

(Name of Project)

by
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in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by
(Current Writer, date)

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FADE IN:

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY

In the distance lush rolling hills rise out of the horizon...

A small HOMESTEAD. MRS. STANTON (60s) Runs in a chair and crochets. A plow is stuck in muddy earth.

Mr. STANTON (60s), in a hat and filthy chaps pushes and strains to un-stick it.

A DOG, a mean-looking mutt of indeterminate lineage, barks furiously.

Sensing something, Mrs. Stanton looks up from her needlework. Both peer across the endless Prairie. Not a soul. But after a moment...

A RIDER appears over the horizon. Too far to know for certain...but whoever they think it is, fills them with dread... as the rider draws closer...

JEDEDIAH GANT cantors up on a fabulous pale horse, the *LONE RANGER'S BOHLIN SADDLE*; she's dressed for rugged, dusty business, not dowdy, tough/sexy; think *Sharon Stone* in *'The Quick And The Dead'*.

She purses her dry, blistered lips, sun-leathered face...

GANT

Your dog's a mite unfriendly.

MR. STANTON

He doesn't take too kindly to strangers.

MRS. STANTON

Here boy...here!

The dog wines, obeys --

She brushes aside her embroidered duster coat with capelet, *Samuel Colt .44 dual action pistols in each holster*. Tucks lace mitts over her gun belt.

MR. STANTON

What can I do fer ya?

GANT

How much further to Sulfer City?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. STANTON

Ten miles thataway. Only it's
Forsaken Run now. That's a polite
name fer it. The devil himself
even have contacts there and the
air smells of brimstone.

Gant tips her hat, spurs her horse.

EXT. RIM OF TOWN - DAY

Gant reins in shy of the main road into town. A sign;
STRANGER; Don't Let The Sun Go Down On You Here.

A CHURCH at the mouth of the main street. STEEPLE, with
bell. And in the shadow of the bell tower -- a GRAVEYARD.

No neat rows. Instead, the graves seem randomly arranged,
many unmarked. Like gopher holes.

A PREACHER -- 40s, cadaverous -- sweltering in his tunic
as a campfire burns amidst stones, he fires up beans.

PREACHER

Then he said also "*when thou
makest the feast...call the poor,
the maimed, the lame, and the
blind... and thou shall be
blessed.*" Luke 15.

(eyes Gant lustily)

He should have mentioned a pretty
girl gives a man an appetite.

GANT

Save your sermons, Father--

EXT. PURGATORY GULCH - DAY

All the prerequisites of a frontier town: The town's
epicenter; *THE SILVER SPUR*; a fancy saloon of gambling
and drinking and pleasure.

INT. THE UNTERRIFIED EPITAPH - DAY

ASA JONES, the editor, sets type for the next issue.
ELMER, a young APPRENTICE works the press in the b.g.

Asa moves to the window, Gant ride past.

ELMER

What's wrong?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ASA

A vulture just rode into town.

EXT. BLACKSMITH SHOP/LIVERY STABLES - DAY

SAWBONES, 50s, an emotionally scarred Civil War Vet in a leather apron stands at the forge in which he is heating a horseshoe while pumping the bellows.

Gant grabs her saddlebag and rifle. He spots a 'Texas Longhorn' engraved on her holsters..

SAWBONES

I'll be doggone. Your reputation got here long before you did. Willie "sawbones" Pardon. Fought at Gettysburg and my leg is cut up real bad. Yep. I can have a new one tomorrow. Come far?

GANT

Far enough. If it's alright -- I'll settle up with you in the mornin'.

SAWBONES

How do I know you'll be in town?

GANT

Would you leave a horse like that behind?

SAWBONES

Yea, see what you mean. Sure is a beautiful hunk of horseflesh you got there. He's Arabian isn't he?
(she nods)

Look at that nose like a Roman soldier. What's his name?

GANT

Caesar.

SAWBONES

The name fits.

GANT

Fastest horse in these parts. By chance, is there a doctor in this town?

SAWBONES

One of the best. Doc Halladay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GANT

Hotel in town?

SAWBONES

Such as it is. Can't miss it,
though you might want to.

GANT

Who's got the best grub?

SAWBONES

Are you religious? There's a
place. The Ponderosa that might
not kill you. But if you tell me
you're going to eat there, I might
want payment in advance.

GANT

Well, Sawbones, keep Caesar if I
don't come back.

SAWBONES

That'd be fair.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

It has seen better days. At the bar, GATOR, 30s, a portly
clerk wipes down the counter.

At a table, four men dressed a bit more professionally
than most of the folks, playing poker.

CORD MCLYNTOCK, 40, a tough-as-nails cattlemen, FLYNN
QUIGBY, 35, the town banker, DEKE, a rough-hewn man, and
Mayor HAL MERCER, 40s, an air of authority to him.

Gant strolls towards the front desk. Gator appears.

GATOR

Day, week, month, miss?

GANT

I'll let you know.

GATOR

Then it's eight bucks, cash in
advance.

He jingles the key, plays with it while he considers her.
She snatches it away.

