

NY Cowboy
by Bryan Colley

Fourth Draft
March 27, 2006

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FADE IN.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

RESTLESS REGGIE whistles an old prairie song as he rides his horse through a thicket of trees. His boyish face is marked by a stubbly beard that betrays his age--a 30 year old cowboy out of the old west--complete with boots, chaps, hat, and scarf around the neck.

A WOMAN'S SCREAM is heard O.S. Restless chokes his whistle and listens.

WOMAN'S SCREECH (O.S.)
STOP! THIEF!

Restless turns and rides through the brush to a clearing.

A CROOK is yanking a purse from an older woman. The crook snatches the purse and runs.

WOMAN
Stop him!

Restless tips his hat as he rides up.

REGGIE
Stay put, ma'am. I'll fetch your handbag.

Reggie spurs his horse and gallops away, leaving the woman stunned. He twirls a loop of rope over his head as he rides up on the thief. He throws and lassos the crook, tripping him up.

Reggie leaps from his horse and hog ties the villain. He picks up the woman's purse.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Your thievin' days are through, varmint.

A BICYCLE COP rides up.

COP
What's going on here?

REGGIE
Howdy, Deputy. I caught this man thieving a purse from an innocent lady. I'll leave him in your hands.

Reggie mounts and rides off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COP

Wait a minute, mister--

Restless is already gone. He returns to the clearing and gives the woman back her purse.

REGGIE

Here you go, ma'am. That varmint is in the hands of the law. Have a nice day.

As quickly as he came, Restless rides away.

WOMAN

Wait! Who are you...cowboy?

Reggie stops, turning back around.

REGGIE

They call me Restless Reggie!

Reggie's horse rears up and neighs, the skyscrapers of

NEW YORK CITY

towering behind him.

INT. NEW YORK PENTHOUSE - DAY

Rotund and refined, proud and venerable, ANDREW NORFOLK struts down the hall of his tasteful and expensively decorated apartment carrying a letter.

GUNSHOTS in the distance become louder as he approaches a large mahogany door. The haughty, British BUTLER is waiting outside.

BUTLER

He's at it again, Sir.

NORFOLK

Don't worry. I've got something here that will give us all a rest from little Tex.

BUTLER

Is it a restraining order, Sir?

NORFOLK

Better still... A vacation!

The butler opens the door and they enter...

INT. REGGIE'S PLAYROOM - DAY

The enormous room is decorated floor to ceiling in a western motif. The walls are painted like the Arizona desert, stretching to the horizon.

Restless aims and fires his pistol, shattering a bottle on a fencepost.

NORFOLK

Reginald!

Reggie quickly holsters his pistols, fumbling them into his belt, and turns with a boyish grin to Norfolk.

REGGIE

Howdy, Pa.

NORFOLK

You know there is no target practice in the penthouse.

REGGIE

I'm sorry, Pa.

Reggie walks over to a covered wagon and stirs a pot cooking over a campfire. With the twist of a valve, he turns off the fire.

NORFOLK

I want you to come into the office today.

REGGIE

Aw, I don't want to go to work!

NORFOLK

No more excuses, Reginald. You are thirty years old today. It's time for you to grow up and assume your responsibilities within the company.

REGGIE

I just ain't cut out for the business life, Pa. I'm a free-roamin' spirit, a force of nature.

Reggie turns to a plasma TV and draws his pistol against Glenn Ford on the screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORFOLK

You are the heir of Norfolk Industries
and the time has come for you to earn an
honest living. You will come in to work
today and tomorrow and from now on, like
I did when I was your age and so has
every Norfolk heir for five generations.

Reggie picks up a bucket and walks through a field of corn.

REGGIE

Awright, Pa. I'll mosey in when I've
finished my chores.

NORFOLK

Chores? What chores?

BUTLER

Sir, Master Reginald is learning to milk
a cow.

NORFOLK

A cow?

Reggie leaps over the fence and proudly pats the cow in his
makeshift farm. Hens and roosters run wild.

REGGIE

That's right, Pa! Tomorrow morning we'll
have fresh milk!

The butler gives Norfolk a disgusted, questioning grimace.

NORFOLK

(to the butler)

That's better than fresh steak!

(to Reggie)

I'll see you in the office, Reginald...

(adding with a chuckle)

...at high noon!

INT. NORFOLK INDUSTRIES - DAY

The elevator opens and Reggie leaps out on horseback, riding
through the acres of cubicles receiving "Hello Restless" and
"Howdy Reggie" from the entertained workers.

INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

Reggie's horse prances up to the dough-faced secretary, TIM
WALTERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

Reggie!

REGGIE

Pack it up, Tim, and come with me!

TIM

But I no longer work for you. I'm Mr. Benson's assistant now.

REGGIE

How'm I supposed to git along without my sidekick? You tell Benson you're working for me now!

Reggie whips out a large brick of tobacco and offers it to Tim.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Have a chew, pardner.

Tim winces at the brown lump and redoubles his determination.

TIM

I must inform you, Mr. Norfolk, that my duties with this company do not include bushwacking, lassoing, horse riding, and tobacco chewing.

Reggie bites off a wad of chew and narrows his eyes at Tim.

INT. CUBE FARM - DAY

Tim struggles, tied to his chair, as Reggie pulls it across the office.

He rounds a corner, and the chair smashes into a desk and follows.

TIM

You can't do this to me! You can't force me to work for you, I don't care whose son you are!

Reggie pushes Tim behind his desk and ties him to it.

REGGIE

Yer just a tender saplin', Tim. You stick with me and I'll make you a timber bearin' oak.

Reggie uncaps his canteen and offers it to Tim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Taste this.

Tim eyes it with dreaded fear.

TIM

What is it?

REGGIE

It's milk.

TIM

Milk!

REGGIE

Sure, taste it.

Reggie pours the milk into Tim's mouth. Tim spits it out!

TIM

It's warm!

REGGIE

Sure it is! Squeezed it myself this morning.

TIM

You don't squeeze milk, you squeeze oranges.

REGGIE

I didn't squeeze an orange, I squeezed a cow.

Reggie lifts a cowboy hat from the hat stand and puts it on Tim's head.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Now that looks better, don't it?

INT. REGGIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Reggie swings open the western saloon doors of his western office. A saddlestand is in the center of the room, as well as a tall, planted cactus.

Reggie salutes a large portrait of Randolph Scott as he ties his horse near a trough.

REGGIE

Howdoo, Randy! How's the range this morn'?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reggie spots a large package waiting on his desk.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Yahoo!

He winds up an old fashioned crank telephone and shouts into it.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Tim! Tim! Get in here!

Reggie begins opening the package as Tim pushes his way in, still tied to his seat.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

You ain't wriggled out of them ropes yet?
I ain't put but two knots in it.

TIM

Sorry, Reggie.

Reggie unties the ropes and sets him free.

REGGIE

Look here what I got in the mail.

Reggie pulls two vintage, silver pistols from the box.

TIM

Are those real guns?

REGGIE

Of course they are! .38 caliber--stop a
grizzly dead in its tracks.

Tim swallows and gives a weak smile.

TIM

Aren't they a little dangerous?

REGGIE

Hell, cowboy's got to have his guns.
What else is he going to kill outlaws
with? You know what I'm going to do?

Tim shakes his head nervously.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I'm gonna give you my old pistols.

TIM

Me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REGGIE

Sure. .22's, but they work. You won't feel like a man till you've got iron strapped to your side.

TIM

Couldn't I just carry a pocketknife?

REGGIE

I need someone to back me up. I wouldn't have much trouble with five or six varmints, but what if I run into a whole mess of 'em?

TIM

Varmints?

REGGIE

Bad guys, law breakers, evil-doers. The world's crawling with 'em. They team up against us decent folk to wipe us out.

TIM

I see.

REGGIE

That's why we've got to stick together, to fight back. You and I will make a pretty good team. You've got a lot to learn, and I've got a lot to teach you.

The phone rings, Reggie picks it up, pointing his gun at Tim and winking.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Howdy!

Reggie's smile drops and he's suddenly serious.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I'll be right up!

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

Norfolk stands at the head of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS, a punctilious gathering of stuffed shirts and snobbery, the conservative bastion of the industrial world.

NORFOLK

As many of you know, today is my son Reginald's thirtieth birthday.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORFOLK (CONT'D)

According to the stalwart tradition of Norfolk Industries, he is to assume a responsible position in line to eventually replace me as president.

A wave of murmurs rumbles through the room as the board makes known its indignation.

NORFOLK (CONT'D)

I realize many of you are opposed to Reginald due to his eccentric nature, but if there is one thing that cannot be argued with, it's tradition.

This is followed with a wave of reluctant nods of agreement.

NORFOLK (CONT'D)

Master Reginald simply lacks real-world experience. Therefore I have devised a plan open his eyes and put an end to his childish fancies.

The door opens at the far end of the room and Reggie pokes his head in.

NORFOLK (CONT'D)

Come in, Reginald. I was just getting to you.

Reggie moseys in with trepidation followed by Tim. The board of directors turns to face Reggie in a collective sneer. He pauses in his tracks, before humbly taking a seat opposite his father.

Norfolk pushes the intercom button.

NORFOLK (CONT'D)

I think it's time to introduce our guests.

The door opens and in walk three well-dressed businessmen: HARRISON, a large, refined gentleman, SOMERSET, down-to-earth and middle-aged, and BOWERS, a meek mouse.

NORFOLK (CONT'D)

Reginald, this is Harrison, Somerset, and Bowers of Harrison, Somerset, Bowers and Associates.

Reggie gets up to greet them, offering his hand.

REGGIE

Run your own business, do you? What do you make?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARRISON
(extending his hand)
We're lawyers.

Reggie waves him off.

REGGIE
Lawyers! Bah, who needs 'em!

Harrison looks to the others, surprised.

NORFOLK
We need them, Reginald. We're looking at their city for our new development. This is very important to our company and even more important to their citizens, and I want you to go there and manage their operations.

REGGIE
But Pa! I can't leave now! There's a cow in my room. Who's gonna milk it?

The lawyers exchange worried glances, gawking over Reggie's cowboy costume, shaking their heads in disbelief.

NORFOLK
I'll take care of everything for you.

REGGIE
But I don't want to be stuck with some boring lawyers. Where is it, anyway?

NORFOLK
A little town called Sugar Creek, in Arizona.

REGGIE
Arizona!

NORFOLK
That's right.

Reggie explodes with joy!

REGGIE
Yahoo! Why didn't you tell me? Arizona!
Home on the range!

Reggie leaps on an ottoman and grabs invisible reins. He whips the reins behind him and bounces up and down as if riding.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Yeehaw! Pack my saddlebags! I'm headin'
west!

Reggie jumps off and looks over the lawyers in their red ties and black suits.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Well, you boys had me fooled.

SOMERSET
Excuse me?

REGGIE
All dressed up in them city duds--you
must have thought you should fit in with
us New York slickers.

HARRISON
City duds?

Reggie leans in and whispers to them, grabbing Bower's tie and pulling it up in the air like a noose.

REGGIE
Don't you worry none. You won't have to
wear that corporate noose back home.

Reggie whips out his tobacco plug and offers them a chew.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Chew, boys?

Harrison balks at the slimy, brown lump and pulls a cigar from his pocket.

HARRISON
No, thank you.

Reggie offers the plug to Somerset. Somerset removes a cigarette case from his jacket and opens it.

SOMERSET
I'm a smoker, really.

Reggie turns to Bowers. Bowers grimaces at the plug and desperately searches his pockets.

BOWERS
I um... I'm uh... I don't...

He finds a stick of gum and holds it up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BOWERS (CONT'D)
I'm quitting.

REGGIE
Suit yourselves, fellows.

Reggie bites another hunk from the block of tobacco.

NORFOLK
That's Reginald's way of squaring a deal.
I'll expect you to take good care of him
during his stay.

Somerset speaks up, to the questioning looks of the others.

SOMERSET
It will be our honor.

Reggie jumps on Tim's back and rides him around the room.

REGGIE
Yahoo! To the elevators, Tim! I've got
to pack my gear!

He slaps Tim on the rear and Tim gallops out of the office.

BOWERS
Mr. Norfolk, isn't your son a little...
uh...

HARRISON
After all, Mr. Norfolk, we didn't expect
to um... to...

SOMERSET
Reginald is not the overseer we had in
mind, Mr. Norfolk, but we will do our
best to accommodate him.

NORFOLK
Don't worry about him, gentlemen.
Reginald's just the rambunctious sort.
He needs to find out what the real west
is really like.

EXT. SUGAR CREEK - DAY

Sand blasting winds rip through this town in decline.
Tumbleweeds roll across the empty streets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Up and down the main roads, business after business is closed. Empty parking lots stand in front of empty storefronts.

A mid-day drunk walks out of a tavern called "SUGAR CREEK BAR".

The hotel has a hand printed sign reading "Plenty Of" above the "VACANCIES" light.

A pickup loaded with furniture makes its way towards the interstate ramp.

EXT. HI-TECH OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Stepping out of a shiny sports car, incongruous, pristine, GAIL SOMERSET heads toward a mini office building.

She meets TERRY MERKLE, a handsome, snobbish poser, at the door and he follows her in.

INT. HI-TECH OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Gail cuts through the room like a razor-edged knife, her business suit immaculate top to toe.

GAIL

Father wants a town meeting called as soon as he returns. The resort merger might be more difficult we thought. Looks like we've got to babysit the president's son.

She slaps a laptop on her desk and turns it on. Her office is wall-to-wall 21st century.

TERRY

I thought it was important.

GAIL

It is--to me.

She hits speakerphone and dials.

GAIL (CONT'D)

This resort is my ticket out of Sugar Creek. It's going to put me on the map along with this town. In five years I'll be sitting in my New York penthouse with a cool million in the bank.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAIL (CONT'D)

I wasn't born the richest girl in Sugar Creek for nothing.

