that?

SNEED

Lophophora williamsii morphium  
psilocybin. Art of apothecary.

ARNIE

Will it kill her?

SNEED

Humble her. Like it humbled Senior.

## MAIN CHAMBER

The Undertaker peels back Vic's covering.

UNDERTAKER

We put him together best we could.  
Humpty Dumpty. We had to inject  
sections--parts--and sit them  
overnight. Set the features. Wire  
the jaw. Gums. Thread through here.  
Center. Used a dowel to keep the  
head on. Packed holes with cotton  
so they wouldn't run. More?

Reina nods.

UNDERTAKER (CONT'D)

Cannulas here in the juggler.  
Formalin'd the tissues. Dowel to  
the right arm. Left was tricky. But  
got a mannequin's arm. Aspirate  
twice. Gut-fanning. Twined his  
privates to his leg.

(pause)

Very little can't be  
fixed...Miss...Miss?

REINA

I'm--I'm fine.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE

I'll get you a stool. It's a lot  
for a young girl like you to take.

REINA  
I'm fine. Really.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
If you ask me...it weren't no train  
accident.

UNDERTAKER  
You don't know that! Just gossip.  
Don't put gossip in her head!

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
She ought to know!  
(to Reina)  
Ask the Chinaman--

UNDERTAKER  
Woman! I swear--

Arnie rips back the curtain.

Glares at the Undertaker then turns to Reina.

ARNIE  
You've seen the body?

UNDERTAKER  
Mister Arnie...my wife doesn't know  
what she's talkin' about. She fills  
her ears with idle gossip. She  
doesn't mean no harm by it.

SNEED  
(to Reina)  
Are you able to stand? Here. Drink  
this. It'll clear your mind and  
help the pain in your arm.

Reina takes the glass. Her hands TREMBLE. She sips.

ARNIE  
Let's go.

REINA  
Uncle, I want to hear about what  
this woman has to say.

ARNIE  
Just rumors, Reina.

UNDERTAKER  
Rumors.

REINA  
I wanna speak to the Chinaman.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
They'll never let you!

UNDERTAKER  
Woman! Cease!

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
Everybody knows its account of the  
money that's disappeared--

Undertaker grabs a scalpel.

UNDERTAKER  
Shut your trap!

Reina wobbles. Sneed catches Reina before she falls.  
Undertakers Wife catches the cup.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
She needs some air. C'mon, honey,  
c'mon.

EXT. REAR FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Reina composes herself on a stool.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
There. There. Fresh air'll do you  
good.

REINA  
I wanna see the Chinaman.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE  
I'll tell them. Drink some  
more...do you good?

Reina hands the cup to Undertaker's wife. Undertaker's Wife  
goes to pour it but decides to gulp down the dregs.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE (CONT'D)  
May help my rheumatism.

She hands Reina a bullet.

UNDERTAKER'S WIFE (CONT'D)  
Little bitter.  
(pause)  
Anyway, this is how I know there's  
foul play. Found this in him.

Brand steps out from around the building corner.

BRAND  
You okay, ma'am?

REINA  
  
Fine.

BRAND  
Must've been a terrible sight in  
there.

REINA  
Who are you?

BRAND  
Detective. Agency across the way...

REINA  
I don't need a detective.

BRAND  
No one does until they do.

Arnie comes through the parlor door followed by Sneed.

ARNIE  
Reina?

BRAND  
I'm Brand from the Parker Detective  
Agency. The Railroad hired us to--

ARNIE  
I don't care who you are or where  
you're from! I don't want you  
solicitin' my niece--

REINA  
Wynnde! I haven't seen Wynnde! Has  
she seen father? My god if she has!

ARNIE  
Sheriff Hines is out lookin' for  
her now. She'll be fine. I'm more  
worried bout you...I should've  
never let you talk me into bringin'  
you here. It was a mistake. We  
should go.

REINA  
I wanna go to the jail!

SNEED

My advice is to get you to the Gerard House and take a good look at that arm.

REINA

Not before I go to the jail!

EXT. SHERIFF HINE'S OFFICE - DAY

Arnie rises up a few planks and onto the porch. TWO MEN are frozen at cards near the door. Reina, Sneed and Brand follow.

BRAND

Excuse me fellas. Ma'am?

Brand ushers Reina in.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

SHERIFF HINES, 50, sits behind a desk, his trouser-bottoms stuffed in his boots.

HINES

Can I help you folks?

BRAND

I'm a railroad detective--and we-- Miss Gerard and I--want to talk to the Chinaman prisoner.

HINES

Does this look like a railroad, mister?

BRAND

No, sir. But--

HINES

What road you work for?

BRAND

Gerard Line.

HINES

Gerard Line? Gerard's detectives been dismissed. Got the order right here signed by Miss Donna Gerard.

REINA

Sheriff...

HINES

I don't want to countermand Miss Donna.

REINA

You've seen my father? What was done to him?

HINES

I have. And we got the murderer in the cell.

BRAND

He been charged with murder?

Hines looks at Brand.

HINES

Not confessed yet. But I believe he will. Our friend back there hasn't uttered a word since we arrested him.

REINA

He'll talk to me. Once he knows who I am.

Hines shakes his head.

HINES

Suit yourself. C'mon.

Brand goes to follow.

HINES (CONT'D)

Not you! You rest your feet outside my office.

Brand walks out of the office.

INT. HALL - CELLBLOCK - DAY

Wu Li behind bars. He's sitting cross-legged on the floor in meditation even though it looks as though he's had a fresh beating.

REINA

Been a long time. Do you remember me? Reina. The Undertaker's Wife said you can help me.

(pause)

(MORE)

REINA (CONT'D)

Do you know what happened to my father? Why he was on the tracks and not on the train?

QUINT, 30, a wiry deputy, rattles a metal cup on the bars.

QUINT

Hear the lady! Speak up ya dumb fuck!

Wu lifts his head. Jaw's swollen and lower lip hangs in a gross pucker. Wu lowers his head again.

QUINT (CONT'D)

Want me to beat the shit outta you again you sonofabitch!

HINES

Quint shuddup!

(to Reina)

This Chinaman stole money from your pa and a lot of people been scratchin' around in the snow and dirt for days tryin' to find that money.

ARNIE

C'mon, Reina, lets go--he ain't gonna say nothin'.

REINA

I don't care about the money. I'm gonna stay here till he speaks to me!

HINES

You'll be wasting your time--

REINA

It won't be a waste of time if you'd let me have a few minutes alone with him.

HINES

'Fraid I can't do that.

REINA

Wait.

(to Wu)

I believe you want my father spirit to rest in peace? I believe you want your spirit to rest?



ARNIE

You'll go crazy talkin' to him--

Reina lifts the veil from her face.

REINA

Look at my arm. See this eye?  
Somebody pushed me into a well. You  
know what the Wichita sheriff said?  
I slipped. That it was an accident.  
I believe someone wanted me dead.

WU

No accident.

REINA

What do you mean?

Wu looks at her then drops his gaze.

Beat.

REINA (CONT'D)

Why is he being held?

HINES

Cause a whole lotta people believe  
the money your father had--which  
was not found--only this fella  
may've lifted it off of him.

REINA

He would never! He's been faithful  
and I want him freed!

HINES

Listen, Miss Gerard, you can kick  
and scream all you want...

REINA

Pa-pah would never permit his  
servants to be treated like this!

HINES

Your grandfather don't give orders  
in this town, Miss Gerard.

Beat.

REINA

Sheriff Hines you used to run when  
you'd see him coming. Wait till he  
hears what you said.

(MORE)

REINA (CONT'D)  
 (to Arnie)  
 Where is grandfather?

ARNIE  
 At the paper.

Reina pushes passed Arnie and Sneed. Hines waits for them to vacate and pulls a strap off the wall. He hands it to Quint.

INT. GERARDSTOWN NEWSPAPER - DAY

VICTOR GERARD SR.(SENIOR),70, slumps in his wheel chair behind Hiram and Skylar. Pinkertons, guards, soldiers, and sundry workers fan out through the room.

Donna wheels Senior forward.

Hiram grips Senior's trembling hand.

HIRAM  
 This is a great man. I've always envied his resolve. Whatever I've done...Senior did it first. Did it better.

Donna smiles.

HIRAM (CONT'D)  
 We go way back. Both fought for the Union. Ran spies. We had trust.  
 (pause)  
 Till Little Vic drove a wedge of lies between us.

Senior incoherently blubbers. Donna wipes his mouth. Hiram holds up an AX.

HIRAM (CONT'D)  
 I won't lie. This newspaper's a disgrace. All it seeks is to rip me and Senior asunder. But we're gonna transform it into the city's first library. Folks want history not current hogwash.  
 (pause)  
 Now I'll give a hundred dollars to the man who strikes the first blow!

HOOTS. HOLLERS. Men pump their axes in the air.

Reina, Arnie and Sneed enter.

REINA  
Give me your gun!

ARNIE  
My gun?

REINA  
Yes!

Arnie unholsters and hands her his Schofield. Reina cocks it and FIRES A SHOT into the air.

REINA (CONT'D)  
I'll shoot the first man who lays  
an ax to my daddy's property!

DONNA  
Reina! Have you lost hold of your  
senses! Put that gun away!

Hiram raises his hand.

HIRAM  
Nobody's gonna do no shootin'!

DONNA  
Mr. Dunson was kind enough to have  
Pinkerton's search the tracks to  
recover your father's body!

REINA  
My father worked his fingers to the  
bone promoting this paper! He  
would've never sold it especially  
not to his enemy!

HIRAM  
Well, I don't know what to tell ya.  
All I know is that I've got a  
signed declaration from Senior  
here. Tell her.

REINA  
Did you do this, Pa-pah?

DONNA  
He did--

REINA  
I wanna hear it from him!

Reina squats before him. Senior's a life-sucked  
husk...gnarled fingers extend from his oaken chair, chin  
moist from dribble. Lips tremble. He nods.

REINA (CONT'D)  
Gerardstown News was your gift to  
daddy, Pa-pah. How could you?

