

(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. PRARIE - DAY

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

A LONE RIDER emerges from the heat haze. *She rides a fabulous pale horse, The Lone Ranger's Bohlin Saddle. She's dressed for dusty, rugged business, not dowdy. A kick-ass DUSTER, scarf, spurs. Think Sharon Stone from the Quick And The Dead; whom will come to know as RIVERS.*

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY

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.

Mrs. Stanton looks up from her needle-work. Mr. Stanton is He's absently staring, as Our horsewoman cantors up.

RIVERS

Your dog's a mite unfriendly.

MR.STANTON

He doesn't like strangers.

MRS.STANTON

(a hoarse whisper)

Here boy...here!

The dog wines, obeys --

Rivers brushes her duster aside, revealing the coup de grace; a *Samuel Colt .44 dual action pistol and in her other holster, a "Grape Shot Revolver."*

She tucks her fingerless lace gloves over her gun belt.

MR.STANTON

What can I do fer ya?

RIVERS

How much further to Sulfer City?

(CONTINUED)

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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.

Rivers tips her hat, spurs her horse.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN - DAY

Rivers slows, reining in just shy of the main road into town. A weathered 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.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

All the prerequisites of a frontier town: general store, barber, hotel, church, bank, newspaper, telegraph office:

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 suddenly looks distracted. He rises, moves to the window, and looks out. Rivers ride past.

ELMER

What's wrong?

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.

Rivers grabs her saddlebag.

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SAWBONES

Willie "sawbones" Pardon. Fought at Gettysburg and my leg is cut up real bad. But I'm still here. Yep. I can have a new one tomorrow. Come far?

RIVERS

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?

RIVERS

Would you leave a horse like that behind?

SAWBONES

Yea, see what you mean. She's real good. How much you want for her?

RIVERS

She's not for sell.

He notes a '*Texas Longhorn*' engraved on her holsters.

Then sees rifles in each saddle-holsters; a sawed off exposed hammer shotgun and .405 Winchester.

SAWBONES

I'll be doggone. Your reputation got here long before you did.

She grabs both of them two.

RIVERS

By chance, is there a doctor in this town?

SAWBONES

One of the best. Doc Halladay.

RIVERS

Hotel in town?

SAWBONES

Such as it is. Other side of the street. Can't miss it, though you might want to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

Who's got the best grub?

SAWBONES

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

RIVERS

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

SAWBONES

That'd be fair.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

It has seen better days. At the tiny 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, with FLYNN QUIGBY, 35, the town BANKER, possessing the face of a shady past, DEKE HARRIGAN, a beefy redneck rancher, and the Mayor, HAL MERCER, 40s.

Rivers strolls towards the front desk. Gator appears.

RIVERS

A room.

GATOR

Day, week, month, miss?

RIVERS

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. Everyone turns to the commotion.

RIVERS

I'll pay when I leave!

And what Gator sees in those eyes truly disturbs him now.

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DEKE

Ain't you got enough trouble?

RIVERS

Yea, you wanna be a part of them?

Locking eyes with Deke, who, flummoxed by this woman standing up to him, scowls in red-faced fury.

Deke curses bitterly, crosses to Rivers. His righthand is inches from his gun. She sees this.

RIVERS

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

DEKE

Some.

Deke draws his gun with great speed, but Rivers draws faster and fires the Samuel Colt .44 --

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

RIVERS

You only have to lose one.

Wheels her gun back into its holster and scans the crowd.

RIVERS

Anybody else want to try their luck?

Terrified, Gator spins a registry around, extends a pen.

GATOR

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

RIVERS

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

Gator's confused... afraid to answer...

RIVERS

Rivers. A good way to remember is think of something you have yet to cross.

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

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.

A few DANCE HALL GIRLS, some Latina, one Asian, one black, are passed around.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE, the iron-willed saloon keeper, sashays through the crowd, a sexy 40. Refined, elegant, flashing cleavage.

A croupier comes up and places a paper before her. A beat, finally, Sierra initials it.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

That's his limit.

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.

POKERFLATS

Unfortunate, my friend. It's been a pleasure... as always. Perhaps your luck will be better tomorrow.

(toasting...)

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

A beat, Sierra studies Poker quizzically, then --

SIERRANEVADAROSE

I thought you you're running for state senate on the reform party ticket. They don't mind if the other's drink and gamble, but you must be above such things.

POKERFLATS

And give up card playing?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

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

EXT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Doors to shops open and people spill out into the street where they see Gator, running, shouting unintelligible.

Sierra exits through batwing doors of the saloon.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Gator, what in tarnation are you gibbering on about?

GATOR

Rivers in town.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Son of a bitch.

Poker crosses towards Sierra, slowly rolling a cigarette.

POKERFLATS

Gator say why she blew into town?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

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

EXT. MARY'S HOME/OFFICE - 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, an attractive Southern Belle conscious of her importance to the town, painstakingly places a letter to its envelope.

INT. MARY'S OFFICE - DAY

Shelves full of medical books. Several cots.

MARSHAL JIM DUNCAN, 50, a hard life's wear and tear hasn't been kind to him, sits in a chair with a crank handle to recline.

Deputy WILL SUNDAY (20), despite his innocent good looks and unassuming, demeanor, is a bit wet behind the ears.

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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.

MARSHALDUNCAN

(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. Rivers.

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

DUNCAN

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

GATOR

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

DUNCAN

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

DEPUTYSUNDAY

Who's this Rivers?

DUNCAN

She's a hired killer.

DEPUTYSUNDAY

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DUNCAN

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

DEPUTYSUNDAY

How come she's still loose?

DUNCAN

She goads them. You can make any man draw first if you try hard enough. Gator, did she say how long she was going to stay?

GATOR

Nope. Who you suppose she's after?

DUNCAN

Maybe she's not after anyone.

GATOR

She took a room. She's not just passing through.

DUNCAN

Could be anyone.

GATOR

That all?

MARY

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

Marshal Duncan paces, grabs his hat.

DUNCAN

Doc, you just watch some of our respected citizens from now on. You'll learn something. I'll tell you 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. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Cord, Hal, and Flynn play cards while Sierra checks a stack of coins a scantily-clad SALOON GIRL has given her.

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CONTINUED:

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

CORD

Spit it out, what's bothering you?

FLYNN

You know mighty well what's bothering me.

HAL

But do you really think you can get away if it's you she wants.

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 pushing me, Cord? Maybe she's after you.

CORD

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

HAL

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

POKERFLATS

Dynamite comes in little packages.

CORD

I thought it was some legend. What's the old saying? 'The last cow is always the hardest to milk.'

Duncan and Sunday walk in as Rivers bounds down the steps in a black string tie, crisp shirt and sexy lace-up leather pants..

She studies his gun hand, a tremor here and there.

RIVERS

You cold or scared, Marshal?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DUNCAN

Got to be cold, 'cause there ain't
nothing frightening around here.

RIVERS

Something I can do for you,
Marshal?

DUNCAN

We don't like the smell of gun
smoke, and there's plenty of it
when you're around. We got a nice
community here chalked with law
and order. And we aim to keep it
that way.

RIVERS

I'm not looking for no trouble,
but I'm not running from it
either.

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

The barber, WADE, sits in his barber's chair reading the
paper, as CLINT, 30s, walks in, not fully sober, which
makes him all the meaner.

WADE

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

CLINT

Why Wade, where did you pick up
such a habit like reading--some
girl's school back East?

He gets up as Clint sits in a chair. Wade gets to work.

Through a huge window, Rivers strolls along. Recognition,
shock, fills Clint's face.

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

WADE

What's wrong, Clint? You look as
though you've seen a ghost.

INT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

The main town square. The SUN beating down--

Rivers takes in the town- making mental notes of her surrounding, drawing frightened looks and hushed whispers as she passes.

INT. MARY'S PARLOR - DAY

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

MARY

Here, here, stop you're worryin'

GRAM

What's this? Pills?

MARY

No, gumdrops.

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.

Grams 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 Rivers stands there, takes off her hat.

RIVERS

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

MARY

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

RIVERS

Doc Mary "swan" Halladay. Is it?

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CONTINUED:

MARY

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

RIVERS

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--

RIVERS

Have there been any other doctor's in the past years?

MARY

No, just me. Why?

RIVERS

I'm looking for someone perhaps you may have treated.

MARY

What is his name?

A beat, and it sounds like a lie.

RIVERS

Oh he could have been using anything.

MARY

How can I help you then?

RIVERS

He might have come through a year ago. Five eight, medium built, black hair. Possibly a bullet wound to his leg.

Mary considers the implications of Rivers' questions.

MARY

Well I've treated a lot of bullet holes. That could be almost anyone.

Her words says one thing, but her face says otherwise, which isn't lost on Rivers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY

And even if I did. What's between doctor and patient is confidential. Except for proper authorities. Excuse me.

RIVERS

Just a minute, Doc. 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 Rivers enters.

Rivers reaches into a JAR for some licorice.

Henryetta moves behind the counter, a .36 caliber Confederate six shooter is a within reach.

RIVERS

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

Lays two silver dollars on the counter, nods respectfully, heads out.

A COWPOKE enters. He freezes when he sees Rivers about to leave. She Notes his limp and he notices. It's not him.

Rivers knocks his hat off his head --

RIVERS

Show some respect.

EXT. BADLANDS - DAY

A RANCHERO. A *CRUDE SKULL AND CROSSBONES* has been painted on the front door the front door. The words *KEEP AWAY!* And *SICKNESS!* Painted below it. .

DONNA JUANITA, a sexy Mexican woman, who's lead many men to ruin, sits out front, low-cut Mexican dress up, only a tequila bottle hides her genitalia..

Mary pulls up in her fancy little ONE-HORSE CARRIAGE.

INT. RANCHERO - NIGHT

The place is beautiful, a fireplace. A weather-beaten Quantrill's flag on a wall. *It resembles the Confederate, but the canton displays a fist.*

JOHN WILCOX, 20s, walks slowly. Deliberately. A limp to his gait; curled jet black hair, athlete's build, some horrible sores on his face.

He sits, rolls up his sleeves as Mary prepares a vial labeled 'Calf lymph' and syringe to inject him.

MARY

This is a small town you can't
sneeze with a half a dozen people
given you cold remedies.

(off his look)

I thought you put that iron away
for good.

JOHN WILCOX

Things change.

MARY

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

JOHN WILCOX

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

MARY

You figure someone sent Rivers
after you?

JOHN WILCOX

More or less.

MARY

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

JOHN WILCOX

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

Mary's expression shows a drop of pity. She injects him.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

At hitching rail. Mary watches as EARL makes his saddlebags and books secure.

EARL

I hear there's a lot of new territory out Arizona way.

MARY

Oklahoma's practically new. Couldn't you just stay here?

He gives the strap a final tug, as Duncan approaches.

EARL

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

MARSHALDUNCAN

Oh? Any particular reason, Earl?

EARL

What happened to Bull Stanley in Lawless Mesa?

MARSHALDUNCAN

Oh, well, they'd have strung him up anyway, so she probably did him a favor.

EARL

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

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Rivers sits, her feet kicked up. Holds one of her guns out and spins the chamber. Locking it ready with a hard snap. Then twirls the gun--into its holster.

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

REBEL

Ahmmm, move it, or lose it.

Rivers moves her feet, as they pass...

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CONTINUED:

REBEL

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!

Mary pulls up in her fancy ONE-HORSE CARRIAGE.

RIVERS

(tips her hat)

Miss Mary. 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.

RIVERS

Where you off to?

MARY

No place. Thought I'd go for a ride. I get stir crazy in this place.

Mary watches Rivers, her expression tells us she will SEIZE the moment.

MARY

Course if you wanna come along, you're more'n welcome.

RIVERS

You know my reputation.

MARY

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

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CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

You're not afraid?

MARY

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

Rivers smirks as Mary extends the reins to Rivers.

