

Firefly - "Trash"

Written by: Ben Edlund & Jose Molina

Directed by: Vern Gillum

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Teaser

EXT. WASTELAND - DAY

SLOW CAMERA PAN across a flat vista of shattered rock. Barren. Lunar. PAN ONTO a MAN seated a short distance away on the ground. His side is to us, and he is BUCK NAKED. It's MAL REYNOLDS. He lifts his head, nodding to himself as he takes in his surroundings.

MAL

(flatly)

Yep... That went well.

CUT TO BLACK:

TITLE APPEARS: 'SEVENTY-TWO HOURS EARLIER...'

EXT. DUST PLANET - NIGHT

A LARGE CRATE slams down onto the ground, hard. The two smugglers who were hefting it straighten, turning to go. WIDEN to see that Mal stands close by, arms crossed.

A PILE OF SIMILAR CRATES lies in the dust around Mal. Other SMUGGLERS carry more crates, adding to the pile. (All smugglers sport holstered firearms) They are ferrying them from the lowered FREIGHT PLATFORM of a SPACESHIP, which looms overhead.

MONTY (O.S.)

Malcolm Reynolds!

A VERY LARGE MAN steps off a ladder that goes up from the platform to the belly of the ship, beaming at Mal.

He's a big, gut-toting bear of a man. Not pretty. Not in the least. Think of a greasy Brad Garrett with bad teeth.

MONTY

Y'old son-of-a-- Com'ere!

MAL
Oh hey Monty --

He sweeps a mildly protesting Mal up into a bear-hug, lifting him off his feet for a beat.

MAL (cont'd)
(wheezes)
How--you--do--in'?

Monty releases him, one mitt still clapped on Mal's shoulder, shaking it with rough welcome.

MONTY
They didn't tell me you were picking
up this leg of the run.

MAL
Yeah, things were a little slow.
Figured to do a little honest
smuggling 'tween jobs.

MONTY
Where's that sorry-ass ship a' yours?

As they speak, Monty's ND CREW continues off-loading the crates, passing in and out of frame.

MAL
Monty, two boats like ours meeting on
an empty rock like this, it just
screams contraband to the Fed. Or
have you forgotten that time you got
pinched on Beylix?

MONTY
(points to his own
temple, nodding)
Always thinking, ain't ya. Smarts.
That's what you got. Smarts.

MAL
(shrugs)
OK.
(looks closer at
Monty)
Something's different.

MONTY
(smiles proudly)
Yup.

MAL
You look -- there's something --
(Monty strokes his
chin)
--the beard! You shaved off the soup-
catcher!

MONTY
Yup.

MAL
I thought you were gonna take that
ugly chin-wig to the grave --

MONTY
(chuckles)
So did I. But she didn't much like
my whiskers...

MAL
She--?

MONTY
(calls out)
Bridgit!
(to Mal)
What the hell am I thinking, I got to
introduce you to the missus!

MAL
Monty! You've fallen from our noble
bachelor ranks?

MONTY
Wasn't looking to, but she kinda
swept me off my feet. Bridgit!

A woman hurries to them obscured by the smugly bustle.

MAL
Well, she must be a rare specimen
indeed.

MONTY

That don't begin to cover it. Mal,
I want you to meet my Bridgit.

And she steps out from behind Monty, smiling -- until she recognizes Mal. A beat as he and SAFFRON look at each other.

Saffron sweeps a foot under a Smuggler's leg, tripping him forward, pulling his gun from its holster as he falls, and pirouetting over his body as he hits the dirt, coming out of the spin with the gun locked on Mal's head, just as Mal's gun is flashing from his holster, locked on hers -- a Woo-off. They are frozen, Monty right in the middle, nonplussed.

MONTY (cont'd)

So... you guys have met.

BLACK OUT.

END OF TEASER

Act One

EXT. DUST PLANET - NIGHT

Right where we left off. Mal and Saffron sidestep, guns trained, slowly circling, very intense. Monty stands nearby, brow knitted with confusion.

MONTY

Mal -- why you got a piece trained on
my wife?

MAL

She ain't your wife, Monty --

MONTY

Hunh? I married 'er, didn't I?

MAL

Yeah, so did --

Mal's cut off before he can finish, because in the instant Mal's eyes flick toward Monty, Saffron scissoring up a high kick, knocks the gun out of Mal's hand. She has the drop on Mal for an instant, but doesn't fire. Mal lunges, sweeping her arm to the side, catching her wrist in his grip and squeezing hard. She drops his gun. Saffron throws her head forward, smashing into Mal's nose painfully.

MAL (cont'd)
Gaaah!

MONTY
Bridget!

Mal staggers back, buffeted by a series of punches from Saffron. Mal fires one punch back, catching her on the chin and knocking her to the ground.

MONTY (cont'd)
Mal!

She lands on her back, mostly unfazed, and instantly rolls for the gun a short distance away. Just as she almost reaches it, Mal sails in on top of her, tackling her flat.

SAFFRON
Get OFF!

She swings an elbow back, hits the side of Mal's head hard. He reels, she rolls on top of him, hands around his throat. He does the same, and now they're strangling each other. They do this for a vicious beat, until --

MONTY (O.S.)
(roars)
Gorramit! That's enough!

Monty's big hands drop into frame, lifting them both off the ground and pulling them apart. They're both breathless, Mal's got a BLOODY NOSE.

MONTY
Now what the hell is goin' on here?
Whaddya mean she ain't my wife?

MAL
She ain't your wife... cause she's
married to me.

SAFFRON
(also huffing)
Don't listen to him!

MAL
It's true. Half-a-year back, out at
the Triumph Settlement. Didn't call
herself "Bridgit" then. It was
"Saffron." Hitched me by surprise,

got on my ship, and tried to steal it
out from under me... She's as cold as
ice and dead crazy on top of it.

SAFFRON

You're a liar, Malcolm Reynolds!

MONTY

Oh, he's a lot of things. But a liar
he ain't. All the terrible thick we
been through, he ain't never lied to
me, not even once.
(pointed to Saffron)
And I never got to telling you his
name.

Saffron drops all pretense -- the jig is up.

SAFFRON

Oh, hell. Fine. Be like that.

She pulls away from Monty and starts neatening herself up, brushing back her hair, wiping the dirt from her face.

MONTY

(hurt)

You said you loved me for me...

Mal looks at Monty, saying with tender frankness:

MAL

Believe me, Monty. She says that to
all the boys.

Off of Monty's crestfallen face we CUT TO:

EXT. DUST PLANET - NIGHT

MONTY'S SHIP as its engines FIRE UP, whipping a small cloud of dust around the tiny figures of Saffron and Mal. (Note: the design of this ship must be such that it can take off without its engines incinerating what is directly beneath it.)

SAFFRON stands with her arms crossed, looking up irritably, lit by the OS glare of the ship's lights. Mal is in the BG, with the crates. He dabs at his bloody nose with a white kerchief.
Monty's voice echoes down over the SHIP'S LOUDSPEAKER, choked with hurt.

MONTY (OS)

Damn you, Bridget! Damn you ta Hades!
You broke my heart in a million
pieces! You made me love you, and
then y-- I SHAVED MY BEARD FOR YOU,
DEVIL WOMAN!

SAFFRON

Whatever.

After a beat, a DUFFEL BAG drops into the frame from above, SLAMMING into the ground.
The OS ship pulls away with a burst of engine thrust, the light from it fading.