GANT

I'll pay when I leave!

(CONTINUED)

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What Gator sees in her eyes truly disturbs him. The others' notice the conflict. Deke rises up.

DEKE
Is there a problem

GANT
You wanna yell for help? Why you
horning in?

Deke, flummoxed by this woman standing up to him, scowls in red-faced fury. His righthand is inches from his gun.

GANT
Can't keep your eyes off that gun
can you. Win lots of arguments
that way?

DEKE
Some.

He jerks for his gun, she pulls her pistol so quick most don't notice until she fires the Samuel Colt .44 --

Deke FLIES BACKWARDS and hits the wall. Dead on impact.

GANT
You only have to lose one.

Wheels her gun back into its holster and scans the crowd. Terrified, Gator spins a registry around, extends a pen.

GATOR
Uh, you have to sign. It's a
formality.

GANT
What's to keep me from signing a
false name?

Gator gives a resigned shrug of the shoulders.

GANT
Gant! Jedediah Gant.

From the looks on their faces this is a woman to be avoided. Gant bounds up the steps.

CORD
Gator, inform the Marshal.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

A large, well-lit saloon. Ceiling frescoes. Venetian glass. No expense or luxury has been spared.

Scantily-clad prostitutes, one black, are passed around.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE, 40, an icy blue-eyed blonde, sexy, flashing cleavage in a Courtesan wardrobe. A neck chain with a KEY dangling from it.

A MINOR rises, defeated--as POKER FLATS RAKES in the pot; a professional gambler/flamboyant dresser, a bit on the chubby side, but by no means soft.

POKER FLATS

(toasting...)

Here's to an easy saddle and good
riding, friend. May your boots
never get dusty and your guns
never rusty.

Sierra locks eyes with Poker. A subtle nod: then --

EXT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Sierra exits through batwing doors of the saloon where she sees Gator, running, shouting unintelligible.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Gator, what in tarnation are you
gibbering on about?

GATOR

Gant in town.

Poker crosses towards Sierra, slowly rolling a cigarette.

POKER FLATS

Gator say why she blew into town?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

No, but you can bet she's not here
to pick strawberries.

EXT. MARY'S HOME - DAY

A two-story home at the edge of town, with a white picket fence. A sign sways out front; "MARY "swan" HALLADAY MD."

INT. MARY'S HOME - PARLOR - DAY

A splendidly decorated home/office, warm and comforting.

MARY HALLADAY, 30s, warm and kind, places a letter in its envelope. She's very pretty, but in a different way than Sierra, more delicate.

INT. MARY'S OFFICE - DAY

Shelves of medical books. A tiny hospital with beds.

MARSHAL JIM DUNCAN, a STAR on his vest, a hard-lived man of 50, with a salt and pepper handlebar mustache, sits in a chair with a crank handle to recline.

Deputy WILL SUNDAY, 20s, a bit wet behind the ears...

MARY

I heard back from that physician in New York who specializes in palsy and described your symptoms. Mentioned an old article from 1807 by a man named Parkinson about a shaking disease.

Duncan grabs his arm to stop the trembling but no dice.

MARY

The symptoms seem familiar to what you're experiencing. Not much can be done for it. Sorry. I'll give you something for the pain.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

(rolls up a sleeve)

Thanks, Doc. It's getting worse.

Mary searches a cabinet - bottles of chemicals for dispensing. Grabs one, then a syringe.

THE DOOR BUSTS OPEN - Gator rushes in, out of breath.

GATOR

Jim, she's here! Right here in town. Gant.

Duncan pauses, unsure of how to respond... tentative.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

You're just full of good news', ain't ya? She just get in?

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CONTINUED:

GATOR

Just this minute. You've got to do something. Cord said --

MARSHAL DUNCAN

I don't care what Cord said. If she's in town. Nothing I can do about it.

GATOR

She just kilt Deke.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Who drew first?

GATOR

He did. Well he tried.

Duncan almost looks relieved.

MARY

This town knows Deke's been bucking for this for a longtime. Six times I've dug lead out of men who weren't fast enough for him. Six times I told you it had to end, just like this.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Doc's right, Deke was trying to cut another notch in his ivory handle. I told him once, I told him fifty times. Well it don't matter much now, I guess he's been encouraged so long to cut the deck any other way.

DEPUTY SUNDAY

Who's this Gant?

MARSHAL DUNCAN

She's a hired killer.

DEPUTY SUNDAY

So. We've had some good ones. We've been able to handle 'em."

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Oh, no. A gunslinger is one thing. Gant is another altogether. A professional killer, an arbiter of fate.

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CONTINUED: (2)

DEPUTY SUNDAY

How come she's still loose?

MARSHAL DUNCAN

No one's been able to jail her. She shoots in self-defense. Goads the other fella into drawing first. Gator, did she say how long she was going to stay?

GATOR

Nope. Who you suppose she's after?

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Maybe she's not after anyone.

GATOR

She booked a room. That all?

MARY

What do you want, him to whistle six bars of "Dixie"?

