

Lonesome Hill

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EXT. FORESTED HILLY LANDSCAPE -- DAY

Bird's eye view rolling across the wilderness as the voice over rolls across leading to the title.

(V.O.)

We start out in this shindig called life with what I like to call a lollipop look, as innocent and as pristine as the snow capping the top of those rocks we call mountains. But as our legs churn through the mud of the road we learn fast and hard that everything comes down to choices, the lollipops dropping their flavor the more of them choices we make, all things living and dying on their lick. And no matter how far or wide those legs of yours get you, bane or boon, those choices nip at your heels. And sooner or later you end up chin to chin with the demon dogs them choices done made, and hope to all highwater you got what it takes to live'em down. Now this here you about to be told is one of those tales, the kind whispered around a late night fire when the bones of age have taken their toll and left little else, when the only thing still spinning webs is memory, and as we all know, memory is a fickle beast. Danile and Momma sitting in a tree k - i - s - s....

EXT. WOODS -- DAY

A deer gallops at full speed through the woods, leaping over dead fall branches in a stunning display of agility, dancing between trees, moving in liquid grace. After a particular graceful move around a tree, a large piece of dead fall lays in front of the deer. With a mighty leap it jumps the wood but in mid clear at it's apex, a shot sounds and it's head disappears in a bloody mess. The camera reverses the angle of the track of the bullet through brush, tree limbs up to a hill a whopping 150 yards away where Daniel "Blades" Williamson is standing up, his henry in his hand, a smile on his face. He pulls a large blade off his thigh (Gladius) and starts stalking towards his prize.

INT. GENERAL STORE -- WESTERN FRONTIER SETTLEMENT -- 1867 --
DUSK

A man dressed in frayed furs and leather, several blades strapped to a bandolier across his chest, forearms, and two on thigh sheaths, a pistol on his hip, and a rifle slung across his back (Daniel "Blades" Williamson-- a hunter and trapper by trade) with the worn time of horrors drifting upon his countenance is finishing his trade of furs to the general store owner who is frontier tradesman of a small general store in a small settlement in the back end of nowhere.

MR. STOKES (OWNER)

Are you sure I can't talk you into staying on in town Daniel. We sure have enjoyed all the meat and furs you been bringing. We could sorely use such. I tell you the town of Lowell is booming, a place to set your oats, to make somethin' that lasts.

Daniel looks nervous, shifting back and forth, then his eyes once darting settle on Mr. Stokes, deep as the furnace of Hell.

DANIEL

No. No Mr. Stokes, sir. I have already stayed longer then I should. I got to keep movin', always movin', keep the sun at my back at the end of the day. Keep steppin' these legs of mine till my mind ain't got no memory left.

Mr. Stokes sighs a regrettable moment.

MR. STOKES

Well I am 54 years young Daniel and in all that time I have learned a thing or two about a thing or two. The most important piece of gold I picked up is this. You can never run far enough. Whatever is haunting you son is with you wherever you are and one day you are gonna have to turn your face to the teeth of that beast.

Daniel looks haunted reliving days of death and recompense.

DANIEL

Be that as it may Mr. Stokes I got to be heading on.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

But if I could ask ya what I can expect out west of here I'd sure appreciate it. Any towns and such I could be unloading what I hunt tween here and there that would sure be a boon I reckon if you could tell me such.

Mr. Stokes sighs again.

MR. STOKES

Sure I can son. About a two week's travel west of here is a town called Shelton. It's about the same size as here, nice folk. It's just past the hills. And there's plenty a good hunting between here and there. Someone of your skill with that rifle of yours won't be having no trouble bagging a buck or two I'd reckon though it will be sore losing you. As I said we sure could use you here and a warm welcome you'd get, but I see in your eyes that you got it set to be doing what you be doing so I won't be standing in your road.

DANIEL

Two weeks?. Nothing closer to here huh? Well it will be what it is as my old Sergeant used to say.

Mr. Stokes looks nervous thinking wether he should say something or not.

MR. STOKES

Well there is another place a little less then a week's travel up on the top of them hills but I wouldn't suggest it. In fact I would say avoid the place, nothing but dark tales coming out of that cess pit. Run by some religious nut goes by the name of the Shepard. Yes sir son, I would stay clear of that place.