SAFFRON (cont'd)

[BUN
tyen-shung duh ee-DWAY-RO.]

She moves to the duffel bag, crouches, unzips it, and roots around inside. The barrel of Mal's
pistol enters frame, pressing against her temple.

MAL

You're goin' to wanna pull your claw
out of that bag, nice and slow.

SAFFRON

Relax. I'm not going for a gun or
anything.

She slowly pulls a small cylinder out of the bag, and shows it to him, cranking it. It's lipstick.

SAFFRON (cont'd)

Just freshening up.

She's about to apply it when Mal snatches it and hucks it out into the OS desert.

MAL

You and lipstick is a dangerous
combination, as I recall.
(gestures with gun)
Now get up and turn around.

She does so, with some impatience. Mal moves in and frisks her, trying to be businesslike, but
she responds in a way that crackles with sexual tension.

SAFFRON

Oh... Yeah... Just like old times.

MAL

We don't have any old times. I just
don't want you pullin' a pistol out
of... of anywhere...

She writhes into him a little as he finishes frisking her.

SAFFRON

(super sexy)

Mmmm. You missed a spot...

Mal gives her a rough shove and she stumbles forward a step.

MAL

Can't miss a place you never been.

She am freaky -- turns to him not with anger, but with practiced emotion -- playing to Mal as if they have a troubled, but real marriage.

SAFFRON

Marriage is hard work, Mal, I know
it... But that doesn't mean we have
to give up...

(moves closer to him)

Sure, we've had our spats. Maybe I
made some bad decisions along the way.

MAL

Oh, you're a tweaked one, you are.

SAFFRON

(smiles)

But face it, hubby, I'm really hot.

MAL

Uh huh.

(waves gun at her)

Start walkin'.

SAFFRON

Walking? Walking where?

MAL

Pick a direction. Just don't turn
around.

SAFFRON
Come on. Mal.

MAL
This is my scrap of nowhere. You go
on and find your own.

SAFFRON
You can't just leave me here, on this
lifeless piece of crap moon...

MAL
Sure I can.

SAFFRON
I'll die.

MAL
Well, as a courtesy, you might start
getting busy on that, cause all this
chatter ain't doin' me any kindness.

Saffron sits down on her duffel bag with a defiant pout. But she seems done with the full court
press, more herself now.

SAFFRON
Why don't you just go ahead and shoot
me, then?

MAL
I dunno.
(thinks on this)
Why didn't you shoot me? Back there,
when I took my eyes off you for a
split? Shame to say it, but I gave
you the window.

SAFFRON
(condescending sigh)
You and Monty, you fought in the war
together, right?
(he nods)
I could smell that. The war buddy
bond is a tough one to crack. I knew
if I shot you I'd lose Monty anyway.

You just had a better hand of cards
this time.

MAL

It ain't a hand of cards. It's called
a life. I've got a better life than
you. And that's just barely, and just
cause I don't spend my every waking
hour pissing all over it, like some
folks I'm holdin' a gun on...

Saffron flashes a tight, insincere smile.

SAFFRON

Touché, mon amour.

(as she stands)

Seriously, Mal. You have to give me
a ride.

MAL

(bitter laugh)

Woman, you are completely off your
nut.

SAFFRON

I won't make trouble. You can stick
me in one of those crates if you
like. Just don't leave me he-

Mal SHOOTs. A bullet kicks up the dust about three feet from her. A beat. She sticks out her tongue. ANOTHER BULLET kicks up dust, two feet away. Another beat. She bends, lifting one strap of her heavy bag. She starts dragging it off, struggling. Then she stops and turns again.

SAFFRON (cont'd)

This was all your fault, you know. I
had a perfect crime lined up.

MAL

Sure. You were stealing a man's beard.

SAFFRON

No you ! [HOE-tze duh
PEE-goo!] A million-square job. The
big time. I was going to cut Monty
and his crew in, but you screwed that
royal.

MAL
(raises gun again)
Odd, but I don't think I'll be losing
sleep over it.

SAFFRON
I've got the layout, entrance codes,
believe me, this thing practically
robs itself.

MAL
Bye now.

SAFFRON
I'm handing you a fortune on a gold
platter, sweetheart! Don't you even
want to hear the details?

Mal considers that for a beat, then looks at the kerchief, BLOODIED from his nose. He raises the
gun again.

INT. SERENITY - CARGO BAY - NIGHT

JAYNE stands by the cargo bay door, pulling on leather work gloves. Behind him, BOOK,
SIMON, KAYLEE, and ZOE stand at the ready

JAYNE
Sure you're up to liftin' this stuff?
Crates are fair heavy, I gather.

The engines are HUMMING, and the bay ROCKS a bit as Serenity sets down. Kaylee nods,
enthusiastic.

KAYLEE
I can handle it.

JAYNE
Wasn't talkin' to you.

Jayne smiles at Simon, who mocks a pained expression. Jayne hits a button -- the airlock opens,
and the ramp beyond it starts to lower.

The lowering ramp reveals Mal, standing in front of the pile of crates, alone. He doesn't look too
happy. He has a wadded up TWIST OF TORN KERCHIEF in each nostril, to stem the blood.

JAYNE (cont'd)
Woah there, cap... Tell me you didn't
get into a fight with Monty.

KAYLEE
Really? But I thought we loved Monty!
(to Zoe, sincere
question)
Don't we love Monty?

ZOE
Sweetie, if he had a tussle with that
sasquatch, we'd be in the dirt right
about now, scoopin' up the Captain's
teeth.

Mal stomps up the ramp, holding them all in an even glare.

ZOE (cont'd)
Ain't that so, sir?

MAL
You know what? I don't particular
want to talk about it. Now we got
work. Let's shut up and do it.

Zoe looks from the Captain to the others, then back, eyebrows raised. WASH comes down the cargo bay stairs closest to the bridge, stops by Mal

WASH
Inara was asking for you. Wanted to -

Mal walks away.

WASH (cont'd)
So later with the talking then.

Wash walks down toward camera, mouthing words to Zoe and Book, who carry one of the crates up the ramp.

WASH (cont'd)
(mouthed silently)
'What happened?'

EXT. SPACE

Just a stock shot of Serenity for transition please.

INT. SERENITY - INARA'S SHUTTLE

Mal enters INARA's chamber -

MAL

Heard you were looking for me?

- to find her seated, preparing tea. Her whole attitude is formal, yet inviting...

INARA

I was. Care to sit?

He does, slowly.

INARA (cont'd)

I was hoping to talk a little business. Would you like some tea?

He stands again, less slowly.

MAL

Okay, what's the game?

INARA

I offered you tea.

MAL

After inviting me into your shuttle of your own free will, which makes two events without precedent and which makes me more'n a little skittish.

INARA

Honestly, Mal, if we can't be civilized and talk like-

MAL

I'm plenty civilized. You're using wiles on me.

INARA

I'm using what?

MAL

Your feminine wiles. Your companion training, your some-might-say uncanny ability to make a man sweaty and/or compliant, of which I have had just about enough today.

INARA

Maybe this isn't the best time.

MAL

It's a fine time. Just talk plain is all.

INARA

I'm not sleeping with you, Mal.

Beat.

MAL

Uh, no, I think I would have noticed if you were. My keenly trained... senses would have...

INARA

You're not my lover. Neither are you my mother, My House Mistress or anyone who has the slightest say in how I conduct my affairs.

MAL

Well enough. So?

INARA

So let me conduct my affairs!