MARSHAL DUNCAN

I've always been a lawman better than half of my life and I can think of a few people who'd like to see me dead. Everybody steps on somebody's toes sometime.

INT. GANT'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Gant in a crisp white shirt, black string tie, fitted black trousers, straps on her guns. Even wearing men's clothes she's breathtaking.

Hikes up a pants leg, puts on spurs. We glimpse a tiny holster. In it, a gun(**Boothe's derringer**). She adjusts.

A key rattles in the lock. She draws a pistol. Her caller is Sierra. Gant holsters.

A mix of emotions cross Sierra's face upon seeing Gant. There's so much history here.

GANT

Still running cold. When comes the thaw?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

It's more fun this way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sierra doesn't realize Gant's seen the BABY LeMAT
secreted between her lovely breasts

GANT

I'd be obliged if you'd get to-the-
point.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'll just lay it on the barrel-
head -- there's six hours left of
daylight. Why don't you pack up
and move on.

GANT

Well, like the bear said to the
trap I'll stay because of my foot.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Do me a favor? Next time we have a
conversation stay ten feet away.
Some people in this town ain't
very accurate shooters.

Sierra heads for the door. Gant grabs her arms and pulls
her back...

GANT

You're one of the prettiest little
maverick's I ever did see. How
about letting me put my brand on
you.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'm wearing one already.

GANT

You know you got to get used to
sudden changes.

Gant pulls Sierra toward her. They kiss an inevitable,
passionate kiss. Both consumed by it. It becomes a fury
of arousal on both sides.

With huge effort, Sierra pulls away, slaps Gant's face,
hard.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'm not that easy to rope.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Our MEN, mid-game, including Poker now. Cord is dealing. There is an atmosphere of tension around the table, and it is obvious that Flynn has been losing.

Poker picks up his cards. Hal makes a bet. Asa folds immediately. Cord eyes Flynn who looks pale in the face.

CORD

Place your bet or throw in your cards.

POKER FLATS

Know what, Cord, your poker playing and disposition seems to have two things in common, they're both bad.

CORD

What's the matter with you? You got the heebie jeebies?

FLYNN

That woman's a hired killer.

HAL

I know but do you really think you can get away if it's you she wants?

CORD

Guilty conscious.

FLYNN

Ain't we all.

CORD

You think she's after you, Hal?

HAL

What would she want with me?

CORD

I wouldn't know. I thought maybe you would.

HAL

Could be anyone. Why are you ridin' me? Maybe she's after you.

CORD

Maybe. You don't build a cattle empire without making enemies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HAL

She sure don't look like what
you'd expect.

Gant descends the stairs. She approaches their table.
Flynn nearly wets himself.

GANT

Seems like nothing happens around
here without your say-so.

CORD

That's right.

GANT

Any stray bullets come my way I
know who to look for.

CORD

Careful, Miss. We don't believe in
chivalry.

Gant tosses a drink in his face. Then, all of a sudden—
Cord lunges at Gant who calmly draws her gun.

CORD

You're pretty tough with those
guns strapped around your waist. I
wonder how tough you'd be without
them.

*Cord's jaw tightens, decides he better not risk it, as
gant leaves.*

POKER FLATS

You know, Cord. You underestimate
the advantage of brute force. You
don't seem to realize when you're
pressing you're luck. If I were
you I'd walk around Gant as if she
were quicksand.

HAL

You sound like you know Gant.

POKER FLATS

Well I've never crossed trails
with her, but I knew a few who did
-- they're all dead.

EXT. PURGATORY GULCH - DAY

Gant takes in the town- making mental notes of her surroundings, people stare. Hushed whispers.

Every window, a snapshot of a frightened face. More faces on the street. Shadowed in the doorways.

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

The barber, WADE, sits in his barber's chair reading the paper. A bearded man dressed as a PARSON enters.

Rev JOHN WILLIS PROSPERO walks slowly. Deliberately. A limp to his gait; curled jet black hair, athlete's build.

WADE

Parson, says here there's a fellow by the name of Jack Ripper on the loose over in England. Evidently, he's butchered half a dozen folks with a knife.

Rev Prospero sits. Wade gets to work. Rev sees Gant walk past the window. Recognition, shock, fills his face.

He hops up, wipes his lathered face with the sheet, tosses it at a flummoxed Wade,

REV PROSPERO

"Hell is empty and all the devils are here." You know that's Shakespeare but you're not a fan of literature are you?

WADE

I find it all boring.

Rev Prospero grabs his hat - exits through the back.

INT. DOC HALLADAY'S HOME/PARLOR - DAY

Mary pulls a pill box from a cabinet, and hands it to a nervous GRAM LOWERY, 20s, baby-faced handsome.

GRAM

What's this? Pills?

MARY

No, gumdrops.

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GRAM

Gumdrops?

MARY

Finest thing in the world for expectant fathers. Now, when you get to worryin', just pop one of these in your mouth and start chewin' on it. Worries will disappear just like that.