DONNA  
Leave him alone. Can't you see he's  
suffering?

REINA  
What's the matter, Pa-pah?

DONNA  
I'll tell you! The apoplexy.

REINA  
Why wasn't I told, Pa-pah?

GIBBERISH flakes from Senior's lips and tears run. Reina  
wraps her arms around him.

DONNA  
Little Vic knew. But, Vic cared  
more for Ellison Whitney, the  
Women's Christian Temperance and  
that nigger caravan than his own  
father.

(beat)  
Mr. Barnes has granted me power of  
attorney. And I sold the paper on  
Senior's behest. I think a library  
would better serve--

REINA  
You don't have the right! I wanna  
see Barnes myself!

Reina gets to her feet. Donna grabs Reina's arm.

REINA (CONT'D)  
Let go!

DONNA  
Senior's been riding debt for  
years. He knew what Little Vic  
might do. Philanthropy is another  
word for squander. If you knew  
Senior's debt and Little Vic's  
follies--

REINA  
Don't ever mention my father!

Reina raises the pistol...

REINA (CONT'D)  
 Aren't you the one who said never  
 speak ill of the dead? Or just the  
 Confederate dead?

DONNA  
 (mutters)  
 You little bitch!

Reina glares then lowers the pistol. She turns and hands the  
 pistol to Arnie. Leaves.

EXT. THADDEUS BARNES LAW OFFICE - DAY

"Thaddeus Barnes, Esq. Attorney at Law" swings on a placard  
 out front.

REINA  
 Mr. Barnes! It's Reina Gerard!

She shields her face to the window.

REINA (CONT'D)  
 Mr. Barnes!

Brand steps out of his next door office.

BRAND  
 Barnes left for lunch.

REINA  
 Can you tell me where.

Brand points.

REINA (CONT'D)  
 Thank you.

BRAND  
 I'll go with you.

Reina walks. Brand grabs his coat and locks the office.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
 Hold on!

EXT. STREET - DAY

REINA  
 Why're you following me?

BRAND

I'm not. We're just headed in the same direction. I have a few matters to go over with Barnes.

Reina continues walking. He matches her pace. At the corner she turns. Reina stops abruptly.

REINA

His house is that way!

She points in the opposite direction.

BRAND

Right. I got a bit turned around. Pardon.

He tips his hat and heads in the other direction.

EXT. ROSE THEATER - DAY

The Rose Theater is a graceless stone mammoth gutted by fire.

Reina leans against the Ionic column. Brand runs up.

BRAND

You okay? You looked like you were gonna faint.

REINA

I'll be okay.

(pause)

I grew up here. Watching my mother perform on this stage. Father built this for her. Now look at it.

BRAND

Fire?

REINA

Yeah.

Brand walks to the entrance.

REINA (CONT'D)

Boarded.

BRAND

If you want...I can get you inside.

Reina hesitates.

REINA  
I would like to see it again.

BRAND  
C'mon.

EXT. SIDE DOOR - DAY

Brand picks up a hunk of concrete block and smashes the window.

INT. THEATRE - DAY

Dust and gloom swirl the corridor. Brand finds a tarnished CANDLELABRA. He STRIKES a match and lights the stubby candles.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Brand and Reina enter. Brand places the candelabra on the stage.

REINA  
That's where I used to sit. Right there where you put the candles. On the edge of the stage.

BRAND  
And they let you?

REINA  
(laughs)  
I'd've had a fit if they dared.

BRAND  
There's somethin' I want you to see. It may have belonged to your father. I picked it up near the tracks.

He pulls a RED SCARF out of his pocket.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
Can you see in this light? There's dried blood.

REINA  
I have something to show you.

Reina takes the bullet out of her pocket.

REINA (CONT'D)  
Undertaker's wife gave me this.

She hands it to him. He paces. Stops. Looks about the auditorium.

BRAND  
Fire sure did a number.

REINA  
It was arson.

BRAND  
Arson?

REINA  
Mother revived La Belle Sauvage. Do you know it?

BRAND  
Can't say I've had the pleasure.

REINA  
It's a play about Pocahontas. Mama decided to live with Comanches for the part. Tattooed and everything. Anyway, she brought poor Indian children on the stage opening night. Caused a riot.

BRAND  
That'd cause a riot anywhere.

REINA  
Under Dr. Sneed's care she worsened.

BRAND  
And she died?

REINA  
Yes. While I was at school in Oswego.

BRAND  
I'm sorry.

Brand takes her hand.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
You okay?

Reina looks at him then takes her hand away.



REINA

The candles are almost out. We better go. Barnes should be back from lunch.

EXT. THADDEUS BARNES LAW OFFICE - DAY

Reina tries the door then puts her face to the window.

REINA

I wonder where he could be?

A PIERCING HOWL comes from the street. Brand shields Reina.

BRAND

Go to my office! Wait till I come!

Reina nods.

BRAND'S POV

Undertaker kneels in the street. He's cradling his wife in his arms. A crowd is gathering.

BACK TO SCENE:

Brand pokes through the crowd.

UNDERTAKER

(to wife)

I told you to keep your mouth shut...but, you wouldn't listen!  
You wouldn't listen!

Close on Undertaker's Wife's face--pale, blue lips with a trail of spittle.

BRAND

What happened.

GAWKER

She collapsed.

UNDERTAKER

Why don't you ever listen?

Brand pushes back through the crowd.

BRAND'S POV

Inside Parker's the heads of two men bob and disappear below the window sill.

BACK TO SCENE:

BRAND  
Hey!

INT. PARKER AGENCY - DAY

Brand slams in. Reina is convulsing on the floor. Arnie is pinning her arms. Sneed is applying a wooden tongue depressor in her mouth.

SNEED  
(to Arnie)  
Help me get her to her feet!

BRAND  
What the hells goin' on!

SNEED  
Seizures! Runs in the family.

ARNIE  
Watch her arm! Get the door!

EXT. PARKER AGENCY - DAY

Brand backs out as the two men struggle to get Reina out the door.

ARNIE  
Duke! Bring the carriage around!

Duke yanks the horse's bridle and loops the carriage round in front and steadies.

The two men hoist Reina.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
Careful! Careful!

The door shuts and the carriage whisks off.

Brand lingers watching the carriage jostle away before he turns toward the crowd. Hines and Quint are shooing people off the street. The Undertaker still rocking his dead wife.

UNDERTAKER  
I knew they'd kill her...

HINES  
Let's get her off the street.

UNDERTAKER  
I knew it!

HINES  
Let's get her outta the cold.

Brand idles a moment letting the crowd flow around him as he stares at the victim's body.

HINES (CONT'D)  
(to Brand)  
You, too, mister. Move along!

Brand turns and heads toward Parker's. He's almost in the door, when he marks several silhouettes on the roof.

BRAND  
You! Come down from there!

Brand can't get a good look, then the PITTER-PATTER OF RUNNING careens along the roof. Brand chases the SOUND.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
Sonofabitch!

The FOOTFALLS cease and in a moment, reverse, and head to the other end of the roof. Brand re-tracks to the front of the building then runs into between the buildings. He grabs the fire escape rung and hoists himself up.

At the top, Brand beetles his way along the ledge.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
Brand, what the fuck are you doing?

Beyond, several figures move behind patches of shadow spilling through pigeon coops.

Brand kilters to his feet. There's a queasiness in his gut.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
Stop!

They don't. One's shimmying down a pipe connected to the rooftop. Then another follows. Now a third. Boys.

The third, in slouch hat, dressed like a boy, is WYNNDE GERARD, 15, and her sleeve snags at the escape pipe.

The weight of the three is causing the pipe to buckle. Wynnde grabs for the ledge.

The pipe bends away from the roof. But Brand grabs Wynnde by the arm and heaves her back onto the roof.

They tumble together. She's on top but he's got her in a loose grip. Their breath is close.

WYNNDE

How bout lettin' me go, fucker?

He smiles.

BRAND

A girl?

WYNNDE

No shit. And here's a little trick  
I learned...

She lifts Brand's NAVY POCKET REVOLVER from his inner pouch and COCKS the HAMMER.

BRAND

Gonna shoot me with my own gun?

WYNNDE

Let go!

The barrel's in his ribs. He releases and puts his hands up.

WYNNDE (CONT'D)

That way!

She backs away toward the fire escape.

BRAND

Range not gonna be good more than  
seven yards.

WYNNDE

Guess you'd better stay eight then.

Wynnde gets to the ledge.

WYNNDE'S POV

Sheriff Hines lurks in the alley below.

BACK TO SCENE:

WYNNDE

Shit!

BRAND

You sure cuss alot for a girl.  
What're you thirteen?

WYNNDE

Fifteen!

Brand puts his hands down.

BRAND

Fifteen's a nice age...

WYNNDE

Whaddya you know about it?

BRAND

Just makin' conversation is all.  
Figured if you were goin' ta shoot  
me...you'd done it by--

She raises the gun. He raises his arms a little.

WYNNDE

Don't try me. I'm a dead shot.  
(beat)  
Fuckin' Hines! Doesn't he have  
somethin' better to do?

BRAND

Probably lookin' for you. Wynnde  
Gerard, right?  
(beat)  
Who're them boys that hauled ass?

WYNNDE

My gang.

BRAND

(scoffs)  
Your gang, huh?

WYNNDE

That's funny? Gonna keep shootin'  
your mouth off?

BRAND

Can I put my hands down?

She motions. He drops his hands and squats.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
Lotta pigeon cages. Rock doves what  
we call 'em where I'm from.

WYNNDE  
I don't care what you call 'em...

She peeks over the ledge.

WYNNDE (CONT'D)  
Fuck!

BRAND  
That's a pretty neat trick. Lifting  
my gun. Pretty neat. Did your  
father show you that trick?  
(pause)  
Sorry...didn't mean to mention your  
father.

WYNNDE  
Duke showed me.

BRAND  
You mean that colored boy?

WYNNDE  
He's a man, not a boy!

