

REDBEAR

Written by
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Based on Bass Reeves, the first African-American U.S. Marshal.

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FADE IN:

CAPTION: *"There will always be bad men worthy of a good bullet." - Sheriff Red Harding, Colorado Territory, 1889*

EXT. OLD WEST - DAY

A large grassy plain with mountains in the distance that are a two-day ride away.

RED "REDBEAR" HARDING, 60s, is a bear of a man with long red sun-bleached hair and a long red graying beard. He wears a reddish-brown bearskin coat so Indians call him "Redbear." His big black round-brim hat looks like it once belonged to a preacher. It did, before Red shot him for being a sinner.

Red's Appaloosa, APPLE, is his best friend and talk-to buddy.

Their PACKHORSE has a bloody blanket covering a corpse slung over its saddle with feet and wrists tied underneath. A Hawken .50 caliber rifle is tied longways under a stirrup.

Red halts at a carved "Welcome To Ahngry" sign to read aloud.

RED
Ahn-gree?

He sees a scorpion on the ground and *spits* black juice on it.

RED
Might wanna' fix that.

EXT. TOWN OF AHNGRY - LATER THAT DAY

A small dusty town in the middle of nowhere that could be an orderly place to live, if only they had order, and Law.

GRUBBY the panhandler, looking like a vagrant, walks to Red with a hand out. Red reaches into a shirt pocket and flips a gold coin to Grubby who bites on it with rotten black teeth.

RED
Jail?

Grubby points a gnarled finger. Red tosses him another coin.

RED
Sheriff?

Grubby's finger swings to point out the far end of town.

Red stands in his stirrups to see the town's, *Boot Hill*.

Grubby runs in a one-bit saloon salivating. There is *yelling* inside, then Grubby flies out through its swinging gates.

Red hooks a leg over his saddle-horn to sit semi-sideways.

BUFORD, acting and looking like the town bully he is, exits the bar *laughing* evil holding up Red's same two gold coins.

BUFORD

Lookee what I found.

RED

T'weren't lost.

BUFORD

(studies Red's Packhorse)

Bounty Hunter?

(no response)

Carryin' a corpse --

(moves hand to gun)

don't make you no killer.

Red arc-spits tobacco juice on Buford's boot. They glare.

RED

Think on it.

Buford draws. A sawed-off shotgun *blast* blows a hole through Red's coat then a hole through Buford as he's blown back into the bar. Two gold coins fall near Grubby who looks up at Red.

RED

Havin' --begets keepin'.

RIFFRAFF exit bar running to see smoke coming out of Red's coat-hole showing a sawed-off single-barrel shotgun. Red pulls his gun out, opens its breach, *puffs* the rest of the smoke out its barrel, reloads it, then locks breach.

RIFFRAFF ONE twitches his hand near his holster.

Red swings the shotgun to him and *clicks* back its hammer.

RED

Think on it harder.

Riffraff step backwards into the bar. Red rides on.

AHNGRY MAYOR, wearing a filthy apron, runs out of what is supposed to be a general store.

AHNGRY MAYOR

Needs a Sheriff!

Red sees another scorpion near Ahngry Mayor's boot and spits black juice on it still riding on.

RED
Still do.

AHNGRY WOMAN, 30s, plain, in a plain country dress, runs out of a shop near the edge of town.

AHNGRY WOMAN
You could help us!
(no response)
Why don't you care?!

RED
Did --didn't take.

Red rides out of Ahngry.

EXT. AHNGRY BOOT HILL - MOMENTS LATER

Red stops outside the small cemetery's two-foot-high prairie wood fence and reads aloud a tall hand-carved wood tombstone.

RED
"Here lies beloved Sheriff Moore
with four slugs from a 44. No Less
and no more, so now no more Moore."
(thinks on it, nods)
Catchy.

Gunfire from Ahngry followed by Ahngry Woman's *scream*.

Red spits black juice on the tombstone and rides on.

RED
Might wanna' fix that.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF SANDPEED IN THE MORNING - DAYS LATER

Red approaches another town. There is a slight ground freeze.

He stops to read out-loud its "*Welcome To*" sign.

RED
"Welcome to Sandpeed, friendliest
town in a hundred mile."
(spurs Apple on)
We'll see.

EXT. SANDPEED'S CENTER STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Bigger with more storefronts than Ahngry having wooden sidewalks. Unlit kerosene lanterns hang above their front doors and all the buildings have hitching posts.

Red rides in pulling Packhorse now with horseflies buzzing around its corpse. He stops to "take in" the town's sights.

RED

Down right citified.

Red, still with earlier burn-hole in his coat, ties off both horses in front of the Sheriff's Office and enters. The Spanish spurs with rooster design and large rowels on his tall Calvary Officer boots *jingle* ominous wherever he walks.

INT. SANDPEED SHERRIFF OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Worn scratched desk with one foot-peg missing is supported by old stacked books. The pot-belly stove door's bottom hinge is broken, so it hangs askew. A small square table with a checkerboard top has black and white painted metal slugs for pieces. One double-barrel shotgun is in its empty rifle-rack.

Red enters. No one is present. He hears *noise* in the back.

INT. SANDPEED SHERRIFF OFFICE JAILCELL - IMMEDIATELY

Back room has one jailcell and a small open storage closet.

Deputy DAVID BASS REEVES, African-American, 19, tall, is in the only cell practicing quick-draws. He is not that quick, and not that coordinated. He drops his gun. Red *coughs*.

RED

If you were aimin' fer the ground --
bullseye.

Bass fumbles to pick up his gun embarrassed and turns to Red wearing a *Deputy* badge.

BASS

Who, who, who ...?

RED

Imitatin' an owl?

Red exits back into the office.

Bass follows him fumble-holstering his pistol.

INT. SANDPEED SHERIFF OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Bass enters to find Red standing by the bulletin board.

BASS
Why, why ...?

RED
Got a problem speakin' whole?

Red pulls a *Wanted Poster* off the bulletin board.

RED
Poster says "Dead or Alive."
(hands poster to Bass)
I took that as a hint.

Bass runs outside, then back in with the poster.

DEPUTY
He, he's dead! How, how, how ...?

RED
Might wanna' fix that.

BANK MANAGER, 40's, balding, slight paunch, in a three piece suit looking like he could be President of the Erie Railroad, enters walking and talking like a true moneylender.

BANK MANAGER
See here my good man, your body's raising quite a stink out there.

RED
He was raisin' quite a stink before which is why now he's a body.

Red takes *Wanted Poster* from Bass and hands to Bank Manager.

RED
Send a telegram to Angelina and Neches River Railroad in Lufkin, Texas to confirm their reward. Make sure to spell our names correct. I'll be staying at --?
(turns to Bass)
town got a hotel?

BASS
Yes sir, best in a hundred mile!

RED
We'll see.

BANK MANAGER

You're full a' more hot wind than a puffy toad. Folks here don't take kindly to strangers riding in telling us how to do, especially when they're a low-life bounty ...

Red pulls back his coat lapels to reveal a bullwhip hanging inside it across from a spear-point made into a machete. His sawed-off single-barrel shotgun is in a special holster on his gun belt with a cut-down *Henry* rifle "Mare's Leg" in its own holster on the other side. A pair of crossed 1851 *Colt Navy Revolvers* stick butt-out of his pants belt. Two bandoliers, one of .40 caliber bullets and the other of shotgun shells, crisscross his chest. He is, an arsenal.

BASS

How much all that weigh?

BANK MANAGER

My God! You're a walking armory.

RED

God --wants nuthin' to do, with what I do.

BASS

Carry a boot-knife, too?

RED

Only one way to find out.

BANK MANAGER

I'll send the wire, but doubt the hotel will take the likes of you.

RED

(lifts nose sniffing air)
Don't matta', don't smell like rain.

BANK MANAGER

Didn't catch your name?

RED

Didn't throw it.

Red exits. Bass and Bank Manager look at each other.

EXT. SANDPEED SHERIFF OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Red, with spurs *jingling*, exits as Bank Manager and Bass follow with same *Wanted Poster*.

Red goes to Packhorse and throws back the top blanket. Back of the corpse's head is blown off, so now it has maggots. Red grabs its hair to lift corpse's head. It has bug-eyes and a swollen black tongue.

Walking past them is MISS MINERVA, impeccably dressed and impeccably dirty minded, who *screams* to break glass, then faints most theatrical. Everyone ignores her.

BASS

Done blew the back of his head
clean off!

RED

Didn't have time to get particular.
(drops corpse's head)
You two sign his affidavit, then --
(looks around)
where's the Sheriff?

BASS

Guess it be me --till the election.

Miss Minerva's scream emptied the stores and saloon of its TOWNSPEOPLE, both sexes, ages, and dress, along with TOM "ARKANSAW" JONES, a giant of a man with an ego to match.

ARKANSAW

Whens "me" --becomes Sheriff!

BASS

(hand moves to his gun)
Only one way to find out.

Red steps between them. Bass helps Miss Minerva stand.

ARKANSAW

"Arkansaw" Jones --
(puffs out chest)
reckon you heard a' me.

Red looks Arkansaw up and down, then spits black juice on Jones's boot tip.

RED

Met a feller once, dumb as a stump,
said his name was Arkansaw.
(sizes Jones up again)
You growed some.

BANK MANAGER

Still need your name, mister.

Red answers still sizing up Arkansaw with an evil-eye.

RED

Red Harding.

BASS

I heard a' you, you're famous!

BANK MANAGER

More like infamous.

ARKANSAW

Either way, I ain't heard a' you.

Arkansaw's hand moves towards his revolver.

RED

Must be him --just growed dumber.

Red pulls back his coat's lapels ovetop both rifle handles and thumbs-off their leather hammer-holder straps.

Arkansaw's eyes get big, then he holds up both palms.

ARKANSAW

Just funnin' ya'.

RED

You see me grinnin' stupid?

ARKANSAW

(backs up)

No, but expect I will --when next we meets.

RED

Don't be lookin' forward to it.

(turns to Bass)

Sheriff --?

BASS

Deputy.

RED

Start thinkin' the other way, or you won't make it to that election.

Red *spits* a huge ungodly glob of black juice. Miss Minerva sees it and faints delicate. Red and Bass look down at her.

RED

She do this regular?

BASS

"She do." Possum ain't got nuthin' on her.

RED

Take my body to your Grim Reaper.
Texas will pay for his bury. I'll
stable my horse at the livery. Take
the packhorse horse there after. It
and saddle are mine now.

BANK MANAGER

Doubt our Blacksmith will want your
thievin' business.

BLACKIE THE BLACKSMITH, burly, wearing a well-worn black
leather apron, steps out of the crowd with his iron mallet.

BLACKIE

He don't.

HOTEL OWNER, meek, mild, horrible combover, in a collarless
shirt with suspenders, joins in to speak up, barely.

HOTEL OWNER

Hotel's fully booked.

TOWNLADIES *hiss*. Red looks around.

RED

There a rattler convention in town?
(to Bass)
Meet me at the edge of town with
his Packhorse and the affidavit.
(tips hat to Townladies)
Hope you ladies got no objection to
me hangin' out near your skirts?

Townladies lift their noses *harrumphing*.

RED

After I wet my whistle, a' course.

BARKEEP, collarless shirt with armbands, steps out of Crowd.

BARKEEP

Bar's closed.

RED

A' course.
(scans town's sour faces)
I sees the welcome mat in this town
--got two sides to it.