Gram smiles and leaves. Mary checks the clock, in a hurry, grabs her black bag. As she turns to leave --

Mary can't hide the fear and surprise on her face as Gant stands there, takes off her hat.

GANT

Didn't mean to scare you. The door was open. My apologies?

MARY

Don't quibble any fine line with me, Gant. You're as dishonest as any common road bandit.

Gant is bemused by Mary's bellicose demeanor.

GANT

Doc Mary "swan" Halladay. Is it?

MARY

Please call me Mary. Although I'd be happier if I knew what this was about.

GANT

Physicians interest me. They have the power of life and death.

Mary considers her, her guns, the whole damn situation. But, nevertheless, she ain't cruel (just lonely). So--

GANT

Just one minute. Doctor. Have you got anything in that black bag that's good for a headache?

MARY

You might try goin' to church. It's the best relief I know.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

HENRYETTA, 40s, the proprietor, stocking shelves, looks terrified as Gant saunters in.

Gant reaches into a JAR for some licorice.

Henryetta moves behind the register, a .36 caliber Confederate six shooter is within reach. Gant drops a silver dollar on the counter.

GANT

You're a Johnny Reb, aren't you?
I could tell by that Griswold
you're reaching for.

YANCY, missing half his leg from the war, hobbles in with the use of a cane. He freezes when he sees Gant, taking a particular interest in his bum leg.

A beat, she knocks his hat off his head.

GANT

Show some respect.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

At hitching rail, Mary looks on as EARL makes his saddlebags and books secure. Gives the strap a final tug, as Duncan approaches.

EARL

Jim, I was just telling Doc I'm
pulling out.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Oh, it wouldn't 'cause of what
happened to Bill Staley in Three
Graves, would it?

MARY

Three Graves?

EARL

When you ride into town you'll
notice three headstones that gives
the place its name now. Three men
are buried there. We thought they
burnt out some settlers, murdered
some folks. Dutch Henry presided
over the quick trial

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CONTINUED:

MARY

Interesting. A town honoring killers.

EARL

They were innocent. We lynched them by mistake. Bill led the mob. Everyone in town had a hand in it, it was shameful. We took a good look at ourselves didn't like what we saw. That's when Skeleton Tusk became Three Graves. Everyone in town hung up their guns.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

They'd have strung him up anyway, she probably did him a favor.

EARL

Well, I'm pulling out before she do me any favors.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Gant sits, feet kicked up. Two OLD GEEZERS approach, one wears a worn rebel hat on his head, the other a ratty Union army uniform.

REBEL

Ahhmm, move it, or lose it.
(she obliges)

As I was sayin', I didn't understand half of that flowery talk especially that last 'libation' part. What the hell is that?

YANKEE

Establishment of libation, house of bibulous concoctions, a, a... what do you people call it? Oh yes, a saloon, a place where I may moisten these withering lips and quench my parched cords for I'm afraid my vocals are beginning to fail me and that will not do.

REBEL

Yee Haa!

Rebel spits out a jet of brown tobacco juice and smiles, revealing a set of crud-coated teeth.

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CONTINUED:

Mary pulls up in her fancy ONE-HORSE CARRIAGE.

GANT

Miss, Mary. Where you off to?

MARY

No place. Thought I'd go for a ride. I get stir crazy in this place. Course if you wanna come along, you're more'n welcome.

GANT

You know my reputation.

MARY

But I don't know you. Besides, I'm trying to cure what's ailing this town.

GANT

You're not afraid?

MARY

Outlaws don't bother me. I've known plenty of ornery characters in my time.

Gant smirks as Mary extends the reins to her.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - SIERRA'S OFFICE - DAY

A spacious corner room, the windows of which look out over the main street. Sierra looks even nicer in her show garments of the night.

Poker sits, the inevitable dice in his fingers, two this time. There is a silence except the rattle of the cubes.

Sierra pours drinks from a decanter and hands Poker one.

POKER FLATS

Ladies first.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

So you wanna play farmer in the dell. And the farmer takes a wife.

POKER FLATS

Well how much time did you think you had?

(CONTINUED)

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SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Hmm, three days at the most. She
 was quite a ways out of town, but
 trouble rides a fast horse.

Poker gulps his in an ominous silence - remembering...

POKER FLATS
 Oh, here this new deck of marked
 cards you asked me to bring back.

He retrieves a new deck from inside his jacket and hands
 them to Sierra. As she examines them....

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Good as the last ones.

POKER FLATS
 The latest in readers. Those
 suckers never will catch on to
 those.

Sierra holds them up to a light, grins.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Watermarks. The house will clean
 up with them.

Sierra looks through the window, sees Gant and Mary.

MCGREEVES, 40s, a grizzled face. Short black beard. Red
 handkerchief around his neck, enters through a private
 door. The lead bandit.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Any luck?

MCGREEVES
 Yea, but it's all bad. There's
 another stage tomorrow.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Six Union regiments are getting
 their payday from Three Graves.
 Coming by stagecoach. Solid gold
 bars.

MCGREEVES
 As far as I can tell the bank is
 as empty as my pantry!