DANIEL

Hmm...well I'll be takin' your advice Mr. Stokes though will have to manage living without the comforts of a bed a little longer(smile) then I'd like.

Daniel gathers his pack on the floor to his back.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Though I better hit the road before
it gets any closer to night. Get
some miles under the belt before
the moon sends me to sleep.

He nods his head and starts to step outside before turning
back one last time

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What's the name of the town by the
way I should be avoidin'?

MR. STOKES

Lonesome Hill and a more fitting
name I do not know though as I said
stay clear of the place. More a
fortress than a town as I heard.
Dark tales. Dark indeed.

EXT. OUTSIDE GENERAL STORE IN SMALL TOWN -- DUSK

Mr. Stokes stands in the doorway of his store watching Daniel
mount his horse grabbing the tether of his mule then heading
off to the west into the forested hills.

EXT. SMALL MUD WASHED ROAD SKIRTING HILLS -- DUSK

Daniel is struggling heavily leaning through a mudsucked road
in a heavy lightning lit storm leading his horse and the
tether of a mule laden in furs. He can see no more than a
few feet in front of his face through the sleet of rain.

DANIEL

Damn all to hell!!! The whole damn
ocean is dumping on our heads!!!

Daniel walks a few more steps before tripping and falling to
his knees in the soup of mud. He glances up and sees two
rickety signs posted on the road. One points in the
direction he is already heading saying "Shelton" the second
points at an even smaller dirt path leading up in the hills
and says "Lonesome Hill"

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Damn! Damn! Damn! Sorry Mr.
Stokes, gonna have to ignore your
advice. I need to get out of this
dog dump.

Daniel gets off his knees and starts pulling the horse and mule up the small dirt path towards Lonesome Hill the journey starting to a giant peal of lightning and thunder.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE GATE OF A WOODEN FORT -- NIGHT

Daniel walks wearily up to what looks to be a wooden fortified town soaked to the bone, visibility still down to nothing. He walks to the entrance pounding on the door and screaming into the night.

DANIEL

Anyone! Anyone! Open the gate!
I'm drowning in this dog piss!
Hello to the town! Fur trader! I
need shelter! Dammit! Open the
fucking gate!

Daniel waits for a moment and nothing happens. As he is about to bang on door again it opens. Two very disgruntled looking men with spencer rifles in their hands and holstered pistols at their hips, large hanging wooden crosses around their necks, step out in the rain. One, somewhat overweight mid forties man with several days of beard growth(Taylor) aims his rifle at Daniel while a taller skinny fella with missing teeth and his rifle pointed down (Jenks) spits tobacco on the ground.

Jenks

What did the daddy storm spit at us
Taylor?! (Spits again) It looks
like a drowned rat he does wrapped
up in all those furs. Wouldn't you
agree Taylor?

Taylor nods his head, his rifle never wavering, sputtering lamps cast meagre light upon the scene hung up to a pole on the inside of each swinging gate.

TAYLOR

Sure does Jenks! Just like a
drowned rat or maybe even a drowned
porcupine with all them stickers he
got on him.(Laugh)

Jenks joins him as Daniel begins to get frustrated and tired of the idiots keeping him from some dry warmth.

JENKS

That's a good one it is. A real good one Taylor, and is that a Henry rifle I see poking off that backside of his. (Spits)

Taylor nods his head in greed.

TAYLOR

It sure is Jenks, it sure is. Blanks my Ma's Apple Pie, only see one of those in my days.

Daniel steps forward ignoring the fat one's rifle.

DANIEL

Hey look fellas. I don't want to stamp down your fun and all but I need to get the hell out of this downpour and near a fire and stable and unload my beasts. I got good furs and meat to trade. So please can we move this little show on the road?

Taylor and Jenks look at each other with a sly and haughty look.

JENKS

Well ain't he a talker he is Taylor and a sharp mouth to it he does, maybe that porcupine call was as right as rain, those stickers ain't the only edge he got going. What you think Taylor? You reckon the Shepard want anything to do with this rodent we done found?

