

INK AND IRON

Written by

Cody Drake

224 W 4th St, Oswego NY
(413)244-8959

Ink and Iron Act I Last Draft	1
Ink and Iron Act II Full	29

ACT I

FADE IN:

INT./EXT. CITY BUS - LATE AFTERNOON

The bus departs from a bus stop, rain pelting the right side as it speeds up to the next intersection.

The bus is filled to standing-room capacity with people. A woman sits toward the front of the bus, talking on the phone.

WOMAN ON THE PHONE (SITTING)

I thought the rain was supposed to stop this morning!... I checked it when I got on the bus, it says it's gonna rain all day now.... Well, can you try and take an extended lunch or something? I need my umbrella.

Two men stand towards the back of the bus, talking louder than most of the other conversations happening.

MAN IN SHORTS (STANDING)

Dude, I swear on my life I'm not lying.

MAN WITH DURAG (STANDING)

I don't believe you though, man. C'mon, be for real.

MAN IN SHORTS

I'm for real, I'm for real. This skinny clown walks up with an old wooden bat and *clobbers* the ball, I dunno, 100? 150 feet over the fence?

MAN WITH DURAG

I'll believe it when I see it, man. He better be there tomorrow.

A mid-20s man, RIAN, peers out the window on the right side of the bus, watching drops of rain race down the glass. His earbuds tune out the conversations around him, replacing it with music by 'That Handsome Devil.'

Rian wears a black hoodie, light-washed ripped jeans, and skate sneakers.

The sky is a dark grey, and visibility out the window is poor due to the rain.

Rian's phone buzzes in his hand, and he sees an email notification from an online book-publishing site. The notification reads 'You've been paid!' Rian taps it, opening an e-reader app. It displays his book, titled 'The Mute Rider: Gunslinger's Gospel (Part 1)' with a total reader count of 23.

Rian closes that app and opens his bank account, displaying '\$18.84' in his checking account and an empty savings account.

Rian's phone dies, he puts it away, removes his earbuds, and looks back out the window.

INT. CITY BUS - LATE AFTERNOON

The bus stops in front of a run-down, three-story apartment building.

Rian picks up his backpack, stands up, pushes through the two men and steps off the bus.

EXT. RIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

Streetlights start turning on as Rian enters the apartment building.

INT. RIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING (VESTIBULE) - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian pauses in the apartment's vestibule to shake some of the rain off and looks towards the front desk. He notices a young (early 20's) attractive woman staring at her phone behind the desk.

Rian sighs and pulls his sweatshirt hood over his head and down his face as much as possible.

INT. RIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING (MAIN HALL) - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian tries walking past her quickly but she looks up from her phone right as he passes the front desk.

FRONT DESK ATTENDANT

Hey Rian! Hope your evening's going well!

RIAN
(Quickens his pace and
lowers his head slightly)
Hey, thanks.

Rian walks past the elevators, both of which have bright yellow 'OUT OF ORDER' signs. He enters the staircase.

INT. RIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING (STAIRWAY) - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian climbs three flights of stairs, exiting on the top floor.

INT. RIAN'S APARTMENT BUILDING (HALLWAY) - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian walks past three apartments. Muffled yelling can be heard through the first apartment door, whose '#351' label dangling by one screw.

Music can be heard from the second door, which is missing it's door number entirely.

As Rian passes the third apartment, the light bulb above him flickers and dies with a pop. A loud moan can be heard through the third apartment's door, with the paint rubbed cleanly off the door number's metal frame.

Rian finally reaches his apartment, Apartment #354. He pulls a set of three keys from his belt loop. The keys are each a different bright color, and Rian picks the bright orange key and inserts it into the lock.

INT. RIAN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Rian turns the key and forcefully pushes the door. He has to push against it with his shoulder before it gives and he walks into his cluttered studio apartment.

The floor of the apartment is littered with crumpled papers. Stacks of overdue library books and a pile of old, waterlogged Young Adult western novels from his childhood sit on the coffee table in front of the couch. A few art pieces dot the walls, mostly simple western landscapes portraits, with a couple movie posters.

Rian starts emptying his pockets, throwing his phone and keys onto the couch from the doorway. He begins to remove a joint and lighter from his pocket, but slides them back in. He walks into the kitchenette and opens a cabinet in the kitchenette.

The cupboard is empty save for a near-empty sleeve of saltine crackers and a cup of instant ramen noodles. Rian grabs the ramen.

Rian fills the ramen cup with water and puts it in the microwave. He struggles with the buttons on the microwave, none of them are working.

As Rian finally gets the microwave to start, his cell phone rings from across the room. He turns around to go get his phone as the microwave sparks and shorts out. Frustrated, Rian faces the microwave again and slaps the side, which creates another spark. Before he can turn back towards the couch, the microwave sparks and then explodes in his face, knocking him across the room and unconscious.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (CLEARING) - NOON

Rian stirs slightly, rolling over in the grass. His left hand clenches a few blades and pulls them from the ground. He lifts them to his face and looks at them briefly, then jerks up to a sitting position. He doesn't recognize where he is.

A mile ahead of Rian sits the tree line to a small forest.

On either side of Rian are rolling hills, fields of yellow/green grass cut by dirt paths.

Behind Rian lies a small town, sitting in a dip between the hills. The town is cut off from Rian's view behind the crest of the hill.

Rian stands up and brushes dried grass and dirt from his clothes. He pats his pockets, noticing his front left pocket and back right pocket have their normal items in them before continuing on towards the woods.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (DIRT PATH TO WOODS) - NOON

Rian finds a small dirt path headed towards the woods and begins following it.

RIAN

Where the hell am I?

Rian continues down the road, looking around for any signs of where he is. He moves aside to allow a man on horseback to pass him on the road.

MAN ON HORSEBACK

Howdy.

RIAN

Hey, could you tell me where I am?

MAN ON HORSEBACK

(without slowing his gait)

Well sir, it looks to me like you're in a field, but you can find Deepshade a couple miles this way.

RIAN

(to the man on horseback)

Oh, okay, thanks.

(to himself)

What the hell is Deepshade?

Rian turns around to follow the man on horseback towards Deepshade. He notices a small herd of deer to his left. The deer stop grazing and spot Rian, fleeing at first parallel to the tree line, then sharply turning into the forest.

As Rian watches the deer, he hears a gunshot from the direction of the woods. He looks and sees a Mexican man on horseback fleeing from a group of men on their horses. Faint yelling can be heard, interrupted occasionally by more gunshots.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (TREE LINE) - NIGHT

Legendary outlaw JOSE "THE MULE" BLANCO rides as fast as he can alongside a man in black. The man in black's face is covered by a bandana from the nose down.

The two men are chasing a group of three Pinkertons around the tree line. Jose fires a shot and one of the Pinkertons collapses, falling off his horse onto the ground.

JOSE

Haha, yeah! Got one of the bastards!

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (DIRT PATH TO WOODS) - NOON

Rian sees Jose disappear into the tree line and the pursuers follow him. Slowly, the yelling and gunshots fade.

After about 30 seconds, Jose emerges on foot, leading his horse behind him. Rian walks towards Jose.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (TREE LINE) - NOON

Rian approaches Jose, pushing through tall grass and stumbling slightly. Jose hears him fall and turns around, hand on the revolver at his hip.

JOSE

You're either very brave or very stupid, standing out here unarmed.

RIAN

(struggling to stand up)
More confused than anything. What's going on?

JOSE

(pointing back to the trees with his thumb)
Just a friendly disagreement, is all. Name's Jose. Who are you, brother?

RIAN

Oh, uh, I'm Rian.

Jose climbs onto his horse and offers Rian a hand to climb on.

JOSE

Now, unless you want to become target practice for my friends back there, we should go.

Rian looks back toward the tree line, noticing a rustle coming from the spot Jose emerged from. Before waiting to see what else leaves the forest, Rian accepts Jose's hand and climbs onto the horse behind Jose.

Jose rears the horse and they gallop in the direction of the town.

As the two move away from the forest, the rustling stops and one of the deer Rian watched from earlier emerges from the trees.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (DIRT PATH) - HIGH NOON

Rian and Jose trot slowly to the nearby town. The forest has disappeared behind them over a hill, and the town is not-so-distantly ahead of them.

As they approach the town, more of their surroundings become farm houses and plots of fenced-in land.

A herd of deer looks up from the grass, eyes trained on Rian and Jose as they pass.

Rian turns around to look behind them, scanning the horizon for anyone following them.

RIAN

So... should I be looking behind us
to check for anyone chasing us
or...?

JOSE

No, I think I lost them for good.
I'm sure they don't want to see me
again.

RIAN

Who were they anyway?

They sit in silence for a moment, then Jose sighs.

JOSE

They were my old crew.

RIAN

Didn't seem like the ideal crew if
they're chasing you with guns like
that.

JOSE

Yeah.

Jose chuckles solemnly to himself.

JOSE (CONT'D)

Yesterday I was running from a
group of Pinkertons, turns out they
don't like their trains being held
up, and I thought I lost 'em. I
didn't.

Jose goes silent for a moment.

RIAN

They kicked you out for that?

JOSE

I led the Pinkertons to our
hideout, now they have to find
somewhere else to live. I'd kick me
out too.