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SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Well, it's comin' into Three
Graves and when it does, we're
robbin' it.

MAN

So when's we robbing the bank,
Sierra? D'you know when the gold's
coming in?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

You'll be the first to
know...McGreeves.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY

The office occupies the front of the building. A barred door leading into a corridor which gives access the cells in the rear of the building.

Sunday sits with a shotgun across his legs. Duncan cleans his pistol, concern evident on his face.

DEPUTY SUNDAY

Well, If she's as bad as the
reports say -- the whole town's
gonna sweat 'til she gets her
hands on the man she's come for.

A moment, Gator, Cord, Hal, and Asa file in.

GATOR

Jim, she just left town with Mary.
You think it's her?

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Mary? No.

CORD

You gonna pick her up?

MARSHAL DUNCAN

On what charge?

ASA

Why don't you deputize a posse.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

They're not gettin' paid to do a
job, keepin' the peace is part of
it.

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CONTINUED:

HAL

Look, she'll be gone in a day or two. You got to be reasonable. What's the use of risking our lives and property.

GATOR

Why sure. Besides she's only come for one man.

ASA

That's what the Romans said when the vandals were at the gates, just before they burned Rome.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

There's two kinds of sheriff's, the ones like me you think with there head and those like Jeb Walker who lets their guns do the thinking for them. And that's why he's out there on boot hill waiting for Gabriel's trumpet. Why I'm down here trying to put her outta town.

A beat, then -- Duncan sits at his desk.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

If I can pick her up on something I will. If I can. 'Til than we just have to wait her out.

EXT. LAKE STREAM - DAY

River takes in the stunning scenery. Dramatic, grass covered bluff. Mary sits on a boulder, tossing pebbles into the water.

MARY

So yes, I'm leaving. And I'd be glad to see the end of the country, outlaws, Indians, drunks, gamblers, saloon girls, bad roads and bad food.

GANT

We need doctor's out here. In fact, we need them a little more worse than they do back east.

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CONTINUED:

MARY

That's what I thought we I came out here. I've become an expert on gunshot wounds and broken heads. I learned to stitch up a knife slash as neat as a handkerchief hem. I've saved the life of a half a dozen worthless murders and couldn't save my husband's life.

Gant and Mary look at one another.

MARY

I'm going straight to Boston. I don't care if I hear of this part of the country again.

GANT

Then it has occurred to you that your wasting your life.

MARY

Doctors take an oath, it has to do with saving lives - no matter who.

GANT

Maybe it's for the best. You leavin'. They're going to die anyway. Best thing you can do is drag out their miserable lives.

MARY

Death is inevitable for all of us but we try and put it off as long as possible.

Mary joins Gant, sits on a log, puts on her stockings.

GANT

I envy you being a doctor. You got a faith, something to go by like a religion. With you it's medicine.

MARY

It means a great deal to me.

GANT

Well, kinda puts us on different sides of that fence I was talking about, don't it?

MARY

You can say that.

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CONTINUED: (2)

GANT

Well, I have a job to do to.

MARY

Why do you have to do it at all?

GANT

Because I took an oath too.
In my line of work, often the real
sickness is seldom physical. I
think I've had more experience
with those than you have.

MARY

You sound like a shrink than --

GANT

-- a killer?

MARY

You're awfully nosey, aren't you?

GANT

Just professionally. Kinda like a
doctor in that respect.

Mary gestures towards her pistols.

MARY

I wouldn't quite call that a
stethoscope...

Suddenly, a snake rattles and rears up just a couple of
feet from Mary, ready to strike.

Gant quick draws. The bullet blasts the head off the
rattler, and the dead snake collapses.

GANT

No, but properly used it can be
good for the human race.

A long beat. Gant, gun still in her hand, exchanges a
look with Mary - in which many things can be read.

INT. RANCH HOME - DAY

Spartan interior of a lovely homestead. Reverend Prospero
grabs a bottle and glass.

His seriously hot wife, MIRANDA, 30s, exits the bedroom.
Her hair, face a bit unkept, straightens her clothes.

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CONTINUED:

MIRANDA

I didn't expect you back so soon.

REV PROSPERO

You never do.

MIRANDA

What happened? They run out of whiskey at the saloon?

REV PROSPERO

Gant is in town.

MIRANDA

I've heard the name but never anything good connected with it.

The two of them lock eyes, a volcano of unspoken emotions.

MIRANDA

That's your way, isn't it? Back away from anything tougher than a steak.

REV PROSPERO

I'm sure you think I'm a coward, like everyone else 'round here.

He stares hard at Miranda, pours himself another drink.

MIRANDA

That's right, pour yourself some courage. What would she want with you? You're not worth killing. Let alone a roll in the hay.

REV PROSPERO

What do you want? A punch in the nose?

MIRANDA

Instead of fighting with me, why don't go over and tangle with her.

INT. BANK OF PURGATORY GULCH - DAY

Flynn tears his attention away from the ACCOUNTING LEDGER to stare through a window as Gant heads for the hotel.

Flynn stands there, trembling. Sweating. Hal joins him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLYNN

Why do Jim let her hang around?