Red tosses Packhorse's lead to Bass who catches. Red mounts
Apple and trots out of town. Townladies *hiss* more. Red looks
around searching for diamondbacks.

EXT. EDGE OF SANDPEED - MOMENTS LATER

Red stops at their duplicate *Welcome To* sign and spits his nastiest glob of black juice yet on its word "Friendliest."

RED

Might wanna' fix that.

EXT. SANDPEED OUTSKIRTS - LATER THAT DAY

Red made camp under a large cottonwood tree and built a ring of rocks with a fire in it. There is a skinned squirrel on a stick-spit he slow-turns over the fire.

Bass rides up pulling Packhorse, dismounts, and ties both horses to a sapling. He hands a folded paper to Red.

BASS

Here's your aff --, affa --?

RED

Af-fa-dave-it. Means a written legal statement for the court.
(motions Bass to sit)
Read much?

BASS

(sits cross-legged)
Pa never saw no reason.

RED

Where he?

BASS

Blown up. Couldn't read the *No Smokin'* sign.

RED

Bet he saw a reason then.

Bass is eyeing the cooked squirrel with envy.

RED

Help yourself.

Bass pulls off a squirrel leg to gnaw on.

BASS

Didn't hear no gunshot?

Red pulls a throwing knife from behind his neck to snap-throw it over-handed. It sticks deep in the tree's bark.

RED

Knife's only good for small game
and whittlin'. Can't throw hard
enough to break a man's heart-bone
and a gut stick only makes him --
àhn-gree.

BASS

Folks say you killed fifty men?

RED

Real men --don't say.
(pulls off squirrel meat)
When'd your pa "see the light?"

BASS

When I were eight.

RED

Who fed ya' then?

BASS

Owner.

RED

You a slave?

BASS

To start, then a soldier, when
Master joined Johnny Reb.

Bass looks hungry at the squirrel again. Red hand-sweeps,
Sure, then circles same hand *And--?* Bass pulls off other leg.

BASS

Came to separate our ways when he
tried to swindle me at cards.
(spits out a bone)
Can't abide a man who cheats.

RED

Good to set limits. And --?

BASS

Thought it best to seek my
immediate relocation, so found
myself in the Indian Territories.

RED

Human Being?

Bass nods licking his fingers clean, then does them again.

BASS

Cherokee first, then Creek, finally Seminole, so speaks all three. Only rode out of there after that, uh, Thirteenth Ah-Ah-Ahmen --?

RED

Amend-ment. Who fed ya' then?

BASS

Sheriff. Let me sleep in the cell for chores, been sleepin' there since.

RED

What happened to him?

Bass stands wiping both hands off on his shirt front.

BASS

Thanks for the grub and confab.
(mounts his horse)
Oh, might be stayin' here longer since the singin' wire stopped singin'. Town's tel, tela --?

RED

Teleg-rapher.

BASS

Him, too. Both rode out to check *The Line*. Might be repaired late this week. Maybe next.

RED

Mind ridin' out and lettin' me know when? Mind bringing some Adam's Ale and oats, please. Don't want to wear my thin welcome --any thinner.

Bass rides away, then stops to turn in his saddle.

BASS

Don't think it right they run you oft like that.

RED

Could a' said somethin' then. How long you been Sheriff?

BASS

Two month.

Bass rides off. Red watches him shaking his head.

RED
Maybe a third. --*Maybe.*

EXT. SANDPEED OUTSKIRTS - DAYS LATER

Red's bearskin coat hangs on a tree branch stub. His gun-belt hangs on another stub. Both saddles are at either end of both horse blankets now on the ground. His shotgun and Mare's Leg are broken down oil-shiny on the blankets. The Hawken, in its case, leans against the tree. Apple and Packhorse are tied under the same tree. Red is brushing both talking soothingly.

Bass rides up.

BASS
Fixed.

RED
What'd they do, make the parts?

BASS
How'd you know?

Bass sees Red's guns on the blanket and dismounts going to them and bends to pick one up. Red draws both revolvers from his belt with hammers *cocked* at lightning speed.

RED
Never touch another peacemaker's
peacemakers.

Bass steps back with palms held up.

BASS
Didn't mean to offend.

RED
Most don't --still do.

Red releases both hammers, twirls both pistols, and holsters them back under his pants-belt with equal speed.

Bass drops his hands stupified.

BASS
Can I asks a question?

RED
Is it rhetorical?

BASS
No sir, straight on.

Red *coughs* smirking, then nods.

BASS
Teach me to draw fast?

Red doesn't answer, but fills his hat's crown with oats from a saddlebag hanging on the same tree, then feeds Apple.

BASS
Gonna' answer?

RED
Just did. --Why'd you pin on tin?

BASS
Seemed right thing to do.

RED
Right'll get you killed quicker
than wrong.

BASS
Maybe, but I had to --'specially
since no one else wanted to.

RED
What about razorback, he seems
eager?

BASS
Folk still too upset he shot him.

RED
"Him?"
(raises an eyebrow)
Arkansaw, shot your Sheriff --why?

BASS
Personal.

Red gets more oats in his hat to feed Packhorse.

RED
Son, no such-a-thing in Sheriffin'.
If you ain't all professional all
the time, you're in the wrong line.

BASS
Sounds like you was one.

RED
"Was."

BASS
Why'd you quit?

RED
"Personal."

BASS
(looks down at his badge)
Still --I likes how it feel,
standin' up for folk that can't.
(sighs, looks up)
Didn't have no one stand up for me.

RED
Sounds like your Sheriff did.

BASS
Reckon. --Either way, didn't have
no callin' before, now I do.

RED
It's a callin' alright, but most
don't want to hear it.

Bass runs over to Red who steps back reaching for his guns.

BASS
If you really was one, teach me to
do it right.

RED
What makes you think I know how?

BASS
'Cause you're still standin'.

Red spits tobacco juice moving his head shoulder-to-shoulder.

RED
Can't fault your reasonin'.

Red goes to his canteen hanging on a tree stub and drinks.

BASS
You help me. I help you.

Red *chokes* on his water, then shakes the canteen at Bass.

RED
Already did, so it's a draw.

Bass tries to draw, but Red moves like a sidewinder to grab the back of Bass's hair with Red's back-knife to his throat.

RED
This --is how fast it happens, boy!

BASS
 (looks up at the sky)
 Looks like rain.

RED
 It do, so --?

Bass holds two fingers against Red's knife-hand to step back.

BASS
 So --there's an Indian woman lives
 near here, got a barn, needs money.
 (grins child-like)
 I help you, you help me.

Red spits black juice, then sheathes his knife behind neck.

RED
 God --help us all.

EXT. SMALL DIRT RANCH FURTHER FROM TOWN - LATER SAME DAY

Sky is now storm-dark. A small house with its chimney smoking has an even smaller barn with a garden barely growing between them. A laundry rope is strung between barn and a bent tree.

AIYANA SMYTH, 40s, American Indian pretty, in a country dress with moccasin boots, is taking in her line's laundry.

Bass, and Red pulling Packhorse, ride up.

BASS
 Mornin'.

AIYANA
 Well past morning, Davey.

Red slow-turns in his saddle to Bass.

RED
 "Davey?"

BASS
 David Bass Reeves, so?

RED
 "So" less your last name's Crockett
 --might wanna' fix the first.

Aiyana, with dry laundry now under an arm, walks over.

BASS

This be he, Aiyana.

RED

"Aiyana?"

AIYANA

Yeah, so?

RED

"So" it means eternal beauty.
 (takes off his hat)
 Which you be, ma'am.

AIYANA

(disgusted to Bass)
 Didn't tell me he's a sweet-talker.

RED

Ain't, don't --
 (puts on hat)
 just call 'em as I sees 'em, ma'am.

AIYANA

Then you "sees" my barn.
 (walks manly to house)
 Supper's at sundown --won't be
 callin' out.

Red sucks his teeth, then leans over to whisper at Bass.

RED

*Didn't tell me she's a sweet-
 talker.*

Aiyana is now at her front door and yells back entering.

AIYANA

Ain't, don't --and don't call me
 "ma'am!"

Bass swats Red's shoulder with his hat.

INT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

One great room with a curtain in one corner and a narrow wood-
 frame with an Indian blanket nailed across it as a mattress.

It's *pouring* outside. Aiyana is setting her small table for
 three. Boot-steps on the outside porch, then hard *knocking*.

AIYANA

Boots, OFF!

Curse-mumbling and fumbling from outside, then door opens.

Red is back-lit by lightening holding his bear-coat and boots, now with only one Navy revolver in his pants-belt.

RED

Drownin' out here, ma'am.

AIYANA

Hang your coat and hat on the wall rack, boots on the hay under.

Red does as instructed, then closes door. His socks have holes in both big toes. Aiyana makes an icky-face.

AIYANA

Hang those rotting rascals up. I'll boil then stitch 'em tomorrow.

RED

(does as told)

I'm touched by your overwhelmin' concern --"ma'am."

Aiyana glares at him. Red steps forward now with bare feet. His toenails are long and disgusting.

AIYANA

Just because you're called Redbear, don't mean you have to grow claws.

Red sits in a table-chair. It rocks. He stands, pulls his neck-knife and shaves the edge off a leg's bottom, then sits again. No more rocking. Aiyana watches open-mouthed.

RED

Can't remember the last time I been spoken to --so kindly.

(sheathes knife)

How'd you come to know my Indian name?

Aiyana stares, *Really?* Red's eyebrow goes up, then he nods.

Aiyana pours steaming water out of the fireplace's pot into a low hammer-formed pan, then puts pan on the floor in front of his chair.

AIYANA

If you can do two things at once.

(hands-on-hips)

But first, wash hands, then eat.

Red holds up his clean bear-paws with long broken nails.

RED

Do believe God's tears already did.

Aiyana studies his filthy fingernails.

AIYANA

Then you walked between His drops.

Red bends to run his fingers above the pan's water, then pretends to fling his hands dry. Aiyana shakes her head.

AIYANA

I'd ask if you raised in barn, but
since you're sleeping in mine --.

Aiyana's eyes motion for Red to put his feet in the pan. He does, then yanks them out *screaming*. It's too hot.

RED

Tryin' to kill me, woman?!

AIYANA

If I were --

Aiyana moves even faster than Red to hold her cooking knife under his chin.

AIYANA

you'd be dead already. --Twice.

Red eye-motions down. Aiyana looks down. Red has his neck-knife's point in her skirt's crotch.

Aiyana steps back putting down knife, then shakes her head.

AIYANA

Why all men such babies?

Aiyana takes the clay water-pitcher from the table to pour some in his pan. Red tries the water again with a big toe, then puts both feet in. A contented look washes over his face. Aiyana nods, then her nose scrunches in horror.

AIYANA

Coat, Out, Now! I'll boil it
tomorrow. It smells like a wet
coyote now drowned two year.

Red looks hurt, then grabs his coat to throw it outside, slams the door, and sits hard. Aiyana glares. Red *stomps* one foot at a time into the floor-pan splashing its water.

AIYANA

Feel better?

No response. Aiyana slops a big spoonful of stew on Red's plate. He eats angry, then his eyes register it's good taste.

RED

Do now.

AIYANA

(yells Indian for "meal")
Tiffin!

Curtain in the corner opens and her son, BIMISI SMYTHE, a 14-year-old boy with long black hair wearing a multi-patched repaired plaid shirt, jeans, and moccasin boots, steps out.

Aiyana proudly puts an arm around Bimisi.