MERKLE

When love speaks, her voice makes heaven drowsy with the harmony.

GAIL

Am I putting you to sleep?

MERKLE

Do I fit in to your five year plan?

GAIL

Of course, you'll be a Broadway star.

MERKLE

I have a little plan of my own.

He holds up a tiny, gift-wrapped box.

GAIL

Well that's a novel tactic, Terry.

A VOICE responds on the phone.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hello?

Gail reaches for the handset. Merkle grabs her wrist.

MERKLE

I seem to be unable to please you and I endeavor this as a last resort.

GAIL

Please, Terry! I'm busy.

MERKLE

I implore you! Give me one minute of your life.

GAIL

(hesitant)

I'll call you back.

VOICE (O.S.)

Good luck with Romeo.

MERKLE

(handing her the box)

Open it.

She slowly unwraps it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GAIL

Let me guess--it's too small for flowers,
too small for chocolates. Is it more of
your glorious prose, or perhaps a lock of
your silken auburn hair?

Opening the box.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Well wouldn't you know, it's a ring.
That's lovely, Terry.
(handing it back)
Now take it back. You can't afford it.

MERKLE

I love you, Gail. I want to marry you.

GAIL

Hmm. Very direct, lacking eloquence. I
like it. Too bad it will never happen.

MERKLE

Don't you have the least concern for my
feelings?

GAIL

Apparently not.

MERKLE

Don't spurn me like this, so coldly and
cruel.

GAIL

It seems effective.

MERKLE

Why can't I find a place in your heart?

GAIL

Because there's no one there to applaud
you.

MERKLE

O brawling love! O hating love! How
miserable is the man who loves. O heart
of sorrow and tempestuous mind, why must
I suffer these cruel rebuffs?

GAIL

A lovely scene, Terry. Now if you don't
mind I have important work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She dials the speakerphone again. Terry looks at the ring in his hand and makes an overt display of sorrow before leaving her office.

VOICE (O.S.)

What was it this time? A sappy poem?

GAIL

A proposal.

VOICE (O.S.)

Again! Why doesn't he give up?

GAIL

Because he knows it amuses me. Listen, furnish the suite at the Hilton. Keep it tasteful, contemporary, but make it rich. Someone's coming and we're going to treat him like a king.

INT. TOWN MEETING HALL - NIGHT

Two hundred townspeople crowd into the tiny hall. CHATTER and CONVERSATIONS fill the room.

Gail, Somerset, Harrison and Bowers make their way from the back of the room to the podium.

SOMERSET

He's half-mad! He thinks he's a cowboy.

GAIL

There's plenty of cowboys here.

SOMERSET

No, I mean a real cowboy, like in the movies. You know, riding a horse and having gunfights.

GAIL

You're kidding?

BOWERS

He tried to make me chew tobacco.

HARRISON

And he thought we were cowboys too, pretending to be businessmen.

SOMERSET

He's a nut!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAIL

A tough nut, but we'll crack him.

They take their places on the platform and Harrison advances to the podium. The room quiets down and attention falls on Harrison.

HARRISON

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. This is the largest turnout we've had yet. It goes to prove how important this development is to the town of Sugar Creek.

Concerned yays and nods emanate from the audience.

HARRISON (CONT'D)

We met with Mr. Norfolk in New York and he was very enthusiastic about setting up shop here. With his help we can look forward to Sugar Creek becoming the prime retirement community of the southwest within the next ten years.

He is stopped by a voice in the crowd.

CONCERNED VOICE

I heard the deal fell through!

Other audience members pipe up in agreement, hurling questions to the podium.

HARRISON

Ladies and gentlemen, please. That isn't true at all...

As Harrison tries to quiet the rabble, Gail leans in to Somerset.

GAIL

Cat's out of the bag.

A young BLUE COLLAR WORKER rises and speaks.

BLUE COLLAR WORKER

This town's been going downhill for the past ten years. If we don't get this development we'll end up a ghost town.

Everyone agrees with this and throws their demands at Harrison.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON

Everyone, listen, please! The development is not in jeopardy. There are only a few details to iron out before everything is set in stone.

An overweight WHITE COLLAR BOSS stand up, cigar in mouth.

WHITE COLLAR BOSS

Don't try to side track us with your political mumbo jumbo, Harrison. If we're in a heap of trouble just tell us.

The audience rises to their feet, demanding the truth. Harrison can't be heard above the rabble.

GAIL

(to Somerset)

You'd better pinch hit for him, Father.

Somerset nods and rises to his feet, taking Harrison's place. The townspeople quiet down when he steps up.

SOMERSET

Our deal with Andrew Norfolk is practically sealed.

WHITE COLLAR BOSS

Practically ain't a fact!

SOMERSET

Now sit down, Harry. We're all on the same side here. And there's no smoking in the town hall.

The boss looks around at the now attentive audience. He takes his seat, putting out his cigar.

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

Now there's just one small hitch. Mr. Norfolk's son is coming out next week to survey our town - to sort of manage things for a while.

This causes some concern amongst the townspeople.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

Now I know we've got what it takes to handle this resort, but it is up to everyone here to make the best possible impression.

Seeing that the audience has calmed down, Harrison interjects.

HARRISON

His name is Reginald and he's...well, he's quite an interesting character.

Bowers also stands.

BOWERS

He's very fond of the west. The wild west.

The townspeople are happy to hear this.

SOMERSET

Ladies and gentlemen, this Reginald is a little naïve. He thinks the west is just like was a hundred years ago. He's in for quite a shock when he gets here and finds us to be rather urbane. I expect we will impress him greatly with our professionalism and our cultural heritage.

GAIL

That's not going to win him over!

Everyone turns to Gail as she advances to the podium.

GAIL (CONT'D)

This man's from New York! That's as urban as you can get. There's nothing we can do to make Sugar Creek seem like a cultural Mecca.

A wave of agreement passes through the audience.

BOWERS

What do you suggest we do?

GAIL

If he thinks this is the wild west, let's give him what he wants. If he wants to come out here and be rootin-tootin, why shouldn't we indulge him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOWERS

You mean pretend we're cowboys?

GAIL

We'll turn Sugar Creek into the town it was when they named it. We won't even have to bring him downtown. We'll put him up in the Pueblo Mansion. It's a hundred and forty years old.

HARRISON

It's an excellent idea. He'll love it so much he won't want to leave.

GAIL

If we put on boots and cowboy hats and talk like uneducated simpletons, he'll think this is the greatest town in America.

SOMERSET

She's right! This fellow's the genuine article. He wouldn't think twice to see us riding horses and toting guns.

JOE the bartender rises from his seat.

JOE

I could decorate my bar like an old saloon, with swinging doors!

GAIL

That's the idea!

BETTY the ranch girl stands.

BETTY

I've got two dozen horses at the stable we can use.

WORRIED OLD LADY

You mean we can't drive our cars?

KARL THE REDNECK

I ain't giving up my pickup for a whole week.

Some of the other rednecks agree with him.

GAIL

Trucks are okay! Cowboys drive trucks. We can have horses and trucks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BOWERS

We could get together and have a square dance or something.

SOMERSET

An old-fashioned hoe-down!

GAIL

We'll make Sugar Creek a town of the future by making it a town of the past.

Everyone is suddenly excited and offering ideas. Merkle admires the enthusiasm and smiles at Gail.

The town PREACHER stands on his chair.

PREACHER

I can't believe this! What are you thinking of doing, masquerading as cowboys and lawless ruffians? How can you expect to put on this dishonest charade?

This is Merkle's cue. He clears his throat.

MERKLE

As artistic director of the Sugar Creek Community Theater, I see this as an opportunity not to be missed. Our actors could stage an authentic western drama, deus ex machina, and he'll think it's entirely real.

BOWERS

You mean like, uh, like a gunfight?

MERKLE

A gunfight, square dance, gamblers, outlaws, dance hall girls, shooting contest, kidnapping, mustache twisting villains, damsel in distress, bank robberies--

SOMERSET

Excuse me! My bank has not had a robbery in a hundred and eighteen years!

His concern turns to a grin.

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

And I think it's high time we had one!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The townspeople are in enthusiastic agreement, bursting into individual conversations and planning their deceit.

Gail watches all with a smile as Merkle blows her a kiss. She leans in toward her assistant.

GAIL

Forget the Ramada suite. Fill the Pueblo with the most god-awful rustic antiques you can find. We've got a real cowboy coming to town.

INT. PUEBLO MANSION - HALLWAY - DAY

A mover comes out of a room with a modern metal frame chair. Another goes in with an antique wooden one.

INT. PUEBLO MANSION - LOBBY - DAY

The computer terminal is removed and an old-fashioned cash register is put in it's place.

EXT. SUGAR CREEK BAR - DAY

Glass doors are removed from the entrance. Swinging wood doors are put in its place. A sign is hung on the window, covering SUGAR CREEK BAR with SUGAR CREEK SALOON.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A dozen horses round the corner as Betty wrangles them down the street.

People pull their cars into garages. Karl parks his truck on the street.

Workers cover up neon signs with painted wood ones.

Tables are laid out full of cowboy hats and boots. Townspeople pick out ones that fit.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Harrison, Somerset and Bowers check themselves out in their period costumes. Somerset wears a reserved, tasteful suit. Harrison is over the top in baroque exuberance. Bowers' mismatched clothing shows no sign of form or function.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An Amtrak passenger train rolls into the station.

HARRISON
Well, here he comes.

BOWERS
He's not gonna fall for it.

SOMERSET
Of course he will.

The train eases to a stop and Tim steps out with a suitcase.

BOWERS
Isn't that his secretary?

SOMERSET
Yes it is.

They go to Tim and takes his luggage. Tim looks them over curiously.

HARRISON
Welcome to Sugar Creek.

TIM
Good afternoon, Gentlemen.

SOMERSET
I'm afraid we haven't been formally introduced. I'm Arnold Somerset, and these are my colleagues, Jeffrey Harrison and Dale Bowers.

TIM
Hello. I'm Timothy Walters.

BOWERS
How do you do?

HARRISON
Where is Mr. Norfolk?

TIM
Mr. Norfolk? Oh, you mean Reggie. He's in the baggage car with his horse.

SOMERSET
His horse?

A ramp is placed at the baggage car door as it opens. Reggie rides out mounted on his horse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He stops at the bottom and takes a deep breath.

REGGIE
Arizona!

He rides up to the others and dismounts.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
I never thought I'd see the day I was
ridin' in Arizona.

HARRISON
Welcome to Sugar Creek.

REGGIE
Now that's more like it.

Reggie looks over their period suits, flipping up Bower's
bowler.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
I'll bet you boys couldn't wait to get
out of them east coast outfits.

Harrison places a foot on a barrel, showing off his fancy,
ornate cowboy boots. He recites his line as if memorized.

HARRISON
I have no home 'cept in my boots!

Reggie looks at his reflection in the silver toe.

REGGIE
And mighty fine livin' it is.

Somerset motions to a fancy, horse-drawn carriage.

SOMERSET
We brought a carriage to take you into
town.

Reggie mounts his horse.

REGGIE
No thanks. I'll ride in on my horse
Rosie.

The carriage door opens and out steps Gail in a garish
southern belle dress.

Reggie sees her as he mounts and freezes in admiration. She
opens her parasol and smiles at Reggie. Reggie absently hands
the reins to Tim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Walk Rosie to town, Tim. I changed my mind.

He dismounts and heads for the carriage.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

A carriage ride sounds downright regal.

They go to the wagon where Gail is waiting.

SOMERSET

This is my daughter, Gail, um--Abigail.

Gail winces at the name as Reggie nervously removes his hat and spits a brown lump of tobacco under the wagon.

REGGIE

How do, Miss Abigail?

GAIL

I've heard a lot about you, Reginald.

REGGIE

Shucks. Only my Pa calls me Reginald. Reg'lar folks ought to call me Reggie. Restless Reggie, if yer so inclined.

GAIL

All right, Restless. May I show you the town?

Reggie opens the carriage door for her.

REGGIE

It would be an honor, ma'am.

Gail looks him over coyly, and steps into the carriage. Harrison, Somerset, and Bowers follow. Gail sits across from her father and gives him a sly wink.

Tim ties the horse to the back of the carriage and starts to climb in but it's full. Betty, the wagon driver, turns and waves him up.

BETTY

Come on up, Sugar. I'll show you how to drive.

Tim hesitates and Reggie nods him on. He climbs up the wagon into the driver's seat.

EXT. FAUX SUGAR CREEK C. 1880 - DAY

The wagon wobbles down a single rustic street with all modern markings painstakingly removed. Reggie watches everything with wide-eyed fascination. People walk the streets in period dress.

A mounted rider passes the carriage. The man waves as he goes by.

PASSERBY

Howdy.

REGGIE

How do!

Reggie shoots his attention to GUNSHOTS up ahead. His pistol is instantly drawn.

He watches gleefully as two men gun each other down. Their bodies are picked up and carried into a building marked "UNDERTAKER".

Reggie licks his lips!

Gail and the lawyers fearfully eye Reggie's huge pistol held out in the center of the cabin.

The carriage pulls up to the Sugar Creek Saloon and stops. Reggie is happy as a puppy.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Oh boy! My first Red Whisker!

INT. SUGAR CREEK SALOON - DAY

Karl, the redneck, watches at the widow as the carriage stops. He turns to the bar and shouts.

KARL

He's here! Everybody act like cowpokes!

Everyone begins to chat, play cards, drink, and laugh very artificially. A PIANO MAN plays a lively, bawdy tune. Reggie opens both saloon doors and holds them, looking over the bar. Pleasure explodes off his face.

