

MARILYN'S TAVERN AND WHOREHOUSE
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FADE IN:

THE SCREEN IS BLACK. We hear a SLIGHTLY OUT-OF-TUNE ACCORDION. It sounds like somebody is practicing. Then, the VOICE of a young woman:

JENNY (V.O.)
And one day, I'll have my own bar, not a
shithole like this...

The accordion-playing stops.

BUTTONHOLE (V.O.)
Y-you... will... never... have your
own... b-bar...

JENNY (V.O.)
(hurt)
How can you say that?

BUTTONHOLE (V.O.)
B-because you... are... too nice. You a-
always help... people. I-I mean... that's
why I a-adore you... but... but that's
just... n-no... w-way to get anywhere.

EXT. HILL - NIGHT

A blizzard is howling through the night. We don't see a thing except for the whirling snowflakes.

Subtitled: "SOMEWHERE UP NORTH - 1881"

A figure is fighting its way through the storm: HELMUT is about 30 years old, wrapped in a nondescript coat, a shabby bag slung over his shoulder. He stops and drinks from a whiskey bottle, which he then slips under his coat.

As he continues his way, a house can suddenly be glimpsed through the snow: a run-down, two-storied wooden building standing alone on a hill. The storm is raging as if it would take the building away any second.

A warm glow comes from the small windows...

Over the porch, a worm-eaten sign creaks in the wind, reading "MARILYN'S TAVERN AND WHOREHOUSE".

Helmut is engulfed by music and voices as he enters...

INT. MARILYN'S TAVERN, SALOON - NIGHT

The small saloon is packed with people. It is very noisy; the air is thick, and heavy with smoke, sweat and booze... In the flickering light of gas lamps, we see COWBOYS and FARMERS in worn clothing sitting around the tables, drinking, laughing uproariously, playing cards, lingering at the bar...

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A few COUPLES are dancing to the music, provided by:

BUTTONHOLE, a stubby, dull-faced accordion player, and EDDIE, a skinny, dark looking man with a trumpet.

JENNY, a small blond prostitute of twenty five, is sitting astride on a chair, listening to their music and chewing candy.

MARILYN, a buxom woman of about forty, pours drinks and collects her money...

Helmut shakes the snow off his coat and steps up to the bar. He is still shivering from the cold. His face looks friendly, almost harmless, but he has small, darting eyes. He could actually be good-looking if he had a better haircut and lost some weight.

Marilyn addresses him.

MARILYN
What'll it be?

Helmut's eyes are glassy, he is obviously already drunk from his whiskey.

HELMUT
(with a slight German accent)
Something... hot, please...

Marilyn serves him a hot cider. The music has stopped, one or two people applaud.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
(drunkenly)
Uh, miss...

MARILYN
Yes?

HELMUT
Can you help me? I... I'm looking... for
a woman...

MARILYN
(smiling)
You've come to the right place, Mister.

HELMUT
No, I mean... I don't mean...

But Marilyn ignores him. She picks up an empty drinks tray and walks over to where the two musicians sit.

Buttonhole, the little half-wit with the accordion, is sitting next to Jenny now and drinks his beer.

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CONTINUED: (2)

Marilyn steps up to their table.

MARILYN

(stern)

Don't you have work to do, Jenny?

JENNY

(moaning)

Look, I already did the Baxter brothers... and Thomas Lee and old Hanks...

MARILYN

Why don't you do Hanks a second time?

JENNY

He's broke. Look. Nobody has any money tonight. The railways still didn't pay and...

Marilyn takes a few empty glasses from the table.

MARILYN

There's a new kid in town.

She gestures with her head towards the bar: Helmut is huddled over his glass, still shivering.

JENNY

Come on... He doesn't look like he's got a penny!

MARILYN

(hisses)

Don't argue with me, Jenny. Just do your job.

She lifts her tray expertly.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

And stop drinking. Your breath smells.

Marilyn crosses the room with her tablet.

Jenny sighs. She turns to Buttonhole to continue the conversation they had before Marilyn showed up.

JENNY

... and when I have my own bar, I'm gonna treat the women properly. They'll get part of the profit, and they can drink beer whenever they want.

She empties her glass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARILYN
(yells across the room)
Jen-ny!

Jenny gets up with a sigh. She crosses the room and pats her dress, while Buttonhole follows her with his eyes.

She steps up to Helmut and flashes a fake smile.

JENNY
Hello, stranger. Never seen you here before.

Helmut drowsily looks up from his beer.

JENNY (CONT'D)
(smiling)
I'm Jenny. You want to have some fun?

Helmut stares at her.

HELMUT
Oh. Thanks, uh, actually, I don't...

JENNY
Come on. I'll give you a good price.

She takes his hand and leads him to the stairs.

HELMUT
(embarrassed)
No... this is not...

INT. STAIRCASE AND CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Jenny goes along a narrow corridor, disappearing into the dark. Helmut stumbles after her. His face is reddened from the alcohol. Everything seems unsteady, swaying...

Very indistinctly, we make out several doors leading off the corridor. The NOISE OF THE SALOON is getting fainter.

HELMUT
Look, miss... I don't want to disappoint you... but... this is a misunderstanding.

Jenny ignores him. She knocks on one of the doors.

A FEMALE VOICE
(yelling from the room)
Just a minute!

Jenny leans against the wall. Helmut stands swaying. Their faces are feebly lit by a flickering gas light. Outside, the STORM RAGES.

(CONTINUED)

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JENNY

It'll be free in a minute. You want some candy?

She offers him a bag of candies. Helmut shakes his head.

HELMUT

Look... I didn't want to...

JENNY

What?

Helmut's drunken eyes muster Jenny. Suddenly, he changes his mind.

HELMUT

Nothing.

From the room we hear MOANING and the SQUEAKING of a bed.

Jenny chews her candy. Helmut, feeling uncomfortable, pulls the whiskey bottle from his coat and drinks hastily.

The MOANING from the room gets louder and faster.

Helmut offers his bottle to Jenny.

JENNY

Thanks. Not when I'm working.

(yells towards the room)

Hey, Louise! Get to the point!

LOUISE'S VOICE

(from the room)

Just a fucking minute!

The NOISE from the room reaches a climax.

Helmut hiccups. Annoyed, Jenny wanders up and down the corridor, from time to time disappearing into the darkness.

The room lets out a FINAL SIGH, then the SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS AND OF PEOPLE DRESSING.

The door opens, and a small HUNCHBACK with disheveled hair slips out, averting his eyes, followed by LOUISE, a stately, big-bosomed brunette with golden earrings. She smooths over her dress with her hands.

LOUISE

(to the hunchback)

Thanks, honey... come back soon.

The hunchback smiles and disappears into the darkness of the corridor. Louise's smile vanishes immediately.

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CONTINUED: (2)

LOUISE (CONT'D)

Pooh... I thought he would never finish.

She lights a cigarette and exhales, relieved. Then, she points at Helmut's whiskey bottle:

LOUISE (CONT'D)

May I?

Helmut, who still hiccups, hands her the bottle which she empties in one gulp.

LOUISE (CONT'D)

(readjusting her bodice)

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I'm gonna call it a day...

She walks away, swinging her hips from side to side.

Jenny seductively stands in the door.

JENNY

Come on in, cowboy.

Helmut enters the room.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(yells at the retreating

Louise)

You going home in this snowstorm?

LOUISE

(without turning back)

Snowstorm, pah! See you tomorrow, honey!

She is swallowed by the darkness of the corridor.

JENNY

Yeah... tomorrow.

For a moment, she stands in the door, looking tired. Then she blows a strand of hair out of her face, straightens her back, enters the room and closes the door.

INT. JENNY'S ROOM - NIGHT

The small room is dimly lit by a candle. An old bed, a cupboard, next to it a jug and wash-basin. Beside the bed stands a cock-eyed coatstand. The furniture is shabby and the once rosy paint flakes from the wall.

Outside, the STORM CONTINUES RAGING. The wind shakes the shutters. We hear the MUFFLED DIN from the saloon downstairs.

Helmut lurches in the middle of the room and hiccups. Jenny closes the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY

Make yourself comfortable.

Helmut awkwardly sits down on the edge of the bed. It creaks.

There's a silence. Jenny slowly walks towards Helmut.

JENNY (CONT'D)

So... what's your name?

HELMUT

Helmut.

JENNY

Nice name.

She leans over him, touching his shoulders.

JENNY (CONT'D)

So, Helmut.. you wanna have a go?

HELMUT

How much is it?

JENNY

Well, how much have you got?

HELMUT

(hesitatingly)

I have... two dollars.

He hiccups.

JENNY

It'll be two dollars, then.

HELMUT

(still more hesitant)

OK...

He puts his bag down and starts to undress. Jenny doesn't move. The STORM HOWLS and the SHUTTERS CREAK monotonously.

Under his shabby coat, Helmut is wearing two holsters with guns. As he awkwardly pulls them off, he has trouble focusing on Jenny, who's obviously waiting for something.

JENNY

The money, Helmut...

HELMUT

Now?

JENNY

(smiling)

Of course, now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HELMUT

(suspiciously)

You... you're not going to fuck... I mean, cheat me, are you?

He hiccups and fumbles in his pocket.

JENNY

Sure won't, Helmut.

HELMUT

You... you better not... you know....

Hesitantly, he hands her two dollar bills. Jenny holds them against the light of the candle, then stuffs them behind a loose board in the wall.

Helmut has gotten rid of his guns now, and they lay next to him on the bed. He sits in his underwear.

Jenny gently, but firmly pushes him onto the bed.

JENNY

Relax, Helmut.

She takes off his longjohns and crushes a cockroach that crawls over the bed. Smiling politely, she wipes off the dead cockroach on a bedpost. Then she begins to get Helmut off with her hand.

Helmut hiccups. Jenny looks up.

JENNY (CONT'D)

You like it?

HELMUT

(nods eagerly)

Uh... yes, yes. Of course. It's just that... I've got the hiccups. Sorry.

Jenny stands up and takes off her panties.

The STORM RUSTLES against the window...

Jenny pulls up her skirt and sits astride Helmut.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Uh... you're not gonna take your clothes off?

JENNY

That's fifty cents extra. Then you can take me from behind, too.

HELMUT

Oh... no, no... it's all right like this...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Jenny starts to move rhythmically. The bed squeaks. Jenny chews her candy. Helmut softly moans, between hiccups. A squall claps the shutters against the wall.

JENNY
(suddenly)
Haven't you got fifty more cents?

HELMUT
Why? I thought... I gave you two dollars...

JENNY
(without interrupting her movements)
Yeah, but that's just for ten minutes, you know. For fifty cents more, we can do it half an hour.

HELMUT
Uh, no... let's just... see, after ten minutes.. I mean, I can still pay more... if I want more.

JENNY
Yes, Helmut, but I have to know in advance. Either I can hurry up or I can take my time... do it real slow and nice, you know.

The alcohol obviously kicking in more and more, Helmut suddenly has difficulty following the conversation.

HELMUT
No, no... let's just... continue...

JENNY
(disappointed)
OK.

Jenny's movements become more urgent, while her gaze follows the wandering of a cockroach across the wall. The bed squeaks. Helmut still hiccups.

JENNY (CONT'D)
(suddenly)
Did you come yet?

Helmut doesn't answer. Jenny interrupts her movement.

JENNY (CONT'D)
You're finished? Uh... Herbert? Hey...
Don't you like it?

Helmut attempts to focus and slowly takes in the dreary situation.

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CONTINUED: (4)

JENNY (CONT'D)

(hurt)
You don't like it, uh?

HELMUT

Yes, yes...

JENNY

You prefer to be on top?

HELMUT

No, I... No, that's... not it. It's all right.

Jenny doubtfully scrutinizes him.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Sorry...

He suddenly starts to sob.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

I'm sorry... It's just... it's all so... everything's so... wrong.

He turns his head away and buries it in a pillow.

JENNY

(suspiciously)
I can't give you the money back...

HELMUT

(in a choked voice)
I don't care about the money.

Relieved, Jenny gets off him and strokes his head.

JENNY

(very friendly)
It's no big deal, you know. It happens to everyone. Even the sheriff.

Helmut has his face still buried in the pillow, and hiccups.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Come on, you're drunk. You're just drunk.

She looks at him and shakes her head. From outside we hear the DRUNKEN LAUGHTER OF CLIENTS leaving the saloon and fighting their way through the blizzard.

Jenny gets up, goes over to the wash-basin and cleans herself under her skirt.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Come on... get dressed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Helmut doesn't react.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Hey!

She shakes him by the shoulders. He looks up with tears in his eyes.

HELMUT

Can I... sleep here?

JENNY

Sleep here? No way.

HELMUT

Please... I can't stand up now...
everything's turning...

He closes his eyes and hiccups.

JENNY

Hey! This is my working bed! I need it!