MAL

Who's keeping you from -

INARA

I haven't had a client in three weeks. Backwater moons, slums frontier planets without so much as a temple built -

MAL

We go where the work is!

INARA

There's all kinds of work, Mal

MAL

And ours is the kind the Alliance
shuts you down for. I opt to stay
off the radar -

INARA

There's plenty of worlds where both
of us could work. We used to visit
them, remember?

MAL

[EE-chee
shung-hoo-shee.] Are you saying I'm
doing this deliberate on account of
you? There's some reason I don't
want you on the job?

INARA

Is there?

MAL

(sighing, pacing)

Well this is one of the crazier
things I've heard today and when I
tell you about the rest of my day,
you'll appreciate --

INARA

Mal, I'm not accusing you of
anything, it's just--

MAL

Hey, no, we'll just set course for Planet
of the Lonely Rich and Appropriately
Hygienic Man. I'll just tell Wash,
we can park there for a month.

INARA

(rises as well)

Not all of your work is illegal. And
the--

MAL

What, you're trying to get me off the
job now?

INARA

-- And the best job you ever pulled
was on a central planet!

MAL

How about I stay out of your whoring -

INARA

That didn't take long -

They're right in each other's faces now, goin' at it.

MAL

And you stay out of my thieving. I
know my business plenty well, thank
you.

INARA

Right. You're a criminal mastermind.
What was the last cargo we snuck past
the Alliance to transport?

MAL

We made a perfectly good piece-

INARA

What was the cargo?

MAL

They were dolls!

INARA

They were little geisha dolls with
big heads that wobbled!

MAL

People love those!

INARA

And what exactly was our net profit
on the famous wobbly-headed doll
caper?

MAL

"Our" cut? You're in the gang now?

INARA

Well, since I can't seem to find work
as companion, I might as well become
a petty thief like you!

Beat. Oops. The air goes out of both of them.

MAL

Petty.

INARA

(backtracking)
I didn't mean petty.

MAL

What did you mean?

INARA

(meekly)
[Suo-SHEE?]

MAL

That's chinese for petty.

INARA

No, that's a narrow... there's
nuances of meaning that...

MAL

Maybe you shoulda stuck with your
wiles.

INARA

Don't put this all on me, Mal. You
know you haven't been after serious
work in a -

MAL
Serious work? You wanna know what
I -

He stops himself.

INARA
What?

MAL
Nothing.

INT. SERENITY - CARGO BAY - SOON AFTER

Mal, alone, descends the stairs into the cargo bay. He goes to the crates, scanning over them for a moment, finding one that has TWO BULLET HOLES in its lid. He pries it open, pulls the lid away and looks in.

MAL
All right. Tell me more about this
job a' yours.

OVER HIS SHOULDER INTO CRATE

Where, frowning with discomfort, wedged kinda sexily into a shipment of PROTEIN
PACKETS, lies Our Mrs. Reynolds...

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

Act Two

INT. SERENITY - DINING AREA

Jayne, Zoe, Wash and Kaylee are all gathered at the dining room table. Presently they're staring a bit open-mouthed at -- MAL AND SAFFRON standing variously before them as Saffron makes her pitch.

SAFFRON
The mark's name is Durran Haymer.
Maybe one of the biggest collectors
of Earth-That-Was artifacts in the
'verse. Guy's got warehouses full of
stuff. But his prize piece is
sitting in his parlor -- an antiquity

of unspeakable value: The Mexican.
The original hand-held laser pistol.
One of only two known to still exist.
The forerunner of all modern laser
technology. Haymer got lucky, picked
it up during the war for nothing.

MAL

But it wasn't just luck.
(then)
Tell them.

SAFFRON

Haymer's Alliance. Bio-weapons
expert during the war. He'd target
neighborhoods with valuables, wipe
out every living soul without ever
damaging the goods. Go in, take
whatever he wanted.

MAL

He's living fat on a private estate
on Bellerophon.

Saffron tosses some future computer disks onto the table.

SAFFRON

I managed to get ahold of his
schedule for the next 18 months --
the layout of the estate grounds...
and every security code for the
place.

No one moves to touch them

MAL

Saffron's got a notion we can just
walk in -- take The Mexican right off
his shelf.

More with the staring. Finally Wash speaks.

WASH I'm confused...

SAFFRON

(ahead of him)

You're asking yourself if I've got the security codes, why don't I just go in and grab it for myself -- why cut you in?

WASH

No. Actually... I was wondering...
(to Mal, suddenly)
What's she doing on the ship!?
Didn't she try to kill us?

SAFFRON (rolls her eyes)
Please. Nobody died last time.
(suddenly unsure)
Right? Where's the old guy with the hair?

WASH

We're in space. How'd she get here?

MAL

She hitched.

WASH

I don't recall pulling over...

MAL

Look. Point is, there's more'n one of us here wouldn't mind sticking it to a < monkey raping > [Chiang-BAO HOE-tze duh] Alliance bastard. Besides that, this could be a very lucrative venture for all of us. This ain't no wobbly-headed doll caper. This here's history.

Jayne's been thinking very hard. Raises his hand

JAYNE

Okay. I got a question. If she's got the security codes, why don't she just go in a grab it for herself -- why cut us in?

A beat as they stare. Then:

SAFFRON

Good point. Getting through the door
and putting our hands on the Mexican
is easy. Getting out with it...
that's the tricky part.

MAL

It's tagged and coded. Second it
passes through the door -- alarms,
security, feds.

SAFFRON

This isn't a one-woman operation. To
do this right, I need...

INARA (O.S)

Idiots.

They turn. Inara has entered the room.

SAFFRON

Partners.

INARA

Dupes. And that's what you'll all be
if you trust her.

MAL

Could be that's so. Lord knows ain't
none of us "criminal masterminds."
So if you got something better,
Inara -- something not "petty" --
we'd sure be willing to hear it.

A beat as Inara and Mal hold the look between them. Saffron doesn't hate the tension that's
evident here. Finally:

INARA

(turns and goes)

< Idiots. All of you. > [Nee mun DOH
shr sagwa.]

MAL

(looks back to gang)

Okay. So the question remains -- how

do we get the artifact out without
setting off the alarms?

KAYLEE

You don't. Not through the door,
anyway.
(reaches for the disk)
This the layout?

SAFFRON

Full blueprints of the entire
grounds.

KAYLEE

Could be we look hard enough, we find
a way.

Mal smiles, that's what he likes to hear.

MAL

You dig into that, little Kaylee.
(looks to Zoe)
Zoe. You ain't said a word. Time to
weigh in.

ZOE

Take sounds ripe enough. That's
assuming we can fence it.

SAFFRON

I know a guy on Persephone. He's
already got half a dozen buyers on
the bid. The split is gonna be sweet.

ZOE

But Inara's not wrong --
(eyes on Saffron)
-- she can't be trusted.

MAL

I ain't asking you to trust her.
I'll be with her on the inside the
whole time.

SAFFRON

See there? Only one thing you gotta

do if you want to be a rich woman,
hon -- and that's get over it.

ZOE
Mmmm. Okay.

POW -- Zoe hauls off and slugs Saffron in the mouth. She goes down on her tush. Everyone's a little astonished.

ZOE (cont'd)
You, too. Hon.
(then, to Mal)
I'm in.

Off nobody offering to help Saffron up --

INT. SIMON'S ROOM - DAY

Jayne is dumping off a bunch of food and water packets, talking to Simon and River.