BRAND  
Didn't mean anything by it.

WYNNDE  
He served in France under my  
father. Taught me how to home  
pigeons, too.

BRAND  
Sorry.  
(pause)  
Think Hines's left?

WYNNDE  
They sure didn't hafta kill the old  
undertaker lady.

BRAND  
Guess so...

WYNNDE  
They already got everything.

BRAND  
Dunson?

WYNNDE

All of 'em. All workin' together!

Silence.

BRAND

Its medieval to get rid of all your rivals. Ever hear of the Tudors?

WYNNDE

Of course. Who hasn't?

BRAND

Henry Seven killed everyone except the princess, Elizabeth.

WYNNDE

Why'd he do that?

He lowers his hands and creeps closer.

BRAND

That's how they did things back then to legitimize their crown. And make heirs.

(pause)

Rumor has it that baby bear Dunson wants a Gerard bride. Maybe Reina.

WYNNDE

(scoffs)

Skylar Dunson marry Reina?

BRAND

Two train baron families knotted. Makes perfect sense. Complete control of Kansas railroads. You know Reina was in my office? Had a seizure--

WYNNDE

Seizure? My sister has never had a seizure in her life!

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Three THUG DETECTIVES, (30s), approach Hines.

HINES

Find those little shits?

THUG DETECTIVE #1

Gave us the slip.

HINES  
Keep lookin'.

The group scatters.

EXT. ROOF TOP - NIGHT

WYNNDE  
You got rolling papers?

BRAND  
You smoke, too? Unladylike.

WYNNDE  
Do you or don't you?

Brand digs in his shirt pocket and gives her the pack. He strikes a match. Wynnde takes out a pencil nub and scribbles on the thin sheet. She rolls the paper and stuffs it into a small strapped canister and walks to a pigeon cage.

Wynnde releases a pigeon into the air.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Sheriff Hines HEARS the WING BEATS from the roof. Hines beckon-waves the Thugs to his location. They assemble at the bottom of the fire escape. Hines chin-ups first rung.

EXT. ROOF TOP - NIGHT

Wynnde walks to the other side of the roof. SHOUTS from a NOISY BAR are heard.

WYNNDE  
All my father did for them and they sit back and do nothing when he's murdered. Drunkards. Wife-beaters. I hate this fuckin' town.

BRAND  
I'd like to help. I really do. But, I'm just one person. What can I do anyway?

WYNNDE  
You can free Wu Li before they hang him.

BRAND  
That's impossible.



Wynnde pivots from the roof and appears to aim at Brand... but she's aiming at Hines who steps out of the shadows.

HINES

Your grandma won't appreciate you shootin' me. And I don't wanna have-  
ta shoot you.

Hines draws his pistol. Aims at Wynnde.

WYNNDE

I ain't goin' back to that house!

HINES

That's up to you. Miss Donna told me to fetch you.

BRAND

Wynnde...lower the gun...

HINES

Whole crazy family with no goddam common sense! Put down the fuckin' gun!

The three thugs appear behind Hines.

HINES (CONT'D)

Don't wanna gun down no little girl, but the choice is yours.

Beat.

Wynnde lowers the pistol.

HINES (CONT'D)

Good girl.

BRAND

Sheriff Hines?

HINES

Yeah?

BRAND

A word?

They come together.

HINES

Yeah?

BRAND

Listen. That was my gun. She didn't mean anything by it. She's a little distraught.

HINES

You don't say?

BRAND

Yeah. So, if you don't mind...I can take...escort her home.

HINES

Console her, huh?

BRAND

If you don't mind. I mean...It'll mean the world to her losing her pa and all.

HINES

Will, huh?

BRAND

Sure. I'll give you my guarantee.

HINES

Guarantee? Guarantee! Fella kidnaps a little girl then wants to escort her home? And what? Fuck her on the way?

BRAND

Now mister!

HINES

Best get your hand off me...  
Mister! C'mon girl.

He jerks Wynnde by the arm...

And the THREE THUGS close in on Brand.

Brand makes for the fire escape. But he's SUCKERPUNCHED in the TEMPLE. He wobbles back and futilely lifts his fists. A WALLOP comes from another direction. Then a GUT PUNCH doubling him over. He's snorting BLOOD.

THUG DETECTIVE #1

(laughs)

I say we throw his ass off the roof!

Brand follows the laughter with a RIGHT CROSS felling Thug Detective #1.

THUG DETECTIVE #1 (CONT'D)  
Sonofabitch!

Thug Detective #2 catches Brand in a headlock while Thug Detective #3 lifts Brand's legs. Brand tussles as they cart him to the ledge.

BRAND  
No! Jesus! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

Brand GRIPS the ledge.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
No! Jesus! No!

Thug Detective #1 TWISTS Brand's fingers back.

THUG DETECTIVE #1  
C'mon you sonofabitch!

Thug Detective #1 KICKS Brand's hand. Brand releases his grip and catches hold of the GUTTER PIPE. The pipe bends away until - SNAP - A reverse pole vault sends Brand into a lattice of dust and snow.

Brand's ANKLE TWISTS.

THUG'S POV

Thug Detective #1 bucks along the ledge peering into the Tavern alley.

BACK TO SCENE:

THUG DETECTIVE #2  
He dead?

THUG DETECTIVE #1  
No. Sonofabitch still alive. Look!  
I'm gunna shoot that fucker!

He aims into the alley shadows.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

CRACK! A BULLET HISSES by Brand and SPUTTERS into the dirt. Brand, dazed, whiffles beneath the porch planking, spidering along the under beams until he's near the saloon.

LAUGHTER SPILLS out of the saloon, followed by DRUNKEN COWPOKES.

COWPOKES (O.S.)  
 (singing)  
*I had an old hen with a wooden leg  
 the best old hen that ever laid  
 eggs...*

Brand staggers to his feet, hobbles.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Ten or Twelve Cowpokes swagger out swinging bar doors.

COWPOKES  
*Turkey in the hay...Hey! Turkey in  
 the straw...pick 'em up, shake 'em  
 up any way at all...*

Brand threads his way into their graces.

BRAND  
 Could use a drink, fellas.

Cowpoke hands him a flask. Brand gulps. His ankle gives.

KIND COWPOKE  
 Hey!

COWPOKES  
*Heyyy! Turkey in the hay...*

KIND COWPOKE  
 Drunker than I thought. Need a  
 hand?

BRAND  
 Just help me over to the jail.

KIND COWPOKE  
 Jail? Sure. Give me hand with this  
 fella.

A couple of Cowpokes human-crutch Brand and drag him to the jail.

Thug Detectives whip past the Cowpoke crowd and search the alley.

EXT. JAIL - NIGHT

Cowpokes unload Brand on the steps.

BRAND  
I'm good here, fellas, thanks.

Brand cuddles on the stairs. The Cowpokes leave. Brand winces his way beneath the step boards.

Brand catches his breath and peeps through the slats, when...

A pair of large, dark hands clamp on his ankles and yank, the pain splits Brand's face...

BRAND (CONT'D)  
Ungh!

Struggles.

DUKE  
C'mon!

BRAND  
My ankle! I think it's broke!

DUKE  
We gotta go for they find you!

Duke pack-straps Brand and crates him to the barred window.

DUKE (CONT'D)  
(sotto voce)  
Wu! Wu!

WU (O.S.)  
Mr. Duke?

DUKE  
Yeah. It's me. We'll be back, hear?

Duke carts Brand into the night.

INT. GERARD HOUSE - REINA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Donna edges along the Reina's bed as Sneed SCISSORS up the cast.

SNEED  
How do you feel?

Reina shrugs. Sneed PRIES OPEN the cast with the spreader-pliers, then un-shells the cast. He gently presses his fingers along her wrist.

SNEED (CONT'D)

Tray.

Donna takes a glass from the tray held by a Black Female Servant, HANNA, 30s.

SNEED (CONT'D)

For the pain.

Reina drinks.

SNEED (CONT'D)

Good. Watch.

Sneed pitches and rolls his arm. Reina lifts her arm and mirrors.

SNEED (CONT'D)

More sprain than break, I think.  
It'll be fine. Good as a gumdrop.

DONNA

(to Reina)

Then we should see you downstairs  
for dinner in an hour?

REINA

Have you found Wynnde?

DONNA

I'm sure the Sheriff has.

SNEED

If it starts giving you  
problems...we can re-wrap it.

Donna and Sneed exit. HANNA begins unpacking Reina's case.

REINA

What are you doing?

HANNA

Ma'am?

REINA

What are you doing?

HANNA

Miss Donna told me to unpack your  
things, ma'am.

REINA  
Leave it and go.

HANNA  
Yes, ma'am.

HANNA bows out. Reina unpacks a dress and lays it on the bed. A curl of white paper floats to the floor. Reina picks it up.

INSERT - NOTE

"Eat nothing. Drink nothing."

BACK TO SCENE:

Reina drops the note. Her face flushes like fired clay. She lifts the glass from the tray. A powdery film lattices the milk surface.

She glances up. There's a man standing in her closet.

GHOST VICTOR stares back at her.

Reina stumbles back.

She forces herself to look again.

Now the closet is empty.

Reina perches on the edge of the bed, her heart pounding. She throws the milk glass across the room.

EXT. SOD HOUSE - NIGHT

Duke props Brand against a horseless wagon as he opens the door. Then Duke acts as a human crutch and the men enter the sod house.

INT. SOD HOUSE - NIGHT

Duke deposits Brand on the bed near the window.

DUKE  
How's the leg?

BRAND  
Fucked.

Duke nods.

DUKE

I'll send my boys around to see to it.

BRAND

How'd you find me?

DUKE

You're a lucky man. When I seen the dove fly off...I knows there was trouble. Then I seen you come off the roof!

BRAND

Wynnde thinks highly of you.

DUKE

Yeah. She's quick as a whip. Anyway, she says you'd be helpin' us free Wu Li?

BRAND

I never agreed to that. Never agreed to gettin' myself killed on account of no Chinaman.