Taylor finally lowers his rifle as he scratches his head.

TAYLOR

Oh I don't know Jenks. He did blaspheme in his big talk and you know the Shepard won't have none of that under his roof. But fresh meat does sound mighty good. Our supplies still about a week out. Hmm. But I don't know.

Daniel has had enough he stepped forward his hand on his pistol.

DANIEL

Ok fellas enough is enough. Let me
the fuck in and get warmth on my
skin and I know ya want the meat I
got and the furs to keep your
toseys warm in this flood.

Taylor takes a step back slightly raising his rifle at Daniel's aggressive behavior but at the moment the door of the main house to the left of the gate opens and a giant bear of a man steps out wearing buckskins and muscles upon muscles (Tuck)

TUCK

Enough you two. Bring the
gentleman in. The Shepard wants to
take a look at a man who walks a
night like this.

Taylor and Jenks shuffle their feet.

JENKS

Ahh we was just having fun Tuck.
Didn't mean no harm.

TAYLOR

Yea Tuck! What Jenks says.

Tuck just glares at them as a young boy curls around him running to take the leads from Daniel to his horse and mule.

TUCK

Shut it you two. Stranger welcome
to Lonesome hill and God in your
steps. Jebediah will stable your
animals come on in and get warm,
and thank the Shepard for his
hospitality on this cold passage in
winter's breath.

JEBEDIAH

I'll take real good care of them
sir, real good care.

Daniel finally breaks a smile and hands the reins to the boy as he starts striding forward.

DANIEL

I will quick as a hummingbird take
you up on that offer. It's a damn
ugly night in these hills.

Jenks and Taylor hold back for a second whispering to each other. Jenks closes the gate.

TAYLOR

More blaspheming Jenks. The
Shepard ain't gonna like this one.
He'll be on the tree before the
dawn mark me. See if he ain't.

They both start walking in. As they walk towards the main house Jenks spits on the ground again.

JENKS

I wouldn't take that bet Taylor but
I think you got it backwards. I
don't think this fella is gonna
like the Shepard. See if he don't,
and I want those blades of his.

They both laugh loudly hitting each other on the arms. Jebediah peeks out of the door of the stable with a look of worry and fear on his face. The camera pulls out backing up and over the gate as a bright flash of lightning hits the night and down slope of the gate in the shadows of the trees several giant crosses stand with skeletons spiked to them.

INT. MAIN CABIN -- NIGHT

Daniel walks in behind Tuck followed closely by Jenks and Taylor. He now sees besides a large bowie knife at his waist Tuck is unarmed. His gaze takes in a vast room largely dominated by a long dinner table where sits at least thirty people, mostly women and children with some old men, and a couple adolescent men. On a smaller table on the far side near the central fireplace, a large cross hung above the fireplace, are about 8 more armed men all looking unsavory, all wearing large wooden crosses hung around their necks. Everyone turns to Daniel as he walks in. Many of the armed men have half played smiles creasing their faces. Everyone has plates of food in front of them including the armed men but none are eating. The people sitting at the large table seemed tense with palpable fear they are attempting to hide. Tuck motions for Daniel to sit at one of the only two empty chairs at the end of the long table, one next to a large empty ornate chair at the end of the table.

TUCK

Please my friend. Sit there. The
Shepard wants you close so he may
ask you some questions.

Daniel starts walking towards the chair mentioned but as he walks he half turns back to Tuck.

DANIEL

I keep hearing about the wondrous
Shepard fellow. I take it he'll be
joining the feast? I wanted to
talk to him about trading some furs
and meat I got with me.

Tuck folds his arm as Taylor and Jenks stroll to the smaller
table with the other armed men amidst laughter to Daniel's
statement.

TUCK

I am sure there will be time enough
for such God willing. When the --
ahh here he is now. All hail the
Shepard, the voice of God on the
Green!