The piano player chimes in with an intro and the whole bar turns to the stage. Reggie steps into the bar, smiling joyfully.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The curtain rises revealing a line of colorful dancing girls. The piano man breaks into a Can-Can as they start to perform.

Reggie watches with pure enjoyment.

GAIL

Let's get a drink, cowboy?

Gail takes Reggie by the arm, snapping him out of his frozen state of wonder. She leads him to the bar, winking to the scruffy bartender Joe.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Give this boy a drink; anything he wants.

JOE

What'll it be?

Reggie slaps his hand on the counter and belts out...

REGGIE

Red Whisker!

JOE

Red what?

REGGIE

Red Whisker!

Joe looks to Gail. She nods to fix him anything. Joe shrugs and turns, musing over his arsenal of liquors.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I sure do like your town, Miss Abigail.

GAIL

Thanks. We tried to make it feel like home.

Joe concocts a brew from red cream soda and a squeeze of lime. He stirs it up and ponders it like a chemist, then adds a shotglass of vinegar.

He sniffs it, souring his face, and carefully puts the glass down in front of Reggie.

Reggie picks it up and takes a deep breath. Joe does likewise. Reggie slowly tips the glass back and downs the entire drink. Then he heaves out a flaming cough.

REGGIE

Golly! Gimme another--and one for my pal Tim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He slaps Tim on the back, pushing him into the bar.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
This'll put hair on your belly!

INT. BAR BACK ROOM - SAME

Somerset slips into the back room where a group of actors are waiting. He goes to Merkle, who is watching Reggie through the bar's two-way mirror.

SOMERSET
Everything's ready for the gunfight.

MERKLE
Places everyone!

The actors pick up their prop guns and prepare to perform.

SOMERSET
Break a leg.

Merkle gives himself one last looking over in the mirror, putting a nice twist in his fake mustache and pulling up his gunbelt.

MERKLE
Don't worry, Mr. Somerset. You shall witness acting worthy of Sir Laurence Olivier!

SOMERSET
As long as it's better than that Brigadoon you staged last year.

INT. BAR - SAME

Joe watches in amazement as Tim sips the concoction. A quick taste and he spits it out.

Reggie laughs and downs his glass. He sets the cup next to four empties. THE MUSIC continues as he staggers around to Gail.

REGGIE
Abigail, shall we dance?

GAIL
Delighted.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He leads her to the open floor, his knees wobbling drunkenly. She helps him stand.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Are you sure you can do it?

REGGIE

Watch me!

Reggie begins an elaborate hoe-down as everyone in the bar watches in amazement. He jigs around the room to the music, displaying an intricate knowledge of western dance.

Joe picks up Tim's still full glass and gives the Red Whisker a taste. His face turns bitter and he shakes his head in disgust, spitting it out.

Somerset returns to the bar and takes his place beside Harrison and Bowers. They nod to each other, confident they've pulled it off.

Reggie takes Gail's hand. She works to keep up with him and is surprised to find herself doing it.

GUNSHOTS ring outside!

The piano stops instantly as everyone turns to the door.

Reggie and Gail stop dancing as a shadowy figure fills the doorway.

A DIRTY MAN staggers in, clutching his chest. He hobbles and shuffles about, reaching out towards Reggie, overplaying his part.

Gail furrows her brow and signals, "Get on with it!" The Dirty Man gasps out in his final breath...

DIRTY MAN

Big Jim!

He collapses in a heap on the floor. Gail lets out a piercing shriek.

JOE

He's been shot!

Reggie is about to bend down and check the dead man when FOOTSTEPS approach on the boardwalk outside.

A silhouette fills the doorway, BIG JIM (a.k.a. Merkle.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He steps through the swinging doors followed by two UGLY BRUTES. The bar is frozen in silence as Big Jim steps up and kicks the Dirty Man's lifeless body.

Tim trembles in terror as he notices Reggie fingering his pistols. Reggie snarls with a hint of fear.

REGGIE

Where I come from, you can't just shoot a man like that.

BIG JIM

You can if you've got a permit.

Big Jim holds up a "WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE" poster with a picture of the dead man.

REGGIE

(to Gail)

I didn't know you could get permits.

Big Jim stands glaring at Reggie as the two brutes reach for the body.

BIG JIM

I don't like it when people try to tell me my business.

REGGIE

Oh? Are you the sheriff?

Big Jim stops the brutes as they leave and removes a badge from the dead man's vest. He puts it on with an evil grin.

He steps up to Reggie, nose to nose.

BIG JIM

I am now.

He turns and stomps out of the bar. Everyone exhales.

Reggie draws his pistol and heads after him.

Gail grabs his arm.

GAIL

No, Reggie! You'll--he'll kill you!

REGGIE

Let me go, Abigail. This calls for justice!

He shakes her off and heads for the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Gail snatches a bottle from the bar and smashes it on Reggie's head. It rings a HOLLOW THUMP without breaking, and she's suddenly sorry she did it. Reggie is dazzled.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Bushwacked!

He swirls dizzily and falls unconscious on the floor.

INT. BAR BACK ROOM - SAME

Merkle steps in laughing uproariously and removing his gun belt. He is followed by the dirty man and two brutes, each laughing with the others.

Harrison, Somerset and Bowers come back and shake their hands.

BOWERS
He bought it hook, line and sinker.

HARRISON
That was excellent, Merkle. He was shaking in his boots!

MERKLE
Deceit is the darling of the mind!

SOMERSET
What's next in the script?

MERKLE
You just do your square dance as planned, and we'll rob the bank.

SOMERSET
Good! You know, I think we've fooled this New York cowboy!

INT: MEETING HALL - DAY

Reggie stands before the podium, facing the townspeople. Tim stands beside him.

REGGIE
People of Sugar Creek! I don't know what kind of town you're running, but when I see a man like Big Jim terrorizing innocent people I... I... Well, it gets my goat!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Harrison, Somerset and Bowers are huddled in the back of the room, sweating with worry.

BOWERS
(to Somerset)
Too much! It was too much!

REGGIE
You people have got to stand together against tyrants like Big Jim. You've got to eliminate this evil menace before it takes over the whole town.

HARRISON
(to Somerset)
He's going back to New York!

REGGIE
How many of you are ready to stand up against Big Jim and his gang? Which of you have the guts to fight for your beloved city?

Reggie looks around the silent room, not quite following what he's getting at.

SOMERSET
What do we do, Reggie?

REGGIE
I'm trying to form a posse and go after Big Jim! Catch him and bring him to justice! Who wants to go along?

The room is silent, uncertain how to react.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Are you gonna let Big Jim shoot your sheriff and ride away? Are you going to let him hold Sugar Creek in a grip of terror?

SOMERSET
(to Bowers and Harrison)
This boy's off the deep end!

Reggie stands before the dumbfounded townspeople.

REGGIE
Well, I'm ashamed of you people. Not a single one of you has any backbone. I guess Tim and I will have to do it ourselves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Reggie grabs Tim and they jump off the stage, heading for the door.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Everyone pours out of the meeting hall as Reggie and Tim mount their horses.

SOMERSET

Wait a minute, Reggie. Where are you going?

REGGIE

Permit or no permit, I'm gonna get Big Jim.

Reggie's horse rears up and turns. He bolts down the street with Tim not far behind.

HARRISON

He's homicidal!

BOWERS

He's gonna kill Merkle!

SOMERSEST

Easy, gentlemen. He's riding out of town. One night in the desert and he'll come back tomorrow with his tail between his legs.

HARRISON

But we're supposed to be watching him! What if he gets hurt out there?

SOMERSET

Karl!

Karl the redneck comes over to the three lawyers.

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

Get in your pickup and follow that boy. See that he doesn't get hurt.

HARRISON

And watch out. He's got a loaded gun.

KARL

Sure thing!

Karl runs to his truck, passing Betty the cowgirl. She overheard everything and climbs onto her horse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns and rides off in the same direction as Reggie.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Reggie and Tim trot alongside the highway as cars pass them.

TIM
Are we really going to kill Big Jim?

REGGIE
If he don't come peaceful like, I 'spect
I'll have to.

TIM
Well, how are we going to find him?

REGGIE
We're going to track him.

TIM
Can you do that?

REGGIE
Of course. I learned how from the injuns
on TV. We just have to find horse
tracks, broken branches and the like.

TIM
Horses don't leave tracks on pavement.

REGGIE
Yes they do.

Reggie nods down to a pile of manure on the side of the road.
He dismounts and sniffs it.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Still fresh.

Reggie finds hoof tracks in the dust leading through an open
gate.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
They came this way, all right.

Reggie and Tim follow the tracks through the gate.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Keep your eyes open, Tim, and you'll be a
cowboy yet.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

Karl pulls his truck off the side of the road. He sees the silhouettes of Reggie and Tim riding over the distant hill. He drives the truck into the field and parks.

He lifts the rifle from his gunrack and follows on foot.

EXT. DESERT CAMP - NIGHT

Reggie masterfully turns a tiny flame into a roaring fire.

TIM

I've never slept outside before, Reggie.
Shouldn't we find a hotel?

REGGIE

The desert air is clean and healthy.

TIM

Aren't there wild animals running around?
Snakes and wolves and scorpions?

REGGIE

Relax, Tim. Nothin's coming near our
fire. You're safer here than on the
streets of ol' New York.

TIM

I'm getting hungry.

Reggie reaches in his duffel bag and pulls out two cans of fruit cocktail. He tosses one to Tim.

REGGIE

Trail grub.

TIM

Fruit cocktail?

REGGIE

Tim, you're a city boy. It ain't a
natural way of life. You've got to learn
what it means to be a cowboy.

TIM

I do?

REGGIE

It starts with your attitude. A cowboy
likes to see the horizon.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REGGIE (CONT'D)

He likes to wash the dirt off his hands at the end of the day. He doesn't seal himself off in a room to hide from nature. He doesn't work in a cubicle, he works in the great outdoors. He's tied to nature, like the animals. He's part of the earth.

TIM

Cowboys are animals?

REGGIE

More than an animal. Man's a controllin' thing. Once you're part of nature, you start controllin' it. Controllin' the plants, the animals, the land. The cowboy is the master. You don't have presidents, CEOs, bosses-- it's just you and the earth, and you serve each other.

Tim pulls a rock out from under him.

TIM

I'm serving the earth right now.

REGGIE

That's because you don't know how to control. That's why you've been a second-rate secretary for the last five years. You've got to learn to be your own master.

He picks up a length of rope and ties a loop into it.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Look at this rope. It ain't much good in the hands of someone that ain't mastered it. But the cowboy is a master. He can make this rope do anything he wants.

He twirls the rope around and it forms a large, spinning loop.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

You turn all that philosophisin' into something useful and you're man of power.

He moves the loop down so it's twirling around his body. He hops in and out of the loop.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

That's why cowboys are honest. They've got no one to lie to but themselves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He flings the rope around and releases. It flies over Tim's head and into the darkness. Reggie pulls hard on the rope and there is a YELP. Tim jumps to his feet.

Karl falls the ground, entangled in the rope, rifle in his hands.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

All right, pardner. Why were you spying in them bushes?

KARL

I'm sorry, Reggie. I was just followin' you.

Reggie pulls out his pistol and aims it at Karl.

REGGIE

What fer? Are you with Big Jim's gang?

KARL

No! I'm not! Honest!

BETTY (O.S.)

Drop yer gun, Restless!

Reggie turns to the voice. Betty has her pistol trained on Reggie. Tim raises his hands, terrified. Reggie drops his gun.

BETTY (CONT'D)

He ain't with Big Jim.

REGGIE

How do you know?

She walks into the firelight next to Tim.

BETTY

Cause Big Jim ain't out here.

REGGIE

He is too. I tracked him.

BETTY

Them's my tracks yer followin'. Big Jim's back in town.

REGGIE

Is that so?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BETTY

We come to join yer posse. Ain't that right, Karl?

KARL

Uh, yeah. That's right. Posse!

BETTY

Thought you could use someone that knew the territory.

REGGIE

Well, I suppose I could.

She turns to face Tim and he raises his hands further, closing his eyes in terror.

BETTY

Put yer hands down, Sweetie. I ain't gonna hurt you.

Tim opens his eyes. She winks at him and he relaxes.

REGGIE

You're welcome to join us for dinner. I got a couple cans of puddin here.

Reggie fishes out more food as Betty looks over Tim.

BETTY

Yer sidekick needs a little work. You oughta bring him out to my ranch and let me work him over.

REGGIE

Tim's all right. He's just a green onion. Sit down, Tim.

Tim joins the others around the campfire as Reggie digs out more cans of food.

BETTY

My name's Betty. I know where Big Jim's hidin'. I'll help you get him if you like. He's been scarin' us townsfolk too long fer my likin' and it make's me proud to see someone doin' somthin' about it.

The childish grin returns to Reggie's face.

REGGIE

Betty! You're the only one talking sense around here.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The three horsemen ride down the blacktop at full gallop.
Karl follows in the pickup.

They come upon a rise overlooking Sugar Creek.

REGGIE
Show me where he is.

BETTY
We've got to move in cautious, Reggie.
You lay low and I'll dig him out for you.
Don't worry.

REGGIE
You find out what rock he's hidin' under.
I'll be waitin' in the hotel.

INT. MERKLE'S APARTMENT - DAY

A gathering of the minds: Gail, Merkle, and Betty. Gail paces the floor, the gears in her head rolling over and over as Betty talks to Merkle.

BETTY
He's not going to stop until you're dead.

MERKLE
What have we gotten ourselves into?

BETTY
He'd a shot Karl if I wasn't there.

MERKLE
He needs to be locked away.

Betty opens a bag full of ammo boxes.

BETTY
All you have to do is replace the bullets
he has with these blanks. Then he'll be
harmless.