AIYANA

This is my son, Bimisi.

RED

(chokes on his food)
Slippery?

Aiyana pulls Bimisi in tighter.

AIYANA

First thing his daddy say when
delivering him.

RED

What's his daddy deliverin' now?

Aiyana and Bimisi look hurt. Red regrets his thoughtlessness.

RED

Sorry, ma'am, none a' my beeswax.
(motions Bimisi over)
Come here, son.

Bimisi looks at Aiyana who nods. Red offers a hand to Bimisi, they shake. Red head-motions to the fireplace.

RED

You build that?

Bimisi smiles at the roaring fire, then looks to Aiyana who nods prouder.

AIYANA

He can build fire --underwater.

RED

Then I will call you --Bodaway.

BODAWAY

Fire Maker!

Bimisi is now called BODAWAY. He looks to Aiyana who nods.

AIYANA

Then his name --shall be so.

Bodaway and Aiyana sit. All eat. Red tells a story. All *laugh*. Aiyana tilts her head looking at Red different now. She gets up to clear the table and bends over, her blouse opens. Red tries not to look, but does, and now looks at her different.

EXT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - NEXT DAY

Rain just stopped, so there's ground steam running between her house and barn. There's a rainbow over both.

Bodaway tills the wet garden as Red, with same pistol in his belt, sits in same dining chair, but now outside as Aiyana uses tailor shears and a Blacksmith's rasp on his toenails.

Bass rides up and just sits on his horse staring.

RED

Move your jowls or move on.

BASS

Sorry. I tend to sit stupefied,
when ain't seen somethin' before.

RED

Ignorant, is when you don't know
somethin'. Stupid, is when you
don't want to. You ain't stupid.

Red goes to stand, Aiyana pushes him back down hard and keeps working. Bass *chuckles*. Red's hand goes to his gun-butt.

RED

Think hard before you laugh at a
man --then think harder.

BASS

Not laughin' at you, just the
situation. You two look --hitched.

Red and Aiyana stare at each other, then break out *guffawing*.

Red laughs so hard with his head back, he chokes on his chaw.

Bass laughs *harder*. Red is really choking. Aiyana stands.

AIYANA

Black teeth, black tongue, black
breath. If I save, you no more
chew, yes?

Red glares at her, then nods animated. Aiyana raises a hand.

AIYANA

Swear.

Red glares more, then raises a hand. She flat-palms his back
hard. His cud flies into the water-pan *splashing*. Red *coughs*.

RED

Socks?

AIYANA

You only got one pair?

RED

Only got one pair a' feet.

Aiyana carries the pan away to pour on her garden.

AIYANA

Dirt to dirt --disgusting.

Aiyana pulls Red's socks off her drying-line, then walks back
to lift his foot between her knees with her butt towards him
and pulls a sock on, then switches feet. Red tilts his head
one way then the other watching her butt.

Bodaway walks over *laughing*.

RED

What you laughin' at, boy?

BODAWAY

You two.

BASS

I'm here to learn Sheriffin'!

Aiyana throws Red's second foot down hard stepping away.

RED

Ow! I swear woman, you change
direction more than a twirly-wind.

AIYANA

(smiles sweet at Bass)
Sweet Bread is ready when you come
back, Davey.

BASS

Bass.

AIYANA

"Bass" --like fish?

BASS

It's what I love to do more than
Sheriffin'. Plus it were my
grandpappy's name.

BODAWAY

(points to own chest)
Me Bodaway now.

Bass bends to offer a hand down to Bodaway. They shake.

BASS

Pleased to make your acquaintance,
Mister Bodaway Now, sir.

BODAWAY

Just, Bodaway. Nice to meet you
too, Sheriff Bass.

BASS

Just, Deputy --till the elec...

Red throws a rock at Bass who ducks.

Aiyana purses her lips at Red.

AIYANA

His name change --your doing?

Red shrugs his shoulders, then puts his calvary boots on.

RED

Coat?

Aiyana mumbles something in Indian. Red understands her.

RED

I'm used to bein' wet.

AIYANA

Good, then take a bath.

Red stands to stomp a boot on and stumbles back like shot.

AIYANA

Yes, all three --
(points to distance)
in river now!

BASS

Why I gotta' go?

Aiyana lifts her nose smelling like a wolf.

AIYANA

You want bread? I want bath.

Aiyana pulls a soap-bar out of her apron to give to Bodaway.

AIYANA

Bodaway show way. You all leave
clothes, I give them bath, too.

Bodaway starts to strip. Red and Bass open-mouth stare.
Aiyana hand-motions, *Go on.*

AIYANA

You two got nuthin', I don't want
to see.

Aiyana turns her back to them with arms folded.

Red and Bass look at each other, shrug shoulders, then strip.

EXT. AIYANA'S NEARBY RIVER - LATER THAT DAY

Bodaway is having the time of his life playing in the river.

Red and Bass stand on the riverbank, nude, wearing just their
boots and guns. Bass has on his holster with its gun. Red
just wears his pants belt with the one revolver stuck in it.

RED

Draw.

Bass draws, not that fast, and not that good.

RED

Again.

Bass holsters, takes a breath, then draws. Red already has
his barrel-tip under Bass's chin.

RED

Learn faster. Watch.

Red sticks his thumb out in front of Bass, then re-holsters,
and draws again with the same thumb out, so it slides the
hammer back as his hand pulls the gun out.

RED

Let your thumb --help your hand.

Bass tries several times with thumb out. It works.

RED
Drop same side hip you draw from.

Bass tries it several times, he likes it.

BASS
Brings your whole body into play.

RED
Plus a moving target, is harder to hit.

Red sees a dead tree branch stuck in the middle of the river, then yells in Indian *Come here* to Bodaway who swims in.

RED
Hikù weh!
(now to Bass)
Draw on that snag.

Bass does and misses by a mile, then looks at his gun.

BASS
Wind shifted.

Red takes Bass's gun, aims, and shoots a nick in the snag, then twirls and hands the gun back butt-first to Bass.

RED
It's not about who's first, but who's last --standin'.
(clears throat)
Lesson One, fire two for effect, gets them to thinkin', then --
(*inhales, exhales*)
breathe, and let go of all feelin'.
(squints one eye)
Then do a serious-to-God one-eyed stare. And above all, take your time aimin'.

Bass does all the above and hits the snag. Red draws, *fires* hitting the snag, then *fans* his hammer cutting the chunk off.

BASS
How, how, how ...?

RED
Might wanna fix that.

BASS
No, I meant --?

RED

Me, too. Lesson Two, only fan your hammer when close, and I mean, how-do-you-do close. If you're shootin' at a man, he ain't your friend.

Red bends with his back to Bass to pick up his fired shells. Red's back has whip-scars all over it. Bass looks away.

RED

Always take your spents, cheaper to reload.

BODAWAY

I want to learn.

RED

Someday --but not today.
(*Indian for "home"*)
Welù.

Red walks towards Aiyana's ranch. Bodaway follows beside him. Their naked butts move in sync.

RED

Your ma's quite an --interestin' human being.

BODAWAY

Noticed that, did ya'?

Bass's two quick shots, then a careful-aimed shot, then fan-shooting, echoes back at the river.

INT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

Bass, Red, and Bodaway, all now clean and wearing their clean clothes, are finishing lunch. Aiyana clears the table, then lifts her nose to smell the air again.

AIYANA

Better.

BASS

Best!

Bass licks his plate. Red's hand makes him put it down.

RED

Finger lickin' is one thing, son.
(to Aiyana)
But I will admit, you're a mighty fine cook, ma'am.

AIYANA

Don't turn blue complimentin' me.

Red looks hurt at Bodaway, *What'd I say?*

BODAWAY

Redbear teach me to shoot.

Aiyana drops her dirty dishes in the dishpan's water.

AIYANA

No, dumb-bear, not.

RED

Times are full a' rough men with rough edges, ma'am. Wishin' it so --don't make 'em smooth out.

BODAWAY

"I'm not afraid to die like a man fighting, but would not like to be killed like a dog unarmed."--Billy the Kid, 1879.

The Three look at Bodaway.

BODAWAY

What --I read?

RED

Write and cipher, too?

AIYANA

Yes, I taught him. --Why?

RED

Mind teachin' same to your wanna-be Sherrif?

BASS

I don't have time to ...!

If looks could kill, Red just murdered Bass, twice.

RED

A good lawman reads dispatch, writes warrants, and pays bounty, so make the time.

(scoots his chair back)

Speakin' of, I need to go into town and see what the hold-up is.

BODAWAY

Can I go?

AIYANA

No!

RED

When's the last he went in, ma'am?

AIYANA

He, we --we are not welcome there.

RED

Bass said you do all the townladies
sewin'?

AIYANA

They bring to me. Is not what I do,
(turns back to do dishes)
is what I am.

RED

Opposite here, ma'am. But don't see
me kowtowin' to their poor manners.

AIYANA

Look to your own son, if you have
one.

Red *slams* both fists on the table hard, then storms out.

All Three look surprised at each other, then Aiyana covers her mouth in embarrassed epiphany and exits after Red.

BODAWAY

Why he so angry?

Bass nods to himself in epiphany.

BASS

Personal.

EXT. AIYANA'S BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Red is angry-saddling Apple. Aiyana approaches regretful.

AIYANA

How he die?

Red knees Apple's belly who *oofs* and tightens cinch strap.

RED

Alone.

(shakes head)
No, that's not right, his ma was
with him.

AIYANA

She, your wife then, yes? That why you like this now --no?

Red spins grabbing her by the shoulders.

RED

They was too good for the likes a' me, yes! And no, I don't like what I do now.

AIYANA

Then why do it?

Red lets her go to check his saddle is secure while quoting the *King James* bible.

RED

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption."

AIYANA

Hebrews, 9, 12. --You kill bad men, to become, a good one?

RED

There will always be bad men that deserve a good bullet, men who need to die in battle, so the rest can live in peace.

AIYANA

(quotes Bible back)

"Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under Grace."

Red pulls a worn-torn *King James* bible out of a saddlebag.

RED

Romans, 6, 14.

(drops bible back in)

We gonna' do this all day?

AIYANA

How death happen?

Been a long time since Red thought about his past. He falls back against the barn's wall, slides down to a crouch, and draws a finger in the dirt. Aiyana crouches next to him.

RED

Doctor said our boy needed "dry air." But my Sheriff pay barely covered room and board.

Red wipes away angry whatever he was drawing in the dirt.

RED

Wanted Poster came in, enough money to retire on, so I went out after some bank robber named Charon. Got him too. But by the time I got back with the money --.

Red tries to stand. Aiyana holds his shoulder down.

RED

Grippe --gripped 'em both.

AIYANA

(quotes Indian saying)
"The Healing Journey is on the path back, from your heart --

Aiyana touches Red's heart, then his head. Red shudders.

AIYANA

to your head."

RED

Think a storm, done covered mine's trail.

Red stands to retrieve his gun-belt hanging over saddle-horn.

AIYANA

Sometimes you must stand still, to see where --not to go.

RED

Wherever I'm goin' --

Red straps gun-belt on, then adjusts his two rifles in it.

RED

I ain't goin' there alone.

Red gets his two revolvers out of Bible's same saddlebag and sticks them in his waistband. He looks like a true warrior.

RED

Let the boy ride in with me, I'll keep him safe. Where's my coat?

Aiyana goes in the barn, then exits with his coat. Hole was repaired. It's washed, dry, and brushed. It looks brand new.

