

HELL 'S ACRE

Based on the true story of
The Bloody Benders

written by

Damian Nieman

and

Shane Clark

"It was as if the men had been snatched off the earth. A terror slowly descended on the countryside. It seemed that death stalked the highway, and men began to fear darkness and night."

~ J.E. McDowell
Bender historian

"Even psychopaths have emotions... then again, maybe not."

~ Richard Ramirez

The following is based on a true story.

FADE IN:

EXT. OSAGE TRAIL, KANSAS (1873) - SUNSET

A TARANTULA works its way over and through the rocks looking for its next meal.

Out in the distance a lone figure appears - on a horse - riding out of the sunset.

The figure is DR. WILLIAM YORK, late thirties, but appears older.

Dr. York rides along, but doesn't seem comfortable in the saddle. His face and clothes are covered in dust.

The sun sinks even lower behind him as he comes up to and passes a sign:

BENDER'S ACRE - GROCERY/SALOON/BOARDING

BLACKSMITH

TRY OUR CURED MEATS

EXT. BENDER INN - SUNSET

Dr. York rounds a hill and sees a small group of structures wedged up against a small box valley.

A house, a barn, a saloon/inn, and a couple other structures - it appears abandoned. Then...

A FIGURE moves into the porch.

Dr. York rides up and as he and WE approach, the figure develops into a mammoth of a HUGE MAN. His back to us and his attention on something else.

The figure is seemingly oblivious to Dr. York even as he rides right up behind him.

DR. YORK
Good evening.

The figure doesn't respond.

DR. YORK (CONT'D)
Um... excuse me?

PA BENDER (OS)
He don't hear or understan' so
good.

From around the side of the inn, PA BENDER walks up. He is a creepy old man who looks like he smells as bad as he looks with jagged teeth to match. And if he wasn't scary enough that slight German accent tops it all off.

Pa walks up to Dr. York.

PA BENDER (CONT'D)
Yep. Been that way whole life.
But he's strong as an ox he is.

DR. YORK
I saw your signs. Been riding all
day. How much further is it to
Cherryvale?

PA BENDER
Still a fer piece. Good three
hours or more.

DR. YORK
Oh. Well... are you open for? Can
I bed down here?

PA BENDER
Always open mister. Always open.

DR. YORK
Good. I could sure use a hot meal
and some drink.

PA BENDER
That's what we here for.

Dr. York dismounts - a bit clumsy - he almost falls. Pa helps right him.

PA BENDER (CONT'D)
Whoa there boy.

DR. YORK
I'm afraid I'm not too good on
these. More of a rig man myself.
This was always more my brother's
line.

PA BENDER
Well get yerself inside. Ma will
fix ya some ya up.

DR. YORK
My horse could use--

PA BENDER
Ya ya. Junior will see to it...
Jüngere!

The huge figure turns around - not only is he huge - he is scary as shit looking with a huge Neanderthal forehead and dead eyes.

Dr. York takes a small step reacting to seeing Junior.

Junior grabs the horse's reigns and walks it around back.

HOLD ON Junior's look as he stares at Dr. York - with a very unsettling grin.

Dr. York turns and reacts again as he looks down to see what Junior was occupied with - a dead opossum. He stumbles back on the stairs and as he does he drops his doctor's bag - it spills open.

He hurriedly collects it and himself and picks up his bag and continues in.

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

Dr. York enters a dark, sparsely furnished saloon/inn. A couple of small tables at one end with a canvas wall behind them with a small bar at the other. Behind the bar a large, wide, unpleasant, older woman stands - she is MA BENDER.

DR. YORK
Ma'am.

She nods.

MA BENDER
Vhat is vish?

DR. YORK
Vish?

MA BENDER
Vant?

DR. YORK
Oh. Whatever you are pouring is fine.

She reaches over and pours whatever rotgut they serve in these parts.

Dr. York takes a long look at it - then sips it. It tastes like turpentine.

He looks around the place. Something on the bar grabs his attention. He moves over to a large pickle jar filled with what looks like meatballs in green vinegar.

MA BENDER
Bries-en-vaggen.

DR. YORK
Excuse me?

Pa enters.

PA BENDER
Pickled cow testicles. Ma makes the best. Brought the recipe from the old country, ya. Want to try?

DR. YORK
Uh... no thanks.

PA BENDER
Thought you's in need of some grub?

DR. YORK
Yes... just not what I had...

PA BENDER
Yeah. Not everyone's taste. Stew?

DR. YORK
Yes. Thank you. That would be lovely.

Pa says something to MA in German. She moves in back to the small kitchen.

Pa motions to Dr. York to a back table.

PA BENDER
If you would Mister...?

DR. YORK
Yes... sorry. York. Dr. William York.

York sits down at the back table and chair that Pa guides him to right up against the canvas back wall.

PA BENDER
Doctor?

DR. YORK
Yes... well I'm more into
government business these days.
But I still always carry my bag.
Habit.

Ma comes out with a bowl of stew - which actually looks
pretty edible. She puts it down in front of Dr. York.

DR. YORK (CONT'D)
Thank you ma'am.

He takes a mouthful. Good.

DR. YORK (CONT'D)
Mmmm. Quite good. Thank you.

MA BENDER
Hmm mmm.

She lumbers back to the bar. York goes back to his stew.

PA BENDER
So you say government - politics
and such?

DR. YORK
Um... Yes. Something like that.
Just coming back from some business
and on my way home to Independence.

PA BENDER
(to Ma)
We got an important man here Ma.
Doctor an politics.

MA BENDER
Doktor.

CLOSE UP of a dark corner. A HAND grabs a heavy Twist Hammer
(used by blacksmiths - like a big sledgehammer).

York sits eating - back to the canvas wall. A MONSTROUS
SHADOW grows up behind him on the canvas.

We see the shadow's arm has something. It towers above Dr.
York.

DR. YORK
This is really quite good stew--

The SHADOW SWINGS!

KRRACKCHUCK!

Dr. York is struck from behind - through the canvas wall - with a vicious blow on the back of the head.

He slams down head first into his stew bowl spraying a mixture of stew, scalp, skull, and blood everywhere.

Ma claps her hands together - smiling for the first time.

MA BENDER

Aye... zer gut!

Junior with the twist hammer in hand moves out from behind the canvas.

PA BENDER

He haw! Good boy.

All three of them move to Dr. York. They pull him back and drop him to the floor. A HUGE gaping impact wound oozes blood.

Ma and Pa scour over York - emptying his pockets of whatever they find - coins, a pocket watch, some foldin' money.

Junior just stands over them with the hammer at the ready cackling like a hyena.

Ma moves over to the doctor's bag and starts going through it - the usual stuff - scalpels and other instruments. Suddenly, she stops. A big wad of cash.

MA BENDER

Oh... Pa.

PA BENDER

Big doctor government man... Ha!

Just as they start to celebrate about their find...

FROM OUTSIDE

A horse and buggy pull up and stop.

Ma and Pa quickly look at each other - someone's coming!

Just then Dr. York spasms and coughs. Blood.

PA BENDER (CONT'D)

Jüngere! Pit!

Junior moves to York and picks him up.

Ma and Pa move the table out of the way revealing a trap door in the floor! Pa kicks a lever over by the wall and--

KR-CHUNK

The trap flings open and WE SEE the dark room below.

Junior tosses Dr. York into the pit. His body CRUNCHES against the stone slab below. Pa kicks York's doctor bag in after him.

They quickly move the table back into place. Ma hurriedly fixes up the mess, scooping up stew and blood with her hands.

FOOTSTEPS approach the door.

Ma, Pa, and Junior turn and try to look composed as the door opens.

A beautiful redheaded woman appears at the door. Stunning and immaculately dressed in the latest fashions, this is KATIE.

Katie walks in and looks around. The others attempt poorly to appear normal, coming off even further creepy. Katie feels the strangeness.

KATIE

Quite a lovely evening out there.
Town was--

She looks around. Something isn't right. She can feel it.

KATIE (CONT'D)

What's -- going on?

The Benders, all silent. Katie looks around. She sees some spilled stew... and just a hint of blood.

She looks.

FROM THE PIT BELOW

A cough and whimper.

Katie turns to the floor.

MOVE WITH HER as she follows the trail of stew and blood. She shoves aside the table and sees the trap door.

MORE NOISE from below.

Katie turns to Ma and Pa and gives them a look.

She yanks open the trap and looks down into it. We see Dr. York in a heap on the dirt floor.

We see Junior's huge shadow coming up behind Katie as she...
Slowly climbs down the ladder. WE catch a brief GLIMPSE of
Junior just behind her.

INT. PIT - CONTINUOUS

Katie moves to Dr. York. Blood still streaming down his
face. Grey matter can be seen through the skull fracture.

Dr. York shakes but is conscious - he sees her.

DR. YORK
He... help me...

Katie moves up closer to him up to his head to look at his
injury.

KATIE
Shh... shhh. It's alright now
darlin'. All okay.

She moves her left hand up to his cheek to comfort him.

KATIE (CONT'D)
All good now. You'll be fine.
Professor Katie is here to help you
on your journey.

York gives her a strange look.

DR. YORK
Please.

KATIE
Shhh...

While Katie rubs his cheek, her right hand reaches down to
her leg and brings up her hand -

WITH A HUGE BOWIE KNIFE and a demented smile on her face.

SHE GRABS DR. YORK'S HAIR AND YANKS HIS HEAD BACK AND SLASHES
HIS THROAT WIDE OPEN!

Blood pours out in a torrent. Dr. York's eyes - life drains
out along with his blood. Katie watches him die with glee.

Once he is gone, Katie turns and looks up to the gleaming
faces of Ma, Pa, and Junior - her family. She is KATIE
BENDER.

Junior goes back to his crazy CACKLING...

PULL BACK from her looking up at them further into the underground lair, across the blood soaked dirt, to see all kinds of belongings, clothes, and mementos of numerous other victims of the Bender's hospitality. KEEP PULLING BACK INTO THE DARK

EXT. BENDER INN - NIGHT

JUNIOR'S CACKLE carries off into the distance and we pull back from the inn and past a sign:

THIS WAY TO BENDER INN - TRAVELERS WELCOME

FADE TO BLACK:

HELL'S ACRE

TITLES over all the assorted things the Benders have collected off their guests - INTERCUT WITH newspaper headlines about bodies being discovered and dug up, but we can't see or make out much.

END TITLES.

FADE IN:

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (TRAIN STATION) - DAY

At the farthest edge of town, station employees assist passengers as they load into the Kansas Pacific Railway train. Off to the side, two PINKERTON AGENTS mutely study the area.

The STATION MASTER (50's) sells tickets from the ticket window and scribbles names into his log.

A MOTHER and DAUGHTER, bags in tow, rush up to the window.

MOTHER

Is this the train to Denver?

STATION MASTER

There's only one train, Ma'am. And yes it'll be going to Denver.

MOTHER

Two please. Two tickets.

She ruffles through her change purse.

STATION MASTER
Hurry up, Ma'am. We've got a
schedule to keep.

Decked in tattered leather and his cross draw holster, the ruggedly good looking cowboy FRANK NESTER (30's) stands discretely off to the side under his brim - his weathered gaze carefully observing the routine, people, and surroundings.

He sees the two Pinkertons and ducks away from sight.

The TRAIN SCREAMS with a geyser of white smoke.

A STATION EMPLOYEE helps the Mother, Daughter, and their bags up and into the train. Within seconds the train slowly inches out of the station.

Frank looks down at his open pocket watch.

CLICK!

The pocket watch is closed and Frank casually struts off.

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (MAIN STREET) - DAY

The long-awaited Spring sun continues to melt the snow from the rough winter. Franks' spurs chime as they hit the boardwalk.

Lively main street - a saloon - General store - the bank - Asian smoke house - a bath house - a parlor - fur shop - hardware store - trading post - a small jail - and a hotel. Workers construct a theater. This town is booming.

At one end is the Sheriff's Office and at the other is the town's bustling church.

This railroad town, laid out in a grid, is a quarter-mile deep and several blocks wide.

The saloon is already engaged with numerous locals - cowboys, prospectors, ex-union soldiers, and jezebels.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Brockman's General Store - Frank approaches as, faintly in the distance, a wagon trails off.

BROCKMAN (40's) finishes lifting various items off the boardwalk and carries them into the store. A sack slips from his grip and barrels to the ground. Frank's hand clinches it before impact. Brockman looks...

BROCKMAN
Thank you, sir.

FRANK
No problem. You can't have...

Frank looks at the sack befuddled.

BROCKMAN
Jerky.

FRANK
Ah. Well you can't have it spillin' all over now.

BROCKMAN
It's local. The best-tasting for three hundred miles.

Brockman studies the cowboy.

FRANK
Never chewed it.

BROCKMAN
Well I'm gonna put this down and get you a taste.

FRANK
Oh no, really...

BROCKMAN
No...really. On the house.

Incurious, Frank waits as Brockman steps inside.

FRANK
Mister, I really...

BROCKMAN (OC)
You wait right there.

Frank does - just then, the tough, but reasonable SHERIFF LOUIS (30's) walks up in mid discussion with JACKSON.

JACKSON
--just saying that people are worried.

SHERIFF LOUIS

I've ridden the trail and all
points in between as much as I can.
Haven't found a damn thing.

JACKSON

It's something like twenty or
thirty people who have gone missin'
in the last year or so, right?
They don't know if it's Indians or
what -- they just know they're
scared. Hell they're even turning
to that spiritualist woman for
help.

SHERIFF LOUIS

I'm doing everything I can.
Besides, I've got enough to worry
about with just the people in this
town. Like this Richardson girl.

JACKSON

I know. Damn shame. But I'm just
lettin' you know which direction
the wind is a blowin'.

Jackson moves on as Sheriff walks up to Frank and Brockman.