Helmut, exhausted from the alcohol and his very obvious emotions, is already half asleep. Jenny shakes him desperately.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Hey! Herbert! Uh... Helmut! Get out of my bed! I have work to do! Come on!

HELMUT

(mutters)

There's a twenty-dollar bill... in my coat. You can take it if you... let me sleep here.

Jenny freezes.

JENNY

Twenty dollars?

HELMUT

Is that... enough?

She reaches for his coat.

Helmut pulls the sheets over his shoulders and hiccups.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

(mumbles)

You got it...?

Jenny pulls a twenty dollar bill from a pocket of Helmut's coat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

JENNY

You're sure you wanna pay twenty dollars
just to sleep here?

Helmut doesn't answer, he's already fast asleep.

Jenny observes him for a moment, then she stores away the
bill in her cache - very satisfied.

She opens the cupboard, takes out a new pair of panties and
puts them on.

Posters of wanted criminals cover the inner surfaces of the
cupboard doors. As Jenny is about to close the door, she
happens to notice one of the posters...

She spins around, stares at the snoring Helmut, then again at
the poster. It carries a drawing of Helmut, with a caption
that reads:

"WANTED: Helmut Korn, rather dead than alive. Reward: \$1000"

JENNY (CONT'D)

No...

Jenny stares at Helmut again. His guns and holsters are lying
on the bed next to him. He hiccups in his sleep.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Oh no...!

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

The saloon has emptied. There are full ashtrays and empty
bottles on the tables, cigarette-butts and broken glass on
the floor. The lights are dimmed.

Marilyn puts the chairs on the tables. Eddie, the skinny
trumpet player, has fallen asleep on a chair. His long,
shaggy hair hangs over his eyes. Buttonhole crouches at his
feet. His accordion lets out a whimper.

TOM and EMILY, an older farming couple, are sitting in a
corner, staring at their whiskey bottle. They talk slowly,
both completely immobile.

TOM

(to Emily)

Did you hear about John Longfolk?

EMILY

Hear what?

TOM

(after a moment)

Died last Saturday.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Marilyn nudges Buttonhole with her foot.

MARILYN
Is that bag yours?

She holds up a bag that has been hanging over a chair.
Buttonhole eagerly shakes his head.

With a sigh, Marilyn puts the bag down again.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
My God, what a mess...

She shakes Eddie's shoulder.

EDDIE
Uh?

MARILYN
Get out. It's closing time.

EDDIE
Please, ma'am... you can't send us out in
the snowstorm!? We got nowhere to go, do
we, Buttonhole?

Buttonhole shakes his head vehemently.

MARILYN
Don't get on my nerves, Eddie. It's the
same story every night. Either you guys
pay for a room or...

Jenny, excitedly, rushes down the stairs.

JENNY
Marilyn!

All look at her.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Marilyn! I got an outlaw in my room!

MARILYN
Again!?

Jenny pulls an apologetic face.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
How many times do I have to tell you?
Check the "wanted"-bills before you serve
a customer!

She gives Jenny a smack on the back of her head.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
You'll get yourself shot one day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jenny nervously pours herself a whiskey. Eddie gets up.

EDDIE

Well, I think we'll be going, eh,
Buttonhole? Since we don't have money for
a room...

He takes his bag. Buttonhole anxiously looks at Jenny.

MARILYN

(to Jenny)

What kind of outlaw?

JENNY

Helmut Korn or something. The German guy
who robbed the Washington State Bank...
The reward's a thousand bucks.

MARILYN

(suddenly interested)

One thousand? Are you sure?

JENNY

Yes. Sure I'm sure. He's sleeping...
completely wasted.

MARILYN

You mean you got a thousand dollars
sleeping in your bed?

Jenny nods and drinks. Marilyn goes behind the bar.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

Well, well... how about that...

She pulls an old rifle from under the counter. Eddie goes
over to the door.

EDDIE

Good night, everybody. You'll have to
excuse us... Come on, Buttonhole!

Buttonhole still hesitates, looking back and forth between
Eddie and Jenny.

MARILYN

(grinning)

No reason to be afraid, Jenny-baby.
Auntie Marilyn's gonna take care of this
little problem...

She pulls out a cardboard box from under the counter, pours
its contents onto the counter, and rummages through tins of
food and spices. Jenny observes her uneasily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARILYN (CONT'D)
(cheerfully)
Thousand dollars... must be a fucking
mass-murderer. We're gonna extend the
saloon.

EDDIE
(impatiently)
Buttonhole!

Marilyn has found some bullets in the mess on the counter and loads her rifle.

Eddie loses his patience, takes Buttonhole by the sleeve and drags him out of the saloon.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Do you wanna get shot or what?

As they exit, Buttonhole makes a waving sign to Jenny who doesn't react. She stares at Marilyn, who's heading towards the stairs with her loaded rifle.

Marilyn stops and turns around at Jenny.

MARILYN
You're sure he's asleep?

JENNY
(nodding eagerly)
Like a baby.

MARILYN
Good.

Just then, Helmut's voice is heard.

HELMUT (O.S.)
Excuse me, ladies...

All eyes turn towards the voice: Helmut stands shakily on the stairs, only half dressed, holding on to the banister, pressing one hand against his stomach. Startled, Marilyn lowers her rifle. Jenny drops her whiskey glass which bursts on the floor.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Sorry... to disturb you. Can you tell me
where the toilets are?

Everybody stares mutely at him. Helmut looks around miserably.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
(in a choked voice)
I'm... not feeling so well.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Jenny merely points at a door in back of the saloon.

JENNY
Out back...

HELMUT
Thanks.

He smiles faintly and staggers out the back of the bar. All eyes follow him.

Marilyn clasps her rifle a little tighter and is about to follow him when Jenny seizes her arm.

JENNY
Marilyn! You'd better not...

MARILYN
Don't worry about me.

She shrugs Jenny off and disappears through the back door.

JENNY
I'm not worried about you, I'm worried
about him...

Jenny follows her anxiously. Emily and Tom are still motionless at their table.

EMILY
(all of a sudden, to Tom)
What did he die of?

TOM
Hmm?

EMILY
John Longfolk. What did he die of?

TOM
(shrugs)
Drank too much. Smoked too much. Go
figure.

Emily nods thoughtfully, and they empty their whiskey glasses.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Marilyn determinedly hurries along a dark corridor behind the bar, tightly clasping her rifle. Jenny barely keeps pace with her.

JENNY
Listen, Marilyn, I don't know if...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARILYN

(resolutely)

If I don't do it now, he'll get sober,
rape us and kill us. I know that type
well enough.

JENNY

Listen, I don't really think he'll rape
us... he seems to have a problem with
his...

Marilyn swings open a door at the end of the corridor.

EXT. BEHIND MARILYN'S TAVERN / OUTHOUSE - NIGHT

The blizzard rages around the house, restricting vision.

Marilyn steps out of the back door. Light shines from an
outhouse, a few yards from the building. The door is ajar.
From inside we hear the COUGHING SOUNDS of someone throwing
up.

Marilyn disappears into the outhouse, lifting up her rifle.
Jenny comes hurrying out the back door.

JENNY

Marilyn, look here, wait...

A GUNSHOT echoes through the night, then A MUFFLED CRY. Jenny
freezes.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(meekly)

Marilyn...?

ANOTHER SHOT. Then silence. Only the storm is howling.

Jenny huddles up against the cold and tries to see something
through the whirling snowflakes.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Marilyn? ... Helmut? Hello?

No answer... Then finally, Marilyn steps out of the outhouse,
still holding her rifle. Exhausted, she leans against the
doorframe. Her eyes are blank.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Marilyn? Is it... is he...

MARILYN

(unhappy)

Not dead.

JENNY

No?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We can hear HELMUT MOANING.

MARILYN
I missed.

JENNY
(anxiously)
Missed?

Marilyn shrugs.

MARILYN
Half missed... it's... disgusting.

She shudders.

JENNY
What do you mean? What do we do now?

Marilyn doesn't answer, her gaze vacant.

JENNY (CONT'D)
(desperately)
Marilyn? What do we do now!?

Again, we hear whining sounds. Jenny bends forward to peek into the outhouse.

MARILYN
Forget about it, Jenny... he'll be dead
in the morning... Just forget about it.

She shudders again and apathetically trudges back to the house.

INT. OUTHOUSE - NIGHT

Jenny stands in the door and peeks inside the ramshackled little outhouse: Helmut lies on the floor, half leaning against the toilet, his arm is shattered and he's bleeding from a shot in the belly. Jenny grimaces, horrified.

JENNY
Oh God...

HELMUT
(weakly)
Shit...

JENNY
Oh God, oh God, oh God...

HELMUT
Shit... She shot me...

JENNY
I'm sorry...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Helmut tries to get up. Groaning, he collapses on the floor again.

Jenny helplessly bends over him and tries to stop his bleeding with some rags.

JENNY (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry, I... don't know what to say.

Again, Helmut groans in pain.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Look, I'm... I'm afraid you're going to die.

HELMUT
(cynically)
Oh, really?

Resigned, Jenny crouches next to the bleeding Helmut. Her rags are soaked in blood.

JENNY
I can't even help you, you know...
There's not a doctor for twenty miles.
And with the storm and all...

She quickly rises.

JENNY (CONT'D)
I... I'm really sorry, Helmut, but...

She turns away from him and starts to leave.

HELMUT
Wait... wait...!

Jenny disappears in the snow. Helmut desperately calls after her and tries to get up.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Wait! Miss... uh... shit.

In pain, he again collapses down in the dirt.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Stupid shit.

He closes his eyes.

Jenny uncertainly reappears in the twilight coming in through the door.

JENNY
Yes?

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

Marilyn enters through the back door, dead tired, dragging her rifle behind her. Tom and Emily watch her.

Marilyn staggers to the counter and pours herself a whiskey.

TOM
Marilyn...?

She doesn't react.

TOM (CONT'D)
Can you bring us another one, too?

MARILYN
(suddenly yells)
Shut up, Tom! Shut the fuck up! Don't get on my nerves now! I've had a hard day! There's an outlaw dying on my toilet and I'm tired! Don't get on my fucking nerves now!

TOM
(mumbles)
OK, OK... no need to overreact...

Marilyn empties her glass in one gulp.

TOM (CONT'D)
(to Emily)
She's overreacting, isn't she?
(beat)
And she drinks too much. She'll end up just like John Longfolk.

Just then, the saloon doors swing open and NICKEL enters: He's tall, skinny, completely wrapped up in thick clothing against the cold. His hair and coat are covered with snow. He wears a holster carrying a big revolver. His face is half-hidden by a scarf, his eyes flicker like a madman's: all in all, a sinister figure.

NICKEL
(with an Italian accent)
Hi, everybody.

He lowers his scarf, revealing the raw-boned and shifty, but good-looking face of a young man in bad need of a shave. Small icicles dot his stubble. He shakes the snow off his clothes.

MARILYN
We're closed, mister.

Nickel crosses the saloon and steps up to the counter, his spurs clanking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARILYN (CONT'D)
(forcefully)
I said we're closed.

NICKEL
Oh, come on. Bring me a whiskey.

He takes off his hat and wipes the snow from it.

MARILYN
Get lost!

Nickel looks up at her.

NICKEL
Aspetta... I've been riding through this
stupid snowstorm for about a hundred
miles! I'm frozen to death! This is the
first saloon I've come across for hours!
And you're telling me to get lost!?

MARILYN
Don't start crying.

NICKEL
Non ci credo!

He grabs the whiskey bottle and wants to drink, but Marilyn
raises her rifle.

MARILYN
Don't move!

Nickel freezes, Marilyn pointing her rifle at him.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
Put it down!

Nickel puts down the bottle, taken aback.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
Sit down!

Nickel hesitates.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
(yells)
Sit down!

Nickel lowers himself onto a chair, his eyes fixated on the
barrel of Marilyn's rifle.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
(yells)
There's no self-service here, understand?

Nickel nods cautiously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARILYN (CONT'D)
(yells)
You want a whiskey?

Nickel nods. Marilyn's rifle is still pointed at him.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
(yells)
Then order one! Properly!

NICKEL
(clearing his throat)
I... could I get a whiskey, please?

MARILYN
(yells)
Which brand?

NICKEL
Uh... Whatever... you have...

Marilyn steps behind the bar. Without lowering her rifle or taking her eyes off Nickel, she pours a whiskey.

INT. OUTHOUSE - NIGHT

Helmut looks up at Jenny, who is still standing in the door.

HELMUT
Listen, uh... What's your name?

JENNY
Jenny.

HELMUT
(with a weak smile)
Penny? That's nice.

JENNY
Jenny, not Penny.

She giggles.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Penny wouldn't be a very promising name
for a prostitute, would it?

Again, Helmut groans in pain.