Rian doesn't reply, letting the conversation fall silent.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (CROSSROADS NEAR DEEPSHADE) - AFTERNOON

About a mile away from town, the two men are forced to stop
at an intersection in the road as a herd of cattle stampede
across it. The stampede is being chased by a couple ranchers.

RANCHER #1

God damn Emmett, I thought you were
good for precisely nothin' before.

RANCHER #2

How many times I gotta tell you,
Wyatt, the damn lock was busted!
Ain't my fault.

The two ranchers notice Jose and Rian waiting at the
crossroads.

RANCHER #1

You two! Willin' to help out a
couple fellas in need?

Jose looks back at Rian, who shrugs.

JOSE

Need more hands to wrangle 'em?

RANCHER #1

Yessir, we'd be grateful. Have your
friend borrow a horse from our
stall there,

(points toward a stall in
the direction of the
fleeing stampede)

And the two of you can rally up
front of the herd. We'll continue
up the rear and we should have it
under control in no time.

EXT. RANCHER'S STALL - AFTERNOON

Jose gallops to the stall and Rian dismounts his horse.

Rian looks between a large brown American Saddlebred and a slightly smaller grey Arabian Horse. Rian doesn't notice a difference apart from their size.

Jose does recognize the two breeds, and stops Rian from walking towards the larger horse.

JOSE

They've got an Arabian, brother,
those are the rich folk's horses.
Gotta be worth double the big
one...

RIAN

Did they say which one to take?

Jose smirks at Rian.

JOSE

No they didn't brother.

Rian walks to the Arabian's side and climbs up. The horse shakes a bit and bucks once but calms rather quickly.

Rian clicks his tongue, and his horse starts following Jose's horse.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (GRASSY FIELD) - AFTERNOON

Jose and Rian gallop ahead of the herd, which has slowed slightly.

A few cows have separated from the herd, and are grazing lazily in the open field.

JOSE

You get the herd to turn around,
I'll round up the stragglers! Hyah!

Jose turns and rides towards the grazing cattle, spooking them and forcing them to run back to the herd.

The two ranchers ride up along the opposite side of the herd from Rian.

Rian leads the front of the pack back towards the horse stalls, slowly guiding the momentum of the stampede.

The two ranchers split up on either side of the herd.

Jose gets the stragglers back into the herd and takes the lead, trotting just ahead of the herd to keep a steady speed.

RANCHER #1

Alright y'all, let's get 'em on the
road and head back! I'll take lead!

The rancher rides up to Jose and Jose falls back to the left side.

The group guides the herd towards the dirt road, running alongside of it until they reach the fenced-in farm.

EXT. THE RANCH - LATE AFTERNOON

The fence gate swings open and a herd of cows run into the fenced-in field. After the last cow runs in, the ranchers swing the gates shut. Jose ties a rope around the gate's posts, tying the gate shut.

RANCHER #1

That should do it until we get
Clyve over here to fix that lock.
(looks at Rian and Jose,
tips his brim towards
them)
Thanks again for the help, you two.

JOSE

We were happy to help, friend.
About the horse...

RANCHER #1

Well, it ain't *my* horse.

JOSE

Say no more, friend.

Jose mounts his horse and signals for Rian to mount the Arabian. The two ride away from the ranch, back to the road they were originally following.

EXT. THE ROAD INTO DEEPSHADE - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian and Jose turn right at the crossroads, putting them back on the path towards the town.

The roads slowly widen and become slightly muddier as they enter the town. They follow the road past a small row of homes.

EXT. DEEPSHADE (EDGE OF TOWN) - LATE AFTERNOON

JOSE

Welcome to Deepshade.

Rian looks around, feeling a sense of familiarity. He recognizes some of the town ahead of him, but he isn't quite sure from where yet.

JOSE (CONT'D)

Got a saloon on your right here.
Prices kinda steep, but the
barkeep's friendly.

RIAN

Yeah, Eugene, right? Got a funny
mustache?

JOSE

Yeah, yeah, you're right. You been
here before?

RIAN

Not that I can remember, but
something came to mind when I saw
the building...

They continue down the road, eventually turning left onto the town's main street.

EXT. DEEPSHADE (MAIN ROAD) - LATE AFTERNOON

The two trot down the main road of Deepshade, Jose points out each notable building in town to Rian.

JOSE

Got the hotel here on the left.

Jose points at a two-story brick building. The double front doors are painted a deep jade green, and a man washes the windows in front.

JOSE (CONT'D)

The owner's a drunk, forgetful too.
Pay for one night, stay for three,
he won't know.

Jose points across the street from the hotel to a one-story wooden building. There's a sign hanging just outside the front door, reading 'GENERAL STORE.'

JOSE (CONT'D)

Store's there, usually got all the essentials for cooking and camping.

Jose drops his hand and starts laughing. Rian looks next to the general store at a two-story building. A group of men enter via the swinging panel doors, and another man stumbles out and falls into the dirt.

Rian's attention is drawn back to Jose as he continues talking through his laughter.

JOSE (CONT'D)

I remember one time, me and the crew robbed the place, and all we took were the cigarette cards!

(laughs loudly)

We didn't even take the cigarettes, brother, we ripped 'em open and threw 'em down when the card was out... Oh, man, we had fun back then...

RIAN

Did you guys get chased by cops or anything?

JOSE

Psh, cops? There's a sheriff in this town, maybe one deputy. They've got much bigger problems than card thieves in this town. Nah, we rode out of town and camped for a few days, came back and sold the dupe cards to some kids on the corner.

The two of them pass a one-story brick building, the front lined with horses hitched to hitching posts. The horses have saddlebags, some filled with letters and mail, some with newspapers, and some empty.

JOSE (CONT'D)

Now, this is the post office. The mail here ain't the interesting thing though, the clerk has a connection in the next town over. If you've got the right coin, he'll tell you what comes in on the cargo trains over there.

Jose stops his horse at the end of the road, just in front of a large barn. The barn doors are open and 4 horses are penned up within it.

A woman in overalls is caring for a horse in the middle of the barn floor, brushing and scrubbing dirt off its mane.

Two men shake hands in front of the barn before one departs. The other walks into the bar, a stack of cash in his hand.

RIAN

Hey, there was a saloon back there, wasn't there? I could go for a drink, maybe a bite to eat.

JOSE

Sure brother, you payin'?

Rian stutters and checks his pockets. He turns them inside out and shrugs at Jose.

RIAN

Given my current situations I think paying is out of the question.

Jose sighs.

JOSE

Brother, we're stopped in front of the horse barn. You just got a nice horse for free, do I need to put more of the pieces together for you? I'm sure you can get another horse and some cash for 'em.

RIAN

Can't hurt to try...

EXT. DEEPSHADE (STABLES) - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian hops off his horse and leads it to the stable. The man from previously reemerges to greet him.

STABLE OWNER

Well, howdy! Name's Francis, how are y'all doin'?

RIAN

Hi, I'm Rian, I'm looking--

STABLE OWNER

(interrupting Rian)

Well I'll be... that there's an Arabian! And a beaut at that. I heard about one of the local ranches having one imported, and now here I stand in front of one.

(MORE)

STABLE OWNER (CONT'D)
Thing's are really lookin' up for
this town.

RIAN
It sounds like it could be your
lucky day then, friend, because I'm
looking to trade in.

The stable owner looks at Rian, a glint in his eye.

STABLE OWNER
(chuckling)
You've come to the right place,
pal! We just got in a BEAUTIFUL
Blue Nokota, and I can offer you 50
cash on top of that.

JOSE
100, brother.

STABLE OWNER
...okay, 100 cash and the Blue
Nokota, but that's as high as I can
go without feeling like I'm bein'
robbed.

The stable owner disappears into the stable to get the money.
Rian looks back at Jose and nods a thanks.

The stablehand guides the horse she was cleaning into a pen,
and brings the Blue Nokota out of the barn. The stable owner
returns, then hands Rian the cash and the reins to his new
horse.

STABLE OWNER (CONT'D)
Pleasure doin' business with you
folk!
(to the horse, walking
into the stable)
You are gorgeous, girl. You're
eatin' good tonight...

Rian mounts his new horse and they ride back up the street
towards the saloon Rian observed earlier. As they approach
the front of the building, a gunshot rings out from inside
the building.

One of the men that Rian saw enter previously runs out,
clutching his stomach and wailing. A woman exits behind him,
holstering her pistol. She turns around as the barkeep rushes
out, yelling at her.

BARKEEP

God dammit Shannon that's the third
time this month!

BEGIN FLASHBACK: INT. DEEPSHADE SALOON - EVENING

Infamous gunslinger SHANNON "CRABBY" LORETTA slams an empty
bottle onto the bar. The man in black sits on her left, mask
pulled down exposing his sharp jawline and 5 o'clock shadow.
He sips a shot of whiskey. A stranger sits on her right.

SHANNON

Barkeep, another round for me and
my friend here!

STRANGER

(drunk)

Jeezus, woman, that scowl only goes
away when yer askin' for more
liquor.

The bartender freezes, the piano music stops, and the man in
black pulls his mask back up.

SHANNON

(sternly)

What did you call it, partner?

END FLASHBACK

EXT. DEEPSHADE (MAIN ROAD) - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian's eyes widen as the scene unfolds in front of him. He
begins to recognize this moment as a scene from his latest
book, 'The Mute Rider: Gunslinger's Gospel (Part 1).' He
mouths along with Shannon's next line:

SHANNON

You know I don't like men
commentin' on my disposition.