Frank immediately recognizes the attire and badge. Sheriff
Louis sees Frank's holster and guns. Attempting to lead
Frank into offering his name...

SHERIFF LOUIS

Afternoon...?

FRANK

Sheriff.

A beat. Tension.

SHERIFF LOUIS

(to Frank)

I don't recognize you.

FRANK

Just got in. Lookin' to stake a
claim -- maybe some cattle.

SHERIFF LOUIS

Heeled?

(beat)

You look like you just leaked out
of the landscape.

(MORE)

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)

(beat)
Brockman!

Seconds later, Brockman emerges with a generous slice of beef jerky in his hand. Sheriff Louis is locked on Frank.

BROCKMAN

Hey Sheriff. What can I do for you?

SHERIFF LOUIS

The Richardson girl's still missin'. Ya mind if I post this up?

Frank sees the MISSING/REWARD POSTER of a young girl in his hand.

BROCKMAN

Yeah, of course.

SHERIFF LOUIS

(beat)
Only eight. If something terrible happened to her I reckon the town'd leave the goney lookin' up a tree.

Sheriff Louis grabs the jerky out of Brockman's hand, digs his teeth in, and hands the poster to Brockman.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)

If you know what I mean.

BROCKMAN

(to Frank)
Lemme git you another...

SHERIFF LOUIS

He don't look like he much wants a piece.

FRANK

That's okay. I should really get on.

After a moment, Frank hands Brockman the sack he's been holding.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Brockman. Sheriff.

Frank turns, walks away.

SHERIFF LOUIS
What's your name, cowboy?

Frank stops, turns back around.

FRANK
Henry.

SHERIFF LOUIS
Well Henry...Cherryvale is the
wrong place to have your gun stick.
You follow?

FRANK
You won't get any jaw from me,
Sheriff.

Frank nods and heads down the boardwalk.

INT. SALOON - DAY

Several tables with card games. A Faro table at the back.

The PIANIST rattles away at the ivories. MURPHY (40's), the
barkeep, pours and refills the whiskey.

GOODHUE (20's) and EVANS (20's) at the bar in the company of
a soiled-dove. Her arms wringed around Goodhue, playfully
flirting with the homesteaders, who polish off another shot.

GOODHUE
Another, Murphy.

Goodhue pulls out his property claim and slaps it down onto
the bar.

A few spaces down, the beautiful and petite ABIGAIL (late
20's) eavesdrops. She makes her way toward the men.

GOODHUE (CONT'D)
There's zinc out here in these
hills for the taking and Evans'n I
are gonna do just that.

PROSTITUTE
Zinc?

EVANS
It's like gold. And silver.

No it's not, but the lady doesn't know. Her eyes sparkle
with opportunity while Murphy pours more shots.

Evans grabs Abigail's ass.

EVANS (CONT'D)
Ain't that right, Prairie Dove?

With her stone-eyed stare, Abigail pushes his arm off her, but he quickly grabs her wrist firmly.

ABIGAIL
Hands off.

EVANS
What's that?

ABIGAIL
It takes more than some three
dollar plot to bed me.

He does, reluctantly.

EVANS
You call me 'Mister'.

ABIGAIL
You ain't got enough money to be
called Mister.

She steps away and Goodhue and the prostitute laugh. Evans is at a loss.

GOODHUE
Looks like you got the mitten
there, Evans.

EVANS
Harlot.

CLOSE UP ON CARDS being expertly shuffled and dealt.

From the action WE SEE one of the players who looks none too happy - CYRUS KEENE (late 20's) and next to him BILL NESTER (late 20's). They both toss in their cards. Cyrus slams his cards down.

CYRUS
What is that? Twelve, thirteen
hands?

His remarks are directed to the dealer - a well-dressed and affable yet steely demeanor man COLONEL YORK (40's). He is also Dr. York's older brother.

YORK
Nine actually. I see you count as
well as you play cards.

CYRUS
Nine hands...in a row.

YORK
Well, my luck's got to be runnin'
muddy here soon.

CYRUS
That ain't luck. I'm tellin' ya.

From across the saloon, Abigail watches the conversation get
heated.

YORK
(sarcastic)
Now what on earth do you mean by
that, son?

Cyrus stands.

CYRUS
Don't you 'son' me.

BILL
Cyrus.

CYRUS
I ain't scared of him.
(back to York)
I'm callin' you a cheat. That's
what that means.

York smiles, undaunted, aggravating Cyrus.

YORK
Is that so?

York leans back in his chair just a bit. His right hand
moves to his cross draw holster. His eyes go cold.

YORK (CONT'D)
Well, what do you intend to do
about it, boy?

CYRUS
Do?

Bill steps in.

BILL
Take it easy Cyrus.

York glances to Abigail clearly aware she's watching. So is the rest of the room...including cowboys ROBERT (30's) and TY (20's).

CYRUS
(to Bill)
You take it easy.

Cyrus turns back to York and looks him in the eyes.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
I bet he ain't that fast.

York smiles.

YORK
Well, Cyrus...I haven't bluffed you
the whole game have I?

Cyrus considers this.

YORK (CONT'D)
You really think this is the right
time to go callin' me?

York's right hand is relaxed just in reach of the handle of his gun. York eyes Cyrus. He betrays nothing. Perfect poker face...

MOVE BELOW the table to reveal...

YORK'S LEFT HAND ALREADY HAS ANOTHER GUN DRAWN AND POINTED AT CYRUS.

Cyrus is making up his mind as...

Frank walks up behind Cyrus and puts his hand on Cyrus' gun.

CYRUS
What th--

FRANK
(to York)
Excuse us. My friend here has had
a few too many. He apologizes.

CYRUS
No I d--

Frank grabs Cyrus hard and moves him towards the door.

YORK
Apology accepted.

York secretly re-holsters his other gun.

Bill grabs what's left of his cash, his drink, and stands as Frank leads Cyrus out the swinging doors.

EXT. SALOON - DAY

Frank pulls Cyrus out the saloon doors by his ear then shoves him against it. He slaps him a couple times, Cyrus cowers.

FRANK
What the hell are you doing?

CYRUS
That sharp in there was taking us.

FRANK
You idiot. Why're you makin' a scene?

CYRUS
He's swindlin' us.

FRANK
Do you know who you're talkin' about?

CYRUS
I don't care a continental. He's was cheatin' us.

Frank smacks him again.

FRANK
Did you see his cuffs? That's a Union man. He'll lay you out in the marble orchard, Cyrus.

Cyrus is still angry.

FRANK (CONT'D)
The night before we pull the job you decide to go and get in some gunfight over a card game?

Frank shoves him away.

FRANK (CONT'D)
The Flier's in at 10 tomorrow.
Only two Pinkertons. No horses.
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
This'll be easy so don't go
screwin' it up. No more antics.
Either of you.

BILL
I didn't do nothing, Frank.

FRANK
You didn't help. I mean hell...I
already ran into the Sheriff. We
don't need this.

CYRUS
(beat)
You did what?

FRANK
What'd I say - keep this fool
quiet.

CYRUS
Sorry Frank.

BILL
Yeah. Sorry.

FRANK
We gotta job to do. No cards, no
whiskey, no women. Got it?

They get it. They head off down the street - Frank gives
York one last look back through the saloon doors as he goes -
York is back dealing in the game.

INT. SALOON - DAY

York deals around to the other players.

IN TIGHT on YORK - we see a tiny mirror (known in the trade
as a *shiner*) in his right hand as he deals - he can see the
index of each card as he deals it.

Son of a bitch - YORK WAS CHEATING.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DUSK - ESTABLISHING

The lively night is just beginning. Streets crawling with
every type of derelict within a five mile radius. Frank
alone casually terrapins the boardwalk and stops in front of
a posting:

PROF. MISS KATIE BENDER - SPIRITUALIST AND FORTUNE TELLER -
 EVERY THURSDAY EVE - 8 PM AT THE MAIN STREET PARLOR

Frank looks down the street to see a crowd gathered in front of a building.

EXT. MAIN STREET (PARLOUR) - NIGHT

Frank weaves up and through the crowd. Some enter and some are there to expel their opinions. An older woman, SALLIE (30's) who's nearly in tears, is there with her deaf and blind son. Voices are heard:

MALE VOICE 1

Witch!

FEMALE VOICE 1

She's the devil!

MALE VOICE 2

(to Female Voice 1)

Aw hush up. You're the devil you old coot.

SALLIE

She cures disease and blindness.
 Please let me in with my boy. I beg of you.

The PARLOR GUARD keeps her away.

PARLOR GUARD

Pay like everyone else or shove off.

SALLIE

Please. My boy is deaf and blind.
 I'll wait here. Please let in my boy to see Miss Katie. I beg you.

Frank whittles his way to the front, drops a few coins into the guard's hand, and enters.

INT. PARLOUR - NIGHT

A nicely appointed parlor has been turned into part showroom and part medicine show. People are standing, talking, and watching the action.

Frank sees York seated towards the back of the room. He nods and Frank does as well.

Most of the audience is male - we soon see the reason why. Professor Kate is Katie Bender and if she looked good in the opening scene - that was nothing. She is quite beautiful as she is on stage.

Frank is immediately drawn to her. What red blooded male wouldn't be?

Katie is finishing up what seems to be the end of a seance - candles are lit - the room is dark - her eyes are rolled back in her head and she is holding the hand of a woman seated across from her. She speaks with a deep gravelly voice.

KATIE

She's here - with us. She is safe now.

Katie's head snaps forward and her eyes return to normal. She speaks to the woman who is MRS. RICHARDSON.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Oh...I'm sorry. I can't see anymore.

MRS. RICHARDSON

And my daughter? My Jenny?

KATIE

I'm afraid she's... she's with the spirits.

MRS. RICHARDSON

No...no.

KATIE

I'm afraid so. She's in a much better place now. Don't worry. At least now you can move on. You know her fate.

Mrs. Richardson cries but smiles a bit.

MRS. RICHARDSON

Thank you. Thank you so much.

She puts some cash into Katie's "tip can". She gets up and Katie stands.

KATIE

I must end for the evening at this point. Talking with the other realm takes so much out of me. But thank you so much for your kind patronage. Good evening.

The crowd murmurs as it begins to disperse - Frank smiles - he likes a good hustle as much as the next guy. Some TOWNIE next to him leans in.

TOWNIE
She's somethin' huh?

FRANK
Yeah. Who is she?

TOWNIE
Katie Bender. She and her family have an inn and saloon on the Osage trail. Between here and Independence. She comes in here a few times a year. Puts on a good show - tells people what they like to hear.

FRANK
Seems very entertaining.

TOWNIE
Oh yeah. If you got the "jack" she can entertain you all night in her room.

FRANK
Got the "jack", huh?

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

The crowd is mostly cleared out. Katie is going through her stuff as Frank comes up to her.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Quite a performance ma'am.

Katie turns and sizes up Frank and his motives quickly. She turns on the flirt.

KATIE
Why thank you. But it's not really a performance. I consider it more of a public service to share my gift.

FRANK
I wouldn't mind sharing "your gift" myself.

KATIE
I'm sure. Well Mister...?

FRANK
Nestor. Frank Nestor. A pleasure.

She moves close to him.

KATIE
Well Mr. Nestor. As you saw - my readings do take a great deal out of me. It's very hard at times. And with you...I'm sure my entire body will be just drained of all energy.

He swallows. She moves her hands up to him.

KATIE (CONT'D)
So I must insist on... compensation.

FRANK
I thought it was a public service.

KATIE
Even public servants draw a salary Mr. Nestor.

FRANK
Well, I'm a bit light in the kick at the moment...

KATIE
That's too bad.

FRANK
Sure is.

KATIE
I have a place north of town. Right near the sunset. I do my best work out of there anyway. Why don't you come by and see me Frank when your kicks are a bit more full.

FRANK
Well ma'am in that case...I think maybe you'll be seeing me quite soon.

Off his look...

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (TRAIN STATION) - DAY

The TRAIN PULLS UP - steam blowing right by us - whistle howling.

The Station Master, per usual, is selling tickets from the ticket window and scribbling names into his log.

Several dozen passengers load into the Kansas Pacific Railway train. Five armed PINKERTON AGENTS with horses observe the loading and unloading. One of them tips his hat to...

Abigail, stylishly dressed in a day dress and hat, stepping up into...

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Sophisticated well-dressed passengers dodge and weave through the crowded passenger car as they make their way to their seats. A BABY CRIES and station employees assist the passengers with their bags.

INT. TRAIN (THROTTLE CAB) - DAY

The ENGINEER enters and the FIREMAN prepares the locomotive for travel about to shovel coal into the stove.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Wedging her way down the aisle, Abigail sees two more Pinkerton agents and an EXPRESSMAN at the back of the car. Uncomfortable, she shifts and wiggles her bustle before sitting in her seat.

STATION MASTER (OS)

Last call.

Abigail glances out the window.

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (TRAIN STATION) - DAY

SMOKE WHISTLES into the air.

VOICES

Last call. All aboard.

A man runs up to the EXPRESS CAR and attempts to enter it. Before he is able to ascend even a step, the Pinkerton Agents have made their move. The man is grabbed and quickly thrown to the ground, weapons drawn. The man struggles.

PINKERTON AGENT
Wrong car, Mister.

Another Pinkerton frisks the man checking for weapons. He's unarmed. Sheriff Louis walks up and turns the man over. It's not who he's looking for.

The agents pick up the man and lead him off.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Still looking out the window, Abigail watches the Pinkertons escort the man away. Most passengers are now seated. The seat next to her is still empty. Until...

Dressed more sophisticated than yesterday, yet poorly and comically mismatched, the unarmed Cyrus wobbles up, stops, and removes his Stetson.

CYRUS
Good morning Ma'am.