HELMUT
Listen, Penny...

He pauses, presses his hand against his stomach and grimaces.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
... could you do me a big favor? Please?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jenny, still standing in the doorway, shrugs her shoulders.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
I need... is there somebody around who
can read and write...?

Jenny doesn't answer at first. She looks at the desperate Helmut.

JENNY
(finally)
I can.

HELMUT
You?

JENNY
(slowly)
Yes... because one day I'll open up my
own bar and... and I'll have to write
signs and menus, you know, so...
(with a shrug)
I've been practicing.

Helmut moans and falls completely silent. Jenny looks at him uneasily. For a moment she believes him dead. When she kneels down beside him, he begins to move again.

HELMUT
Oh shit...

JENNY
What do want to write?

HELMUT
(weakly)
A letter... could you write a letter for
me... I can't hold a pen... anymore.

JENNY
A letter?

HELMUT
Yes... do you... I need a pen and paper.
(clutching his wound)
I don't think I have much time left...

Jenny hesitates.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Come on... I gave you twenty dollars for
the night, remember?

He looks up at her beseechingly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JENNY
(sighs)
OK.

She rises.

JENNY (CONT'D)
But don't you die while I'm gone!

EXT. BEHIND MARILYN'S TAVERN / outhouse - NIGHT

Jenny steps out of the outhouse and trudges through the snow, her arms wrapped around her body, her head down.

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

Marilyn and Nickel sit face to face at a small table and drink whiskey. Tom and Emily have fallen asleep in front of their glasses.

Jenny hurries into the saloon. Nickel's eyes are immediately her.

JENNY
Marilyn! Have you got a pen and some paper?

Marilyn talks slowly, she's obviously drunk already.

MARILYN
Pen and paper?

JENNY
(impatiently)
Yes, a pen and paper. To write with!

MARILYN
(apathetically)
Behind the bar. Didn't know you could write...

Jenny fumbles behind the bar.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
What do you want to write, Jenny?

Jenny, who has found what she was looking for, heads for the back door.

JENNY
A farewell letter.

She exits. Nickel follows her a lustful glance.

MARILYN
(shaking her head)
Crazy girl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKEL
Is she... does she work here?

Marilyn nods.

NICKEL (CONT'D)
Do you think I could...?

MARILYN
She's busy right now.
(sighs)
There's a outlaw dying on our toilet.

Nickel jumps up.

NICKEL
An outlaw? Where?

MARILYN
(drunkenly)
Sit down.

NICKEL
(excitedly)
Where's the toilet?

Marilyn grabs her rifle.

MARILYN
SIT DOWN!

NICKEL
Come on, where's the toilet!?

Marilyn points her rifle at him, trembling because she's drunk.

MARILYN
Sit down, kid, or I'll blow your stupid
head off!

Nickel unwillingly sits down.

NICKEL
Look, you... please! Let me explain: I'm
a bounty hunter and...

MARILYN
(slow of speech)
No way. You're not gonna shoot nobody in
my saloon. The whole thing's messy enough
already.

Nickel stares at her in disbelief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NICKEL

Que cazzo! I don't believe this! You said he's already dying! I mean, do you realize what you're doing to me? I'm a bounty hunter! I've got a job to do! I've been after some stupid German guy for weeks now...

MARILYN

(with a sigh)

Oh, please! Just shut up.

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

The storm is blowing snow through the cracks in the wall. Helmut sits on the dirty floor, leaning against the wooden wall, pulling a blanket over his body.

Jenny puts a petroleum lamp on the floor and sits down facing Helmut, a piece of paper on her knees and a pen in her hand, ready to write.

JENNY

Ready.

HELMUT

My Sally... write "My Sally".

Jenny shakes her head.

JENNY

You can't start a letter that way.

HELMUT

Why not?

JENNY

You just can't. It has to be "Dear Sally", or "My dear Sally", or "My dearest Sally"... but not "My Sally".

HELMUT

(after a short silence)

Are you sure?

Jenny nods.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

(reluctantly)

But... that sounds too formal. I can't write her a letter that starts with "Dear Sally"... That's ridiculous.

JENNY

What about just "Sally"?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELMUT
OK. Write just "Sally".

Jenny writes.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
"Sally... I don't know where to begin."

Jenny looks up expectantly.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
(after a while)
Why aren't you writing?

JENNY
Writing what?

HELMUT
"I don't know where to begin."

JENNY
But... it makes no sense to start a letter like that. If you don't know where to begin, you should think it over first.

HELMUT
(annoyed)
No. You don't understand. That's what I want to say. I want her to know how I feel while I'm writing this letter.

JENNY
But...

HELMUT
No "buts"! Stop correcting me all the time! It's my letter! It's my first and last letter! I want it to be as... as I want it to be!

Exhausted, he slumps back against the wall, coughing blood.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Damn...

JENNY
(pouting)
I just wanted to help...

Helmut coughs and presses his hand against his chest.

JENNY (CONT'D)
(after a moment)
OK. I'll write what you say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HELMUT

I don't... know... anymore... shit... I forgot what I wanted to write. You made me forget.

JENNY

You said "I don't know where to begin".

HELMUT

Exactly...

He wipes his mouth.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Write... "I don't know where to begin. Everything's so complicated... and yet so clear..."

Jenny writes.

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

Marilyn still threatens Nickel with her rifle, while Tom and Emily doze in their corner.

NICKEL

(excitedly)

It's him, right? The guy on the toilet?
It's the Korn guy?

Marilyn doesn't answer.

NICKEL (CONT'D)

I can feel it! I got a sense for these things. That's why I'm good at my job! He's worth a thousand bucks! Please, signora, you gotta let me shoot him!

MARILYN

No way, kid.

NICKEL

I've been chasing him! I've earned this money!

Marilyn shrugs indifferently, still aiming her gun at Nickel.

NICKEL (CONT'D)

Non ci credo!

He turns towards Tom and Emily.

NICKEL (CONT'D)

(gesticulating)

Can you believe this?

Tom and Emily look up drowsily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICKEL (CONT'D)

(emphatically)

I've been riding through four states, I finally find an open saloon, I get a rifle stuck to my head, I'm treated like a criminal, I'm prevented from doing my job and I can't even get a proper fuck because the only whore in this miserable dump is writing a letter for the guy I've been meaning to kill! Is this normal?!

He laughs, completely wound up.

MARILYN

(abruptly)

So you wanna fuck?

NICKEL

Do I want to fuck? What do you think! I haven't come across a woman in months!

MARILYN

(drunkenly)

OK. Let's go upstairs.

NICKEL

(taken aback)

You mean... with you?

Marilyn nods.

NICKEL (CONT'D)

But... what about my outlaw?

MARILYN

(threatening)

Forget the outlaw. Let's go upstairs.

NICKEL

(gesticulating)

Oh no! No, signora! I'm not going to bed with a gun to my head!

MARILYN

I'm too old for you, eh?

NICKEL

(caught by surprise)

Well, uh... no. No. That's not it...

MARILYN

You're not attracted to me, huh?

Marilyn raises her gun slightly.

NICKEL

No, I...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Marilyn shoots a hole in the counter next to him. Nickel jumps up.

MARILYN
(yells, completely drunk)
I'm too old and fat for you, huh?

NICKEL
Now look, don't get upset. I just...

MARILYN
(yells)
You like them young? You're a little
cradle robber, huh?!

She shoots a hole into the floor next to his foot. Nickel backs away, his eyes open wide in panic.

NICKEL
You... you can put it... that way, but
it's not...

Marilyn reloads and lifts her rifle, pointing at Nickel's chest.

MARILYN
(with a sigh)
Oh, you men are all the same... you don't
know what you're missing, kid. You'll die
not knowing...

NICKEL
(scared to death)
Stop! Stop! I'll... possiamo... let's
give it a try!

Marilyn stops and lowers her rifle.

NICKEL (CONT'D)
(meekly)
OK?

MARILYN
You're serious?

Sweat runs down Nickel's forehead.

NICKEL
Yes, I... I'll try my best, OK!? I'm not
sure it's gonna work. Just don't shoot
me, OK!?

MARILYN
You better try your very best.

Nickel nods, relieved.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Marilyn pushes him towards the stairs with the barrel of her rifle. She yells back over her shoulder at Tom and Emily:

MARILYN (CONT'D)
I'm warning you guys! If you try to steal my bottles again, I'll kill you both.

TOM
(to Emily)
See what I mean? She's doing it again:
Overreacting.

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

Helmut and Jenny still sit facing each other. He dictates, she writes. Helmut seems to feel a little better, although there's a dark puddle of blood beneath him.

HELMUT
"... and... and... I'm sorry".

JENNY
You already said that.

HELMUT
I know. I want to say it again.

JENNY
(shakes her head)
You shouldn't keep apologizing. This woman will think you grovel at her feet.

HELMUT
That's exactly what I'd do if I had the chance. Write: "I would like to grovel at your feet, which is quite impossible, since I have been shot by this stupid fat saloon owner woman."

Jenny writes giggling.

JENNY
That's good. That puts a little humor in it. This letter was getting pretty sad.

HELMUT
Well, it's a sad story.

JENNY
(after a pause)
This Sally you're writing to... was she the one you robbed the Washington State Bank with?

HELMUT
(pleased)
You heard about it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY

Sure. I... I read the papers, you know. I keep myself up to date.

HELMUT

(with a sigh)

Oh yes... the Washington State Bank... that was long ago...

AS HE TALKS, FADE TO:

INT. WASHINGTON STATE BANK - DAY

It's a small provincial bank, somewhat neglected. Dust dances in the sunlight falling through the windows. A few CLIENTS are waiting in front of the cashier's desks, mostly farmers. It's quiet and peaceful.

The scene is in SLOW MOTION, we don't hear any noise except HELMUT'S NARRATIVE.

SALLY enters the bank. She's about twenty-seven, with a pretty face and boyish charm. The sunlight plays in her hair which is flying about like in a Breck commercial; her long coat floats behind her.

She stops in the middle of the room.

HELMUT (V.O.)

You should have seen her, you should have seen the twinkle in her eyes when she robbed this bank...

STILL IN SLOW MOTION, Sally pulls two sawed-off shotguns out from her coat and shoots wildly into the air, a radiant smile on her face.

HELMUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The way she moved, like a dancer...

Sally moves through the room, swirling around, keeping the CLIENTS and the CASHIERS in check with her guns.

The clients throw themselves on the floor, hands on their heads.

HELMUT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... I couldn't believe my eyes.

Sally reaches the cashier's desk and lifts her guns.

THE SPEED changes from SLOW MOTION back to NORMAL, and we now hear THE SCENE'S AUDIO:

SALLY

(to the off-screen cashier)

The money, sweetheart.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Behind the desk stands Helmut, in the uniform of a bank clerk. He stares at her.

HELMUT (ON SCREEN)

Sally!

Sally looks at him for a moment before recognizing him.

SALLY

... Helmut!?

A big smile spreads over her face.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

In the dirty, dark outhouse, Jenny listens to Helmut, with her mouth half open.

JENNY

You knew each other?

HELMUT

Of course. She once was my best friend...

FADE TO:

INT. IMMIGRATION OFFICE, REGISTRATION ROOM - DAY

The large room is filled with IMMIGRANTS of all European nations: poor people, whole families, holding on to their belongings. They are dirty, their clothes old and torn, most of them look tired and fearful. Some form lines in front of the desks, where the OFFICERS question them and check their papers. Others sit on long wooden benches. Mothers are looking for their children, crying in a variety of languages, the men are disputing with the officers... The noise is incredible.

HELMUT (V.O.)

We met in the immigration office, when the ship carrying my parents and me arrived in America.

SALLY'S PARENTS, an English couple, have just been given their admittance papers and are escorted by an OFFICER through an iron gate. On the other side, a sign reads "Welcome to America". Sally's mother, a nervous woman of about thirty-five, drags the struggling LITTLE SALLY (five years old) behind her.

SALLY'S MOTHER

Come on, Sally, don't make a fuss now!

Sally frees herself and runs back through the gate into the registration room, under the eyes of the stupefied OFFICER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALLY'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Sally! Don't...

She wants to follow her daughter, but the officer holds her back.

OFFICER

Can't go back, miss. You just got in.

SALLY

It's my daughter!

(cries)

Sally! Get back here!

OFFICER

Sorry, miss. It's the law. You can get into the country here, but you can't get out.

Little Sally, crying, maneuvers between the legs of the crowd waiting to be admitted. All of a sudden, she bumps into someone. She looks up: It's HELMUT'S MOTHER, a fat, good natured German woman, wearing a bulky dress. LITTLE HELMUT (seven years old) fearfully clings on to her.

Helmut's mother bends over the crying little girl and wipes her face with a handkerchief, trying to calm her with kind German words. Sally's mother is still held back by the officer.