Tuck says this as he throws a fist to his chest followed by
everyone in the room repeating "All hail The Shepard, the
Voice of God!" With a fist to their chest. And from some
back room comes an impossibly tall fellow in the raiments of
a priest with a wide brimmed hat in his mid 40's with an
immaculately trimmed full beard flecked with gray. His
entire outfit is meticulously kept. He walks from whatever
back room on the far side of where Daniel sits his eyes
taking in all his people then as he moves closer, a steely
judging gaze as he sits in the large chair which had been
pulled out by Tuck after he had followed the Shepard, then
Tuck stands behind the chair to the left as the Shepard
situates himself and removes his hat which Tuck takes. The
Shepard has slightly long hair speckled in gray. Everyone's
heads in the room are bowed, waiting.

THE SHEPARD

All hail to God's glory.

With that everyone's head comes up. Daniel takes this as
the time to eat so he starts chowing his food like a starved
man. There is an audible gasp within a moment of him doing
so. He looks up to find everyone staring at him with fear
etching their flesh. He turns to the Shepard to find him
looking upon him with disapproval. Daniel stops eating.

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

Obviously our brother here has been
too long within the woods and their
bounty. He forgets the grace of
god and let's his malnourished
flesh think ahead of his even more
ravened spirit. We will forgive
him this trespass once.

(MORE)

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

For all know the mercy of God and
his Voice here upon the salt of
Earth can be no less.

(EVERYONE)

All thank The Shepard

Daniel rolls his eyes at this.

DANIEL

Uhh yea. Sorry about that. Been a
long time since I had to say grace
before chowin'. A soldier usually
didn't have no set meal. You ate
when you had the chance and someone
wasn't tryin' to carve your life
into the mud.

The Shepard inclines his head.

THE SHEPARD

Yes. War, such an ugly business,
it was good tidings to find it's
end had found it's way. Out here
in the western wilds we saw little
of such. God found his hand on
man's greedy coven and laid peace
upon his brow and blessed be such.
Though this is not a battlefield my
child and here we show the grace of
God in all we do. What is the
birth name you are called in this
mud we call a world?

Daniel starts really getting nervous as if he should of
heeded Mr. Stokes advice.

DANIEL

Daniel Williamson out of Vermont.
Well, ex-soldier now hunter and
trader, in fact my mule is full of
such to trade if after the meal you
caren' to take a look. And again I
apologize for my ill gotten
behavior. Been a long spell since
I been haven a chance to eat with
civilized folk such as yourself.

The Shepard bows his head slightly.

THE SHEPARD

Well said Mr. Williamson, well
said. So let us have no more of
it.

(MORE)

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

All my children assembled here
 under God's loving arms, let us
 pray for thanks for our bounty and
 that under God's rule he has chosen
 you all to listen to his words
 through his instrument, my
 undeserving flesh.

Everyone bows their heads and Daniel notices besides the
 armed men none of the people at the long table had spoken or
 even so much as whispered to each other since he had walked
 in. The Shepard begins.

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

Oh great Creator of the heavens and
 the earth we thank you for the
 blessings you have given us and the
 food you gift to us to make us
 strong and thank you Lord for this
 stranger to be brought to us, to
 add will and devotion to our flock
 and the meat and furs he brings as
 tithe to your good works. Let his
 generosity be paid ten fold in the
 wisdom he shall garner as he
 journeys onward as a part of our
 people. In your blessed name,
 amen.

The people say in unison

(EVERYONE)

Thank you Shepard!

All the people began to eat but Daniel has lost his appetite.
 He couldn't of heard this crazed preacher say he was now a
 part of this cracked vessel that was the insane carnival
 within these walls. And that he was giving his goods for
 free.

DANIEL

Excuse me sir. I must be mistaken.
 It sounded like you said you was
 expecting me to give up my goods
 and that somehow you think I plan
 on staying on here. I am sure it
 is just some confusion, maybe I
 still got water pan handling my
 head. I can give you a good price
 and be happy to for the kind
 hospitality you all have shown me.
 Though I have to say beggin' your
 pardon.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I see how you all believe in God in such, but in my world, God don't exist, only blood and horror and greed and saving your own neck as you can, again, no insult intended.