DUKE

Well. That's what the pigeon message said. I'll have the boys care for you anyhow.

Duke rises.

DUKE (CONT'D)

I understand. Scared.

BRAND

Ain't scared.

DUKE

They'll be movin' him from the jail tomorrow. Early.

BRAND

What's so important about this Chinaman?

DUKE

Mr. Victor had a deposit box key. Wu Li like to have it.

BRAND

How do you know that?



DUKE  
 In the deposit box is another key.  
 And that key is to a money chest.

BRAND  
 No bank's gonna let him near their  
 vault.

DUKE  
 But they'll let Miss Reina.

BRAND  
 Reina?

DUKE  
 Yeah.

BRAND  
 Can we save her?

DUKE  
 Get some rest.

Duke swings open the door and darts out.

INT. GERARD HOUSE - LANDING - NIGHT

Reina eases across the landing steadying herself against the grand staircase balustrade.

REINA'S POV

Guests are arriving. Bustling and laughter drift up. The flitting top of Donna's head bobs in then out of view. Ghost Victor appears at the foot of the stairs. He looks at Reina who tries to steady herself.

DONNA (O.S.)  
 Hurry with the coats! Check on  
 Reina. Tell her the guests have  
 arrived!

HANNA (O.S.)  
 Yes, mum.

BACK TO SCENE:

HANNA ascends the stairs.

HANNA

Oh. Miss Reina! You scared me! Yo  
grandmutha--

REINA

I heard.

HANNA

Miss Reina, you look weak. Can I  
help you?

REINA

I needn't any assistance, thank  
you.

Reina grips the railing.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Raucous table gathering. Hiram sits at the table's head  
flanked by Senior and Skylar. Donna sits opposite with Arnie  
and Sneed. Servants buzz about the full table serving the  
town's eight or nine guests.

The chair next to Skylar is vacant. Reina sits.

REINA'S POV

Bestial faces with SLURPING MOUTHS TEARING FLESH like  
wolves...then Ghost Victor stands between Hiram and Donna.

REINA

Daddy!

BACK TO SCENE:

Reina HOWLS. She's SMASHES plates and HURLS food. The guests  
RECOIL in horror.

Donna calmly steps to the door and beckons.

DONNA

I need your expertise, ladies.

TWO STOUT NURSES, 30s, hurry in and collapse on Reina like  
wrestlers. The trio writhe en masse.

Sneed applies chloroform to a handkerchief and pushes it to  
Reina's face.

SNEED  
Breathe. There now.

Donna stands over Reina's limp body.

INT./EXT. GERARD HOUSE - BARN - NIGHT

Duke stables his horse and runs into HANNA.

HANNA  
Where you been?

DUKE  
No where.

HANNA  
All hells breakin' loose. Mr.  
Arnold is lookin' all over for you!

Duke brushes her aside and heads out.

DUKE'S POV

The Two Stout Nurses force Reina into a carriage which hastens away.

A moment later, Sheriff Hines trots up with Wynnde.

BACK TO SCENE:

Duke waits for a moment and returns to the barn.

EXT./INT. BARN - NIGHT

DUKE  
Didn't I tell you to stay with  
Senior?

HANNA  
Mr. Arnold wants the wagon--

He grabs her.

DUKE  
Listen! Get Senior to Mr. Whitney  
then meet me at Paps. I'll give you  
as much cover as I can!

HANNA nods. She waits for a moment then creeps outside.

INT. GERARDS HOUSE - ANTEROOM - NIGHT

Donna sits on a settee. Skylar meanders to the hearth and picks up a PORTRAIT OF TWO CONFEDERATES.

SKYLAR

Huh.

DONNA

Pardon?

Skylar faces the portrait to Donna.

SKYLAR

Thought Senior was a Union general?  
Looks like his sons are both  
Confederates.

DONNA

Those are my sons.

Skylar turns the picture.

SKYLAR

Huh! Now I see the resemblance. Why  
is one in uniform and the other  
not?

Donna takes the portrait from him and places it back on the mantle.

DONNA

Both are in uniform. One served  
under my first husband. The other  
served as an agent for President  
Davis.

SKYLAR

I take it Senior never welcomed  
them here?

DONNA

Never had to. Both are dead. Shot  
and hung. And my first husband died  
in the Great Army of Northern  
Virginia.

SKYLAR

I'm sorry--

DONNA

You know the greatest sight I ever  
saw? The Old Man on Traveler.

(MORE)

DONNA (CONT'D)  
 And Old Stonewall by him. Very best  
 of men!

SKYLAR  
 Your sons names?

DONNA  
 Boyd and Brett.

SKYLAR  
 Pardon my asking but, how did you  
 end up marrying a Yankee?

DONNA  
 Hiram never told you?

Hiram and Kiser enter.

HIRAM  
 Never told you what?

DONNA  
 My marring my jailer in a Yankee  
 prison.

HIRAM  
 Another time perhaps.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Donna and Arnie watch Hines holds the reins as Wynnde remains  
 on the saddle.

DONNA  
 What do you have to say for  
 yourself? Hear me talkin' to you,  
 young lady?

WYNNDE  
 Ma'am?

DONNA  
 Well?

Wynnde slides off the horse.

DONNA (CONT'D)  
 Go inside. Got someone I want you  
 to meet.

WYNNDE  
 Baby bear?

DONNA  
 Sheriff that'll be all.

Hines re-mounts and rides off. Donna turns to enter the house. Arnie grabs her arm.

ARNIE  
 It's reckonin' time for the  
 Gerards, ain't it?

DONNA  
 What's that supposed to mean?

ARNIE  
 Means I get what you promised.

DONNA  
 You're drunk and have no idea what  
 you're talking about.

ARNIE  
 I know my wish is coming true!

DONNA  
 Your wish?

ARNIE  
 You said once you've served your  
 turn on the general that killed  
 Boyd and Brett--then everybody gets  
 what they want! I want Miss Rose!

She slaps him across the face.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
 Whatdya do that for!

DONNA  
 Don't ever mention her name in this  
 house and don't let my boys names  
 spill from your drunken lips!

Duke reins a horse from the shadows.

DONNA (CONT'D)  
 Where you been? We've been callin'  
 you.

DUKE  
 No where, ma'am.

DONNA  
 Take Mr. Arnold home till he's  
 sober!

DUKE  
I'll hitch the wagon, ma'am.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Donna tugs Wynnde before Hiram who's smoking at the hearth.  
Skylar slumps on the couch.

HIRAM  
Bring her over here so I can look  
at her.

Hiram examines Wynnde.

HIRAM (CONT'D)  
Skylar? Whadya think? Not insane  
like her sister.

SKYLAR  
She's just a little girl.

WYNNDE  
Little? Fuck you!

Donna WHACKS Wynnde across the face. Kiser steps in the room.

HIRAM  
(to Kiser)  
It's all right. She's a little  
feisty. Nothing we can't handle. Be  
about your business.

Kiser nods. Exits.

INT./EXT.

Kiser stands on porch checking his revolvers.

KISER POV

Six hundred yards away, a squat triangle (Hanna) pushes a  
square (Senior) toward the town.

BACK TO SCENE:

Kiser holsters his pistols and steps off the porch.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Duke whacks the reins as the wagon waggles between ruts and shoveled snow wakes.

                          ARNIE  
What?

                          DUKE  
Nuthin'.

Wagon shakes along farther.

                          ARNIE  
Nuthin'? I knows there's somethin'  
when you get quiet.

                          DUKE  
Nah-suh. It's just...Nevermind.

                          ARNIE  
Stop the cart!

Duke yanks the reins. SQUEAKING WHEELS halt.

                          ARNIE (CONT'D)  
You wanna walk? Out with it!

                          DUKE  
You ain't gonna believe me.

                          ARNIE  
Out!

Duke climbs down. Arnie slides over to helm. Arnie snaps the reins and CLIP-CLOPS a pace.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

On the outskirts of town, Hanna hears a NEIGH from behind.

                          HANNA  
Never should of done this! It's yo  
fault!

Senior piffles and drools. Hanna spies a church and shoves him forward.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Hanna rolls Senior to the altar.



HANNA

Stay here. I'll be back.

Hanna jitters through the back presbytery door.

Moments later, Kiser's shadow enshrouds Senior. Senior's GIBBERISH INTENSIFIES like a chant as Kiser circles the wheelchair.

Kiser puts on his gloves and CLAMPS Senior's throat.

INT. RETREAT - DAY

Reina lies on an asylum bed in restraints.

Sneed enters capped, masked and smocked.

He scratches a stool from the corner and drags it bedside.

SNEED

Good. You're awake?

Reina's eyes rove across the constellation of blood droplets on his smock.

SNEED (CONT'D)

May have to re-cast that arm.

REINA

Where am I?

SNEED

You've had some convulsions, but we'll see you right.

REINA

Let me go.

SNEED

When your seizures are under control. And your hallucinations.

REINA

Seizures? I've never...

SNEED

Are you still seeing your father?

REINA

My father?

SNEED

Yes?

Beat.

SNEED (CONT'D)  
Well, your grandmother thinks it  
best I care for you...

Reina struggles vainly against the arm straps.

SNEED (CONT'D)  
You'd like the restraints removed?  
I need to know I'll have your full  
cooperation. Do I have your full  
cooperation?

Reina nods.

Sneed motions to the Stout Nurse who brings over a bowl.

SNEED (CONT'D)  
You've gotta eat...

He takes the bowl and pushes it to Reina's mouth. Reina turns her head.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Duke comes along side the wagon at the bottom of a rise where Arnie parked. He's cradling his Schofield and crying.

DUKE  
Boss?

ARNIE  
I know you niggers know all the  
tattle that goes on around  
here...spying...don't look dumb!

Duke looks dumb.

Arnie raises the Schofield. Cocks it.

DUKE  
I know you have a shine for Miss  
Rose...But, doctor Sneed swore me  
to secrecy...

ARNIE  
Sneed...I knew it!