RED

Like I said --where's mine?

Aiyana helps Red put it on hand-brushing his shoulders.

RED

If a person's soul were worn on the outside, ma'am --expect yours would be just about the most beautiful, I've ever seen.

Aiyana turns her back to Red folding her arms.

AIYANA

He can go.

Red takes bull-whip out of saddlebag and whips around his hip and opposite shoulder, then high-pitched two-finger *whistles*.

Bass and Bodaway exit the house with their mouths full.

RED

Saddle-up, we're all leavin'!

Bass walks to the barn chewing. Bodaway stands still.

RED

You growin' moss underfoot, boy?!

Bodaway points to his own chest.

BODAWAY

Me --come, too?

Aiyana turns back faking a smile at him and nods.

Red hand-motions Bodaway to come who does hop-running.

RED

Saddle the packhorse.

BODAWAY

What his name?

RED

Don't know, you ain't named him.

Bodaway doesn't understand.

RED

A man can only ride one horse at a time in this world. He's yours now.

Bodaway's speechless, hugs Aiyana, then runs into the barn.

AIYANA

Thank you.

Red points to where they had been talking.

RED

Thank, you.

Bodaway exits the barn trying to carry the Packhorse-saddle which weighs almost as him. He struggles funny. Red and Aiyana both smile, then she sees Red's teeth are black. She reacts grossed out. Red sees her reaction.

EXT. OUTSIDE SANDPEED SHERRIFF OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY

Bass, Red, and Bodaway now on Packhorse, dismount to wrap their reins around a hitching rail in sync.

RED

You check-in with your Mayor, I'll go see King Midas.

BASS

Why I gots to "check-in?"

Red drops head in disbelief, turns back *clucking* his tongue, then punches Bass in the stomach doubling him over.

Bass catches his breath to stand up slow-rubbing his stomach.

BASS

Why the hell--?

RED

To remind you to start using that "thing" between your shoulders for more than just a hat holder.

BASS

(ponders, then nods)
When a Sheriff's been out of town fer a spell, he "checks in" with his Mayor, to get new news.

RED

You win a cookie.

Red flips a gold coin to Bodaway.

RED
Go get yourself some sweet-bait.

Bodaway catches the coin, then bites it.

BODAWAY
What's that?

Bass jumps up and down little-boy excited.

BASS
I'll teach him!

Red smiles, then looks at his reflection in a window, sees his black teeth, frowns, and tosses a second coin to Bass.

RED
And get me some tooth-powder.

Bass and Bodaway have a foot-race to the general store.

RED
And a horse-hair tooffer!

Miss Minerva walks by with her nose in the air harrumphing.

Red smiles at her covering his smile with a hand while tipping his hat with the other.

INT. SANDPEED BANK - MOMENTS LATER

Small, but institutional. A single caged Teller Window is on one side with Bank Manager's huge desk on the other. A small black safe with gold lettering sits against the wall between.

Bank Manager, sitting behind desk, shakes his head at Red who stands with his back to the front doors propped open.

BANK ROBBER ONE and BANK ROBBER TWO, in cowboy slickers with kerchiefs over their faces, enter. Bank Robber one hip-aims two pistols, then *cocks* both their hammers.

Bank Robber Two twirls a lariat over his head, then lassos the safe.

BANK ROBBER TWO
We're makin' a withdrawal!

BANK ROBBER ONE
Permanent-like.

Miss Minerva at Teller Window *stomps* a tall shoe disgusted.

MISS MINERVA
You're both --brutes!

BANK ROBBER ONE
Yeah? Well, brute this --!

Bank Robber One back-hands Miss Minerva knocking her down.

RED
Shouldn't a' aughta' done that.

BANK ROBBER TWO
Yo, grampa furball, turn around,
real slow-like.

RED
Shouldn't a' aughta' said that
neither.

Red spins so fast, his coat flies open. He doesn't draw his two rifles, doesn't have to, their holsters rotate, so all he does is push down on their handles to swing their barrels up.

Double *Boom!* When Red's smoke clears, Bank Robbers One and Two are no longer inside the bank, just their guns and lariat lay on the floor.

INT. BEHIND TELLER'S WINDOW - IMMEDIATELY

BANK TELLER, balding with horn-rimmed glasses, stands behind his iron-gate with hands up trembling, then faints. His body falls on a foot-pedal with a piece of rope that goes up to the trigger of a 20-shot fixed-pistol with no frame or handle mounted under his counter.

INT. SANDPEED BANK - CONTINUOUS

His *Teller Revolver* fires twenty rounds at once blowing a huge hole through the window's base. Its twenty bullets travel over prone Miss Minerva and close enough past Red to move his coat, then take out a corner of Bank Manager's desk.

Miss Minerva was trying to get up, but now faints.

Red looks back at the surprised Bank Manager.

RED
Mounted Revolver?

Bank Manager nods wide-eyed. Red fans a hand sideways.

RED

Might wanna' move --*just a bit*.

Bank Manager hop-scoots with his chair to move his desk over.

Red goes to help Miss Minerva stand.

RED

You okay, ma'am?

Miss Minerva nods disorientated. Red straightens her hat.

RED

Does this town have a tea room for
a fine lady such as yourself?

Miss Minerva nods, *Uh-huh*.

RED

Good, tea with brandy should soothe
your delicate constitution.

Red goes behind the counter to help the Teller stand.

RED

Would you mind escortin' the pretty
lady there Mister Bank Teller, sir?

Miss Minerva primps her hair on Red's word, *Pretty*. Bank
Teller nods woozy. Red slips a gold coin to him whispering.

RED

*Might wanna' hold on to her real
tight-like on the way out.*

Bank Teller nods disoriented, then helps Miss Minerva exit.

She *screams* outside, then sound of a loud *thump* as she falls.

Red picks up both of Bank Robber's two guns off the floor.

RED

Mind if I keep these?

Bank Manager shakes his head. Red flips their lariat up and
off the safe to then coil it over a shoulder.

RED

Might wanna' bolt that down.

Bank Manager jumps up to come over and congratulate Red back-
slapping him.

BANK MANAGER

Of course, of course! And your reward money did come in!

RED

Real sudden-like?

Bass runs in with his pistol drawn.

BASS

What happened?

BANK MANAGER

Your job --he did it!

RED

T'weren't his fault. I have a penchant a' bein' in the wrong place --at the right time.

(concerned to Bass)

Where's the boy?

BASS

In the store?

Red now tosses a third gold coin to Bass.

RED

Collect him, and buy her --
(head-motions outside)
some smellin' salts. She needs to be carryin' them at all times.

Bass exits. Red twirls both Bank Robber's pistols, then "holsters" them in his back waistband simultaneous.

RED

Think I'd like to open an account.

Red turns his head listening to a *ruckus* outside.

RED

Put my reward money in it, please.

Sounds of a *scuffle* continue. Red exits to investigate.

Bank Manager rubs his hands together just like King Midas.

EXT. SANDPEED GENERAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Red exits to see Bass has been knocked down by Arkansaw.

Bodaway is beating his fists on Arkansaw's back who spins to back-hand Bodaway knocking him down.

Bass reaches for his gun. Arkansaw draws, but Red's bullwhip snaps the back of Arkansaw's gun-hand, so he drops it. He reaches down for it, but Red's bullwhip's tail yanks it away.

Red hangs his coat over a hitching rail, then lays all four pistols on it. He takes off his gun-belt to lay over them, puts his hat on top, then circles his whip around it. Red walks over to Arkansaw unarmed rolling up both shirt sleeves with heavy steps so his spurs *jingle* a reckoning is coming.

RED

Time you and I had --a serious disagreement.

Arkansaw smiles letting his gun-belt drop to make fists.

ARKANSAW

Should warn ya' --

Arkansaw kicks dirt up into Red's face to blind him, but Red had already closed his eyes. Arkansaw tackles Red as both fall backwards with Arkansaw on top.

ARKANSAW

I fights dirty!

Red digs both his thumbs into Arkansaw's eye-sockets who *screams* grabbing Red's wrists. Red pulls Arkansaw's head down nose-to-nose snarling.

RED

I never warns --

Red head-butts Arkansaw, then rolls him so Red is now on top.

RED

I fights dirtier!

Red straddles Arkansaw and begins pummeling him with punches that sound like he's *slapping* wet mud. Arkansaw covers-up, then *wails* like a little baby as Red's punches get through.

BASS

That's enough, Red.

Red gets his second-wind punching Arkansaw like a crazed man.

RED

If you ever touch that boy again --

Red pulls Arkansaw's bloody face up nose-to-nose with his.

RED
I, will, end, you.

Red punches Arkansaw more whose face now looks like raw meat.

Bass pulls Red off struggling. Red has gone off the deep end, and spins to Bass drawing back a hay-maker.

Bodaway runs over to grab Red's threatening arm.

BODAWAY
Stop!

Red's switch flips to "off" as he strokes Bodaway's hair.

RED
Sorry 'bout that, son. But never be
sorry for goin' mad-dog mean, when
standin' up for someone else.

Red opens both palms flat to reveal, he has two small round pieces of lead pipe curled in both. He tosses one to Bass.

RED
Lesson Three, if you're gonna' put
a man down, put him down to stay.

Red head-motions to Arkansaw.

RED
Help him to your town's Doc, then
your town's jail.

BASS
What's the charge?

RED
Assaultin' a peace officer while
disturbin' my peace a' mind.

Bass helps Arkansaw stand, then supports him away. They go past Miss Minerva who sees Arkansaw's face, and faints again. Bass drops the bottle of smelling salts on her and goes on.

BASS
Don't leave home without 'em.

Crowd of Townspeople have formed.

Red puts his arm around Bodaway and announces like God.

RED

This young man is a friend of mine!
Anyone messes with him, I mess with
them! Everyone got that?!

SANDPEED TOWNSPEOPLE

(answer in agreement-fear)

Got it ...Absolutely ...Makes sense
...Of course ...Wouldn't have it
any other way ...etc.

Bodaway looks down sad at his stick-candy in the dirt.

RED

Ever had rock candy?

Bodaway's face lights up. Red tilts his head now looking at
him different, then escorts Bodaway into the general store.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

TEN COWBOYS ride into town at full speed *Yipeeing* and *firing*
their guns in the air. They tie their horses at the saloon's
twin hitching posts, then enter the saloon between them.

Bass, Red, and Bodaway, exit into the street. Bass and Red
look at each other. Red nods. All Three enter the saloon.

INT. SANDPEED SALOON - CONTINUOUS

Typical western watering hole with brass spittoons. A player
piano playing and a large gold-leaf mirror is behind the bar.

The Ten Cowboys are whooping it up at the bar drinking.

Bass, Red, and Bodaway, enter.

BARKEEP

He can't come in here!

Barkeep points at Bodaway. Red puts his arm around him. News
of Red's bad-behavior has spread fast.

BARKEEP

Oh --of course, except when with
you, Mister Red.

RED

Three sarsaparillas, please.

Cowboy One overhears Red's order and *guffaws*.

COWBOY ONE

Hear that, boys --we done got a
teetotaler in the house!

Red steps beside Cowboy One to take his shot glass of Redeye
and downs it. Red then leans in close to whisper.

RED

*Never make fun of a' ugly person,
(snarls like a cave beast)
he's got nothin' to lose.*

Cowboy One gulps. Red thumb-flips a gold coin to Barkeep who
bites on it.

RED

For our drinks --the rest for a
round for the waddies!