ABIGAIL
Hello.

Cyrus sits down next to her. She'd rather he didn't. Cyrus looks back down the aisle and sees the Expressman enter the Express Car while the Pinkerton remains outside it. He glances at various passengers throughout the packed car.

CYRUS
Some folks fond of Denver, I guess.

Abigail squints with an unaffecting forced smile.

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (TRAIN STATION) - DAY

Smoke piles into the air as the locomotive WHISTLES two more times. The pistons move and the wheels begin to roll.

Sheriff Louis walks up to the ticket window and grabs the log from the Station Master.

STATION MASTER
What can I do ya for, Sheriff?

SHERIFF LOUIS
I need your Telegraph.
(pauses)
Lookin' for a Henry. From Texas.

The Sheriff reads through the log as the train inches its way out of the station.

EXT. KANSAS PLAINS - DAY

With very little other than a few rolling hills, the train barrels down the track.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Settled in, the passengers talk amongst each other, read the newspaper, etc. The BABY still CRIES, annoying Cyrus. He looks back at the mother attempting to settle and quiet the child.

CYRUS
How far is Denver?

Abigail does not respond and Cyrus looks out the window.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
However far it is, I don't think
we're gonna make it.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

Five men on horses gallop up alongside the speeding train - three on one side, two on the other. LOGAN, LEFTY, and CHARLIE, all in their twenties, ride with Frank and Bill who lead the pack.

Charlie eases up against the passenger car and hands off his horse to Lefty as he steps onto the car. Like clockwork.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Charlie steps into the doorway, pistol drawn. Before he can sturdy himself, the Pinkerton from the back of the car unloads gunfire into his chest - sending the dead man flying into the Kansas dirt past his cohorts.

PINKERTON AGENT
Everybody down. Stay where you
are.

The panicking passengers drop forward into their laps... everyone except Cyrus. And that damn baby is still crying.

The Pinkerton paces up and down the aisle, leaning down, looking out the windows.

FROM OUTSIDE - GUNSHOTS.

PINKERTON AGENT (CONT'D)
 (to Cyrus)
 I said down. Now.

Cyrus leans forward onto his legs, slowly reaches into his boot. He looks over to Abigail, her face buried in her dress.

INT. TRAIN (THROTTLE CAB) - DAY

The Engineer slouches down as he pushes the train to its limits. The Fireman pulls out a shotgun.

FIREMAN
 Take to the birds.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

Frank pulls his pistol, aims at the locomotive, arm steady as a rock.

INT. TRAIN (THROTTLE CAB) - DAY

The Fireman inches up, shotgun extended.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

Frank sees the top of the Fireman's head appear. A single shot.

BANG!

INT. TRAIN (THROTTLE CAB) - DAY

SMASH! TINK!

Frank's bullet shatters the window and HITS the Fireman's shotgun barrel. Falling backwards, screaming for his life and out the back of the throttle cab, the shotgun discharges ripping into the locomotive's engine. It immediately begins to slow.

The Engineer reaches for the Fireman, but can't catch him. He's gone. The Engineer looks down at the shotgun.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

Two Pinkertons exit one of the cars and hop across the coupler into the next one.

Seconds later Logan, one of Frank's men, appears alongside the train between the cars. He dismounts his horse and climbs onto the train. Pulling dynamite and rope from his war bag, he fastens the sticks to the train's coupler.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Startled passengers SCREAM. The Pinkerton races up the aisle toward the locomotive. Cyrus pulls out a BUCK KNIFE from his boot and SLAMS it into the Pinkerton as he passes. He falls face first into the aisle.

Cyrus stands above him and then drives the knife again into the Pinkerton's back. He grabs the dead man's gun and points it at Abigail.

CYRUS

Get up.

The rear door opens. The two Pinkertons surface. Cyrus spins and empties the gun in their direction missing all four times.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

He drops the pistol, grabs Abigail by the back of her dress, forces her up, pulling her into his shield.

CYRUS (CONT'D)

I said get up, strumpet.

With Abigail between Cyrus and the Pinkertons, he holds the buck knife to her throat. The armed agents inch their way toward Cyrus.

PINKERTON AGENT

Pull in your horns, cowboy. You ain't gettin' outta here.

CYRUS

How d'ya figure that, Yankee?

They inch down the aisle toward Cyrus.

PINKERTON AGENT

Let the lady go. You're makin' it worse for yerself.

Abigail looks down, sees a Gunslinger tucked deep into Cyrus' waist. Her eyes widen.

Both Pinkertons turn. Cyrus moves Abigail aside, yanks the gun from inside his pants, aims, and fires. Everyone ducks. Both Pinkertons fall to the floor. The horrified screams are piercing.

CYRUS
Everybody shut up!

He pulls Abigail in tighter.

Bill enters the far end of the car, sees the three dead agents in the aisle, looks up to Cyrus livid.

BILL
What the hell are you doing? Where did you get a gun?

CYRUS
What? I wasn't gettin' on the train without a gun.

The passengers continue to whimper and scream.

BILL
Everybody shut up! No one get fancy and we'll be outta here directly.

After some hesitation, he throws Cyrus his holster.

BILL (CONT'D)
Don't shoot anybody else.

INT. TRAIN (THROTTLE CAB) - DAY

With the damaged train coming to a halt, the Engineer sits on the floor reloading the shotgun. A shadow cloaks the old man. He looks up.

FRANK
You can jump or take lead. Your choice.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Through the window, WE SEE the Engineer hit the dirt and tumble across the plains.

The passengers have begun pulling out their belongings and removing their jewelry. Holster now fastened, Cyrus still holds Abigail hostage at the end of the car. Bill walks up the aisle.

BILL
Calm down everybody. Put your
money away. We ain't here for you.
Except for maybe you land grabbin'
bankers.

He looks down to a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, smiles, and tips his hat.

BILL (CONT'D)
Ma'am.

KABOOM!

The dynamite EXPLODES, completely destroying both cars five feet deep on each side of the coupler, knocking Bill forward and injuring several passengers. Cyrus and Abigail are pushed back into the car.

INT. TRAIN (THROTTLE CAB) - DAY

The violent shake derails and jackknifes the locomotive knocking Frank over. Once it comes to a SPARKING and SCREECHING halt, he hops out the cab onto the ground.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

The car fills with smoke. Cries, screams, blood.

CYRUS
...the hell was that?

BILL
God damn it.
(beat; to Cyrus)
Hold 'em steady.

Bill makes his way through the smoke toward the back.

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (MAIN STREET) - DAY

The ground shakes - Sheriff Louis turns. In the distance the smoke and fragments from the explosion soar into the air.

SHERIFF LOUIS
Barnes! Get the men. Now! Saddle
up!

He runs down the boardwalk toward his horse.

EXT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

With the two wooden cars shredded, Frank steps up. Logan stands next to where the coupler used to be...fully aware he's in some shit.

FRANK
You dumb son of a bitch.

LOGAN
What? That was the plan.

FRANK
That was not the plan. There's a hand brake up top. You were told to *unhitch* the car when it was movin' not blow it sky high, you idiot.
(pauses)
Jesus.

In a daze, Bill pops his head out from inside the fragmented passenger car.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(to Bill/Logan)
Get in there.

INT. TRAIN (EXPRESS CAR) - DAY

As Logan enters the car...

BOOM!

Buckshot fills him up. He drops. Frank and Bill take cover. Leaning up against the safe, the Expressman reloads his shotgun.

EXT. TRAIN (EXPRESS CAR) - DAY

Frank leans up against the car, pistols out.

FRANK
We're takin' what's in that strongbox, ya old pod. It ain't worth your life.
(pauses)
I won't say it again.

Frank looks to Bill then slowly inches down the side of the car with pistols extended.

BOOM!

The Expressman fires blindly through the side of the Express Car showering splinters of wood into Frank's face. He wipes the blood from his cheek. His eyes bead.

FRANK (CONT'D)
What'd I say? What. Did. I.
Say?

INT. TRAIN (EXPRESS CAR) - DAY

The Expressman rushes to reload. The smoke begins to clear. As he slowly stands and aims again...

Frank appears through the hole made by the Expressman's previous shot.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

EXT. TRAIN (EXPRESS CAR) - DAY

As rapid as machine gun fire, Frank fires through the hole.

INT. TRAIN (EXPRESS CAR) - DAY

Frank's lead fills the Expressman. THUD! Dead.

Bill hops into the car with his war bag, pistols drawn. He eyes the dead Expressman.

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (MAIN STREET) - DAY

People gather in the streets as Sheriff Louis and his posse high tail it out of town fully armed.

INT. TRAIN (EXPRESS CAR) - DAY

FRANK (OS)
Don't blow the damn thing up.

Bill fastens a stick of dynamite onto the safe, lights it, and jumps out.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

BILL (OS)
Cover!

CYRUS
Alright folks. Heads down unless
you wanna lose 'em.

Everyone cowers and ducks down tightly.

EXT. KANSAS PLAINS - DAY

As Sheriff Louis and his posse gallop through a shallow creek
toward the ruckus...

BOOM!

INT. TRAIN (EXPRESS CAR) - DAY

Frank and Bill enter the smoke filled car, safe's door blown
off.

INSIDE THE SAFE

It is filled to the brim with gold bars and Wells Fargo
payroll. Bill's jaw drops. Frank pats his brother on the
shoulder.

BILL
Mother of God.

FRANK
The Motherload.
(beat)
Get to it. The whole hog. With a
quickness.

Bill quickly fills bags with the safes' contents as Frank
turns away.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - DAY

Frank hops up into the car.

FRANK
We appreciate the hospitality
ladies and gentlemen. We'll be
leaving you now.
(beat)
See how easy that was?

He sees a man cringing and holding his bleeding arm.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Is there a doctor in here?

Silence.

FRANK (CONT'D)
This man needs help.

FROM THE FRONT

DOCTOR (OS)
I am.

FRANK
Well move your ass back here and
fix him up.

The DOCTOR (40's) stands and makes his way down the aisle.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(to Doctor)
Anybody else hurt, you tidy 'em up
until the authorities get here, you
got it?

DOCTOR
Yes, sir.

He motions to Cyrus.

FRANK
Let's go.

VOICE (OS)
(from outside)
U.S. Marshall. Come out with your
hands up.

Frank shakes his head. Cyrus looks out the window to see
half a dozen men crouched behind a hill fifty feet away with
weapons pointed straight at them.

CYRUS
They're lookin' right at us.
Gunnin' and ready.

FRANK
(sotto)
You gotta be kiddin'. Wasn't
s'posed to be this hard.

Frank reloads his pistols.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (calling out)
 You got women and children in here,
 Marshall. Unless you want this
 blood on your hands, I advise you
 to back off 'n let us ride on outta
 here.
 (to Cyrus)
 Bring her. Let's go.

ABIGAIL
 Git your damn hands off me.

Frank's reloaded.

FRANK
 Okay. Everybody up.
 Silence. Frank fires a shot into the ceiling.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Up.
 The passengers stand.

EXT. KANSAS PLAINS (NEARBY HILL) - DAY

The U.S. MARSHALL and his armed men are focused solely on the train. Through the windows of the passenger car all they see are standing bodies.

U.S. MARSHALL
 Damn it.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

On the ground from behind the car, Lefty's and Frank's eyes meet. In 3... 2... 1...

Lefty fires toward the Marshal and his men - Frank and Cyrus jump out of the car firing shots blindly toward the hill. The Marshall and his men eat dirt and take cover. Spits of dust pop up everywhere. Cyrus shields himself with Abigail.

CYRUS
 I gotchya.

FRANK
 Let's cut stick, boys. Git it on.

He looks around. Where's Bill?

FRANK (CONT'D)

(beat)

Bill!? Now!

BILL (OS)

You said, 'The Whole Hog'.

As Bill attempts to jump out of the Express Car, the Marshall and his men unload their Colts and Winchester's into it... fragments of the car flying everywhere forcing Bill back into it.

Frank and Lefty dump every bullet toward the hill trading gunfire with the lawmen. Cyrus attempts to hold the horses and get Abigail up on one.

Frank reaches for the rifle on his horse. Steady... Aim...

BANG! THHHHMP!

One of the Marshall's men is hit although not lethally.

Bill leaps out of the Express Car tumbles, recovers, and loads the last of the bags onto his horse.

In the distance, Frank HEARS hoofs. He turns and looks. Through the upkicked dirt is the Sheriff's posse.

FRANK (CONT'D)

How many are there?

BILL

Ah hell, Frank.

With the lawmen's gunfire continuous, Frank and his men reel their horses up and tear off across the plains. Frank is firing his rifle with great dexterity.

INT./EXT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - MINUTES LATER

Several of the Sheriff's posse blast by as the U.S. Marshall carefully enters the train with shotgun extended. Women cry and the baby is at it again.

VOICE

They're gone...they're all gone.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY

Sheriff Louis dismounts his horse and steps up to Logan, who's flat out in the dirt, gurgling on his own blood. The Sheriff points his gun straight at him.

LOGAN

Get a doctor.

The Sheriff steps on Logan's chest. Logan cringes.

SHERIFF LOUIS
How many are there?

LOGAN
I'm dying here. I said get me a
damn doctor.

Sheriff Louis looks into the Express Car and sees the dead
Expressman and gutted safe.

SHERIFF LOUIS
How 'bout I get you a damn pine box
instead.

Two shots right through the head.

Hearing the shots, the U.S. Marshall appears from the
Passenger Car with shotgun levelled.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
Sheriff Louis of Cherryvale. I
sent you the telegraph.

The Marshall lowers his shotgun.

EXT. KANSAS PLAINS - DAY

Frank and his men with Abigail saddled, rip across the drab
and derelict savanna. From the rear, Lefty and Bill trade
random gunfire with the trailing posse.

Lefty is bleeding from the neck. He's getting weaker.