DUKE  
Yessuh. They say he puts stuff in  
women's drinks. Sometimes boys  
drinks, too. Poisons they minds.

(MORE)

DUKE (CONT'D)

Then he takes 'em up to the hospital to be with the crazies. He knows the crazies can't talk. Nobody believes crazies. You can do anything to them.

(pause)

I think you know already.

ARNIE

He's runnin' a whorehouse up there?

DUKE

A birdy says he gotta a bunch of carriages and took 'em up to there to move the women out.

ARNIE

Tonight?

DUKE

Tonight. Plan on shippin' off to Pennsylvania or somewheres.

ARNIE

Everyone?

DUKE

Everyone.

ARNIE

Donna know about all this?

DUKE

Reckon. That's why she had me usher you away.

ARNIE

She knows I've always loved Miss Rose! I went to all her performances!

DUKE

I think Miss Rose be the first to go--

ARNIE

You're lyin'!

DUKE

Sneed got a shine for Miss Rose, too. He say you just a drunkard and don't deserve Miss Rose. Said if he could he'd poison you but you already dun done that.

Arnie picks up his bottle. Examines. SMASHES it.

ARNIE

Fuckin' weasel! Somethin' told me!  
Sneed! Weasel! Gonna jip Arnie?  
We'll see whose the stupid  
sonofabitch!

Arnie jerks the reins and tears off toward the asylum. Duke runs the opposite direction.

EXT./INT. SOD HOUSE - NIGHT

Duke beats on the door.

JONNY (O.S.)

Duke?

DUKE

Yeah. Let me in.

Jonny opens the door.

BRAND

What happened?

DUKE

Let me catch ma breath.

The two look at him.

DUKE (CONT'D)

Where's Billy?

JONNY

Home.

DUKE

Get him. And bale-up the wagon.  
They takin' Wu out from the jail  
early morning 'fore the  
Suffragettes march. Hiram's men  
'fore marshal come.

Jonny bolts out the door.

BRAND

Whatcha gonna do?

DUKE

Intercept the transport! Prolly be takin' Ole Wichita Road avoidin' marchers. Can you steady yoself on the wagon or you need a crutch?

BRAND

The wagon?

DUKE

Yeah. I'll need you and the boys to hold up the prison transport.

BRAND

Prison transport!

DUKE

Second thought a crutch be too hard to find. Maybe a shagbark'll work.

BRAND

I'm not holdin' up no prison cart!

DUKE

You know how to drive a team don't ya?

BRAND

Sure. But, there's no way...

DUKE

All you need is a Baled-up wagon and two scarecrows. Boys'll be scarecrows.

BRAND

It'll never work.

DUKE

I gotta get down to that hospital Miss Reina in helluva trouble.

BRAND

Reina?

DUKE

Just meet me at Pap's camp cross the bridge. Shanty town.

Duke goes to leave.

BRAND

Wait!

Duke stops.

BRAND (CONT'D)  
Why are you doing this?

DUKE  
The Gerard's saved my life and I'm  
not gonna stand by and let Hiram  
and Donna rip them to shreds!

Duke yanks the scarf from around his neck revealing an ugly  
rope scar.

DUKE (CONT'D)  
Twenty one and half miles outside  
of town. Six men strung me up.  
Called it a picnic. People threw a  
party. Gathered from all over.  
Nevermind I was innocent. Nevermind  
I was a cav'ry sargent. Didn't  
matter...except to Miss Rose.

Beat.

BRAND  
My leg. It ain't healed none.

DUKE  
Debate with your conscience for all  
I care! Just remember it was Miss  
Wynnde's bird that saved yo hide.

Beat.

BRAND  
Paps, huh?

DUKE  
Paps. From Paps the Buffaloes can  
take the Gerards to Oklahoma where  
they'll be safe.

Duke leaves. Returns shortly with a hickory staff. Throws it  
to Brand who catches it.

EXT. ASYLUM - DAY

Arnie arrives in wagon as five or six hospital nurses herd a  
dozen or more hooded patients into horse-drawn ambulances.

One nurse scuffles with a hooded patient.

Arnie hops down from his wagon perch.

NURSE  
Who are you?

He holds the pistol to the nurse, who backs away.

ARNIE  
(plaintively)  
Rose?

He snatches the hood off the patient. Only wild eyes stare back at him.

He pushes the patient away. Arnie heads to the compound.

ARNIE (CONT'D)  
Rose!

EXT. ASYLUM - DAY

Kiser gallops up and dismounts.

INT. ASYLUM - PREP ROOM - DAY

Stout Nurses attend a near sedated Reina prone on the hospital cot. Sneed's head pokes in.

SNEED  
We got trouble. She ready?

STOUT NURSE #1  
Yes, doctor.

SNEED  
Unstrap her and take her to the ambulance. Use the back courtyard.

He disappears. There's a CRACK of a gunshot in the distance. The nurses unstrap Reina and place her on the gurney. Sneed's head pops in again.

SNEED (CONT'D)  
Leave her! We'll come back for her!  
Follow me to the dungeon!

STOUT NURSE #1  
We're taking the dungeon patients?

SNEED  
Just one.

They leave Reina on the floor and exit. Then the RATTLE of keys locking her in. Reina blinks and rolls off the gurney.

She staggers to the door and pulls. No luck. She tries the windows until she finds one open leading onto the roof.

EXT. ROOF TOP - DAY

Reina climbs out and walks over to the ledge.

Below Stout Nurses clump across the courtyard. They see her.

STOUT NURSE #1

Hey!

Reina jumps back from the ledge and tries several windows to other rooms. Locked. Reina runs back to the ledge. No nurses insight below.

Reina clambers onto the ledge and lowers herself down a trellis.

Stout Nurses reach the roof but Reina is just out of reach.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Reina scrambles across the courtyard. More gunshots are heard.

INT. ASYLUM - DAY

Reina creeps down a corridor. There's a man (Arnie) lying in a blood puddle. She steps to him.

REINA'S POV

Uncle Arnie!

BACK TO SCENE:

She unclenches the pistol from his hand. But, she can hear the CLICK OF BOOTSTEPS closing from another corridor.

Reina finds a closet and enters.

The footsteps stop near the closet then move on.

More GUNSHOTS. SCREAMS. Then Quiet. Reina exhales.

She chances out of the closet, and heads opposite the direction of the footsteps and paces until she comes to an open door.



The footsteps are louder...coming her way. She lifts the pistol and slips through the door.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - DAY

Reina descends.

EXT. ROAD TO ASYLUM - DAY

Duke arrives on horseback. SCARED NURSE is running toward him. As she runs by Duke dismounts and grabs her shoulders.

DUKE  
What's happening?

SCARED NURSE  
Mr. Arnold and a man in black are  
killin' everybody!

DUKE  
Man in black--

SCARED NURSE  
Let me go!

She jerks away and continues running.

INT. DUNGEON - DAY

The Dungeon is a forgotten circular pit indented with cages and slimy as an unclean fish bowl with fuzzy-gas-lit splotches illumining the walls.

Reina feels her way from the stairs to the nearest wall the gun heavy in her hand.

She can make out a shrouded staircase on the other side of the "arena". And a cage suspended from a rope near the bowl's center.

There's a jungle-consciousness of caged faces watching her creep by.

Reina navigates by gas light.

REINA'S POV

A man (Dr. Sneed) slumps outside of an open cell.

Reina raises the Schofield.

BACK TO SCENE:

REINA

Sneed that you! Raise your hands!

Sneed doesn't move.

Reina takes a few steps to him.

REINA (CONT'D)

I swear I'll shoot!

Reina creeps closer. She sees his lifeless stare.

She steps over him into the cell.

There's a half naked body of a WOMAN with her throat cut. The dead woman is sprawled on a bench.

Reina retreats as she hears FOOTSTEPS coming closer from somewhere in the dark arena.

REINA (CONT'D)

Come closer and I'll shoot!

Duke steps into the light.

REINA (CONT'D)

Duke? Oh, my god!

Duke looks from Sneed to the dead girl.

DUKE

Kiser's here to kill you! He must've forced Sneed to lead him here...to the wrong girl. But, if Kiser didn't find you, maybe he didn't find her neither!

Duke gazes up to the suspended cage.

DUKE (CONT'D)

C'mon. Help me get her down before it's too late.

REINA

Who?

DUKE

Your mother.

REINA

My mother?

INT. ARENA - CONTINUOUS

Duke follows the pulley rope to the crank. Reina runs to the center of the arena where the cage slowly lowers.

Legs dangle from the crate suspending the chair from four hooks--a make shift torture swing.

The pulley winches her down in jerks. Slackens. Duke runs to the cage and fumbles with the latch. Reina stares at the cage.

DUKE

Careful! This is a vomit chair  
reserved for the most violent  
patients.

Duke rips open the cage and unbuckles the straps from Rose who is naked and unconscious.

REINA

She dead?

Duke checks her.

DUKE

No. Just sedated. Pull those  
clothes off the dead girl and bring  
here.

EXT. COURT YARD - DAY

Duke unbundles Rose against the court yard wall.

DUKE

We'll need a horse.

Reina stares at Rose.

REINA

I was always told she'd taken her  
life.

Rose peers up from under a cloak.

DUKE

Miss Rose it's me Duke. Duke. You  
remember?

ROSE

Duke?

DUKE

It's me.

Rose places her hand on his cheek.

ROSE

Poor, Duke. Did Victor send you?

DUKE

Victor...he...we...gotta get over the bridge.

REINA

Now, we need to get Wynnde--

DUKE

Later. We need a wagon and get you and your mother to safety--

REINA

Kiser'll--

Duke shoots up and grabs Reina by the shoulders.

DUKE

I wanna get Wynnde as much as you! But, We gotta get Miss Rose outta reach!

REINA

I'm not goin' just leave Wynnde--

DUKE

Listen! I don't think Hiram wants her dead. If they wanted to kill her...she'd be dead already.

REINA

How do you know that! She may be dead for all we know!

DUKE

You're right! I don't know! But I do know we'll need the Buffalo's help to kill Kiser...you know it and I know it...