JAYNE
Captain says you're to stay put.
Doesn't want you runnin' afoul of his
blushin' psychotic bride. She
figures out who you are, she'll turn
you in 'fore you can... say... "don't
turn me in, lady".

SIMON
The bounty on us just keeps getting
more exciting.

JAYNE
(busying himself)
Well, I wouldn't know.

RIVER
(looking at Jayne)
She's a liar.

JAYNE
That don't exactly set her apart from
the rest of us. And the plunder
sounds fun enough.

RIVER

She's a liar and no good will come of
her.

JAYNE

Well, I say as a rule that girlfolk
ain't to be trusted.

RIVER

Jayne is a girl's name.

JAYNE

Well Jayne ain't a girl.
(to Simon)

She starts on that "girl's name"
thing, I'm a show her good an' all I
got man parts.

SIMON

I'm trying to think of a way for you
to be cruder. It's just not coming.

JAYNE

I just heard enough ab --

SIMON

(wearily dismissive)

< Go far away very fast. > [KWAI chur
hun-rien duh di fahng.]

JAYNE

And I WAS gonna leave you a deck of
cards...

He goes, shutting the door behind him.

SIMON

Great. Another exciting adventure in
sitting.

RIVER

Afraid.

SIMON

We'll be okay. Why the captain is
trusting that < remorseless harridan > [BOO

hway-HUN duh PUO-foo] is
beyond --

RIVER
Not her. Jayne.

SIMON
(amused)
Afraid? Since when?

RIVER
Since Ariel.

Simon is no longer amused.

RIVER (cont'd)
Afraid we'll know.

INT. SERENITY - CARGO BAY - CATWALKS

Zoe is headed up the catwalks from the cargo bay, Inara comes down the stairs leading from the bridge, heading to her shuttle.

ZOE
We should be on Bellerophon by oh-
six. I figure the job should be-

INARA
Please. I really don't wanna know.

ZOE
At least it's your kind of world. You
got appointments made?

INARA
The minute we hit atmo, I'm gone.
I've booked a few choice clients,
should help me get my mind off Mal's
descent into lunacy -

ZOE
(curious)
What happens if you got an
appointment coming and you ain't
finished the one you're at?

INARA

Overbooking is a cardinal sin.
Clients must feel the experience is
timeless. Only thing worse is a
badly faked fall.

ZOE

See, that's where me and
Companionship part ways. I never
could work the notion of pretending
a man was gettin' it done when he
wasn't.

INARA

So you've never pretended to fall.

ZOE

Well, never is a strong word...
sometimes it's easier.

INARA

What about with Wash?

ZOE

One time. Poor boy was bone-tired...

INARA

And?

ZOE

He knew. Son of a bitch called me on
it.

INARA

That's the one you marry.

ZOE

Damn right.

Zoe starts to leave.

INARA

Zoe. Don't let Mal trust her.

ZOE

Thought you didn't care about the job.

INARA

I really don't. I just want there to be someone around to pick me up when I'm done.

ZOE

< Don't worry. > [FAHNG-sheen.] I got his back. Captain starts thinking with his < dangly piece of flesh > [JAN-doh duh ee-KWAI-ro], I'll step in.

INARA

The man's a moron. Everything Saffron is, is a lie. She'll get the drop on him - which as far as I'm concerned is what he richly deserves.

ZOE

Ain't sayin' it ain't risky. Don't count Mal out, though. He just knows the estate is -

Inara holds up her hands.

INARA

No details. I meant that. Just be careful.

ZOE

See you when we're wealthy...

They split up, Zoe heading up toward the bridge, Inara going into her shuttle

ANGLE: SAFFRON - has been eavesdropping from above, near the second shuttle. Mal steps out-

MAL

You give me a hand in here. No wandering about, remember? Or I'll stick you back in your crate.

WASH (V.O)

(from the COM)

Cap'n?

Mal keeps his eye on Saffron as he hits a nearby button.

MAL
Yeah?

WASH (V.O.)
We think we got something...

INT. SERENITY - DINING AREA

Mal, Zoe, Jayne, Wash, Kaylee and Saffron are gathered around the table. Kaylee has the portable display (seen in "Ariel" with the estate schematics. It gets passed around as she and Wash speak:

WASH
Bellerophon Estates... Home to the
rich and paranoid... gracious
living... ocean views...

EXT. BELLEROPHON - DAY

Ocean as far as the eye can see. Floating about the blue expanse are enormous manors -- estates hovering a mile above the water, complete with greenery, landscaping, etc.

WASH (V.O.)
... and state-of-the-art security,
including local patrols, and multi-
code-keys needed at all entrances and
exits...

INT. SERENITY - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

SAFFRON
Which we have --

WASH
Right. You and Mal will split off in
Shuttle II as we make our approach...

EXT. BELLEROPHON - DAY

SERENITY zooms into the shot (continuing CGI shot from before.) Shuttle II splits off from Serenity, veering slightly up. CAMERA STAYS WITH SHUTTLE II as it approaches the floating estate, other flying vehicles coming and going.

WASH
There's a landing port just south of
the main house.

INT. SHUTTLE II - DAY

Mal at the helm.

MAL
Prepped for landing. You ready?

Saffron appears from the back, two ENORMOUS FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS in her arms.

SAFFRON
Ready.

EXT. FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

The well manicured grounds. SHUTTLE II lands in the distance. CAMERA PANS to find various DOMESTICS bustling about who carry covered trays, carts loaded with fine China, a BARTENDER setting up an outdoor bar, etc.

WASH (V.O.)
Haymer's throwing a big party this weekend, so you should have no trouble blending with the hired help who'll be there setting up.

CAMERA FINDS Mal and Saffron carrying the flower arrangements, now moving through all of this.

WASH (cont'd; V.O.)
All you gotta do is get through the back door.

EXT. FLOATING ESTATE - BACK ENTRANCE - DAY

Mal and Saffron arrive at the back door. Saffron pulls out a punch-pad and small round "enabler." Attaches the small cylinder to the door, taps in her code, the cylinder LIGHTS --

MAL (V.O.)
Shouldn't be a problem, unless someone's been less than truthful --

The DOOR CLICKS open, Saffron looks to Mal, smiles...

INT. SERENITY - DINING AREA

Saffron's looking to Mal, here, too.

KAYLEE

The parlor with The Mexican's on the ninth floor. You'll have to disable the display. Won't be any trouble. 'course, once you got your hands on the goods, you can't take it out the front door, nor the back door, nor any door. Every piece of pretty is tagged for the scanners.

SAFFRON

Right. So what do we do?

KAYLEE

(to Wash)

You wanna tell them?

WASH

(waves it to her)

It was your genius idea.

KAYLEE

(proud)

You chuck it in the garbage.

OMITTED

OMITTED

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - CORRIDORS - DAY

Mal and Saffron exit further into the estate. WE STAY WITH the Housekeeper who moves to a chute opening. She dumps the bag down, then moves to a panel on the opposite wall.

KAYLEE (V.O.)

You hit one little button, and the drone whooshes off with the trash.

The Housekeeper touches the panel. Words appear ONSCREEN: "READY FOR DISPOSAL. YES. NO." She touches "yes."

INT. SERENITY - DINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

SAFFRON

(not really)

Brilliant.

KAYLEE

Thanks.

SAFFRON

Oh, except it's idiotic. Those drones take the disposal bins straight to reclamation. Thirty seconds after we hit the button, the booty'll get incinerated.

KAYLEE

Not if we reprogram the bin. Give it new coordinates.