BILL
Lefty.

Lefty's gun is empty. CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

LEFTY
I'm done Billy. I'm done.

BILL
Lefty. Hold on.

Abigail looks back. Lefty falls off his horse and drops and
tumbles like a sack of shit. Bill slows...the posse is
catching up.

FRANK
Let 'em go, Billy!

Bill stops, looks at the posse. He raises his Winchester and aims. A stand off.

ABIGAIL
(to Cyrus)
What the hell's he doin'?

Cyrus either doesn't hear her or doesn't care. There's no stopping him at this point.

BANG! Miss. Bill reloads. BANG! Miss. Gunfire zips by him until...

THHHHMP! Bill's hit in the shoulder, drops his rifle. He reels around and follows the others.

BILL
Heeya!

He tears off.

Seconds later, the posse tramples past the dead Lefty.

EXT. KANSAS PLAINS - DAY

Frank and his posse blaze across the horizon.

EXT. TRAIN - DAY - LATER

The Doctor tends the wounded. The posse stomps up and stops. LUKE (20's) dismounts. Sheriff Louis stares him down. Silence.

LUKE
We lost 'em, Sheriff.

The Sheriff chuckles.

SHERIFF LOUIS
What d'ya mean you lost 'em? They were right in front of you.

LUKE
They were...they've done this before, Sheriff. They were just too fast.

SHERIFF LOUIS
What're you ridin' mules? Christ.

Sheriff Louis punches the side of the train over and over.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
Damn it. Damn it. Damn it.
(beat)
They can't git far. Land's flatter
than a ten year old.

He turns and looks to the baker's dozen of dumbfounded men including the Marshall.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
What are ya, a bunch of Marys?
(beat)
You dumb sons a bitches.
(pauses)
Move! Do something! I want them
dead by dusk. Ya hear me? Dead!

EXT. KANSAS PLAINS (CREEK) - DAY

Frank, Bill, Cyrus and Abigail trot under the shade of a tree.

FRANK
Bill. How bad is it?

BILL
It's nothin'. Flesh wound.

The men dismount their horses and lead them to the creek for a watering. Frank goes to his brother. He's bleeding pretty good.

Cyrus, with one arm, eases Abigail off the back of his horse. She forcefully pulls him off, Cyrus landing horizontally onto the ground. She jumps on top of him and begins punching him.

CYRUS
Ow. Stop it.

After a few final swings, Abigail stands and steps onto Cyrus' wrist.

ABIGAIL
No one was supposed to die.

CYRUS
What? You knew your part.

ABIGAIL
You killed that man, Cyrus. Right there in front of everyone.

FRANK
Abigail, calm down.

Abigail kicks Cyrus several times. She steps away, Cyrus tries to stand. Abigail returns with one more. He gets to his feet and pushes her back - she stumbles back into the dirt and mud.

ABIGAIL
Strumpet? I ain't no whore you
bastard.

She heads straight for Bill, looks at his shoulder wound.

BILL
Are you okay, baby?

He doesn't look it.

FRANK
He'll be fine. Clean through.

She turns to Frank.

ABIGAIL
What the HELL are you thinking? No
one was supposed to get hurt.

BILL
Honey, it's okay. We just gotta
keep moving.

FRANK
Let me take a look at it.

She holds him off. Cyrus is finally up, shaking off his beating.

ABIGAIL
I think you've done enough, Frank.
(pauses)
'just one more train.' Well done.
Brilliant. Now he's gonna bleed to
death here in the middle of Kansas.

BILL
Abigail it's not that bad.

ABIGAIL
This was supposed to be for us. To
start our family. I don't care
about them.

Frank and Cyrus look at each other. Then to Bill. A family?
Bill smirks.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
(to Bill)
Right?

BILL
Of course, dear.

She kisses him on the lips. Then...

FRANK
Um...Abigail...

ABIGAIL
Come near me and I'll knock those
splinters right outta your face.

BILL
(pauses)
No I think he means...

Bill motions to Abigail with his eyes downward. A
rattlesnake is less than a foot away from her between the
group and the horses.

Without hesitation, she walks over to the rattler, rounds
behind it, snatches it up by the back of the head, and
pinches its jaw wide open. She points the snake at Frank and
Cyrus. They pull back reacting.

FRANK
Cute trick.

ABIGAIL
They shall take up serpents; and if
they drink any deadly thing, it
shall not hurt them...

She grabs it by the tail and gently dangles it releasing the
head - then walks it right past Frank and Cyrus toward the
creek and lets it go into the water. She turns back to the
startled men.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
Benefits of being raised Mountain
Pentecostal.

They all just kind of stare.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
Where's my stuff?

EXT. KANSAS PLAINS (CREEK) - DAY - LATER

Abigail in new more comfortable tomboyish threads tends to Bill's wound. She kisses him again.

ABIGAIL
We're getting you some help.
Right, Frank?

He'll live, but he's weak. Frank and Cyrus dig through the canvas bags of their winnings. Frank is looking for something.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
How long d'we plan on sitting here,
you two geniuses?

FRANK
Where's the map?

Silence.

CYRUS
Lefty had the map.

Abigail chuckles in disbelief...what a cluster. Frank looks to the sun as it is minutes away from sinking behind the horizon.

FRANK
Yeah, we're going to get him some
help. I know where we're going.
It's not far. Not far at all.
Let's go.

Abigail helps up her man. Cyrus gathers the dangling items and they mount their horses.

EXT. CHERRYVALE, KANSAS (SALOON) - AFTERNOON

Sheriff Louis and a couple of RAILROAD AGENTS are pulling together men for a posse.

SHERIFF LOUIS
...robbed a few miles outside of
town. That makes it our
responsibility to go after them.
We leave at first light.

AGENT
Now I've been authorized to make
payments of twenty dollars a day to
any man who...

The Sheriff leaves the crowd and heads up to the bar.

York sits at the bar. Sheriff slides over to him.

SHERIFF LOUIS
What about you?

YORK
Me?

SHERIFF LOUIS
Ride with us. I heard you used to
be some big shot with the army back
east during the war.

YORK
My posse days are long over
sheriff.

SHERIFF LOUIS
The man'll pay.

YORK
Do I look like I need the scratch?

Sheriff turns to take a drink.

YORK (CONT'D)
Besides, I'm here on business of my
own actually. Been waiting for my
brother to show - and he's late.
Very late.

SHERIFF LOUIS
(sarcastic)
Real sorry to hear that.

Takes another drink.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
Well if you ride with us we could
keep an eye out for your brother as
well.

YORK
Thanks. But I have some men with
me. I think we'll do a better job
looking on our own.

SHERIFF LOUIS
You have some men? I should've
known.

York gives a little nod.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
Ya know? I just realized. I don't
think I like you.

YORK
Well I'm all broken up to hear that
sheriff.

York grabs the drink that the bartender poured for the
sheriff and drinks it down. He places a coin on the bar and
heads off.

EXT. OSAGE TRAIL, KANSAS - SUNSET

Frank and gang discreetly ease down the trail as the sun
sets. There's nothing anywhere...for miles. Cyrus tends to
the rear watching for any followers.

A TARANTULA has a GRASSHOPPER in its clutches. It sits
motionless draining the blood out of it.

The gang rides by some signs for The Bender Inn. They ride
past and round the corner to see the lone structures up
against the hills.

EXT. BENDER INN - EVENING

Frank, the crew, and horses trot up. Pa is working out front
and turns to see them.

FRANK
Evenin'.

PA BENDER
Aup.

FRANK
We have an injured man here. We
could use some place to help clean
him up. Could also do with some
grub and drink.

PA BENDER
That's what we're here for.

They dismount and Frank hands Cyrus the horses. Abigail
helps Bill down.

Frank sees a cave or something up on the craggy hill behind
the Inn.

FRANK
What's up there?

PA BENDER
Ol' zinc mine. This area's
honeycombed with 'em. Never panned
out. Previous land owners dug 'em
an went bust. Ain't too safe down
there.

Franks looks at it. Zinc?

PA BENDER (CONT'D)
Well come on then. Just put the
horses round back.

Cyrus grabs the horses as Frank follows Pa in.

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

PA BENDER
Ma. Katie. We gots company.

Ma comes from back in the kitchen. Katie appears from a back
hallway. She is dressed in some kind of flowing robe thing -
she looks even better.

Frank sees Katie. She smiles.

KATIE
Why hello, stranger. That didn't
take long.

Frank looks around searching for anyone or anything
suspicious.

FRANK
Anybody else here?

KATIE
What? No. Just Ma and Pa.

FRANK
Good.

KATIE
Your kicks a bit more full now,
hon?

FRANK
That they are.

Abigail and an even weaker Bill sneak out of the dark to Katie's surprise.

KATIE

What's this?

FRANK

My brother's been hurt. Need to hole up for a few hours, maybe the night.

(pauses)

...and then of course once we get him squared away...you can give me that reading.

Katie smiles...she moves forward to help Abby with Bill. Abby sits Bill down. She pulls back his shirt to reveal the wound.

KATIE

Just what have you boys been up to?

FRANK

A misunderstanding.

KATIE

Usually is.

She yells back to Ma.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Ma. Bring out some water and some towels.

BILL

I'm fine. It's nuthin'.

ABIGAIL

If you bleed out much more that nuthin' will sure as hell turn into somethin'.

Ma comes over and begins to clean and bind the wound.

MA BENDER

Ah. That's be good one there.

While the girls tend to Bill, Frank heads over to the door as Cyrus comes in. Frank pulls him aside.

FRANK

What are you doing?

CYRUS
They're outta sight.

FRANK
Get back out there.

CYRUS
Come on. I'm hungry.

FRANK
The bags, you idiot. I'll have
somethin' brought out for ya in a
while. But keep a sharp eye out.
If someone's coming - I want to
know about it.

CYRUS
Okay. I'm on it.

Cyrus heads out into the night. Frank turns to see the
horrible looking jar of pickled cow balls. Pa comes up to
Frank.

PA BENDER
Ma has some fresh stew just put on.

FRANK
Great.

Frank makes his way over to Bill and Abby. Bill is laid
back. Abby is making him comfortable.

FRANK (CONT'D)
How we doin' here?

BILL
Fine and dandy.

ABIGAIL
He needs to rest a bit. He'll
live. No thanks to y...

FRANK
Watch it girlie.

Franks gives Abby a look. He walks over to the dining area.

PA BENDER
Come now. Get some food in ya all.

CLOSE UP of some chunks of meat being dropped in and cooked
and added to a stew like brew.

Ma cooking at the stove.

Frank sits down at the table and Katie places a plate of stew in front of him.

FRANK

Thanks.

He tries it - not too bad.

FRANK(CONT'D)

It's good.

KATIE

Ma's special.

Katie smiles.

FRANK

So how exactly doesn't this -
reading thing work?

KATIE

Well...once you finish up, I'll
take you back and show you.

Frank smiles back to Abby and Bill.

ABIGAIL

(to Bill)

Just take it easy.

BILL

I'll a -- I'll just take a little
rest...

Bill closes his eyes. Abby watches him for a moment - then heads over to the dining area. Frank sits eating already with Katie. Ma pours him a drink as well. Abby is about to sit down when she looks at herself - still filthy from her run in with Cyrus earlier.

ABIGAIL

Anywhere I can clean up?

KATIE

Sure. I was just pouring a bath
when y'all rode up. It should
still be hot.

ABIGAIL

I don't want to--

KATIE

No bother. Just in the back house.
Through there.

Abby reluctantly heads out back. Frank watches her leave but then turns his attention back to the smirking Katie.

Pa looks over the room. He quickly locks eyes with Ma and then Katie.

EXT. BENDER INN (HITCHING POST) - NIGHT

As the thwarted Cyrus reaches the horses he notices there are only two. He scans the area, but the darkness is thickening and there are no signs of the thoroughbred.

CYRUS

Ah man.

He begins his search.

EXT. BENDER INN (ORCHARD AREA) - NIGHT

Walking around the back of the main house Cyrus looks everywhere, but to no avail.

With no sound other than the winds and the only light coming from the lanterns inside the main house - Cyrus searches - the ambient light disappearing the further he delves across the uneven orchard around back of the buildings. Quieter and darker.

CYRUS

Dex. Where the hell are you? Dex!

(sotto)

He's gonna kill me. Frank's gonna kill me.

A LIGHT glows in a back building. He turns to look.

CYRUS' POV of a female silhouette disrobing. He moves towards it.

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abby drops the last of her dusty and dirty clothes on the floor. She reaches her hand into the steaming water.

EXT. BENDER INN - NIGHT

Cyrus smiles, a creepy smile. He moves in closer for a better look.

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abby slides one leg into the water.

EXT. BENDER INN - NIGHT

Cyrus moves even closer when--

SNAP!

Cyrus hears a branch break and spins around toward it.

CYRUS
Who's there? Dex!

Only able to see twenty feet in front of him, he sees nothing, but something is moving.

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abby hears something and turns to look.

EXT. BENDER INN - NIGHT

Cyrus crouches down to not be seen. Abby looks around and then goes back.

CYRUS
Shit.

Cyrus carefully steps along. More noises out in front of him.

For what seems to be an eternity, Cyrus finally sees the escapee, CRUNCHING on some grass. As Cyrus moves up to grab the horse - it spooks and trots just out of grip.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
Damn it Dex.

Cyrus heads off following after Dex around the side into another area. He finally sneaks up and quickly grabs the reins.

POV OF SOMEONE WATCHING CYRUS from a distance.

CYRUS (CONT'D)
Damn you, Dex. C'mon.

INT. KATIE'S PARLOUR - NIGHT

Katie leads Frank into the room and closes the door. The room is a cross between a madam's bedroom at a brothel and witch's workroom. Frank looks around at the wall covered on shelves of strange looking books and artifacts.