The room goes from somewhat noisy bevy of people eating and the armed men making jokes to an utter silence as Daniel talks but when he hits the words about no God a chorus of uttered comments from "Blaspheme" to "The Tree for sure" to loud intakes of breath. Daniel looks around like he just shat gold out of his mouth. The Shepard gives a look like he's conversing with a misunderstanding toddler and a dull one at that. Tuck slides over behind Daniel with his hands behind his back. Daniel pushes his chair back slightly his hand resting under the table on one of his forearm sheaths, his fingers touching the handle of his blade his eyes keeping all the men on the long table including Taylor and Jenks though Tuck behind him worried him. He sees across the table a very beautiful lady and Jebediah next to her from the stable. Both look like Hell is rising in their hearts.

THE SHEPARD

Well that is unfortunate Daniel, unfortunate indeed. Where the spirit is willing it is under the Creator's grace to give it succor but when it is not it the children of God that must teach, and my young friend, I have found the best teacher in the world is depravation, and pain, pain the threshold to salvation.
Hallelujah!

The crowd choruses "Hallelujah!" Daniel feels the shadow of Tuck and sees the armed men moving off the small table hands on weapons and Taylor and Jenks with wicked smiles on their faces. He shoves back with his feet hard off the table as he pulls both blades out of his forearm sheaths. He feels his body and chair collide with an umphh into Tuck's midsection as Daniel rolls off the chair to his left towards the Shepard's backside. As he rolls to his feet he underestimate's Tucks strength as he sees a descending club coming at his face. Blackness.

EXT. ON A HILL ACROSS FROM THE FORT -- DAWN

Daniel wakes to the morning light and is disoriented everything upside down. The storm has passed. He is tied to a giant tree by his ankles hanging upside down. POV upside down. He is groggy his eyes barely open. Dried blood on his head.

DANIEL

What the God damn!?

A fist collides into his mouth. Jenks steps back. Daniel realizes the entire town which seems many more people than he saw last night all stand behind 20 armed men with Jenks, Taylor, Tuck and The Shepard standing before them. He also sees the girl he saw last night (Sara) with her arms around Jebediah. The Shepard walks forward and leans down using his finger to wipe a spot of fresh blood from the punch. He looks in Daniel's eyes and gives an exasperated sigh. He then stands up, turning to address the crowd, his body still half bent towards Daniel.

THE SHEPARD

Such a sorrowful countenance we see before us. Do you see the Devil dancing in his eyes?

(EVERYONE)

Yes Shepard!

THE SHEPARD

And so it is my children. And as we know through our own trials and tribulations that only a path lit upon the flames of God's judgement can one be cleansed of the demons all men harbor. And so we see another upon the Tree of Redemption and Clarity and praise be to God that he sees the truth of his sin and joins our flock to bring his voice to the clarion call of our heavenly choir.

(EVERYONE)

Praise be to God Shepard!

With that The Shepard walks up to Daniel and kneels again leaning in close.

THE SHEPARD

You will be here from dawn to dusk, every day till you see the truth of God and his voice within me, or until you die with your demons chewing upon your flesh. At the end of the day you will be put in a cell to contemplate the revelations you will be shown. You will have no food, but within your cell you will be given water. What say you Daniel Williamson?

DANIEL

I say you are one crazy goat
fucker!!! And if I were you I would
just kill me right now cause I as
sure as a rattlesnake bites am
going to be handing you that favor
and the sheep shaggers that folla
ya, starting with Jenks over there.

When Daniel first starts talking Jenks starts to step up with another fist but the Shepard stops him with a hand. When Daniel makes the threat Jenks takes a step back with fear etched but then spits upon the ground. Daniel notices Jenks is wearing his blades, though he has most of them strapped wrong.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Hey Jenks I see you got my blades
there and your fat friend, my rifle
and pistol. Take care of them for
me will ya?! I'll be collecting
them sooner rather than later.

The Shepard turns his back to Daniel to address the crowd. Jenks and Taylor both motion to his possessions and Jenks cuts a finger across his throat.

THE SHEPARD

Let us leave the sinner to the
silence of God and his own memory
my children. Let the tree preach
our word and final pronouncement.
We shall pray for his soul that he
find salvation through his
travails.

The Crowd bows their head.

(EVERYONE)

Amen Shepard!!

