EXT. TOWN - DAY

Two rows of buildings are separated by a wide, dirt street. The wind whips about. Dust swirls like a tornado.

A lone figure, dressed in black, approaches in the distance.

The figure gets closer, a MAN, mid thirties, holds the collar of his jacket close to his face to combat the swirling dust.

He walks to the middle of town and up the steps of a general store.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

The man enters and looks around.

An old man, COOKY, is asleep in a chair behind the counter.

The man stomps on the ground to shake the dust off. It wakes Cooky, who leaps from his chair.

    COOKY
Who’s there?

Cooky sees the man, who stops dusting himself off.

    MAN
Didn’t mean to scare ya.

    COOKY
Quite alright. What can I do for ya?

The man slowly walks toward the counter.

    MAN
I’m in search of a gunfighter for hire.

    COOKY
Ain’t much of anybody round here anymore, especially a gun for hire.

    MAN
How bout a place for a drink then?
Cooky points to a large hole in the wall, covered by a curtain.

        COOKY
        Right through there.

The man nods and proceeds through the curtain.

INT. SALOON - DAY

The man sits at the bar. Not a soul in the place.

Cooky enters and takes his place behind the bar.

        MAN
        You the bartender too?

        COOKY
        Like I told ya, nobody round here no more. I pretty much run everything.

        MAN
        Sounds peaceful.

Cooky extends his hand.

        COOKY
        Name’s Cooky. Don’t believe I caught yours.

        MAN
        BAKER.

        COOKY
        Pleasure to meet ya. Now, what can I get ya?

        BAKER
        Whiskey.

        COOKY
        Coffin varnish, comin’ right up.

Cooky pours the drink and sets the bottle on the bar. Baker drinks it quickly and signals for another.
COOKY
Help yourself.

BAKER
Much obliged.

Cooky leans against the back wall. Baker pours another drink.

COOKY
So, whatcha need a hired gun for?

BAKER
I got a score to settle.

COOKY
So it’s revenge you’re after.

Baker drinks his whiskey.

BAKER
Yep.

COOKY
Most people I know get their own revenge.

BAKER
I got my reasons.

COOKY
Well, there’s a fella rolls into town every now and then. He might help for the right price.

BAKER
Don’t have much money. I’m gonna need a good samaritan.

Cooky laughs.

COOKY
That’s harder to find than people out here.

BAKER
I’ll take my chances.
Baker pours another drink.

   COOKY
   Ain’t sure when he’ll be back, but you
   can bunk over at the hotel if you got
ten cents for the night.

   BAKER
   I can handle that.

Baker drinks the whiskey, puts a coin on the bar, and gets up.

   COOKY
   Just be careful of them whores.

   BAKER
   As long as you ain’t in charge of that
too, I’ll be fine.

Cooky laughs and Baker exits.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

Two women, KATE, brunette, and MAE, blond, both mid
twenties, sit on a couch. They appear to be extremely
bored.

Baker enters the hotel. The women jump to attention.

   KATE
   Well, hello there, handsome.

   BAKER
   Ladies.

   KATE
   Somethin’ we can do for you?

   MAE
   Somethin’ we can do to you?

The two women look at each other and giggle.

   BAKER
   Cooky said I could get a bunk here.
KATE
It’s ten cents a night for a bed, fifteen cents for a bed and bath, and then we got the fifty cent package.

BAKER
What’s that get me?

MAE
A bed, a bath, and one marvelous fuckin’.

The girls look at each other and giggle again. Baker cracks a small smile.

BAKER
Thank ya, but I think I’ll just take the bed for now.

The ladies sigh in disappointment. Kate points to the top of the stairs.

KATE
Up the stairs, second door. I’m Kate and this is Mae.

Mae smiles. Baker nods.

BAKER
Baker. Thank you.

Baker heads up the stairs.

KATE
If you change your mind, I’ll be up in a bit with some fresh linens for the bed.

Kate winks at him. Baker smiles, nods, and goes into his room.

Kate slaps Mae on the arm.

KATE
Dammit, Mae. Why you always gotta scare ’em like that?
MAE
Me?

KATE
Yeah, you.