MERKLE
Harmless! No one's shooting at me, not
even with blanks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETTY

But I can't get the bullets out of his guns. He sleeps with 'em like a teddy bear.

GAIL

You boys don't get it. We just have to drag Terry out for a high noon showdown and let him get shot. That's the way our cowboy wants it, let's give it to him.

BETTY

But the bullets?

GAIL

Leave it to me. I know more than one way to get a man's belt off.

MERKLE

Gail! You're not going to--

GAIL

This hayseed's a pushover. One coo from me and he'll be down to his BVDs.

MERKLE

Well, I won't allow it.

GAIL

I'm not asking you.

MERKLE

But the thought of you with another man--

GAIL

Is as close as you'll ever get to sleeping with me.

MERKLE

You drive me mad with your infernal rebukes! I'm rescuing this town for you and yet you remain a callous shell. Is there no love in your heart?

GAIL

This is no time for overtures.

MERKLE

The overture to my greatest symphony! The prelude to happiness! The beginning of our everlasting romance. I do this only for love of you, my precious.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MERKLE (CONT'D)

Show me some kindness, some pity, some
compassion--lest madness overtake me.

GAIL

(sternly)

Sit down and chill out, Terry.

Merkle collapses in his chair with a huff.

GAIL (CONT'D)

What about his partner?

BETTY

Cupcakes? Leave him to me.

GAIL

Great, now what do I wear?

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Reggie opens the door to find Gail in a sexy, low-cut dress.

GAIL

Hello, Restless.

REGGIE

How do?

GAIL

Mind if I come in?

REGGIE

Please.

She enters and closes the door. Reggie puts his boot in it
before it shuts.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Excuse me. We are in a hotel room, Miss
Abigail. We mustn't let people think
we're doing something we hadn't ought to.

GAIL

No?

REGGIE

After all. If anyone knew I was alone in
a hotel room with-- well, it'd ruin my
reputation.

GAIL

Alone? Where's Tim?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REGGIE

Out practicing his lasso.

GAIL

So it's just you and me?

REGGIE

That's right, Miss Abigail. What did you come see me about?

GAIL

I just wanted to get to know you, Reggie. After all, your father is C.E.O. of a Fortune 500 company, you're setting up branches out west, and I don't know a thing about you.

REGGIE

Aw, shucks! I'm just a good ol' boy.

GAIL

I know you're good, Reggie. But sometimes, don't you want to be bad?

REGGIE

Who me?

She eyes the pistols holstered at his hip. She pulls the sleeves of her dress off her shoulders and eyes Reggie seductively.

GAIL

I think you're quite a stud!

Reggie blushes bright red as he guffaws.

REGGIE

Heck, Abigail. I think yer purty as a picture.

GAIL

Why don't you wash the range off your neck and I'll show ya what we girls do in Sugar Creek.

Reggie chokes back his embarrassment.

REGGIE

Huh. Gee, I'll uh-- Okay, I'll just wash up then.

He backs up to the bathroom door, a mile wide smile contorting his face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She puckers her lips and blows a kiss. Reggie flashes an innocent grin before turning coy.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
You just, ah, make yerself comfortable
there, Abigail. I won't be a minute.

Reggie closes the door. Gail shakes her head.

GAIL
Cowboys!

She grabs her purse and goes to Reggie's things laid out on the dresser. She pulls open a drawer and is stunned to find it stock full of ammunition.

She opens her purse and switches the cartridges with identical looking blanks.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The door cracks open and Gail's eye peers in. She sees Reggie's clothes in a pile on the floor.

She looks up to the steamed mirror to see the foggy reflection of Reggie behind the shower curtain. He's WHISTLING his prairie song.

She slowly reaches in toward the clothing, opening the door another inch. She grabs hold of his shirt and pulls it toward her.

She reaches back in and catches the belt loop of his dusty jeans. She pulls them forward, opening the door even more.

Frustrated, she puts her head in the bathroom, looking behind the door and around inside.

REGGIE
Abigail!

She jumps and scurries back into the room. She covers her mouth with his shirt and calls back.

GAIL
(muffled)
Yes, Reggie.

CUT TO: Reggie's is covered with shampoo as he speaks. His gunbelt and pistols hang over the shower head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REGGIE

I'd be much obliged if you could slide my suitcase in here so's I could dude up for ya.

GAIL

(muffled)

Sure thing.

She grabs his suitcase and slides it into the bathroom, looking about the room as she does for his gunbelt.

REGGIE

Thank ye.

She shuts the door perplexed.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Gail comes down the stairs and follows a sign marked TELEPHONE to an old fashioned crank phone. She stops dead when she sees it and leans around the corner to the DESK CLERK.

GAIL

Does this thing work?

DESK CLERK

Si, señora. Just turn the crank.

She picks up the earpiece and turns the crank.

The phone at the desk rings and the clerk picks it up.

DESK CLERK (CONT'D)

Hallo, Pueblo Mansion?

Gail looks around the corner again at the clerk, telling him face to face.

GAIL

942-2145, please.

DESK CLERK

Si, uno momento, gracias.

Gail gives the clerk the slow-burn as the phone rings.

TERRY

(on phone)

Hello.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAIL

Terry, I did it. I got everything but the bullets in his guns. Looks like it's plan B.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Reggie steps out of the bathroom in his starched, pressed, and sparkling courting clothes.

REGGIE

Here's yer stud, honey!

He looks around the empty room, suddenly dismayed.

EXT. DESERT CAMP - MORNING

Tim twirls a rope over his head and hurls it at a nearby post. The rope misses by a foot and Tim pulls it back in.

Betty watches from behind Tim, innocently spying.

He tosses again and the rope hits the post but doesn't loop over. Tim frowns in frustration. Betty smiles.

One more toss and the loop circles the post. A HOOK! Tim pulls on the rope. The loop slides out and falls off the post. Tim grumbles and pulls the rope back in.

Betty comes over and takes it.

BETTY

You're on the right track, Honey.

She shows him how to tie a lasso.

BETTY (CONT'D)

Tie it like this, so it slides.

She whirls the rope around and lets it fly. It falls around the post and she yanks it tight.

TIM

That's great! How did you do it?

BETTY

Practice, practice, practice.

She unties the rope and gives it to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETTY (CONT'D)

You got any girls back in New York?

TIM

Just my mother.

BETTY

Mama's boy, huh? You like girls, don't you?

TIM

I guess so.

BETTY

You like me?

TIM

No girl's ever paid so much attention to me before.

BETTY

That's too bad, Tim. You're a decent fellow.

Betty looks at Tim's gun, holstered and strapped to his side.

BETTY (CONT'D)

Ever use that piece?

TIM

No. I'm a pacifist. I don't like guns. Reggie just makes me wear it in case of varmints.

Betty picks up a can from the ground and sets it on the post.

BETTY

Go ahead. Give it a try.

Tim eyes the can and swallows hard.

TIM

I can't.

BETTY

Sure you can. It ain't livin'.

TIM

No, I mean I don't have any bullets.

BETTY

What good's a gun without bullets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She takes the pistol from his holster and loads it with blanks.

BETTY (CONT'D)
Now give it a try.

Tim raises the pistol and aims. His hand quivers. He pulls on the trigger and the gun FIRES, flying from his hand.

TIM
Ouch!

Betty picks the gun up off the ground and gives it back, looking at the can still sitting on the fence post.

BETTY
Maybe you oughta stick to the lasso for a time.

TIM
I think so, too.

She turns to leave.

TIM (CONT'D)
Betty!

BETTY
Yes?

TIM
You're the most decent, prettiest woman I've ever met.

BETTY
You're pretty good yourself. I'll see ya later, Tex.

Tim picks up the lasso and readies it, aiming at the post. He tosses the rope and it loops perfectly around the post. He pulls the rope tight and smiles.

He looks back to tell Betty, but she's long gone.

INT. GAIL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gail opens the door as Betty comes in. Betty closes the door and falls against it, blushing.

BETTY
Gail, I'm in love.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAIL

Love!?

BETTY

He's the greatest guy I ever met.

GAIL

Betty! You're not talking about Lonesome Bill's little sidekick?

BETTY

He's the nicest guy!

GAIL

Did you get his bullets?

BETTY

I got the bullets. He got my heart.

GAIL

Jeeze! Well, I guess I'm happy for you.

BETTY

But I don't think he likes me.

GAIL

Why not? You've got--spunk?

BETTY

He's from the big city. I ain't never been outta Sugar Creek. He must think I'm some sort of hick.

GAIL

You just look like a hick, Betty. City living is all in appearances.

BETTY

What do you mean?

Gail opens the doors to her closet.

GAIL

Step into my office.

INT. HOTEL - DAY

Reggie opens the door. Betty stands outside in a flowery dress and make-up. Reggie looks at her like a stranger.

REGGIE

Yes, what can I do fer ya?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETTY
Reggie, it's me.

Reggie gives her the once over before recognizing her.

REGGIE
Betty? Wha--What's wrong with you?

BETTY
What do you mean?

REGGIE
Well, you're all dolled up.

BETTY
Reggie, you mind if I talk personal a moment?

Reggie understands now. He shows her in.

REGGIE
Come in, Betty. Have a seat.

She sits, trying with difficulty to cross her legs in a lady-like way.

BETTY
Reggie, I think I'm falling in love.

REGGIE
Look Betty, I like you. I like your style. You ain't like these other girls. But-- heck, your like my own sister Betty. You just ain't what I'm used to in a woman.

BETTY
What about Tim?

REGGIE
Tim! I ain't like that, Betty. Tim's just my partner. I don't like--

BETTY
I mean me and Tim. Do you think he'd go fer it?

REGGIE
You-- oh! You and Tim! Why of course, Betty. Tim's a young buck, but he's a buck all the same, and he sure wants to be a cowboy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BETTY

Does he ever talk about me?

REGGIE

Well, you know Tim ain't like most boys. Most boys need to be tamed. Tim--he needs to be untamed. He needs to find him a spirited woman, someone to dig the spurs in deep and not let go till he's gone wild.

BETTY

That's a colorful way to put it.

REGGIE

You make your move, Betty. Tim can be shy about such things.

BETTY

Thank you, Restless.

She turns and trots off.

REGGIE

And Betty--

Betty stops.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

That dress doesn't work.

BETTY

You don't like it?

REGGIE

It's not a question of like or dislike. It just don't look honest.

She looks down at her dress, knowing what he means. She smiles.

BETTY

Thanks, Reggie.

She turns to leave and comes face to face with Harrison, Somerset and Bowers. They enter the room looking grave and serious.

REGGIE

What is it boys?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SOMERSET

Big Jim's ready for you, Restless. He
says to wait at the Sugar Creek Saloon.

REGGIE

I guess it's time for a showdown.

Reggie puts on his gunbelt and checks the pistols to see that
they're loaded.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Betty, you round up Tim.

She turns and leaves. He nods to the others.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Let's go.

INT. SUGAR CREEK SALOON - DAY

Reggie and entourage enter the saloon. Reggie scans the
saloon and spots Gail. He strides over to her.

REGGIE

I wondered where you'd got to.

GAIL

I'm sorry. I--

REGGIE

Look, I know a lotta people take me for a
chump, but I ain't like that.

GAIL

I didn't say you were.

REGGIE

I can't help the way I am, and I wouldn't
want to if I could. I know when I'm
being taken advantage of.

GAIL

I didn't--

REGGIE

You came on to me and then ran out. It
don't look real good. I figured you for
a decent woman.

GAIL

Let me explain--

INT. BAR BACKROOM - DAY

Merkle stands at the two-way mirror, Reggie and Gail directly on the other side. He can hear their conversation through the wall.

REGGIE

I may seem stupid to you, Miss Abigail,
but I know more about love than you
think. I know how to treat a person
decent.

There is a flare of jealousy in Merkle's eyes as he watches Reggie walk away.

INT. SUGAR CREEK SALOON - DAY

Reggie steps up to Harrison, Somerset and Bowers.

REGGIE

I'm ready.

HARRISON

Big Jim says he don't kill a man unless
he knows it's worth the trouble.

REGGIE

Neither do I.

SOMERSET

He wants to see how good a shot you are.
If you're good, he'll face you.

Reggie twirls his pistols on the ends of his fingers.

REGGIE

Bring him out! I'll show him.

BOWERS

He wants you to shoot some targets.
He'll know if you hit them.

Reggie thinks it's an odd request, but he nods in agreement. They lead him out of the bar.

EXT. SUGAR CREEK STREET - DAY

Reggie looks round as Betty runs off to ready targets. He checks out all the storefronts, the windows. Big Jim could be anywhere.

INT - HARDWARE STORE WINDOW - DAY

Merkle and SANTOS step up to the window where they have a good view of Reggie.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Betty sets up a mannequin in a cowboy outfit about twenty yards from Reggie.

Reggie holsters his pistols and gives the mannequin a cold stare.

REGGIE
Yer goin' down, Big Jim.

In a flash of lightning, Reggie's pistol is out and a GUNSHOT resounds. The mannequin's hat flies off. The mannequin's forehead is shattered by the bullet.

INT. HARDWARE STORE WINDOW - DAY

Merkle swallows hard when he sees the hat fly.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

REGGIE
Still standing, slimeball?

He pulls the gun from his left holster and fires into the leg. The leg shatters and the mannequin leans over.

Before it topples, he shoots out the other leg. The mannequin crashes to the ground. Reggie then empties his guns into the hat, sending it flying and holding it in the air with each bullet.

INT. HARDWARE STORE WINDOW - DAY

Merkle looks to Sancho, fret with worry, and shakes his head.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Reggie flips open his pistol and loads new bullets. Betty nods to the others.

INT. HARDWARE STORE WINDOW - DAY

Sancho nods to Merkle.

SANCHO
He's loading the blanks. That's our cue.

Merkle turns to his actors.

MERKLE
All right, men. Places!