SALLY'S MOTHER

(yells)

Miss! Miss!

Helmut's mother look up.

SALLY'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Please bring her back here! She's my daughter!

Helmut's mother holds up her hands as a sign that she doesn't understand. She yells something in German.

Sally's father comes up to the gate, joining his wife.

SALLY'S FATHER

Annie? What's the matter?

SALLY'S MOTHER

(with a sigh)

She wants to go back to England again.

(turning her head)

Is there an interpreter around?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OFFICER

(getting annoyed)

Look, ma'am, you'll have to get out of the way. There are people waiting to get in. Like I told you...

The people in the line are getting impatient. Someone yells.

SOMEONE

Allez allez, on avance, là-bas?

SALLY'S MOTHER

Could someone tell this woman to bring me my daughter?

SALLY'S FATHER

(yells)

Sally, stop getting on your mother's nerves! We're not going back on that bloody ship!

HELMUT'S FATHER, a man with a huge beard, shows up. Helmut's mother showers him with German words. He turns towards the gate.

HELMUT'S FATHER

(with a strong German accent)

Ist good. Wir come.

Helmut's mother grabs Sally's and her son's hands firmly and drags the two children to the gate. Sally, stumbling behind her, cries and still tries in vain to free herself.

LITTLE SALLY

(weeping)

Let me go! Let me go!

Little Helmut stares at her in amazement. Suddenly, she notices him and immediately stops crying. The two children stare speechlessly at each other, while being dragged by Helmut's mother past the line of impatiently waiting people.

SOMEONE

Eh-oh, on fait la queue comme tout le monde, non!? Oh putain, les allemands encore...

Helmut's mother comes to the gate, where the officer is still trying to get Sally's mother and father away from the passage.

OFFICER

Ma'am, please!

Sally's mother reaches for her daughter and pulls her over to the other side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SALLY'S MOTHER

Sally, come here!

OFFICER

Hey! Where are the papers for this girl?

Sally's mother ignores him.

SALLY'S MOTHER

(to Helmut's mother)

Thank you very much, miss...

HELMUT'S MOTHER

(shakes her hand)

Marianne Korn.

SALLY'S MOTHER

Annie Creek. Pleased to meet you.

They shake hands right there in the gate, Helmut's mother on one side, Sally's on the other, each one holding on to their child.

OFFICER

Madams! You are standing on America's doorstep! Could you please do this somewhere else?

SALLY'S MOTHER

(to Helmut's mother)

Thank you for helping. We don't know anybody here.

HELMUT'S FATHER

(stepping up to them)

We too.

HELMUT (V.O.)

And so our families became friends.

SALLY'S MOTHER

(presenting her husband)

This is my husband John... And this is Sally... say hi, Sally.

The two children still stare at each other, without saying anything. Finally, Sally boldly stretches out her little hand. Helmut reaches out to take it, but at that moment, Sally pulls back her hand and runs away, shrieking with delight.

OFFICER

(desperate)

Could you please decide if you want to go in or out... RIGHT NOW!?

BACK TO:

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

While telling his story, Helmut seems to have forgotten his pain. His face has even regained some color.

HELMUT

Since our fathers couldn't find work in
New York, we finally headed west, looking
for cheaper land...

FADE TO:

EXT. COVERED WAGON IN THE PRAIRIE - DAY

Helmut's and Sally's parents sit on a lonely, modest covered wagon crossing an endless plain. It is pulled by an old weary horse and advances slowly, jolting. Household things are hanging everywhere, the cover is sewed together from all kinds of clothes.

Little Helmut and Little Sally dangle their legs from the rear of the wagon. They drink milk from bowls, clutching them with both hands.

LITTLE SALLY

What do you want to be when you're big?

LITTLE HELMUT

Don't know... Maybe an accountant.

LITTLE SALLY

What's that?

Helmut shrugs.

LITTLE SALLY (CONT'D)

I'm gonna rob banks.

Suddenly, Little Sally stares behind Helmut in amazement.

LITTLE SALLY (CONT'D)

Helmut! There are buffaloes! Behind you!

Helmut spins around: Behind him there's nothing.

Sally quickly pours the milk from her bowl down the back of his shirt.

LITTLE HELMUT

Ah!

Sally jumps off the wagon and runs away, shrieking with delight. Helmut pursues her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELMUT (V.O.)

And so we settled down in Kansas. Our parents found some cheap land for their houses. It was a little remote...

FADE TO:

EXT. BEHIND THE HOUSE OF HELMUT'S PARENTS - EVENING

The house of Helmut's parents is a poor, but neatly arranged log house in the middle of an open prairie. The only other building in sight is the house of Sally's parents, which looks pretty much the same.

Behind the house, Little Helmut and Little Sally play Cowboys and Indians: Sally, a chicken feather in her hair, has tied Helmut to a tree and dances around him, waving a self-made tomahawk.

LITTLE HELMUT

(whiny)

Sally... it's my turn to be the Indian now! I don't wanna be the cowboy anymore!

LITTLE SALLY

First I have to take your scalp.

With a solemn face, she pulls a huge kitchen knife out of her belt and approaches Helmut.

LITTLE HELMUT

Sally! Don't... Don't!

Desperately, he tries to free himself. Sally grabs his hair and menacingly lifts her knife.

LITTLE HELMUT (CONT'D)

(panicking)

Sally! No!

His eyes are wide with fear.

Sally slowly puts her knife against his forehead with a mean smile...

... but suddenly kisses him on the mouth. Helmut is bewildered.

LITTLE SALLY

(cheerfully)

You kissed me! You kissed me! You're in love with me! Now you have to marry me!

LITTLE HELMUT

(desperately)

I didn't kiss you! You kissed me! Buarkh!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LITTLE SALLY
(firmly)
That's the same. Pow.

LITTLE HELMUT
(on the verge of tears)
Is not! Is not! Let me go! Cut me loose!

Helmut's mother appears in the back door.

HELMUT'S MOTHER
(yells)
Helmut! Sally! Come in! Your daddies are
leaving!

Little Sally stiffly stands in front of Helmut with her arms folded. Behind her there's a magnificent sunset, rendering the scene somewhat overblown.

LITTLE SALLY
(very seriously)
I didn't take your scalp. So you'll have
to live with me and die with me. That's
Indian law.

Helmut's and Sally's father come out the back door. Both of them are wearing unionist military uniforms. They smile as they watch their children play.

HELMUT'S MOTHER
Sally! Helmut! Come and say good-bye to
your daddies!

LITTLE SALLY
Coming!

She runs towards her father to kiss him good-bye.

LITTLE HELMUT
(yells after her)
Hey! Sally! Cut me loose! Hey! Hey!

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

Helmut seems lost in his memories. Jenny watches him for a moment, chewing on a strand of hair.

JENNY
(finally)
Helmut?

He looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY (CONT'D)
(gently coaxing)
Please go on.

FADE TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD HILL - DAY

THE CAMERA CRANES over soft hills green with grass. We hear the VOICE OF A PRIEST.

PRIEST (OFF SCREEN)
We can truly say that by burying Hans
Martin Korn and James Earl Creek today,
we bury two heroes. Two men who fought
for the freedom and prosperity of our
beautiful country without fear...

As the CAMERA MOVES ON, we discover a small group of people gathered around two open graves. Little Helmut and Little Sally (both about eight years old by now) stand next to each other. They are surrounded by their mothers and a couple of FRIENDS and UNIONIST SOLDIERS. While a skinny PRIEST holds his speech, the wind plays with the pages of his bible. At a distance sit two VULTURES.

PRIEST (CONT'D)
... and who did not hesitate to give
their lives for our holy nation's cause,
when they were called upon. These two
brave men fell side by side in a battle
that will have its place in our history.
May they rest in peace. Amen.

He scatters a little earth over the coffins.

Suddenly, Sally runs away from the crowd.

SALLY'S MOTHER
(yells after her)
Sally! Get back here! Sally!

Helmut runs after Sally.

LITTLE HELMUT
Hey!

Sally doesn't turn around.

LITTLE HELMUT (CONT'D)
Sally! Wait for me!

He reaches her, out of breath: Sally is sitting under a tree, crying, her face buried between her knees.

LITTLE HELMUT (CONT'D)
Sally?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LITTLE SALLY
(without lifting her head)
Leave me alone!

She turns away from him to hide her tears.

LITTLE HELMUT
Come on, Sally... please...

Helmuth hesitates for a moment. Then, he sits down next to her.

There's a long silence. We only hear Sally sobbing.

LITTLE HELMUT (CONT'D)
(finally)
You know...

He clears his throat.

LITTLE HELMUT (CONT'D)
You know... it's good that they could die together.

Sally doesn't react. Helmut tries to speak with conviction, swallowing his own tears. For the first time in his life, he puts on a brave face, even if only to reassure Sally.

LITTLE HELMUT (CONT'D)
Because in Heaven, you know... there are so many souls... millions and millions! Like... your grandparents and mine, and everybody's grandparents, and... and all the people who were sick on the ship when we came here... and that's why it's so difficult for a soul up there to find the souls of his friends... it can spend hundreds and thousands of years searching, and still be on it's own, without any of his friends!

Sally wipes her face with her sleeve and doubtfully looks at him.

LITTLE HELMUT (CONT'D)
And if our daddies would have died all on their own, they would never have found each other again, ever! But if a soul comes to Heaven together with a friend's soul, then they can stay together, and never be separated. And this is why the best thing that can happen to you... is to die with a friend.

There's a faint smile on Sally's face. Helmut uncertainly smiles back. She leans her head against his, and Helmut puts his arms around her shoulder.

EXT. HOUSE OF SALLY'S MOTHER - NIGHT

Night is falling on the two houses in the endless prairie.

Sally's mother, marked by grief, sits in a rocking chair on the porch of her shabby home. She stares into the dark. Her gaze is strangely empty, and from time to time, she mumbles words to herself.

Helmut's mother comes out of the house and puts a blanket over Sally's mother's knees.

HELMUT'S MOTHER
(shaking her head)
Annie... You'll catch a fever.

Sally's mother doesn't react. Helmut's mother lets out a sigh. Then she turns towards the pasture behind the house.

HELMUT'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Sally! Helmut!

Young Helmut and Young Sally (both about thirteen years by now) hide in the darkness under the porch. Sally puts her finger on her mouth.

Above them, Helmut's mother's paces. The floor boards creak.

HELMUT'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Helmut! Sally! Come home! It's dark! The grizzlies will get you!

Helmut looks at Sally, frightened.

YOUNG SALLY
(whispers)
There are no grizzlies around. I asked farmer Higgins.

HELMUT'S MOTHER
Come on, children! ... Well, too bad for you. You'll have yourselves eaten up.

With a heavy sigh, she disappears into the house. Sally's mother still sits in her rocking chair, completely immobile.

Helmut and Sally gaze out into the night.

YOUNG HELMUT
(whispers)
Sally?

Sally turns towards him.

YOUNG SALLY
Hmm?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG HELMUT
Do you... you remember when we were kids?

YOUNG SALLY
What?

YOUNG HELMUT
(hesitatingly)
When you kissed me and said I'd have to
marry you?

YOUNG SALLY
(embarrassed)
Hmm...

There's a silence.

YOUNG HELMUT
How come we don't kiss anymore?

YOUNG SALLY
Because we're big now.

Silence.

YOUNG HELMUT
Couldn't we do it again... I mean, just
once?

YOUNG SALLY
(uncertainly)
You want to?

YOUNG HELMUT
Uh... Do you?

Sally leans over and quickly kisses him on the mouth. They
look into each other's eyes, then they kiss again...

They awkwardly embrace and lean back to disappear in the
shadows under the porch. Suddenly, Sally frees herself.

YOUNG SALLY
(whispers)
My mother's still up there...

YOUNG HELMUT
(whispers)
You know she doesn't hear anything
since... since your dad's been gone.

YOUNG SALLY
(unsure)
Maybe she can hear us, but just doesn't
react...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Helmut leans forward and they try another kiss. On the porch, Sally's mother is still sitting in her rocking chair, smiling absentmindedly into the darkness.

YOUNG HELMUT
(whispers)
Hey, Sally...

YOUNG SALLY
Yes?

YOUNG HELMUT
Can you take your shirt off?

YOUNG SALLY
Only if you take off your pants.

YOUNG HELMUT
Why? If you take off your shirt, I'll
take off mine.

YOUNG SALLY
No, that's not fair. Because my main
things are my breasts. But you don't have
breasts, so your main thing is... down
there.

FADE TO:

EXT. HOUSE OF SALLY'S MOTHER - MORNING

Day is dawning on the prairie behind the houses. Sally's mother is asleep in her rocking chair.

Young Sally lies under the porch on her stomach, half-naked, wrapped in a blanket. Young Helmut, kneeling next to her, is "drawing" with a finger on her naked back. It's a children's game. Sally watches the sun rise while she tries to guess what Helmut is drawing on her back.