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 there with a shotgun across his legs. Duncan cleans his six-shooter, concern evident on his face.

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

GATOR

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

DUNCAN

Mary? No.

CORD

You gonna pick her up?

DUNCAN

On what charge?

ASA

Jim, why don't you deputize a posse.

DUNCAN

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

ASA

The town has been taken over by a criminal, doesn't that mean anything to you?

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GATOR

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

ASA

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

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.

DUNCAN

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

INT. JAILHOUSE - DAY

Dark, claustrophobic. Iron-barred windows set in brick. Shafts of light strike through dank must, finding --

SAM TALBORT, an arrogant, unlikable man inside a cell. Miserable. He peers through the bars. Townsfolks build a GALLOWS.

A KEY works a lock. A door opens, more light stabs in. Duncan moves to Sam's cell,

SAM

You'd think this kind of work of art was being made for John Wilkes Booth.

A beat, he turn to Duncan.

SAM

That judge said I was supposed to hang, Marshal, not starve to death!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN

Is there anything special you want?

SAM

Yeah - a hacksaw and a gun!

DUNCAN

Will you settle for a steak?

EXT. LAKE STREAM - DAY

The sun beats down -- a clearing on a brush-filled knoll. Mary sits on a big Run. Both become aware of the sexual tension between them.

RIVERS

I understand you're leaving?

MARY

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

RIVERS

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

MARY

That's what I thought we I came out here last year. 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 even save my husband's life. I'm going straight to Boston. I don't care if I hear of this part of the country again.

RIVERS

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.

Rivers studies Mary a moment, then--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS

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.

RIVERS

I envy you, Miss Mary, 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.

RIVERS

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

MARY

You can say that.

RIVERS

Well, I have a job to do to.

MARY

Why do you have to do it at all?

RIVERS

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 --

RIVERS

-- a killer?

MARY

You're awfully nosey, aren't you?

RIVERS

Just professionally. Kinda like a doctor in that respect.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Mary gestures towards her pistols.

MARY

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

RIVERS

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

(then)

Don't move.

Mary, stares at Rivers, hears the hissing. Understanding.

Among the Runs, a RATTLESNAKE coiled, HISSINGSTRIKES
OUT... She quick draws to SHOOT it, killing it instantly.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF TOWN - DAY

There is a lot of smoke.

Flynn gives a sheepish glance in the direction of Sierra,
Hal, and Cord

With shaky hands, Flynn raises his rusty pistol and aims.

Bam! He misses the tin coffee can again.

He aims again and -- the coffee tin doesn't move.

Flynn stands there, trembling. Sweating.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Flynn, you couldn't hit the hind
end of your horse with a handful
of buckshot and you know it.

Sierra grabs the old pistol, turning and aiming the gun.

CORD

You can't shoot.

The bullets pierce the tin can. ONE, TWO, THREE times.
Much to their surprise.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

When I aim at something, I hit it
and when I hit something its what
I aimed at.

FLYNN

Why do you and Sierra let her hang
out around town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRANEVADAROSE

You got a good way of getting rid of her?

FLYNN

Well, why don't Jim do something?

CORD

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

(then)

And I'm getting fed up of your bellyaching.

HAL

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

INT. HOTEL - DAY

A shaky hand pours a glass of whiskey. The hand belongs Clint. He drinks the whiskey down in one gulp. Shoots a look at Gator.

Spurs jingling, as Rivers, in sexy lace-up leather pants crosses to the bar, and, without a word, is served a WHISKEY by the Gator.

She turns to Clint, who doesn't look at her.

RIVERS

Clint.

CLINT

How did you know my name?

RIVERS

I read it on a wall some place.

Clint is backing away from Rivers, and he looks scared shitless. He runs out of the building.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

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

GATOR

Miss Rivers, would you like more coffee?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS

Sure. Thank you.

GATOR

(pouring)
And how is everything?

RIVERS

Very good.

GATOR

If there's anything you need
during your stay here don't
hesitate to ask.

She takes a sip of the coffee and winces. Would spit it out if she could.

RIVERS

Sweet Jesus, that's strong enough
to float an egg.

Gator moves off -- she sits there staring at the coffee.

A group of men enter and cautiously approach Rivers. 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.

RIVERS

Talks cheap. I can spare you some.

Rivers gestures for them to sit.

FLYNN

We know who you've come for.

Rivers shakes her head, "*here we go again.*"

RIVERS

Really?

HAL

You can drop this manhunt.

RIVERS

Now why would I want to do that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HAL

For the good of the town. It should be perfectly obvious. You can see what's happened to this town since you've got here.

FATCOUNCILMAN

It ain't the same place. Half the people are afraid to go out on the street.

HAL

Everybody's suspicious of everybody else.

RIVERS

I've already been paid.

FLYNN

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

RIVERS

Do you really think you can pay me off?

FLYNN

Assassins work for money, don't they?

RIVERS

There's loyalty, that money can't buy. No dice.

FLYNN

You're making a mistake.

RIVERS

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

Flynn has had enough. Shaken, he backs out the door and leaves, the over disgruntled men follow.

INT. MARY'S OFFICE - DAY

The curtains are closed. In the semi-darkness we FIND, Marshal Duncan slumped in a chair.

MARY

Well he won't be able to use his gun hand again.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY (CONT'D)

Her slug severed his nerves and tendon. His fingers will have no grip.

Mary adjust a head mirror, catching light from a brightly illuminated oil lamp. She aims her light at his cornea.

DUNCAN

Anything be done, Doc?

MARY

Not much, thick glasses, maybe. But I'd say your marshaling days are over.

MARY

Sorry, but you're getting cataracts, too.

DUNCAN

I understand you took a ride with Rivers. Did she say anything? Any hint of which one of them she's after?

MARY

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

DUNCAN

It's her M.O. She rides into a town, checks into a hotel. Sits around for a coupla days 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.

DUNCAN

In this case, the reputation is the woman. Every lawman in the west knows her reputation.

(then)

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY

She seems friendly enough.

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

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.

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.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

The day has darkened, a downpour accompanied by a thunderclap. It's one of those showers that comes on fast and strong.

THUNDER rolls in the distance.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Rivers strikes a match on her boot hill, lights a cheroot, stares out the window lost oin thought.

The key turns in the door, Sierra in a rain slicker, let's herself in, They make eye contact - they know of each other... well.

O.S. THUNDER & RAIN OUTSIDE punctuate the silence.

RIVERS

Nice quite town you got here.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Marshal ain't had no prisoner in jail for four months until recently.

RIVERS

Sounds like a law abiding town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Depends on what law you're talkin'
about. Most of us are abiding by
the law of self preservation.

She helps Sierra out of her slicker to reveal Sierra wears a sexy provocative dress.

Sierra moves to the window, looks out. The weather matching her mood.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Rain's still coming down
wholesale. Think the good Lord is
over-stocked. We don't get rain in
these parts 'cept once in four
years. Then they get us a real
goose-drownder like this one,
sorta to make up for lost time.

A beat, then--

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

You haven't changed at all,
Rivers.

RIVERS

What made you think I had?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

In four years, a person should
learn something.

RIVERS

Four years ago, I met you in a
saloon; now I find you in one. I
don't see much change.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Except I **own** this one. This
hotel. My secret brothel, too.

They look at each other. Finally she kisses Sierra. Sierra resists - barely. They speak in between kisses.

RIVERS

*You're still 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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

You know you got to get used to sudden changes.

Sierra slaps Rivers, nearly knocks her out of her boots.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'm not that easy to rope.

RIVERS

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

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'll just lay it on the barrel-head -- S'pose you just tell us who you've come for, save us all some time and sleepless nights.

DENVER

Being old friends I didn't think you had to ask me that question.

MAN

But you want know until you pick up your mail, that right.

RIVERS

I always told you it was easier doing business that way. Not knowing. You know how it is, sometimes you get to thinking too hard on what needs to be done and you're liable to make a mess of things.

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

Now Sierra, with a .36 caliber Griswold and Gunnison Confederate six shooter is aimed at her to coldly blow Rivers' head off.

SEIRRA NEVADA ROSE

If you came to see John Wilcox. He cleared out months ago. Now, I'm sorry you rode all this way for nothing, but it's best you just turn around and go back the way you come.

In a flash she wrestles the gun away, then backhands Sierra her viciously --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RIVERS

Don't let the fact that you're a woman make you think I won't kill you. A shoot at the hand that holds the gun.

Sierra gets up, grabs her rain slicker.

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.*

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

Rivers heads down the street. As she passes the General Store, she can't take her eyes off Mary in the window.

Suddenly, feeling Rivers presence, Mary looks back, sees Rivers. She holds Rivers look, then turns as a customer enters the store.

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

Duncan follows at a safe distance.

EXT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Sierra comes out. She makes eye contact with Rivers -

As Rivers heads inside, Sierra greets Duncan.

DUNCAN

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

SIERRANEVADAROSE

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.

DUNCAN

Now you're talking sense.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

The saloon is alive with an almost holiday like atmosphere, music, card-playing, and dancing girls

Rivers is knocking off her tequila and looking at Sierra hungrily. She is moving among gaming tables, making small talk, playing up to Rivers and with unmistakable effect.

A lecherous RANHHAND grabs her ass, growls like a bear, Sierra playfully brushes his hand away.

ARKANSAS

Oh, come on, Sierra! Marry me, please?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Ask me sometime when you're sober, Arkansas.

ARKANSAS

It's a funny thing. She won't marry me when I'm drunk and I won't marry her when I'm sober.

Laughter. Sierra joins Rivers.

Across the room, Cord, looking displeased to say the least. Sierra opens a fresh deck and shuffles.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

How 'bout I tell you your fortune.

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?

RIVERS

Look, I don't like the place you run in Socorro. Your cards are marked, your dice are loaded and your whiskey is watered.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rivers pounds her glass on the table.

RIVERS

Your whiskey is still watered.

Sierra gestures to saloon girl Donna Juanita, who crosses to their table.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Beers...two cervezas.

RIVERS

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

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

There's no limit for you. Anything you can win, you can collect. But, if you're still playful, I'll take that off too.

Donna Juanita sets down the beers and leaves.

RIVERS

There's a drifter in the jail.

Sierra raises an eyebrow, then -

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

He killed a fellow. After he went on a tear in Maricopa, stole a bunch of guns we no more needed than a man on the moon.

(then)

Judge Dutch Henry "the hangman" Brown, is coming to do the honors. He's a preacher and circuit rider. A God-fearing man who packs a bible in one pocket and a six shooter in the other just to balance the law. And fights with the Devil wherever he finds him. Why?

RIVERS

Judge's interests me, especially a hangman.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

That drifter has, one, two days at the most.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

A man's last hours cannot be
measured by the clock.

Cord joins them with HANK SAWYER, a mean-looking hombre
with a penchant for violence.

CORD

Any trouble?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

No trouble t'all.

CORD

I'm Cord McLyntock. How long you
stayin in Forsaken Run?

RIVERS

I'd like to give you a friendly
tip. Keep out of my business and
you'll live longer.

He FLARES at the insult - Sierra places a hand on his arm
to stop him from striking Rivers. He clips a cigar.

CORD

You don't like me much, do ya?

RIVERS

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

Sierra sees this... and defiantly, almost smiles.

CORD

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

RIVERS

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

HANK

Maybe you can hear me better.

Hank lays a hand on his pistol's grip. He holds his hard
glare on Rivers. Then...

RIVERS

He a friend of yours?

CORD

He runs errands for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RIVERS

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

He lunges at Rivers. Just then he is GRABBED from behind
by Cord, who pins his arms back.

Hank grunts in pain, struggles but Cord pulls his arms
tighter, draws him away from Rivers.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

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

RIVERS

That's my business.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

*From what I've seen from your
business it means nothing but
trouble here. Why don't you ride
on through.*

RIVERS

*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*

As Rivers goes, Cord turns his attention to Hank.

