UPON REFLECTION

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - 14TH STREET - DAY

A tall man marches down the snow-covered sidewalk. MAJOR LEONARD WOODS, 35, is wearing a sky blue greatcoat with a black cape; on his head is a dark blue kepi hat.

SUPER: "New York City, 23 February 1876"

He glances at the window display he’s walking past: a mannequin in a fancy gown provides the only color on this street on this gray day.

A horse-drawn carriage rattles by on the street. He glances at it, but his eyes are drawn to the big building across the street: “R. H. Macy Dry Goods.”

He continues on to the next display window and is startled when his own face is reflected back at him from the elaborate dressing mirror on the other side of the window. The haggard look on his face makes him avert his gaze.

A brass plaque next to the iron and wood door proclaims this to be “Gleason’s Looking Glass Emporium.”

INT. GLEASON’S LOOKING GLASS EMPORIUM - DAY

The size of the showroom is difficult to determine because the mirrors crowding the floor, or resting on tables, reflect each other making the room seem huge.

A dapper old gentlemen in a three-piece suit with frock coat, MR. GLEASON, seemingly appears out of nowhere and offers Major Woods a nod and a smile.

GLEASON
Welcome to my little shop, -

Gleason sees the three black sleeve braids on Woods’ coat.

GLEASON (CONT'D)
- Major.

Woods nods, extends a hand and shakes hands.

WOODS

GLEASON
You walked over from the armory?
Woods nods, walks around, looks at the merchandise.

GLEASON (CONT'D)
How long have you been posted here?

WOODS
Almost three years, sir. But my
tour of duty is ending soon.

GLEASON
Indeed?

WOODS
I’m going out to the territories
for the new campaign season.

GLEASON
Cavalry?

WOODS
Yes, but I’m a surgeon, not a saberr-
rattler.

GLEASON
An honor to have you in my
emporium. Are you interested in any
particular kind of looking glass?

WOODS
It’s not a looking glass I’m
interested in.

GLEASON
Oh?

WOODS
My assistant, a young man of
questionable lineage and dubious
character, said you might be able
to provide, uh, an implement to
alleviate my wife’s hysterical
paroxysm.

GLEASON
I beg your pardon?

WOODS
Hysterical paroxysm. A medical term
for a certain female problem.

GLEASON
What are the symptoms, sir?

Woods grits his teeth before answering.
WOODS
Irritability. Nervousness.
Sleeplessness. Anxiety.

GLEASON
Might I suggest a liquid solution
of bromide salts?

WOODS
Don’t you think I’ve tried that?
I’m a doctor, for God’s sake.

GLEASON
Your pardon, major. Are there other
symptoms?

WOODS
Heaviness in the lower abdomen.
Erotic fantasies.
(beat)
Wetness between the legs.

GLEASON
Ah. I think I can help you.

WOMEN’S SUPPLY ROOM

Gleason leads Woods down the long narrow room which features
a large profusion of phallic totems made of wood, rubber,
iron, glass, bronze, and steel, in a wide variety of sizes
and shapes.

Aghast, Woods keeps his eyes averted but he jerks to a stop
when he sees something out of the corner of his eye. He
stares at a contraption composed of pulleys, gears, a round
tank and a gauge. And an extension tipped with rubber.

WOODS
What in blazes is that?

GLEASON
That, sir, is a steam-powered
vibrating intruder. It’s still in
the experimental stage. Actually,
it’s quite loud and quite hot. I
doubt it’ll succeed.

WOODS
I can’t present any of these things
to my wife.

GLEASON
Of course not. You’re a cavalryman.
They’ve reached the end of the room. Before them is a heavy red drape. Gleason reaches for a pull cord and yanks on it. The curtain parts to reveal:

THE ROCKING HORSE

The large mahogany horse is exquisitely detailed. Woods runs his hands over it in awe.

WOODS
It’s beautiful. But how does this help me -- I mean my wife?

He quickly steps aside as Gleason plops a saddle on the horse. Sprouting from the center of the seat is a dildo. Gleason unscrews the dildo and presents it to Woods, who’s too shocked to do anything but stare at it in horror.

GLEASON
"Captain Standish" comes in various sizes and shapes, depending on your wife’s needs.

WOODS
Oh, my.... How much?

EXT. LAST STAND HILL - DAY

The small hill top is crowded with soldiers of the 7th Cavalry, many of them dead or dying. Those still standing are firing at the horse-mounted Lakota, Cheyenne and Sioux warriors who surround them. Arrows, spears and lead fly everywhere. The NOISE is overwhelming.

SUPER: “Valley of the Little Bighorn River - 25 June 1876”

MAJOR WOODS & LT. COL. CUSTER

Major Woods is tending to a mortally wounded 36-year-old man with an extravagant mustache. The man’s head is resting on a buckskin jacket. His sweaty face is pinched with pain as Woods works on freeing the arrow impaling his chest.

WOODS
Upon reflection, I should have bought her the rocking horse. I could have left her back East, happily riding her wooden pony the live-long day.
Woods flinches as a feather-draped spear buries itself into the ground near him. He ignores the fight raging around him.

WOODS (CONT'D)
But I’ve always hated spending money on luxuries. So I brought her out here with me, where the keep and housing are free. I actually volunteered for this campaign just to get away from her for a while!

Custer struggles to speak.

CUSTER
I should have brought the Gatling guns.

WOODS
Her unseemly demands have worn me to a frazzle, Colonel Custer. Look at these hands!

He shows the dying man his trembling hands.

WOODS (CONT'D)
Are these the hands of a competent surgeon? No, sir, they are not!

He puts the hands back on the arrow in Custer’s chest. Custer gathers his remaining strength to lift his head a little.

CUSTER
Fuck your wife.

WOODS
NO!!

He jerks the arrow out, Custer screams his last breath, and his head falls to the side.

Woods staggers up and stares at the bloody arrow in his hands. Then spasms as an arrow plunges into his stomach.

WOODS (CONT'D)
Ah, hell...

He topples forward and raises a cloud of dust as he plants his face in the dirt.

FADE OUT.