EXT. SUGAR CREEK SALOON - DAY

Reggie leans back against the wall of the Sugar Creek Saloon with a Red Whisker in his hand. The bar is silent. Everyone looks at the floor.

Tim sits nervously, fumbling with his rope. He grows increasingly anxious and rushes to the bar.

TIM
Red whisker!

The bartender raises an eyebrow and fixes him the drink. Gail takes Reggie's hand.

GAIL
I'm so proud of the way you are standing up to Big Jim.

Reggie looks her over indignantly.

REGGIE
I always stand up for decent, honest people.

Betty rushes into the saloon.

BETTY
Big Jim's a waitin'!

Reggie snaps to attention. Tim swallows the rest of his drink, taking it hard. Reggie slaps Karl on the back.

REGGIE
Let's go, boys.

They head out the swinging doors. Betty stops Tim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BETTY

Take care of yourself, cowboy.

She puts her arms around him and kisses him. Tim stiffens, then relaxes as she holds the kiss. She releases. Tim sways, a smile on his face.

Reggie looks to Gail with a glare of contempt.

Gail looks anxiously at Reggie, almost carried away with emotion, but she holds back.

They look at each other for a long awkward moment, but Reggie turns around and heads for the doors, sucking in his courage.

Tim does likewise, and follows Reggie into the street. Karl winks at Gail as he goes out.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Reggie straddles the yellow line in the center of the road. Tim and Karl follow; Karl with shotgun, Tim with .22's.

The townspeople watch from the bar, the houses, the street. Everyone has turned out for the gunfight. Gail and Betty stand side by side watching over the swinging doors.

Reggie looks up the street where three figures stand.

Big Jim, Santos, and an ugly ruffian--waiting for a fight.

BIG JIM

Cowboy, you done come to the wrong town.

REGGIE

This town's mine as much as yours.

BIG JIM

Pull your piece, Restless!

They all draw and fire. Tim's man goes down, as does Karl's.

Reggie looks through the smoke of his pistol to see Big Jim is still standing, gun drawn. He almost shoots twice, but is stopped by Big Jim's sudden burst of LAUGHTER.

GAIL

What's he doing? Why didn't he die?

Big Jim's laughter continues as he puts his gun away. Santos opens one eye to look at him. Big Jim stops laughing and snarls at Reggie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG JIM
You win, cowboy.

Big Jim's knees buckle and he collapses on the pavement.

Reggie puts his gun away and looks at Tim. Tim stands stiff as a mummy, gun in hand, a frozen stare on the dead bodies.

GAIL
He did it!

She rushes into the street along with Betty and the rest of the townspeople. They surround the three gunslingers with cheers and congratulations.

A few STAGEHANDS rush out quickly to remove the bodies of Big Jim and the others.

Reggie sees them and pushes his way through the crowd.

REGGIE
Hold it! Stop! Wait!

He forces his way out of the throng and everyone grows silent as he makes his way to Big Jim.

STAGEHAND
Hold your breath! He's coming!

Merkle takes a deep breath and plays dead on the stretcher. The others crowd behind him, thinking the game is up.

Reggie looks down at his body. Reggie gives him a cold, soul-searching stare, then hocks a huge, wet lump of tobacco spit into his face.

REGGIE
Crime doesn't pay, Big Jim.

He nods to the carriers and they proceed to haul Merkle off.

GAIL
You've saved the town, Restless.

SOMERSET
He's a hero!

They grab Reggie and raise him onto their shoulders. They carry him into the saloon.

INT. SUGAR CREEK SALOON - DAY

They set him down on the bar and everyone crowds around him. They make a big show of his triumph. Harrison, Somerset, and Bowers take their place alongside him.

HARRISON

We want to thank you, Restless Reggie,
for cleaning up our town.

SOMERSET

As a token of our appreciation, we have a
special honor to bestow upon you.

BOWERS

Reggie, the citizens of Sugar Creek make
you their honorary deputy.

Gail places a badge on Reggie's shirt and kisses his cheek.

GAIL

Congratulations, Deputy Reggie.

HARRISON

Tonight we will have a celebration in the
town square, in honor of the man who
cleaned up Sugar Creek.

BOWERS

Music! Dancing! Barbecue!

SOMERSET

Well, Reggie, what have you got to say
for yourself?

Reggie is so happy he cannot speak. He looks around for words, his eyes falling on Gail. He smiles.

REGGIE

People of Sugar Creek, drinks are on me!

Everyone hurrahs as they raid the bar and PIANO MUSIC begins. The curtain raises on the dancing girls and all eyes turn to the stage.

Betty enters the bar and finds Reggie, whispering in his ear.

BETTY

Something's wrong with Tim.

Reggie puts his drink down and heads out.

EXT. KARL'S TRUCK - DAY

Tim and Karl sit on the tailgate. Tim wipes away his tears when he sees Reggie coming.

TIM
I'm sorry, Reggie. I ain't never killed
a man before.

Reggie sits beside him, putting an arm on his shoulder.

REGGIE
I know it's rough, Tim, but you did a
good thing.

TIM
I don't think so?

REGGIE
Think about how many people that man's
killed and tortured-- innocent, decent
people. How many more would he murder if
you hadn't stopped him? If you hadn't
been there, he might have even gotten me.
You wouldn't want me killed?

TIM
No.

KARL
You fought like a man.

BETTY
We're all proud of you, Tim.

TIM
Thank you, Betty.

REGGIE
Feeling guilty just means you're a decent
person. Now buck up, have a Whisker, and
forget all about it.

Tim nods his head, sniffing back his sorrow. They help Tim off the truck and lead him into the bar.

EXT. BETTY'S RANCH - DAY

Reggie holds the reigns of his horse as Gail searches for the stirrup with her foot. It bobs around her toe without going in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAIL
I can't get it.

Reggie holds it steady and she slips her foot in.

REGGIE
Okay, now lift.

Gail grabs the saddle horn and tries to pull herself up. She hangs dead on the side of the saddle. Reggie contemplates shoving her behind, but can't commit to it.

She comes back down on the ground.

Tim and Betty laugh from the fence. Reggie waves them to be quiet.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Throw your leg over.

She tries again, throwing her right foot onto the horse's back and hanging upside down. Reggie helps her this time, lifting her up into the saddle.

GAIL
I did it!

REGGIE
That's good. Now take the reigns, give a little kick, and she'll walk for you.

She sits up proudly and taps the horse lightly with her heels.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
A little more! Don't worry, Rosie ain't so sensitive.

She kicks harder, and the horse moves slowly forward. Gail smiles, looking back at Reggie.

GAIL
How do I stop?

REGGIE
Pull the reigns.

Holding the reigns in one hand, she pulls hard to make it stop. The horse simply turns left and circles back to Reggie.

GAIL
She didn't stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REGGIE
You have to pull on both sides.

She pulls both reigns and the horse stops, right back where she started.

GAIL
Well, that was fun.

REGGIE
You're done?

GAIL
Sure.

REGGIE
You just got up.

GAIL
We walked around. What else is there?

Reggie mounts his horse and rides toward the gate.

REGGIE
Follow me.

Reggie rides out the gate.

Gail spurs her horse to follow.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Reggie follows a trail into the hills. Gail follows. They ride higher and higher into steeper terrain. They arrive at a bluff overlooking a vast desert valley.

Reggie dismounts as Gail rides up.

GAIL
It's beautiful!

REGGIE
Step down for a spell.

Gail dismounts. They walk to the edge of the bluff and admire the scenery.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
This is what it's all about--to look out on unspoiled land. You know it doesn't follow the same rules we do.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Takes it's time, does what it wants,
keeps to itself.

GAIL

This nature stuff sure gives you a kick,
doesn't it?

REGGIE

The land is something I can trust. It
ain't got no business with you. It ain't
trying to harm nor help.

GAIL

And you need that security? You'd rather
be a misanthrope and hide away from
civilization. You'd rather live alone in
a log cabin than have to deal with
people?

REGGIE

You don't make it sound as appealin' as I
do.

GAIL

Didn't you ever think that all those
romantic ideals might be fantasies?
Maybe we have to live together in cities
and towns and maybe we're better off that
way?

REGGIE

Maybe some of us are. Some of us are
born to it. But people like me need
communion with nature.

GAIL

Those are funny words coming from a New
York City boy.

Reggie looks down at her hand clasped in his, suddenly aware
of it. He turns and looks into her eyes.

REGGIE

Of course, it's better with you here.

He strokes her cheek and slides his hand under her hair,
leaning towards her for a kiss.

She stops him, pushing him back.

GAIL

No, Reggie, you shouldn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REGGIE

But--I thought you liked me.

GAIL

I like you, Reggie. But you're a cowboy and I'm--

REGGIE

I understand. Decent women ain't got no business with the likes of me. I'm wild and woolly and I ain't fit for tyin' down.

GAIL

That's not what I mean, Reggie. I think-- I think you're a lot of fun. But there's so much you don't know about me.

As they talk, they lean closer and closer, until their faces are brushing, their lips almost touching, their words growing fainter, losing faith.

REGGIE

Tell me then. I want to get to know you.

GAIL

You wouldn't like me if you knew.

REGGIE

What could a little thing like you have done I wouldn't like?

GAIL

Let's just say I'm a city dweller. I've been to New York, and someday I want to live there. I'm high falootin', Reggie. Understand?

REGGIE

Understand? I've been fightin' that all my life.

GAIL

So I guess we just couldn't get along, could we?

REGGIE

No, I s'pose we ain't cut from the same bolt.

Their lips meet, and a breathless silence follows as they look into each others eyes and give in to their animal desires.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

They kiss with uncontrolled passion and honest abandon.

They part lips with arms wrapped around each other, Gail is lost and dizzy and enchanted.

GAIL

I ain't never kissed a real man before.

Then remembering who she is she pushes away.

GAIL (CONT'D)

What have I done?

She looks at Reggie, wanting desperately to explain, but turns and runs instead.

GAIL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry!

REGGIE

Abigail! Wait!

GAIL

I made a mistake.

She flees with tears in her eyes. Reggie begins to chase her, but stops.

She tries to mount the horse, but can't get herself up, pulling the horse in circles. Reggie watches her desperate effort.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Forget it!

She gives up and runs away down the trail. Reggie scratches his chin.

REGGIE

One thing I'll never understand is women.

INT. BETTY'S RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Gail stands against the door, her face red.

BETTY

My God! Are you in love with him?

Gail nods "YES".

BETTY (CONT'D)

But I thought you loved Merkle?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gail shakes her head "NO".

BETTY (CONT'D)

But he loves you?

GAIL

No, he doesn't. Once he wanted to play Romeo and they cast him as Tybalt. He never got his big chance, so he acts it out on me. It's all a show. The curtain never goes down on Terry Merkle.

BETTY

Tybalt suits him, anyway.

GAIL

What do I do?

BETTY

You have to be honest. Tell them both how you feel.

GAIL

Terry would kill me, and Reggie... God, why did I have to fall for a cowboy. I like cultured, intelligent men. Men who go out to dinner at nice restaurants--the kind without buffets. Men who wear ties and suits and clothes that are dry cleaned. Men who know how to wrangle the stock market, not the livestock. I don't have anything in common with these cowboys--

BETTY

He's a good kisser, huh?

GAIL

Damn straight!

BETTY

I think it's time you stopped waitin' to live and just started livin'.

GAIL

Why am I talking to you? You sound just like him.

Betty chuckles at this.

GAIL (CONT'D)

What's so funny?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BETTY

The Gail I remember always knew what she wanted. Someone's changing you right sure.

GAIL

I know. It's this masquerade. We've got to stop, Betty. We've got to tell Reggie what we're up to.

BETTY

And send him running back to New York?

GAIL

He won't--not when he knows I love him. I'll talk to father.

INT. SOMERSET'S OFFICE - DAY

Gail steps into Somerset's tasteful bank office. The three lawyers are huddled over paperwork and schedules, printing page after page from a computer.

GAIL

Father, I have something important to discuss with you.

SOMERSET

There's the prize citizen of Sugar Creek! Come in, Abigail, come in!

HARRISON

You wouldn't believe the response people have had to your little scheme.

SOMERSET

I don't think this town's ever been happier. Everyone seems to have a purpose all of a sudden, like the community's been reborn.

BOWERS

People I haven't spoken to in ten years have come up and said hello. I didn't know I had so many friends.

HARRISON

This western idea of yours is the best thing ever, Gail.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRISON (CONT'D)

I'm thinking we might set up something like this as an attraction--for people that want to come out and pretend like the old west never died. We could make a mint.

SOMERSET

And look what I had made up special just for you...

He opens his closet and pulls out an elegant, though inevitably gaudy, square dance dress.

GAIL

For me?

SOMERSET

For tonight--for the square dance.

GAIL

It's beautiful.

SOMERSET

Take it.

GAIL

Thank you.

SOMERSET

Now what was it you wanted to discuss?

She looks at the three eager old men, the joy on their faces, and can no longer say the words that would disrupt their plans.

GAIL

Nothing that can't wait until tomorrow. Have fun at the dance.

INT. MERKLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Merkle opens his door to find Gail standing outside.

MERKLE

Alas, beauty at my doorstep. Do come in.

Gail follows him inside as he shows her a place to sit.

GAIL

I couldn't think of anyone else to turn to. Something's troubling me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERKLE

At last you are ready to confess your love?

GAIL

Yes, in a way.

MERKLE

I have thought of nothing but you since I've been holed up in my humble abode. Not being able to go out to see you, lest our silver-spooned cowboy should spy me, has driven me wild with passion for you.

GAIL

Terry, we've got to end this charade.

MERKLE

There is nothing false about my love!

GAIL

Not that charade. This cowboy thing. It's got to end.

MERKLE

But everything is going so beautifully.