CORD

You're too quick tempered. Take it
a little easy.

HANK

I've got a right to think.

CORD

I'm not denying you that, but
Rivers reputation isn't founded on
thin air.

HANK

I haven't found a gun yet I don't
mind drawing against. I reckon
I'll be doing what I think needs
to be done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CORD

It want do a bit of harm to let her get one day older. I've gotta move three thousand head of cattle north in a few days, and I can't afford to lose men. Now after that it's a different story.

HANK

Well I'll be telling it to her.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

You won't like how it ends.

Hank bristles at the challenge to his competence.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

Townpeople stop and pause as three GREYCOATS, faces caked with a mask of grey ash, long coats trailing behind them - - gallop into town.

REX, a tough-as-nails son-of-a-bitch with a shock of shoulder length hair. He has a hook for a left hand.

SKEETER, waves a black flag on a pole.

Another, BUGLER, wearing a ratty Union uniform, blows an erratic tune on a bugle.

EXT. MARY'S HOME/OFFICE - DAY

The dying light illuminates the town in soft rays.

River helps Mary down from her carriage. A definite sexual attraction developing between them.

RIVERS

I know it maybe a bit forward of me, just meeting you today and all, but would you do me the honor of having dinner with me tonight?

MARY

Well...I appreciate the kind offer, I really do --

RIVERS

Buuut...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

But I have a previous dinner engagement I'm afraid.

Rivers looks disappointed.

MARY

You see, I'm cooking for the church's bean supper tonight. I hope to see you there.

RIVERS

You just might, miss Mary.

MARY

Well...good. I look forward to it.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Rivers focus on a table where Poker plays solitaire, cheating at it, too. She approaches him.

He scans the crowd, trying to draw another sucker.

POKER FLATS

Who'll be next...in the game of chance? Opportunities abound. Build your fortune here rather than digging in the muck and the mud.

(Rivers joins him)

How about you, Miss? A game of chance? Poker Flats, at your service.

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

POKER FLATS

...to your very good health.

RIVERS

And to yours --

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS

I'm not a gentlemen.

Poker Flats smirks, resumes cheating at solitaire.

RIVERS

I know you from somewhere.

Poker suddenly fidgets, uncomfortable --

POKER FLATS

I don't think so.

RIVERS

No, I do, I know I do. I swear
it's on the tip of my tongue...

A slight of hand, his pocket pistol slides out of his sleeve pointed at Rivers. Then, a CLICK!

Under the table. Rivers' pistol pointed at Poker.

POKER FLATS

Hah! Slippery one, ain't you.

Slowly HIS FINGER TAPS THE TRIGGER - a locking mechanism slides open, a flame appears. He lights a cigar.

There's a tinge of condescension in his voice. He trades amused looks with Rivers.

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.

POKER FLATS

Interesting business you got there. Gun for hire.

RIVERS

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

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

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.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DRESSING AREA - DAY

Half-naked saloon girls getting dressed. Mary bandages an ankle - belonging to DELTA under Sierra's supervision.

MARY

It's just a sprain. But she'll be off her feet for a while.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

You been pretty chummy with Rivers. Any idea who she here for?

MARY

I don't rightly know-- you'll have to take that up with the her.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Rivers and Poker Flats, as Mary joins them.

POKER FLATS

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

MARY

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.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

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.

Across the way, Rex sits with Buglar, Skeeter and one other man at a table in the corner. A bottle of whiskey stands in the middle of the table.

Rex slides a letter over towards him.

REX

You don't get a letter like that from Brigadier General Beauregard just for running Quinine.

COWPOKE

No, I reckon you don't. I'd give my right arm just to serve under that man.

Rex eye Rivers; burning with hatred in their eyes. The other's follow his gaze.

They finish their drinks, amble towards the table.

REX

WHAT KIND OF MEN ARE YOU? PAYING COURT TO HER? DON'T YOU KNOW WHO SHE IS? Don't you know Susanna Cushman when you see her? Don't you know the Yankee spy who brought death to your friends and kinfolks.

The customers bar all look round uneasily and gradually start to move away.

Sierra is not one to be caught off guard, but this news turns her so white that the next shade would be invisibility.

RIVERS

Seems some of you people won't admit the war is over.

REX

And some of use never will.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

POKER FLATS

He's one of those southerners
neither resigned or repentant.

RIVERS

Well, why should he be we both
fought for what we thought was
right. Nothing to be ashamed of.

POKER FLATS

Want a gun hand?

RIVERS

No thanks.

POKER FLATS

I do handle them pretty well. The
only trouble is, those best able
to testify to my aim aren't around
for comment

Rivers offers a bottle of whiskey to Rex - Rex slaps it
away, shattering it.

Poker eases a hand inside his jacket... puts a hand on
his Ruger Old Army .44 cap, ready to draw.

MARY

There's no hiding place for what
ails you son. We are all under one
flag now!

REX

I lost a brother in Shelbyville
thanks to you. Guess they gave
you a medal for that, didn't they?

RIVERS

Oh they did better than that, they
commissioned me as a Major in the
Union Army.

REX

Don't push.

RIVERS

Don't push? Why you Rebs ought to
be used to bein' pushed. Well, we
pushed you clear from Gettysburg
through Georgia. You gotta admit
you been pushed real good.

Mary gets between them, Rivers escorts Mary out...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

REX

Susanna Cushman!

Rivers turns and looks at Rex. Walks towards him.

Rex jerks for his gun, but Rivers' GUNSHOT bites him in the shoulder. He grabs at it, turns and looks at Rivers as --

His Drunk's COMPANIONS leap up, going for their guns--

POKERFLATS

Settle down boys. Don't try it.

Poker wields a brace of pistols, holding off the men -

SKEETER

Yankees always hide behind women.

Poker shoots Skeeter in the forehead.

REX

That's all well and good, but you'd better kill me. Because if I ever see you again, I'm gonna put a bullet in your little tiny head and blow your brains from here to the Dakotas.

RIVERS

Reb, if I ever see you again, I'll be sure'n give you a chance.

Poker chuckles, tucks his gun into its shoulder holster.

Duncan and Sunday rush in, guns out. Stare at the dead Skeeter and Rex being attended to by Mary. Duncan glares at Rivers.

POKER FLATS

No, I'm afraid I did that one, Jim.

RIVERS

Are you paid to take care of trouble, Marshal, or are you itching to start some?

INT. MARY'S HOME/OFFICE - NIGHT

As Mary finishes washing her bloody hands and forearms in a porcelain bowl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She pulls a towel from a peg, turns to look at the shaft of light illuminating Rex now sleeping on a bed.

Mary moves around a table and takes in the pile of bloody cloth on the floor, Duncan appears with Buglar.

MARY

Nothing I could do for him.

Rex reaches out with his good arm, and grabs Mary by the elbow, startling her.

REX

Some doctor.

He then passes out once more.

MARY

He won't be able to use his gun hand again. The slug severed his nerves and tendon. His fingers will have no grip.

DUNCAN

There's been talk around town.

MARY

People talk, it's what they do.

DUNCAN

About Rivers and you.

Mary stares at her, grows suspicious. Paranoid.

DUNCAN

What if Henryetta's right? What if Rivers is after you?

MARY

Why would she be after me?

EXT/INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The CHURCH SUPPER. Much of the town has gathered.

Fiddler and banjo-player are playing a lively square dance for dancers -- ranchers.

At the far end of the room is a table with punch bowl set up, buffet of food, and a cluster of men and women about.

Mary looks sympathetically at Flynn hunched unhappily in a chair, picking at his plate of food.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

This is a small town you can't sneeze with a half a dozen people given you cold remedies. You want to talk about it?

FLYNN

Look, some of my investors lost money during the panic. I was a little more astute myself, I got away with a few dollars. Now how do I know some dissatisfied investor didn't send her out here to kill me.

MARY

There's an easier way to stay alive if she's here for you. Take off that gun.

Suddenly, the townsfolk stop whatever they're doing. Rivers can feel their accusing eyes bore into her.

A beat. Mary serves her a plate. Rivers samples a taste, smiles at Mary and nods, savoring it...when...

PREACHER

Thou may be a woman here that thinks the book of judgment don't apply. That she can take pleasures in falsehoods, pleasures in exploiting her brothers' and sisters' sorrows.

(eye-fucking Rivers)

Well, to her, comes damnation a thousand fold! To her comes the devil's branding irons, heated to her tortured flesh. Yea! There are some who will suffer the eternal desert, the eternal thirst of the unbeliever! Whither, goest thou? What trail? What road? What awaits ye? The fires of Hell! The burning pit --.

RIVERS

Go on with your meeting.

HENRYETTA

Your beneath contempt and beyond redemption.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

So I'm not good enough to come to meeting! Just because I'm a hired gun. You miserable bunch of hypocrites! Do you know why I'm an assassin? Because you good people pay me to do it, that's why! You can't do your own dirty work, but you can't wait to spit on the one who does it for you!

Rivers walks out, Mary grabs her shawl to follow.

HENRYETTA

All she brought is fear and suspicion. Everybody's jumpy and distrustful. Flying off the handle, starting feuds. Somethin' got to be done, doc, and I don't know what it is.

DOC HALLADAY

It's going to take a lot of nerve from me who spent most of her life helping other people. You'll know that, just ask anyone around. It needs a woman with courage and a steady hand. One that others can put faith in. This whole town is my patient. It's a sick town with a festering growth that needs to be cut away. And that's what my conscience is telling me.

A murmur goes through the room as Mary hurries off.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - NIGHT

Rivers escorts Mary, wrapped in a shawl, home along the torchlit streets.

MARY

Not sure that's such a good idea....me standing beside you 'n all. Someone's liable to take a pop shot at you.

Rivers is bemused by Mary's bellicose demeanor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

Do you know that every time you look at me, I feel like I am running around without any clothes on?

RIVERS

Gonna get mighty chilly before the sun rises.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - SIERRA'S SUITE - NIGHT

In the semi-darkness, it's enormous. Lavishly furnished, richly decorated in pastels and lace.

As our lovely near-naked Sierra saunters to a GRANDFATHER CLOCK, her sheer peignoir robe she wears flutters open revealing a small gunbelt strapped to her thigh. In it, a Baby Lemat presses against her flesh.

She opens it, revealing a HIDDEN STAIRCASE inside. Donna Juanita emerges.

DONNA JUANITA

You make good looking bait for her trap. It's a dangerous play, Señora

Sierra locks eyes with Donna Juanita via her vanity mirror.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Now is it?

DONNA JUANITA

John Wilcox is a friend of yours, a particular friend. The trouble is what if Rivers knows that. Maybe she's waiting for him to show up in town or for you to leave it. She's probably watching you, following you ever place you go. She knows that sooner or later you'll lead her straight to him.

Sierra nods. I won't. Donna Juanita vanishes inside the clock. Moments later, then the door opens.

She looks at Rivers. She holds Sierra's look. No surprise in either face. She steps aside to let Rivers in.

Sierra grabs Rivers' gunbelt, boots, and hat, and hangs them up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She saunters to a sideboard pours from a decanter into two wine glasses.

Rivers strips down to her corset, garters and stockings.

Rivers peers through the shade; looks out. Down the alley, at the corner, Cord is loitering, smoking a cigar.

Sierra brings her the wine.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

You know how Cord got a scar on his forearm? From a cougar. You know how he got even? He killed that cougar with his bare hands. So don't rile him up.

She kisses Sierra, forces her onto the bed, they wrestle until passion takes over. She rips Sierra's gown off.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - SIERRA'S SUITE - NIGHT

The room is deeply shadowed except where the pale moonlight through curtains and windows slashes the blackness.

Rivers, naked, on her stomach, sleeps, the sheet pulled around her thighs- *her back and ass SLASHED TO RIBBONS* by Bull Whip beatings.

After a conflicted beat, Rivers rolls off Sierra gets out of bed naked, moves to the armoire where she bits lights a thin black cigarette.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

How long you been a union spy?