(Calmly)

I gave him a fair warnin'.

The barkeep throws his rag in frustration.

BARKEEP

Taking aim ain't a warnin' Shannon!
Find somewhere else to drink from
now on, and I pray for the next man
who calls you 'sour-faced.'

The barkeep storms back into the bar, piano music resumes faintly from inside.

Shannon turns and walks to her horse, climbing on top and quickly galloping out of town. Rian looks back at Jose, who's looking in Shannon's direction, stunned.

Rian looks over at Jose and makes a connection: the two flashbacks he saw are actually scenes from his novel.

RIAN

We have to follow her.

Jose shakes the stunned expression away and looks at Rian.

JOSE

Brother, I don't know what you just saw but it seems like we should stay far away from her.

RIAN

Trust me, Jose.

Rian rears his horse up and starts galloping down the street after Shannon.

RIAN (CONT'D)

(louder as he moves away
from Jose)

It's gonna be a good time, I can guarantee that.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (JUST OUTSIDE DEEPSHADE) - LATE AFTERNOON

Rian gallops along the road, a few hundred feet behind Shannon. Jose has slowly gained ground and is almost directly behind Rian.

Shannon suddenly turns right off of the road, her horse breaking through the tall grass and cutting a path out. Rian and Jose follow the newly created path as Shannon disappears around a hill. By the time the two men round the hill, Shannon is out of sight.

EXT. THE GREAT PLAINS (BASE OF THE HILL) - LATE AFTERNOON

Around the hill, Rian and Jose can see some woods further along, with a pillar of campfire smoke coming from the top of the tree line. A herd of horses graze in the grass a short distance away from the woods. Rian spots a cave set within the base of the hill.

JOSE

I see some smoke coming from the trees, might be her camp.

RIAN

There's a cave mouth there, too.

JOSE

Which one do you want to check out?

RIAN

I'll check the camp, you want to look in the cave?

JOSE

Yeah, brother, but take this just in case.

Jose tosses a revolver to Rian, who catches it. Rian inspects the revolver, running his hands over the engravings set into the metal. He notices the initials 'E.B.' carved into the bottom of the handle.

RIAN

Thanks, man. I hope I don't need it, though.

Jose canters away in the direction of the cave, and Rian gallops towards the smoke.

EXT. CAVE MOUTH - EARLY EVENING

Jose dismounts his horse, feeding it a carrot before leaving it outside the cave. He grabs his rifle from the saddle and heads into the cave.

INT. CAVE MOUTH - EARLY EVENING

Jose enters the cave, rifle in hand. The cave is dark, getting more so with the nearly-set sun. Jose can just barely make out the room he's in: about 20 feet wide and 15 feet deep, with 30 foot ceilings. At the back of the room are two small corridors, but Jose can't see further than 5 feet down them.

Jose pulls a matchbox out from his pocket and strikes one. In the brief light it provides, he can see someone's belongings on the ground: a box of revolver ammunition, a saddle, and the remnants of a campfire.

As the match flame dies, Jose hears a voice come from one of the corridors.

SHANNON

You 'n' your friend fancy me or somethin'? Came a long way to follow me.

Shannon emerges from the corridor, barely lit by the fading sunlight. Jose can make out her rifle resting on her shoulder. Shannon appears as if she was in the middle of getting undressed, the top of her dress is missing revealing her white blouse, and there are a few undone buttons and flaps on her large skirt.

JOSE

No señora, my friend seemed really interested in meeting you and I just followed him.

Shannon lowers her rifle, leaning against the stock as the barrel rests on the ground.

SHANNON

Well? Where's my big admirer then?

JOSE

Oh, we split up to find you, he went to that camp over in the woods.

SHANNON

The camp?

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP IN THE WOODS - SAME TIME

Rian approaches the camp on horseback. As he breaks through the trees into the camp's clearing, he dismounts. The little sunlight left is blocked by the trees, so the roaring campfire is Rian's only source of light. Rian pauses and looks around the camp.

The camp is fairly small. Two small tree trunks lay next to the fire, and a single carriage sits behind the fire from Rian. Three tents are set up on the outer edges of the camp's clearing. A cooking spit rests over the fire, burnt ends still clinging on to the metal.

Rian walks around the campfire, noticing a tankard on the ground. He picks it up and a few droplets of beer fall onto the ground. He continues walking towards the carriage.

Rian notices the back of the carriage is a cage, draped over with a cloth. As he rounds the back of the carriage and opens the door, he hears voices approaching the camp.

EXT. WOODS (APPROACHING THE CAMP) - SAME TIME

PINKERTON 1

You think three fish is enough for us?

PINKERTON 2

The other two went hunting, so assuming they caught something, I'd say yes. We should only be here another night or two anyway.

EXT. CAMP IN THE WOODS - SAME TIME

Rian climbs underneath the carriage, out of sight of the two Pinkertons. The two riders slow up as they enter the clearing and dismount. The first Pinkerton leads their horses towards the front of the carriage and hitches them to the front wheel. The second Pinkerton notices Rian's horse on the edge of the clearing.

PINKERTON 2

Jim, did one of the others get back early? Whose horse is this?

The first Pinkerton turns around, looking around the camp.

PINKERTON 1

No, we were first.

The first Pinkerton looks around the camp for anything out of place. The second Pinkerton starts searching the edge of the clearing, peering between trees.

Rian crawls backwards away from them, trying to get out from under the carriage on the opposite side. His foot catches on the cloth covering the carriage, pulling it off of the cage and on top of him.

Rian gets tangled in the cloth, struggling to get out from underneath it. In the struggle with the tarp, Jose's gun falls out of Rian's waistband and lands on the ground. By the time he gets free, the two Pinkertons are standing over him.

PINKERTON 2

Well, Jim, I think we found the owner of that horse.

The first Pinkerton draws his pistol and aims at Rian's head.

PINKERTON 1

Young 'in like this might just be lost. Poor one too, look at the rips on his jeans.

PINKERTON 2

Interference is interference, Jim. Get him gone and help me with the damn fish.

The second Pinkerton turns to walk away as the first clicks the hammer back on his revolver.

A gunshot rings out from the woods, and the second Pinkerton falls to the ground. The first Pinkerton looks up, giving Rian a moment to blindly search for his revolver.

Rian fires the revolver, shooting clean through the Pinkerton's neck. He collapses on top of Rian.

As Rian pushes the corpse off of him, two figures approach him on horseback. As it's now night, Rian can't make out their details until Shannon speaks:

SHANNON

Well, partner, this has got to be the least flattering introduction anyone has made to me before.

Jose dismounts and helps Rian to his feet.

JOSE

Gotta say, brother, you made the wrong choice.

RIAN

Apparently. How'd you guys know I was in trouble?

Shannon and Jose share a look with each other.

JOSE

You really are new here, brother.

SHANNON

You decided to mosey into someone's camp. Even I woulda done the same to you. Besides, I chose that cave for exclusionary purposes, not to have neighbors.

RIAN

Yeah, well, thanks for saving me. I think I heard them talking about two more of them though, should we go?

SHANNON

If more of them sumbitches are comin' this way, then I am FINE waitin' for 'em.

Shannon dismounts her horse and walks to one of the logs by the fire. She pulls a cigarette out of her skirt and lights it on the campfire. She pulls from the cigarette and rests her arms on the stock of her rifle.

Jose and Rian look at each other briefly, then move to sit on the other log.

EXT. CAMP IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

Rian and Jose are laying on the ground by the log they sat on. Rian is trying to spin a bullet on his fingertip like a basketball. Jose is snoring. Shannon sits in the same position, arms resting on her rifle, peering out into the woods.

Rian notices Shannon stand up and move behind one of the tents. He shakes Jose, who stirs awake. They move behind a different tent.

Shannon looks towards the two men, making eye contact with Rian. She nods towards the woods around their tents, and shushes them.

PINKERTON 3

(faintly)

Look! Over there! The ghost wolf!

PINKERTON 4

(slightly louder)

For the last goddamn time, I saw it! Have you ever seen an all-white wolf around here Levi?

PINKERTON 3

(louder, through laughter)

This is coming from the man who dated Bigfoot herself.

The two Pinkertons emerge from the woods into the clearing, strutting past the three hiding behind their tents.

PINKERTON 4

I asked you kindly to stop calling
Lucy 'Bigfoot.' Brown is a bad
color for her figure, is all.

Shannon runs at Pinkerton 4 in the back, ripping him off his horse.

Jose runs along the other side of the two, aiming his revolver at Pinkerton 3 in front.

JOSE

I'll be honest, brother, this
doesn't look great for you.

A gunshot rings out, Jose and Pinkerton 3 turn around to see Shannon standing over the corpse of Pinkerton 4. Pinkerton 3 uses the distraction to draw on Jose.

Before Jose can react, he flinches from another gunshot and the Pinkerton falls limply off his horse. Jose turns to see Rian blowing pretend smoke off the end of his revolver's barrel.

RIAN

I've always wondered if that was a
cartoon thing or a real thing.

JOSE

A cartoon thing?

RIAN

Nevermind.

Shannon walks to the other Pinkerton and searches his pockets. She pulls out a Pinkerton badge and three dollars.

SHANNON

Goodnight Agents Harvey and Wilkes.
Boys, you're both welcome to camp
with me tonight.