Looking as sexy as hell - Katie - in a new more sinister but hotter wardrobe - lights a lamp and adjusts the flame. She drapes a cloth over it to give the room a nice dim red glow.

Frank begins to undo his shirt.

KATIE

Whoa there cowboy. We must consult the spirits first.

FRANK

I've got plenty of mone--

KATIE

I always consult the spirits.

She motions Frank to sit down. He does begrudgingly.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Mr. Nestor...

FRANK

Frank.

She indicates his holster and gunbelt.

KATIE

Frank. If you don't mind.

FRANK

Oh. Sure.

He takes it off and drapes it onto a corner table.

KATIE

The spirts can be funny about such things.

FRANK

Yeah. The spirits.

He sits. She lights a strange looking candle and sets it on the table. She grabs some powder and drops it onto the flame - the flares rise up and smoke. Frank pulls back a bit. Katie sits down in a very deliberate manner.

She pushes forward to Frank a deck of TAROT CARDS.

KATIE

Shuffle and choose four cards.

Frank shuffles and then deals out four cards. Katie turns them over one by one - studying each - the final card being the DEATH CARD.

FRANK

Whoa. That don't seem too good.

KATIE

It's not to be taken literally. It means change is in your future. A new path.

She sweeps up the cards and puts them aside. She pulls out a chalice with a large dagger sitting in it. She removes the dagger and places it on the table and pours some kind of wine or something into the cup. She takes a drink then offers it to Frank.

She pulls out a chalice with a large dagger sitting in it. She removes the dagger and places it on the table. She pours some kind of wine or something into it. She takes a drink then offers it to Frank.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Please. Drink.

Frank does...it must not taste too good. Whatever it is - it ain't whiskey. She opens her hand to him. He reaches out and puts his hand in hers.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Now. Let's call upon the watchtowers to open the gates.

She grabs his hand and leans her head back and begins murmuring in some gibberish.

Frank - okay...when do we get to the sex part?

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abigail is in the tub - laying back relaxing - trying to be as far from here and the whole situation as possible.

POV of SOMEONE LOOKING at her through a crack in the wall. We hear BREATHING.

Her eyes are closed totally unaware.

INT. BENDER INN - NIGHT

Bill sits sleeping in the same corner.

A HAND REACHES OUT and slips his Colt out of his holster slowly.

EXT. BENDER INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - NIGHT

Cyrus continues walking in the dark. Approaching what he believes is the main house, Cyrus looks closer. It's a cabin alright, but smaller, tattered, and without windows. There's a steel stove connected to the exterior and a tin funnel peering out the top. He sniffs the air. It smells good.

Dex eats more grass. Cyrus gently releases the reins.

CYRUS

Stay here.

Cyrus inches up and after a few forceful tugs opens the fragile door.

CREAK...

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

Katie starts whipping her head around quicker as her speech gets louder but even more incoherent.

She SNAPS her head forward - her eyes are white. Frank pulls back but her hand holds his tight.

She opens her mouth and some stringy gelatinous material spills out onto the table (ectoplasm).

Frank recoils in disgust.

Katie coughs the rest of it out - it almost seems to be moving on its own - like giving birth from her mouth. When she looks back up - her eyes are back to normal but she looks different.

KATIE

(evil voice)

The spirits are with us now...

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abby sits still in the water.

POV through the wall crack...the BREATHING gets louder.

Abigail's eyes snap open and the SOUND STOPS. She sits up and looks around.

ABIGAIL

Hello?

Nothing. All quiet. She slips back into the tub.

INT. BENDER INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - NIGHT

Cyrus enters...flames from two stoves FLICKER, illuminating the creepy shack. Cyrus enters carelessly more curious than interested. Several makeshift cubicle containers connected with pipes.

Cyrus opens one - metal grates on multiple shelves. He looks in then looks around...grabbing a nearby tool, he slides out one of the grates. Slices of meat...smoked meat...he's going to dig in.

He grabs a few pieces filling his pockets. Before he puts it away...one more. He closes it up.

Chewing on a piece, Cyrus checks out the rest of the crowded smokehouse.

CREAK!

Cyrus spins at the sound hitting a rack of hanging meat.

CYRUS

Shit.

He quiets the ruckus - he looks closer. Skinned horse, cow, and a few smaller carnivores. Then...

A pair of chaps still attached to the dried corpse. He sees the man's hand, fingernails. Cyrus nearly vomits as he drops the jerky and backs up.

CYRUS (CONT'D)

(in crescendo)

Oh my god. Frank. Frank.

Fraaaaa...

Lightning fast, from behind him, something grabs his pistol from his holster. He looks down...unarmed. He spins to...

SPLIONCH!

One of the many tools in the shack straight through Cyrus' neck. A MAMMOTH of a shadow envelopes him. Horrified and falling into everything as he stumbles backward, gripping at his throat he...

EXT. BENDER INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - NIGHT

FALLS out the door onto his back, gushing blood. Junior appears in the doorway now with a large hammer hanging from his grip.

Cyrus picks himself up, looking for his horse. Scrambling around with only seconds to live, stumbling away, and reaching for anything in front of him he trips and...

THUD!

Cyrus falls into a pit filled with soft, fresh dirt. He looks over. The ankles and shoes of a young girl...probably eight years of age extend vertically out of the earth.

He quickly realizes it's a shallow grave and in fact...it's now his grave as well.

Turning over he looks up just as the three foot sledge hammer flies down. He puts his hand up and the head of the hammer takes his hand with force and CHRUSHES it into the pit. He'd scream if he had a throat. He looks up.

The hammer is up again...extended up over Junior's head.

CRYUS'S POV of the HAMMER AS IT SWINGS RIGHT DOWN ON US!

KERRUNCH!

SMASH TO BLACK.

INT. BENDER INN - NIGHT

Bill sleeps - unaware of anything.

WHUMP!

A HAND swings the BUTT of his Colt down to his temple - hard. He grunts as he falls over onto the floor - out cold.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

Katie is in full on seance mode now. Frank's not sure if bedding any broad is worth all this.

KATIE

You're on a journey. Fit full of danger. Danger all around you - but also great treasure. I see - I see a change in your plans - a detour.

Frank starts to pay closer attention.

FRANK

Detour? What kind?

KATIE

Someone...no something is after you...forcing you to change plans. You won't be reaching your destination as planned.

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

POV OF ABBY through crack - the BREATHING STARTS AGAIN

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

FRANK

Where are we gonna change our plans to?

KATIE

Ahhh...hard to see - I see - I see you staying here for a while.

FRANK

Here?

KATIE

Yes. You will be here. And I'm being commanded - commanded by the spirits to...

FRANK

Yes?

KATIE

...to make sure you stay here... forever.

FRANK

What?

Just then - the bookcase directly behind Frank silently slides open.

JUNIOR STANDS RIGHT THERE BEHIND HIM!

Katie looks directly at Frank now and smiles.

Junior's HUGE HAND grabs Frank around the mouth and as Frank reacts...

Katie's hand swings from under the table with the DAGGER and brings it down onto his wrist! IMPALING it to the table.

Frank's muffled scream cries out!

Katie shoves the table aside with Frank's hand still stuck to it and she dives down below - pulling off Frank's pants and swings out her BOWIE KNIFE.

CLOSE ON FRANK AS HE SCREAMS.

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abby hears Frank's muffled scream and her eyes snap open...

THERE RIGHT ABOVE HER IS FREAKY HUGE MA BENDER!

Ma grabs Abby's head and shoves her underwater.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

Frank is still struggling in Junior's grasp, screaming as Katie comes up from below with something bloody in her hand.

Junior throws Frank to the floor - covered in blood from the waist down. Katie just laughs...

Frank rolls on his back and looks up to see...

Junior with the HUGE TWIST HAMMER - brings it down with a mighty blow - FLATTENING Frank's head like a watermelon. Bits of brain and scalp spray like some deranged Gallagher concert.

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abigail struggles gasping for air as Ma's huge arms hold her down.

We get bits of screams and gasps as she fights for her life - but Ma is too strong.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

MOVE with Katie as she walks out of the room - her hand still clutching something - and with her down the hallway and out to the main room.

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

Pa stands with the Colt in hand. Bill is spread out on the floor.

Katie walks by and up to the bar and right up to the pickle jar. She opens the lid and then drops in two bloody balls of meat into it.

She turns and smiles at her loving Pa.

INT. BENDER INN (BATH AREA) - NIGHT

Abby struggles slowly - then stops - she is still. Ma yanks her out of the water just before she completely drowns. Abby coughs and spits up water. She rolls onto her stomach and looks up at the hideous Ma smiling with glee.

Abby's eyes flutter and she loses consciousness.

ABIGAIL'S POV of Ma as Junior walks up with his idiot grin.

FADE TO BLACK.

WHITE.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The next day...all seems calm.

In the distance WE SEE Junior tugging the chains of a pulley system. It's some sort of well...or ditch. Upon closer look, this pulley contraption with chains, ropes, and a metal platform is being lowered into the earth...with Bill attached to it. He's still unconscious.

Bored with the time it will take to lower Bill all the way, Junior releases the chains. The pulley accelerates.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (SHAFT) - DAY

Bill crashes into the bottom of the pit at full speed. He grunts in pain with the impact.

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY

After looking down, Junior turns and walks away.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

We hear bits and pieces of VOICES from somewhere else. It's not English - sounds like German. We can't make it out. Then we hear...

VOICE (OS)
 ...out back as soon as you can.
 Don't want 'em starting to spoil.
 Can't do nuthin' with spoiled meat.

SOMEONE'S FUZZY POV - we look around a room - nothing much to see - no windows at all.

Some strange looking furry things on the floor - can't make them out. More VOICES - we start to recognize them.

KATIE (OS)
 I don't see why he gets to keep
 his.

POV begins looking around the room - frantically. That blood stained doll lies in one corner of the floor.

PA BENDER (OS)
 You know full well why. How he
 gets if he doesn't have someone to -
 - to play with.

PULL BACK to reveal - Abigail - nude - trussed up in some sort of harness. She is bent over - legs shackled to the ground and spread apart. Her body is forced forward and her arms are tied out in front. A BIT GAG is in her mouth.

The whole device looks like the kind of MATING RIG used for breeding mares.

Abby's eyes are wild with fear. She strains and pulls trying to move and look around the room.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - DAY

Ma, Pa, and Katie clean up from last night.

KATIE

I don't see why I can't just take care of him like I used to.

MA BENDER

Ja. Katie take care of Jüngere.

PA BENDER

Na, na...we can't afford him getting carried away. You know how he is. Once he gets going he can't stop.

KATIE

Oh I can handle him Poppa.

PA BENDER

We can't be losin' our greatest product.

She smiles - almost flirting with the disgusting man.

PA BENDER (CONT'D)

If he ever put a mark on your beautiful face...

Pa caresses her in a very unfatherly way. Katie smiles - she likes it.

PA BENDER (CONT'D)

If he were to break you like he did that Richardson girl I'd hate like hell 'n take 'em out back and have to put him down. That'd just kill your Ma.

KATIE

Aww Daddy. She kisses him on the cheek.

Katie turns to the direction of the room Abigail is trussed up in.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Well at least this one looks pretty strong. She should be able to last a little while.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Overhearing the conversation, Abby reacts. She has got to get out of here - now!

The door opens and Katie looks in at Abby. Abby struggles and screams through the gag - we can only imagine what she is yelling at her.

KATIE
Good morning, doll.

More muffled screams.

KATIE (CONT'D)
(beat)
Shhh, shhh, now. Don't tire
yourself out honey. You'll be
needin' your strength.

Katie takes a long slow look over Abby's exposed and restrained body. Her eyes linger a little too long.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Nice. Such lovely skin...

She smirks.

KATIE (CONT'D)
At least for now.

Abigail's eyes burn with rage. She screams through the gag.

ABIGAIL
FFHHHHRRRRRUUKK YYYYOOOOUHHHHFFF!

KATIE
This one's got some spirit. Looks
like this mare is ready to be rode.

She heads back out of the room. Her voice trailing off.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Where is he anyway?

PA BENDER
Out back. Workin' the smokehouse.

Voices trail out of earshot.

Abby still looks around for something - anything. She sees a lone square nail sticking out slightly out of one of the floorboards. It's not much - but it's something.

She strains to reach for it - not even close. She keeps trying.

INT. BENDER INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - DAY

SPLAT!

Frank's body slaps down onto a table. Meat and corpses in varying stages of dismemberment hang in the background as Junior rips Frank's bloodied shirt off and throws it over onto a pile. He hacks the upper body up, starting with the neck, throwing chunks into the smokers.

He stops and looks over at some clothes piled in the corner. A young girl's yellow dress - dirtied with brown, crusted blood stains.

He leans over and picks it up. He sniffs it and then rubs it on his face. A different look emerges...lust.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Abby strains at her tied wrists. Pulling with all her might to no avail.

CRR-CHUNK

Abby turns to the noise.

She sees a TRAP DOOR IN THE FLOOR open up and Junior comes climbing out from below!

Abigail SCREAMS her muffled plea again.

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - DAY

Katie, Ma, and Pa turn when they hear Abby.

KATIE

I guess playtime is about to begin.

Pa and Katie laugh. Ma shakes her head and goes back to her cleaning.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Junior moves close to Abby. She pulls away as much as she can unable to do much.

Junior leans in - smelling her hair. He takes a big whiff. He moves to her face - and LICKS it - long, slow, lick.

Tears start to flow down her face. This can't be happening to her.

Junior moves back - into position behind her - between her legs. He grunts and giggles. He undoes his overalls and lets them fall to the floor.

Abigail shakes with all her might trying to do something... anything.

Junior moves forward and leans over her and is just about there as...