RIVERS

News travels fast In Forsaken Run.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

It's the only thing that does.

RIVERS

I usually figure my women. You come harder.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

I'm not your women.

RIVERS

Just wasn't makin' any sense to me?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS (CONT'D)

A smart gal like winding up in this - cemetery of a town? All it needs is flowers and a headstone.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Because I run this one. The saloon, the hotel, the brothel. I couldn't face another season at the old places. Faro Dealer on the Louisiana Riverboats, a saloon girl singing and dancing in Dodge City. Missouri --

RIVERS

The Rose of the Rio Bravo.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

My what big ears you have..

RIVERS

Ain't you a bit off your range? Forsaken Run seems to be quite a Union stronghold.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Yes, red, white and blue all over.

RIVERS

All over?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Of course there are a few copperheads here, but they're harmless.

RIVERS

So how long you been a Johnny Reb, a sympathizer to the Confederate cause?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

We know which side paid you off?

Rivers is quick to correct Sierra.

RIVERS

I did not fight for money. I tried to be of use for a cause and a man.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I assume you're not referring to the Confederacy and General Beauregard?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

I am referring to Mr. Lincoln who spoke of the birthright of freedom and the abomination of slavery.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

The north had no cause they fabricated one to justify another. And the man who talk about was a tyrant and a fool.

Sierra enters her office, Rivers watches her open a hidden safe.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'll pay you to tell me who you're after. I give you my word. I...I won't warn whoever it is.

RIVERS

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

Sierra reemerges, tosses a pouch of coins on her lap.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

You'll listen and be glad you did for thirty-thousand in gold.

RIVERS

What you do rob the US Mint?
(then)
Maybe I've come for no one.

Roguish as Rivers is, this sentiment certainly seems sincere. But Sierra isn't buying what Rivers is selling.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I tried it. That I had enough. I can't go on like this anymore. I want to start over again - a new town, new faces... a new me.

RIVERS

What happened, Sierra? You try to fill an inside straight with an honest deck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Just don't give me no lectures.
 A woman like you can't change
 anymore than I could. We're cut
 from the same deck, you and I.

A beat, Sierra gestures towards her guns...

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Chances are you'll end up with
 more lead than gold.

Rivers opens the sheets, beseeching her Sierra.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 I wish we had you on our side -
 the South would have won.

There's a commotion from down the hall, Sierra gets up,
 throws on an attractive robe...

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - HALLWAYS - NIGHT

Half-naked prostitutes spill out of their room, as Sierra
 races to a room at the end of the hall...

INT. BROTHEL ROOM - NIGHT

Room of S&M and bondage.

A naked PROSTITUTE in heels is screaming while an IRATE
 Preacher, equally exposed, beats her with a bullwhip.

Her back is bleeding, and she is throwing shit at him

PREACHER
 Go on, piss y'self, you scrofulous
 piece of Yankee shit.

Sierra barges in, her .36 caliber Griswold and Gunnison
 Confederate six shooter to coldly blow his head off.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE
 Lars!

PREACHER
 (brandishes his whip)
 Get on, before I give you some of
 this.

She fires. A LOUD ASS CONCUSSIVE BANG,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HIS HEAD VANISHES.

A PLUME of blood and gray matter... then -- the headless body crumples to the ground, deadweight --

INT. SIERRA'S SUITE - DAY

Rivers searches the room, the drawers, lots of lingerie.

She finds a FALSE BOTTOM in a memento box. Excited, she pulls it up, revealing a FADED FOLDED POSTER.

Rivers unfolds it, Wanted poster; *JOHN WILKES BOOTH - 'WANTED FOR MURDER - REWARD \$100,000 DEAD OR ALIVE.*

A crude likeness to John Wilcox, if he had a moustache.

In the b.g., that GRANDFATHER CLOCK opens, Donna Juanita emerges from the hidden staircase, watching Rivers.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - NIGHT

Rivers strides toward the hotel, the streets empty, but she has the feeling that eyes are watching her.

She draws, whirls around, aims at a man in the shadows.

It's Duncan on his nightly rounds.

RIVERS

You not bein' real smart. I usually shoot first and bury my mistakes.

His POV: blurry vision finally comes to focus on Rivers as she rolls her Samuel Colt .44 and holsters it.

RESUME SCENE

DUNCAN

You remind some of everything they come out West to git away from.

RIVERS

Then I reckon their quarrel's with their past -- not me.

EXT. RUSTLER'S CANYON - DAY

On horseback, Rivers stare at a set of HOOFPRIENTS left in the rusty dirt at an outlet spur off the main drag.

INT. SMALL CAVE - DAY

A spacious cave, lit by oil lamps hanging on the walls, along with Quantrill's black flag. Horses tied up nearby. Bedrolls laid out.

A rag-tag group of GUN-THUGS led by LEE KEMPER, squat over a pan-roasted rabbit, which they eat with cloth napkins and silverware.

They stare off into the darkness at Sierra emerges.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Any trouble?

LEE KEMPER

Yeah, with the sheriff. They need a new one now.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Those poor farmers use to be redlegs. If you think you need six men, take a dozen. If you think you need a dozen, take two.

RUSTY

Quantrill wouldn't stand for this if he was here.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

He's dead! Shuddup! I've been doing just fine without your advice. You have your orders.

A beat, they mount up, as Poker joins Sierra.

POKER FLATS

The 7th Calvary picked up Wes and Duke.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

What? Ah, that was a tough break. They was good boys. But that's the game for ya... all part of the game. You and me, Donna Juanita - the Butcher brigade just us left out of that fine parcel of men and women. Of course, we end up with the money, but that's how the cards fall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POKER FLATS

Look, Sierra! This deck has had so much bottom-dealing that it's dog-eared. Too many jokers keep turning up.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

You got somethin' in your craw spit it out.

POKER FLATS

I wanna know why you're entertaining a Yankee spy, a fire breathing southerner like you?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

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

EXT. RUSTLER'S CANYON - DAY

The edge of a high bluff.

Donna Juanita hovers in a Mexican Rurales uniform. Cross bandoliers, Even wearing men's clothes she's breath-taking.

She looks down a dark smudge on the plains. We see the trail into town. Below -- a SINGLE RIDER appears.

Donna Juanita puts her spyglass to her eye: POV: It's Rivers walking her horse.

Back to scene. Donna Juanita spins, RIFLE UP -- SEES Poker and Sierra standing behind her.

Sierra sees Rivers below. Not seeming to give too much of a shit, Poker sips from a flask.

POKER FLATS

Best place for a clean shot.

They trade looks -- he nods for Donna Juanita to get on with it.

Donna Juanita turns back around. Draws a bead on Rivers in the distance. Closes one eye, sights down the barrel.

Pause. Pause.

POKERFLATS

Don't you want to see Rivers out of town?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRANEVADAROSE

The devil will get her some day.

POKERFLATS

I'd like to help.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

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

POKER FLATS

You do know there's still a price on every Quantrill man and on everybody else that help Quantrill too.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I doubt she's hear for us. But you better telegraph Kansas just the same.

POKERFLATS

You got to burn yourself on a fuse before you admit it's lighted?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Dynamite can be useful if properly handled.

POKER FLATS

This is like smoking a loaded cigar -- one you know will go off in your face.

EXT. RUSTLER'S CANYON - DAY

Hoses hooves. Rivers turns, looks back to find Poker riding up on her rear.

RIVERS

You're quite a tracker, Poker. You been in the military?

POKER FLATS

I've done my time.

He withdraws a flask and takes a drink as they move on, cantering down the canyon together.

POKER FLATS

I was with the 118th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers. That ring a bell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS

Yes, I remember! Ne'er-do-well slacker Pvt. Hemp Johnson who deserts the cavalry. The "winter soldier," one who joins the Army in winter to enjoy the warm barracks, and then deserts when the weather improves. Well it's the dog days of July. Who side are you own anyway?

Poker looks back at Rivers, his alignment yet unclear.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Duncan and Sunday sit at their desks covered with PIES, homemade JAMS and other COOKED GOODS -- stuffing themselves.

Both barely look up as Sierra saunters in.

DUNCAN

Look what the cat drugged in...

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

She's not after doc.

DUNCAN

Is she now?

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

A woman's intuition.

Duncan pulls out a pipe- A match- Lights it. Puffs...

DUNCAN

Well, I wish you'd use a little more of that woman's intuition and tell me who's she's after.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Dutch Henry. That's who she's waiting on.

(off his look)

She stays in town, one, no more than two. Things get complicated after that and Rivers don't like complications.

DUNCAN

So either who she come for is not here yet, or don't live in town.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

That would make sense. I better warn him.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

How? He'll be here today.

A beat, then Duncan turns to Sunday --

DUNCAN

Will, see if you can intercept him.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

Rivers walks towards the hotel. She sees Duncan coming out of the TELEGRAPH OFFICE. Duncan stops. Lights a match and BURNS a TELEGRAM in his hand.

Then walks toward the Saloon.

INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - DAY

O'HENRY, the TELEGRAPH OPERATOR SNAPS AWAKE as a message comes over the wire. As the machine clicks he diligently writes the message.

A bell rings above the door as Rivers saunters in. Without looking up...

O'HENRY

Gimmie a minute I've got an important message.

Rivers watches him closely, listening deliberately, soaking in the key strokes.

Over this we hear her thoughts...

RIVERS(V.O.)

In answer to your inquiry; Judge Dutch Henry Brown departed Deadwood two days ago. Should be in your area sometime today. US Deputy Marshal Bass Reeves has been dispatched from Fort Smith, Arkansas. End of message.

Beat, O'Henry looks up, shocked to see that its' Rivers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS

You know now that contraption fascinates me, can you take a douses as fast as it comes over the wire?

O'HENRY

Of course that's why I'm here.

RIVERS

Well if it isn't too much of a secret what did it just say?

O'HENRY

It's against company regulations to give out that information. But being that you're so curious it told about the stagecoach being delayed alright. Satisfied?

RIVERS

I got the message.

EXT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Marshal Duncan sits at a table studying a chessboard. Deputy Sunday comes over and sits down. He watches as Duncan makes a move

DUNCAN

I recall you were always more of a checkers man.

(makes a move)

Checkmate.

O'Henry hurries in with a telegram, hands it to Duncan.

DUNCAN

Did you tell anyone else about this?

O'HENRY

No, it's addressed to you. But Rivers came in, asking about the message. But I didn't tell her --

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

You didn't have to, if she's what I think she is -- a former union spy, then she's well acquainted with the Morse code.

Gator hurries in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GATOR

Jim, Clint's gone hog wild,
looking for a fight with Rivers.

DUNCAN

Is he some kinda half-wit idiot or
just plain, goddamn stupid?

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

A drunk Clint taps his glass on the bar for a re-fill.

Gator re-fills. Rivers takes notice of him.

He polishes off his whiskey, wiping his mouth, then...
stands and challenges Rivers--

CLINT

Goddamn bitch!

Locking eyes with Clint, Rivers, flummoxed.

Duncan and Sunday come up through a door in a dead run.
Clint brushes them aside.

CLINT

You keep out of this, Jim.

RIVERS

You're trying to pick a fight with
me, why?

CLINT

You know why.

RIVERS

You'll have to call it.

His expression going dark and angry, as he slaps a hand
to his pistol, waits for Rivers to go for hers.

RIVERS

You forget, Clint - I know that
your father died because he
wouldn't wear a gun. You'll die
because you do.

Rivers keeps her hands on the table. A tense beat --

RIVERS

All right. If you think you can do
it, go ahead and try. My hands are
on the table.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS (CONT'D)

I couldn't possibly outdraw you.
So go ahead and shoot.

Clint stands there swaying, seemingly lost in thought.

She flicks a coin, it lands at his feet.

RIVERS

Go buy you some whiskey
'cause you're going to need to
drink half the bottle to get up
the nerve to draw on me.