HAL

He wasn't much of a soldier, come to think of it, not much of a marshal, either.

FLYNN

If she can execute a man for money maybe we can pay her to go away.

Hal and Flynn exchange a look - Not a bad idea, but...

INT. HOTEL - DAY

A shaky hand pours a glass of whiskey. The hand belongs to CLINT, 30, not sober, which makes him all the meaner.

Gant crosses to the bar, makes eye-contact with Clint.

GANT

Clint.

CLINT

How did you know my name?

GANT

I read it on a wall some place.

Clint backs away from Gant, scared shitless.

EXT. PURGATORY GULCH - THOROUGHFARE - DAY

Clint stumbles arounds the thoroughfare, drunk. Most of the Townsfolk know him, and so they also know to stay the hell out of his way.

CLINT

Who does she think she is, roaming the town like she was an honored guest or... or something.

He turns and see Mary standing there, looking at him.

MARY

Clint, I just want to remind you that you have a bad lung. Getting liquored up ain't going to help it none.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLINT

Isn't there anybody in this town
that ain't afraid of Gant?

Sawbones spits. No time for this --

SAWBONES

Sure! Graveyard's full of 'em.

Clint scoffs, gets on his horse and rides away.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Gant sits alone in the almost empty lobby. Gator
approaches with a fresh pot of coffee.

GATOR

Gant, more coffee?

GANT

Sure. Thank you.

GATOR

(pouring)
And how is everything?

GANT

Very good.

She sips coffee, winces. Would spit it out if she could.

GANT

Sweet Jesus, that's strong enough
to float a pistol.

A group of men enter and cautiously approach Gant. In the
bunch, Hal, Flynn, and several other gentlemen.

She studies their grim faces, her own, unreadable.

HAL

I'm Mayor Hal mercer, and these
gentlemen are members of the city
council. I wanna speak with you.

GANT

Talks cheap. I can spare you some.

HAL

You can drop this manhunt.

GANT

Now why would I want to do that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FAT COUNCILMAN

For the good of the town. This is an old town. Just bare bones until Sierra Nevada Rose resurrected it. Then people came here from a lot of different places. And we don't ask questions about there past. All we're interested in is how they behave here.

FLYNN

Whoever you're looking for ain't doing anyone harm now.

GANT

I've already been paid.

FLYNN

We're prepared to offer you two thousand dollars out of the town treasury.

GANT

Switching sides for money that's most unethical.

FLYNN

You're making a mistake.

GANT

Could be, but you'll never know unless I've come for you, banker.

Flynn, shaken. Him and the disgruntled men follow.

EXT. COURTHOUSE SQUARE - DAY

A tall gallows is being constructed. It doesn't look too sturdy, not well-maintained.

Gant looks it over as she strides past. The workmen pause in their labors to look at Gant.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Gant heads down the street. As she passes the General store, she sees Mary in the window. She can't take her eyes off Mary.

Suddenly, feeling Rivers' presence, she looks up, sees her. Mary holds Rivers' look, then turns as a customer enters the store.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gant stands for a moment, watching her, then crosses the street, and heads to the saloon.

Marshal Duncan follows at a distance...

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Sierra exits the batwing doors, surprised to see Gant; quickly feigns scorn. Duncan follows at a distance.

Gant tips her hat, heads inside. Sierra greets Duncan.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

If you're smart, Sierra. You'll throw her outta there.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

While she's spending her money? You know me better than that, Marshal. Personally I think you got a bum steer. But since I got thousands of dollars working in the opposite direction I'll keep an eye on her.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Now you're talking sense.

INT. DOC HALLADAY'S HOME/OFFICE - DAY

Rev Prospero paces - strain and tension on his face. Mary searches a medical cabinet, retrieves a bottle of pills.

MARY

This is a small town you can't sneeze with a half a dozen people given you cold remedies. I thought you put that iron away for good.

REV PROSPERO

Things change.

MARY

Gant?...you're not figuring on mixing with her, are you?

REV PROSPERO

I've done a lot of riding. Sometimes in the wrong places. Sooner or later it's bound to catch up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

Maybe you're going out of your way to look for trouble.

REV PROSPERO

As long as she's in town I don't have to look.

MARY

These pills will take care of your indigestion. Take one after every meal.

REV PROSPERO

Much obliged Doc. What I owe you?

MARY

I'll send you a bill.

REV PROSPERO

Well, don't make it too steep, business has been kinda slow since Gant been in town.

As he leaves Duncan enters...

MARSHAL DUNCAN

I understand you took a ride with Gant. Did she say anything? Any hint of who she's after?

MARY

No. You're awfully sure she's after someone here.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

She rides into a town, checks into a hotel. Sits around for a day taking stock of the situation. Sizing up her next victim known only to her. Baits and needles him until there's nothing left to do but draw on her. Shoots him down in front of witnesses.

MARY

You can't hang someone on their reputation.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

Every lawman in the west knows her reputation.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARSHAL DUNCAN (CONT'D)

Here, half the town is afraid
she's going to kill them. And
you're riding around with her.