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - DAY

Katie and Pa turn towards the front door as...

SOUNDS OF HORSES RIDDING UP out front.

Pa quickly motions to Katie. She moves down the hall.

INT. BENDER'S INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Katie bursts in just in time. She grabs Junior and pulls him back. He fights her for a moment.

KATIE

Men outside. She'll wait. Come on. Pa needs us.

Junior pulls up his drawers and slips down into the trap door.

Abby strains to see what's going on. She has a short reprieve - she won't get another one. She pulls with all her might on her wrist - the ropes dig into her flesh as she pulls.

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY

Sheriff Louis and his posse ride up. Pa exits to greet them.

PA BENDER

Afternoon gents.

SHERIFF LOUIS

Bender. We're looking for some men.

PA BENDER

Men?

SHERIFF LOUIS

Ya. They robbed the Flyer
yesterday a fer piece outside of
town. Three men. They may have
had a woman hostage with'em as
well.

Katie comes out along with Ma.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)

Ma'am. Mrs. Bender.

KATIE

Sheriff.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Abby is pulling as hard as she can - blood starting to drip
and stream down her wrist. The rope is starting to give and
slide.

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY

SHERIFF LOUIS

Just wonderin' if you seen anyone.

PA BENDER

No. Ain't seen nobody for days.
Business been a bit slow. Robbed
the train ya say?

SHERIFF LOUIS

Made off with a payroll and some
gold.

KATIE

That so?

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Abigail pulls hard and fights the pain as the rope peels back
her skin even more until finally - it strips free. One hand
out...she pulls and leans down to grab the nail.

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY

Sheriff leans, looks around back, and sees a large figure.

SHERIFF LOUIS
That your boy there?

Pa looks to see Junior coming out of the smokehouse.

PA BENDER
Oh, ya. He don't have much
upstairs - but he's strong as an
ox.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Abby pulls the nail out and uses it to undo her other wrist. She quickly pulls herself out of the harness and undoes her leg cuffs - she's free.

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY

From fifty feet away, Junior looks over at the men still a bit wound up. The Railroad Agent impatience grows.

AGENT
Sheriff. I feel we're wasting time
here.

SHERIFF LOUIS
Well, if you do see anyone that...

PA BENDER
Of course - we see anyone strange
like we'll let you know.

Oh, the irony.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Abby looks around searching for a way out. She looks out the door and sees Ma standing at the main doorway - no go that way.

She looks back to the room...no other door. Then she looks to the floor...the trap door.

She looks around for a lever or something - she finds it and pulls -

CRR-CHUNK

It opens up...dark passage looms below.

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY

The Sheriff and his men ride off. Pa and Kate watch them go. Pa turns to Katie.

PA BENDER
Gold and payroll?

KATIE
Didn't find anything like that on them.

PA BENDER
I'll check their horses.

He moves off around back passing Junior.

PA BENDER (CONT'D)
You finish that cowboy up yet? I don't wanna catch you playin' til ya have.

Pa continues on...Junior just stands there. Damn chores.

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

Abby looks down into the pit. She hears Ma and Katie coming back into the main room.

Abby has no choice. Still in her birthday suit, she climbs down and pulls the door down behind her.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (TUNNEL) - DAY

Only three feet wide by five feet high, Abigail makes her way through the dark and is crouched down. A lone lamp glows down at one end. Wood slats all along the walls secure the structure from caving in...it creaks...the earth shifts.

We realize that we are in the modified in progress tunnels of the zinc mine Pa talked about...

She slowly makes her way along toward the light up ahead...terrified.

EXT. BENDER INN (STABLE) - DAY

Pa arrives at and digs through Frank's saddle bags - he pulls out something heavy - the loot. And gold bars.

PA BENDER
I'll be...

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM - DOOR) - DAY

Katie walks up to the door leading to where Abigail is being held. She leans up against it and listens. Nothing...

KATIE
Poor little thing tuckered herself
out.

INT. BENDER INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - DAY

The door in the floor peeps open. Abigail peers out. She sees Frank's boots at the edge of the table. All is clear, for now.

She jumps out and rushes up to the table.

ABIGAIL
Frank. Frank.

His lifeless, headless, armless corpse. Blood everywhere.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
Omigod. No, Frank, no.

Seeing the pile of clothes, she rushes to it, fishes, finds some cowboy's old threads and quickly dresses. No shoes.

Sneaking to the door, she inches it open, looks out, seeing Pa Bender shutting the doors to the stable. He turns and walks in the direction of the smokehouse.

Between here and the main house Abigail sees Junior approaching. She retreats...

Looking for any sort of weapon she grabs a steel rod, lifts the trap door, and descends.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (TUNNEL) - DAY

Making her way down the corridor, Abigail stops. Slats are attached to the side wall. She looks between them into the darkness...another tunnel. Quickly Abigail pulls off the slats one by one using the steel rod as leverage.

She jumps between the slats and into the tunnel.

INT. BENDER INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - DAY

Junior enters and heads straight for the table to finish dismembering Frank's corpse.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (STEEP TUNNEL) - DAY

Far steeper than the other tunnel, Abigail carefully moves as fast as she can...downward...to where nobody knows. The earth around her shifts again. Dirt and dust fall around her. She stops, steadies herself, and continues on.

After a few feet, Abigail loses her footing and begins to slide. Faster and faster...reaching for anything she can, she finally stops upon hitting and dislodging a few boards.

EXT. BENDER INN (ORCHARD AREA) - DAY

The shallow grave/pit with Cyrus' body shifts and sinks.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (STEEP TUNNEL) - DAY

The earth shakes again. She looks up...the earth is giving way. Before she is able to move, large chunks of dirt begin falling. Faster and faster, more and more. She tries to fight off the incoming, gasping for air.

Within seconds the above gives way completely SLAMMING Abigail with a tremendous amount of dirt. Digging and fighting, she turns to see CYRUS' BODY along with the decayed body of a young girl and man. SHE SCREAMS!

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - DAY

Ma and Katie stop what they are doing and listen. A beat... Katie jumps up and heads straight to...

INT. BENDER INN (DARK ROOM) - DAY

The door flies open. Katie stands there. Abigail is gone.

KATIE
(yelling)
Junior!

EXT. BENDER INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - DAY

Junior barrels out of the smokehouse and straight for the main house.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (STEEP TUNNEL) - DAY

With the sunlight now blasting down into the mine, Abigail looks down. She is able to see the bottom - a ladder or something. She digs through the dirt then races down the shaft.

AT THE BOTTOM

Abigail arrives...Bill is attached to the pulley system.

ABIGAIL
Bill. Billy. Billy.

He moans...dried blood all down the side of his head. Several bones fractured. She kisses him.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
Oh Billy. I'm so sorry. We have
to get out of here.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (TUNNEL) - DAY

Katie hits the bottom, just under the dark room, a scaling knife in her hand.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (BOTTOM) - DAY

Abigail tugs and pulls on the ropes and chains.

ABIGAIL
I don't know, I don't know. How
does it work?

BILL
Just pull.

She does - Hard. CCCCLICK! The platform lifts a foot off the ground.

BILL (CONT'D)
Again, honey. Pull it again.

CCCCCLICK! Another foot. She looks up. Daylight.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (TUNNEL) - DAY

Katie runs down the tunnel toward the smokehouse.

KATIE

I see your future little one.

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - DAY

Ma Bender loads a shotgun.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (SHAFT) - DAY

CCCCCLICK! Another foot. Abigail and Bill are reaching the top.

BILL

Again.

CCCCCLICK!

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (TUNNEL) - DAY

Katie closes the trap door to the smokehouse, descends the ladder, and heads back down the tunnel.

KATIE

You little bitch where are you?

She stops...looks to her right, sees the boards ripped away, leading into the steep tunnel. She crawls in.

INT./EXT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (SHAFT) - DAY

They're almost there...just ten more feet. Abigail heaves with all her might. CCCCCCLICK! And then...

JUNIOR APPEARS AT THE TOP looking down. Abigail screams. Bill is too weak too. She releases the pulley in mid-motion and it snaps one of the teeth. The wheel spins, the platform diving downward.

Reaching terminal velocity, Junior reaches out with one hand and grabs the chain. The platform locks, but doesn't stop. The contraption RIPS BILL'S head right off taking his entire spinal column with it.

The platform continues downward until Abigail hits the ground with it. She looks over, most of Bill is there...well except for his head and spinal cord. That's thirty feet up.

Junior pivots his head then backs away.

With her remaining strength, Abigail races back UP the tunnel...where she started.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE (STEEP TUNNEL) - DAY

Abigail climbs up the shaft and reaches the mound of dirt and corpses. Katie's silhouette in the distance headed right for her.

KATIE

Where are you going?

Abigail frantically looks for something. Anything. Looking up, she sees the hole...the one the caved in, shallow grave created, leading out. She climbs grabbing wood, boards, rocks, using everything as a step on her way up.

KATIE'S HAND grabs her leg. Katie swipes at Abigail with the scaling knife. She connects. Deep. Blood gushes.

Abigail kicks. Nothing. A piece of wood in Abigail's hand gives way and pulls from the earth. In one fluid motion Abigail swings it downward.

SLAP!

Right into Katie's hand, impaling it with a nail on the bottom. Katie screams. Abigail climbs faster.

Katie rips the piece of wood from the back of her hand.

EXT. BENDER'S INN (ORCHARD AREA) - DAY

Abigail claws her way out of the grave, flips onto her back, gasps for air.

ABIGAIL

Billy. Cyrus. God all of 'em.

She'd cry, but doesn't have the energy. Looking over, she sees Ma Bender outside of the main house...shotgun in her grip. She heads for Abigail.

Abigail forces herself with all her might to her feet... runs. Focused more on what's behind her more than what's in front of her, she sprints.

She heads in the only direction she can - back up the craggy hillside. Getting further and further away from Ma Bender as she scales the steep hill. She's safe. Until...

She runs right smack into PA BENDER coming out from the main mine entrance.

PA BENDER
He's gonna hate to lose another
playmate - but you just too damn
much trouble girlie.

He has a large AXE in his hand. He moves forward. Her back is to the steep hillside. Ma is coming up from below.

ABIGAIL
No. No, please no. No.

Pa Bender launches at her - she dodges and stumbles back and trips over some rocks and stumbles into--

A small opening in the ground - a pit. She tumbles down bouncing off the walls of the narrow cave.

Finally she hits the floor some thirty feet below. She is knocked out cold.

Ma makes it up alongside Pa. They look down and start laughing.

INT. SNAKE DEN - DAY

Abby's motionless body lies in the dim light.

BUZZING SOUND GROWING LOUDER AND LOUDER!

WE realize some movement around her. The cave is filled with HUNDREDS OF RATTLESNAKES. It's a rattlesnake den.

EXT. BENDER INN (HILLS) - DAY

Ma and Pa let out a little laugh as they turn back down the hill.

INT. SNAKE DEN - DAY

The snakes are everywhere. All around her.

HOLD ON ABIGAIL'S lifeless face as a rattler flicks its forked tongue along her cheek.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. OSAGE TRAIL - SUNSET

THE TARANTULA once again makes its way over and through the rocks looking for its next meal.

A GIANT WASP lands on the back of the big spider - its huge stinger poises and STINGS it square in the head. The tarantula shakes and spasms trying to dislodge its attacker to no avail. The predator has become the prey.

The arachnid gives one last attempt but the wasp shows no mercy - the tarantula stops moving - paralyzed. The wasp's eggs will have a good place to hatch and feed in the spider's body. That's why she's called a TARANTULA HAWK.

Out in the distance a lone figure appears - on a horse - riding out of the sunset - just as the opening of the film.

DARK STORM CLOUDS are on the horizon building.

The lone figure separates into three men on horseback as it comes into view. We recognize them as York and two of his men.

Unlike his brother - this York knows how to ride. Looks like he was born in the saddle.

They ride by the Bender Inn signs.

EXT. BENDER INN - SUNSET

Pa Bender looks at the gold bars. Something pulls his attention and he looks up.

York and his men ride up - a flash of lightning in the clouds behind silhouettes them for a moment.

Pa covers up the gold and slides it out of sight. We catch a quick glimpse of something reflecting the last rays of sunlight under the porch stairs as he moves the loot.

Pa turns back to York.

YORK
Evening sir.

PA BENDER
Aup. Evenin'. What can we do for ya?

York dismounts. The other two stay back on horseback scanning the grounds with experienced eyes.

YORK
You the proprietor here?

PA BENDER
Yep. Me and my family.

YORK
Mister Bender is it?

PA BENDER
Yes -- Mister?

YORK
York. Colonel York actually.

A hint of recognition in Pa's eyes.

PA BENDER
You and your men need some drink or food?

YORK
Actually were looking for some information. Hoping maybe you'll be of some help.

PA BENDER
Sure.

Just then Katie appears at the doorway. She cleaned up well - and quickly - a bandage on her hand. York sees her and takes his hat off.

YORK
Ma'am. A pleasure.

KATIE
Why thank you, Colonel. I'm Miss Katie.

York moves forward and grabs her hand.

YORK
Yes. I know. I saw some of your last show the other night.

KATIE
So how can we be of help Mr. York?

YORK
I'm looking for my brother. He was supposed to meet me back in Cherryvale, but he's long overdue - so we are retracing his path.
(MORE)

YORK (CONT'D)

He's a doctor -- dark suit, square hat. You haven't seen him, have you?

KATIE

Afraid not. Pa?

PA BENDER

Nah. Been real slow around here for a while. Not much travelers.

YORK

Ah. Oh well. I appreciate your time then. If you do see anyone or him...

KATIE

Of course.

York turns back toward his men and horse. Katie walks over to him.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Colonel York?

YORK

Yes?

KATIE

You said you caught my last show in town.

YORK

Yes. Quite...interesting.