They all turn and leave, the girl(Sara) and the boy Jebediah take one final look back. Daniel moans.

DANIEL

Damn all to hell!! Sure should of
kept to your advice Mr. Stokes.

He struggles against his bonds to no avail except causing himself to swing back and forth.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

How the all get out am I can pull
my bacon from this damn fire?!

EXT. TREE ACROSS FROM FORT ON HILL -- NOON

A few crows are muddling on the ground in front of Daniel. His face is now a little chafed, a bright high noon sun beating down upon his blood rushed brain. Starting to make him delusional.

DANIEL

Want to join the army Ma! Fight!
It's about freedom! So much blood.
So much blood. Never knew there
was that much blood in the world.

INT. VERMONT FAMILY HOUSE OF THE WILLIAMSONS, VERMONT 1862 --
DAY

An 18 yr. old Daniel is speaking to his mom passionately a rifle in his hand as she cuts vegetables in the kitchen.

DANIEL

Ma, there is no arguin' I am
joining the army. All my friends
already done so and are off
fighting. Them southern boys given
a mighty beating to the North down
in Virginia but the people I talk
to sayin' the North about to throw
it back at'em. I am going to be
there and do my part.

His ma stops cutting vegetables and gives him a hard look.

MRS. WILLIAMSON

No you are not. Mrs. Tucker's
already got two dead boys from that
war. And many more I will not
mention through the territory. I
will not see my only child be
another name on that list. No sir
I won't. And your Pa in the grave
not 2 years from the lung rot. I
couldn't survive losing you both.

His mom continues to cuts vegetables but Daniel's eyes become flinty hard.

DANIEL

Well Ma, I wanted your blessings
before walking as a man but
blessings or not I am joining.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You and Pa always taught me to stand when a bully be pushin' and that's what I be about doin' I have two more bells to sign up with the Sergeant before they leave to the front. (Steps towards her)so I best be headin'

Daniel stops himself and turns to go. His Ma stops again. Tears are forming in her eyes as Daniel starts to turn away rifle in hand. His Ma grabs him from behind in a desperate hug.

MRS. WILLIAMSON

Why did your Pa and I have to teach you the bible so good. Why was honor and doin' what's right the bread we boarded to you day and night. I love you more then life itself son, more then life itself.

Daniel turns into his mom's hug.

DANIEL

I will make you proud Ma. You and Pa both. I will show these southerners what kind a man you made.

His ma let's the hug go but holds him by the arms.

MRS. WILLIAMSON

You must promise me one thing son!

Daniel nods his head, tears in his own eyes.

DANIEL

Anything Ma! Anything!

His Ma grabs him hard and gives a belly full of fire in her look.

MRS. WILLIAMSON

You kick those southern boys arses back to their momma's skirts where they belong!!!! Just like your Pa showed ya!!!!

With that his Ma turns him around and swats him on the behind.

MRS. WILLIAMSON (CONT'D)

Now get!

His Ma and him share a wink and a laugh as he rolls out the door. Daniel exits and a short look of tears in his Ma's eyes.

EXT. TREE ACROSS FROM FORT, CURRENT DAY -- LATE AFTERNOON

Daniel peels an eye open, delirious. There are now 3 or 4 crows on the ground. He hears a few more above him. His eyes lock into one crow near him picking at the carcass of a field mouse. Zoom in to the crows face and eyes, a piece of gibbet hanging from it's mouth then back to Daniel his eyes raving, the camera spinning in vertigo.