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

Underneath the floating estate, a futuristic dumpster (lined with computer panels) is latched onto the body of the estate. We hear the low THUD of the bag landing inside.

KAYLEE (V.O.)

Once I override the standard guidance protocol, I can tell the disposal bin to go wherever we want.

A flying GARBAGE DRONE GLIDES INTO FRAME, flies towards the dumpster, and its forklift-like claws clamp onto the dumpster with a loud METALLIC KLANG

The dumpster shudders with the impact, then detaches from the structure and the drone whisks it away. Another dumpster drops into place where the other one was.

INT. SERENITY - DINING AREA

SAFFRON

And where would that be?

WASH

The loneliest piece of desert we can find. Here. Isis Canyon. Drone dumps the bin, we claim the goods when we're all together again.

SAFFRON

How do you plan on getting to the bin to reprogram it?

KAYLEE

You get to the loot -- we'll get to
the bin.

OMITTED

OMITTED

EXT. SERENITY/UNDERNEATH THE FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

WIDE - CGI. Serenity RISES INTO FRAME, hovering steadily a few feet below the dumpster.
Bright sunlight and wind whipping up here.

CLOSER -- THE HATCH opens and Jayne emerges. He's wearing goggles, his thrilling heroics
hat and a harness with cable (which dangles at the moment.)

He pulls himself out of the hatch and crawls carefully up the hull and attaches the safety latch of
his cable to a rung on the ship.

Now from the hatch Kaylee emerges, also wearing goggles and protection from the wind and
cold. She hands up the end of her safety harness to Jayne. He clips it. She hands him out a tool
kit. He takes it, then helps her up onto the top of the ship. She crawls toward him on her belly.
They're under the bin, now.

He makes her lie flat, one arm over her protecting her as he pulls out his com, speaks into it,
telling over the ROARING WIND --

JAYNE

Okay! We're planted!

INT. SERENITY - BRIDGE - DAY

JAYNE (V.O., FILTERED)

Take us up --

Wash white knuckling it. Zoe at his shoulder. He pulls back on the controls as...

EXT. SERENITY/UNDERNEATH THE FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

Jayne and Kaylee still lying flat. Serenity rises up. Jayne and Kaylee look up as the bottom of the
estate looms closer.

JAYNE (into com)

That's good! Hold 'er there.

Kaylee, still face down, pops open her mobile tool kit, hands an electric (space age?) screwdriver to Jayne. Jayne gets to his feet with great care -- reaches up to the control panel side of the trash bin. It's all very precarious now as he sets to work on the panel, removing the face of it...

OMITTED

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Mal sneaks down a corridor, Saffron standing watch at the other end of the hall. She's keeping an eye on Mal -- specifically, on his ass. Mal turns to her --

MAL
Clear.

She trots down to him, looks at a Palm-like device which displays the house's blueprints.

MAL (cont'd)
Which way?

SAFFRON
Left.

They continue on.

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

Jayne pulls off the front panel of the control mechanism, sets about removing the innards, hands the motherboard down to Kaylee, who begins to work on it.

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Mal and Saffron move down another corridor -- one that opens into a larger room. Saffron peeks at her Palm as Mal peers into the room, addresses him in a whisper --

SAFFRON
This should be it.

Mal holds up a finger. The sound of VOICES in the other room slowly drifts away. Then he nods and they walk into --

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - PARLOR - DAY

The ENTER into a room that defines opulence. Beautiful furnishings, expensive art on the walls. Memorabilia of Earth-That-Was fills the room. This room alone cost millions to decorate

MAL
< Holy testicle Tuesday. > [Shun-SHENG
duh gao-WAHN]

And on the mantel, in the proper place of honor: a Buck Rogers lookin' Laser Gun. It is to phasers what those huge old clunky cell phones were to modern ones.

Mal and Saffron set down their flower displays, move to it. She reaches out. He stays her hand. Holds up a small aerosol-looking can, sprays and a FORCE FIELD becomes visible for a moment. Mal reaches into his flowers, pulls out a mini- tool kit.

MAL (cont'd)
Let's get to work...

EXT. SERENITY/ UNDERNEATH THE FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

Kaylee hands the jerry-rigged motherboard back to Jayne.

KAYLEE
Okay! She's set!
(yelling over the roar of
wind)
Careful! It's hot!

Jayne nods, starts to replace the innards. Serenity rises up a few inches, closing the distance between the bottom of the estate and Jayne's head.

JAYNE
(sharply into com)
Gorram it Wash! Hold it steady!

INT. SERENITY - BRIDGE

Wash and more with the white knuckles.

WASH
Sorry...

Wash eases off...

EXT. SERENITY/UNDERNEATH THE FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

As Serenity dips ever so slightly, Jayne gets a bit more "head room." Continues to work. Kaylee reacts as she watches:

KAYLEE

Jayne! No! The dyna-ram's live!

He can't hear what she's saying over the ROAR. Glances at her, annoyed --

JAYNE

What?

KAYLEE

(worried)

Don't touch the dyna --

ZAP! A BLUE BOLT of energy jumps out of the bin control innards zapping Jayne and knocking him out. He falls and lands hard on the top of Serenity and starts sliding, out like a light. Kaylee instinctively grasps for the tether as Jayne's body slides and rolls, the tether taught. This all happens very fast and off Kaylee's SCREAM!

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - PARLOR - DAY

Mal uses a space-aged allen wrench as he digs into an open panel under the Mexican.

MAL

Where's the trash chute?

SAFFRON

We passed it in the vestibule.

FOOTSTEPS...

SAFFRON (cont'd)

Someone's coming...

Mal quickly shuts the panel, moves away just as -- DURRAN HAYMER, the master of the house, enters the room, freezing both Mal and Saffron. He looks from one to the other, in shock.

DURRAN

(to Mal)

You...

Mal waits.

DURRAN (cont'd)

You found her...

He takes Saffron in his arms.

DURRAN (cont'd)
Oh, God, you've brought back my wife!

Off Mal, in jaded awe

BLACK OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

Act Three

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - PARLOR - DAY

Durrán holds Saffron close to him... His face is away from Mal's, hers toward Mal. She looks vexed, though she hugs him back.

DURRAN
Oh, my dear...

Mal mimes hitting the guy. Saffron shakes her head slightly, no.

DURRAN (cont'd)
Oh, my own sweet Yolanda...

Mal mouths 'Yolanda?', amused. Durrán holds her at arms length.

DURRAN (cont'd)
I thought I would never see you again.

He's fighting welling emotion. To Mal:

DURRAN
Forgive me... I don't mean to make a
show...

MAL
Please. I'm the one intruding.

DURRAN
Not at all. I owe you a great debt of thanks.

MAL
Just gave the lady a lift.

DURRAN
You did much more than that. You

returned to me the only thing I truly
treasure.

MAL

Well, then, this is a day I'll feel
good to be me.

DURRAN

Do I owe you any --

MAL

No. Trip weren't even out of our way.

SAFFRON

I promised him 800 square.

MAL

But, no, I never agreed to --

DURRAN

Please. I'd be embarrassed not to
make some recompense... In my study,
I... Are you hungry? You both look
so tired, there's food, or...
Yolanda, I'm babbling like a moon
brain...

SAFFRON

Hush. We'll both have plenty to say
by daybreak.

DURRAN

Six years...

SAFFRON

Is that all?

DURRAN

From the day we found your shuttle --

SAFFRON

They set on me at Parth, these awful
men...