YOUNG SALLY
A horse.

YOUNG HELMUT
No.

He draws again.

YOUNG SALLY
Of course it is.

YOUNG HELMUT
No. It's a donkey.

YOUNG SALLY
That's the same.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG HELMUT
No, it's not. A donkey has big ears.

YOUNG SALLY
That doesn't count. You have to do
another one.

Little Helmut thinks for a moment, then he bends over Sally,
puts his finger on her back and "draws" a heart. Sally has
her eyes almost closed, blinded by the rising sun.

YOUNG SALLY (CONT'D)
(suddenly)
Helmut?

YOUNG HELMUT
Yes?

YOUNG SALLY
Say...

She hesitates.

YOUNG HELMUT
What?

YOUNG SALLY
(after a moment)
Will you die with me?

There's a silence.

YOUNG HELMUT
Why? You're not going to die...

YOUNG SALLY
When we're big, I mean. So that my soul
can go with your soul... to Heaven. I
don't want it to be there on its own and
look for you and... not find you
anywhere.

Helmut is drawing an arrow through the invisible heart on
Sally's back.

YOUNG HELMUT
(mumbles)
Sure I'll die with you...

YOUNG SALLY
You have to say "I promise".

YOUNG HELMUT
I promise.

Sally smiles, without looking up at him. Helmut's drawing is
finished.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

YOUNG HELMUT (CONT'D)
What is it?

Sally is still smiling, her eyes closed.

YOUNG SALLY
I didn't pay attention. Do it again.

Just then, two boots stop in front of the porch, and the children hear other FOOTSTEPS above them.

SHERIFF (O.S.)
Miss Creek?

Sally and Helmut look up.

SHERIFF (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Miss Creek, can you hear me?

More feet pass by in front of the porch.

NURSE (O.S.)
Hello, Miss Creek?

MAN (O.S.)
We've been told that you're not feeling too well.

Sally quickly puts on her shirt. Helmut has fear in his eyes.

SHERIFF (O.S.)
Can you tell us where your daughter is?
... Hey! Can you hear me?

Sally climbs out from their hiding place under the porch. Helmut tries to hold her back.

YOUNG HELMUT
Sally... don't...

But Sally is already out and stands up: she sees the local SHERIFF, two NURSES and a MAN IN A SUIT standing around her mother.

YOUNG SALLY
(warily)
What do you want?

The grown-ups all look at Sally.

SHERIFF
Oh, there you are, girl...

MAN
Listen, we have to take your mother to an asylum. She's not well.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

YOUNG SALLY
Go away! Nobody called you!

The man and one of the nurses comes down the steps towards Sally.

NURSE
Be a good girl... You'll be put in a nice orphanage, and everything will be taken care of...

YOUNG SALLY
Go away! Leave me alone!

The nurse tries to grab Sally, but she bites her hand and runs away into the meadow. The man and the nurse go after her.

SHERIFF
Come back here, girl! Right now!

Still hidden under the porch, Helmut watches the scene, his eyes wide with fear.

HELMUT
(whispers)
Sally... Sally!

Helplessly, he has to watch as the sheriff, the man and the nurse manage to grab Sally and drag her towards a carriage that stands next of the house.

SALLY
Let me go, you pigs! Get off! Leave me alone! Get... off!

BACK TO:

INT. WASHINGTON STATE BANK - DAY

The situation hasn't changed: Sally stands with shotguns raised in front of the counter, Helmut behind it, in a cashier's livery. They stare at each other.

SALLY
Helmut! What are you doing here?

HELMUT
(stammering with joy)
Working... and you...

By way of explanation, Sally waves her shotguns.

SALLY
Well, uh... me too, I'm working!

They laugh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The clients, still lying on the floor with their hands above their heads, look up with curiosity.

HELMUT
I can't believe it! I haven't seen you
in... years!

A YOUNG COWBOY slowly rises and attempts to grab his gun.

Sally spins around and shoots twice in the air. The frightened cowboy throws himself back on the floor.

SALLY
(yells)
Hey! Keep your pretty head down! The
robbery's not over yet!

Helmut admiringly looks at her.

SALLY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Helmut, but I have to run...

HELMUT
(eagerly)
I'll get you the money.

Sally hands him a bag. Helmut opens the safe and begins to put bundles of bank notes into the bag.

SALLY
(yells)
Hurry up, OK?

He quickly closes the bag.

HELMUT
Coming!

He goes over to the counter and hands the bag to Sally.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Here you are.

SALLY
Thanks.

They lock eyes for a few seconds, both are captivated...

SALLY (CONT'D)
(finally)
I... I'm sorry, but I have to go!

HELMUT
(clearing his throat)
Of course.

Sally hesitates...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SALLY

Bye, then.

HELMUT

Bye, Sally. Good luck.

Sally smiles and lifts her guns, not knowing what to say.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

It was good seeing you again.

Sally nods and bites her lips. Then, she suddenly turns around and storms out of the bank. Helmut's eyes follow her.

The people lying on the floor slowly rise, wiping the dust off their clothes.

Helmut is still motionless behind the counter. Then all of a sudden, he turns to the cashier next to him.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Bye, Edward. Nice working with you.

He shakes the cashier's hand, jumps over the counter and runs after Sally.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Sally, wait!

EXT. WASHINGTON STATE BANK - DAY

On the street outside the bank stands a SMALL BOY who holds a horse's reins, eating an apple.

Sally climbs on the horse, bends down, presses a coin into the boy's hand and pats his head.

Just as she's about to gallop away, Helmut comes running out of the bank.

HELMUT

Sally! Wait!

She looks around, startled. Slowly, a big smile appears on her face.

SALLY

Helmut! ... hurry up!

Helmut hastily climbs on the horse behind her; and they gallop away, leaving a cloud of dust behind. The small boy looks after them, happily chewing his apple.

Their horse gets smaller and smaller on the horizon, galloping away into the great wide open...

BACK TO:

INT. OUTHOUSE - NIGHT

In the miserable outhouse, Helmut still sits leaning against the wooden wall. Jenny has put down her pen and paper and watches him.

HELMUT

And so we became celebrities... wanted in almost every state...

MUSIC RISES OVER:

EXT. BILLS ON WALL - DAY

CLOSE UP of a WANTED BILL with photographs and a caption that reads "Helmut Korn and Sally Creek, \$ 200 dead or alive"...

More bills are displayed, with the rewards higher and higher...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY - DAY

CLOSE UP of the fingers of SOMEBODY typing a wire...

INT. PRINTING-PRESS - DAY

CLOSE UPS of newspapers speeding through a printing-press. The headlines read: "National Bank raided... AGAIN!"

EXT. STREET - DAY

A PAPER BOY is holding up a newspaper with pictures of Helmut and Sally, and crying out the headlines which read "Outlaw couple on the run." A SHERIFF snaps a newspaper from the boy and reads it with a sinister face...

EXT. PRAIRIE - DAY

Sally and Helmut gallop like hell through the open prairie, pursued by several LAWMEN on their horses, shooting at them.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - DAY

Helmut and Sally gallop over a small mountain road, pursued by twice as many LAWMEN as in the scene before...

EXT. DESERT - DAY

As we see them galloping through the desert, there are about four times as many LAWMEN close on their heels, as before...

In full gallop, Helmut takes the reins of Sally's horse. She turns around in her saddle and shoots at the pursuers with her guns. Her hair is blowing in her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Helmut, who's riding at her side, seizes her hair with his free hand and holds it together behind her neck.

Sally thanks him with a smile. Still shooting, she leans over and smacks a kiss on his lips...

FREEZE FRAME. The PICTURE turns into a:

WANTED BILL displaying Helmut and Sally, kissing each other on the mouth...

EXT. LONELY HOUSE - DAY

The WANTED BILL is pinned to a wooden wall.

Sally and Helmut stand on both sides of the poster, they kiss bending over it, freezing in exactly the same pose as on the picture...

A flash lights them briefly.

In front of them stands a PHOTOGRAPHER with a heavy camera on a tripod. In his raised hand he holds a plate with smoking magnesium. When his head emerges from under a black veil, he smiles and lifts his thumb.

FADE TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Sally and Helmut are lying wrapped in blankets next to a small camp-fire in the desert. Sally sleeps, lying on her side, curled up like a kitten. Helmut sits leaning against his backpack and rolls a cigarette.

The MUSIC slowly fades out.

There's a muffled sound. Helmut's eyes widen anxiously.

HELMUT

Sally?

SALLY

(half asleep)

Hmm?

HELMUT

Are you sure there are no grizzlies around?

SALLY

(mutters)

We're in the desert, dummy... There are no grizzlies in the desert...

Helmut imagines a pair of eyes flickering in the darkness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALLY (CONT'D)
(sleepily)
What are you doing? Get some sleep.

With a sigh, Sally turns away again and pulls the blanket over her shoulder.

SALLY (CONT'D)
(suddenly)
Helmut?

Helmut looks up.

HELMUT
Yes?

SALLY
(hesitates)
What if...

She falls silent.

HELMUT
Yes?

Sally's eyes are open, but she speaks away from Helmut who's sitting behind her.

SALLY
What if... we ever... I mean, what if one of us gets... attracted to somebody else.

HELMUT
What do you mean?

SALLY
Sleeps with somebody else.

HELMUT
What... I'm not sleeping with somebody else.

SALLY
Yes, but if.

HELMUT
Then... then we can think about it when it happens... if it does.

SALLY
So you think it will?

HELMUT
I didn't say that... I said "if it does", not "when it does"...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SALLY

But you were assuming that it will
happen... one day.

Helmut rolls his eyes.

HELMUT

Sally... nothing's happened!

SALLY

But it could.

HELMUT

(with a sigh)
No, it couldn't.

SALLY

Why?

HELMUT

Just... because! Because we love each
other and... that's how we are. We...
belong to each other. End of story.

There a silence.

SALLY

It happens to other people...

HELMUT

Yes, but we're not other people!

SALLY

(after a moment, tenderly)
OK. That was just important... to know.
You know.

She gives him a kiss and closes her eyes. Then, she lies down
again, snuggling up against him like a kitten, trying to find
the most comfortable position.

After a moment, she suddenly reopens her eyes.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Helmut? Are you still there?

HELMUT

Yes.

SALLY

Are you comfortable?

HELMUT

Yes.

SALLY

Good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She closes her eyes again, moving even closer to him.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Ouch! You need to cut your toenails!

HELMUT
(mumbles)
This is the wild west, baby. Where a man
has long toenails.

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

Helmut lapses into his memories. There's a silence.

A squall blows through the cracks in the wall, the petroleum
lamp goes out.

JENNY
Damn it... hold on...

INT. MARILYN'S ROOM - NIGHT

MARILYN lies naked in the bed, wrapped up in a sheet, next to
NICKEL, who smokes a cigarette, lying on his back. He looks
exhausted.

MARILYN
(smiling happily)
Ah, that was beautiful. I haven't had sex
in years.

She rubs her head against Nickel who strokes her shoulder,
absentmindedly.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
Can I have a drag, italiano?

She takes the cigarette out of his hand and inhales deeply.

MARILYN (CONT'D)
(exhaling)
You know, if you want to stay here for a
while...

NICKEL
If I... what!? ... No, no, I have to go
looking for my outlaw. Don't have any
money left.

MARILYN
I got money... I could look after you.

NICKEL
The man you got on the toilet, he isn't
by any chance...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARILYN

Come on, kid, forget about work for
once...

She embraces him.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Eddie and Buttonhole are sitting on the porch, shivering, their arms slung around their knees to protect themselves from the cold. Snow is in their hair and clothes.

EDDIE

... and even if she would have her own
bar one day, what would she need you
there for?

BUTTONHOLE

To... p-play... the accordion... on a...
stage... w-with... lights.

EDDIE

(with a sigh)
Buttonhole...

He puts an arm around Buttonhole's shoulder.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

(friendly)
... Look, she... Jenny probably just said
that to be nice.

Buttonhole looks at him with big eyes.

BUTTONHOLE

But sh-she... said she l-liked... me.

Eddie looks down at him with pity.

EDDIE

Because she doesn't want you to feel
lonely.

BUTTONHOLE

Y-you really... think s-so?

EDDIE

Buttonhole, you're... I mean, look at
you.

He shakes his head, not knowing what to say without hurting
his friend.

A new squall blows snow on them, they hide their faces in
their coats.

INT. SALOON - NIGHT

Jenny has put her petroleum lamp on the counter and fills it up with petroleum from a bottle.

The saloon is dark except for a candle burning on Tom and Emily's table. They still sit as before, now with two empty bottles in front of them.

EMILY

(suddenly)

Say... has he been buried yet?

Tom is startled from his reverie.

TOM

Uh?