Shannon stands up, swats each of the Pinkertons' horses, and they flee out of the camp. Shannon, Jose, and Rian lead their horses out of the clearing and towards Shannon's cave.

INT. SHANNON'S CAVE - NIGHT

Rian, Jose, and Shannon rest by a small campfire in the center of the cave's open room. Hunks of meat spin over the fire on a spit.

Rian reaches for another hunk of meat, ripping it off the spit and biting into it.

Shannon tosses a bone into a dark corner of the cave, wiping her hands on her blouse.

SHANNON

So, do y'all have problems with the Pinkertons too or were you just lettin' a lady indulge back there?

Jose swallows a big bite of meat and throws the bone behind him.

JOSE

I got problems with them, all right.

RIAN

I didn't really, until today. I can say that's my first interaction with them at all, actually.

SHANNON

You new around here or somethin'?

RIAN

...or something, yeah.

A moment of silence in the conversation.

SHANNON

Jose, was it?

Jose nods.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Right, so, Jose, what's your story with 'em?

JOSE

Bastards followed me to my gang's hideout. Came out the trees, shot three and arrested five of us. We scared 'em off eventually, but the rest of the crew wasn't so welcoming to me.

RIAN

(through chewing)
Justifiably.

Jose glares at Rian.

JOSE

Even if it was justified, they didn't need to run me down like they did. You saw that Rian. 20 years of devotion and I'm eating meat hunks in a cave.

RIAN

I mean, I wouldn't wanna sleep in the same room as someone who betrayed me like that.

JOSE

But you're here now?

RIAN

You haven't betrayed me like that. Besides, my other options are starve alone outside or get mauled to death, alone outside. You seem like the lesser of three evils to me.

SHANNON

Evil or not, the Pinkertons are the real enemy.

The two men fall silent. Rian takes another bite of his food, Jose spins his revolver's barrel. Shannon takes a deep breath.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

They killed my father. Ironworkers' strike a few years back.

RIAN

Oh my God, I'm so sorry.

Shannon looks up at him, tears forming in her eyes.

SHANNON

My mother couldn't handle the grief and took her life a week after we buried him.

JOSE

I'm sorry to hear that, Shannon.

SHANNON

"Sorry"s won't take the pickaxe out his chest, and it certainly won't unhang my mom.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: EXT. JUST OUTSIDE WAYWARD BLUFF - NIGHT,
RAINING

Shannon and the man in black ride furiously out of Wayward Bluff. Shannon fires a shot ahead of her. She can barely see ahead of her through tears.

The man in black's horse leaps over a man tumbling on the ground.

SHANNON
MORGAN!!

The two close the distance on the four remaining Pinkertons. The one in the front turns around to look at Shannon, smiling.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SHANNON'S CAVE - NIGHT

Shannon sniffles and wipes the tears from her eyes.

RIAN
Wait, did that happen out by
Wayward Bluff?

SHANNON
Yes, it did. Were you there?

RIAN
Well, no, I, uh... wrote about it.

JOSE
Oh, you're a writer? Out here
looking for your next story?

RIAN
No... to be honest, I don't know
why or how I'm here.

JOSE
Oh, when I found you near Tall
Pines I thought you had a good
night of drinking. And when you
wanted to go to the saloon in
Deepshade...

Shannon stands up, moving towards the back of the cave.

SHANNON
I'm gonna hit the hay, you two.
Have a good night.

Shannon disappears into the left corridor of the cave.

JOSE
Goodnight!

RIAN
G'night Shannon.

Rian reaches into his left pocket and pulls out a disposable lighter. He stands and pulls a joint out of his back-right pocket.

RIAN (CONT'D)
Finally a good time for a schmoke.

Jose leans over, interested in the joint. Rian notices.

RIAN (CONT'D)
You smoke weed, man?

JOSE
Weed?

RIAN
You know, weed, whacky tobacky, the
devil's lettuce...?

Jose stares at Rian.

RIAN (CONT'D)
Cannabis? Marijuana?

Jose finally understands what he means and nods along.

JOSE
Ohh, Marihuana, brother. I don't
know what the hell you were saying.

Rian grins and puts the joint tip in his mouth. He flicks the lighter against the other end.

He flicks it again.

A few more times.

RIAN
Dammit, I guess the lighter's done.
You got any matches or anything?

Jose looks at Rian, then at the campfire in front of them. He takes the joint from Rian's mouth and holds it to the fire, lighting it and pulling from it.

RIAN (CONT'D)
Okay, cool guy.

Jose passes the joint to Rian.

JOSE
Never seen a white guy roll it up before, brother.

RIAN
Oh this is a pre-ro-- never mind.

INT. SHANNON'S CAVE - EARLY MORNING

Shannon wakes up before the men. She looks through their bags and pockets, finding the 100 dollars in Rian's jeans. She takes a 20 dollar note from the stack and pockets it, returning the 80 dollars to Rian's jeans.

EXT. SHANNON'S CAVE - EARLY MORNING

Shannon comes out of the cave carrying her saddle and walks towards the herd of horses, away from the mouth of the cave. When she's far enough, she whistles for her horse. She saddles it up and mounts, riding in the direction of Deepshade.

EXT. DEEPSHADE (MAIN ROAD)

Shannon trots down the main road, glaring at anyone who makes eye contact.

A large, burly man in the middle of a conversation spots her walking down the street. He stops talking, lowers his gaze, and retreats into an alley between two buildings.

Shannon dismounts and hitches her horse to a hitching post just outside the post office.

INT. DEEPSHADE POST OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Shannon walks into the post office and directly to the clerk.

SHANNON
Got any new ones for me, Stan?

POSTAL CLERK
Ever been to Dryrock Flats, ma'am?

INT. SHANNON'S CAVE - MORNING

Rian slowly wakes up, groggy and sore from sleeping on the cave floor. Jose is sitting near the fire, cooking an egg on a small pan.

Shannon enters the cave, throwing a paper on the ground towards Rian.

SHANNON
Morning, sleepyhead. We got a
bounty to collect.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

EXT. SLIVERHAVEN GENERAL STORE - AFTERNOON

JOHN MORGAN and a small crew of Pinkertons dismount their horses in front of the general store.

JOHN MORGAN
Alright boys, you know the drill!
Time we collect from Mr. Fellows.

INT. SLIVERHAVEN GENERAL STORE - AFTERNOON

Morgan barges through the swinging door.

The store owner flinches at the slam of the door into the barrel of grains behind it.

Three Pinkertons follow in quickly behind him, each carrying an empty sack.

JOHN MORGAN
Mr. Fellows! A pleasant surprise
for you, I'm sure.

The store owner, Mr. Fellows, looks fearfully at Morgan.

The three Pinkertons pull various canned foods, bottles of alcohol, and camp supplies off the walls and shelves and into their bags.

One Pinkerton notices a display of expensive foreign spices and loads them into his sack as well.

MR. FELLOWS
Y-yes, hello again, M-Mr. Morgan.

Mr. Fellows glances around the room at the Pinkertons looting his store, helpless to stop them.

JOHN MORGAN
Now, Mr. Fellows, I like you.

MR. FELLOWS
Th-thank you, Mr. Morgan!

Two of the Pinkertons leave the store, sacks full of various goods.

Most of the store's shelves are now barren and empty.

The third Pinkerton loads the last of the spices into his sack before turning towards the door.

JOHN MORGAN

I like you, my friends here like you. Mr. Simpson!

The third Pinkerton stops just before the door, turning to face Morgan.

JOHN MORGAN (CONT'D)

Could you tell our friend here what you heard the other night from one of our associates here in town?

The third Pinkerton, Mr. Simpson, drops his sack by the door and walks over to the register.

MR. SIMPSON

I heard, Mr. Morgan, that someone at this store has been charging some of the agents in town more than others for his product.

Morgan pulls out his revolver, one with a long silver barrel and a black leather handle, and holds it just in sight of Mr. Fellows.

Mr. Fellows's eyes frantically shift between Morgan and the gun.

MR. FELLOWS

Mr. Morgan, I-I I charge the same price for everyone! I wouldn't ever think to raise prices for any of ya!

JOHN MORGAN

Well, sir, that's the problem. Are you not familiar with the Pinkerton rate, Mr. Fellows?

Morgan raises his pistol high into the air, and Mr. Fellows flinches at the barrel that only briefly points at his head.

Morgan slams it down on the register between him and the store owner.

JOHN MORGAN (CONT'D)

You see, Mr. Fellows, in exchange for the protection services we provide you and your store...

Morgan reaches across the counter and into the register, pulling every bill larger than a five out in a crumpled wad. Mr. Fellows watches, stunned.

JOHN MORGAN (CONT'D)
Pinkerton agents are entitled to,
at minimum, a 30% discount on all
goods, in addition to your generous
"donations."

Morgan shoves the crumpled bills into his vest pocket and turns to leave.

JOHN MORGAN (CONT'D)
We'll consider this a repayment of
that missing discount, and I bid
you adieu, Mr. Fellows.

Morgan and the third Pinkerton leave the store, Morgan laughing loudly.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FRONTIER (ROAD TO DRYROCK FLATS) - EARLY AFTERNOON

Three people on horseback ride along a road that seems to split desert from plains.