MAL

That wasn't me, though. I don't know
those men...

SAFFRON

They said they wanted ransom, but
they... they sold me... to slavers...

MAL

Also unknown to me...

DURRAN

(ashamed)

At first I thought -- well, you
disappeared the same day as
Heinrich --

SAFFRON

Heinrich?

DURRAN

The security programmer. And he was
young, and I'd seen you two talking,
and I thought -- but after they found
his body...

MAL

They killed Heinrich. Guess he
wasn't useful anymore.

DURRAN

(to Saffron)

I never stopped looking.

SAFFRON

I knew you wouldn't.

(tears and all)

That's the thought that kept me alive.

They kiss passionately. Mal looks around, at his nails, at the wall...

SAFFRON (cont'd)

(seductively)

We have so much time to make-up...

MAL

Well, that's my cue to skedaddle...

DURRAN

Let me get your money.
(to Saffron)
You won't disappear again?

SAFFRON

Never.

He goes. A beat, as her loving look hardens.

SAFFRON (cont'd)

We gotta move fast.

As Mal returns to the dismantling of the force field with his sp-allen wrench...

MAL

Yeah, he might come back and hug us
in the act.

INT. SERENITY - FOREDECK HALL - BELOW HATCH, LOWERING

Zoe (who's wearing goggles and anti-wind-clothing) and Book struggle to lower the dead weight of an unconscious Jayne into the ship. Zoe is half up the ladder, using Jayne's tether to guide him down to Book. She wears a tether harness vest now.

KAYLEE (OS)

Zoe?

ZOE

I'm comin', Kaylee--
(down to Book)
Book -- You got him?

BOOK

I got him -- I got hi--

Zoe unhitches his tether line and Jayne's full weight topples toward Book. He staggers back, pinned against the wall of the corridor by Jayne's bulk.

BOOK

(wheezes)

Lord-- this boy weighs-- a solid ton--

He lowers Jayne to the floor. Simon appears, having been summoned. Zoe hitches the tether line to her vest.

ZOE

Doctor, you got yourself a patient to see to.

Simon nods, face clouded with subtle darkness.

SIMON

Yes. I'll take care of it.

Simon moves to assist Book. Zoe hauls herself up out of the hatch.

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - PARLOR -DAY

As Mal continues his dismantling...

SAFFRON

You don't know him. He's everything I said he was.

MAL

Oh, he's a killer of men. Why I'll bet he eats up babies.

SAFFRON

You're wasting time.

He's actually being very efficient while continuing.

MAL

But let's take a breath here, Yolanda. You're sneaking into a place you could walk into as welcome as glad news. What's the math on that?

SAFFRON

The math is you not adding up that Durran Haymer would as soon cut your throat as --

MAL

--You would?

SAFFRON
If possible.

MAL
No. That ain't it at all. You'da
knocked him on the brain, were that
the case. You don't want him knowing
the truth. Unlike all the -- I'm
gonna go with hundreds -- of men
you've married, you actually want
this one to think well of you after
you've gone.

A FLASH and WE SEE the FORCE FIELD appear then DISAPPEAR. Mal reaches in easily,
grabs The Mexican.

MAL (cont'd)
My god... Could it be that I've just
met your real husband?

She has backed up to her flower arrangement, whips out a small gun at him, furious.

SAFFRON
Congratulations, anything else you
want on your tombstone, you piece of
crap?

DURRAN
Now I'm intruding.

She puts the gun down, genuinely upset that Durran has busted her.

SAFFRON
Durran... This isn't what it looks
like...

MAL
Unless it looks like we're stealing
your priceless Mexican, 'cause that's
what we're doing. Don't ask me about
the gun, 'cause that's new.

As he says this, Mal has elegantly moved past Durran, dropped the Mexican into the trash can
just outside the door, hit the button.

DURRAN

Well. I appreciate your honesty.
Not, you know, a lot, but --

SAFFRON

Durran, you don't know what he's
forced me to --

DURRAN

Stop. Yolanda, please just stop.

There is a terrible sadness in his voice. And a frantic misery in hers:

SAFFRON

Durran... Don't look at me like
that.

A beat. She whips the gun at him.

SAFFRON (cont'd)

I said don't look at me like that!

She might just shoot him as we GO TO:

OMITTED

OMITTED

EXT. UNDERSIDE OF FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

Kaylee teeters on precarious tippy-toe, straining to plug a piece of HARDWARE into the top part of the control panel on the dumpster. Zoe steadies her, heels dug in, one hand gripping Kaylee's tether.

KAYLEE

Almost...done... Just have to plug
the interface strike-plate
back...in...

There's a CLACKING of machinery from the dumpster, and a BEACON LIGHT begins flashing.

ZOE

That's the pick-up call -- they must
have dropped the Star... How we doing?

Kaylee strains but can't quite reach.

KAYLEE
(growls)
Can't reach it --

Zoe looks to --

ZOE'S POV - of A (CGI) GARBAGE DRONE in the distance, taking a hard turn towards them,
like a shark nosing toward its prey.

Zoe speaks into her com.

ZOE
Wash -- we need a little more
altitude -- now --

WASH (O.S.)
Working on it, dear --

ZOE
Kaylee--

Kaylee fumbles with the plate as Serenity lurches up another foot or two.

ZOE (cont'd)
KayleeKayleeKaylee--

Kaylee snaps the strike-plate into place.

KAYLEE
Got it!

Zoe pulls hard on Kaylee's tether --

GARBAGE BIN

as Kaylee is yanked hard down OUT OF FRAME, just as the drone SLAMS into place, right
where Kaylee had been a micro-second before. It attaches to the dumpster with a DEAFENING
BONG.

ZOE AND KAYLEE

Lay prone on top of the ship, exchange a look. Start to scurry forward out of frame and we GO
TO:

INT. SERENITY - BRIDGE - DAY

Wash pilots hard as Zoe's voice crackles in over the com.

ZOE (O.S.)
We're in! Go! Go!

WASH

Copy that--

Wash pulls back on his controls.

EXT. UNDERSIDE OF FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

Serenity drops away from the underbelly, peeling into a dive and sailing off, as the drone detaches the dumpster and flies off in the opposite direction.

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - PARLOR - DAY

Mal inching his way around from the door; Saffron staring down Durran, gun pointed at him...

MAL
Whoa, whoa, let's not get worked up
here --

SAFFRON
Are you really so naive? Do you
really think your life is anything to
me?

Mal is next to his flower arrangement -- whip quick he pulls his own gun from it, is drawn and pointed at her in a heartbeat.

MAL
Okay, we're not killing folk today,
on account of our very tight
schedule. So why don't you drop that
pistola, Yo-Saf-Bridge, and we'll be
about our --
(suddenly as fierce
as a cop)
DROP IT NOW.

He comes at her as he shouts it, his whole attitude wrought with controlled fury, putting the gun to her head. She drops hers to the floor, knowing he means business, but never takes her eyes off

Durrán. They play everything to each other, even when talking to Mal. (Mal retrieves her gun, pockets it.)

SAFFRON

Did you think I was a princess? That I would stay locked up here in the tower? With you?

DURRAN

I hoped.

SAFFRON

You're a rutting fool.

MAL

Saffron, you wanna finish the damn job? We're short on minutes here. I'm sorry mister --

DURRAN

How long have you been with him?

MAL

Oh we're not together.

SAFFRON

He's my husband.

MAL

Well who in the damn galaxy isn't?

She starts working.