MARY

She seems friendly enough.

He chuckles, "yeah, right." Grabs his hat, heading out.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

When I was a kid, I had a pet
rattlesnake. I was fond of it, but
I wouldn't turn my back on it.

MARY

Let's see how things develop.

MARSHAL DUNCAN

You surprise me Doc, Never thought
you were one to sit round and let
the flu develop into Pneumonia.

MARY

You can't cure the flu, but
sometimes you can cure Pneumonia.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Sierra wanders through crowded tables. The saloon is
alive with an almost holiday like atmosphere, music, card-
playing, and dancing girls.

She nods now and again to some cowboys.

A saloon girl -- a lovely, young, black woman --
POLLYANNA is passing around drinks.

She makes her way over to the bar, takes a drink, knocks
it back. She turns to Clem.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Give me a bottle of our best
whiskey.

CLEM

Who's the lucky sonofabitch?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Gant.

Clem raises his eyebrows but puts a bottle on the bar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sierra grabs it, making small talk, playing up to Gant and with unmistakable effect.

A lecherous RANCHHAND grabs her ass, growls like a bear, Sierra playfully brushes his hand away, and joins Gant.

She offers Gant the whiskey. Gant accepts. Sierra pours. Their faces remain placid to anyone watching, but their low voices fire with intensity --

GANT

How you get to be come a saloon
girl with men's hands pawing you?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Which story you want to here. The
one I fascinated with the life,
did someone push me through the
singing doors. My father was a
preacher, sort of. I mean he never
been ordained or anything. But he
somehow got the idea in his head
that the whole world was wrong and
it was his job to set them right
again. So he went around preaching
to anyone who would listen,
sometimes even those who wouldn't
listen. Oh I'm not trying to give
you this with a piano. You asked
and I'm telling you.

GANT

I've met some. Hell, fire, and
brimstone shouters. And find sin
everywhere.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

S'pose you just tell us who you've
come for, save us all some time
and sleepless nights.

GANT

You call that a business
proposition? Like askin' a pack of
coyotes to keep quiet about a dead
horse.

Sierra's look hardens; she'll need another tack.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

(opens a fresh deck)
Perhaps you'd like me to tell you
your fortune.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Sierra shuffles. There's an intimacy to it. Tosses three cards face down, turns a forth face-up; Queen of Hearts.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Love.

Sierra repeats the process, turns over; the Ace of Spade.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Death. Uh, are you feeling lucky tonight?

GANT

Your place doesn't come with the best recommendations. Crimped cards, loaded dice, fixed wheels.

Sierra looks at Gant. Any civility has vanished.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I run honest games now because it pays in the long run.

GANT

Your whiskey is still watered.

Gant pounds her glass on the table. Sierra gestures --

DONNA JUANITA, a descendant of Spanish Conquistadors in sexy *showgirl garments*, hustles over.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Beers...two cervezas.

GANT

No thanks. It makes one careless. I like to be able to tell my friends from my enemies.

Sierra dismisses Donna Juanita. A croupier places a paper before her. A beat, finally, Sierra initials it.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

That's his limit.

GANT

It's a fair gamble, especially if the house will take off the limit.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

If it's action you want, the game's open. The roof's the limit. But, if you're really playful, I'll take that off too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Cord approaches. A dog-step behind him is TEX LAREDO, a mean-looking hombre with a penchant for violence.

CORD

Any trouble?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

No trouble t'all.

CORD

You don't like me much, do ya?

GANT

I was once bitten by a rattlesnake
that I liked better.

He flares at the insult - Sierra places a hand on his arm to stop him from striking Gant.

TEX LAREDO

You're gonna talk yourself right
into a box, lady.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Simmer down. She's just trying to
draw you into an inside straight
now don't you go giving her the
right cards.

CORD

Some day, Gant, someone's gonna
fill you so full of lead, they'll
stake a claim on ya.

GANT

Seeing you ain't wearing a gun
I'll ignore that.

TEX LAREDO

Maybe you can hear me better.

Tex lays a hand on his pistol's grip.

GANT

He a friend of yours?

CORD

He runs errands for me.

GANT

You best keep him out of my way or
you may have to run them yourself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Tex draws his gun to coldly blow Rivers' head off. Sierra quickly slaps it away - his GUNSHOT goes wild.

Then SLAMS a whiskey bottle upside Tex's face, knocking him unconscious. Gant turns to Cord.

GANT

Next time you try to run me out of town play your own hand. Maybe you'd like to try right now.

A tense moment... a stare down. Instead, Cord helps a woozy Tex Laredo to his feet. As Gant heads out...

TEX LAREDO

You'll GET what ya GAVE, ya bitch!
Just a matter of when.

INT. MCLYNTOCK'S LAND OFFICE - DAY

Cord presides over a meeting between Hal, Asa, and a COUNCILMAN. Snifters of brandy. The air heavy with cigar smoke. The proverbial "smoke-filled" room.