Reina slumps in his arms.

DUKE (CONT'D)

We can save you and Rose. We'll get you across the bridge. And we'll get Wynnde I promise.

(MORE)

DUKE (CONT'D)  
Now, I'll stay with your mother and  
you find us a horse? Okay?

Reina nods.

Reina exits the courtyard. Duke sits beside Rose.

DUKE (CONT'D)  
Can you walk?

ROSE'S POV (**HALLUCINATION**)

Instead of Duke...Sneed's face  
smiles back at her. Instead of  
Duke's outstretched hand, she sees  
Sneed's thrusting a hypodermic  
needle at her.

BACK TO SCENE:

ROSE  
No you don't!

Rose wraps her arm around Duke's shoulder and as he lifts  
her...she reverts her grip into a choke hold.

ROSE (CONT'D)  
Sneed! Coyote vagina!

DUKE  
Sneed? No, it's me! Duke!

Duke spins around and is soon wilting. He pushes back with  
all his might and CRASHES into the wall. Rose goes limp.

Duke crawls away and sits.

Beat.

He eyes Rose for a moment then slowly crawls back to her.  
Checks. She's still alive.

DUKE (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Jesus!

He struggles to his feet and staggers out.

DUKE (CONT'D)  
Reina?

EXT. OUTSIDE COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Duke runs from wagon to wagon. No horses. No staff.

DUKE

Reina!

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Murky pre-dawn. A back trail fractures a half mile beyond Gerardstown--an outlaw getaway that few know of or use.

The trail meanders into a low between a spit of trees where a hay wagon grinds uphill peeling faint snow-dust.

A prison wagon is coming opposite less than a quarter mile.

Close on the driver with bandana (Brand) of the hay wagon. He leans back and whispers to the hay.

BRAND

Y'all ready?

JONNY

Yeah.

BILLY

Yeah.

BRAND

When I give the signal, push the rifles outta the hay so it looks like we gotta wagon load of bandits. Then crawl out the back.

Brand brings the hay wagon to a stop, lowering his hat and pulling a bandana over his mouth.

The prison transport hobbles the trail but is brought short by the hay wagon blocking the way.

Two drivers, WHIPS, 40s, startle at the hay cart bandit and his leveled rifles. Whip #1 yanks the reins and stops the transport.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Show your hands! Throw down your pieces!

Billy and Jonny (hay stuffed in the shirts and boots) walk on either side of the transport collecting sidearms and rifles.

WHIP #1

Ain't no money on this stage, mister.

BRAND  
Not what I heard.

WHIP #1  
This here's a prison cart.

BRAND  
I reckon it'd be the best way to  
sneak out a money chest.

WHIP #2  
Money chest? Hiram Dunson wouldn't  
send a penny without an armed  
guard. All we got is a prisoner...a  
Chinaman.

WHIP #1  
(to Whip #2)  
Don't think Mr. Dee would want you  
blabbin' his business about.

BRAND  
Mr. Dee, huh? Ole Baron Dunson!  
Somethings aren't adding up. One  
transport for one prisoner on a  
back road? Must be he's the emperor  
of China?

WHIP #1  
Just a regular ole Chinaman.

BRAND  
A regular ole Chinaman? Show me.

WHIP #1  
Can't do that.

BRAND  
Now somethin' ain't adding up.  
Who'd wanna get shot over a  
Chinaman? I know I wouldn't.

WHIP #2  
I think we better show him.

BRAND  
That's all I'm asking.

Whip #2 gets down. He undoes the latch and swings the gate.  
He pulls Wu Li out and pushes him against the wagon side.

WHIP #2  
See? Only the prisoner.

BRAND

Kid climb into the wagon and check.

Billy climbs up but snags his shirt. Straw flies everywhere.

WHIP #2

What the fuck?

Whip #2 grabs Billy. They scuffle. Whip #1 pulls out a hidden revolver from beneath the seat and FIRES at Jonny. Brand returns FIRE.

Jittery horses rear and pull the prison cart forward. Whip #2 has Billy by the throat. Wu Li finds a LARGE STONE and SMASHES it on Whip #2's head.

The uncontrolled wagon slips sideways and spews Whip #1 face down into a watery gulch and he rises no more.

Wu Li stares up at Brand. Brand lowers his rifle and pulls down his bandana.

BRAND

Duke sent us.

Wu bows. Climbs onto the hay cart.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

Duke piggy-backs Rose out of a grove across from the bridge.

DUKE

We need to get over the  
bridge...can't carry you no  
further.

She nods. He lets her down. She staggers.

DUKE (CONT'D)

You'll need to keep the cloak on  
till we get to the settlement.

She hesitates.

DUKE (CONT'D)

Still seeing visions?

She nods. He takes her hand.

They mount the bridge.



EXT. BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

From the opposite side of the bridge a WHITE TRADER, 20s, leads a nag and Schultz wagon.

DUKE  
Just keep yo head down, Miss Rose.

White Trader passes. But Rose's bare feet, legs and stagger catch his stare.

WHITE TRADER  
Hey!

Duke and Rose keep walking.

WHITE TRADER (CONT'D)  
Hey, boy, You'd better stop when  
I'm talkin' to you!

He parks the wagon, ties the hitch and pulls out his revolver.

WHITE TRADER (CONT'D)  
Stop or I'll blow your nigger head  
off!

White Trader hustles around front and cowboys up to Duke. White Trader's gaze lingers over Rose's bare legs. Trader smiles.

WHITE TRADER (CONT'D)  
Sneakin' a whore to Shanty town?

Silence.

WHITE TRADER (CONT'D)  
Well, whore or not...you ain't  
takin' no white woman to no nigger  
camp.

He steps to Rose.

WHITE TRADER (CONT'D)  
Who are you, trash?

He peeks under her cowl.

WHITE TRADER (CONT'D)  
Holy shit!

Then Rose is on him like a fury--SCRATCHING, KICKING, CLAWING. They spin-dance for a moment.

Duke strips White Trader of his gun and with a WALLOP, fells him over the bridge rail.

SPLASH!

DUKE'S POV

Duke watches White Trader thrashing, gulping half the river.

BACK TO SCENE:

Rose tears across the bridge...naked and whooping like a native.

DUKE

Miss Rose!

Duke chucks the Trader's revolver over the side, scoops up Reina's cloak and runs after her.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Main road into Gerardstown. A speck of a rider (Kiser) silhouettes through the snow and disappears into the town.

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Reina, on horseback, follows Kiser up the main road.

EXT. CAMP - DAY

Shanty camp. Mules and men packing and being packed. Pap Singleton moves through the camp with an entourage of six or seven faithful.

A cavalry officer, Cyrus (same soldier we saw in Wichita), stands at the door of the shanty.

INT. SHANTY - DAY

Pap hovers over a potbelly stove pouring coffee.

PAP

Hate to see you boys go.

CYRUS

Orders.

PAP  
 Didn't finish tellin' ya 'bout Fred  
 Douglass's funeral.

CYRUS  
 Another time, perhaps.  
 (pause)  
 Our boys can protect you as far as  
 Kansas City.

PAP  
 No Kansas City for these. Think  
 we'll fare better in Oklahoma.  
 Gotta a few black settlements there  
 already. Doin' well I hear.

HARRY, 15, flies into the cabin.

HARRY  
 Pap!

PAP  
 Boy--you know better than to  
 interrupt--

HARRY  
 There's a naked white woman runnin'  
 cross the bridge!

PAP  
 Wha?!

HARRY  
 And there's a white man drownin' in  
 the river--

COAL JOHNSON, 40s, pokes his head in the cabin.

COAL  
 You ain't gonna believe dis!

EXT. SHANTY - DAY

Pap steps porch side. Entering the camp surrounded by  
 onlookers is Duke escorting Rose wrapped in a cloak.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Exhibition Day March!

The town bulges with Suffragettes, unionists, no-work-a-days, groundlings and gawkers lollygagging before a raised platform. Ellison Whitney and May Stone chit-chat.

Reina wades through the crowd. She spots Kiser disappear into an alley.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Reina ties her horse, grips her Schofield and leans into the alley.

Kiser's horse is there, but no Kiser.

She raises the pistol and takes a few steps into the alley.

There's movement near an alley door. Reina aims.

TWO LOVERS, 20s, emerge, the she-lover's straightening her white dress and the he-lover's fiddling with his pants.

Reina heads down the alley.

She finds an open alley door with stairs leading to the roof. She pauses a moment and steps in.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

Reina prowls the lobby of the second floor. No guests or attendants. Everyone must be at the rally.

She mounts the flight to the roof.

EXT. ROOF TOP - DAY

Reina swallows hard and steps out onto the roof. She surveys. The wind is driving up the voices from the crowded street below. She works her way around the icy ledge of a sky-light.

REINA'S POV

Opposite the hotel on the platform sit Ellison Whitney and May Stone before the frenetic gatherers.

Directly below Reina is Donna, dressed as a Suffragette, steering a torpid Wynnde in wheelchair through the crowd.

BACK TO SCENE:

REINA

Wynnde?

She turns. She spies Kiser, higher, on an adjacent roof.

He's staring at her.

She freezes. The Schofield is as heavy as lead.

Kiser lifts his rifle and aims. But, not at her...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Platform.

ELLISON

I give you Miss May Stone!

Clamorous applause.

May steps to the edge of the platform.

MAY

Mister Whitney and Fellow  
Citizens...If God were to give me a  
choice when to live it would be in  
this the best time for the poor,  
the dispossessed. Black, white,  
men, women--

CRACK!

The bullet pierces her chest and she drops to the stage.

CRACK! CRACK!

A shot clips Ellison in the jaw and shoulder spinning him  
onto a wooden chair.

And for a moment no one moves.

Then mayhem!

EXT. ROOF TOP - DAY

Reina leans over the ledge.

REINA

Wynnde! Wynnde!

But her voice is drowned in a CACOPHONY of SHOUTING.

Reina whips around and heads for the door but as she reaches the door...