Clint gawks at Rivers, the anxious crowd.

He weaves unsteadily out the door, but not before Duncan has a few choice words for him.

DUNCAN

Anymore trouble with you and I'll
lock you up.

Duncan stare back at Rivers.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - 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.

Sierra, Cord, and Hal do nothing, watch the proceedings, lingering outside the Silver Spur.

CLINT

Isn't there anybody in this town
that's not afraid of Rivers?

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

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAWBONES

Sure! Graveyard's full of them.

Clint scoffs, gets on his horse and rides away.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - HALL - DAY

The Silver Spur is alive with MUSIC that barely drown out the sounds of PASSION emanating from its private rooms.

As Sierra comes out of her office, runs into Cord loitering.

CORD

You have strange friends, Sierra.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Whatta mean?

CORD

I've been watching you two. I don't like what I see.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Maybe you better stop looking.

It hits Cord like salt on a wound and he just takes it, as she pushes past him and saunters up the stairs.

INT. BANK - FLYNN'S OFFICE - DAY

Flynn is looking out the window. Then catches sight of Rivers, loitering nearby. His face, tense.

He holds up his pistol, aims it at Rivers, and it is an easy shot and Flynn is sweating, his hand is shaking.

A beat. Flynn snatches the bottle of Tequila and pours it down his throat.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - MAIN STREET - DAY

Hal and Cord walk towards the bank.

Then hear Flynn's threats from inside - a vague roar.

INT. BANK - DAY

A frantic Flynn looks ill, stares at his gun, places the barrel against his temple. Contemplates the benefits of a quick, merciful, self-inflicted death.

He pulls the trigger but the safety catch is on.

The sound of the door opening, Flynn looks up in awareness as Cord, hal, and Asa walk in

Now wildly pointing his pistol at them... Flynn stumbles backwards...

CORD

Put that gun down, Flynn.

FLYNN

What for? To go on living like them? To be ridiculed. To be insulted? Naw, I had enough, Cord. I've had all a man can stand.

In the background, townsfolk doing bank business look on.

CORD

Enough, now put that gun down.

FLYNN

Why? Are you afraid, Cord? Are you afraid to hear a dying man's confession? Of course you are afraid. You know why? I'll tell ya because the mark of Cain is on you'll heads too.

FLYNN

Tell them what you done, Cord. How you robbed that payroll on the stagecoach. Remember --

CORD

-- you're talking nonsense, get that gun away from him...

Suddenly Hal lunches, but Flynn doesn't aim it at him.

Instead, turns it on himself, and... A shot rings out!

Flynn's body clatters into view, falling to the floor, the smoking gun in his hand.

INT. BANK - FLYNN'S OFFICE - DAY

A solemn Mary examines Flynn's body, half his face is missing. She covers it with a blanket.

Duncan and Sunday look on. She puts her stethoscope away.

EXT. BANK - DAY

Gator and Henryetta come out, emotional, doing his best to keep it together, addresses the horrified crowd.

HENRYETTA

It's awful seeing a man kill himself. One minute he's there... alive... then he's dead. Blood and the smell of powder smoke. And it's all over and done with. It's awful!

GATOR

Ain't seen nuthin' like it.

Mary looks across the way a moment, sees Rivers heading towards the hotel. Everyone turns as glares at Rivers.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Mary enters. Their eyes meet and hold. The silent tension grows, seemingly to fill the room as if explosive gas.

Finally, Mary breaks the silence.

MARY

You knew it was going to happen, didn't you?

RIVERS

I wasn't surprised.

Rivers goes to the basin to wash her hands.

MARY

You are a killer! I'm surprised you bother to wash your hands. That kind of blood won't come off.

RIVERS

Aren't you a little careless with your words, Miss Mary? Yes, I kill when I have to.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS (CONT'D)

But I've never killed a man who
wasn't trying to kill me.

MARY

And that makes it all right.

RIVERS

I like you, Miss Mary. You're like
me. You and I may well be the only
two honest people in town.

MARY

Don't compare us. We've got
nothing in common.

RIVERS

Take two men. Say they have robbed
and lied, and have never paid. The
man whom one of them has robbed
comes to me and says, "Kill that
man who's robbed me." And I kill
him. The other man becomes ill and
would die, except for a physician
who returns him to health to rob
and lie again. Who's the villain
in this piece? Me or the
physician?

All the pent-up fury of Mary's baffled anger and wounded
pride overflows.

Rivers grabs her, kisses Mary. They struggle and Mary
kisses back, both swept up in their need and longing,
holding on for dear life.

Mary is scared yet thrilled at the same time.

MARY

They'll lynch us.

RIVERS

No one's lynching anybody.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

They make love as if their lives depended on it - -
passionate, intense, nothing held back.

Both fight hard to keep quiet so as not to disturb the
other guests. But failing miserably. Locked in a
struggle, its THAT personal -- as if any sound would be
an admission.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

They lie naked in bed -- together, yet alone. Rivers gets out of bed, her back and ass SLASHED TO RIBBONS by Bull Whip beatings.

Rivers lies back down. Mary traces the scars on Rivers body. Kisses them tenderly.

MARY

Do you think they heard us?

RIVERS

Who cares.

Rivers kisses her again. Mary returns it with equal passion and wants to give in to another round of passion.

MARY

You stand for everything I've always hated. Violence, bloodshed. You kill and I love you. I have from the first moment I met you. I can't help it. I knew you wanted me too.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Cord, Hal, and a few other townsfolk, seething in anger.

DUNCAN

Oh, I'll tell her you haven't been sleeping nights. That outta do it.

CORD

You got a cute answer for everything.

HAL

We've in acted us some laws, Jim --

Duncan takes the book from him and reads, then looks up -

DUNCAN

Why this is crazy, Hal. How so many fools can get together in one place, just pouring powder on a fire to put it out.

HAL

Well anyway, that's better than getting roasted one at a time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN

(reading...)

Forbidden guns in town. Extending
the town limits so I got to
protect all the farmers grass.

CORD

Afraid you can't make our laws
stick?

DUNCAN

Nobody could. Marshaling a town is
not like a doctor's practice. When
I start carving, my customers
fight back.

CORD

Maybe you picked your costumers
from the wrong side of the fence.

DUNCAN

Now I've kept this town safe up
'til Rivers got in town. And I'll
continues to do so my way.

HAL

Some of us got a notion that ain't
good enough.

DUNCAN

There's a middle road in anything.
That's the one I ride.

MARY

A man's burdens is his own sins.
You can't blame Rivers for that.

DUNCAN

Okay, Will, let's see how we make
out.

CORD

Jim, do what you have to do. I'll
make sure the town council backs
you up and make it official.

DUNCAN

Well it gives me an idea.

Mary borrows a bullet from Duncan's gun belt, then --

MARY

Have you'll ever really seen one
of these up close?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY (CONT'D)

Know what makes it work? This is the cap, the percussion cap. When struck by the firing pin, it explodes. The powder burns and forms powerful gases that force the slug out through the gun barrel at a very high velocity. Now if the gun is aimed right, it'll kill what it hits.

HAL

Now what's all that supposed to mean?

MARY

Rivers - this town is priming her. She's being pushed and sooner or later she's going to explode.

ASA

Now why are you telling us this? Where do I fit in?

MARY

Somewhere between the firing pin and the percussion cap.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

Rivers bounds down the stairs -- runs into Duncan and Sunday coming towards her.

A tense beat. Rivers studies his gun hand, a tremor or two. The tremors stop.

DUNCAN

I come to tell you to get out of town.

RIVERS

Why?

DUNCAN

New city ordinance. A public nuisance. Spittin' on a sidewalk.

RIVERS

I don't think so. I like it fine right here. Saloons, women, whiskey...No, I think I'll just have to enjoy the hospitality a little while longer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They go for their guns. In a blink of an eye --
Rivers draws, sees Duncan struggling to get his gun out.
She fires. Duncan's HAT FLIES OFF!

RIVERS

You've got two ways to move,
deputy. Run or take me!

On second thought, a terrified Sunday eases his gun back
in its holster.

Duncan seems surprised, lifts his hat, pokes a finger
through the smoking hole.

DUNCAN

Why didn't you kill me?

RIVERS

Your name's not on the bullet.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Duncan sits at his desk. Mary uses a cold compress on
the top of his head.

He runs a finger through the hole in his hat.

MARY

At least she ain't here for you.

Sunday pauses as he glances at Duncan.

DEPUTYSUNDAY

I've got a wife and a body, Jim.

DUNCAN

I understand. Go home, kid.

Sunday unpins his badge, promptly lays it on his desk.

DUNCAN

Hell, I'm half tempted to turn in
mine too. That idea has been
running through my head. And I'm
not a bit proud of it.

As he leaves... Henryetta hurries in, concerned.

HENRYETTA

You all right, Jim?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN

Oh sure, I got a new part in my hair, but I'm all right.

HENRYETTA

All she brought is fear and suspicion. Everybody's jumpy and distrustful. Flying off the handle, starting feuds. Somethin' got to be done, doc, and I don't know what it is.

DUNCAN

There's just the quick and the dead with Rivers in between. The jackals will inherit the Earth - at least this part of it - and they're welcome to it.

MARY

It's opium, Jim...for the pain.

DUNCAN

A quart of whiskey works just as well.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

Rivers strides up the boardwalk, when she sees Rebel and Yankee outside the hotel playing chess.

REBEL

I got a bullet in my chest from one of you Union men. Doctors said it missed my heart by a penny.

YANKEE

Wasn't me.

REBEL

How do I know that?

YANKEE

I wouldn't have missed.

Yankee's dead serious. Rebel chuckles.

A horse with spools of rope and a RIDER in a black coat canters up. He wears A PREACHER'S COLLAR. This is JUDGE DUTCH HENRY 'The Hangman' BROWN. A stern looking man in his forties.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Townsfolk nod respectfully to Dutch Henry, but he fixes his steely gaze on Rivers with a withering stare.

RIVERS

Well, if it isn't the honorable Judge Dutch Henry "the hangman" Brown, beloved chairman of the city council complete with his assortment of housebroken ringtail puppets.

DUTCH HENRY

You can't go around terrorizing the citizens.

RIVERS

Who's going to stop me. You?

DUTCH HENRY

The law, public opinion, decency. There will be troops here from Fort Machcua this time in two days.

RIVERS

I got a horse down at that livery stable, can outrun anything in the west.

Hal rushes over, tries to ease the tension.

HAL

Maybe it would be better if we just go about our business Judge. I'm sure she means no harm.

DUTCH HENRY

No harm in terrorizing a town? She spreads evil. She'll not only destroy us, she'll destroy the whole town.

RIVERS

You didn't expect a Sunday school outing when I showed up, did you?

He continues on towards the Marshal's office.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - JAILHOUSE - DAY

Dutch Henry curses bitterly as he crosses to Duncan who leads him towards the prisoner's cell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN

Stay out of it. I'll handle her.

DUTCH HENRY

I'm holding you responsible for this carnage -- and yes, the territory's compensation is more than adequate.

They turn towards Sam standing before them.

SAM

You're wasting a lot of good lumber. A tree does just as well.

DUTCH HENRY

You were sentenced to be hanged - not lynched!

He pulls out a piece of paper and pencil.

DUTCH HENRY

Now all I need from you, Sam Talbort, is your age, your height and your weight.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

THUNDER. A STORM brews in the distance.

The wind blows, and townspeople are gathered by the big tree, for a memorial service for Flynn.

Dutch Henry addresses the mourners, doesn't mince words.

DUTCH HENRY

The bible tells us that it is a grievous sin to die by one's own hand. For that alone, Flynn will never feel the closeness, love, and warmth of our Heavenly father. May the Lord have mercy upon his soul.

A beat, his remarks gives the townspeople pause, then--

TOWNSPEOPLE

Amen.