On the riders' left, dry and sandy ground stretches a very short distance before being cut off by a sharp cliff wall which extends a dozen feet straight up. Another small flat stretch of barren ground atop the cliff is stopped again by another cliff wall, forming three large steps seemingly cut into the cliff.

On the riders' right is a long stretch of flat, yellow-green grassy land.

RIAN, JOSE "THE MULE" BLANCO, and SHANNON "CRABBY" LORETTA ride north along the road into Dryrock Flats, Shannon leading. Dryrock Flats is finally in viewing distance, and Rian spots the large Mining Company building on the west side of the road. The top of a water tower peeks over smaller buildings on the east side.

JOSE
--one of my old brothers, Eugenio,
would ride into town the day after
every Beaneaters game to get a
paper with the scores.

Rian's attention is ripped away from the town on the horizon ahead of him at the mention of the team.

RIAN

The... The *Beaneaters*?

Shannon, who'd been quiet during the entire baseball discussion, chimes in.

SHANNON

The Boston Beaneaters? Yer talkin' all this baseball and don't know the Boston Beaneaters?

Rian sits in thought for a moment, thinking about what he knows of baseball history.

RIAN

Oh! The Braves! Yeah I know them. Man, they really go from a bad name to a not-so-great one, huh.

JOSE

What?

RIAN

Nevermind. Either of you ever heard of Babe Ruth?

Shannon and Jose share a confused look.

JOSE/SHANNON

No.

RIAN

Right, probably too early... Well, if you ever see his name in the paper, bet all you have on him. He'll be a star someday.

EXT. THE ROAD TO DRYROCK FLATS (EDGE OF TOWN) - AFTERNOON

The three of them ride past the first set of buildings, a group of small homes on the left side of the road.

A black haze thickens in front of them as they ride closer to the mining office. Rian can finally read the sign on the side of the office building: *Smithen-Westend Iron and Coal Mining Company*.

EXT. DRYROCK FLATS (MAIN ROAD) - AFTERNOON

SHANNON

Whoa.

Shannon slows her horse, Jose and Rian following suit.

Just past the mining office, standing in front of another grouping of housing shacks on the slightly raised porch, is a tall, black man in jeans, chaps, a black-and-red plaid button-up, and a tan ten-gallon hat.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS (CAMPSITE) - DUSK

The man in black emerges from the woods and into the clearing. He sees a few smoldering tents and piles of ash where tents used to be.

He steps over one of the many bodies strewn across the ground.

Renowned gunslinger and leader of the Nightcrawler Gang OSCAR "THE GROUCH" MENYA kneels on the ground next to the body of a lifeless woman.

He grips her lifeless hand in his as the man in black approaches from behind.

Oscar turns to the man in black, a look of pure rage beneath the tears on his face.

OSCAR

It was Morgan, Black. Morgan did this.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. DRYROCK FLATS (MAIN ROAD) - AFTERNOON

The man stands across the street from five Pinkerton agents in a standoff.

Rian and Jose ride up beside Shannon for a better view.

JOSE

Is that our guy? Looks like the Pinkertons got him first.

SHANNON/RIAN

No-

Shannon stutters and looks at Rian, confused.

RIAN

-that's Oscar Menya. A gunslinger, not a forger.

SHANNON

I doubt the sumbitch we want even knows how to hold a gun, let alone fire one. How'd you know that, Rian? You two cross paths before?

RIAN

Something like that.

Rian scans the scene, counting the agents and thinking to himself.

Suddenly, a feeling a familiarity overwhelms Rian.

RIAN (CONT'D)

Jose, I need you to flank around them. Sneak behind the saloon on the right, get situated so you have a shot on them.

Jose pauses for a second, then nods and dismounts, running behind the building to their right.

RIAN (CONT'D)

Shannon, find cover on this side of 'em. On my signal, let loose on them. I'll run to help Oscar after my signal. Oh, and I need your rifle.

Shannon looks at him, confused.

SHANNON

The hell do you need my rifle for?

RIAN

The signal.

Shannon sighs before unslinging her rifle from her shoulder and tossing it to Rian.

She dismounts, finding cover behind two horses hitched on the side of the road.

Rian crouch-runs along the western edge of the road, stopping about 25 feet from the standoff on Oscar's side behind a water trough for horses.

PINKERTON AGENT #2

This'll have to be your final warnin' Mr. Menya. You're comin' with us, it's up to you decide if it's voluntary.

OSCAR MENYA
(mumbling to himself)
Can't find a day of peace
anymore...
(to the Pinkertons)
I ain't goin' nowhere *voluntarily*
with a Pinkerton, and if y'all
think you can--

A rifle shot rings out from Oscar's right.

Shannon, Jose, and Oscar look at where Rian shot the rifle,
then follow where the barrel points, toward the water tower.

The five Pinkertons on the ground turn towards the water
tower just in time to see a rifle fall from the top, followed
shortly by a man.

They hit the ground behind the saloon, first a metallic thud,
than a much louder impact.

RIAN
NOW!

Two more shots emerge from the street as a Pinkerton on
either side of the group fall to the ground.

The three remaining agents look around frantically for where
the shot echoed from.

In the confusion, Rian sprints out from behind his cover,
running up the porch stairs and hiding behind the table Oscar
flipped over and now hides behind.

RIAN (CONT'D)
Name's Rian, I brought some help.

Rian pokes his head out from the cover and aims at another
agent, missing his shot.

Oscar emerges fully from their cover, rattling 5 shots at the
agents from his revolver.

Two shots land on the rightmost agent, sending him to the
ground screaming in pain.

Jose closes the distance between himself and the remaining
two Pinkertons.

He fires a shot from his revolver that hits the leftmost
Pinkerton in the temple then takes cover again behind a
covered wagon.

The remaining agent stands across the street, glaring at Oscar.

Oscar stands on the porch, glaring at the agent.

They both hold their revolver in their dominant hand.

PINKERTON AGENT #2
Mr. Morgan will have yer head for
this, Oscar Menya. What say we
handle this like men?

The agent holsters his pistol and positions himself on the south side of the street for a duel.

Oscar holsters his pistol as well, slowly walking down the porch steps and lining himself up across the agent on the north side of the street.

They stare each other down for a long moment.

Jose and Rian poke their heads out of cover to watch the duel unfold.

Oscar's fingers wiggle over the handle of his revolver.

The agent's eyes shift between his opponent's eyes and hands.

SHANNON
HYAH!

All four men turn their heads in the direction of Shannon.

Before he move out of the way, a horse smashes into the Pinkerton's side at full-speed, sending him crashing to the ground in front of the loose horse's path. The agent's yelp is abruptly cut short by the horse, now trampling over him in its' frantic attempt to flee the scene.

Shannon walks calmly towards the agent with two bullet wounds in his thighs.

His gaze travels up her body, a look of fear and pleading in his eyes.

Shannon's pistol fires a final time and the body of the Pinkerton slumps back to the ground.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
That all of 'em?

Jose walks up to the freshly-killed Pinkerton.

JOSE
I think so, sister.

They both look toward Rian and Oscar, Rian still standing on the porch.

RIAN
You don't have to thank us or anyth-

OSCAR
I wasn't.

RIAN
-okay, right. I'm Rian, like I said. That's Jose, that's Shannon.

JOSE
Howdy.

Shannon tips her hat.

OSCAR
Okay.

JOSE
You riding with anyone brother?

OSCAR
I don't ride with anyone. Nor will I.

Rian looks toward Jose and Shannon, then back to Oscar.

RIAN
That's totally fine, but if you wouldn't mind helping us, we're looking for a bounty.

OSCAR
What's my cut?

Shannon scoffs.

SHANNON
Yer cut? Fer telling us where a man went?

RIAN
You can have my cut.

Jose and Shannon look at Rian, shocked.

JOSE
Brother, why?

SHANNON

Yer as dumb as they come.

Oscar thinks it over for a second.

OSCAR

Okay.

Rian turns to face Shannon and Jose, beaming. They return his look with surprise.

RIAN

Shannon, that bounty poster had a description or picture of the stolen horse or something, right?

Shannon walks over to her horse and pulls the Wanted poster out of the saddlebag.

SHANNON (READING)

Ahem. "Suspect did unlawfully steal a horse from the MacAbree Ranch: One Rocky Mountain Horse, imported from Appalachia, 7 years of age, dark brown coat with light brown spots, saddle-trained, responds to the name *Willow*."

Oscar thinks as she reads the poster.

OSCAR

Matter of fact, I did see a Rocky Mountain hitched outside one of the houses just up the road there.

Rian gives Jose and Shannon a look of hope. Shannon rolls her eyes.

RIAN

Perfect! Mind leading the way?

Oscar sighs.

OSCAR

Fine.

Oscar walks back down the road towards the remaining horse that Shannon first hid behind.

He unties the horse and starts walking it up the road.

Rian, Shannon, and Jose, quickly follow suit and start walking their horses behind him.

OSCAR (TO SHANNON) (CONT'D)
Yer damn lucky you cut the right
horse out for your little trick.

Shannon smirks at Oscar.

SHANNON
Attitude like that, no wonder you
don't ride with anyone. 's just a
horse, friend. You'd a found
another one.

Oscar grimaces at her.

EXT. DRYROCK FLATS (NORTH END OF TOWN) - AFTERNOON

They approach a hitching post outside one of the small homes
with a lone horse hitched to it.