GAIL

I'm afraid someone might get hurt. We're being dishonest.

MERKLE

We are in character--acting is honest. Art is life.

GAIL

No, Terry. Listen. I think I love Reggie.

MERKLE

Love! I have never heard that word uttered by your lips. And yet you say it and do not refer to me. Love! For that six-foot eight-year old? Love! For that pampered, spoiled brat that doesn't even know what century he lives in? How can you say that word to me and intend it for another man?

GAIL

I'm serious, Terry. Everything is in danger.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MERKLE

Danger! You do not know the depths to which your life may be in jeopardy. Do not speak to me of love for another man!

GAIL

Look, it's time everyone leveled with everyone. We've got to honest with each other. You know I've never loved you, so stop playing these games. This schoolboy infatuation has gone on too long.

MERKLE

Get out! Out of my house! I will endure your scorn no longer.

GAIL

Terry!

He grabs her and pushes her toward the door.

MERKLE

I am not playing a game. I am not acting a play. I am casting you from my sight and I hope you are happy with little Tex!

GAIL

Terry, we're friends. Don't do this!

MERKLE

Get out!

He shoves her out the door and slams it.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

If you want honesty, I'll show you honesty!

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

A country band practices a lively dance number, all acoustic. The MUSIC continues as...

CUT TO:

A group of workers build a dance platform out of lumber, cutting wood and hammering to the music...

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Another group prepares the food, stirring and chopping to the beat...

CUT TO:

Children run around the trees as parents hang decorations about the square...

CUT TO:

Harrison, Somerset, and Bowers--decked out in their finest costumes--survey the preparations, stopping at each booth and smiling with admiration.

INT. GAIL'S HOME - DAY

Gail prepares to leave, picking up her purse and checking herself in the mirror. Her dress is gay and elegant, the most splendid yet, but her expression is dour and melancholy.

She stares at herself, heaves a heavy sigh, then turns and leaves.

INT. REGGIE'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Reggie puts the finishing shine on his boots and pulls them on his feet. He's as sharply dressed as a cowboy can be--brand new jeans, a button up shirt with the creases still showing, and a brand new black hat with a silver band.

He stands and looks himself over in the mirror, admiring his own physique.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

REGGIE

Come on in, Tim.

The door doesn't open. Another KNOCK follows. Reggie saunters over and opens it.

He's quickly grabbed by two BURLY THUGS. They throw a blanket over his head and hold him fast. They lift him up and carry him out of the room.

INT. ABANDONED CABIN - NIGHT

A thug yanks the hood from Reggie's head. He looks around confused. The cabin is dark. Shadowy figures can be seen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A pair of tennis shoes appear in a shaft of light, following up the leg of loose slacks. The man stops just before the light reaches his face, his button up-white shirt standing out against his black jacket.

Reggie strains to see his face in the darkness. The man nods his head and the lights come on. Fear strikes the center of Reggie's heart.

REGGIE

Big Jim!

Merkle steps up to the table.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

But--you're dead!

Merkle smiles and sits down across from Reggie.

MERKLE

When are you going to see the truth, Tex?
You think we're all a bunch of hicks?
You think we ride around on horses and
carry pistols? How can a city boy like
you be so naïve?

Reggie looks around the room, now brighter where he can see the others. They are all in contemporary dress.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

We pulled the wool over your eyes real
good, didn't we?

REGGIE

But, all the folks in town?

MERKLE

They're all foolin' ya. They just want
yer daddy's money. It's appalling how
low they'll stoop to get it.

Reggie is thoroughly confused. Merkle rips off his fake mustache. Reggie is shocked.

Merkle nods to the actors and they untie him. Reggie sits calmly at the table in disbelief.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

You're the first person I've ever given a
convincing performance to. I certainly
hope I was a worthy villain, because my
acting days are over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Merkle stands and follows the others out of the room. Reggie remains in confounded contemplation. He shouts just as Merkle reaches the door.

REGGIE
But Abigail?

Merkle smiles and relishes his final blow.

MERKLE
It was all her idea.

He leaves, and Reggie remains at the table alone, his innocence shattered.

EXT. HIDEAWAY CABIN - SUNSET

Reggie steps outside the cabin and shuts the door. He sees Tim riding up against the fading sky with Reggie's horse.

TIM
They told me you were up here.

Reggie mounts, dejected and angry.

REGGIE
Did you know all along, Tim?

TIM
I suspected, but I was having too much fun to ask questions.

REGGIE
Me too, I guess.

They ride off towards Sugar Creek.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE DANCE - NIGHT

A dejected Reggie rides into the town square with Tim.

The festivities are in full swing. Lights hang around the dancing platform-- game booths and concessions set up all about. People crowd the square. Children chase each other past Reggie's horse.

Reggie rides on, seeming not to notice. He passes into the crowd of people, who open to let the horses through.

Some shout "Howdy Reggie!" and "Good to see ya, Restless" but others notice his mood and follow.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reggie rides up to the dance floor in the center of the square, where Gail is waiting in full southern regalia. She is happy to see him, almost leaping into his arms until she sees the steely glare in his eyes.

The MUSIC stops and all eyes turn to Reggie.

He dismounts and steps onto the dance platform, his spurs JINGLING on the hollow wood floor. He steps up nose to nose with Gail.

REGGIE

So this was all your idea?

GAIL

All what?

He waves to the crowd.

REGGIE

All this! This western charade.

GAIL

I don't know what you mean.

REGGIE

I'm wise to what's goin' on, Abigail.
Wise enough to know I've been lied to.

He turns to the rest of the crowd.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

You can all stop pretending it's the old west. Go back to whatever it is you do.

He steps up to the three lawyers.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

And you three boys can put yer city duds back on. You must feel right silly in them dandy clothes.

SOMERSET

But what about the resort?

REGGIE

I can't do business with a town of lyin' cheats.

GAIL

But Reggie, we just wanted to impress you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REGGIE

Pretending yer someone you ain't don't
impress me no how. I'm leavin' first
thing in the morning.

He jumps on his horse and gallops into the darkness.

Gail stands alone on the dance floor, watching Reggie's dust
settle in the glow of the streetlights.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

Gail and Tim sit next to an open keg, finishing it off.
Betty sleeps on Tim's shoulder.

TIM

I'll have another.

Gail starts at the Red Whisker, then stops and pours him a
drawl of beer.

GAIL

Have a real drink, Tim.

She gives him the beer, and he swallows it down in one gulp.
She smiles and slaps his back.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Thatta boy!

She turns and fills her own mug.

GAIL (CONT'D)

I'm not going to get drunk alone.

Turning back around, she finds Tim has passed out. She's
suddenly sad, and peers philosophically into her mug.

A horse NEIGHS. Gail looks at Tim.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Gesundheit!

The horse NEIGHS again, and she realizes it's not Tim.

She looks over the keg and sees Reggie dismount from his
horse and step onto the empty dance platform. She puts her
mug down and watches.

Reggie walks to the center of the platform and removes his
hat, looking at the beaten felt with melancholy affection.
He scans the square.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gail ducks behind the keg when his eyes pass over the bar.

Reggie stands almost tearful with indignation. With a muscular heave he frisbees his hat into the darkness. He marches off the platform to his horse.

Gail jumps up from behind the keg.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Reggie!

He stops, not turning, then continues to his horse.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Reggie, don't go!

She rushes out onto the platform as Reggie reaches his horse.

GAIL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Reggie. Don't go! Don't be angry.

REGGIE

I'm through with you and your town.

GAIL

Where were you? We looked all over.

REGGIE

I rode out into the desert. I was going to hit the high range. I wasn't going to come back.

A glimmer of hope sparkles on Gail's face.

GAIL

Why did you?

REGGIE

Because I got out there away from town, and I looked up into the sky, and I saw the stars--millions of them. And I realized I ain't never seen so many stars before, and I ain't much of a cowboy if I ain't even seen the stars.

GAIL

But you are a cowboy. You are in your heart, because you live and act the way you want, not the way you think you should.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GAIL (CONT'D)

It ain't your fault cowboys don't come from New York, or maybe you're the only one honest enough to admit what he is.

Reggie looks away in melancholic thought.

REGGIE

I think it's time to be honest.

GAIL

Yes. I can be honest too, Reggie. I love you! Nothing else matters to me because that's the truth, and I've lied about everything else in my life.

REGGIE

I've lied too. I have to be honest.

He pushes Gail away and heads for his horse.

GAIL

Don't you understand I love you?

REGGIE

You love the lie, not the man.

He mounts and rides away.

Gail sorrowfully watches him go, then FOOTSTEPS approach on the platform behind her.

GAIL

Tim, what can I do to get through to him?

She turns to Tim but finds Merkle instead, a sly smile on his face, holding Reggie's cowboy hat. Sancho is behind him.

MERKLE

(mocking)

You are a cowboy! I love you!

GAIL

Yes! And you ruined everything.

Merkle throws the hat to Gail and she catches it.

MERKLE

Here's what's left of your manly man.

GAIL

You've gone from Romeo to Othello.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MERKLE

It's all tragedy. Now it's time for a little old-fashioned melodrama.

Merkle grabs Gail, picking her up off the ground.

GAIL

Let go of me!

Sancho grabs her legs. They carry her off.

Tim looks up from his stupor. He sees Merkle and Sancho carrying Gail away. He raises an eyebrow, and goes back to sleep.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Reggie buttons the top of his collar and pulls a necktie tight around his throat. He turns and looks in the mirror.

Cleaned and shaved, wearing a brand new business suit, Reggie appears to have jumped forward a hundred years in time.

REGGIE

Yer a twenty-first century man now.

Reggie looks down at his dress shoes, twisting his feet and frowning.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Reggie's shiny cowboy boots, complete with spurs, step out of the hotel. His business suit makes a new man out of him.

He scans the town to see it has returned to normal. Cars drive up and down the streets. People are wearing their regular clothes. Rustic painted signs have been replaced with modern neon ones.

Karl drives up in his truck. In the back are Betty and some townspeople. They are still wearing their western costumes.

BETTY

We came to tell you there's still real cowboys, Restless.

REGGIE

Maybe there are, but I'm not one of them.

A loop of rope falls on Reggie and tightens around his waist. Tim reels the rope in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM
I can do it!

Reggie pulls the rope off without appreciation, then pets his horse one last time.

REGGIE
Betty, you'd better take Rosie. She needs a ranch more than New York streets.

BETTY
You don't have to do this.

REGGIE
I've got to be what I am.

BETTY
And what are you?

REGGIE
That's what I'm going to find out.

He puts his hand on Tim's shoulder, giving him his best look of paternal concern.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I drug you out west. It ain't no place for a kid like you.

TIM
I kind of like it here, Reggie.

REGGIE
Maybe you found your place in the world.

TIM
You will too, Reggie. Have a chew!

Tim whips out a tobacco brick, offering it to Reggie. Reggie looks at it and smiles.

REGGIE
That ain't fit stuff for a modern man.

Tim bites of a large wad. Reggie turns to Karl.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Give me a ride to the train station?

Karl nods. Reggie throws his bags into the truck and climbs in with the others. The truck drives away from the hotel.

INT. BANK - DAY

The guard unlocks the front door and Merkle enters the bank followed by Sancho and the acting troupe. The actors are in full western garb with their faces covered by handkerchiefs.

Merkle immediately raises a gun on the guard.

MERKLE

Hand over that there six-shooter.

The guard gives up his pistol as Sancho and the others raid the bank.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

Lock that door.

The actors each take a teller and hold them at gunpoint.

Somerset steps out of his office and bursts into laughter when he sees Merkle and the others with their guns.

SOMERSET

I guess you haven't heard. The joke's off. Reggie found us out. There'll be no need for the robbery.

MERKLE

Hold it right there, pardner. Put yer hands up.

SOMERSET

(laughing still)

That's almost convincing. It's a shame. This part would have been the most fun.

Merkle fires a bullet over Somerset's shoulder.

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

Easy there, Terry. That thing's loud in here.

GUARD

I don't think he's joking. Look.

The guard motions behind Somerset where a bullet hole goes through the wall into his office.

Somerset walks over and puts his finger in the hole.

SOMERSET

It's a real bullet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERKLE

That's right. Now git into your office.
Everyone! Into the office.

SANCHO

Everyone! Move!

Sancho herds everyone into Somerset's office. Merkle unplugs the phone and holds his hand out to Somerset.

MERKLE

Keys?

SOMERSET

Are you crazy?

MERKLE

Keys!

Somerset tosses him the keys to the office.

SOMERSET

You'll never get away with this.

MERKLE

I'll git away with a whole lot more than
yer money!

SOMERSET

Gail?

Merkle slams the door shut and locks them in, keeping the phone and keys. He rushes over to the teller windows with the others.

They begin to shovel bills into duffle bags.

INT. SOMERSET'S OFFICE - DAY

The bank employees are crammed into the tiny office. Somerset is still dumbfounded as he stands in the center of the room.

SOMERSET

I don't believe it.

He is distracted by the sound of a LOUD HAMMERING. The guard is smashing futilely at the window with a metal chair.

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

It's no use. That window is as strong as
steel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The bank workers start to panic and scream. The guard rushes the door and smashes it with his shoulder. He rebounds onto the floor.

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

The door is impossible. This office is a vault.

GUARD

What do we do, then?

SOMERSET

Get someone's attention out the window. Tell them we're in trouble.

They rush to the window and crowd to see out. There is nothing but the empty back lot of the bank and a vacant construction site beyond.

EXT. BANK LOT - DAY

A small BOY dribbles his basketball around the empty paved lot until a POUNDING distracts him.

He carries his ball around to the bank window where a dozen panic-stricken faces are gesturing, pounding, and silently shouting through the glass.

He smiles and laughs.