EXT. VERMONT 1862 SMALL TOWN CONSCRIPTION TABLE -- AFTERNOON

Daniel runs to the center of town and sees the train already loaded with soldiers making all sorts of rowdy ruckus while towns folks cheer them on while 50 feet in front he sees a the recruiting table. Two other boys are there, neither he knew very well, all his friends having already signed up 6 months earlier, in fact most of the boys in town signed up then. He sees Travis, Mrs. Keller's son already at another table picking up his gear. He sees Daniel and waves. Daniel waves back. Travis gets cuffed and told to board the train. He didn't know Travis very well but his Ma was friends with his own. He looks at the recruiting table and the strange motley of soldiers around it as another of the two boys left walks towards the supply table. What looked to be an officer stood behind the Sergeant at the table. Average height, longer blonde hair with a handlebar mustache a standard pistol side arm, a calvary saber at his side.(Lt. Chuggers) The rifle on his back though was a rare rifle, a spencer. Daniel was fascinated with weapons. A spencer unlike the single shot rifles most had carried 7 rnds. Nothing like his most prized possession, in his hand, his father's, a henry rifle. 16 shots. Next to him was a black man, but a negro like he had never seen. He was dressed like an indian. He had two axe looking things stuffed into his belt (Tomahawks) and another spencer rifle across his back(Digs). He was chewing tobacco. The strangest yet was a man in a disheveled dirty uniform at the table with a few days of beard growth.(Sgt. Johns) The strangest thing was he had blades everywhere you could see, strange forearm sheaths and several fighting knives strapped to his belt. Next to him on the table leaned another spencer rifle. Daniel got behind the one boy left at the table. He thought his name was Chase or Chris or some such. He lived in the outskirts of town.

SGT. JOHNS

Ok son, you are all signed up. You are with the twelfth. That's the rowdy boys over there in the train.

(MORE)

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)

Pick up your gear form Corporal Sands who's right over there. He's with the twelfth too and will get you all taken care of.

The boy walks away but before Daniel can move into his place the blonde man looks exasperated while the black man just leans against a fence.

LT. CHUGGERS

Damn Sergeant this is the third pisshole we've been in and you still can't find one piece of fodder to fill our ranks. We meet the Captain in three days and have a suare to get to down south my man.

The Sgt. Turns towards the Lt. His hand absently toying with the short blade on his forearm.

SGT. JOHNS

No meaning to yank your britches sir but the Cap'n told me I could do the choosing and I as a yet seen anyone worth bringing to the Misfits sir. Mayhap that change, mayhap it not. Most of the boys been taken' out of this area already.

The Lt. Looks exasperated. Then his eyes light up at the rifle in Daniel's hands. The Lt. Steps forward just behind the Sgt.

LT. CHUGGERS

Is that a Henry? Damn my eyes but it is.

The Sgt. Turns towards Daniel, eyeing him up and down.

SGT. JOHNS

Where did you get that rifle son?

Daniel was sweating feeling this moment to change everything after and the way he answered this question the key to that road.

DANIEL

My Pa sir. He worked for a gun manufacturer up in Springfield for 15 years. It was a gift for time of service.

The Sgt. Looked him up and down.

SGT. JOHNS
And why ain't your Pa here to see
you off son?

A moment of remorse drifts into Daniel's eyes.

DANIEL
My Pa died 2 years past of long rut
sir.

The Sgt. humphs like death was a long friend.

SGT. JOHNS
You know how to use that rifle son?

Daniel stands all 6'3 of his lanky frame in pride. Now this was something he knew.

DANIEL
Yes sir! I been shooting a rifle
since I was knee high. Shoot a
squirrel's balls off at 200 yards
or at least that's what my Pa used
to say.

The Sgt. Let's out a laugh, a larger then life sound. Daniel can tell he's gonna like this man, the same type of zest for life his Pa had.

SGT. JOHNS
With that Henry of yours I'd say
that shot would take more off then
a squirrel's nuts. Though that
piece takes special rounds, we will
have to order some.

Daniel pats his knapsack.

DANIEL
I got 500 rounds sir, another gift.

The Lt. Moves up with a total loss of patience.

LT. CHUGGERS
Sounds like our search is over Sgt.
Let us get on with this. We must
get to the road.

The Sgt. Rolls his eyes so only Daniel can see then winks.

SGT. JOHNS
 Mayhap it is Lt. Mayhap it is. Ok
 Son you are now officially part of
 the Union Army.

The Sgt. Begins to reach under the table as Diggs steps forward spitting tobacco on the ground. Daniel found him extremely threatening. He was quite a bit shorter than Daniel but stocky, full of muscle.

DANIEL
 Should I go pick up gear sir and
 join the train with the rest of the
 twelfth?

The Lt. Has a big smile and Diggs spits again. The Sgt. laughs coming around the table carrying a pistol.