OSCAR
There she is. Yer Rocky Mountain
Horse. Fella yer looking for should
be in there.

RIAN
Willow!

The horse exhales and raises its head slightly. Its ears turn
back toward the group for a moment.

RIAN (CONT'D)
Yeah I don't really know what a
horse response is.

Shannon hitches her horse next to Willow.

SHANNON
It was good enough fer me. Jose?

Shannon and Jose approach the door of the home.

Rian peers through the one window, but can't make out any
details inside the dark room. Oscar remains by the horses.

Jose tries the door handle.

JOSE
Seems latched.

RIAN (FROM AROUND THE CORNER)
Does the lock look pickable or--

Rian is interrupted by the cracking of wood as Jose tries kicking the door in. It gives slightly on the first kick, and gives out completely on the second.

JOSE

Pickable?

INT. DRYROCK FLATS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The small metal chain lock clatters across the wooden floor of the small home.

Just enough light comes in through the doorway for Rian and Shannon to see a pair of legs scrambling to hide under the dining table.

Shannon glides into the room, grabs the man by the ankle, and easily pulls the small, scrawny man out from his hiding place.

Together, Jose and Shannon keep the man immobile long enough to hogtie him.

SHANNON

Well, well, you must be the famous Mr. Goodwater. Supposin' that's even yer real name.

MR. GOODWATER (STRUGGLING)

That IS me and that IS my real name! I'm not some master criminal like you might believe, I was just doin' my good deed, honest!

Rian walks into the house.

RIAN

And what was the good deed? Must've been great if it got you that pretty little bounty that's on your head.

Shannon and Jose leave Mr. Goodwater alone to struggle on the ground. He strains against the ropes for a second before giving up with a long sigh.

MR. GOODWATER

Seems there's no use in keepin' it from you... I forged some documents for a family north of Deepshade. They were on the verge of losing their little farm to the government, so I helped 'em out.

Rian looks at Shannon with slight surprise, and she returns it to him.

RIAN
What was in it for you?

MR. GOODWATER
'In it' for me?

RIAN
Like, what did you have to gain from helping them?

MR. GOODWATER
Oh... well, nothing, I guess. They fed me a nice meal before I left their property, but I asked for no payment, sir.

Shannon groans in exasperation.

SHANNON (TO RIAN)
Dammit Rian, this is why I don't ask the morals of my bounties.

SHANNON (TO MR. GOODWATER) (CONT'D)
Why is the bounty so high if you just made some phony land documents for a family already on the land?

MR. GOODWATER
Y'know, ma'am, I'd love to answer your questions more... comfortably?

Mr. Goodwater struggles again against the tight bindings on his wrist and ankles.

SHANNON
Maybe if I like the answer to your question I'll consider loosening the ropes.

Mr. Goodwater begrudgingly accepts the terms and begins explaining.

MR. GOODWATER
Y'see, the family kept gettin' harassed by the government and their Pinkerton cronies.

Jose, Shannon, and even Oscar from outside make a noise at the mention of Pinkertons.

MR. GOODWATER (CONT'D)
 They were good people being
 needlessly upset by those men, so I
 wanted to help.

Shannon begins pacing around the small room.

SHANNON
 The Pinkertons WOULD put a higher
 bounty for personal reasons, too.
 I've seen it.

RIAN
 Um, Jose, Shannon, could I speak to
 you out here for a moment?

Rian walks out of the house, Jose quickly follows behind.
 Shannon pauses for a moment, looking down at the hogtied man
 on the ground, then exits.

EXT. DRYROCK FLATS (OUTSIDE THE HOUSE) - AFTERNOON

The three past Oscar, who stops leaning against the outer
 doorframe and follows them.

They gather in a huddle near the hitching posts.

RIAN (QUIETLY)
 Okay, how do you two feel about all
 this?

SHANNON
 I hate to believe him, but I do.

JOSE
 Yeah, brother. He sounds like he's
 telling the truth.

The three of them look at Oscar.

RIAN
 What about you? How much of that
 did you hear?

OSCAR
 I heard enough. I don't care what
 y'all do as long as it involves me
 gettin' my share.

RIAN
 I think we should interview the
 family he allegedly helped. Where'd
 he say they lived?

SHANNON

North of Deepshade. That's at least a day's ride from here, assumin' it ain't too far north.

RIAN

Regardless, I don't know how I feel about turning him in if he actually did do what he says.

JOSE

He mentioned a nice meal.

Shannon looks at the men, all of whom want to or don't mind traveling out of their way.

SHANNON

Fine. We'll investigate. But the sumbitch rides with me.

INT. DRYROCK FLATS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Rian and Shannon walk back in to the house. The forger remains on the ground where they left him.

RIAN

Got good news for you, buddy. You're gonna come with us, and we're gonna find out from that family if you're telling the truth or not.

Shannon cuts the ropes tying his legs together and lifts Mr. Goodwater up off the floor.

SHANNON

And you get to ride with me, *buddy*.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FRONTIER (ROAD TO DEEPSHADE) - AFTERNOON

The posse rides west towards Deepshade. The dry, barren land is long behind them and they're again surrounded by rolling hills of long green grass.

Different groups of wild animals graze and roam around the hills, and a few other riders pass the posse on their own horses.

Shannon and Mr. Goodwater share a horse in the lead, with Jose and Rian riding behind her.

Oscar rides a short distance further back from everyone, remaining out of conversation range.

Rian speeds up slightly to catch up and ride alongside Shannon.

RIAN

So you have a perfect record as a bounty hunter, right?

Shannon quickly glances back to Mr. Goodwater, who's spacing out looking to her left.

SHANNON

So far, yes.

RIAN

Why would Pinkertons set up camp to hunt for you then? Aren't you helping them?

Shannon says nothing.

RIAN (CONT'D)

I mean, if they had something to do with this bounty then surely they've had their hands in some of your other ones.

SHANNON

You could be right.

RIAN

So why are they chasing you?

Shannon stays silent for a moment before replying.

SHANNON

My record is perfect, but my demeanor ain't. Some folks don't much like my disposition, 'specially Pinkertons.

Rian thinks.

RIAN

Oh, because of the whole thing with your dad.

Shannon gives Rian a look that tells him to shut up.

SHANNON

Since that 'whole thing' with my father, it's taken a lot less fer a Pinkerton to put me in a shootin' mood.

OSCAR (FROM WAY BEHIND)

Damn right, girl.

The other three turn to look at Oscar, who'd been silent until that moment. Oscar speeds up enough to close the gap between himself and the others before continuing.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

I wouldn't ride alone if not fer the Pinkertons.

Rian slows to ride beside Oscar, now slightly behind Jose.

RIAN

What happened?

OSCAR

Any a y'all heard of the Nightcrawler Gang?

Rian notices a look of surprise on Jose's face.

JOSE

Damn, brother, that is a name I haven't heard in a long time.

SHANNON

Ain't that the crew that always rode with merchants and ranchers? I heard the government caught them in chargin' hefty "protection fees" to those they rode with.

RIAN

Like a protection racket?

Oscar chuckles sadly.

OSCAR

That still the yarn they spin? It weren't the government, it was Pinkertons. And it weren't a protection racket, it was just protection.

Oscar goes quiet for a minute, sighing before he continues.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

We offered security for travelers. Merchants, traders, ranchers. We make their travel safe, they feed us on the way and pay a more than fair wage. Over the years the Pinkertons became a bigger problem than any group of raiders or thieves.

Rian's memory jogs for a moment.

JOSE

You're right brother, damn Pinkerton logos are in every gun store and general store I visit nowadays.

Shannon nods silently in agreement, thinking back to the last few stores she visited.

OSCAR

Hard findin' work when most travelin' convoys are made to hire Pinkerton Agents.

RIAN

They tell the owners that they can keep their deliveries safe, but they charge a huge fee and take a share of the delivered goods on top.

OSCAR

Like a protection racket.

SHANNON

So they took over yer business and painted y'all as the thieves?

OSCAR

If Morgan thinks everything under the blue sky belongs to the Pinkertons, then everyone's a thief somehow.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FRONTIER (JUST PAST DEEPSHADE) - EVENING

The sun takes a final look over the horizon before it disappears behind a mountain in the distance. The posse rides up to an abandoned carriage.

Oscar looks towards the horizon where the sun used to be.

OSCAR

We should set up camp.

MR. GOODWATER

I agree. We went through Deepshade about an hour ago, so I'd wager there's about 6 hours of riding left 'til the farm.

SHANNON

Sounds fine by me. Be rude to arrive in the dead of night anyway.

EXT. THE FRONTIER (CARRIAGE BY THE ROAD) - EVENING

Jose dismounts near the carriage and starts poking around underneath the canvas.

JOSE

There's a guitar in here!

SHANNON

Anything actually useful?

JOSE

...There's a guitar in here. Oh, and a notebook.

Jose fishes the notebook and guitar out from the back of the carriage, setting the guitar down against the carriage wheel.

He flips through the notebook, glancing at the few pages with writing.

JOSE (CONT'D)

Song lyrics, it looks like.

Jose tosses the notebook on the ground next to the guitar.

Oscar starts setting up a campfire near the carriage, a few dozen yards away from the road.

Rian roams around looking for sticks for the fire.

Shannon helps Mr. Goodwater, with his hands still tied behind his back, off her horse.