Red back-slaps Cowboy One hard making him choke.

RED

How long you boys on the trail?

COWBOY TWO

Two month?

RED

Well, hell --

Red tosses a second coin to Barkeep who bites harder.

RED

then you boys earned two rounds.

The Ten Cowboys *cheer*.

RED

What'd you bring in?

COWBOY THREE

Two hundred head a' steer.

RED

Any cow?

Ten Cowboys look at each other trying to remember.

COWBOY FOUR

Found a heifer stray last week.

RED

Ask your foreman to find me, I'll
buy it.

Bass leans to Cowboy One sizing him up. Red grabs Bass's shirt to drag him to a back table where all Three sit.

BASS
Why'd you drag me way back here?

RED
Your job as Sheriff ...

BASS
Deputy.

RED
(sucks teeth)
Put your non-shootin' hand flat on
the table.

Bass does as told. Red hammer-fists it. Bass, *Yeows!*

BASS
What'd you do that for?!

RED
Pain is a great reminder to think,
then think harder, before doin'.
You the only law here?

BASS
Till the election.

Bass put same hand back on the table. Red hammers it again.
Too painful for Bass to cry out, he just sits open-mouthed.

RED
Gonna' win that election?

Bass nods putting his hurt hand under the other armpit.

RED
Then put your title in front of
folk now, so they remembers then.

Fist-fight breaks out between Cowboy One and Cowboy Two.

Bass stands.

RED
Where you goin'?

BASS
To do my job.

RED

Do it from here.

Bass remains standing. Red glares. Bass sits. Red holds up one hand with all four fingers splayed.

RED

Lesson Four, always study first,
without lettin' them know you is.

Bass doesn't understand.

RED

Outside, use window-glass. Inside --
look for a mirror, or shiny object.

Red head-motions to the bar's mirror. Bass looks in it.

RED

They wearin' guns?

Red squints to focus in the mirror at Cowboy's reflections.

BASS

Nope, took 'em off.

The other Eight Cowboys pull Cowboy One and Cowboy Two apart, then all Ten Cowboys go back to *laughing* and drinking.

RED

Most important part of keeping the
peace, is to know when to keep it.
(no response, explains)
Less is more, so if you don't have
to get involved --don't.

BODAWAY

You're smart.

RED

(shakes head)
Trained.

BASS

I ain't.

RED

Gettin' there. Biggest thing to
remember, always be the smallest
man in the room.

BASS

"Smallest?"

RED

Any man, especially one drinkin',
and especially one drinkin' with
friends, wants to show the world he
is a man. Don't make him prove it.

Their three glasses arrive. Red holds his up for a toast.
Bass holds his up. Bodaway doesn't understand.

RED

Hold your glass up, then touch it
to the others if somebody wants to
celebrate somethin'.

Bodaway holds up his glass.

RED

Quickest way to stop a fire?

BODAWAY

Don't start one.

RED

You're smart.
(toasts)
To sheriffin' --

All Three clink with Bodaway last, then drink. He likes it.

BODAWAY

This is good.

Red looks at them. This is the first time we see Red smile.

RED

Yes --yes, it is.

There's a *gunshot* out in the street.

The Ten Cowboys exit on the run to investigate.

BODAWAY

This is a real interestin' town.

RED

Noticed that, huh?

Rest of bar exits. Red, Bass, and Bodaway, follow.

EXT. SANDPEED SALOON - MOMENTS LATER

All exit to see the badly bruised Arkansaw standing over the
body of a DEAD STRANGER whose pistol is still in its holster.

RED

Thought you locked him up?

BASS

Said he wouldn't do it again.

Red back-hand swings, but Bass was ready and ducks. Red squats down to punch Bass in the nose who falls back.

RED

Don't --"do it again."

Red drops to a knee and grabs Bodaway's shoulders.

RED

Only thing a man leaves behind in this world is his word, so don't give it, less you're gonna' do whatever it takes to keep it. I want your word, you'll stay behind this sawdust barrel till I calls.

Bodaway nods reluctant.

RED

Promised your, ma --so needs your spoken word.

BODAWAY

I'll stay.

Red ruffles his hair.

RED

Good boy.

Bass goes to Arkansaw. Red follows him, but at a distance.

Townspeople have gathered on boardwalks to watch.

ARKANSAW

Hold it right there, Deputy!

BASS

Sheriff.

ARKANSAW

Till the election!

BASS

Till then --I need your gun.

ARKANSAW

Was a fair fight, I got witnesses!

BASS

Then they'll testify at your trial.

ARKANSAW

Ain't lettin' you put me in jail.

Arkansaw holsters his gun. Bass stops, so Red bumps into the back of him. Red whispers into the back of Bass's ear holding up a hand with all five fingers splayed.

RED

Five, never stop walkin' up to a man, gives him time to think.

ARKANSAW

Ain't your concern, dead-bear!

Red pushes Bass in the back who starts walking again.

Red angles away while pacing him.

ARKANSAW

I said butt out, ex-lawman --
(snort-laugh)
if you ever was one.

BASS

He was.

ARKANSAW

Why, 'cause he said so?

BASS

No, 'cause I know so.

Bass is now in front of Arkansaw. Red is ten feet beside.

BASS

Need your gun.

Arkansaw nods, then draws. Bass draws slower.

Red's bullwhip tail snaps the back of Arkansaw's hand making him drop his gun.

ARKANSAW

Again?

Bass steps on Arkansaw's gun aiming his own.

BASS

You're under arrest.

ARKANSAW

Never get me there, copperhead.

Red walks over coiling his bullwhip to hang back inside his coat, then drops his hat flat on the ground.

RED

Mind pickin' that up, son?
(leans-in to whisper)
Twenty-dollar gold piece in it.

Arkansaw leans to look down. Red coils down, then springs up upper-cutting Arkansaw so hard, he leaves his feet.

TEN COWBOYS/TOWNSPEOPLE

Uuuuuuu --!

Show's over. Ten Cowboys go back into bar, Townspeople go back into their stores.

Red shakes his fist at Bass.

RED

Never stop steppin', and always be
steppin' closer, where it's faster
to hit a man with your fist --!

Red palm-springs up into the air earlier hand-pipe, then snap-catches it one-handed to pocket.

RED

than a bullet.

Bodaway runs up. Red spins down to a knee in front of him.

RED

Broke your word!
(face turns purple)
You walk back!

BODAWAY

Pain makes one remember.

Red's face softens, then he nods and stands to Bass.

RED

Should be able to figure out the
next lesson on your own, since I
now have to help you drag his fat
ass off to jail.

Bass picks up Arkansaw's gun to stick under his belt. He and Red drag Arkansaw off to jail. Bodaway just stands there.

RED
Wanna' run back?!

Bodaway runs to join them.

INT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

Bass is not there. Red and Bodaway sit at the table eating. Aiyana sits down.

AIYANA
Thank you for the milking calf.

RED
Least I could do for all your kindness, ma'am. Plus it's what a growin' boy needs. At least, that's what they say.

BODAWAY
"They" --say a lot.

AIYANA
How was your fist visit to town?

Bodaway is still a boy, so cannot control his enthusiasm.

BODAWAY
It was great! First there was this fight in the bar ...

AIYANA
You were in a bar?!

RED
Now I can explain --

BODAWAY
Yeah, and we drank sas-- sasa--?

RED
Sas-parilla.

BODAWAY
Yeah, and it was good. Then someone got shot.

AIYANA
There was shooting in the saloon?!

RED
Outside.

BODAWAY

Yeah, and the dead man was gross.
Then the Deputy, uh, Sheriff, tried
to arrest the man and ...

AIYANA

And where were you during all this?

BODAWAY

Outside watching?

AIYANA

(glares at Red)
You --put my son in danger?

RED

I put him --behind a dust barrel.

AIYANA

"Dust barrel?!"

Aiyana's face turns crimson. Red looks for an escape route.

BODAWAY

The bad man tried to draw on Bass,
but Red whipped him good, then hit
him so hard, he flew up in the air.
(goes back to eating)
Then made me walk home.

Aiyana leans-in to Red threatening while making a fist.

AIYANA

You --made my son, walk home?

BODAWAY

Yeah, so I don't forget, and I
won't. Was the best day ever!

Bodaway is ear-to-ear smile. Aiyana's eyes go to slits.

RED

Now hold on, there's a good ...

AIYANA

"Good" night.

RED

But I haven't finished my ...?

AIYANA

Yes --you have.

Red has finally met his match. He gets up to leave, then reaches for his full plate. Aiyana pulls his plate to her.

AIYANA

So you don't forget.

Red stammers, then exits. He is heard tripping over something outside, then curse-mumbling, and finally throwing something.

EXT. OUTSIDE AIYANA'S BARN - NEXT MORNING

Red finishes saddling Apple. Aiyana walks up.

AIYANA

When you come back?

RED

(mounts)

Sorry if I caused concern for your boy, ma'am. Do appreciate your hospitality, surely do.

AIYANA

Sorry if I hurt your feelings.

RED

"Feelings?!" Ma'am, I don't ...

Red stands in both his stirrups as a dust cloud approaches.

Aiyana looks to it, then squints with a hand over her eyes.

AIYANA

One horse, rider hurt.

RED

Eagle eyes, woman.

Red draws one pistol to hold it cocked under his coat.

Bass rides up with his face bloody. His horse is lathered.

BASS

Escaped --

Bass falls off his horse exhausted. Red quick-holsters to grab Bass's reins, then wrap them around his saddle-horn.

Aiyana kneels to tend Bass.

Red dismounts and kneels with his canteen.

RED

Easy, son --catch your wind.

Bass guzzles from Red's canteen, then Red pours water over Bass's blood and dust-caked face.

BASS

*Arkansaw --two men --broke him out
--broke in bank --dragged safe out
--It went hop-skip-pin' --hurt folk.*

Aiyana takes off her neck-bandana and uses Red's canteen water to wash the rest of dried blood off Bass's forehead.

BASS

Has to bring 'em in --to justice.

Red spins the barrel of one revolver, then the other one.

BASS

Not that way --

RED

There's more justice in one gun,
than any law book, son.

Bass now opens his fist, a second Deputy Badge is in it.

BASS

this way.

Red stands upright like he heard a rattler's rattle.

RED

No, way!

Bass rolls over to get up to his feet wobbly.

AIYANA

You not well enough to go alone.

BASS

Has to, nobody else to.

Aiyana glares at Bass who rolls his eyes shaking his head grumbling like a real bear. Bass sees him and smiles.

BASS

Hold up your right hand.

RED

What? No!

BASS

Only way you're goin'.

Aiyana stares at Red pleading. Red sucks his teeth, then spits only saliva, and raises his left hand, barely.

BASS

Other right.

RED

Hurry up before I change my mind --
what little's left.

BASS

"I, Red Harding, will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Sheriff and ..."

RED

Toss me your G.D. star, boy.

BASS

Swear.

RED

Just did.

Bass tosses badge to Red who catches to put in a pocket, then takes Bank Robber One's pistols and holster out of Apple's saddle-bag and hands it to Aiyana along with a folded letter.

RED

Sold the other rig, money's in the paper pocket, for schoolin' Bass. You can give these to your boy when you think he's ready. Bass'll teach him to use 'em right.
(looks down kicking dirt)
Wrote some words --read 'em if you wants.

Aiyana looks at Red's envelope.

Red takes Bass's exhausted horse into the barn, then walks out with Bass's saddle now on the Packhorse. Red tightens its cinch-strap looking at Bass.