MAE
Cause we ain’t had a man in here in ages, and what we been doin’ in the meantime ain’t ladylike.

Kate puts a finger to her lips, shushing Mae.

KATE
We promised we wouldn’t speak of that.

INT. BAKER’S ROOM – NIGHT

Baker sits at a desk. He has removed his jacket, and wears a white t-shirt, black pants, and suspenders.

He stares at a picture in is hand. In the picture are himself, a WOMAN, late twenties, and two children, a BOY, 9, and a GIRL, 7.

There is a knock at the door.

BAKER
Come in.

Kate enters, holding clean sheets and a bottle of whiskey.

KATE
Here’s the linens I promised, and a little whiskey in case you was thirsty.

BAKER
Thanks.

KATE
That a picture?

Baker holds the picture out to Kate.

BAKER
Yeah.
Kate takes the picture and looks at it.

    KATE
    Family?

    BAKER
    Yeah.

Mae stands in the doorway with her hands on her hips.

    MAE
    I was wonderin’ where ya got off to. Tryin’ to steal ‘em all for yourself?

Kate holds up the sheets.

    KATE
    Just droppin’ off the linens.

    MAE
    Then what’s with the whiskey?

    KATE
    Just thought our guest would like a drink is all.

    MAE
    Well, that’s a fine tall tale.

Kate places the sheets on the bed and the whiskey on the desk.

    KATE
    I was just talkin’ to the man...

Kate starts to exit.

    BAKER
    Don’t go. It’s nice talkin’ to someone.

    KATE
    Fine, but let’s head downstairs so we can stretch out.

Baker grabs the bottle and heads for the door.
INT. HOTEL, UPSTAIRS LANDING – NIGHT

The three exit Baker’s room.

KATE
Yeah, we’ll have a nice chat and a nightcap.

MAN (O.S.)
Hello, my lovelies.

The girls turn their attention to the distinctive Georgian drawl coming from the bottom of the stairs.

A MAN, early forties, dressed in a distinguished grey suit and hat, stands smoking a cigarette. He has two silver colts at his waist.

MAE
Scholar!

The ladies run down the stairs and greet him with a hug.

Baker proceeds down slowly after them.

SCHOLAR
I must say you’re both pretty as a picture.

Baker reaches the bottom of the stairs.

KATE
Scholar, this is Baker.

The two men shake hands.

SCHOLAR
Pleasure to meet you, good sir.

BAKER
Likewise.

KATE
We was just about to sit and chat a bit.

Scholar eyes the bottle.
SCHOLAR
And a little imbibing I hope.

KATE
Of course.

SCHOLAR
Splendid. Shall we adjourn to the lounge area then?

INT. HOTEL, MAIN FLOOR - NIGHT

The four are a little tipsy and laughing. The whiskey bottle nears empty.

BAKER
You’re not, by chance, a gunfighter, are ya, Scholar?

SCHOLAR
Heavens no. I’m just an intellectual and a drifter. Why do you ask?

BAKER
Just saw that you were carryin’ guns.

SCHOLAR
It’s always best to have a little protection when drifting about. Thought I was gonna need ’em in Jerome.

KATE
What happened?

SCHOLAR
Enough talk of my adventures. How about someone else take a turn.

Kate looks at Baker.

KATE
How bout tellin’ us about your family?

BAKER
There’s not a whole lot to say.
MAE
Come now, there’s gotta be somethin’.

BAKER
Not really. They’re all dead.

KATE
Dead? How?

BAKER
Outlaws. Three of ‘em.

KATE
Oh honey, I’m sorry.

BAKER
So, I’m lookin’ for someone to kill ‘em.

KATE
Do it for you?

BAKER
It’s a long story.

Scholar sets his glass down.

SCHOLAR
I’ll help you.

BAKER
You will?

SCHOLAR
You sit with me, share your whiskey and your story, that makes you my friend. I like to help my friends.

BAKER
That’s damn kind of you.

SCHOLAR
I suggest we retire for the evening, and begin work on our plan when the cock crows.

BAKER
Sure.
INT. BAKER’S ROOM - DAY

Baker lies sound asleep in his bed.