DURRAN

I feel so bad for you.

SAFFRON

Bad for me? I'm not the patsy getting stole from. You had half a brain, you'da called the Feds the minute you saw me.

DURRAN

Oh, I did.

They stop. He points to his ring. It's modern, with a stone like a button. That is a button.

DURRAN (cont'd)
Emergency signal. For kidnappings
and the like. I love you, Yolanda,
but I couldn't think for a second you
were actually here for me.

The sound of approaching cops, etc.

DURRAN (cont'd)
That would be them now.

A beat, as Mal and Saffron fume.

SAFFRON
Men.

EXT. FLOATING ESTATE GROUNDS - CONTINUING

As a trio of POLICE CRUISER-SHIPS descend on the estate, sirens blaring, lights flashing.

OMITTED

END OF ACT THREE

Act Four

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

We hear the SIRENS and POLICE ANNOUNCING their arrival. Saffron sidles desperately up
to Durran...

SAFFRON
Durran, peaches, just call them off.
Tell 'em it was a mistake.

DURRAN
You need help, Yolanda.

SAFFRON
I'll do whatever you want... you know
how I can make you feel...

DURRAN
Please. You're embarrassing yourself.

She punches him into unconsciousness.

SAFFRON

I'm embarrassing? Who's the dupe on
the floor?

She spits on him as Mal comes up, grabs her arm.

MAL

I hate to bring up our imminent
arrest during your crazy time, but we
gotta move.

He tugs at her and they take off.

EXT. FLOATING ESTATE - GROUNDS - DAY

COPS (armed with those SONIC RIFLES we saw in Ariel) at the doors, speaking into a COM.

POLICE SERGEANT

... police. Responding to emergency
call code. Request entry, all
points.

A BEAT, then the doors BUZZ as the locks give. The cops race inside...

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Mal and Saffron hoofing it out of here. A COP comes around the corner, heading right at them. The cop is more surprised than they are -- Mal takes him down with a few well-placed moves. Saffron reacts as --

TWO MORE COPS -- appear coming the other way. One of them is raising his SONIC RIFLE.

SAFFRON

[Wahg-ba
DAN duh biao-tze.]

Mal drags her along, over the fallen cop. They round the corner just as BOOM! From the Sonic Rifle.

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - BACK ENTRANCE - DAY

They bolt down the glass corridor, the way they came in. Cops appear, coming after them. They push through the door, end up --

EXT. FLOATING ESTATE - BACK ENTRANCE - DAY

Saffron beelines for the security panel, hooks her device onto it, starts working. Mal braces himself against the door.

MAL
What are you doing?

SAFFRON
Shut up and stand back.

Mal backs away from the door just as her enabler BEEPS.

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - BACK ENTRANCE - DAY

A cop reaches for the door -- but it pulls AWAY FROM him. We hear a KA-CHUNK as the door locks.

EXT. FLOATING ESTATE - BACK ENTRANCE - DAY

SAFFRON
Let's go!

She runs off. Mal regards the door and the POUNDING from the trapped cops for a tiny beat.

MAL
(impressed)
Good security.

He turns to join her as --

SAFFRON (O.S.)
Mal!

TWO MORE COPS, armed with sonic rifles, coming at them. Saffron is already spinning and kicking at the first one. Mal takes on the second one, hand-to-fist-to-face.

SAFFRON
(calls to Mal, as she
fights)
Can I have my gun back now, please?

MAL
No!

He lays out the cop he's fighting. Then reaches down and grabs the fallen sonic rifle. Spins on Saffron and the cop she's still engaged with:

MAL (cont'd)
Move!

She dives out of the way as Mal fires a (CGI) SONIC BLAST. Second cop is down for the count. Mal tosses the sonic rifle aside. Saffron goes to grab it. Mal grabs her, yanks her from it.

MAL (cont'd)
Nope. Let's go.

And they do.

INT. FLOATING ESTATE - BACK ENTRANCE - DAY

One of the cops is trying to work the security code pad. No luck. The Sergeant calls into his COM.

POLICE SERGEANT
Subjects have exited the residence
and are on the grounds. Does anyone
have visual?

Off the Sergeant's frustration --

EXT. FLOATING ESTATE - DAY

Shuttle II flies away, unpursued.

INT. SHUTTLE II - DAY

Mal pushes buttons, engages autopilot (either burned in graphics or a voice saying as much), and heads to the back as he straps on his holster, back to normal.

Saffron sits on a crate, facing away from him, sullenly ignoring the welling in her eyes.

MAL
That must've been tough.

SAFFRON
Yeah, have yourself a great guffaw.

MAL
I mean it. Six years, you knew he
was holding such treasures, you
didn't move on him. I gotta figure
that's a job you told yourself you'd
never take. Till times got hard

enough, and the one line you hadn't
crossed...

SAFFRON
(turning, fierce)
My name's not Yolanda.

MAL
Never entered my mind that it was.

She looks away again. Her tone at first is worldly, bitter -- but there is clearly more underneath.

SAFFRON
I tried. I actually tried. I
thought, "this is a decent man. The
genuine article."

MAL
A working man, struggling to get by
with the barest necessities on his
private floating island...

SAFFRON
Yeah, he had money. I thought it
would help. That if I had
everything... I wouldn't want...

MAL
Heinrich the Security Programmer?

SAFFRON
You know, I'd forgotten his name.

MAL
Addressing the itch of curiousness,
you marry him too?

SAFFRON
No. I didn't kill him either.

MAL
I don't reckon you've killed many.
Just put 'em in a position to die
easy.

SAFFRON
I should've killed Durran.

MAL
Right. The one guy that don't have
it coming. The man who knows you and
still loves you, treachery and all.
Can't have him walking about.

She does start crying now, balled up, not making any move toward Mal.

SAFFRON
You must be loving this.

MAL
Little bit. I seen you without your
clothes on before. Never thought I'd
see you naked.

She looks up at him with genuine pleading in her eyes.

SAFFRON
Can people ever change?

MAL
Depends on the person. I'm guessing
the pain of this fades away, you'll
just go back to being what you are.

SAFFRON
(small voice)
What is that?

He squats before her, takes her chin in his hand.

MAL
(not unkindly)
A brilliant, beautiful, evil double
crossing snake. Cheer up, weepy:
you've earned yourself a boatload of
hard cash today. You can question
the meaning of life on a floaty
island of your own for a while.

SAFFRON

You won't tell anyone about me
breaking down?

MAL

I won't.

SAFFRON

Then I won't tell anyone how easily
I got your gun out of your holster.

He looks down.

MAL

I take that as a kindness.

They rise, her with the gun pointed at his belly.

SAFFRON

You just may be the most gullible
fool I have ever marked. And that
makes you special.

MAL

You can riddle me with holes,
Yolanda. Won't make what I just saw
anything but truth.

SAFFRON

(almost convincing)

I played you. From minute one.

MAL

You got me at barrel's end, who am I
to argue. What's your move?

SAFFRON

We'll be settling down in the desert.
Leave you to set a spell. Oh, and
speaking of naked...

MAL

No, now that's just low. SAFFRON
Kinda evens things out, don't you
think? Pants.

She cocks the hammer, he starts undoing his trousers.

MAL

Don't really see the benefit in all this. However I slip, you're not gonna catch my crew with their trousers down.

INT. SERENITY - BRIDGE - DAY

Wash at the controls. Zoe and Kaylee enter.

ZOE

We still clear?

WASH

Nobody's following.