EMILY

John Longfolk. Has he been buried yet?

TOM

(after a pause)

Don't think so. Didn't leave any money for a funeral.

EMILY

(after a pause)

Doesn't the government pay for funerals?

TOM

Don't think so. Spending all their money on killing Indians, I suppose...

EMILY

... and for this stupid railway line...

TOM

... that's built by their buddies.

Jenny has filled her lamp with petroleum and exits.

EMILY

We could organize a collection for John Longfolk's funeral.

TOM

We better start collecting for our own funerals.

They laugh tonelessly and empty their glasses.

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

The newly lit lamp stands on the floor in front of Jenny. Helmut ties himself tighter in his bloodstained blanket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY
Are you all right?

Helmut shivers. There's a silence. Jenny chews some of her candy.

JENNY (CONT'D)
So... what's the letter about? I mean...
Why are you... not with her anymore?

HELMUT
Well... Sally and I... after a while,
things somehow just... became more...
difficult, you know. Working together,
being together all the time...

AS HE TALKS, FADE TO:

EXT. IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - DAY

A stage-coach stands in the desert. The PASSENGERS are lined up next to it, hands on their heads. Sally threatens them with her guns while Helmut collects their valuables and wallets into a big bag.

SALLY
(nervously)
Come on, hurry up, Helmut... We can't
spend all day here...

HELMUT
Just a minute...

He approaches a pleasant looking WOMAN with a low neckline.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
(friendly)
Could you hand me your necklace, please?

THE WOMAN
(smiling)
I can't get it opened, mister outlaw.

SALLY
Come on, Helmut!

HELMUT
Coming, darling...
(to the woman)
May I try?

THE WOMAN
(coquettish)
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Helmut bends over and tries to open the necklace, not without throwing a glance into the woman's sumptuous neckline. She giggles.

HELMUT

(smiling)

Well, it is hard to open.

As if by chance, he caresses the woman's neck.

Sally suddenly turns on her heels and heads for her horse.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Hey, Sally? ... Sally!

He lets the necklace go and follows her.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Sally! Are you... Hey! What are you doing? We're in the middle of a robbery!

Sally mounts her horse without taking notice of him.

The passengers slowly take their hands off their heads and look at each other, puzzled.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Sally, what... what's wrong?

SALLY

(hisses)

You're too damn slow for this job!

HELMUT

Come on... there's no...

The passengers still stand around in amazement and observe them.

SALLY

(restraining herself with difficulty)

You know perfectly well what's wrong, Helmut!

HELMUT

(sheepishly)

You're not going to get jealous about ... Sally? ... Come on! I just - you wouldn't want me to let the necklace go, would you? It's pure gold...

SALLY

She turns you on? Go after her! She's just waiting for you, her and her big tits!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She sets spurs to her horse. The COACHMAN calls after her.

COACHMAN

Hey! Miss, mister! Are you... finished
with us?

Sally turns around.

SALLY

(almost in tears)
Yes, can't you see that!? Take your
goddamn stagecoach and get lost!

HELMUT

(desperate)
Sally... listen...

Sally gallops away. Helmut hastily mounts his horse.

THE WOMAN

(shouts)
So don't you want my necklace after all,
mister outlaw?

Sally abruptly stops her horse and draws her guns.

HELMUT

Sally! Don't...

Sally wildly shoots at the passengers, who throw themselves
to the ground or run for cover behind the coach.

SALLY

(screaming)
Nobody wants your fucking necklace!

HELMUT

Sally! Please!

Sally rears her horse about and gallops away.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Sally! Come back! ... oh shit...

He sets spurs on his horse and goes after her.

EXT. ABANDONED FARM - DAY

SANCHO, a good-looking young Mexican, sits on a bench in
front of the abandoned farm and drinks beer. GUNSHOTS are
heard.

Helmut arrives and jumps off his horse.

HELMUT

Where is she?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANCHO
Behind the house.

Helmut runs around the house. We hear another GUNSHOT.

SANCHO (CONT'D)
(calling after him)
Tell her to stop, we'll have the law here
in no time!

He empties his beer.

JENNY (V.O.)
Who's he?

HELMUT (V.O.)
Sancho, a young Mexican who was supposed
to help us raid some bank...

EXT. FIELDS BEHIND THE ABANDONED FARM - DAY

Helmut appears around a corner.

Sally stands on the fallow land and shoots with two revolvers
at empty tin cans standing in the distance. Tears are running
down her face.

Helmut steps up behind her.

HELMUT
Sally...

SALLY
(in a choked voice)
Get lost.

She shoots. A tin can is sent flying through the air.

HELMUT
Sally, please stop shooting around...

SALLY
(suppressing her tears)
Can't shoot you, can I?

She shoots again, another tin is hit. Helmut sighs.

HELMUT
Sally, please!

She shoots again, without hitting.

SALLY
If you want to sleep with other women, go
ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELMUT
(embarrassed)
... come on, Sally... that's not...

SALLY
(obstinately)
Maybe you'll be better off without me...

She bites her lips and shoots again, but too shakily to hit.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Maybe you need your freedom...

She desperately shoots three times, without hitting another can. Suddenly she bursts into tears, throws her guns away and lets herself fall to the ground.

SALLY (CONT'D)
(howling)
I can't hit that stupid fucking can!

She sits in the grass, weeping.

SALLY (CONT'D)
(crying)
Go and get yourself a big-breasted girlfriend, if that's what turns you on!

HELMUT
(guiltily)
Oh, please, Sally! It has nothing to do with that... I like you as you are...

SALLY
You "like" me!

HELMUT
I mean... I meant to say...
(getting angry)
You're turning the words around in my mouth! You're so... touchy!

SALLY
(sobbing)
So, now I'm touchy!

HELMUT
Oh, forget it!

With a sigh, he walks away towards the farm.

Sally sits in the grass, weeping like a little girl. She takes up one of her guns and flings it far into the meadow.

INT. MEXICAN BAR - DAY

The little Mexican bar is a mud hut. It's almost empty. The young bar woman is listlessly swatting at flies.

Helmut and Sancho sit at a table. It is hot and damp, their clothes stick to their bodies. Helmut is bent over his beer, he doesn't look too happy. Sancho is smoking a cigarette, leaning back in his chair.

HELMUT

... I just don't know what to do... she's so... unreasonable.

SANCHO

(without really listening)
Yeah, that's too bad...

All of a sudden, he leans forward towards Helmut.

SANCHO (CONT'D)

(whispers)
Look at them.

Two young mexican TWIN SISTERS have entered the bar. As they pass by, they smile at Sancho who lifts his hand, greeting nonchalantly.

SANCHO (CONT'D)

You like them?

Helmut frowns.

SANCHO (CONT'D)

They do things... you wouldn't believe it.

HELMUT

What are you talking about?

SANCHO

(whispers)
I tell you... they do everything together.

He makes an overtly sexual gesture. Helmut stares at the twins.

HELMUT

You mean...?

SANCHO

I mean, everything.

He smirks. Just then, one of the sisters turns her head and looks at Helmut, as if she could read his thoughts. Ashamed, he lowers his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELMUT
(amazed)
How do you know?

SANCHO
(with a grin)
How do you think?

HELMUT
Come on... that can't be...

SANCHO
(hurt machismo)
You don't believe me? You want me to go
and ask them for you?

HELMUT
(quickly)
No, no! But... how did you get to... I
mean, we've only been in this village for
four days and...

Sancho leans back.

SANCHO
Look compagnero, if you don't want to
believe me, you don't have to...

As Sancho talks, THE SOUND FADES OUT, and we only hear
HELMUT'S THOUGHTS:

HELMUT (V.O., HIS THOUGHTS)
How does he do it? He's not ugly, OK,
but... kind of common...

JENNY (V.O.)
It doesn't depend so much on the looks.
It depends on your attitude.

BACK TO:

INT. OUTHOUSE - NIGHT

Helmut looks puzzled at Jenny.

HELMUT
Attitude?

JENNY
If you really believe that you can get a
girl, you'll get her. It's a question of
self-confidence.

Helmut frowns, considering this.

BACK TO:

INT. MEXICAN BAR - EVENING

The light in the bar has become warm and golden. Most of the tables are now occupied by GUESTS.

The barwoman is chatting away with the twin sisters. Helmut and Sancho still sit at their table, plenty of empty glasses in front of them. Due to the alcohol, they speak louder than before.

SANCHO

... this year was pretty quiet, so far.
I've only slept with...
(counting in his head)
... Four women. Four.

HELMUT

But Sancho... it's only March!

SANCHO

What, already? ... Shit.

He shakes his head and takes a sip from his beer.

HELMUT

(after a moment)
I've only slept with one.

SANCHO

This year?

HELMUT

No, not this year. In my life. In my whole life I've only slept with one single woman.

He falls silent and drunkenly stares into his glass.

SANCHO

(shaking his head)
That's bad...

The twins say good-bye to the bar woman and turn to go. They stop at Sancho's and Helmut's table.

THE TWINS

(in unison, to Sancho)
Hi... are you coming to the party tonight?

SANCHO

Of course we are.
(pointing at Helmut)
That's my friend Helmut Korn, the famous outlaw. He's wanted in over 30 states.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWIN #1

Really?

TWIN #2

Wow...

They smile at Helmut admiringly. Embarrassed, he smiles back.

THE TWINS

Nos vemos en la noche!

They wave to the men and leave the bar, wagging their hips.

SANCHO

Look at them, man... aren't they fucking great?

HELMUT

Sancho, what were they talking about?
What party?

SANCHO

(secretively)

You'll see... just a party. A place to forget about your Sally troubles for a minute.

HELMUT

But tonight, I can't! ... Sally and I...

SANCHO

(with a grin)

She'll manage one evening without you.

HELMUT

Yeah, but I told her... look, it's just not possible tonight!

EXT. ROCKY LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

Helmut, Sancho and the twin sisters march along a winding path between the rocks and down a slope to where a big bonfire is burning.

MEXICANS are playing music, dancing and sitting around in small groups, drinking beer, laughing and talking...

Sancho and the twins greet FRIENDS as they pass by...

Helmut follows somewhat ill at ease, curious but intimidated by the sensual atmosphere...

FADE TO:

Sancho, Helmut and the twins sit with a group of YOUNG PEOPLE a little apart from the rest. They are smoking and drinking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

One of the young Mexicans offers little tubers from a cactus to the newcomers. Sancho shows Helmut how to swallow the tuber. Helmut shakes his head.

SANCHO

Come on, compagnoero... this will make you feel great...

HELMUT

Sancho... I'm not sure about this...

Helmut hesitates, but finally swallows the tuber. Sancho nods, contentedly.

The picture gets BLURRED, then FOCUSES again:

A thousand stars are glimmering in the sky...

Helmut makes his way through the crowd. His eyes are wide open now, and there's a broad grin on his lips...

He moves to the rhythm of the music, smiles radiantly at every woman and casually touches their shoulders, hips, backs, as if drifting on a cloud...

The wild music is getting louder and louder...

In the center of the party, the twins dance ecstatically, admired by the bystanders who have formed a circle and clap their hands rhythmically...

Helmut forces his way through the circle and starts to dance with the twins, completely in tune with the music. The two of them come nearer and nearer to him, smiling...

HELMUT'S POV: One of the sisters plays with her scarf and teasingly slinging it around him... the picture sharpens and softens, everything seems to be swaying, strangely deformed...

JENNY (V.O.)

And?

BACK TO:

INT. outhouse - NIGHT

Frowning, Helmut looks at Jenny.

HELMUT

And what?

JENNY

Did they really do "everything" together?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELMUT
Well... yes.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKY LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

We see the shadows of Helmut and the twin sisters making love projected by the flickering fire against the rocks...

BACK TO:

INT. OUTHOUSE - NIGHT

Jenny has a big grin on her face.

JENNY
And... was it good?

HELMUT
Well... yes.

He has to smile too, despite himself.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKY LANDSCAPE - DAY

The bonfire has died out, the sun beats down on some GUESTS sleeping all around.

Sancho comes running through the rocks. He looks tired, hung-over and very upset. He desperately looks around for Helmut, finds him a little off to the side, behind a rock, asleep between the two sisters. All three are naked, half-covered by woolen blankets.

Sancho shakes Helmut's shoulder.

SANCHO
Helmut! Wake up!

Helmut opens his eyes and blinks, blinded by the sun. He looks around, realizes where he is.

SANCHO (CONT'D)
Get up, get up!

Helmut grunts.

SANCHO (CONT'D)
The law showed up at the farm!

HELMUT
What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANCHO

The sheriff and his people... they took
Sally away!

HELMUT

What!?

He frees himself from the sisters' embrace. They moan and
turn around, pulling the blankets over their shoulders.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

My God... how... how do you know?

He sits up, holding his aching head.

SANCHO

I was there! Come on, get up!