He sits with his back against a carriage wheel, facing the growing campfire.

EXT. THE FRONTIER (CAMP NEAR THE CARRIAGE) - NIGHT

The fire crackles warmly. Everyone in the posse and Mr. Goodwater sit quietly around the fire, eating rabbit stew.

Mr. Goodwater still sits near the carriage, and to his left sits Oscar, Shannon, Rian, and then Jose.

SHANNON

Oscar, I apologize for my attitude
when you wanted to stop at the
Deepshade General Store.

Shannon slurps the last of the stew from her bowl and approaches the pot above the campfire for seconds.

OSCAR

I had most of what I needed, I just
needed some good meat.

SHANNON

You make a damn good rabbit stew,
Oscar.

Jose mumbles in a agreement through the bowl he's now slurping from.

Oscar hides a look of satisfaction.

OSCAR

You don't survive out here this
long with shit food.

Rian walks around to collect everyone's bowls, setting them down by the fire. He sits back down next to Shannon, who turns to Jose.

SHANNON

Jose, what did you do before the
Pinkertons?

JOSE

Huh?

SHANNON

Well, we know Oscar rode with the
Nightcrawlers, you know I became a
bounty hunter because of them...

RIAN

Yeah, actually, you never mentioned
what your old crew got up to.

Oscar and Mr. Goodwater look over at Jose too.

Jose sits for a moment in quiet thought.

JOSE

Oscar, do you remember the Woodson Gang?

Oscar sits back and whistles, impressed.

OSCAR

Man... The Woodson Gang. Y'all gave us a lot of grief in the good ol' days.

JOSE

That's right, brother. We rode loud and proud. I ran with them for about 15 years.

OSCAR

Do you remember that big caravan y'all attacked? Must a been 10 carriages, at least, and they hired us to ride protection for 'em.

Jose's eyes light up.

JOSE

Oh yeah brother! That was on the road to Gallow's End, yeah?

OSCAR

From, but yeah. Felt like we were fightin' you off for three days, like annoying bugs.

Jose laughs, Oscar chuckles at him.

JOSE

Brother, we tried hitting you and that caravan for a week!

Oscar laughs, this time a deep belly laugh.

OSCAR

Right! Annoyin' little shits, you were. Like big horse flies buzzin' at us every day. Remember that one day when three of you...

Shannon, realizing she's no longer a part of their conversation, turns her attention to Rian.

SHANNON

Now, you, Mister Writer, are a total enigma.

RIAN

I mean, you know I'm a writer?

Shannon scoffs at him.

SHANNON

Sure, but a writer of what?
Y'Apparently wrote about my father,
but you don't look old 'nough to
have been there. So what's the deal
with you?

Rian is quiet for a moment. He can feel his anxiety rising.

His mind races, trying to think of any possible explanation for his situation.

QUICK FLASH

Crackling of a fire. The darkened charcoal of a burnt floor.

RETURN TO SCENE

His pulse rises until it's beating in his throat, his eyes dart between Shannon and the ground. His leg starts bouncing.

RIAN

I'm a writer, that part's true. But
what I write isn't... I mean, I
don't write like newspapers or
anything, I write this.

SHANNON

This?

RIAN

Yeah, this.

Rian gestures his hand around them broadly.

RIAN (CONT'D)

I write Western novels. I write
about people like you doing shit
like this, except I'm not usually
HERE?

Shannon stares at him, confused.

RIAN (CONT'D)
(growing exasperated)
Like, I'm not supposed to be here.
Something happened, like an
explosion or something and I woke
up here in a field outside of
Deepshade.

SHANNON
Woke up here?

RIAN (VOICE RISING)
Yeah I woke up here, and I don't
know how I woke up here or why I
woke up here but I'm here now,...

Jose and Oscar stop talking, turning their attention to Rian as he gets louder and more panicked.

RIAN (CONT'D)
...and now I might never smoke
good weed again or go anywhere
faster than a horse can run or
sleep in my own bed or see my
friends again, or my parents, or my
boss or my coworkers...

Rian takes a deep breath, his first since he started ranting.

Oscar walks over to the guitar and brings it back to his seat with the notebook.

RIAN (CONT'D)
...and I'll never get a Crunchwrap
at 2 in the morning or fly to Rome
or Paris for the first time or even
to San Diego again, I don't even
know IF San Diego FUCKING exists
yet, and I'll never ride in a
Lamborghini or watch TV or play
"Civilization" again-

The strumming of a guitar cuts into Rian's panicked ranting, catching his and Shannon's attention.

Oscar sits on the ground, the guitar resting his legs as he plucks a few strings.

He whistles a few notes before he begins singing.

OSCAR

(singing)

Come all you range riders listen to
me,
I'll relate you a story of the
saddest degree.
I'll relate you a story of the
deepest distress--
I love my poor Lulu, of all girls
the best.

Jose recognizes the song, "The Range Riders," and joins in.

JOSE

(singing)

When yer out ridin, boys,
upon the highway,
Meet a fair damsel, a lady so
gay,
With her red, rosy cheeks,
and her sparklin' dark eyes,
Just think of my Lulu, and
yer bosoms will rise.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

(singing)

When yer out ridin, boys,
upon the highway,
Meet a fair damsel, a lady so
gay,
With her red, rosy cheeks,
and her sparklin' dark eyes,
Just think of my Lulu, and
your bosoms will rise.

Rian finds his breath again and can finally start relaxing.

Shannon starts humming along to their tune.

Mr. Goodwater closes his eyes, falling asleep to their song.

Shannon joins in with the other two for the final verse.

OSCAR / JOSE / SHANNON (PRE-LAP V.O.)

(singing)

I have one more request to make
before we part,
Never place your affection on a
charming sweetheart.
She's dancin' before you your
affections to gain,
Just turn your back on them with
scorn and disdain.

EXT. THE FRONTIER (CAMP NEAR THE CARRIAGE) - EARLY MORNING

The sun peers over the tree line to the posse's east. Morning
birds chirp, waking Rian from his slumber.

Rian pulls the carriage canvas that he used as a makeshift
blanket off of him and stands up.

He notices Oscar and Mr. Goodwater still sleeping, Shannon tending to the fire and pot containing breakfast, and Jose cleaning up their sleeping areas.

SHANNON
Mornin', sleepyhead.

RIAN
What're you making?

SHANNON
More a the stew.

She leans in closer to Rian.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
(whispered)
Don't tell Oscar, but I had to rummage in his things fer more ingredients.

OSCAR
And that'll be the last time I leave my things in the open...

Rian and Shannon turn to see Oscar awake in his spot.

Oscar gets up with a loud groan, walks over to Shannon, and takes over the cooking pot from her.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
I don't trust other folk to do my cooking. Y'all never do it right.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FRONTIER (ROAD TO THE POLISH FARM) - EARLY AFTERNOON

The posse rides again toward the farm; Shannon in the lead with Mr. Goodwater, who's rubbing his freshly freed wrists, Rian and Jose behind them, and Oscar riding in the rear, albeit closer to the posse this time.

They ride along a road north, passing the DiAmond Station & Mines on their right.

EXT. POLISH FAMILY FARM - LATE AFTERNOON

The posse rides through the farm's property fence. A short path leads to the front of the house, where a woman sweeps dust off the porch.

She looks up after hearing the incoming horses, cautious at first.

Mr. Goodwater leans out from behind Shannon and waves toward the woman. Her face lights up upon seeing his.

MRS. WOLSKI
(Polish accent)
Mr. Bowman!

Shannon turns to look at Mr. Goodwater, who hides his face from her.

MR. GOODWATER
Hi, again, Mrs. Wolski.

MRS. WOLSKI
Please, come in! Come in! You and
your friends are always welcome in,
Mr. Bowman!

INT. POLISH FAMILY FARM - LATE AFTERNOON

The posse, Mr. Goodwater, Mrs. Wolski, her husband, and her five children all sit around a dinner table that can seat six comfortably, eight uncomfortably.

Rian, Mrs. Wolski, and one of her children are all scooping various dinner dishes onto their plates and passing it to their left.

Mr. Wolski gives the posse a hesitant look before he starts the conversation.

MR. WOLSKI
(Polish accent)
It's nice to see you again, Mr.
Bowman but may I ask who your
friends are?

OSCAR
We're just trying to find out why
the Pinkertons are offerin' so much
money for his head.

Mrs. Wolski drops her fork and covers her youngest daughter's ears.

MRS. WOLSKI
Please, sir, mind your language
around the young ones?

Oscar looks at the daughter, a pang of guilt crossing his face.

OSCAR
Yer right, ma'am. Apologies.

SHANNON
But anyways, mister...

MR. WOLSKI
Wolski, but you can call me Piotr.

SHANNON
Right, Peter. D'ya mind tellin' us
what it was that Mr. *Bowman* did for
y'all?

Mr. Wolski looks at Mr. Goodwater with confusion at the way Shannon said his name.

MR. WOLSKI
Of course. Mr. Bowman saved our
farm.

RIAN
(through a mouthful of
food)
Right, from the government and
Pinkertons?

MR. WOLSKI
Pinkertons, mostly. The government
was nice about it usually. They
even sent a translator to make it
easier for us to talk with them.

OLDEST WOLSKI SON
Mr. Szewczyk was nice, too! He
showed me how to tie a Surgeon's
Loop!

Mr. Wolski chuckles at his son.