KATIE

Then you know that perhaps...I can be of some help to you.

YORK

That so?

She starts to turn on the flirt.

KATIE

Indeed. See, Mr. York...the spirits know and see all. They may be able to guide you as to where to find your brother.

YORK

Well I'm a little more interested
in finding some information out
here in the physical world. But
thank you.

Her hands move up onto his chest.

KATIE

Well if you change your mind, come
back later tonight. I'm sure it
would turn out to be...quite useful
to you.

She moves away from him and looks back.

KATIE (CONT'D)

And be sure to come back...alone.

She winks.

York shakes his head. Not sure what to make of her.

He turns back to his horse - but for a split second -
something catches his eye.

CLOSE UP on his reaction - as his poker face takes back over.

He turns back to his men and horse. He climbs on.

FLASH OF LIGHTNING in the background.

York turns to face the Benders. A different look in his
eyes.

YORK

Thanks again for your time.

CLAP OF THUNDER rolls in.

YORK (CONT'D)

You've been most helpful.

York leads his men off back onto the trail and around the
hills.

Katie and Pa watch them ride off. The storm draws closer.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BENDER INN - NIGHT

The storm is much closer now. Wind gusts through the trees. Another flash of lighting illuminates the building.

INT. BENDER INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

A plate of meat slaps down on the table. Ma drops down some more stew and some trimmings. We linger on the meat for a bit.

Pa walks over to sit down for supper.

Katie comes out from her lair.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

The three look at each other. They didn't hear anyone ride up. Katie goes over to the door and opens it.

There stands York - backlit against the incoming storm. This takes Katie by surprise a bit. She quickly composes herself.

KATIE

Colonel York. What a surprise. We didn't hear you ride up?

YORK

Sorry to give y'all a startle. I went ahead and stored my pony around back - the storm comin' and all. May I?

KATIE

Please. Do come in.

York enters - takes off his hat and outer coat.

YORK

Thank ya. Some weather comin' in.

PA BENDER

Ya. Could be a good'in.

KATIE

I thought you and your men were continuing your search?

YORK

I sent my men on ahead to Independence. See what they could find. I just got to thinking about what you said before.

(MORE)

YORK (CONT'D)

If there was something - some kind of help you could provide - and I didn't take you up on it - well, I'd never forgive myself.

KATIE

Well we can certainly try. We were just about to sit down for supper. Would you care to join us?

She motions to York to sit - the same chair up against the canvas back wall that his brother had his last meal at.

York looks at the table, the seat, and canvas.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Please.

PA BENDER

Yes. Join.

He thinks twice - the gunfighter in him not liking his back to anything but a solid wall.

YORK

Why thank you for the offer, but I already ate with my men on the trail. And I am actually quite anxious to see what you can divine Miss Katie.

Katie is a little displeased, but covers well.

KATIE

Indeed. Well then. Follow me.

She leads him out of the room and down the hallway.

Pa and Ma watch York closely.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

Katie and York enter...she moves to her table, begins her preparations - lighting candles etc. York scans the room.

YORK

I've never really done this sort of thing before. Heard of some gal when I was back east that would do this sort of thing. She was exposed as some sort of charlatan.

(MORE)

YORK (CONT'D)

Would put cheesecloth dipped in fat
in her mouth and let it drip out or
some such thing. Claim it was
proof of the spirits presence.

York looks over to Katie. She quickly moves something out of sight.

YORK (CONT'D)

Don't do anything like that do you?

KATIE

(covering)

No, of course not.

YORK

Good. I'd hate to think I was here
wasting my time on some snipe hunt.

She turns around. He sees the bandage on her hand.

YORK (CONT'D)

That looks painful.

KATIE

Oh. Yes. Work around the place.
We all have our jobs to do out
here.

She motions for him to sit. He quickly sizes it up. His
back to the wall - good.

KATIE (CONT'D)

And if you wouldn't mind, your
belt.

YORK

Of course.

York takes it off, hangs it in the corner, and takes a seat.
She sits as well. She pulls out the Tarot cards and places
them in front of him.

KATIE

Shuffle please. And take four.

York grabs the cards, shuffles them expertly - even giving
them a fancy one handed cut - deals out four.

Katie turns them over and studies them as York seems to be
studying her.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Yes. I see. I can see your
confusion and something missing.

YORK
Really?

KATIE
Yes. Give me your hand a moment.

He does. She grabs it in hers and closes her eyes.

KATIE (CONT'D)
Hmmm -- yes. He has been delayed.
Away from here - from his
destination.

YORK
Can you see where?

KATIE
I see...I see a river. Large
trees. And...

She snaps open her eyes and is out of breath. She lets go of
his hand.

KATIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry - the spirits - like the
winds...are restless tonight. Very
hard to commune.

YORK
Oh. Well maybe I can help.

KATIE
You?

York grabs the tarot cards again.

KATIE (CONT'D)
What are...

YORK
I can do a reading for you.

KATIE
I don't usually...

He spreads the cards in his hands with a springing motion
into a lovely fan.

YORK
Please. Choose one.

She is taken aback.

KATIE
Colonel I don't...

YORK
I insist.

WE SEE he has the shiner (mirror) concealed in his hand just like when he was playing poker. He can see a card reflected that he "forces" her to take. She does. She turns it over.

THE DEATH CARD.

Katie reacts.

YORK (CONT'D)
Well how do you like that?

KATIE
The death card isn't to be taken...

YORK
Give me your hand.

She does reacting to his militant tone. He takes her hand in his large hand. With his other, he places something in her hand and closes it.

YORK (CONT'D)
Perhaps the spirits can tell you something about that.

She opens her hand. A SMALL GOLD LOCKET opened with a picture of a woman in it.

YORK (CONT'D)
About how my brother's locket with the picture of his wife came to be sitting under your stairs? Since, he hasn't been here.

Katie looks at him - frozen.

YORK (CONT'D)
Can the "spirits" explain that?

York's eyes are burning with rage.

A quick bit of movement in the background behind him.

Katie's look changes to a smile.

KATIE

Why don't you ask them yourself.

YORK'S POV of the shiner still on the table by the cards at an angle - he sees...

JUNIOR BEHIND HIM RASING THE HUGE HAMMER.

Faster that shit - York spins out of his chair with his holdout gun drawn!

BLAM!

His shot rings out - deafening in the small room.

The hot lead catches Junior in the arm - spinning him around dropping the hammer to the floor.

Katie screams and she leaps forward with her dagger drawn.

In one continuing motion - York keeps spinning and with his other hand grabs his .45 Smith & Wesson M1869 right out the holster hanging on the wall and ends up with it pointed right at Katie's head.

She stops in her tracks with the dagger in hand. York keeps the other gun trained on Junior - a gun on each of them.

EXT. OSAGE TRAIL - NIGHT

York's TWO MEN from earlier stand next to their horses with a small campfire going.

GUNSHOT ECHOES towards them coming from the Bender Inn.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

York has his guns trained on them both.

YORK

Over here. Now! And drop the blade, honey.

She does. Her eyes filled with hate. York moves her over to her bleeding brother who is pulling himself up to his feet.

YORK (CONT'D)

Out.

(to Junior)

You too big boy.

KATIE
You're gonna die tonight. Just
like your brother.

YORK
Maybe. But not before you. Out.

INT. BENDER INN (HALLWAY) - NIGHT

Moving toward the main room York keeps the six gun trained on both of them.

YORK
My men will have heard the shot.
They'll be here. Quick.

KATIE
Your men?

YORK
Yeah. They ain't in Independence.
They're waiting just around the
hill.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

As they enter, Ma and Pa are nowhere to be seen. The front door is wide open - wind and thunder. York moves them to the far side of the room.

YORK
Over there. The both of you.
Believe me I have no problem
shooting you both right now for
sport. So don't temp me.

York moves slowly to the front door - looks out quickly - nothing. He closes the door with his foot. He moves his attention back to Katie and Junior.

YORK (CONT'D)
Sit down. Now we're just gonna...

MA COMES BARRELLING OUT FROM BEHIND THE BAR LIKE A FREIGHT TRAIN - screaming like a banshee.

York spins, but she is on top of him too quickly and tackles him like a linebacker.

They SLAM into the wall - York spinning with her weight and using it against her.

JUNIOR and KATIE leap at him as well.

CRACK!

York slams the butt of his gun across Ma's mouth - teeth go flying. He whips the gun back around to fire at her head when...

JUNIOR SLAMS into him driving him against the wall with a thud. Katie grabs hold of his gun hand and BITES DOWN with all her might - blood squirts from her lips - the gun goes flinging across the room.

York grunts in pain as Junior grabs for his throat. Katie continues to claw at him.

York pulls free for a second, but Junior grabs and throws him across the room. YORK SLAMS through the canvas wall and into the solid wall beyond. Junior races after him.

York rolls out to see his gun right in reach. He grabs it and cocks it. Junior, Ma, and Katie freeze. York stands up and takes a step forward.

KRR-CHUNK!

THE TRAP DOOR in the floor opens under York's feet. He free falls...

CUR-THUD!

York smacks his temple on the side of the trap door. His gun flies out of his hand as he tumbles into the darkness.

INT. BENDER INN (PIT) - NIGHT

WHAM! York hits the dirt floor hard and is out cold in a heap.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

Katie claps her hands in approval.

KATIE

HA!

Pa stands at the far side of the room holding the lever which released the floor.

Junior goes over to help Ma to her feet when...

HORSES RIDING UP OUTSIDE

KATIE (CONT'D)
(panicking)
What'da we...?

Ma reaches over to Katie.

She RIPS HER BLOUSE OFF exposing Katie from the waist up. Ma turns her to the door.

FOOTSTEPS COME UP to the door.

EXT. BENDER'S INN (PORCH) - NIGHT

The two men with guns drawn come to the front door and...

KICK IT IN!

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM)

WHAP - the front door flies open.

TWO MEN'S POV of Katie's bare chest - they freeze.

CRUNCH! THUD!

Junior swings his huge hammer right into the side of the head of one of the men while...

SKINK!

Pa jams a huge knife into the chest of the second man. Blood pours out of his mouth and Pa drives the blade deeper. He follows with the man all the way to the floor making sure of the kill.

Without missing a beat, Katie pulls her blouse back up and leaving it loose...she runs into her parlor.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

Katie's hand picks up her huge bowie knife.

INT. BENDER INN (PIT) - NIGHT

York moves a bit...coming to. He looks around...dark. Blood pours from his head. He realizes he doesn't have his gun and frantically feels around - no luck.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM)

Katie returns and heads to the pit.

KATIE
Now we'll see who'll be dying
tonight.

She descends...

INT. BENDER INN (PIT) - NIGHT

York reaches around - seeing Katie's silhouette - he feels something and grabs it. It's his brother's medical bag.

He flips it open and spills it out.

Katie is almost to him.

His hand grasps something - SHE IS THERE! She leans over him.

KATIE
Now this won't hurt a bit. Well
maybe.

She brings the knife up to his neck and...

SLICE!

York swings across her face.

A HUGE GASH across the width of her face - blood and tissue spread and flow.

Katie lets out a bloodcurdling SCREAM!

In York's hand...a scalpel.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

Hearing Katie, Ma, Pa, and Junior all turn in horror.

INT. BENDER'S INN (PIT) - NIGHT

Katie stumbles back grabbing her face and, feeling her fingers slide into the gaping cut, gets covered in her own blood.

York pulls himself down the pit and into a small tunnel as fast as his disoriented body will allow him.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

Katie emerges from the pit still screaming and crying - blood pouring everywhere. Ma races over and helps pull her out.

Pa's eyes go wide with rage.

PA BENDER
(to Junior)
Get him!

Junior grabs his hammer and jumps down into the pit.

Pa grabs his shotgun and heads out the front door.

INT. LABYRINTH/ZINC MINE - NIGHT

York shuffles along in the near total darkness. He comes up to a fork - right or left? Left!

He's starting to move better now - getting out of his knocked out fog. He runs along feeling the wood slats on each side. The tunnel is starting to widen out into the main shaft.

INTERCUT WITH:

Junior racing from the pit into the tunnel and then down it...along the same path York just did. He reaches the fork - and he goes right!

WITH YORK...

He keeps running - for all his might. Looking for something, anything, that will lead him out.

The tunnel empties out into a larger area. Mine equipment sits unused and rusting. Rotting wood supports hold the roof of the mine from coming down.

York looks around...which way to go? He listens behind him...nothing. He moves forward a few steps and looks down one of the tunnels...dark and quiet. He moves to the other one - the same...he moves over to the third and...

Nothing...He stands, listening for anything. A wall of wooden slats is next to him and...

KRA-BASH!

The WOOD SLATS explode outward with Junior barrelling through them. York is blown to the dirt floor.

Junior swings the huge hammer down. York rolls out of the way as the earth next to his head heaves up from the blow.

Junior swings and kicks York in the side as he heaves the hammer skyward for another deathblow.

York pulls out the scalpel and slices into Junior's calf muscle...deep.

Junior stumbles back as his leg gives out from the cut. He looks down to see the scalpel sticking out of him. Enraged, he raises the hammer again, but before he can...

With a primal yell, York springs forward from the ground at Junior's torso pushing him back and using the weight of the hammer above his head to pull Junior back into...

ONE OF THE ROTTEN TIMBER BEAMS ABOVE AND BEHIND HIM.

It SNAPS like a toothpick as the hammer hits it and it gives way - the roof of the mine drops down on Junior!

York dives forward and out of the way as the rock and dirt pile on top of Junior.

York pulls himself up - he looks at the pile of earth where Junior was seconds before.

CRRRAACK!

One of the timbers starts to snap - then another - oh crap.

Suddenly - like a chain reaction - all the timbers start giving way!