Helmut slowly gets up.

HELMUT

You were where?

SANCHO

I was... at the farm! For God's sake,
Helmut, hurry up...

Helmut starts to dress.

HELMUT

Oh my God, Sally... and I... Oh, my
God...

He rubs with his hands over his forehead, trying to get rid
of his headache.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

We have... we have to get the horses...

SANCHO

They've taken the horses! We have to run,
man!

HELMUT

Oh no...

EXT. THE SHERIFF'S BARN - DAY

ELLIOT, the sheriff's twenty years old, pimply son, ties a
noose to a rafter of the barn which opens onto a backyard and
the sheriff's house. Dust is dancing in the sunlight.

ELLIOT

(shouts towards the house)
I'm done, dad!

INT. THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE / PRISON - DAY

The SHERIFF rises from his desk.

SHERIFF
(shouts out the back door)
Very good, son!

He goes over to the prison cell and opens the gate.

On a cot sits SALLY, her hands tied behind her back.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
(cheerfully)
It's time, miss!

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sancho hurries along the street towards the village, followed by a pale Helmut. Both of them are very hung over.

HELMUT
(mumbles)
Shit, shit, shit...

Out of breath, he stops at the curb.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Sancho! Sancho! Wait... a minute...

He bends over and throws up.

Sancho fidgets nervously.

SANCHO
Hurry up! For God's sake, Helmut...
please!

HELMUT
(vomiting)
... coming ...

EXT. THE SHERIFF'S BARN - DAY

SALLY stands on a chair in the middle of the barn. The SHERIFF ties the noose around her neck. His son Elliot is watching with interest.

SALLY
You have no right to do this! I'm not
wanted in this state!

SHERIFF
Oh, shut up. You don't have to explain
the law to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALLY
This is illegal, asshole!

SHERIFF
Illegal?
(he laughs)
The most notorious outlaw in the country
is telling me what I'm doing is illegal!
Well...

He tightens the knot and scoffs at Sally.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
... it might be, but it pays. Once I get
your pretty body over the border, I'll
get a cool grand for it.
(beat)
And by the way, the times of you outlaws
are over. We'll install law and order in
this country now, in case you haven't
noticed.

The SHERIFF'S WIFE looks out of a window on the first floor
of the house.

WIFE
Humphrey, Elliot, lunch is ready!

SHERIFF
I'll be finished in a second, honey!

WIFE
(nagging)
Can't you finish after lunch? The soup's
getting cold!

SHERIFF
Please, Betty, just two minutes!
(to his son)
Elliot, go and help your mother set the
table.

ELLIOT
(disappointed)
But, dad... can't I stay and watch?

SHERIFF
(severely)
Elliot...

SALLY
Do what your father said, you little
jerk.

Elliot sulkily trots out of the barn, his hands in his
pockets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHERIFF

(to Sally)

So. Pardon me if I make it quick. Any last words?

He lifts his foot, ready to knock the chair over.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

No? OK...

He notices Elliot still standing in the door, looking back.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Elliot! I told you to...

Just then, a GUNSHOT resounds and Elliot drops dead. The sheriff freezes.

Helmut appears in the doorframe with a smoking gun. He shoots wildly around.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Holy... shit!

SALLY

(reproachfully)

Helmut! Where the fuck have you been?

The sheriff jumps behind a pillar, drawing his gun, and shoots back. Helmut takes shelter behind the doorframe.

The sheriff's wife appears in the window of the house again.

WIFE

Humphrey! What's going on?

SHERIFF

Stay where you are! Get away from the window!

Helmut shoots. The sheriff hides behind the pillar again.

HELMUT

(shouting from his cover)

Did I get him?

Sally stretches her neck to see if the sheriff is hit.

SALLY

No!

WIFE (O.S.)

Humphrey? What's the matter? What's the shooting all about?

Helmut continues to shoot wildly around. Sally ducks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SALLY

To the right, to the right! Are you trying to kill me?

Helmut rubs his eyes.

HELMUT

Sorry... fucking headache...

He feels like he has to throw up again.

WIFE

(reproachfully)

Humphrey? Are you hit? Could you please tell me...

SHERIFF

Betty, get away from the window, for God's sake!

More shots.

SALLY

Aim more to the right! Your right, not mine! Are you drunk or what? Try to concentrate a little!

WIFE

Humphrey, listen...

SHERIFF

Shut up, Betty! Shut the fuck up! Can't you see I'm in trouble here?

WIFE

(yells)

Get off our property, you goddamn bandits! Leave my husband alone!

Helmut turns to Sancho, who's sitting in the backyard, rubbing his forehead.

HELMUT

Sancho, make yourself useful and get that woman to shut the hell up!

Sancho rises, unsteadily.

SANCHO

Si, si...

He staggers into the house, dragging his gun from its holster.

Helmut shoots again. A scream comes from behind the pillar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SALLY
I think you got him.

WIFE
(horrified)
Humphrey!?

HELMUT
Really?

SALLY
Can't see... Look, you have to come and
check it out for yourself!

WIFE (O.S.)
(yells)
Hum-phrey! For God's sake, give me an
answer!... Ah... Get out of my house, you
dirty Mexican!

Helmut carefully steps into the barn, gun in the ready.

SALLY
(reproachfully)
Helmut... Where have you been all night?

HELMUT
At... a party...

SALLY
What party?

From the house come the voices of Sancho and the sheriff's
wife.

WIFE (O.S.)
Ah! Leave me alone, you piece of shit!

SANCHO (O.S.)
Please just be quiet, miss...

Helmut goes around the pillar and sees the sheriff laying on
the ground.

HELMUT
(relieved)
I think he's dead.

He nudges him with his foot to make sure.

WIFE (O.S.)
You... dirty fucking immigrant!

We hear fighting sounds.

Helmut frees Sally from the noose.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

HELMUT

Look, Sally, I... I wanted to get home early, but...

SALLY

But what?

She steps down from the chair and turns her back towards Helmut so he can cut her fetters.

HELMUT

I just... fell asleep. I was so... tired. And nobody... noticed. You know.

Sally rubs her wrists. They look at each other, feeling uncomfortable.

SALLY

What's the matter?

HELMUT

Nothing. I... I have a headache, that's all. What's the matter with you?

SALLY

Nothing. I... I missed you last night, that's all.

He takes her into his arms. In the background, the sheriff's wife falls out of the window and lands in the grass with a thud.

EXT. STONE HOUSES - NIGHT

Small Mexican stone houses are built into the rocky landscape. They are obviously abandoned.

Sally is laying against the wall of one of the houses, wrapped in a blanket. Helmut is sitting next to her, staring into the night.

HELMUT

(suddenly)

Sally? ...

Sally opens her eyes. Obviously, she's been wide awake.

SALLY

What?

Helmut hesitates.

HELMUT

(finally)

Nothing... just wanted to know if you were asleep...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sally closes her eyes again.

FADE TO:

EXT. STONE HOUSES - MORNING

Day's dawning. Sally's sleeping, Helmut still sits against the stone wall, awake: he hasn't moved all night.

Finally, he opens his bag. It contains bundles of dollar-bills. Helmut takes them all out and carefully stores them away into Sally's bag, which is laying next to her.

He slowly gets up and begins to walk away, trying not to make any noise. After a few yards, he stops and looks back at the sleeping Sally.

He hesitates for a moment, then walks on.

JENNY (V.O.)

So?

HELMUT (V.O.)

So... nothing. I left her... I had cheated on her... so I left her.

FADE TO:

INT. OUTHOUSE - MORNING

The petroleum lamp has gone out, the outhouse lies in the gray and pale light of the early morning.

JENNY

You left her?

HELMUT

Well... yes.

Jenny jumps up, excitedly.

JENNY

How could you!?

HELMUT

Well, I... I had spoiled it all.

JENNY

Spoiled what?

HELMUT

Everything. It would never have been like before... I would never have been able to look into her eyes again without... feeling guilty.

He falls silent.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY

But Helmut... these things just happen! I mean...

HELMUT

Not to us.

Jenny is obviously very upset.

JENNY

Oh Helmut...

She is standing by the door, shaking her head.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(after a moment)

And then?

HELMUT

(shrugs)

I... I came up here. I raided a bank or two, but without her, it was... rather sad.

(beat)

I'm lonely. I'm homesick.

(beat)

Sally was the only home I had in this stupid country.

He stops, seemingly on the verge of tears.

There's a silence. Jenny slowly sits down again. When she finally speaks, she avoids his eyes.

JENNY

(uneasily)

Listen, Helmut... I think I... I have to tell you something...

Helmut looks at her, expectantly.

HELMUT

Yes?

JENNY

(clearing her throat)

I don't really know... where to begin...

FADE TO:

INT. SALOON - DAY

The saloon is empty except for Jenny, cleaning glasses behind the counter, and Buttonhole, sitting on a chair and practicing on his accordion. It sounds quite horrible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY

... and one day, I'll have my own bar,
not a shithole like this...

Buttonhole interrupts his playing and looks up.

BUTTONHOLE

Y-you... will... never... have your
own... b-bar...

JENNY

(hurt)

How can you say that?

BUTTONHOLE

B-because you... are... too nice. You a-
always help... people. I-I mean... that's
why I a-adore you... but... but that's
just... n-no... w-way to get anywhere.

Jenny looks at him, frowning.

At that moment, the door swings open and... Sally walks in.

SALLY

Hi.

JENNY

Hi...

BACK TO:

INT. OUTHOUSE - MORNING

Helmut starts.

HELMUT

She was... here!?

Jenny nods.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

How could you not tell me!?

Jenny lifts her shoulders in despair.

JENNY

It... it's so tragic. The two of you...
missing each other by a couple of hours!
And I didn't want... to depress you...
even more.

(after a moment)

I'm sorry, Helmut... I'm so sorry...

Helmut lets out a sigh.

BACK TO:

INT. SALOON - DAY

Sally is leaning against the counter now, blowing on her hot coffee. Jenny is cleaning glasses again.

JENNY
(casually)
And why are you looking for him?

SALLY
(sighs)
Long story.

She takes a sip of coffee. Jenny leans over the counter, her head in her hands.

JENNY
(dreamily)
A love story?

Sally nods.

SALLY
He ran away, and I'm trying to get him back.

JENNY
What did he leave you for?

SALLY
He didn't say...

JENNY
(after a moment)
That's weird.

Sally takes a sip of coffee.

SALLY
(finally)
I'm afraid he found out that... that I had cheated on him.

BACK TO:

INT. OUTHOUSE - MORNING

Helmut stares at Jenny.

HELMUT
What?

BACK TO:

INT. SALOON - DAY

Sally looks down, a guilty look on her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALLY
With his friend. Some Mexican guy we used
to work with.

BACK TO:

INT. outhouse - Morning

HELMUT
What... WHAT?!?

CUT TO:

INT. Abandoned Farm - Night

An almost empty room in the abandoned farm. Sally is sitting alone in front of the fireplace, drinking whiskey.

SALLY (V.O.)
He didn't come home that night. I stayed
up waiting for him, and... started
drinking...

FADE TO:

Sancho appears in the door. He has a strange smile on his face, and stares at Sally still sitting in front of the fire that has almost gone out.

Sally turns around and gives him sad smile. She clearly is drunk and clumsily knocks the whiskey bottle over with her hand.

SALLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
... until this Sancho came home and
somehow... took care of me...

FADE TO:

Sancho is kneeling down next to Sally, talking gently to her, stroking her hair. She nods, with big sad eyes.

FADE TO:

Sally lays on the bed. On top of her lies Sancho, making love to her. The fire has gone out, the gray, pale light of early dawn fills the room.

CLOSE UP of Sally's face: Her empty gaze wanders out the window...

CLOSE UP of Sancho's face, above her, he's getting near his climax...

Suddenly, the barrel of a gun COMES INTO FRAME, being put against Sancho's head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERIFF (O.S.)

You better get off that woman now, if you
want to keep that stupid Mexican head on
your shoulders.

Sancho freezes.

Sally turns around and wants to grab her gun from the floor,
but it isn't there anymore.

She looks up: Next to the bed stands the sheriff, some amused
LAWMEN, as well as the sheriff's son Elliot, who's staring at
Sally with a dirty grin. All of them are armed.

Sancho slowly lifts his arms and gets out of the bed, his
eyes wide with fear.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

(to Sancho)

And now get lost!

Sancho quickly collects his clothes from the floor and runs
out of the room. The lawmen laugh.

BACK TO:

INT. SALOON - DAY

Jenny listens to Sally's story, chewing on a strand of hair.

SALLY

He came and freed me from the sheriff,
but...

She takes another sip of coffee.

SALLY (CONT'D)

... the next morning, he was gone. Sancho
must have told him all about it.

She shrugs in resignation.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Stupid, eh?

Jenny nods, full of contempt.