DUTCH HENRY

If anyone wishes to say something...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rivers trots up on her horse.

RIVERS

No one's proud of what happened to your banker, Dutchie.

DUTCH HENRY

It didn't happen to him. You did it to him.

RIVERS

I did nothing. A man's guilt is his own burden. Nothin' you can do about that.

With that, she spurs her horse and rides off.

INT. MARY'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

In the center of the table is the remnant of a hearty meal. Rivers finishes up. Mary, bending over with s plate of chicken, revealing ample cleavage.

MARY

Do you prefer the leg... or the breast?

RIVERS

I've had quite enough of both, thank you.

A beat, then -

RIVERS

You say he didn't have a chance. Muncy went for his gun first. When he does that, he uses up all his chances.

MARY

Tell me something...did you have to kill him? How about hittin' them in the arm?

RIVERS

A wounded man can still kill you.

MARY

You let Rex live.

RIVERS

He can't shoot with his left.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

And what about the marshal?

RIVERS

He would have been, but I felt in a charitable mood today.

MARY

He's got a bad hand, he just lost his deputy, and now he's losing his sight.

RIVERS

I notice he wears his guns too low. Tell him to raise it. At night, tell him to walk in the shadows - you can see better. In the daytime, walk away from the sun - he'll live longer.

This surprises Mary.

MARY

You're the most peculiar hired gun I've seen yet.

INT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

Packed. Music played. Men gamble. Whores are passed around. Rivers enters and takes it all in.

Cord and Hal and Asa and Poker play cards.

DUTCH HENRY

Black aces and eights.

CORD

Your luck's changed. Three queens. I'm afraid you lose judge.

DUTCH HENRY

A man's bound to lose - sooner or later.

Sierra saunters over, puts a hand of Dutch Henry's shoulder.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

From the look of that stack Judge there much be some truth to the old adage about gamblers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUTCH HENRY

Yea, what's that?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Lucky at card. Unlucky at love.

Rivers sits down at the table with them.

RIVERS

Please, gentlemen. Don't get up.

DUTCH HENRY

So what brings you here, besides interrupting my leisure time?

RIVERS

Judges interest me, too.

HAL

Don't give Rivers any excuses.

CORD

She's counting on you trying, Judge.

Rivers turns to Cord.

RIVERS

I don't think you two are savvy, you're about a second from gettin' dealt outta the game.

Rivers turns her attention back to Dutch Henry.

DUTCH HENRY

You and I are nothing alike. What I do is fair and legal according to the law.

RIVERS

And how I operate isn't?

DUTCH HENRY

You're wasting your time. All the men who wish me dead I hanged them.

RIVERS

Sometimes dead men leave ghost's behind.

Dutch Henry raises an eyebrow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DUTCH HENRY

You're a dangerous woman. You know how to kill and you're not afraid of dying. The moment I saw you I could see that you are lost, and pain and suffering follow where you lead.

RIVERS

Save the sermon for church.

DUTCH HENRY

In the end, I'll see that the law gets you. And it won't be just to run you out of town. It'll be at the end of a rope.

Dutch Henry pulls out a pencil and paper.

DUTCH HENRY

Your height, weight, and age is all I want from you.

Rivers studies him a long moment, then --

DUTCH HENRY

You want the reasons, fine. I need your age to tell me how long it will be before your heart stops beating. I need your height in order to know the position of the noose above the cervical vertebrae and whether to use 10 or 13 wraps in the knot. I need your weight in order to know the length of the drop. Too high and your head will be separated from your shoulders. And too short then I run the risk of a long strangulation, the worst possible type of execution. It's medieval and barbaric. So ladies and gentlemen, call me a fool, call me a liar, call me nothing at all. The facts remain the same.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

A customer enters the store, his hat pulled low hiding most of his face, that beard. It's John Wilcox.

He freezes when he sees Rivers about to leave.

Rivers knocks his hat off his head --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS
Show some respect.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Rivers comes out, her gaze tracks between: John's face and that limp.

Sensing her eyes on him, he glances back briefly, before Henryetta pulls the shade covering the window down.

Rivers moves to the door but Henryetta throws the 'Closed sign" up. She eyeballs Henryetta, gives her an easing but menacing smile.

Rivers' breath snared. It's him! She dashes around the back of the store -just in time to see --

John on horseback riding off, heading out of town.

EXT. TOWN OUTSKIRTS - DAY

Rivers BLOWS BY CAMERA. Sees John, far ahead. Spurs the horse, face contorted, a rictus of hate --

EXT. RUSTLER'S CANYON - DAY

As John rides fast into the forbidding canyon, leaving a trail of dust a half mile long behind him, which slow begins to clear to reveal...

Rivers reins in her horse, looks around. She has no idea where she is or where John went.

The wind picks up, kicking up dust, covering hoofprints.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN - DAY

Dutch Henry with his sleeves rolled up, inspects the gallows with a fine tooth and comb.

Not pleased one bit, as he confronts several townsfolk building it.

DUTCH HENRY
An expert is one who knows more
about less and less. I only know
one thing. That scaffold might do
for hanging laundry perhaps, but a
man, never.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A beat, he grabs a hammer and some nails.

DUTCH HENRY

Just as dead, Mr. Wiley, but not just as fast. To a man with a noose around his neck, a second could be a lifetime. And a minute can be an eternity. Now it is our job to make this execution just as professional, just as merciful as possible. Do I make myself clear?

DUTCH HENRY

Now bring some more lumber.

Rivers gallops up on her horse.

RIVERS

There's nothing like a good hanging to take your mind off your troubles.

DUTCH HENRY

He let another man's fury take the place of my reason. And that is the cardinal act of idiocy. No man could ever run away from trouble, any more than he can cut off his shadow and bury it.

RIVERS

I guess he figured he had reason to hate.

DUTCH HENRY

Hatred is a shield, a wall of fire to combat evil, a holocaust of Heaven to turn away the iron forks of Lucifer.

RIVERS

Pretty woman, the judge's got.

DUTCH HENRY

Why, you dirty...

He goes for his gun, but he's not wearing one.

RIVERS

Nothing scarier than a man with a gun. And nothing so helpless as a man without one.

Rivers spurs her horse and rides off...

EXT. THE SILVER SPUR - DAY

It is twilight. Fewer people move about. A lamplighter is at work; Mary's carriage approaches with a lanterns lit.

MARY

I'm the only doctor for eighty miles and he's a sick man. Got the pox.

RIVERS

This is dangerous country for a woman traveling at night.

MARY

Rivers, I appreciate your concern for my well bein', but as you may a noticed, I can take care of myself.

A beat, then -

MARY

S'pose you give me the pleasure of your company.

RIVERS

We'll take my horse.

The Preacher steps up to them,

PREACHER

You're missin' church.

MARY

It's not the first time.

EXT. RANCHERO - NIGHT

A *CRUDE SKULL AND CROSSBONES* has been painted on the front door the front door. The words *KEEP AWAY!* and *SICKNESS!* Painted below it.

Rivers helps Mary down off the horse.

MARY

It's best you not go inside, there's a good chance you don't come out.

RIVERS

I reckon you could burn the place down, put him out of his misery.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

That your answer to everything?

A horse whinnies in a paddock.

INT. RANCHERO - NIGHT

A nervous John Wilcox, limps across the room, grabs his *.36 caliber Griswold and Gunnison Confederate six shooter* and tucks it in his pants.

JOHN WILCOX

What the devil, Doc? What's she doing with you?

MARY

It's not safe for a woman to be travelling way out here at night.

He eases himself in a chair, pushes back the curtains, watching Rivers.

Mary examines him, dips a towel in a bucket of water, and dabs it over his face, the sores have cleared up some.

JOHN WILCOX

Now she knows where am at.

MARY

If it'll make you feel better Rivers is not vaccinated -- so I'll leave the sign up.

EXT. RANCHERO - NIGHT

Rivers sees John, well not a good look, his pistol in hand, peeking out the curtains.

MARY

I suppose you know why he's locked up there, don't you?

RIVERS

He's afraid of me.

MARY

Should he be?

RIVERS

Who is he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

John Wilcox.

Rivers recognizes the name but maintains her poker face. She swings Mary up in front of her saddle. They start away.

RIVERS

I know knowing about the man
except he's a coward.

EXT. FORSAKEN RUN STREET - NIGHT

Streets empty. Ominous. Just then an angry mob exits the MCLYNTOCK'S LAND OFFICE, head towards the jailhouse.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Duncan writes in a diary.

The Preacher, and IRATE CITIZENS BURST INTO THE OFFICE. Some with guns, embolden by alcohol.

All of them panicked. Duncan tries to establish order.

DUNCAN

Let's all keep calm, and talk
about this like civilized folks.

PREACHER

The wrath of the Lord must move
through his servants. Evil has
come to us and it must be driven
out.

DUNCAN

Crowds can get unruly, Preacher.
Our common problem is a matter for
the law.

CORD

Since you've seen fit to neglect
your duties. We've taken it upon
ourselves.

DUNCAN

With guns? Look at ya, this is
that liquored courage talking. You
gonna get this folks killed.

(then)

Rivers will take plenty.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN (CONT'D)

One thing I know for sure. We're not vigilantes!

DUNCAN

Like anyone else as long as she doesn't commit no crime she's entitled to the same rights as all of you. And she's committed no crime. These are the rules set forth in a civilized west. And like wise, if she gives me a reason to treat her as a criminal than I will. But she's not going to be shot down or strung up just because this town is afraid of her.

Hal push through the crowd, *just a dog-step behind him* --

TEX LAREDO, JEP KESLER, DOOLEN CAIN, and RUBE MAMERUN. Long COATS, bowler hats, six shooters. Operatives from the famous PINKERTONS Detective Agency:

These are not law-abiding men.

HAL

Gentlemen, I just deputized this Pinkerton boys. Just to see her out of town pronto.

DUNCAN

You hired killers to get a killer?

CORD

(lying)
Jim, I don't like it any more than you do, but what's the alternative?

HAL

Jim, we're down arguing. It's up to them now to handle this.

EXT. MARY'S HOME/OFFICE - NIGHT

Tex Laredo and his henchmen are dismounting. At a hand signal from Tex Laredo, they fan out a foot.

In the b.g., the mob hangs back, some carrying torches.

INT. MARY'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rivers and Mary sit in warm water and suds in a nice bathtub. Mary leans back into Rivers.

Mary takes a sponge and washes her legs seductively.

Rivers RISES, soapsuds clinging to her body. Mesmerized, Mary watches her step out of the tub-- her back and ass

SLASHED TO RIBBONS by Bull Whip beatings.

MARY

What happened?

A POUNDING on front door. Both trade nervous glances.

Mary climbs out too, peeks out the window sees the ANGRY MOB outside her home. Alarmed. Rivers joins her.

RIVERS

A posse feels safe because it's big. They only make a big target. I can pick off a handful The rest of them will lose their guts and go home.

MARY

Stay in bed. Doctor's orders.

Our near-naked Mary in her sheer peignoir, shrugs on a silk robe, quickly brushes her hair with dubious results.

EXT. MARY'S HOME - NIGHT

Mary opens the door and steps on the porch, SEEING the lynch mob out front. Lit torches in hand.

MARY

What can I do for you.

TEXLAREDO

That depends. I hear that Rivers is in there with you.

MARY

Word travels fast.

TEXLAREDO

You didn't expect to keep a thing like that quiet, did you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

No one was trying to. That any of your business?

JEPKESLER

You get in our way you're liable to find out.

TEXLAREDO

Go easy, Jep. No reason why we can't do this peacefully.

(then)

Now just turn Rivers over to us and we'll be on our way.

MARY

Do the marshal know about this?

JEPKESLER

He will after we hang her.

MARY

Well in that case, you better start riding.

TEXLAREDO

Don't play no games with me Doc, you start protecting a killer and you're liable to hang on a rope yourself.