ZOE

Good. Time to turn around. Bin'll be dumped by now. Let's get there before anyone else does.

Wash nods. Pulls on the ship controls. Frowns.

WASH

Can't.

ZOE

What?

WASH

Can't... turn.

(still trying)

Not getting any tug from the aft alternator --

KAYLEE

What? That don't make no sense...

(realizing)

Unless...

She turns and runs out, toward the --

INT. SERENITY - ENGINE ROOM

Kaylee goes right for the engine, Zoe and Wash following. She only has to look for a second before knowing what's up --

KAYLEE

Yep. < whores in hell! > [Tah-shr SUO-yo DEE-yure duh biao-tze duh MAH!] The filament in the grav-dampener's stripped.

WASH

Now, who could've possibly done that?

KAYLEE

I can fix it, but she must've put a timer on the motivator and wetwired the dampener with--

ZOE

What does that mean, Kaylee?

KAYLEE

We ain't gonna make the rendezvous. We have to land. Now.

Off their reactions, PRELAP --

MAL (O.S.)

That dirty dirty whore...

CUT TO:

EXT. WASTELAND - DAY

MAL's FACE staring up into the sky as CAMERA CRANES UP, the engines of the departing (yet unseen) shuttle whipping wind and dust around Mal.

As CAMERA CONTINUE TO PULL BACK, we see that Mal is very much naked. And standing in the wasteland where we first saw him in the opening. Mal stares at his bare feet and shakes his head as if to say "shoulda seen it coming."

OMITTED

EXT. MOON - DAY

A different wasteland-y part of the moon. The disposal bin sits near Shuttle II, its lid open. From inside the bin, we hear --

SAFFRON (O.S.)
Blaerghchh!

Garbage comes flying out of the bin.

INSIDE THE BIN --

-- is Saffron, digging through the trash, rummaging through moldy fruit, eggshells, and assorted sticky, wet rubbish. Her hair is matted -- basically, she's covered in shit and doesn't look happy about it.

SAFFRON
Where the hell is it...

She keeps digging. Diggy, diggy, diggy -- then she stops, throws her hands up in defeat.

SAFFRON (cont'd)
It's not here.

INARA (O.S.)
Looking for this?

She looks up to see Inara perched on the wall of some nearby ruins, beautiful as always, in her veil and bare midriff ensemble. She points The Mexican.

INARA
Wonder if it works?

Pulls the trigger. Nothing.

INARA (cont'd)
Ah-well. Still worth a fortune.
(as she raises a
lugar)
Anyway, this one works fine.
(then)
Honey, you look horrific.

SAFFRON
What are you doing here?

INARA
Oh. Just my part of the job.

SAFFRON
What part of the job?

INARA

(matter of fact)

You know, I put on this big act and storm away in a huff, then I fly off, wait for you to doublecross Mal, beat you to the rendezvous spot and grab the loot before you can get to it.

(beat)

What, you didn't see it coming?

Saffron makes a move; Inara points her lugal.

INARA (cont'd)

Uh-uh.

(beat)

You know, I'm a little disappointed. Some of the crew's performances weren't quite as nuanced as they could have been. I thought they might tip the fact that we were playing you from the second Mal took you out of that crate.

(beat)

Oh, well. Guess not.

As she's said this, she's set aside The Mexican and picked up a small REMOTE CONTROL. She aims it at the bin, presses a button -- and the lid SLAMS SHUT on Saffron.

SAFFRON

Wait a minute, wait, you can't --

(SLAM! the lid shuts)

-- mmmf mmfff ni fmm do hmf!

INARA

You're not going to die, you big baby. The authorities will be here in a few hours to dig you out.

INT. SERENITY - INFIRMARY

Jayne fuzzily comes to, looks around. Simon is quietly notating some things, his back to Jayne.

JAYNE

Wah guwwunoh?

SIMON
(not looking around)
You got knocked out.

JAYNE
Dih we gedda payoff? Dih we make the
money?

SIMON
Can you move your arms and legs?

Jayne looks suddenly worried. Tries -- cannot move anything below his neck.

JAYNE
Dah nod movin'!

SIMON
Do you want to know why?

He turns to Jayne, eerie calm on his face.

SIMON (cont'd)
Your spine. You hit it pretty hard
when you fell.

JAYNE
(worried)
'pine?

SIMON
Yes. So I gave you something to
knock out your motor functions so you
wouldn't wrench it when you came to.
Should wear off in half an hour.
You'll just be bruised.

JAYNE
'pine okay?

SIMON
How much did they offer you to sell
me and River on Ariel?

Jayne pauses. Now he's worried.

JAYNE
Das crazy talk.

SIMON
Then let's talk crazy. How much.

JAYNE
(looking beyond
Simon. calls out)
Is anybody there?

River leans in from the doorway looks at him calmly. It's not comforting.

JAYNE (cont'd)
(Quieter)
Anybody else?

SIMON
You're in a dangerous line of work,
Jayne. Odds are, you'll be under my
knife again. Often. So I want you
to understand one thing very clearly.
No matter what you do, or say, or
plot... no matter how you come down
on us I will never ever harm you.
You're on this table you're safe.
I'm your medic, and however little we
may like or trust each other, we're
on the same crew. Got the same
troubles, same enemies and more than
enough of both. Now we could circle
each other and growl, both sleep with
one eye open but that thought wearies
me. I don't care what you've done.
I don't know what you're planning on doing,
but I'm trusting you. I think
you should do the same, cause I don't
see this working any other way.

He exits. We hold wide on Jayne, thinking on what Simon has said, as River's head pops in the doorway at the other end of frame.

RIVER
Also, I can kill you with my brain.

She pops back out, leaving Jayne to contemplate even more.

EXT. WASTELAND - DAY

ON MAL, who sits naked on a sheared-off stump of stone. He lifts his head, and utters the now familiar:

MAL

Yep... that went well.

REVERSE TO INCLUDE Inara, who has emerged from Serenity's open ramp and is now standing a few feet from Mal. The line is addressed to her.

INARA

You call this "going well"?

MAL

We got the loot, didn't we?

INARA

Yes, but --

MAL

Then I call it a win. What's the problem?

He stands, starts casually walking back to Serenity with Inara, who does her best to not glance at his naughty bits.

INARA

Should I start with the part where you're stranded in the middle of nowhere, or the part where you have no clothes?

MAL

All according to plan.

INARA

Really? I thought the plan was for me to act as a failsafe in case everything else went wrong. Like, for instance, if Saffron disabled Serenity and left you for dead.

MAL

Nonsense. You had a key role to play

in this. How sad would you have been
if you hadn't gotten to play it?

INARA
Heartbroken.

MAL
See? All according to plan.

They reach Serenity, where Zoe, Wash and Kaylee await. As Mal moves up the ramp --

MAL (cont'd)
Wash, take us out of the world. Zoe,
contact Brennert and Ellison, see if
they're interested in fencing a
priceless artifact for us.

Zoe and Wash just stand there, staring at his nakedity. Yes I said nakedity.

MAL (cont'd)
What?

Zoe and Wash mutter "nothing," "I'll get right to work," etc., as Kaylee smiles at Mal, not at all
thrown.

KAYLEE
Good work, Cap'n

MAL
Thanks.

Kaylee goes off as Mal closes the ramp. As the ramp rises, Mal looks out at the wasteland with a
certain fondness.

MAL (cont'd)
Good day. Good day.

The ramp shuts and we --

BLACK OUT.

END OF SHOW