INT. SOMERSET'S OFFICE - DAY

The bank workers shout at the boy as he laughs. Somerset turns to see the Guard peering through the bullet hole in the wall.

SOMERSET

Can you see them?

The guard nods.

SOMERSET (CONT'D)

What are they doing?

GUARD

They're taking the money.

EXT. BANK LOT - DAY

A PLUMP MAN walks around the bank to see his boy staring at the wall.

PLUMP MAN
Come on, Billy. The bank's closed.

The boy points at the wall and the man walks around to see what it is. He doesn't know what to think of all the desperate faces, but soon realizes it must mean trouble.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

The plump man and his boy race into the police station, excited and breathing heavy.

PLUMP MAN
Sheriff! Sheriff!

A SHERIFF and DEPUTY sit playing cards.

SHERIFF
All right, calm down.

PLUMP MAN
Sheriff, the bank, it's being robbed!

SHERIFF
Impossible.

PLUMP MAN
I was just there.

SHERIFF
But they called off the bank robbery.
Reggie's going home.

DEPUTY
Maybe they think they can fool him one
last time.

SHERIFF
Sure. That shithead ain't too smart. He
might fall for it.

PLUMP MAN
You mean they're faking it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERIFF

Sure. Hey, we ought to tell that cowboy what's goin' on. This might be our last chance to save this town.

DEPUTY

He was staying at the hotel. Maybe he hasn't left yet.

The sheriff gets up and puts on his hat.

SHERIFF

Come on. Let's go find him.

The Deputy gets up and follows him out the door.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Reggie sets his bags down on the train platform. He turns to Tim, Betty, and Karl.

REGGIE

Well, nice knowin y'all.

BETTY

Sure, Reggie. Maybe someday you'll come back.

REGGIE

Whenever you need a job, Tim, you just let me know.

TIM

I'm through being a secretary.

KARL

It's nice to meet a real man, just once in my life, Restless.

REGGIE

Thanks Karl. Well...Fare thee well, my friends.

He gives them a nod and a pitiful smile as the sheriff and deputy charge onto the platform.

SHERIFF

Reggie! Reggie! Wait!

Reggie turns around as the Sheriff approaches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

You've got to help us. The bank's being robbed.

Reggie smiles.

REGGIE

You can't fool me, Sheriff. I'm wise to you.

DEPUTY

It ain't a lie. Big Jim and his men are there now. You've got to stop them.

REGGIE

You're the law. You stop them.

SHERIFF

I'm pretty good at speedin' tickets, but I ain't never wrangled no bank robbers.

REGGIE

Well, I ain't never neither.

BETTY

You've got to stop them, Reggie. It's our last chance.

The sheriff holds up a badge.

SHERIFF

You're an honorary deputy. The law's behind you.

Reggie hesitates, tempted by the prospects of nabbing a bank robber, but shakes his head and turns back toward the platform.

Tim grabs the badge from the sheriff.

TIM

If Reggie's yeller, I'll git them varmits.

Reggie looks at Tim, seeing him for the first time as a real man.

REGGIE

Yer still my sidekick, Tim.

Reggie takes the badge from Tim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Take me to my horse, Karl.

BETTY

Thata boy, Reggie.

KARL

Let's go.

They rush off across the platform towards Karl's truck.

INT. BANK DRIVE-THRU - DAY

Merkle and the actors continue to shovel cash into bags.

A NERVOUS ACTOR turns to Merkle.

NERVOUS ACTOR

We're not really robbing this place, are we? I mean, this is all pretend, right?

MERKLE

Don't break the fourth wall, you idiot. Of course we're acting--but don't let them know we're acting! For the first time we've invoked real terror in our audience.

Sancho glances out the drive-thru window as Reggie and Tim ride up to one of the car stalls.

SANCHO

He's here!

MERKLE

Already?

Merkle goes to the window and sees Reggie hitching his horse to the drive-thru terminal.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

It's time to put a stop to that boy scout!

SANCHO

Will this work?

Sancho holds up a stick of DYNAMITE.

Merkle's eyes widen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERKLE

Where did you get that?

SANCHO

I stole it from uncle.

MERKLE

The contractor?

Sancho nods. Merkle snatches the dynamite and pulls out his lighter. He grabs a pneumatic cylinder and drops the dynamite inside.

He lights the fuse!

He closes the cylinder and goes to the transparent tubes. There are four of them. He looks to Sancho.

SANCHO

No time to be choosy.

Merkle shoves the cylinder into the first tube.

MERKLE

Fire one, torpedo!

He hits the SEND button. The cylinder is sucked up the tube into the ceiling.

EXT. BANK DRIVE-THRU - DAY

Reggie ties his horse to the pneumatic receiving station, turning to Tim.

REGGIE

I hate these fancy hitchin' posts.

Tim dismounts just as...

AN EXPLOSION destroys the far terminal. Reggie and Tim drop to the ground.

INT. BANK-DRIVE THRU - DAY

Merkle watches as the smoke clears. The horses are still standing.

MERKLE

Wrong one! Give me another.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANCHO

That's all I've got.

MERKLE

One stick of dynamite?

SANCHO

It's not my fault you picked the wrong tube!

A GUNSHOT disrupts them. Merkle looks out the window to see Reggie aiming at him.

Two gunshots hit the drive-thru window, putting large knicks in the glass but not going through.

MERKLE

He's got real bullets!

EXT. BANK DRIVE-THRU - DAY

Reggie holsters his pistol and turns to Tim.

REGGIE

That winder's thicker than a buffalo hide.

A voice crackles out from the terminal intercom.

MERKLE (O.S.)

Nice try, cowboy!

Reggie peers over the terminal to see Merkle at the microphone.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

(cont, through intercom)

You aren't ready for the NEW west, you, you-- bumpkin!

Reggie looks curiously at the intercom. Tim pushes the CALL button and nods to Reggie.

REGGIE

Come on out peaceful-like, Big Jim. You haven't got a prayer.

MERKLE

(intercom)

I'll teach you to steal my girl!

He puts another cylinder in the tube and sends it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MERKLE (CONT'D)
 (intercom)
 Fire two, torpedo!

Tim hears the VACUUM SUCTION and grabs Reggie.

TIM
 Another bomb!

Reggie and Tim run for cover, but Reggie stops.

REGGIE
 My horse!

He turns back to the two horses tied to the stall. Tim grabs him again.

TIM
 Too late!

He pulls Reggie behind a concrete construction barrier and they wait for the explosion.

NOTHING!

Reggie peeks up over the barrier. The horses stand patiently. DISTANT LAUGHTER echoes over the intercom.

MERKLE
 (intercom)
 Ha Ha Ha! Suckers!

REGGIE
 Come on. Let's circle round back.

INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

Betty, Karl and the Sheriff rush into the office and find Harrison and Bowers.

BETTY
 Come quick! The bank's being robbed.

HARRISON
 Impossible. Isn't Reggie gone?

BETTY
 No! This is our last chance to make good. Get everyone back in their cowboy hats and round up the town. Where's Mr. Somerset?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOWERS

At the bank, naturally.

BETTY

Good. He's already ahead of you boys.

HARRISON

We'll have to find Gail. This was all her idea. Go to the bank and wait for us. We'll get everyone else.

They all head out the door.

EXT. BANK BACK LOT - DAY

Reggie and Tim move stealthily around to the back lot of the bank. They slide up to a corner, and Reggie leaps around with his pistols drawn.

He comes face to face with a window full of startled tellers.

Reggie screams. Those inside scream-- silently.

Somerset sees Reggie and catches his attention. He mouths words but Reggie doesn't understand. They all start shouting at once, trying to tell him something.

Reggie just shrugs, unable to understand.

A teller holds up a notepad with the words "We're being robbed" scrawled across it.

Reggie smiles and nods his head.

REGGIE

I know that, you idjits.

The guard leaps to the window and takes the pad of paper. He rips off the page and writes another. Holding it upside down against the window.

Reggie can't read it and turns his head around, telling them to flip the paper. They turn it right-side up.

It reads "They're getting away--front door!"

TIM

They're getting away! Let's go!

Reggie nods a "thank you" as they rush around to the front of the bank.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reggie and Tim round the corner just as Merkle and his men are diving into the back of a mini-van. Gail is tied in the back seat, still wearing her square dance dress, and screaming.

GAIL

Let me out of here, you lousy actors!

The doors slam shut and the mini-van speeds away.

REGGIE

Abigail?

Reggie fires three shots at the van as it rounds a corner and disappears.

Reggie leaps on his horse and follows. Tim does likewise.

As they ride out of the parking lot, Karl's truck pulls in. Betty and Karl look at the bank, a trail of smoke rising into the air from the exploded drive-thru terminal.

They watch as Reggie and Tim round the corner on their horses.

BETTY

We'd better follow them.

Karl nods and turns the truck around.

EXT. STREETS OF SUGAR CREEK - DAY

Reggie and Tim ride through the street of Sugar Creek as cars HONK and pass them.

Merkle's mini-van weaves in and out of traffic up ahead. It screeches to a stop at a red light.

MERKLE

Don't stop! Keep going!

The driver looks at the cross traffic, heavy in both directions. Merkle looks back to see Reggie and Tim gaining ground.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

Move! Move!

The driver readies as the cross traffic light turns yellow.

Reggie and Tim are almost upon them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The light turns green as Reggie and Tim arrive at the mini-van. The driver hits the floor and peels out--burning into the intersection.

Reggie slows to a stop as the mini-van speeds away. He watches the departing van with the bitter look of failure.

A BLASTING HORN catches his attention and he reels around to see a backup of cars. They step aside as the traffic passes. Karl drive up in his pickup and stops.

BETTY

Hop in! We'll catch 'em.

Tim leaps from his horse and into the cab of the truck.

Reggie rides around the van and with a swift spur urges Rosie to leap into the flatbed.

Karl speeds off after the fleeing bank robbers, with Reggie mounted on his horse in the truck bed.

EXT. HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

The mini-van drives up to a construction area. A flagman waves them down as a large bulldozer blocks the road.

The mini-van pulls to a stop.

MERKLE

Find a way around it.

SANCHO

Pull in there--between those cones.

The mini-van turns and goes between the cones, into the construction area.

SANCHO (CONT'D)

Stop here!

The van stops.

MERKLE

Why?

SANCHO

This is my uncle's crew.

MERKLE

Excellent! Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Merkle opens the side door. None of the actors move.

MERKLE (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

NERVOUS ACTOR

They're shooting real bullets at us,
Terry. That's a violation of equity
rules.

MERKLE

We're in this too deep to back out now.
Who's going with me?

Merkle waits as they contemplate going. Sancho grabs the
bags of cash.

SANCHO

Acting doesn't pay my bills.

Merkle grabs Gail and slings her over his shoulder. They
rush off towards the construction crew.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Karl's pulls to a stop. Everyone in the truck peers forward.
Reggie tips his hat up, checking his eyes.

Coming down the highway towards them are the heavy
construction machines of the road crew.

An army of men and metal!

A bulldozer leads the battalion--the scoop raised high.
Merkle, Sancho, and the FOREMAN ride in the scoop.

Gail lies tied at their feet amidst the bags of money.

Karl looks to the others--both with the same dumbfounded
expression on their faces. Karl carefully shifts the truck
into reverse.

The truck suddenly bounces as Reggie leaps from the truck.

REGGIE

Yee-Haw!

The others watch him in disbelief as he rides off towards the
machines.

KARL

I suppose we have to follow him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIM

Yeah, I suppose we do.

BETTY

You've got to admire a man that stupid.

Karl shifts the truck into drive and peels out after Reggie.

EXT. ASPHALT BATTLEFIELD - DAY

Reggie charges full gallop toward the yellow machines slowly lurching their way towards him. He then pulls the reins and stops.

Everything falls SILENT.

Reggie looks all around--an army of T-shirted construction workers, frozen before him. The massive trucks, their engines RUMBLING a low, steady growl of readiness, are amassed beyond like sleeping dragons.

Reggie eyes Merkle and Sancho, observing above all from the raised scoop of a bulldozer.

Merkle barks into the foreman's walkie talkie.

MERKLE

Alright boys! Let's run this lousy cowboy out of town.

The ENGINES ERUPT with life as the machines advance forward. The workers march in, road tools in hand.

Reggie's horse rears up and NEIGHS as Reggie leaps to attack.

Reggie twirls an enormous lasso loop above his head as he rides down on the workers. He releases and the rope goes flying.

The rope loops around a large group of workers. Reggie pulls back and bundles them together.

Leaping from his horse, he knocks the operator of a small Bobcat bulldozer from the cab. He quickly lashes the rope to the Bobcat and sends it off into the desert, bounding across the sandy ground.

The Bobcat drags the lassoed construction workers away.

Reggie rolls in the sand and rises to see five burly workers rushing towards him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He WHISTLES and his horse comes charging, plowing through the workers, knocking them aside. Reggie effortlessly leaps onto the back of the horse and evades them.

Reggie pulls the reigns and stops as a giant studded steamroller lurches toward him. He laughs and stands his ground as the machine slowly makes its approach. He then easily sidesteps the giant machine. The driver shakes his fist at Reggie.

Reggie turns to a revving motor to see another tiny Bobcat racing towards him. He spurs Rosie and they ride away.

The Bobcat follows at full speed in hot pursuit.

Reggie checks his distance, then looks ahead to see a large dump truck with a dozen workers in the back heading towards him. The Bobcat driver grits his teeth as he leads Reggie towards the truck.

Out of nowhere Karl's pickup comes SMASHING into the tiny Bobcat, sending it spinning out of course.

Reggie rides on, narrowly dodging the dump truck. He catches the dump lever with his boot as he passes. The dump truck begins depositing the workers and its load of dirt onto the pavement.

The workers tumble out in a cloud of dust.

As the air clears, workers are half-buried in the debris, struggling to pull themselves out.