HELMUT (V.O.)

(impatiently)

And then?!

BACK TO:

INT. outhouse - Morning

Jenny shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY
And then...

BACK TO:

INT. SALOON - DAY

Sally finishes her coffee and leaves.

JENNY (V.O.)
... she finished her coffee and left.

BACK TO:

INT. outhouse - MORNING

Helmut looks at Jenny with big eyes.

HELMUT
What? Where? Where did she go!?

JENNY
(desperately)
How shall I know!? If I knew, I would
have told you long ago, Helmut! She
just... went on looking for you... I
suppose.

HELMUT
Oh my God...

Helmut lets himself fall back against the wall and shakes his
head in frustration.

JENNY
I'm so sorry...

Helmut leans forward.

HELMUT
Jenny?

JENNY
What?

HELMUT
The letter... we have to finish the
letter! I want her to know... what has
really happened and that... it was all a
big... mistake! You can find her... you
can find her and give her the letter!

Jenny bites her lips.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Jenny...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jenny suddenly gets up, obviously ill at ease.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
Come on! Please...

JENNY
(clearing her throat)
Look, Helmut...

HELMUT
Yes?

JENNY
About the letter...

HELMUT
Yes?

JENNY
(after a moment)
I can't write.

She stands in the door, avoiding Helmut's eyes.

JENNY (CONT'D)
I... just pretended. I mean, I can read a
bit, but really only a bit, and I can
write some numbers. But... it seemed so
important to you. So I just...
(she shrugs)
... pretended.

She hands him the pages. There are only covered with simple
drawings: a man groveling to a woman's feet, a woman with two
guns, a covered wagon, a horse and a donkey, a heart with an
arrow through it, a stagecoach...

JENNY (CONT'D)
I'm so sorry, Helmut.

Helmut makes a resigned gesture with his hand.

HELMUT
Oh, never mind.

He lets himself fall back against the wall.

HELMUT (CONT'D)
(sad)
I did it all wrong...

There are tears in his eyes now. Embarrassed, Jenny gets up
and opens the door. She looks outside for a moment.

JENNY
(clearing her throat)
Day's dawning.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HELMUT

Can I have a look?

Jenny helps him on his feet.

INT. MARILYN'S ROOM - MORNING

The feeble light of dawn illuminates the bed. Marilyn snores blissfully. Nickel, who lies next to her, wakes up.

He makes sure that she's asleep, rises and searches for his clothes.

INT. SALOON - MORNING

The morning sun falls on Tom and Emily sleeping at their table in the murky saloon. There are some empty whiskey bottles on the floor around their table.

Emily wakes up, looks around and shakes Tom.

EMILY

Hey, Tom...

Tom drowsily looks up.

TOM

Hm...

EMILY

Let's go, Tom.

They rise from their table, yawning, and leave the saloon... not without stealing a whiskey bottle from the counter.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

When Tom and Emily come out of the saloon, they step over Eddie and Buttonhole who sleep curled up on the steps leading from the porch. They're almost totally covered with snow.

INT. MARILYN'S ROOM - MORNING

Nickel, wearing trousers and a shirt, holding his boots and his holster, sneaks to the door.

The floor creaks. Marilyn turns around in her bed and grunts. Nickel freezes.

Marilyn wraps the sheet tighter around her and starts snoring again. Relieved, Nickel tiptoes out of the room.

INT. outhouse - MORNING

Jenny stands in the door and supports Helmut, her head leaning against his. They look out at the sun rising over the snowy hills.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY

Nice day...

HELMUT

Yeah... pretty stupid to die on a morning
like this, huh?

He coughs a little blood, then he collapses. Jenny tries to
keep him upright.

JENNY

Helmut! Hey, Helmut!

He passes out. Jenny tries to hold him upright with all her
might.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Helmut! Don't pass out now! Listen to me!
Helmut? Do you hear me?

Helmut slides down along the wall.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(desperately)

Helmut! Goddammit, can you hear me?

There is no reaction from Helmut.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Listen, Helmut! You can't die now! I'll
get you a doctor!

(out of her mind)

The storm is over! I can make it in an
hour! Do you hear me? I'll go and get you
a doctor, right!? You're not gonna die on
me now!?

She rushes out the door.

INT. SALOON - MORNING

Nickel comes yawning down the stairs. He sits on the steps
and begins to put on his boots.

Jenny rushes in through the back door, crosses the saloon to
the front door and bumps into... Sally, who just walks in,
shaking off some snow from her clothes. Jenny falls on her
behind.

SALLY

Oh, hi. Sorry...

Jenny stares at her in disbelief.

JENNY

You... it's you...!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SALLY
(smiling)
Yeah. I forgot my bag.

She stretches out her hand to help Jenny onto her feet again.

Nickel, who's just forcing one foot into the tight boot, lifts his head and scrutinizes Sally. Jenny is still stupefied.

SALLY (CONT'D)
This morning, remember? It's a brown bag, about this big...

Jenny jumps up.

JENNY
Don't move!

She starts rushing out the back door again.

JENNY (CONT'D)
Just stay here, don't... don't go away!
I'll be right back!

SALLY
OK, OK, no need to hurry...

Nickel slowly gets up.

Sally notices her bag hanging on a chair.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Oh...

She goes over to take it.

NICKEL
Good morning.

SALLY
Hi...

Nickel slowly walks across the saloon, not taking his eyes off Sally.

INT. OUTHOUSE - DAY

When Jenny comes back into the outhouse, Helmut still lies unconsciously on the floor.

JENNY
Helmut!? She's back!

She bends over him and shakes him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY (CONT'D)
Helmut, please! ... Get up, for Christ's
sake! She's here!

Helmut opens his eyes briefly, but he doesn't seem to understand.

INT. SALOON - DAY

Nickel walks around Sally, keeping a wary distance.

SALLY
Something wrong?

She is just about to pick up her bag. Instead, her hand slowly slides down towards her gun...

NICKEL
(mumbles)
Sally fucking Creek, non ci credo... this
is like fucking Christmas.

His hand is also on his gun...

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

With all her might, Jenny drags an unconscious Helmut along the corridor...

INT. SALOON - DAY

Sally and Nickel stand facing each other, ready to draw...

SALLY
Better not do anything stupid...

NICKEL
You bet I will...

Just then, the back door opens and Jenny drags Helmut into the saloon.

JENNY
Come on, Helmut, let's go!

Sally and Nickel turn around at them...

SALLY
Helmut...!

Helmut opens his eyes and looks at her. A smile appears on his face. Sally rushes over towards him...

Nickel draws...

NICKEL
Helmut fucking Korn! I knew it!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jenny stares at Nickel's gun in panic...

SALLY

Don't!

She draws her gun...

Nickel whirls around and shoots... Sally is hit.

NICKEL

Yesss! I got her! Got her! Bang bang!

This is the last thing he says, for Sally shoots and hits him just then. Nickel collapses, knocking over a chair.

SALLY

Asshole...

Wounded, she makes a few steps towards Helmut, when...

MARILYN (OFF SCREEN)

Don't move!

Marilyn is standing on the top of the stairs in a nightgown, rifle in hand.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

(threateningly, indicating
Helmut)

That's my thousand dollars!

SALLY

(mumbles)

Oh, fuck you...

She tries to lift her gun, but she is too weak. The gun falls from her hand.

Marilyn aims at her...

MARILYN

(annoyed)

Stupid girl.

JENNY (O.S.)

Hold it, Marilyn!

Marilyn slowly turns her head: Jenny stands next to Nickel's body, holding his gun with two hands. She's shaking.

JENNY (CONT'D)

Put that rifle down!

MARILYN

Jenny... what...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JENNY

Put it down! Now!

Marilyn shakes her head in amazement.

MARILYN

Oh, come on, Jenny. You're not going to shoot me...

JENNY

(tears in her eyes)

Put that fucking rifle down... please!

(desperately)

I don't want to do this, Marilyn! Please don't make me do this...

Marilyn stares at the crying Jenny. The wounded Sally very slowly sits down next to Helmut on the floor.

MARILYN

My God, Jenny. You don't even know how to shoot.

She aims at Sally again, puts her finger on the trigger... and is hit by Jenny's bullet.

Marilyn collapses.

Jenny stares at her, then at her own smoking gun. She can't believe what she just did.

JENNY

I'm sorry, Marilyn... I'm so sorry!

She shakily sits down on a chair.

Sally lifts her hand to stroke Helmut's head.

SALLY

Helmut...

After a moment, Helmut opens his eyes again.

HELMUT

Sally...

SALLY

Oh, Helmut...

Helmut blinks, bloodstained hair hanging into his eyes.

HELMUT

Can't see anything...

SALLY

Wait...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She wipes Helmut's hair out of his face. They look at each other, don't know what to say, smile...

HELMUT
I'm so glad you came...

SALLY
I'm so glad I found you...

He lifts his heads weakly and they kiss.

SALLY (CONT'D)
I was looking for you... everywhere...

HELMUT
So was I... I'm so sorry...

SALLY
So am I...

She lays down, cradled up against Helmut like a kitten.

HELMUT
I even wrote you a letter... but I
couldn't... finish it...

He slings his arms around Sally from behind.

SALLY
(smiling)
I love you, Helmut.

She's nestling up against him, trying to find the most comfortable position, and closes her eyes.

HELMUT
(smiling)
I love you too, Sally.

For a moment, it seems like the two of them are dead.

Suddenly, Sally reopens her eyes.

SALLY
Helmut? You're still here?

HELMUT
Sure.

SALLY
You're comfortable?

HELMUT
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

SALLY
(satisfied)
Good.

They die... looking very content.

Jenny who has motionlessly observed the scene, slowly rises and goes over to Helmut and Sally laying in the middle of the saloon.

She looks down at them for a moment, shudders, straightens up and walks towards the door.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

Eddie stretches in the sunlight. Buttonhole sits on the steps of the porch and sleepily wipes the snow off his clothes.

Eddie pulls a small buggy out from under the snow.

Jenny steps out of the saloon and blinks in the sunlight.

BUTTONHOLE
G-good... morning... J-J-Jenny.

JENNY
(in an choked voice)
Good morning.

Buttonhole smiles at her.

Eddie contentedly ties the buggy to Nickel's horse standing in front of the saloon.

JENNY (CONT'D)
(in a choked voice)
Are you leaving?

EDDIE
Yeah, we're going down south.

BUTTONHOLE
To... S-San... Fran... cis...c...

Jenny suddenly bursts into tears and sits down on the steps.

Embarrassed, Buttonhole puts his hand on her arm.

JENNY
(sobbing)
Sorry. I'm sorry.

Buttonhole looks at her with big eyes, not knowing what to say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY (CONT'D)
(sobbing)
I'm just moved. A whore has the right to
be moved, too, right?

EDDIE
(embarrassed)
She sure has, miss Jenny...

Jenny blows her nose into her sleeve.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
(after a moment)
Uh, I'm afraid we'll have to go now.

Eddie takes the horse's reins.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Come on, Buttonhole.

Buttonhole hesitates, not wanting to leave Jenny.

JENNY
(sniffing)
Go on, Buttonhole. I'll be all right.

Buttonhole hugs Jenny in order to say good-bye. She smiles at him weakly.

EDDIE
(to Buttonhole)
Hurry up, kid! We want to be in Lost
Springs before it starts snowing again!

Buttonhole hesitantly gets up and climbs onto the buggy,
which Eddie leads away through the snow.

Jenny sits forlornly on the steps, chewing on a strand of
hair, and watches them drive away.

Suddenly, she jumps up and runs back into the saloon.

INT. SALOON - MORNING

Jenny rushes in, stumbles over Nickel's body, but doesn't
care in her haste. She picks up Sally's bag that's still
hanging on the same chair where it has been for the whole
night.

Jenny opens it quickly: It is full of dollar bills in
bundles!

She throws the bag over her shoulder. Then, she bends over
the dead Sally and Helmut.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JENNY

Thank you, Helmut... and thank you,
Sally... You.... you know what? I...

She has to swallow her tears.

JENNY (CONT'D)

(talking fast)

... I'm gonna name my bar after you
two... "Helmut and Sally's"... with a big
sign, and... with pictures on the walls,
and...

(beat)

Sorry, but I have to run.

She quickly exits.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

Jenny comes out of the saloon, throwing Sally's bag over her
shoulder.

The buggy with Eddie and Buttonhole is almost out of sight.
She runs after them through the snow.

JENNY

Hey! Wait!

Buttonhole gesticulates in her direction when he sees her,
and puts his hand on Eddie's shoulder. Eddie turns around and
stops.

From a distance we see Jenny reach them and climb onto the
buggy. Buttonhole happily looks up at her.

The horse sets into motion again.

Buttonhole and Jenny sit side by side on the rear board of
the buggy which disappears over the snowy hill...

FADE OUT.