MARY

She really got you sweatin, hasn't she? It couldn't be you're afraid she's after you.

JEPKESLER

Look, were through talkin'

Finally, Rivers emerges, wearing absolutely nothing but a Mexican poncho, and her guns. Our *own little Raquel Welch moment in HANNIE CAULDER.*

RIVERS

If you harm one hair on her head. You'll have to play high cards win to see who I kill first.

TEXLAREDO

I'm ordering you out of town.

RIVERS

You gettin' tired of living?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JEPKESLER

We're the law now.

Rivers sees their tin stars on their coats.

TEXLAREDO

There's enough guns behind me to take care of you. So it's best you know what's you're dealin' with. This here is Rube Mamerock, even half drunk he's the fastest gun around here. Jep Kesler. He derives pleasure out of hurting people... And Doolen, he's deadlier than a rattlesnake.

Rivers walks right up to Tex Laredo.

RIVERS

I sure wish you'd draw those guns instead of shootin' off at the mouth.

Lightning fast - Tex Laredo draws, Rivers snags his hand, twists it, wrapping his arm backward around her waist. With him still gripping his revolver,

She FANS THE HAMMER as she turns, shooting the Pinkerton boys as they try and rush her.

With a final yank, Rivers pulls the pistol from Tex Laredo's hand and crashes it down on his skull

RIVERS

Give my regards to those below.

Rivers draws her LeMat Revolver(a nine shooter cylinder by the way) it's 20 gauge BUCKSHOT barrel and BLASTS Tex Laredo to kingdom com.

Rivers comes towards the angry mob, who steps back.

RIVERS

This is a rotten town with a lot of rotten people in it.

They all just stare back at her, terrified.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RIVERS

You surprise me, preacher. I expected the other's to run with the wolves, but you -- a man of cloth, using your pulpit to teach the wrath of God - hell and damnation, the vengeance of the Lord. You took an oath to teach folks to love God and to cherish his words to face evil and rise about it. Why, you're no better than me. There's gotta be a special place in hell for one's like you.

Preachers says nothing. The men glances about, then...

RIVERS

Though I can't say I'm surprised to see you in the pack, Asa. You could be more accurate.

ASA

I print the truth as I see it.

RIVERS

Now that's where you're wrong. A newspaper is a voice and you raised that voice against that kid and hammered away and made the town think he was guilty even before a trial. That town lynched an innocent boy. So one word out of you and you're seconds from being nothing but an obituary notice in your own paper!

A COLLECTIVE GASP! This visibly discomforts Asa.

RIVERS

Now there are many of you! I can hit a lot more of you before I go down. But it's only fair to warn you that I'll kill you, Asa, Hal, Cord, preacher, and a few more of you.

A beat, then -

RIVERS

I'll stay here until I'm ready to leave. Now I warn you: If you come against me again, much blood will be spilled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

A beat, Rivers heads back inside.

Duncan shakes his head, then, turns to the others-

DUNCAN

The meeting's over. Now go on home.

INT. DOC HALLADAY'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Rivers takes in the room, examines her wardrobe, singles out a low-cut saloon girl dress, the only one.

RIVERS

You use to be a saloon girl?

Mary's SILHOUETTE behind a wardrobe screen. She's in the midst of changing clothes, it's hot. Pokes her head out.

MARY

I was no slut.

A beat, then -

MARY

I'm from a lot of places. I spent the first fifteen years of my life going from one dirty town to the next. My father was a hide hunter. After so many years and too many bottles who couldn't tell a Buffalo from a wild bore. Oh I'm not trying to give you this with a piano. You asked and I'm telling you.

Mary comes out in a blouse and skirt, steps into her heels.

MARY

You know Rivers you're a special case. I never known a gun to wear a woman before.

A silent moment. Mary looks away, then at Rivers. She lowers her eyes.

MARY

I don't know how I got the idea in my pretty little head that you could chnage. You wouldn't last long without those guns, Rivers.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY (CONT'D)

Even if you want to throw your gun away, you can't, you'll always be looking over your shoulder because you know that just around the bend there's someone that will kill you. You're branded clean to the bone.

Rivers suddenly pulls Mary into her for a passionately romantic kiss, leaving Mary breathless...

Mary finally breaks the kiss, then--

MARY

Get out.

Mary grabs her gun belt and hat and hands it to Rivers.

MARY

I said -leave.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Consumed with guilt and self disgust, Duncan kicks over a chair. Pulls a bottle of whiskey and a glass from a drawer, sits down at the desk.

He pours himself a full one and drinks it down, then pours another. He barely looks up as Mary comes in.

MARY

You fall off the wagon already?

DUNCAN

I was more mad at myself than anything for letting it get this far.

MARY

You're a good man, Jim Duncan. You've done a good job with this town.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

In the gray afternoon, Rivers and Sierra have just finished having sex, good sex, too. Sierra draws on thin black cigarette.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Through grieving?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIVERS

This room is private.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

It is, isn't it.

RIVERS

Look, Sierra, we've been through for a longtime. The fires out. Nothing left but ashes.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Blow on them. Funerals do something to me, I look at that long black coffin and I think about clocks. They just keep ticking, the hands keep moving, nothing can hold them back.

(then)

Did you even consider how many minutes we waste. How many opportunities we pass up.

RIVERS

I'll remind Mary.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Well, you must be in love with her. I've never figured you to go much for barnyard hens. I thought you like your chicks wild and gamey.

RIVERS

Like it never was with us.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

Are you sure? I remember when you started with me. It was all roses, conversation and blank verse. Of course it didn't last once the stove was lit, why don't you face it you could never love anyone else but yourself. You're looking in the mirror, can't you see it, you're all flash, an empty bottle with so many cracks in it, that it'll never hold holy water, But it'll hold whiskey. Why don't you forget the little princess and come back to the common heard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RIVERS

The only thing you find in a heard
is cows. Quantrill, you really
joined with that murderer.

EXT. THE BADLANDS - DAY

The sun is beating down....

Rivers rides up into the hills, finds a spot and
dismounts.

She reaches into her saddle bag, pulls out some
binoculars and glasses the Rancho.

John Wilcox is silhouetted by the sun, chops wood with an
axe. He limps

She takes a moment to observe him and the area:

INT. SIERRA'S SUITE - DAY

Sierra shuts the door, stands there a moment, thinking.
She looks at the clock. She comes to a decision, then
saunters hurriedly to her BEDROOM.

PAN WITH HER, reflected in her dresser mirror, we can see
her beginning to change clothes.

Another door opens and Donna Juanita hurries in, stands
silently. Sierra glances at Donna Juanita, who smiles
thinly back.

SIERRA NEVADA ROSE

I'm sorry, get out to the
Rancho.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Sierra lets herself in with the key, starts rummaging
through drawers, while Poker looks on. The drawers are
mostly empty.

A beat, Sierra looks under a pillow and sees a Deringer,
this is no ordinary Deringer, *it's Booth's Deringer, ok a
replica of the one he used to kill Lincoln.*

POKERFLATS

It's just an ordinary Deringer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Look again.

POKERFLATS

Hmm a presentation model.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

That's right. .44 caliber pistol.
A duplicate of the one Booth used
to kill Lincoln. They don't make
them anymore.

Sierra checks the load,

SIERRANEVADAROSE

One round to. She's probably going
for a head shot.

POKERFLATS

She's more old testament than new
testament. An eye for an eye.

INT. MCLYNTOCK'S LAND OFFICE - DAY

Hal and Asa has entered in silence, Cord sits himself in
a chair. Asa does not look at him; his face, hard now,
looks straight at them.

ASA

No need to get your blood in a
boil, Cord. Just because your
woman pays a call on an old
friend.

CORD

Old friend?

ASA

That news to you. Imagine a smart
operator like you missing out on a
fact like that. They've been
hitched a longtime ever since New
Orleans.

INT. HOTEL - LOBBY - DAY

Gator is strumming his guitar as Cord strides in.
A nervous Gator looks up.

CORD

What room is Sierra in?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GATOR

She said she'd shoot me if I told.

Suddenly - a DERRINGER POPS into Cord's hand from a metal sliding apparatus concealed under his jacket sleeve.

CORD

I'll shoot you! Now is she with Rivers?!

He makes eye contact with Sierra, coming down the stairs, who registers surprise and suspicion at Cord's presence.

Off Cord's glare, Sierra regards him with equal contempt.

INT. SIERRA NEVADA ROSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Cord is pacing up and down as Sierra enters quietly. Cord promptly confronts her.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Do you make it a habit of spying on people?

CORD

No, but I got a habit of observing people. I'd like to know how we stand.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Same way we always stood.

CORD

That's not good enough.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

What's wrong with it?

CORD

I seen too many men work themselves to death for an ambitious woman.

Now Sierra in pain because Cord is twisting her arm behind her back. He's furious.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Don't you want to know what i found out?

CORD

Maybe you hired her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRANEVADAROSE

You know, for a smart man you ain't got a lick of sense! Not a speck!

CORD

Ah, I'm bein' foolish, huh?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

You're too suspicious.

CORD

We've a right to be suspicious. Our share keeps getting smaller and smaller; first thing you know they'll deal us out completely.

He backs right into a pistol pointed at the back of his head. Held by Poker.

POKERFLATS

Release the Rose of Rio Bravo. Please.

Cord, startled, to see Poker there. He complies.

CORD

Rio Bravo?

POKERFLATS

Mexican's name the Rio Grande below the border. She drove thousands of cattle across the Bravo and rifles for the Confederates, while custom officials slept. Or thanks to her charms looked the other way.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Someone seems to have gotten out of the wrong side of the bed this mornin'. Lets drink to his recovery.

Cord stares at her, trying to process this.

Sierra grabs glasses and a decanter. She pours drinks.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

You don't know what I did in the war. I've been an outlaw. I fought, I lied, I cheated.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SIERRANEVADAROSE (CONT'D)

I rolled around in the hay with men just because I hated them so they'd talk. Yes I was willing to do anything to help us fight them damn Yankees.

Sierra, a subtle manipulator, hesitates before moving on,

SIERRANEVADAROSE

When Quantrill's gang had broken up, most of his men was scattered up, but not all of them. A few of us decided to stay together. I put together a rag tag group of soldiers after the war. General Beauregard's bushwhackers. We've been riding and raiding ever since.

CORD

The war has been over for sometime --

SIERRANEVADAROSE

--We still got scores to settle with you damn Yankees.

CORD

We were going to take the ranchers share back to them. That's not the way we planned it. We were going to take your share, Ben's share and that all.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

Of course, and we were going to be very cunning and sly, a little trickery here, a small deceit there then we ride off together and live happily everafter, but it didn't work out that way, a little trickery needed a bigger trick. My husband seen to that when he wouldn't let that cattle go except over his dead body.

Now it's Cord's turn to look surprised - didn't expect Sierra to admit it.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

When you start playing cards with the devil, Cord, there's no limit.

EXT. BADLANDS - DAY

On horseback, Sierra in riding pants, rides hard.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

With Gator, who sits behind the desk, strumming on a guitar, as Rivers approaches at a fast clip with her saddlebag and rifles.

RIVERS
I'm checking out.

She tosses several silver dollars on the counter.

RIVERS
Keep the change.

INT. MARSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Gator burst through the door...

GATOR
Jim, she's leavin'. Just checked out now.

DUNCAN
That right?

GATOR
Yep. I guess she was passing through. Just like you said.

MARY
Unless it was someone not in town.

DUNCAN
Like who?

MARY
John Wilcox.

DUNCAN
Doc, how much to you know about him?

MARY
A quiet man, usually keeps to himself. Sort of a recluse. But he flew off the handle when he read Rivers was in town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN

Can't say I blame him.

GATOR

I wonder why?

MARY

A few months back he came down with yellow fever so I kept him in my office to watch him closely. He'd read Shakespeare. He fell asleep with it, so I went to put it aside. This article fell out. I didn't think much about it at the time. I thought it was odd he'd keep something like that.