CUT TO:

Karl spins around the truck and stops, leaping out. He turns to Tim.

KARL

Take the wheel pardner, and try to keep her in one piece! Karl rushes off toward a giant earth mover. Tim slides over to the driver's seat and looks to Betty.

TIM

Now what?

BETTY

Beats me, Sweetie. You've got the wheel.

The truck suddenly flies in the air as the huge studded steam roller smashes down on the back end of the truck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Tim and Betty look back to see the massive machine begins to climb over the little pickup.

They leap from the cab as the vehicle is smashed under the weight of the giant machine.

The steam roller driver CACKLES wildly.

The pickup is flattened as the steam roller passes and moves on its way.

CUT TO:

Reggie sees Merkle command a group of workers to charge. Reggie rides toward them, leaping from his saddle and knocking the first to the ground.

He rises to his feet as the others surround him. They wield sledgehammers, shovels, and iron bars.

The burliest man attacks, swinging a massive hammer.

Reggie dodges and swings at the burly man, smashing his jaw and sending him to the pavement.

The others lunge and swing, but Reggie knocks them back and leaps from the fray.

He turns on them and draws his pistol

THEY FREEZE.

One steps forward and Reggie forces him back at gunpoint. They stand hesitant a moment, then suddenly turn and run.

Reggie shrugs then turns to see a giant circular saw heading directly at him. He backs up, tripping over the downed worker and falling to the ground.

The massive trench digger--its WHIRLING CIRCULAR BLADE six feet across, comes ripping through the asphalt toward Reggie.

The fallen worker rolls out of the way as the blade passes where he lies. Reggie scrambles to his feet as the deadly saw draws closer.

He backs up into the treads of an approaching earth mover.

Quickly turning, the saw barely misses Reggie and cuts into the treads of large earth mover.

Sparks fly as the SCREECHING METAL SAW digs into the steel treads. Reggie emerges from a shower of sparks and smoke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Moving clear of the carnage he races towards Merkle's bulldozer. His path is blocked when the MASSIVE CLAW of the earth mover comes smashing down before him, rupturing the pavement.

Reggie loses balance averting the claw. He tumbles and rolls to one side. Looking up, he sees the giant claw raise into the air, poised for another attack, like the head of a monster.

The claw comes down again, smashing into the road as Reggie rolls from underneath.

Reggie struggles to get to his feet as the earth mover lifts the slab of asphalt Reggie is on. He slides off the slab into a cluster of cacti on the side of the road.

He looks up as the deadly claw is ready to strike again, when another giant claw swings in and smashes the monstrous arm.

Karl operates the controls of a second earth mover, and drives the machine forward to attack.

The two giant machines face off, raising their claws like battling cobras.

Karl pulls the lever and the claw surges forward. The enemy claw deflects his attack. The enemy machine attacks Karl, it's expert driver turning the truck, lunging and smashing Karl's earth mover in one graceful swoop.

Reggie stands to watch the two giants do battle, as do the other construction workers.

Karl swings the arm toward the enemy's cab, narrowly missing as he smashes down on the machine. The enemy earth mover counters, swinging its arm at Karl.

The iron claw smashes Karl's cab.

Karl reels from the hit, but the machine is still operational. He pushes the machine forward, driving his earth mover into the enemy's. The claw arms lock and fight against each other, their hydraulics WHINING and WHIRRING.

Karl urges on until the two machines are piled against each other.

The other driver counters by trying to pull away, but his damaged tread causes his machine to turn and the two claws lock together immobile.

Karl leaps from his cab and jumps across to the enemy truck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The other driver is working frantically at the controls trying to unlock the two machines.

Karl opens his cab door and pulls him from his seat.

The driver takes a swing at Karl, but Karl blocks and swings back. His punch knocks the other driver off the machine and onto the pavement.

CUT TO:

Reggie notices Tim and Betty racing across the pavement towards Merkle's bulldozer. He follows after them.

Merkle see the others coming and there are no workers left to protect him. He turns to the driver and orders him to flee.

The driver puts the machine in reverse and it backs away.

Merkle laughs as Reggie, Tim and Betty rush to catch up on foot.

Gail, still tied up in the cup of the scoop, manages to give Sancho a kick. He tumbles over the edge of the scoop and falls to the ground below.

He gets up and limps off toward the retreating tractor.

Merkle can only shrug as they drive away.

Tim charges up and tackles Merkle. Betty takes her rope and ties him up. Reggie is fast approaching.

TIM

We've got him. Get Big Jim.

Reggie runs after the bulldozer but it's quickly receding.

Reggie whistles for his horse.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Reggie rides full throttle down the highway blacktop. The bulldozer flies away at top speed but Reggie quickly catches up.

Merkle aims his pistol at Reggie, firing off two shots.

Reggie draws and fires back, the bullet ricocheting off the iron scoop.

Merkle ducks down low as Reggie rides under the scoop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Reggie looks for a place to grab on to the massive machine, hopping from his saddle and catching hold of a metal bar. His grip nearly fails as he throws a leg on top of the bulldozer, pulling himself up.

He rises and draws his pistol on the driver. The driver leaps from the cab into the sand as the bulldozer barrels on out of control.

Reggie climbs into the cab as the bulldozer veers off the pavement and bounces across the desert. Reggie takes the controls, uncertain what to do.

The bulldozer flies over a sand dune, plowing into the ground and continuing on. Merkle is nearly jostled from the scoop.

Reggie pulls a lever, turning the scoop upside down and depositing Merkle, Gail and the bags of money on the ground.

Reggie looks ahead at an eroded ravine.

He can't stop the bulldozer.

As the huge construction truck tumbles over the edge of the ravine, Reggie runs along top and leaps off the back end. He lands in the sagebrush and rolls.

The bulldozer crashes into the ravine, kicking up a cloud of dust, the metal SCREECHING and TWISTING as it plummets to the bottom.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

Merkle collects the bags of money and lifts Gail over his shoulder. He races through the sandy brush, panting and sweating in the desert heat, and collapses in the sand.

Merkle stops as he hears the DISTANT WHISTLE of an approaching train. He looks up to see a set of railroad tracks just a few yards away. Suddenly seized by an idea, he drags Gail over toward the tracks.

MERKLE

You will love me, or nobody.

He lays her across the tracks and begins lashing the ropes to the iron rails.

GAIL

Have you gone crazy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The train WHISTLES again. This time Gail hears it. The realization and fear spreads on her face.

GAIL (CONT'D)
I love you! I really do, Terry. Now untie me. I'll do whatever you ask.

MERKLE
Too late for love now. I'll just have to be happy with your daddy's money.

GAIL
A train is coming, Terry. This isn't funny. I'm not pretending!

MERKLE
Goodbye, my love.

He kisses her one last time.

REGGIE
The show's over Big Jim.

Merkle leaps to his feet and draws his pistol.

MERKLE
Not just yet, cowboy. It isn't a tragedy until someone dies!

REGGIE
This ain't the old west. You've got things all backwards. Now I think it's time we stop playing this game and start acting like modern men.

The train whistles again, closer. Reggie is getting worried, slowly approaching Merkle step by step.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Why don't you put yer gun away?

Merkle fires a shot over Reggie's shoulder. Reggie freezes, terrified.

MERKLE
I think I'll wait until this little melodrama has played out. This is going to be fun.

Reggie notices Tim sneaking up behind Merkle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REGGIE

Listen Big Jim. You're in a mess o' trouble right now, but it ain't so bad as killing someone. You do that and you're sure to regret it.

Gail sees the train come into view around a distant ridge.

GAIL

Just shoot him!

Tim moves closer to Merkle, jumping from sage bush to sage bush. He readies his rope.

MERKLE

I love her, understand. She's mine!

REGGIE

Then why do you want to kill the thing you love most?

MERKLE

Because! Because... because she's evil! She's spiteful! She's so damned bossy and irritating and... and... domineering. And I love her.

REGGIE

Then it don't make no sense that you'd want to kill her.

MERKLE

For years I've loved her, and for years she's shrugged me off. She doesn't care. She doesn't care about anybody. Nobody cares about me!

Merkle's earnestness breaks down into sobs.

The LOW RUMBLE of the coming train builds.

REGGIE

You don't have to be the bad guy, and I don't have to be the hero. That's just-- just stories. We're human beings, Big Jim. Ain't good, ain't bad--just tryin' to live.

Merkle gives in and lowers his pistol.

MERKLE

My name is Terry. Terry Merkle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Tim throws his lasso and it loops around Merkle. He pulls the rope and Merkle falls to the ground.

Reggie leaps for the railroad tracks, drawing his knife.

The train approaches fast, WHISTLING as the engineer sees them.

Reggie quickly cuts through the ropes.

The train barrels down on top of them, the brakes suddenly SCREECHING, the WHISTLE BLOWING endlessly.

Reggie and Gail leap from the tracks as the train passes by at blinding speed. They roll into the sand.

The train blocks them from Merkle and Tim.

They get up and wait for the train to pass.

As the last car goes by, Tim is sitting in the sand alone, the rope tied around him several times.

REGGIE

Where'd he go?

TIM

(nodding his head)

Over that dune!

Gail begins untying Tim.

Reggie WHISTLES and his horse charges towards him. Reggie leaps into the saddle as the horse passes without even slowing down.

EXT. DUNES - DAY

Reggie rides over the sand dune and down on top of Merkle fleeing futilely with the duffel bags.

Merkle turns and takes pot shots at Reggie. Reggie ducks low and charges forward, leaping from his horse and tackling Merkle.

Merkle rises and swings a punch at Reggie. Reggie ducks and swings back, thrusting into his stomach. Merkle keels over and Reggie connects with his jaw. Merkle goes own into the sand.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Reggie rides through the cheering crowd. G

ail sits on the back of Tim's horse, her arms around his waist. They ride up to a flat bed truck and dismount. The townspeople surround them.

The bulldozer drives up with Karl at the wheel. He pulls a lever and dumps Merkle, Santos and the money from the scoop onto the flatbed. They are tied and gagged.

Tim and Betty hop off the bulldozer, holding hands.

Reggie and Gail wave to the townspeople. Gail raises Reggie's cowboy hat and puts it on his head.

GAIL

You are a real cowboy, Restless.

Reggie kisses her and they turn away, coming face to face with...

NORFOLK, with suitcase and sharp travel attire.

REGGIE

Pa!

Norfolk looks over the crowd, all dressed in western wear, hootin' and hollerin' and shooting pistols in the air.

He steps onto the flatbed and the crowd quiets down. He looks at Tim and Betty, then to Merkle and Santos. He can't believe his eyes.

The crowd collapses into a DEAD SILENCE.

NORFOLK

What's going on?

REGGIE

We're just doin' a little celebratin'.

NORFOLK

You're all a bunch of cowboys!

REGGIE

They're just dressed that way on account of me.

Harrison, Somerset, and Bowers scramble onto the trailer. Norfolk gives their cowboy outfits the once over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOMERSET

Welcome to Sugar Creek, Mr. Norfolk. We weren't expecting you.

NORFOLK

Obviously not!

HARRISON

You'll have to pardon our appearance. We've been trying to entertain your son.

BOWERS

And we caught us a bank robber!

NORFOLK

I'm afraid I've missed something.

REGGIE

I can explain it all, Pa.

NORFOLK

No. Somehow with you involved it all makes sense. I thought the real west would open your eyes, but instead you just put blinders on everyone else.

REGGIE

These are decent people, Pa. I don't want my behavior to jeopardize their chances of getting their resort.

NORFOLK

Of course not.

SOMERSET

You mean you're going along as planned?

NORFOLK

I always intended to.

HARRISON

But, Reggie was here to look us over.

NORFOLK

Reginald was here on vacation. He doesn't know the first thing about real estate and resort mergers. But that's going to change.

(to Reggie)

How about staying in Sugar Creek and heading this division, son?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

REGGIE

No thanks, Pa. I got me a new profession.

He opens his coat to show the tin star on his lapel.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

But there's a decent fellow for that job standing right here.

He slaps Tim on the back, pushing him toward Norfolk.

NORFOLK

Well, Tim doesn't quite have the seniority.

REGGIE

He's come a long way from the man he used to be.

Tim takes Betty into his arms, his maturity beginning to seep through his baby fat.

TIM

If it's all the same to you, Mr. Norfolk, I'd like to live on the ranch with Betty. I ain't cut out for the business life.

REGGIE

That's a grand idear, Tim.

NORFOLK

Then who's going to head my branch office?

GAIL

I will, Mr. Norfolk.

She slides an arm under Somerset's.

GAIL (CONT'D)

My father will vouch for me.

SOMERSET

I couldn't think of a better person.

NORFOLK

Well, I don't know anything about you.

REGGIE

It's okay, Pa. If Abigail runs the branch, you can keep the business in the family.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GAIL

You mean?

Reggie nods to Gail. Joy spreads across her face.

GAIL (CONT'D)

Oh, Reggie. I'll finally have everything I ever wanted. I want to live in style! We'll travel! We'll go to New York!

REGGIE

New York! What's wrong with Sugar Creek?

GAIL

What's wrong?

REGGIE

Room to breath. Plenty of sunshine. It sure beats ol' New York!

Her eyes are wide with horror at the thought of spending the rest of her life in Sugar Creek.

Reggie looks at her puppy dog eyes and caves in.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Aw, shucks!

INT. PRICELESS MANSION - DAY

Decked out in style--21st Century style.

Reggie and Gail walk through the enormous house, hand in hand, Gail triumphant. They go to the front door in the enormous foyer where Reeves is waiting. Reeves opens the door revealing...

Wide open prairie stretching for miles.

Tim and Betty await on horses at the end of the porch.

Gail and Reggie kiss in the doorway.

They mount their horses and the four of them ride away into the sunset.

FINAL FADE OUT.