Nearby, Poker dazzlingly manipulates a deck of cards with one hand. Switches to the other and resumes throughout.

HAL

Why'd you let her get away with it?

CORD

She wanted me to draw. I wonder why.

From Sierra's expression she's wondering too.

HAL

I don't mean to criticize Jim, but I think he should bring in some outside help.

CORD

What do you got to worry about?

HAL

I'm thinking back. Same as all of us. I shot a man once. In the back. Maybe he had kinfolk.

CORD

You have strange friends, Sierra.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Maybe it's the way she slings her artillery. Texas style, low and handy.

Jaw clenched in anger, he knocks back rest of his drink.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Sometimes I think you stir up trouble when there isn't any.

Sierra lights Cord's cigar, studies him intensely.

POKER FLATS

Why you sticking up for that side winder? Don't you want to see Gant out of town?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

The devil will get her some day.

POKER FLATS

I'd like to help.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

The devil does plenty of business in this town. It don't need you.

Cord reaches into his coat and retrieves a letter..

CORD

Here's a letter from Dulin Cain.

HAL

Who's Dulin Cain?

CORD

He's from Salts Flat. He's broke and wants to borrow a thousand dollars from me.

HAL

What's that got to do with Gant?

CORD

He'll earn this thousand by rubbing Gant out.

HAL

I didn't know the Kid was a killer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CORD

He never had to be. He's the fastest man with a six shooter I ever saw.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Maybe he won't go for it.

CORD

He'll go for anything when he's broke. And if we have to we'll up the ante.

A beat, hands the letter to Hal.

CORD

There's his address. Wire him five hundred and have him come runnin'.

Hal grabs his hat, heads out, the men follow suit.

Cord pulls out a cigar - a match- Lights it. Puffs...

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I thought he was your friend?

CORD

Maybe he'll get lucky.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

If you had the chance you'd through me to the wolves. Wouldn't you?

CORD

If you ever got in my way.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'm too smart for that.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DRESSING AREA - DAY

Mary wraps the ankle of DELTA, an older but attractive saloon girl. Sierra nearby, having summons Mary here.

DELTA

I know men like him, fuck anything in sight. And get enough of that liquor in him... let's face it, he's been ridden and it's time to change horses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

It's just a sprain, not broke.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Told ya Doc would fix ya up.

MARY

Yep, a few days, you'll be able to run away from this place.

Sierra holds her hard glare on Mary.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

At a corner table, Poker plays solitaire, cheating at it, to. A bottle of whiskey nearby. Gant approaches him.

POKER FLATS

Poker Flats, at your service.

He drains his glass of whiskey, pours two more. Slides one towards Gant. Holds up his shot...

POKER FLATS

There is a Code of the West. Mind you, nothing written, merely a gentleman's agreement to certain rules of conduct for survival, and are respected. Like drink your whiskey with your gun hand, to show your friendly intentions.

GANT

I'm not a gentlemen.

Poker Flats smirks, resumes cheating at solitaire.

POKER FLATS

So, care for a friendly game? It'll help pass the time.

GANT

Those sir, are the devils pasteboards.

POKER FLATS

No, their mine. It's provided me with a very good lively hood.

GANT

I'd think so being a professional gambler?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POKER FLATS

Interesting business you got there. Gun for hire.

GANT

In a sense I'm a gambler. But I don't gamble for money. I gamble for higher table stakes. My life and I don't shoot people in the back. Every man I've faced as had an even chance.

POKER FLATS

From what I hear not with your speed.

GANT

You never know when you'll meet a faster one. It might be today. It might be tomorrow.

POKER FLATS

I had another profession once. Up in Kansas. Wasn't much of one though. A man of medicine. Not a dentist. Sellin' fake snake oil... You'd be surprised how gullible some folks are.

Suddenly grabs a crumbled ball of silk. A coughing fit. His entire body goes into spasms. Finally it ends.

He pulls the handkerchief from his mouth that's peppered in blood. Folds his silk, tucks it back into his pocket.

POKER FLATS

Got a pair of bad lungs. All that smoke made 'em twitch. A draft of whiskey will cut the dust.

Poker pours himself another drink. Gant hasn't touched hers yet. Just then, Mary joins them.

POKER FLATS

Yes, siree, the finest doctor there is out west. Purgatory Gulch was a mighty sick town. Mary operated on it. Patient lost a lot of blood - but lived.

MARY

I thought you were running for state senate on the reform party ticket.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY (CONT'D)

They don't mind if the other's
drink and gamble, but you must be
above such things.

POKER FLATS

And give up poker playing?

MARY

Well, of course not. There's
always solitaire and old maid.

(re: his drink)

You s'pose to have that stuff?

POKER FLATS

Why not? We all have to die
sometime. Me. You. The whole
cockeyed world. Doesn't make much
difference what kills us.

Poker can't help but laugh. But the laugh turns into a
coughing spasm. A horrible, racking cough with no end.

She takes out a bottle of laudanum. Reluctant, Poker lets
Mary spoon some into his mouths until the coughing abate.

Poker counts drops five silver dollars into Mary's palm.