RED

Comin'?

Bass mounts Packhorse.

RED

Got any idea where they'll hold up?

BASS

One or three.

Bass rides off.

Red starts to mount, but Aiyana pulls him back down into her chest.

AIYANA

Come, back.

Their eyes lock, romance sparks fly, but can't react, that's the times. Red mounts and rides off, then stops to look back.

Bodaway has now joined Aiyana and both look sad.

Red sits upright in his saddle like electrocuted.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. RED'S MONTAGE OF MEMORIES - YEARS AGO

Flashes of images with his WIFE and SON, ending with him kneeling at their two tombstones. A cabin is burning behind him. Red stands transformed into the angst man he now is.

RETURN TO.

EXT. ON THE PLAIN - LATER SAME DAY - PRESENT

Red and Bass trot towards mountains ahead.

RED

Where we headed?

BASS

Set of caves Aiyana told me about.

They ride in silence.

BASS

Quite a woman.

RED

Noticed that, huh?

Red opens his canteen for a drink.

BASS

She likes you.

Red chokes on his water, then angry wipes off his beard.

RED
Did that on purpose.

BASS
(grins mischievous)
I think ...

Red reels his horse to a stop. Bass stops.

BASS
What's wrong?

RED
What you're doin'.

BASS
What I "doin'?"

RED
Law enforcement is a business, son.
As such, it got rules to work by,
and ways to live by.

BASS
Such as --?

Red starts riding. Bass follows alongside.

RED
Keep your mind on what you be doin'
--not on what you be wantin'. When
out on patrol, even around night
campfire, keep your gaze always
searchin', and your brain ever
strategizin'.

BASS
Strat-a what-in'?

RED
Planning. For instance, what if one
of them desperados had a long rifle
and took a shot at us right now?

BASS
Duck?

Red glares. Bass smiles.

BASS
Spur to that dry creek-bed ahead.

RED

Always plan ahead if you wanna'
keep yours. Strategy, is a plan of
action, to achieve your goal.

BASS

Strategy --equals live?

RED

If you're gonna' keep doin' this
for a livin'.

They ride in silence. Looks like Bass is talking to himself.

BASS

Really think I can learn to read,
write, and 'rithmetic?

RED

Don't matta' what I think, or what
anyone else does, only matters what
you believe. Do you?

BASS

It do seem a might --overwhelmin'.

RED

How many fingers you got?

BASS

Ten.

RED

Toes?

BASS

Same.

RED

Altogether?

BASS

Twenty.

RED

Ears and eyes?

BASS

Two and two, so four.

RED

Mouth and nose?

BASS

One and one, makes two, so --
(counts on fingers)
twenty-six.

RED

Appears you got addition down, so
just reverse to take away. In
school, they call that subtraction.

BASS

Well, I'll be --.

RED

And you will be right off, 'lesson
something of yours gets shot off.
(no response, explains)
Only twenty-six letters in the
whole dang alphabet, so --.

BASS

"So" --just name each body part a
letter, then I can figure 'em out.

RED

See, you figured that out. Now,
which body part gets you in trouble
the quickest?

BASS

Uh --mouth?

RED

What sound comes out when
"stupified?"

BASS

Ahhh --?

RED

There's your vowel "a" --only its
shorty sound.

BASS

Vow --?

RED

Vow-ell. A, E, I, O, U, and just
like life, there's always an
exception, Y.

BASS

Why?

RED

Because. There are twenty-six letters all havin' five "vowels," each with two sounds and sometimes "Y." Why? Just is.

BASS

I gotta' learn, fifty-two letter!

Red stops riding. Bass stops. They're closer to mountains now. Red lets Apple graze while he talks fatherly to Bass.

RED

Think of a long sound as a tall man. He's gonna' talk harder, stronger.

BASS

"So" a short sound is like a short man --softer, gentler?

RED

Depends on the man.

Red holds out a hand. Bass shakes.

BASS

Why we shakin'?

RED

'Cause you just graduated. We'll talk about the letters C and G on the ride back.

Red starts to ride on. Bass follows beside shaking his head.

BASS

Ow, may need to wait a spell.
(scratches his head)
Done gave me a lot to think on.

RED

Yeah --so what'cha thinkin' on now?

BASS

That out-crop of rocks up atop there, might be a nice eagle nest.

RED

"Might" --but first stare hard at that big tree ahead. Do not, take your hard stare off it.

BASS

'Kay --?
(stares at tree)
What I starin' at?

RED

Life --as a sheriff. Now while
keepin' both eyeball on that tree,
what else you see goin' on?

Bass looks at Red.

BASS

"What, else?"

RED

You keep makin' me repeat myself,
and I'll be bone to dust before you
ever learn Sheriffin'.

Red head-motions to tree. Bass stares at the tree again.

RED

We all do it, just most don't pay
attention that we doin' it.

BASS

Great. --What we doin'?

RED

A sheriff has to know how to do it
all the time. What else you see
happenin' while starin' at it hard?

BASS

Can see more trees, bushes, uh --?

RED

Now without looking for it, can you
spot a squirrel movin' in one?

BASS

Well, I'll be a son of a bee. --
Yeah, at the top a' my sockets.

RED

Good, that's called "full vision."
You're lookin' at one thing while
seein' another. When on the trail,
you wanna' be doin' that always.
Now, still starin' at that tree --
see anything flashin' anywheres?

BASS

Well, I'll be --.

RED

Well, you shoulda' be --way back,
'cause your eagle rock's been a
signalin' us. What's it sayin'?

BASS

That there's probably a rifle
barrel glintin' in the sun, and if
it be, we done been spotted.

RED

It be, and we done.

BASS

(still staring ahead)

We weren't way-way back, but now,
we's in rifle range. And if so,
shootin' could be startin'...

Red spurs Apple to a full gallop heading for the mountain's
tree-line.

RED

NOW!

Rifle shots *echo* as rifle rounds ricochet off rocks around
them. Bass spurs Packhorse harder to gallop after Red.

RED

Hope you can fly like an eagle,
'cause you sure can't see like one!

They ride up the mountain's steep embankment through its
forest. The shooting stops.

EXT. MOUNTAIN'S EAGLE NEST - IMMEDIATELY

A large flat rock cliff juts out of the mountain's face as a
natural viewpoint. Laying down at its edge is BURNING CLOUD,
Sioux, in fringed leather clothing, scanning below with a .44
caliber Winchester *Yellowboy*.

Arkansaw walks up behind him.

ARKANSAW

Well?

BURNING CLOUD

Is for water.

Arkansaw kicks Burning Cloud's moccasin who rolls onto his back cocking the lever of his rifle to aim up at Arkansaw.

BURNING CLOUD

(Indian for, *colored man*)
You not say hà-sapa, friend of
Redbear.

ARKANSAW

They both down there?

BURNING CLOUD

Up here soon.

ARKANSAW

They can't flush us out of our
cave?

BURNING CLOUD

You not know Redbear, we should go.

ARKANSAW

Not till we get that safe open. It
darn near killed Mesquite's horse.

BURNING CLOUD

(stands)
White Man's paper not buy back
Life. You stay, I go.

Burning Cloud turns to leave. Arkansaw draws on his back.

ARKANSAW

You leaves, when I says.

BURNING CLOUD

(Indian warning)
Hoka Hey.

ARKANSAW

Don't tell me to "clear the path."
You want that money, same as me.

BURNING CLOUD

Not want --need, to buy food and
blankets for my people, difference.

MEXICO MESQUITE, older Hispanic, dark-skinned with a long Fu-Manchu mustache, wears a Mexican Poncho and Sombrero with crossed bandoliers of ammunition across his chest for his *Colt Dragoon Revolver* which hangs by a leather lanyard around his neck. He walks up asking in Spanish, *How many?*

MESQUITE
 (pronounced *kwon-tosc*)
 Cuantos?

Burning Cloud holds up two fingers, then curls its pointer back in to throw *The Bird* at Arkansaw.

BURNING CLOUD
 Two. One be Redbear.

Mexico Mesquite glares at Arkansaw mumbling in Spanish.

MESQUITE
 Ay, caramba.

ARKANSAW
 A bullet goes through his coat,
 just like any other bear.

MESQUITE
 Maybe, maybe not. Many try, only
 his hat and belt fall dead, then
 others fall dead. We should go.

ARKANSAW
 Don't squat with your spurs on.
 (to Mesquite)
 Get the safe open yet?

MESQUITE
 (*dee-nah-mee-tar*)
 Dinamitar.

ARKANSAW
 Well we don't have any g-d
 dynamite, now do we, seniorita?

RED (ECHOING)
 'Preciate you boys waitin' for us!

Arkansaw, Mesquite, and Burning Cloud, run into their cave.

EXT. NEAR BAD GUYS CAVE - SIMULTANEOUS

Red and Bass have tied their horses off below. Red is using his machete to clear a way up through the undergrowth.

RED
 Been stratagizin'?

BASS
 Might help, if I knew how to.

RED

They'd only still be here, if they
can't get the safe open. It's too
heavy to haul up this piedmont.
Ever seen a cornered mountain lion?

Bass nods.

RED

Ain't goin' with us quiet-like, you
know that.

BASS

Need Arkansaw alive to stand trial.

RED

So the judge can hang him? Gettin'
mighty particular in your wants.

BASS

Promise you won't kill him.

RED

Never make a promise, you don't
know if you can keep.

Bass grabs Red's coat tail. Red spins with his machete.

RED

Pull in your horns, boy, 'fore I
dehorn 'em!
(calms down)
We can build a fire and talk it
out, or build a fire, and smoke 'em
out. Choose.

Bass nods.

RED

Go git dry fungus so I can strike
the machete to it as a flint.

Bass goes off. Red talks to himself building a starter-fire.

RED

*Boy's got a mouth like a cannon --
always shootin' it off.*

INT. BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

It's smaller opening leads to a large cavern big enough for
Arkansaw, Burning Cloud, and Mesquite, to have their horses
inside with them.

ARKANSAW

Reckon he gonna' try and smoke us
out?

Burning Cloud and Mexico Mesquite look at each other.

BURNING CLOUD

Not "try" --do.

ARKANSAW

Have to get in close, to throw it
in. That's when we ride out.

MESQUITE

Adiós, al dinero?

Arkansaw shakes his head angry.

ARKANSAW

We surprise 'em, kill 'em, bury the
bodies here with the safe, then
come back with nitro to blow it. In
the meanwhile, we sell their horses
for a grub-stake. Comprendez?

Burning Cloud and Mesquite nod not quite satisfied.

ARKANSAW

You boys are as timid as new-
sheared sheep. Mount up, load up.
We's havin' ourselves a hoedown.

Tension is broken. All Three saddle their horses *laughing*.

EXT. NEARER BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Red now has a small fire going. Bass is using Red's machete
to cut saplings still with green leaves.

RED

Group bunches together by their
stem. We're gonna' have to get in
close to toss 'em in, so they may
charge us. Have your gun ready.

BASS

Still need your word.

RED

(shakes head)

Bet if you were fightin' a rattler,
you'd give him first bite.

BASS

"If" they do come out fast ridin',
how do we handle the situation?

RED

Play checkers?

Bass nods smiling.

RED

Learn chess.

Bass's smile turns upside down.

INT. BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Arkansaw, Mesquite, and Burning Cloud, are mounted with guns drawn. They hear a *chopping* sound outside.

ARKANSAW

Is he --?

Sound of wood *splintering*.