Kiser's large hands grip her by the throat.

Kiser knocks the weapon from her hand, then resumes tightening his grip, dragging her, then lifting her from the door toward the ledge.

Reina thrashes wildly to no avail, a few more feet and she's over...

KISER

(whispers in her ear)

No comin' out the well this time!

He pushes. Reina's heels scrape along the roof top then buckle at the ledge wall. As Kiser prepares to thrust, Reina kicks against the wall with all her might.

They topple backward onto the skylight...then SMASH! They fall through to the floor below.

INT. HOTEL SECOND FLOOR - DAY

Reina rolls off Kiser. A sharp pain courses through her re-injured arm. She cradles it. A large glass splinter pierces Kiser's brow and blood pools his head.

Reina unholsters Kiser's revolver, tucks it in her dress, and staggers down the stairs.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Reina wades into the chaotic mass of bodies as she pushes in Donna's direction.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

Soggy White Trader forces his way pass several deputies.

WHITE TRADER

Need to see the sheriff!

QUINT

He ain't here.

WHITE TRADER

Get him!

QUINT

He's attenden' a shootin'! There's  
chaos in the streets--

WHITE TRADER

Gonna be more chaos you don't find  
him!

White Trader leans close to Deputy's face. Whispers. Quint  
pales.

EXT. SOD HOUSE - DAY

The hay wagon prattles to a stop in front of the sod house.

Jonny and Billy debark and help Wu inside.

Brand sits for a moment, then crawls down.

INT. HUT - DAY

Pap's powwow hut. Pap's been at it all morning. Yelling. Duke  
stands in a corner near Rose who sits. Cyrus stands stiffly  
with a few cavalry men. DOC BROWN, robust, 60s.

DOC

Give her time. She'll be better in  
a few days. Its not what we can put  
in her that matters...but lettin'  
the poison out.

DUKE

Is it true, Doc? Whitney? Stone?

DOC

Shot? Yes. And Mister Gerard dead  
in a church. Town's in an uproar.

Silence.

PAP

This is Wichita all over again!  
They gonna burn this whole camp to  
the ground!

DUKE

Dunson's cleaning house! Rose'll be  
next! We owe the Gerards--

PAP

The Gerards? What about us? What'll  
happen to us? A riot that's what!

(MORE)

PAP (CONT'D)

That's what the papers'll call it.  
Riot. Occasion to kill every nigga  
here and say we started it!

DUKE

The white boy we threw in the water  
most likely drowned.

PAP

Drowned? Where is his horse?  
Where's his wagon? That drowned  
too? By now he probably got every  
white man in the county headin'  
this way!

CYRUS

Pap, our commanding officer won't  
be here for a few days...We can buy  
you a little time till he arrives.

PAP

No. I don't want y'all breakin'  
regs on my account. I don't want  
another Fort Pillow.

OFFICER#1

Why don't we take the fastest horse  
and ride this woman away?

PAP

To where? What's gonna be their  
first question when you get there  
with a crazy white woman in tow?

OFFICER#2

With all the commotion in the  
town...they won't have time to form  
a posse...can we move camp?

CYRUS

If we can move the camp. Get  
everyone on the road. Maybe some of  
them would have a chance...

PAP

A chance to be massacred. No.  
They'll catch up to us. We'll be  
searched. And they'll be mad we  
made 'em chase us.

KNOCK at the door. HANNA steps in with two minstrels, IRA and  
SEDRIC, 50s.



PAP (CONT'D)

Yes?

HANNA

Pap. Listen to these actors I think they can solve all our troubles...

PAP

Well?

IRA

Bootblack.

SEDRIC

Bootblack.

PAP

Bootblack?

IRA

It's Sedric's idea. If we bootblack her and put her with the women...

Ira holds out the grease paint.

PAP

That's you're solution? A minstrel? That's one of the stupidest ideas I've ever heard tonight. And the first thing they'll look for.

CYRUS

Pap we're runnin' out of options.

DUKE

Miss Rose is the only hope of you gettin' all that money Victor promised. Without the money the exodus is 'fore Spring.

PAP

Swore this would be my final march outta the South. Now its gonna end in a massacre.

ROSE

It'll be Custer's last stand.

PAP

Custer's last stand...

Pap pauses. He looks at Duke and Rose and at the cavalry soldiers.

PAP (CONT'D)

(to Duke)

Where's your cavalry uniform?

DUKE  
I swore I'd never--

PAP  
Just shuddup and bring your  
uniform!

INT. SOD HOUSE - DAY

Brand props his leg on a stool.

BRAND  
Then what happened?

WU LI  
A tremendous fight. All the  
passengers sat like statues--  
ignoring the man striking the  
woman.

BRAND  
Everyone except Victor?

WU LI  
Yes.

BRAND  
And?

**FLASHBACK - EXT. TRAIN DEPOT - DAY**

WU LI (V.O.)  
The man and the woman got off the  
train.

We see a woman's shoe step off.

WU LI (V.O.)  
They fought at the depot.

The man grabs the woman by the arm and strikes her. And she  
snatches away and falters behind the train and along the  
tracks. She's bawling.

BRAND (V.O.)  
So Victor jumps off the train...

WU LI (V.O.)  
Yes. He throws me his coat...

Victor throws coat, mouths words, leaps from platform...

WU LI (V.O.)  
Tells me wait here...and watch the  
man!

Wu brings his face close to the train window and in a moment  
Wu jumps off the train to assist.

Wu is on the tracks with a coat and a bird cage.

BRAND (V.O.)  
Can you remember anything else?

**BACK TO SCENE:**

WU LI  
Yes. The man looked like an  
assassin. But, it was the woman. I  
think she signaled the train to go  
backward.

BRAND  
(scoffs)  
What happened to the key?

WU LI  
When I was arrested...I swallowed  
it.

Wu hands the key to Brand who turns it in his hand.

WU LI (CONT'D)  
I'm to give it to Reina.

BRAND  
Diebold key? Diebold deposit box  
has a time-lock and sometimes needs  
two keys.

WU LI  
I must get her to the Topeka bank.

BRAND  
Well you're in no shape to go  
anywhere. Neither am I. And we  
definitely can't stay here long.  
(pause)  
Duke should've been back...

**EXT. TRAIN DEPOT - DAY**

Donna plows Wynnde's wheelchair through the crowd on the  
platform. She wheels Wynnde up to a PORTER, 40s.

DONNA  
Can you assist me getting her on  
the train? She's rather ill and I'm  
afraid to jostle her.

PORTER  
Yes ma'am.

Reina approaches the depot.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Donna tucks a blanket around Wynnde. Reina walks up the  
aisle. She stands over Donna. Donna looks up.

Reina holds up the Kiser's pistol.

DONNA  
Gonna shoot me?

REINA  
I want my sister!

DONNA  
I'm taking her to Skylar Dunson.

REINA  
She's not marrying Dunson or  
anyone!

PORTER sees the commotion and runs to the party. The train  
whistle TRUMPETS.

CONDUCTOR (O.S.)  
All aboard!

PORTER  
Everythin' okay Miss Donna?

The Porter halts when he sees Reina's gun. Donna hand-waves  
the Porter away.

DONNA  
Sit down!

Beat.

Reina does reluctantly. The Porter hurries off the train and  
we see him flailing his arms signaling the Conductor. Wynnde  
revives but FEIGNS SLEEP.

DONNA (CONT'D)

You think the Gerards are a bunch of do-gooders? I'm here to tell you they're not! Bet you didn't know your Pa-pah was a murderous sonofabitch in the war.

REINA

The war is over!

DONNA

Is it?

(beat)

I was young like you when the war started and I'd done anything for my family, too--

REINA

I've heard this story a thousand times. Grandfather kept you in a Washington prison. You were a Confederate spy. Your sons died on some battlefield long ago--

DONNA

Long ago? I live it everyday!

REINA

So you've been poisoning Pa-pah's mind? You and Sneed! Poisoned him like you poisoned me? Poisoned Wynnde?

Silence.

REINA (CONT'D)

I'm right aren't I?

The locomotive lurches forward. Reina jumps up to see the depot passing by.

REINA (CONT'D)

Get up!

Reina gestures with the pistol.

REINA (CONT'D)

You're getting off!

Donna rises and heads for the rear platform. Reina puts the pistol at her back and pushes her along. Onlookers gawk but remain white-faced and silent.

EXT. SHOVING PLATFORM - DAY

The train picks up speed. Reina shoves Donna onto the platform.

DONNA  
If I die, they'll hang you from a rotten apple tree.

REINA  
Well, you won't be around to see it!

DONNA  
He wanted you. Skylar.

Reina edges Donna to the railing.

REINA  
Me?

DONNA  
But, I convinced him you were too unstable like your mother. You know what she wanted? To give Gerardstown back to the Indians. But, its better than Vic who wanted it for the filthy rumps, bulldykes and niggers!

The train full steams to break-neck throttle. Reina raises the pistol.

REINA  
It should've been you in the asylum not mother!

Donna grasps the rail. Backs down a step. Stops.

DONNA  
No!

Reina cocks the pistol. Aims. Donna grabs the muzzle and forces it down. She jabs Reina's injured arm. Reina WINCES. Donna wrests the gun from her hand.

She points the barrel at Reina.

Wynnde bursts through the door and PLOWS into Donna.

WYNNDE  
No!

CRACK! Donna's SHOT veers wide and her body crumples to the platform.

EXT. HILL TOP OVERLOOKING SHANTY TOWN - DAY

Sheriff Hines peers down at the Exoduster encampment through his field glasses. A sparse posse of White Trader, Deputy Quint and two newly deputized TOWN TOUGHS quiver with anticipation.

SHERIFF HINES POV

A glut of ill-clad Blacks shiver in the cold as they await a mounted cavalry unit's departure.

A bearded and mustached LIEUTENANT (Rose) sits erect in SLOUCH HAT and YELLOW GLOVES on her horse as she is saluted by a Buffalo sergeant who then mounts his own horse.