Gunshots and loud shouting begin to ring out in the street.

Baker jumps from his bed and looks out the window to see three men, riding horses and shooting in the air.

They halt their horses at the saloon and head inside.

Baker quickly gets dressed and exits. Scholar stands in front of his door, holding a gun and holster out to him.

SCHOLAR
I don’t think we’ll get to work on that plan, friend.

Baker is confused.

BAKER
Did you know?

SCHOLAR
That little incident I had in Jerome was with them.

BAKER
How’d you know it was the same people? That they’d be comin’?

SCHOLAR
Because they are of a rare breed, and only stay in one place long enough to suck it dry. Completely worthy of a few lead pellets if I do say so myself.

BAKER
But, you’re not a hired gun.

SCHOLAR
I’m not louse either, and that’s exactly what I’d be if I let you go this journey alone. Now let’s go.

Scholar hands Baker the gun and they exit.
INT. SALOON - DAY

The three men sit drinking whiskey and raising hell.

IKE, late thirties, with a long beard spits on the floor occasionally.

ROSCOE, mid thirties, and mustached has his feet up on the table.

JOHNNY, late twenties, stubble beard, smokes a small cigar.

All three men are filthy.

Scholar enters and sits at the bar. Cooky looks relieved to see him.

   COOKY
   Well, if you ain’t a sight for sore eyes.

   SCHOLAR
   Cooky, you old ragamuffin, how bout a little of that devil juice?

Cooky pours Scholar a glass of whiskey.

The outlaws hoot and holler. Scholar turns to them.

   SCHOLAR
   If you gentlemen don’t mind, I am trying to converse with my friend.

Ike eyes Scholar up and down.

   IKE
   I remember you. You’re that fella from Jerome. The one with the big mouth.

   SCHOLAR
   Not big, really, just well spoken.

   BAKER (O.S.)
   If you remember him, perhaps you remember me too.
The voice comes from the direction of the general store. The men turn. The curtain leading to the general store is torn down. Baker stands in the passageway, his jacket buttoned up tight.

IKE
Nope, don’t remember you. Roscoe? Johnny?

JOHNNY
Nah.

ROSCOE
Looks like a drunkard to me.

BAKER
Perhaps this’ll help your memory.

Baker unbuttons his jacket to reveal a preacher’s collar.

Ike smiles a snarly smile, showing decayed teeth.

IKE
Yeah, now I remember. You’re that preacher we burned outta Gammons Gulch.

BAKER
You burned my family.

Ike spits. He glares at Baker as he wipes his mouth.

IKE
And I enjoyed it too.

Baker trains his gun on Ike.

Ike stands up.

IKE
You gonna kill me, preacher? Ain’t there somethin’ in the bible against killin’?

SCHOLAR
I do believe there is.
IKE
So, whaddya gotta say to that, preacher?

BAKER
I didn’t come here to kill you as a preacher...

Baker removes his collar.

BAKER
...I came here to kill you as a man.

He tosses the collar into the air toward Ike, who reaches for his gun.

Baker raises his gun to shoot, but before he can fire, Ike and the other two outlaws are mowed down by an onslaught of rifle fire.

Cooky hits the floor. Scholar lights a cigarette.

The outlaws lie dead. Scholar begins claps for Kate and Mae, who stand at the saloon’s entrance with rifles.

KATE
Somethin’ in there about an eye for an eye, too.

SCHOLAR
Well done, ladies, simply prodigious.

Cooky resurfaces from behind the bar.

MAE
What now?

COOKY
Should probably get a few pine boxes together.

SCHOLAR
Cheap ones.

BAKER
I got a better idea.
EXT. TOWN - DAY

Three coffins are ablaze. The five stand watching them burn.

BAKER
Eye for an eye.

KATE
Where to now, Baker?

BAKER
I was just thinking about that.

KATE
And?

BAKER
This town got a church?

KATE
No, this town went to hell long ago.

BAKER
Then I must stay here and help restore the faith.

SCHOLAR
That’s not a half bad idea. I think I shall join you.

Baker and Scholar nod at each other.

They stare at the fires in silence.

FADE TO
BLACK

THE END