York starts running for his life as the roof collapses right behind him... as if it were chasing him.

He sees the exit - he's almost there. The last bit of the tunnel falls in on itself with a HUGE ROAR - dust flying everywhere as he dives...

EXT. BENDER INN (MINE ENTRANCE) - NIGHT

York launches out of the mine and lands with a thud - and explosion of rock and dirt billows out. He turns and looks back at the devastation and smirks.

WHAM!

A shotgun butt catches York from behind as he falls face first into the dirt. He rolls over to see...

Pa Bender aiming the shotgun right at York's face.

PA BENDER
You...cut my Katie!

He cocks both barrels of the scatter gun.

York prepares for what's coming.

BZZZ! A loud buzzing sound.

VOICE (OS)
Old man...

Pa spins around to see...

A face full of RATTLESNAKES FLUNG right at him.

He SCREAMS as one after another - the vipers sink their fangs deep into his face and flesh.

Abigail stands wielding the rattlers by their tails. Living whips.

FIFT! FIFT! FIFT!

The fangs penetrate...again and again Pa is bit in the face - arm - hand - chest - eyeball.

Pa drops the shotgun screaming like a little girl and stumbles back and falls out of the mine entrance. He rolls down the incline - still with snakes attached.

Pa gets up and stumbles - running and yanking at the snakes heading back for the main house.

York looks up at his saving angel.

YORK
Thanks.

ABIGAIL
Don't mention it.

She helps him up.

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)
Now let's get the hell outta here.

YORK
Right. Follow me.

He grabs her hand as they quickly head down the hill.

EXT. BENDER INN (TREE) - NIGHT

Hitched to a tree by the Orchard, York grabs one of the ponies and shoves Abby up into the saddle - he grabs the reigns of one of the remaining two.

CUT TO:

EXT. BENDER'S INN - NIGHT

LIGHTING FLASHES and THUNDER ROLLS. The rain finally comes.

WE HEAR a SCREAM in the distance.

EXT. OSAGE TRAIL - PRE-DAWN

York and Abigail ride down the trail at a gallop heading to Cherryvale.

EXT. BENDER INN - MORNING

The storm has passed...the place looks placid - almost peaceful.

TIME PASSES as the sun rises higher until...

A large group of men on horses ride up. Sheriff Louis leads the group. A cleaned up York and Abigail follow close behind.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - DAY

The Sheriff and a couple other men enter with guns at the ready - scanning the room. They look around...nothing.

Sheriff Louis sees blood stains on the floor.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - DAY

Sheriff looks over the room. The table is turned over and items are spilled across the floor, but no one is there.

EXT. BENDER INN - DAY

Men are combing all over the place.

York and Abby watch from a distance...recovering.

INT. BENDER'S INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - DAY

The Sheriff opens the door with body parts in full view.

SHERIFF LOUIS
My god.

VOICE (OS)
Sheriff!

EXT. BENDER'S INN (SMOKEHOUSE) - DAY

The Sheriff steps out...Goodhue, one of the men we saw in town earlier, stands by the orchard.

GOODHUE
You need to come take a look at this.

EXT. BENDER'S INN (ORCHARD AREA) - DAY

The collapsed grave of Cyrus and the little girl. You can just see her foot sticking out of the dirt.

Standing over it, Sheriff Louis looks up. Several other mounds of similar size and shape dot the orchard...many, many graves. The Sheriff is in utter shock.

OFF the looks of Abigail and York...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BENDER'S INN (ORCHARD AREA) - DAY

Some time has passed. A dozen men digging up the graves scattered all over the property.

Sheriff and York stand looking over the scene.

SHERIFF LOUIS
I've never even heard of anything like this.

YORK
Me either.

SHERIFF LOUIS
That's your brother they pulled up over there?

YORK

Yeah.

SHERIFF LOUIS

I'm sorry.

YORK

Me too.

One of the Sheriff's men, GEORGE (20's), pulls up to the men and quickly dismounts.

GEORGE

They found their wagon outside Independence.

SHERIFF LOUIS

And?

GEORGE

Nothing there. But the train agent said a family fitting their description boarded the morning train heading west.

SHERIFF LOUIS

Shit. Did you wire ahead?

GEORGE

Sure did. The Marshal in Morrehead checked the train when it arrived. No family onboard. No one like that.

SHERIFF LOUIS

Damnit.

YORK

Could've jumped off anywhere between here and there.

SHERIFF LOUIS

Yeah.

(to George)

Get Jesse and take a group to ride the rails from Independence to Morrehead.

GEORGE

On it.

He and a couple others ride off.

York turns to Abigail standing amongst the graves being unearthed. She looks back to him.

DISSOLVE TO:

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES from the day - and the accompanying photos and illustrations.

THE BLOODY BENDERS

MASS GRAVES FOUND AT BENDER'S INN

21 BODIES AND COUNTING

HELL'S ACRE

HOLD on photo of men standing by the graves - PULL OUT of photo into real time.

EXT. BENDER INN - AFTERNOON

The sun heads toward the horizon.

Sheriff, York, and Abigail stand back watching the men at work.

SHERIFF LOUIS

They up and vanished like a fart in the wind.

Sheriff looks to Abby.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)

'Scuse the language.

ABIGAIL

Please.

They walk as they talk.

EXT. BENDER INN (STABLE) - AFTERNOON

SHERIFF LOUIS

Who knows where they'll end up.
But they're gonna be front page
from here to San Francisco. Gonna
be hard for them to hide.

Sheriff looks at the horses.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
Ain't that the rig the...I think it
is.

He walks over to Frank's horse and saddle. He opens up the saddle bags - THE MONEY AND GOLD are still there. That's odd. He chuckles in disbelief.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
Must not of known what they had out
here...or never bothered to check.

The Sheriff unloads the loot. He turns to York at Abby.

SHERIFF LOUIS (CONT'D)
Wherever they end up...if they set
up shop...maybe they won't find
such a law-abiding gentleman to
cross next time...maybe they won't
be so lucky.

The Sheriff walks by York and on his look we PAN OVER to Abigail - looking at York. A shared moment between them.

OFF YORK'S EYES...

FLASHBACK

EXT. BENDER'S INN (MINE ENTRANCE) - NIGHT

YORK'S EYES.

We are back to last night. Abby just saved York.

ABIGAIL
Now let's get the hell outta here.

YORK
Right. Follow me.

They quickly head down the hill.

EXT. BENDER INN (TREE) - NIGHT

Hitched to a tree by the Orchard, York grabs one of the ponies and shoves Abby up into the saddle - he grabs the reigns of one of the remaining two.

LIGHTING FLASHES and THUNDER ROLLS. The rain finally comes.

WE HEAR a SCREAM in the distance.

York is about to jump on when he SEES something over on the edge of the orchard. He quickly walks his horse over to it.

ABIGAIL
(loud whisper)
What are you doing? Come on!

York arrives at a mound of dirt. He kneels down and quickly thrusts his hands in and digs. It doesn't take long - he reaches a body. He pulls it out from the dirt.

HIS DEAD BROTHER'S FACE - THROAT SLIT WIDE OPEN.

Abigail sneaks up behind him.

YORK
My brother.

ABIGAIL
Sorry. But we gotta go.

York stands - Defiant - Purpose filled. He moves to his saddle bag.

YORK
I ain't goin' anywhere.

ABIGAIL
What d'ya mean?

York pulls out a satchel and a roll. He opens them and unrolls it - MULTIPLE REVOLVERS, SHOTGUNS, AND AMMO. Abby reacts...she's in.

He grabs the weapons and starts loading.

YORK
Time to finish this. Now.

Abigail dismounts. She grabs a sawed off shotgun out of the satchel and grabs some shells.

York turns to face her - guns loaded and ready for battle.

She snaps shut the loaded shotgun and looks at him.

ABIGAIL
Ready.

They turn and look at the Inn sitting there. A perfectly timed FLASH OF LIGHTNING illuminates them. Two avenging angels.

The THUNDER CRASHES seconds later. Wind gusts.

YORK

Okay. Let's use the back door.

Abby smiles.

ABIGAIL

Right.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

Pa is on the floor being tended to by Ma and Katie. He is HIDEOUSLY DEFORMED and bloated from the multiple snake bites. His face and hands are the size of watermelons.

His screams have turned into whimpers and cries now. Each breath is labored and difficult.

Ma is hysterical and speaking to him in German.

Katie is dealing with the cut across her face wrapped in bloody towels.

She quickly moves from the room into her parlour.

INT. BENDER INN (KATIE'S PARLOUR) - NIGHT

Katie rushes in looking for something to help Pa. She catches a quick look at herself in the mirror. She can't help it - she stops.

She bends down and pulls back the towels to reveal the damage to her formerly beautiful visage - it's horrendous. The gapping gash is all across her face.

The look in her eyes is of total and complete horror and disbelief. That's probably why she doesn't see the movement of the wall behind her.

VOICE (OS)

It's an improvement.

Katie turns around to see York standing over her. He grabs her head and slams it through the mirror and into the wall.

INT. BENDER'S INN (MAIN ROOM) - NIGHT

Ma is still talking German as Pa begins to convulse.

She screams and tries to hold him in place. Just then...

York comes walking out from the hallway - dragging Katie by her hair.

Ma sees him and with all her might leaps towards him completely animalistic.

York brings up his gun.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Hitting Ma in the chest with his shots each finding their mark. The force blows her across the room and against the wall.

BLAM!

The final shot blows the back of her head clean off and all over the wall.

York turns to Pa and the floor. His face barely recognizable as human. His eyes look up at York.

York places his boot on Pa's grossly swollen hand and stands on it. The pressure is too much and the skin gives way.

SPLOCH!

Blood and fluid squirt out as the paper thin skin rips open.

Pa screams in agony.

YORK
Whad'ya say? Should I waste the
bullet?

Pa tries to say something, but convulses again and takes one last breath...dead.

York looks over to Katie still in a daze on the floor. She is slowly crawling along the floor - leaving a blood trail as she goes.

YORK (CONT'D)
Who's gonna die tonight? What was
that?

He calmly walks over to her, kicks her arm out from under her, and turns her over to face him. He aims his gun at her.

KATIE
Please...

CLICK.

He cocks the gun.

YORK
Now you really will get to talk to
the spirits.

WHAM!

The front door explodes open! York turns to see...

JUNIOR

covered in dirt, mud, and blood with broken bones protruding from his skin - his jaw dangles...hanging off to the side, but the bastard keeps coming forward.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

York scores three dead hits, but he keeps coming.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

York unloads the reaming round left in his guns, but Junior is almost upon him and York is back against the wall as his huge broken hands clinch around York's throat. York reaches for something...anything. The nearby lever at his fingertips. He finally grips it.

CR-CHUNK!

THE TRAP DOOR IN THE FLOOR SWINGS OPEN AND ABIGAIL SPRINGS INTO VIEW - SHOTGUN RAISED!

Junior spins to...

KER-BOOM!

Abby unloads both barrels into Junior and blows apart Junior's groin! Meat, blood, and buckshot spray across the room - busting the pickle jar on the bar to bits.

Junior is knocked to his knees. York pulls out another gun and puts it point blank to Junior's head.

BOOM!

Junior's head disappears in a spray of red dousing Katie in blood and grey matter. The mammoth body tumbles to the floor a second later.

Abigail climbs out of the pit. She comes over to York.

He casually reloads his revolver. She reloads the shotgun.

KATIE
Please...please.

KATIE'S POV of Abigail and York looking down at us. They turn their weapons directly at us - and fire.

BOOM! KER-BOOM!

CUT TO:

BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. INDEPENDENCE TRAIN STATION - MORNING

The train is loading the last of the passengers.

WE SEE four figures climbing on quickly. Two men and two women - one of the men quite large.

The train whistle BLOWS and it pulls out of the station.

INT. TRAIN (PASSENGER CAR) - MORNING

The train is moving along now.

At the back of the car the "family" sits by themselves. It sure looks like the Bender clan.

WE MOVE closer and see it's Abigail as Katie, York as Pa, and a couple of his other men we saw him with earlier at the card game. Robert as Junior and Ty dressed in drag as Ma. They are all in the Bender's clothes.

One at a time - they get up and head to the back of the train car - making sure no one pays attention.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - MORNING

As the train passes by - WE SEE someone jump off the back car.

The person rolls to a stop and we see it's Abigail - followed quickly by York.

They look at each other - and smile.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. BENDER'S INN (ORCHARD AREA) - MAGIC HOUR

York and Abigail finish their knowing look as the Sheriff walks by and hands the train loot to one of his men.

He turns.

SHERIFF LOUIS

Well, they're bound to turn up
somewhere. Dead or alive. They'll
turn up.

YORK

I'm sure you're right.

The Sheriff walks back to his men working in the orchard.
Track with him and then pull up and over the digging workers -
we HOLD FOR A MOMENT -

TITLE CARD:

ELEVEN CORPSES AND REMNANTS OF MANY OTHERS WERE
UNEARTHED ON THE ABANDONED BENDER INN PROPERTY IN 1873. IN
ALL IT IS THOUGHT THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR NEARLY THIRTY
DEATHS. DESPITE A MASSIVE MANHUNT AND BEING FRONT PAGE
MATERIAL NATIONWIDE FOR MONTHS, THE BENDER FAMILY WERE NEVER
SEEN OR HEARD FROM AGAIN AND NO TRACE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO
THEM WAS EVER FOUND.

WE BEGIN PULLING UP EVEN FURTHER NOW - to move up over the
men digging and past them to the collapsed mine entrance and
then keep moving just around it to the SNAKE PIT -

WE DIVE down into the pit - still crawling with rattlers.

There on the bottom of the pit - in a pile - lie the bloody
bodies of The Bloody Benders.

The snakes couldn't care less.

UP MUSIC

ROLL CREDITS

The End.