BURNING CLOUD

He is.

MESQUITE

El Diablo.

Unmistakable sound of a cut-tree *cracking* loose, then a small tree does fall across the mouth of their cave.

RED (O.S.)

Burning Cloud, Mexico Mesquite,
you're only wanted for robbin', not
a hangin' offense! Walk out now,
and only serve time!

No response. Burning bunches of brush are thrown in.

EXT. BAD GUYS CAVE OPENING - MOMENTS LATER

Smoke is blowing back into the cave with the sound of the Three Bad Guys inside coughing. Their horses *whinnie*.

Red and Bass are on either side of cave and whisper.

BASS

They got horses in with 'em.

RED
Ya' think?

Red and Bass back away from its entrance down on one knee. Red has both his revolvers ready. Bass has his own out.

RED
Aim up okay --try not to shoot me.

BASS
They still gonna' try?

RED
Wouldn't you? But at least make it sound legal for the judge.

BASS
(nods, then yells)
Sheriff --come out with your ...!

Arkansaw is the first to ride out. His horse jumps the fallen tree and he rides off. Red stands taking aim at him.

Mesquite's horse gallops out tripping over the tree sending him and it flying in front of Red causing him to miss.

Red belts his pistols to draw his Mare's Leg and aims.

Burning Cloud's horse jumps the same tree just as Red fires hitting the horse's haunch to send Burning Cloud flying who rolls up to a fighting stance with his hunting knife out.

Red holsters his rifle to grab his machete leaning nearby.

RED
Think on it.

Sunlight reflects off Red's machete-blade. Burning Cloud stares at it, then takes off running.

Red drops his coat, hat, and machete in one shrug to follow running.

Mexico Mesquite recovers standing with his pistol still hanging around his neck.

BASS
Hands, Up!

Mesquite grabs his gun, fires, and hits Bass in his non-shooting shoulder. Bass quick-fires back, too quick, and hits a tree beside Mesquite who smiles, aims careful, then fires.

TIME LAPSE:

Bass uses Red's training. He takes a deep breath, then releases it slow as he drops a hip while having his thumb out so it draws cocking the hammer. Mesquite's second bullet grazes Bass's same injured shoulder a second time, but Bass ignores it to take slow methodical aim, then *fires*.

END TIME LAPSE.

ARROW CAM: Bullet explodes out of Bass's gun rocketing to and causing Mesquite to cross his eyes as it hits between them.

Back of Mesquite's head is blown out spraying brain, bone and blood over the leaves behind. He dead-falls straight back.

Bass stands upright, holsters his gun, then pulls his kerchief from around his neck to tie off his bleeding arm.

BASS

You have the right to remain --dead
silent.

Adrenaline fading, Bass feels his pain, and falls back against the cave's outside wall, then slides down it.

EXT. FAR AWAY FROM BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

FOOTCHASE SCENE: Burning Cloud runs like a gazelle leaping over things. Red runs like a hunter obsessed with the kill.

Burning Cloud comes to a river. Red is right behind him. Burning Cloud doesn't have time to run along riverbank, Red will intercept him, so he wades into the river trying to cross, but the swift current sweeps him over its waterfall.

Red sees Burning Cloud go over the falls, but doesn't slow down. He drops his rifle-belt grabbing both revolvers and speeds-up angling past the falls to jump into thin air.

TIME LAPSE:

Red falls, straight down, legs together. His speed threw him forward enough to be aiming for the center of the white water below. Red sees Burning Cloud bobbing on the surface and *fires* both revolvers straight down. Burning Cloud dives under the water. Red hits the water, boots first, still firing.

TIME LAPSE ENDS.

EXT. UNDERWATER AT BOTTOM OF FALLS - MOMENTS LATER

Water is churning making it hard to see. Red is scanning when Burning Cloud's knife slices his shoulder from behind.

Red's blood clouds the water as he turns *firing*. His bullets leave tracer-wakes missing until both guns *click* empty. Red sticks both guns under his pants-belt, then pulls his neck-knife searching.

Burning Cloud's knife cuts Red's other shoulder making him drop his neck-knife. Red spins grabbing two-handed Burning Cloud's knife-wrist who tries to punch with his other fist, but can't underwater, then tries to thumb-gouge Red's eye.

Red shakes it off controlling Burning Cloud's wrist who tries to pull Red's pistols out taking his focus off his wrist. Red raises a knee to pull out his boot-knife. Burning Cloud sees it too late as Red rams it hilt deep under his raised knife-arm. Red keeps stabbing Burning Cloud's side until he goes limp. Red then stabs Burning Cloud under his chin and uses his knife to pull Burning Cloud's face to his and *screams*.

EXT. SURFACE OF FALLS WATER - CONTINUOUS

Red's bubbles carry his fierce war-cry up breaking the surface. Small animals scurry away nearby.

EXT. BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Bass is going in and out of consciousness when he hears brush *crackling* and tries to raise his pistol. He can't, so falls over onto his side to aim sideways from the ground.

Red stumbles out bleeding from both shoulders with his rifle belt clasped around his neck and both revolvers in his pants.

BASS
Ain't we a sight?

RED
Pain --means we're alive.

Red sees Mesquite's bloody corpse.

RED
"Blew the back of his head clean off."

BASS
"Didn't have time to get particular." Yours?

Red walks past Bass dropping his rifle-belt while grabbing his machete.

BASS

Where you goin'?

RED

To heat this, then burn our wounds
closed.

Bass looks at his bleeding shoulder, then talks to himself.

BASS

Pain --helps you remember.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS - MUCH LATER THAT DAY

Business as usual as Townsfolk stroll.

Red and Bass, tired and dirty with dried blood on their shirts, ride in on Apple and Packhorse. The safe is tied between Burning Cloud and Mesquite's horses walking in tandem. Burning Cloud and Mesquite are tied over their saddles. Burning Cloud's horse has dried blood on its haunch.

Red tips his hat to Miss Minerva walking on a boardwalk under her French parasol.

RED

Ma'am.

Miss Minerva turns to a PASSERBY FEMALE.

MISS MINERVA

He's such a gentleman.

PASSERBY MALE sees them and ducks into the bank. The Bank Manager runs out, not to greet them, but his safe.

BANK MANAGER

And its money?

BASS

(nods to safe)

Might wanna' bolt that down.

RED

Think your hotel will now let me
stay there long enough to get a
bath and some shut-eye?

BANK MANAGER

Absolutely! As a matter of fact --
(theatrical-announcing)
I'll pay for you and the Deputy!

RED
 I'm the deputy.
 (tosses badge to Bass)
 He's the Sheriff.

Red and Bass toss the two horse's reins to Bank Manager who grabs them. Red and Bass turn their mounts to the hotel.

RED
 Mind gettin' the Doc to mend that
 one horse, then send him to the
 hotel to mend us?

BASS
 And ask Blackie to come get ours at
 the hotel and stable 'em with a
 good brush down. They earned it.

RED
 Sure could go for a sarsaparilla.

Barkeep is listening and pats Bass's leg as he rides by.

BARKEEP
 Sure earned it.

BASS
 Make mine two.

BARKEEP
 Sure thing, bring 'em over me-self.

RED
 Well ain't you the good Christian.

Red and Bass, exhausted, dismount at the hotel. Hotel Owner is out front and takes their reins.

HOTEL OWNER
 I'll tie up your mounts --
 (hands them two keys)
 you go on up to your rooms and get
 doctored. I'll have hot water ready
 when you come down. They'll be no
 ...

Bass puts his filthy hand over Hotel Owner's mouth and head-motions to the Bank Manager, then whispers.

BASS
He's buyin'.

Bass takes his hand away to reveal Hotel Owner is beaming.

RED

Got a haircutter in town?

HOTEL OWNER

Best barber in a hundred mile.

RED

We'll see. If it's all the same,
we'll get in those tubs now. Just
pour the wash water over us. It'll
clean us and our clothes at same
time. They can dry while we siesta.

BASS

Done this before I take it?

Red raspberries.

Townspeople give standing *ovation* as Bass and Red drag their
weary boots into the hotel. Bass beams.

BASS

I could get used to this.

RED

It passes.

INT. HOTEL'S DINING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Hotel has a separate but attached dining area through an
archway off its lobby.

Red and Bass enter. They and clothes are now washed and dry,
but their shirts still have blood stains. Bass is now clean-
shaven and wears his gun-belt. Red's beard has been styled
and cut back with his neck shaven clean under it. Red's hair
has been cut several inches shorter with the rest ponytailed
having three leather strips tying it tight. He has his
favorite revolver in his pants-belt.

They are ignored by the other DINERS as they sit themselves.

BASS

They forgets quick.

RED

That's what "they" --pay you for.

Aiyana and Bodaway enter. Now, the Diners take notice. Bass
motions them over. Red stands. Aiyana sees Red's bloody torn
shirt and throws her arms around his neck. Been so long, Red
doesn't know how to react, so he politely *pats* her back.

Bodaway nods smiling at Bass who ruffles his hair.

Aiyana is embarrassed by her show of affection. All Four sit.

AIYANA
(matter-of-factly)
I'll mend tomorrow.

RED
Appreciate it, but all the same,
I'll buy a new one. This one --
(looks at it)
has memories.
(to Bass)
Might wanna' do the same.

BASS
Don't wanna' remember the pain?

RED
Don't wanna' relive the past. Best
to always be lookin' forward --
(horizontal-waves palm)
keeps all your faculties focused in
the right direction.

BASS
Always be a professional?

RED
Still standin' ain't ya'?

BASS
(nods)
"Can't fault your reasonin'."

WAITRESS, African-American teen, in a dress with apron
overtop comes over.

BASS
Steak dinner, rare please.
(to Aiyana)
And for the lovely lady?

WAITRESS
(to Red)
Not allowed to serve either.

Red stands slow trying to control his rage, but can't. His
bear's *bellow* shakes the silver on all the tables.

RED
TIFFIN!

Hotel Owner enters running.

RED
Four steak dinners, rare, all the
fixin's --on the House!

Red's glare convinces Hotel Owner who nods at Waitress, then about-faces for a quick exit. Waitress exits to the kitchen.

Red sits explaining to Bass.

RED
Part of your job is to remind
"your" citizens --of theirs.

BASS
(to Aiyana)
How'd you know we were here?

Aiyana stares back. Bass nods.

BODAWAY
What happened to the bad man?

Outside in the street, Arkansaw yells.

ARKANSAW (O.S.)
RED --we gots unfinished business!

Red goes to stand, but Bass stops him.

BASS
I'm --the Sheriff.

Bass exits. Red stares from Aiyana to Bodaway.

RED
Stay, here.

Red stands. Aiyana stands. Red glares at Bodaway.

BODAWAY
Mom, sit.

Aiyana stares at both, then sits. Red exits up the stairs.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS AT NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

All the kerosene lamps are lit and swing in the night wind. Their swaying shadows cast across everyone and everything.

Arkansaw stands centered up the street. Bass exits hotel.

ARKANSAW

You second, Red first!

BASS

This is my town, I'm the Law! Your business --was always with me.

ARKANSAW

(looks around scanning)
Not gonna' whip me again is he?

BASS

Told him to stay inside.

ARKANSAW

(still searching)
Since when he listen to you?

BASS

Since I graduated.

Arkansaw doesn't understand, then doesn't care.

ARKANSAW

Fine, first you --him second.

Bass steps out into center of the street.

BASS

Doesn't have to be this way.