DUNCAN

Do you remember the article?

MARY

Something about Lincoln's murder.

EXT. BACK OF THE MARSHAL'S OFFICE - DAY

The crowd gathers...

Sam is marched up the stairs of the gallows toward the waiting Judge Dutch Henry Brown.

Sam is at the platform. His hands are tied in front of him. The noose is placed on his neck.

Judge Dutch Henry Brown grabs a black hood. Sam laughs at the absurdity.

SAM

The suns setting for me. It'd be a shame to miss it.

Sam spits out his tobacco. Judge Dutch Henry takes the lever...

The CROWD, sensing something, easing back from the gallows as Rivers rides up.

Her and Judge Dutch Henry make eye contact --

INT. EPITAPH - DAY

They all bust in...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUNCAN

Asa, I need to see your old files.

ASA

Any special year?

MUNCY

Eighteen sixty-five. Anything on Lincoln's assassination.

ASA

Oh, any particular reason?

DUNCAN

That remains to be seen.

Asa checks dates on some binders and takes out the one he's looking for.

They search through articles come across a big headline:
'LINCOLN'S MURDER.'

MARY

That one?

ASA

Same old lies. Listen to this. Report of death of John Wilkes Booth. April 24, eighteen sixty-five. Reports have been received of the assassination of President Lincoln...John Wilkes Booth was killed last night at Garrett's farm near Port Royal Virginia.

DUNCAN

I remember reading this report when I was Sheriff of Deadwood. It was thirteen days of the greatest manhunt in the nation's history.

ASA

(reading)

Booth and two armed accomplices took refuge in a barn where federal agents ignited after vainly calling on the assassin to surrender. Booth permitted his villainous accomplices to surrender then either shot himself or was wounded by one of the men surrounded the conflagration. The circumstances are not definitely ascertained.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ASA (CONT'D)

He died several hours later. According to reputed eyewitnesses his last words were useless. By an odd coincidence the location of the fatal wound was identical to the martyred President's. The man that was captured at Garretts barn was never proven to be Booth. To this day the authorities haven't revealed where the body was buried.

MARY

Why not?

ASA

Because the whole thing was trumped up by men hand and glove with Booth and his gang. Men in high places. Still in power.

DUNCAN

Northerners?

ASA

In cohorts with the leaders of the Confederacy. Abraham Lincoln's murder was a treacherous conspiracy to rob us of the fruits of victory. Why was he left unguarded? Why was the telegraph shut off? By official order. And the Potomac bridge. The only bridge by which he could escape. Why was it left open that far side of Garrett's barn? The trial of his accomplices a secret. And they were young with hoods over their heads and a gag in their mouths.

MARY

And Booth?

ASA

Still alive. There's been reports of him from Texas to California. Places in Boston.

DUTCHHENRY

Wilcox? I believe you said his first name was John.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GATOR

He limps. The assassin caught one of his spurs on one of the flags draped over the President's box when he jumped from it to the stage at Ford's theatre. Broke his darn leg. Dr. Mudd was sent to prison for setting it. He testified he'd be maimed for life.

MARY

No, if you knew the kinda person he is...

ASA

I know he was a man of the theatre, did some acting back east. Boston I believe. This clipping he apparently keeps. Got to admit, the name's similar to John Wilkes Booth. What more do you want?

GATOR

If he was the one she's after why did she wait all this time?

MARY

She didn't know where he was until now.

JUDGEDUTCHHENRY

Why, if this man is Booth, this would start a Civil war right here in Forsaken Run. The Yankees will want to lynch him and the Rebels would fight to the death to protect him.

MARY

Jim, doctors take an oath, as well as Sheriff's. And there's a reason for both. One has to do with saving lives - no matter what I think about a person. That's why I told her he has the 'pox.

A beat, then --

MARY

The other binds you to uphold the law, by due process.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARY (CONT'D)

To protect an accused man against illegal violence no matter what you think of him. It's a principle that's more important than that man. You can't let Rivers kill him. He deserves a fair trial.

EXT. RANCHERO - DAY

Sierra rides up to Rancho. She remains on her horse and looks around. She looks at the cactus, some hills in the short distance. Makes sure she's alone.

Satisfied, she gets off his horse.

Sierra ignores the small-pox sign, walks right up to the door and saunters.....

INT. RANCHERO - DAY

John reads as Sierra hurries in.

Poker Flats kicks back in a chair, reaches into his pocket and retrieves a tin of tobacco. He pinches a wad.

JOHN WILCOX

You got any guerilla's leftover?

SIERRANEVADAROSE

A few. This town is full of Yankees.

(then)

But in case she gets through -- your ace in a hole.

Sierra tosses that holster on a table with a heavy sound and lots of sawdust. Poker Flats coughs up a storm.

POKERFLATS

Damn it, Sierra. You tryin' to kill me?

JOHN WILCOX

I do pretty good with mine.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

She'll have you dead to rights.

JOHN WILCOX

You wanna bet?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRANEVADAROSE

I never bet on a sure thing.

POKERFLATS

I'd give ten to one... and I don't even like your chances, but I'm a sucker for the odds.

She throws on the gun belt, swivels the holster to a 90 degree angle -- fires -- the slugs RICOCHET off a wall.

It startles Poker and John. The smoking gun primed, levelled, and still in its holster.

POKERFLATS

Dang all the luck. A swivel holster. Yep, your odds just went up.

She takes it off, hands it at him. Notes his hesitation.

SIERRANEVADAROSE

You've been nothing but a dirty cheat your whole life. At cards, death, and on me. Now put it on!

Finally John Wilcox puts it on, adjust the belt.

EXT. RUSTLERS CANYON - DAY

Rivers rides fast alone into the forbidding canyon.

Then pulls up, thinking. A beat. She kicks her horse into motion up the left canyon wall --

A long moment passes before Poker cantos in the canyon, watching Rivers. A SAWEDOFF SHOTGUN across his lap.

EXT. FOOTHILLS - DAY

A few buttes and brush through out.

Rivers rides the trail leading towards the Rancho.

Undaunted by Five of Sierra's BUSHWHACKER on horseback in ratty confederate uniforms, closing off the road ahead.

A FUSILLADE OF SHOTS as the Bushwhackers fire on Rivers as she charges towards them, low in the saddle-- firing her LeMat revolver --

-- dropping two of them before --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A GUNSHOT hits nearby. Rivers turns and jumps.

Rivers rolls, getting to one knee and BLASTING. One man goes down. She swings the gun right, and the uncanny way she can aim and hit dead-on.

She fires and a another Bushwhacker goes down.

Now she fires at the final Bushwhacker, and misses --

-- but his horse nosedives and he topples off, coming to an unarmed, and painful landing several feet from Rivers.

Rivers shoots him dead.

In the brush, two BUSHWHACKERS rush Rivers from behind. They raise their Confederate pistols...

we hear a SHOTGUN BLAST.

Both Bushwhackers are blown to bits by ONE DOUBLE-BARRELED SHOTGUN BLAST.

Rivers turns to see Poker holding a smoking shotgun.

RIVERS

You're quite a tracker, Poker. You been in the military?

POKERFLATS

I've done my time.

EXT. RUSTLERS CANYON - DAY

A bad bit of road. A back road.

Mary fast, handling the reins expertly, despite showing the effects of the rough ride.

EXT. RANCHERO - DAY

Rivers rides up, dismounts, hitching her horse.

She doesn't seem to be in a hurry, as she is careful to navigate around the Rancho.

Seems surprised there's little resistance.

INT. RANCHERO - DAY

John is looking out the window - catches sight of Rivers running across the front property.

He raises his rifle and fires.

EXT. RANCHERO - DAY

Rivers hunkers down behind sandbags, reloads her pistol.

INT. RANCHERO - DAY

Rivers returns fire chews up the wall around John, a GLASS CABINET SMASHING down on him.

John crawls to another window and peers out--but has to duck as more bullets pepper the wood above his head.

Again he weasels to the window and looks out.

Rivers' and running towards the back of the Rancho.

EXT. RANCHERO - DAY

In back, Rivers kicks open the door. Walks inside with her pistol drawn. Nothing.

INT. RANCHERO - DAY

Rivers stalks in, finds John as he throws his rifle away.

A beat, she scans for possible bushwhackers. Satisfied, holsters her pistol.

JOHN WILCOX

If I were the fugitive you clam me to be would I call myself John Wilbert. A name so similar to the other? Or would had been wiser for a desperate hunted man to assume a name completely different.

RIVERS

Pride. Vanity. The very vicarious contempt of the criminal. Does that answer your question?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SIERRANEVADAROSE

We've all heard the rumors before about Booth being alive. But we've also heard talk about marshal Nay upon. And what about the fountain of youth..they've Been looking for it for a long time and I don't think they've found it.

RIVERS

Explain that limp?

JOHN WILCOX

Congenital defect, childhood accident. I could give you many explanations but I'm sure you wouldn't accept any of them. What leg did he limp on?

RIVERS

Your right foot.

A beat, then --

RIVERS

You can't shoot your way out of this one.

In one fluid motion John swivels his holster, but Rivers shoots at John, dropping him to his knee -

Rivers wheels around in time to hear the rifle shot as the bullet bites her in the shoulder -

Mary pointing a rifle dead at Rivers, still smoking.

EXT. RANCHERO - DAY

Duncan, Dutch Henry, and a few others pulls up in a hurry.

Rivers comes out, favoring her shoulder, shirt soaked red. Escorting John. Mary tends to Rivers shoulder.

MARY

She didn't kill him, Jim.

RIVERS

Tell 'em.

JOHN WILCOX

I'm John Wilkes Booth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUTCH HENRY

I wouldn't have believed it if I
hadn't seen it myself.

She hands him over to Duncan, then turns to Dutch Henry.

RIVERS

You can hang him.

INT. MARY'S OFFICE - DAY

Rivers lies on the bed, sweaty, feverish. Mary lays down
a bowl of hot water and towels.

RIVERS

Nicely shootin'.

MARY

Doctoring you was a waste of time
a bullet will get you eventually.

RIVERS

Maybe, but luckily for me you were
around.

Mary inserts a finger into her bullet wound, as Rivers
arches away from Mary in pain.

She grabs her medical bag, uncaps a bottle and packs
Rivers' wound with gunpowder.

MARY

I can give you something for the
pain. Or a shot of whisky.

Rivers declines. Mary hands her a bullet.

MARY

Then bite on this if it tinkles.

Rivers bites a bullet.

Mary strikes a match and we briefly see Mary's face
before she lights the wound on fire. Rivers upright.

INT. MARY'S OFFICE - DAY

Mary washes her bloody hands and forearms in a porcelain
bowl. She pulls a towel from a peg, turns to Duncan.

DUNCAN

Will she make it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARY

You can toss a coin.

MARY

The bullet was too close to her heart. Couldn't get at. I gave her a shot of morphine. It deadens pain, makes the patient feel fine, but as soon as this dose wears off, she's going to start coughing. Each cough's going to rip the lungs a little bit more.

DUNCAN

Did you tell her?

MARY

I didn't have to.

As Duncan leaves,

Rivers comes out, fresh new shirt, laboring her shoulder, but her arms is not in a sling.

RIVERS

I reckon God ain't wantin' me much, Doc, but when I look at you, I feel I've been ridin' the wrong trail.

Mary kisses Rivers in a passionate good-bye.

EXT. MARY'S OFFICE - DAY

Rivers comes out, still favoring her wounded shoulder.

She mounts her horse with a bit of difficulty. Then turns to them.

RIVERS

A lot of people would like to kill Denver Rivers. But it took a healer with courage to make it easy for them.

MARY

Rivers... I'm sorry I wished I could have done more for that shoulder.

RIVERS

Don't worry none, Doc. It all comes to a finish.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With that, Rivers wheels her horse around, rides off...

TOWARDS A SETTING SUN...