The cavalry column, two abreast, trots out of camp and over the bridge.

BACK TO SCENE:

The horses strut by, stout and haughty. Rose slouches pass Hines, makeup covers her neck tattoos. Hines salutes but the salute isn't returned.

HINES  
(mutters)  
Drunkard.

Buffalo soldiers parade without acknowledgement.

EXT. CAMP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Sheriff Hines is standing where the cavalry unit vacated. Pap, Maddy, EXODUSTERS stand before Hines for inspection. White Trader and Deputies have their rifles at the ready.

HINES  
Pap, haven't seen you since you came back...how was Washington? See the President?

PAP  
I wasn't admitted, no.

HINES  
Too bad. How bout the new govner-- he give audience?

PAP  
He prays for our plight...and the  
plight of all negroes in this land.

HINES  
(scoffs)  
Can't coin prayers, huh? And after  
all he promised. All bullshit!

Beat.

HINES (CONT'D)  
Now where's that nephew of yours? I  
said I wanted everyone out here!

PAP  
Yessuh.

Pap speaks over his shoulder without turning.

PAP (CONT'D)  
Duke!

HINES  
Uppity that one! Trouble. And y'all  
definitely don't need more trouble?

PAP  
No-suh. No more trouble.

HINES  
Heard what happened down in  
Wichita...it was unfortunate...they  
didn't have to burn everythin'.  
But, things happen during a riot.

PAP  
Yessuh.

Duke jaunts up. Stands next to Pap.

HINES  
Now you know why we're here?

PAP  
Suh?

WHITE TRADER  
That motherfucker's kidnapped a  
white woman--

HINES  
(to White Trader)  
You let the law be the law!  
(MORE)



HINES (CONT'D)

(pause)

Pap knows how to follow the law.  
Now. We want this boy and we want  
that woman.

Deputy Sloan and Town Toughs return from searching the camp.

QUINT

There ain't nothin' here.

HINES

You sure?

QUINT

'Les you count mammies and  
pickaninnies. No whites.

Hines glares at White Trader. Awaits an answer.

WHITE TRADER

She's here I tell ya! I saw her  
with my own two eyes!

DUKE

You can check yoself if you like.

WHITE TRADER

You uppity sonofabitch!

He rushes for Duke but Sloan and Town Toughs restrain him.

HINES

(to White Trader)

Don't forget who bears the star!

(to Pap)

Don't wanna see no harm come to you  
folks...so I'd suggest y'all be  
gone by mornin'?

PAP

We'll need at least a few days.

Hines mounts his horse as does his posse.

HINES

Mornin'!

Hines jerks the reins and rides off. The posse spurs to his rear.

Pap watches the horses shrink over the bridge. He turns to Duke.

PAP

Get to the sod house! Tell Cyrus to meet us in Wellington. Maybe the troop can escort as far as Shakaska or even Osage. Anybody know about the sod house?

DUKE

Don't think so.

PAP

Make sure you ain't followed.

DUKE

Yessuh.

Duke runs toward the bridge.

PAP

Git Black Tuesday--she's 'bout fast as a horse!

Duke skids back. A moment later Duke is riding a mule out of camp.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

The train rattles on. Donna slumps unconscious as Porter applies ice to her head. Reina sits across from Wynnde. The pistol's on Reina's lap. The girls sit in silence as though meeting for the first time.

REINA

We're getting off at the next stop.

WYNNDE

It's too late. Hiram's train will be here soon.

REINA

Then we'll get off now.

WYNNDE

No. I don't want to.

(pause)

I'm going to marry Skylar.

REINA

They've poisoned your mind you don't know what you're saying--

WYNNDE

Father always treated you like a princess. He sent you to Oswego. School for young ladies. Where'd he send me?

REINA

Beloit.

WYNNDE

Beloit. Industrial school for wayward girls!

REINA

He wanted to protect you. Protect both of us--

WYNNDE

Beloit is for defiance and control. And incorrigibleness.

Beat.

WYNNDE (CONT'D)

You know what the house mother said? This is not a punitive institution but an opportunity. Opportunity? A teacher? A seamstress?

(pause)

What if I wanna be a cowboy?

REINA

You can be whatever you want--

WYNNDE

They tear those thoughts from you! They break you with women's work! They break you with the sewing detail! It's like prison.

(pause)

Two hundred aprons, fifty four aprons, white, forty six aprons, puce, seventy two curtains, one hundred thirteen counterpanes...

REINA

I didn't know.

WYNNDE

Over a hundred and fifty carpet-rags, a hundred and two dresses, sixty table napkins, three hundred toilet napkins, thirty four pillow-cases, fifty sheets. Three thousand six hundred and seventy garments and stockings mended. And three hundred and sixty eight days of my life.

Silence.

WYNNDE (CONT'D)

We're prisoners, right? What happens when we fight? What was mama told when she tried to manage the theatre? Or bring Indians onstage? Didn't they force father to put her away?

REINA

He couldn't control her.

WYNNDE

Like me?

REINA

We gotta fight! It'll all be different now. We have each other. We have mama back.

The train slows.

WYNNDE

Donna was right. Fight from inside.

Reina looks confused.

WYNNDE (CONT'D)

You know the Sunday I ran away from Beloit..They were having us read from the book of Jonah. Each girl in her turn. It was half-past five in the morning! Reading fuckin' Jonah!

The train rattle ceases. Reina jumps up.

REINA

Something's wrong!

WYNNDE

But you came here to take me back.  
I know you love me. You'd do  
anything for me?

REINA

Of course I would.

WYNNDE

Then let me fight.

REINA

Become Donna?

WYNNDE

The Dunson's'll never stop! You  
know it in your heart. But if I'm a  
Dunson--

The train shudders along the tracks the promptly convulses to  
a halt.

REINA

It's not gonna work, Wynnde!

WYNNDE

It'll stop the bloodshed.

Wynnde steps off the train.

EXT. TRACKS - DAY

Reina jumps off the train, pistol in hand.

Opposite is the large, red snout of Hiram's LOCOMOTIVE  
PUFFING like a bull.

Wynnde is fifty yards ahead.

Hiram and Skylar step forward to greet her.

Suddenly, a dozen PINKERTONS chunder down from the boxcar's  
side and form a phalanx around Hiram. Their rifles are drawn.

Pinkertons part as Wynnde is swallowed into their ranks.

Reina stands frozen as Hiram and company re-file onto the  
train. The train bellows and backs away.

A SHRILL whistle beckons from behind.

INT. TRAIN DEPOT - CONTINUOUS

Passengers bustle by Reina, Donna and Porter.

REINA  
 (to Porter)  
 Nearest frontier marshal?

PORTER  
 E.D. Nix I reckon.

REINA  
 Take a telegram.

Porter takes out pad and pencil.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Reina stands on a cold mound of dirt and two side-by-side caskets.

REINA  
 Rest, father, rest grandfather.  
 (V.O.)  
 It was definitely a bitter draft.

She drops a few clods of dirt atop the caskets.

EXT. SOD HOUSE - DAY

Reina stands at the door of the sod house. Buffalo soldiers mount and stamp into formation. At the rear, Duke drives a wagon with Wu Li lying in the back.

Reina waves as they depart.

REINA (V.O.)  
 There's still the question of the  
 deposit box. But, Duke believes it  
 wouldn't be prudent to fetch it  
 with so many eyes watchin'.

INT. SOD HOUSE - NIGHT

Rose kicks off blankets in fitful sleep. Reina pulls and tucks the blankets around Rose. Brand puts his hand on Reina's shoulder. Reina covers his hand with her own.

REINA  
 I'm here, mama.

ROSE

Red Path!

REINA (V.O.)

Red Path is Comanche medicine man  
in Oklahoma Territory. Maybe his  
art will heal her mind. Duke'll  
meet him and send word.

REINA

(to Brand)

You'll care for her till I return?

BRAND

I promise.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Reina climbs the fire escape.

REINA (V.O.)

Daddy, I adopted your  
causes...wanted to please you. But,  
what did you say? Do it cause you  
believe. Do it for myself. From  
your heart. That its wider than our  
family.

EXT. ROOF TOP - DAY

Billy gathers pigeons as Jonny repairs a cage. Billy hands  
Reina the bullet-wounded bird.

BILLY

Look. She's healing!

REINA

Here. I'll take her.

Reina attaches a capsule to the pigeon's leg and puts her in  
a cage.

INT. PARKER AGENCY - DAY (**TWO WEEKS LATER**)

Brand limps over to his desk and props his crutch against the  
table. Reina, dressed smartly for train travel, sits  
opposite.

BRAND

Will you make it back before the  
Wynnde's wedding?

REINA  
 Hope to. I have papa's wish to  
 fulfill. Then I'll bring Wynnde  
 home.

Reina stands. Brand hobbles around the table.

BRAND  
 Ready?

REINA  
 Ready.

He kisses her.

INT. TRAIN DEPOT - DAY

Reina stands before the TICKET MASTER. She lifts the pigeon  
 cage.

TICKET MASTER  
 Where to, miss?

REINA  
 The bird's goin' to Dodge City.  
 Wynnde Gerard. Care of Skylar  
 Dunson.

Reina slides bills under booth window.

REINA (CONT'D)  
 And a ticket to Washington, please.

Reina stuffs the ticket into her purse. In the lobby Donna is  
 escorted by TWO MARSHALS.

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA AVE. - STREET - DAY (WASHINGTON, D.C.)

Reina wheels May Stone's wheel chair onto a platform behind  
 Ellison Whitney. Ellison is wearing bandages. The CROWD is  
 cheering.

Whitney bows. He then gestures to the man seated to his left,  
 WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN, 35, lean and energetic, bounds to the  
 rostrum.

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN  
 Thank you old friend!

A sea of faces and pickets surge. Red scarves wave.



WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN (CONT'D)  
I come to speak to you in defense  
of a cause as holy as the cause of  
liberty--the cause of humanity!

Bryan gestures toward the White House.

More CHEERS.

FADE OUT.

THE END.