ARKANSAW

Sure it do.

Bass starts walking towards him. Arkansaw looks worried, then smiles glancing up behind him.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. SANDPEED ROOFTOP BEHIND ARKANSAW - MOMENTS AGO

WHITE CLOUD, Burning Cloud's brother, lies on a roof with the same type rifle as his brother aiming it down at Bass.

WHITE CLOUD

Hà-sapa die.

From behind White Cloud, Red gives the Sioux warning call.

RED (O.S.)

Ah-ah.

White Cloud tenses, but does not turn.

WHITE CLOUD

Redbear?

Red steps out of the shadows.

RED

Ah-ah.

WHITE CLOUD

My fight not with you, is with man
who kill my brother.

RED

I --killed your brother.

White Cloud tenses as he grips his rifle tighter.

RED

He died well, but did not have to
die at all. It was, his choice.

WHITE CLOUD

I have --no choice.

RED

Yes, you do, we all do. Enough
human beings have died today --

Red slices the air with his palm horizontal again.

RED

enough is enough.

Silence as White Cloud considers, then asks.

WHITE CLOUD

Why you kill brother?

RED

That white man down there tricked
him into a bad battle. Your brother
should not have been there.

WHITE CLOUD

But he was.

RED

Yes, and attacked me from behind,
twice.

Red tears his damaged sleeves at the shoulders turning just
enough to reveal his two burn-scarred cuts.

White Cloud turns over cautious to look as Red covers up.

WHITE CLOUD

Cuts are from behind as you say.
(nods)
You also say, he die well?

RED

By my knife.

White Cloud slowly releases his rifle's hammer.

RED

White Cloud, you are a great chief,
and my Indian brother. I grieve
with you. Let me bring three good
beef to your village to feed your
people. They will then see you are
a fair and wise leader.

White Cloud stands. Red keeps him covered. White Cloud pulls his hunting knife. Red *clicks* back his gun's hammer. White Cloud cuts a palm, then extends same. Red releases hammer to stick gun in his belt, then raises a knee to pull out his boot-knife and slices a palm. They shake their cut hands.

WHITE CLOUD

Now we are blood brothers. We not
spill each other's blood --today.

RED

Not --"today."

Red nods grabbing White Cloud's shoulder with his free hand. White Cloud grabs Red's shoulder with his free hand. Red grimaces. White Cloud smiles, then grips Red's shoulder harder, so Red grimaces more. Both release to step back.

WHITE CLOUD

It shall be so.

RED

(hand-gestures to edge)
"Shall" we?

Both go to the edge of the roof to look down.

RETURN TO.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS - PRESENT NIGHT

Bass continues to walk toward Arkansaw who is still looking up behind him, but now sees White Cloud and Red standing side-by-side. White Cloud side-waves once. Arkansaw spins angry.

ARKANSAW
Stop right there!

Bass keeps walking.

BASS
I'm not going to kill you.

Bass moves his thumb out straight on his swinging gun-hand.

BASS
You have to stand trial for your
crimes. It's --The Law.

ARKANSAW
You ain't no law man.

BASS
Only one way to find out.

Arkansaw draws. Bass follows his training as his hat is blown off by Arkansaw's bullet while dip-firing to hit Arkansaw in his free shoulder freezing him. Bass stands dead-aiming.

BASS
Holster your gun.

Arkansaw is confused. Bass holsters his gun while walking.

BASS
Let's go again --till you're sure.

Arkansaw feigns holstering his gun, but draw-fires instead.

Bass anticipated and drops lower to draw firing and hits Arkansaw in the same shoulder again making him cry out.

ARKANSAW
Ow, #@\$%!

BASS
Holster, your gun.

Arkansaw is confused, but holsters. Bass stands holstering his gun never breaking stride walking towards Arkansaw.

BASS
You are going to jail. Your choice
--how much of you goes.

Arkansaw draws again, but faster. Arkansaw's bullet cuts the side of Bass's leather gun-belt slicing it so it drops off, but not before Bass quick-draws and *fires*.

His bullet hits Arkansaw in his shooting shoulder knocking his gun away. Bass covers Arkansaw never breaking stride.

BASS
Hands --Up!

Arkansaw raises his hands slightly because of his hurt arms.

BASS
On your knees, criminal.

Arkansaw threaten-grumbles as he gets on both knees.

ARKANSAW
No jail can hold me.

Bass steps behind and raises his gun to pistol-whip him.

BASS
We'll see.

Bass nods now understanding Red's lesson, holsters his gun, and grabs Arkansaw's hands to spin them down behind his back squeezing their thumbs together, then helps Arkansaw stand.

BASS
You can walk yourself to jail.

Bass escorts Arkansaw to his Sheriff's Office.

EXT. SANDPEED ROOFTOP BEHIND ARKANSAW - MOMENTS LATER

Red and White Cloud watch all below.

WHITE CLOUD
White man prison?

RED
White man --hang.

WHITE CLOUD
Good.

White Cloud turns to Red and holds up a splayed-finger hand.

WHITE CLOUD
Five --good beef.

Red nods his head smiling saying Lakota word for "wise."

RED
(P-ksah-Pay)
Pksape.

INT. HOTEL'S DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Aiyana and Bodaway sit ramrod straight at their table with hands in their laps waiting.

Bass, and Red with both shoulder seams torn down revealing his burn-cuts, enter exhausted and sit.

AIYANA

Now --you buy new shirt.

Red chuckles, then picks up his knife and fork to cut and try his steak. He makes a yucky-face, then waves the Waitress over, finger-circling their four plates.

RED

Mind puttin' these back on the fire
to take the chill off?

Waitress never takes her star-struck eyes off Bass.

WAITRESS

Anything for you, Sheriff Bass.

Waitress takes all four plates while smiling at Bass to exit with them into the kitchen.

BODAWAY

Where bad man?

BASS

Takin' a dirt nap.

Red raises an eyebrow.

BASS

See you learned your last lesson.

Both smile to say in unison.

BASS/RED

"Till you gets 'em to jail."

Bass and Red laugh, then high-five.

Waitress brings them four Sarsaparillas. Red raises his glass. Bass raises his. Bodaway raises his. Aiyana doesn't.

BODAWAY

Called a toasty, mom.

She raises an eyebrow, then her glass.

RED
To --Sheriffin'.

BASS/BODAWAY
"Sheriffin'."

The Three males *clink* their glasses to Aiyana's, then drink. She furrows her brow, then drinks.

AIYANA
What you do now?

RED
Have to ride into Indian Territory a few days to deliver some cattle. Bodaway should come with and meet his people. We'll hunt on the way back, kill some pheasant.

AIYANA
What I do --now?

RED
You'll ride in everyday and be your Sheriff's schoolmarm. We'll be back before the Circuit Judge arrives.

Waitress brings their re-heated steaks. Red rubs his hands.

RED
Wanna' see you write your name when I gets back, Sheriff Bass.

Red dives into his steak, likes it, and eats like a cannibal.

Bass and Bodaway dig into theirs. Aiyana picks at hers.

RED
Dig in honey, not as good as your cookin', but at least we ain't starvin'.

AIYANA
"Honey?"

BODAWAY
Means he likes you, ma.

AIYANA
Just --like?

Red *slams* his knife and fork on the table, then grabs both of Aiyana's hands with his bear paws.

RED

I ain't much to look at on the
outside, but inside, I'm a fair and
lovin' man that will never hurt
you, keep fresh game on the table,
and a dry roof over you and your'n.

Red throws her hands away and begins eating again.

RED

There --satisfied?

Aiyana sits speechless. Bass *chuckles*.

BASS

Do believe --she's stupified.

Aiyana smiles a sweet but tiny smile, then eats happy.

BASS

And, then?

Red *slams* his knife and fork on his plate, grabs Bass's head
with both hands, and pulls him nose-to-nose. Bass's gun comes
up under Red's chin.

BASS

I's already --"satisfied."

All Four *laugh* and go back to eating hearty.

Red moves his head back and forth like he's talking to
himself, then swallows.

RED

Aiyana?

Aiyana puts her fork down to sit up straight, looking down.

RED

On my ride here, I passed through a
small town --could be a big one.

BASS

What's stoppin' them?

RED

No sheriff.

Bass stops eating. He and Aiyana look up.

BASS

You applyin'?

Red puts down his fork and turns in his chair to Aiyana.

RED

Folks around here has got used to thinkin' of you a certain way, and treatin' you both that same.

AIYANA

You --start over?

Red gets down on one knee taking one of her hands between his two. Aiyana puts her free hand on her chest.

RED

We --start over. New town, new life. Didn't see no school house there, so you become their teach, I their Sheriff. You and the boy would be treated well there, better'n here.

AIYANA

You --treat us good?

RED

(drops his head)
Been a long time since I felt agape for --or from someone.
(raises head sincere)
Yes, I treat you good.

This is the first time we see Aiyana's full beautiful smile. She puts her other tiny hand on top of Red's big paw.

AIYANA

Circle of Life.

Red nods, sits in his chair, grabs fork, then tilts his head.

RED

Never did get your last name?

AIYANA

Smythe.

BASS

Sheriff Smythe --was her husband.

Red is speechless.

BASS

Now do believe --he's stupified.

The Other Three *laugh* as Red's head tilts back and forth in disbelief with eyebrows going up and down like a dog. Those Three go back to eating and smiling. Red's mouth pantomimes "Smythe," then he goes back to eating looking at Bass.

RED

Don't go and become no newspaperman. You're little slow on spreadin' the news.

BASS

Don't worry, after the election ...

RED

When you're Sheriff with Sheriff's pay.

Waitress walks by their table and smiles alluring at Bass. He smiles back showing all his pearly-white teeth.

BASS

I'll probably get married.

RED

(sees Waitress smile)
"Probably." Then what?

BASS

Hear tell of a place on the edge a' town might be comin' up for sale. I always wanted to try farmin'.

RED

Good luck with that, ground's so dry, its trees are bribin' dogs.

BASS

Can't read yet, but I listen real good. Heard of somethin' called a wind's mill as a way a' bringin' water from one place to another.

RED

Irrigation.

BODAWAY

Bless you.

Red and Bass *chuckle*, then Red gets serious.

RED

Your knowledge of the Three Tribes would stand you well as a U.S. Marshal in the Indian Territory.

BASS
 Could do both.

RED
 Lotta' hard work.

BASS
 Most things are.

Red nods, then pats Aiyana's hand lovingly.

RED
 Heard a preacher pulpit once, "God
 moves in mysterious ways."
 (goes back to eating)
 There's mystery --then there's darn
 right stupifyin'.

BODAWAY
 When I get to age, think I'll take
 up Sheriffin'.

The Other Three are shocked open-mouthed silent.

EXT. SANDPEED OUTSKIRTS NEAR RED'S TREE - IMMEDIATELY

The Four's *laughter* can be heard all the way out of town.

RED (V.O.)
 Bass did become the first African-
 American U.S. Marshal arresting
 over 3,000 felons during a 32-year
 career with only his hat and gun-
 belt ever shot off.

BASS (V.O.)
 I wrote the first police training
 manual titled, "Hands Up."

AIYANA (V.O.)
 His great-great grandson became the
 first African-American United
 States Federal Judge.

BODAWAY (V.O.)
 Marshal Reeve's exploits became the
 basis for the television series,
 "The Lone Ranger."

COYOTE *howls* at the full moon followed by the *William Tell*
Overture beginning with announcements from "The Lone Ranger."

FADE OUT.