MR. WOLSKI
And that knot saved us last fishing
trip. But it was the Pinkertons
that gave us the real trouble.

JOSE
Typical.

MR. WOLSKI

They sent a group of men every week to "remind" us that we needed to pay them. After 6 months of that, we got this letter.

Mr. Wolski leaves the table and rummages around a desk across the room. He returns with an envelope, marked with the Pinkerton logo.

Shannon takes the letter from him and reads through it.

MR. WOLSKI (CONT'D)

They said we didn't pay enough for the land title, but Mr. Szewczyk didn't know what I was talking about the last time he came by.

Mr. Wolski slides back in to his spot at the crowded table.

MR. WOLSKI (CONT'D)

Lucky for us, a couple days after the letter arrived, Mr. Bowman showed up at our door.

MR. GOODWATER

I needed to rest my feet after a long journey. The folks here were incredibly kind, and let me rest the night.

Mr. Wolski chuckles.

MR. WOLSKI

You declined every offer for a bed and slept on the floor that night, didn't you?

MR. GOODWATER

I did, yeah. I'd never take a bed from someone offering me a roof, let alone their children.

SHANNON

Mind if I see the papers that Mr. Bowman gave y'all?

MRS. WOLSKI

Oh, of course! We keep them right over here in case the Pinkertons come back.

Mrs. Wolski gets up and grabs some paperwork from the table beside the front door. She returns and hands them to Shannon.

Shannon looks over the forged documents. She gives Mr. Goodwater an impressed look.

SHANNON

Deed, title, even some... Damn,
y'all've even got phony fire
insurance! These sure as hell look
real to me.

She passes them around to Oscar and Jose, who nod in agreement.

MR. WOLSKI

Mr. Bowman and I became fast
friends after he stayed that night,
and on one of our fishing trips
together I told him about the
government and Pinkertons.

MR. GOODWATER

I wasn't about to let the damn
Pinkertons harass my new friends
any longer, so I made those papers
for 'em.

MRS. WOLSKI

Those government agents took one
look at them and wished us well! We
were so thankful for that. But the
Pinkertons weren't so kind.

MR. GOODWATER

That's when they tracked me down
and put a bounty on my head.

Shannon takes in all the new information and looks right at Mr. Goodwater, thinking.

SHANNON

Seems like Mr. Goo-- er, Mr. Bowman
here is as good as he says.

Mr. Goodwater and the Wolski's look at her, Mr. Goodwater beaming.

Shannon sighs.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Alright.

She stands up and walks out the front door.

Jose and Rian share a puzzled look. Oscar barely notices from the bottom of his bowl.

QUICK FLASH

Faint, then piercing sirens. Red and blue lights flashing.

RETURN TO SCENE

Rian blinks the sweat out of his eyes. He's hot. His shaky hand tries to gently drop his spoon.

He looks at Jose. Jose looks back and notices Rian's pale skin.

RIAN
Um, excuse us.

Rian and Jose get up and leave the house after Shannon.

Oscar finally sets his empty bowl down.

OSCAR
Ma'am, I have GOT to know what
spices you put in this stew.

EXT. POLISH FAMILY FARM - EVENING

Rian and Jose step off the porch and turn towards the hitching posts.

JOSE
You okay, brother?

Rian, refreshed by the cool evening air, manages to sturdy himself.

RIAN
Yeah, I'm good, I'm good.

The boys approach their horses to see Shannon removing her stuff from her own horse.

SHANNON
Jose, how much room you got on your
horse?

JOSE
I'm not sure, but not much sister.

SHANNON
Rian?

RIAN
Plenty. Why?

SHANNON

I'm gonna stow my stuff on yer horse.

RIAN

Okay but again, why?

Shannon throws a saddlebag on the ground in frustration.

SHANNON

Mr. Goodwater is gonna need a horse if he's gonna git now, isn't he Rian?

On cue, Oscar walks out of the house with Mr. Goodwater right behind him.

MR. GOODWATER

Thank you again for the meal, Mrs. Wolski! It's always a pleasure to see you all!

MRS. WOLSKI

Don't be a stranger, Mr. Bowman!

The two latecomers approach the other three. Mr. Goodwater walks up to Shannon as she ties the last of her saddlebags to Rian's saddle.

MR. GOODWATER

Have you decided my fate?

Shannon checks her horse's saddle to make sure it's still properly tied as she responds.

SHANNON

Yes. Yer gonna need another new name, Mr. Jones. And the papers to match.

She steps aside to let Mr. Goodwater climb onto her horse.

MR. GOODWATER

Thank you all. You've been so kind and understanding and--

SHANNON

And yer startin' to grate me, Mr. Jones.

Shannon walks to the front of her horse and leans her head against its head. She whispers something to the horse before walking back to Mr. Goodwater.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
 Ride North, don't stop 'til you
 start shiverin', then find
 somewhere new to stay.

Mr. Goodwater nods, smiles at the rest of the posse, waves the Wolski's goodbye and rides off.

Shannon turns to the family, all of whom are now standing outside.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
 Thank you all kindly for the meal.
 Jose? I'm gonna need a ride.

Jose mounts his horse, Shannon climbing on behind him. Oscar and Rian each mount their horses and give them family a wave goodbye as they ride off the property.

EXT. THE FRONTIER - NIGHT

The posse rides south, back towards Deepshade.

JOSE
 Maybe we should find a spot to camp
 for the night. It's pretty late.

RIAN
 You can say that again.

JOSE
 Okay then, brother.
 (louder)
 We should find a spot to camp for
 the night! It's pretty late!

RIAN
 No, not what I-- nevermind.

OSCAR
 Y'all, are you seein' that smoke
 there too?

Jose and Shannon follow where Oscar's finger points: two large pillars of smoke in the distance, just to the left of the road they're on.

SHANNON
 Yeah, I see it Oscar. Is that
 DiAmond Station?

JOSE
(to Shannon)
Looks like it.
(to Oscar)
We passed it on the way up, didn't
we brother?

Oscar nods at Jose, and the two of them spur their horses into sprints.

Rian, who had trouble spotting the smoke in the night sky, just follows them.

EXT. DIAMOND STATION & MINES - NIGHT

The posse rides up to DiAmond Station & Mines, a combination train station and mining company.

The smoke they saw from a distance comes from the train station and the mining office, both now burning piles of near-rubble.

Oscar rides around the train station, searching for anyone that might be alive or in need of help.

Rian and Jose, with Shannon still riding behind him, ride towards the mining office.

Jose and Shannon search around the mining office for any people.

Rian rides past the mining office, searching inside the mineshaft built into the small hill the office was built beside.

SHANNON
Boys, I got someone!

Rian rides over to where he heard Shannon's voice and dismounts near them.

Oscar runs over, having dismounted his horse by the train station.

Jose and Shannon crouch down near a man who lays against a barrel a short distance from the mining office.

His shirt, normally a light blue with navy stripes, is stained red with his own blood.

He holds the hilt of a knife, the blade hidden in his stomach.

SHANNON (CONT'D)
Sir! Sir, stay with us. What the
hell happened here?

The man coughs up a mouthful of blood and wipes it on his sleeve.

JAMES DIAMOND
(between gasps and coughs)
The Pinkertons...

The man pulls out a deed, crumpled and covered in his blood. He holds it out to Shannon with a shaky hand.

Shannon takes the deed and looks it over. Her eyes catch on the bottom, where the signatures are. The man never signed, but there was one signature at the bottom already.

OSCAR
Why the hell would the Pinkertons
do all this? For a government sale?

SHANNON
I don't think it were a government
sale, Oscar.

She hands him the deed, and he reads the name she points to on the bottom of the paper.

OSCAR
Morgan?

Jose turns his attention to Oscar.

JOSE
John Morgan?

Shannon nods, angry.

Rian's mind flashes with recognition, this time more complete than previously. Rian remembers the details of this part of his story.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: EXT. DIAMOND STATION & MINES - EARLY EVENING

Nine Pinkertons throw fire bottles at the windows of the train station and the mining office.

QUICK FLASH

Voices yelling close by. The sky.

MALE VOICE
-another tourniquet!-

FEMALE VOICE
-oxygen low, too-

RETURN TO FLASHBACK

John Morgan crouches over the body of a man. Morgan's knife is buried to the hilt in the man's stomach.

As his men throw molotov cocktails at the two buildings, Morgan speaks softly to the man lying on the ground as he twists his knife one final time.

JOHN MORGAN
We asked you to play nice, Mr.
DiAmond. Next time, play nice!

Morgan rises from his crouched position and turns to address his crew.

JOHN MORGAN (CONT'D)
You know what to do boys! Once
they're roaring, we ride for
Dryrock Flats!

END FLASHBACK

EXT. DIAMOND STATION & MINES - MIDNIGHT

Rian feels his knees weaken for a moment. His heartrate skyrockets and his forehead is damp. He shakes off the feeling.

Rian's eyes go wide as he remembers Morgan's plan.

RIAN
(to himself)
Dryrock.

Rian turns to the others.

RIAN (CONT'D)
We have to ride to Dryrock Flats
now.

SHANNON
What the hell do you mean? Morgan
could still be around here!

OSCAR

Yeah, it weren't like this when we rode past earlier, they can't have gone far.

Rian jumps back on his horse, ready to ride.

RIAN

This was just a part of their plan.