SGT. JOHNS
 No son. You ain't in the twelfth
 and you ain't getting on that there
 train with the rest of the yahoos.

He hands Daniel the pistol who in shock removes it from the holster as he leans the Henry against the table. His eyes go up in shock.

DANIEL
 Is this a Colt Dragoon? Damn
 almighty!!! I hear there's been
 only a few thousand made of these.
 And wait, what you'd mean not
 joining the Twelfth?

The Sgt. puts his hand on Daniel's shoulder.

SGT. JOHNS
 Your gonna have to learn to let go
 of that country boy wide eyed kiddy
 stare youngster. You in elite
 company now.

Daniel is still trying to take in all of this.

DANIEL
 Elite company?

The Lt. And Diggs walk up and clap him on the back while the Sgt has a big shit eating grin.

SGT. JOHNS

Ya heard me right son. The clarion
call of War is soundin' and a river
of blood to spill and you just been
chosen to make your mark. Welcome
to Blackstone's Misfits, the
toughest sons of bitches north of
the Mississippi.

Diggs tomahawk slams into the table with a grunt.

LT. CHUGGERS

Correction Sgt.

Sgt. John's smile gets even bigger.

SGT. JOHNS

The toughest sons of bitches
anywhere.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- DUSK

A bucket of water gets thrown into Daniel's face by Jenks. Somehow he had been so out of it they had already cut him down though his hands were still tied behind his back and he felt like a slab of beef that had been beaten for a few hours. Taylor stood a few feet off carrying his father's Henry rifle, with his dragoon pistol on his side. Jenks had a bandage around his hand and was still wearing Daniel's assortment of blades. Sgt. John's death gift to Daniel, still worn wrong. Jenks had obviously been [laying with them and holding the wrong end. There were two others standing off to the side equipped with the standard rifle of the Union, a Springfield single shot, the ones his Pa helped make in the hundreds.

JENKS

Up and at'em soldier boy!!! Time
for you to
compe...conke...uhh....damn...

TAYLOR

I think it's contemplate Jenks.
That's the word the Shepard used.

Jenks leans down and punches Daniel in the face.

JENKS

Why thank you Taylor. Are you
ready to contemplate soldier boy?

Daniel spits out some blood.

DANIEL

Hey Jenks. You might not cuts yourself if you hold the other end of the blade and fat boy, keep my rifle and pistol well oiled and I might kill you quick when I come a callin.

Jenks moves forward to punch Daniel again but Taylor stops him then moves forward and uses the stock of the Henry to swing down at Daniel. Darkness.

INT. CELL INSIDE COMPOUND -- EARLY EVENING

Daniel woke to another aching head and jaw. One of these days he would know better then to open his mouth but probably not. Sgt. Johns taught him to well and his Pa and Ma. He found himself in a 10 by 10 cell with the only light a small barred window in the wall and a small window in the cell door with some lamp light flickering in.

DANIEL

One of these days I'm gonna learn to watch my mouth. (Laugh, then a hand to aching jaw) Who'm I kidden'

He started to check his injuries but then heard a key in the cell door. His throat felt as raw as a desert patch.

GUARD

Step back from the door

The door opened and to his surprise along with the guard came the woman(Sara) he had seen with the young boy Jebediah. The Guard looked like he would be staying with her. She had a bucket of water with a ladle. She had also brought a small bag along with her. From some unknown reason Daniel brushed his hair with his hands wanting to be presentable or as presentable as a beaten numerous times hanging upside down from a tree all day could be. She smiled when she noticed what he was doing which made him more self conscious, the killer of many, a member of the infamous Blackstone's Misfits, nervous! She sets the water bucket and ladle next to him. He goes to reach for it but is weaker then he thought and winces with the movement of his arms. The look in her eye is one of mercy. She reaches in and ladles some water and brings it to his mouth.

SARA

Please, rest yourself Sir. The days are long and hard on that tree.

He looks shocked.

DANIEL
Thank u kindly Mrs.?

She gives him a shy look.

SARA
It's Miss, not Mrs. I ain't
married. And my name is Sara, Sara
Johnstone if you please.

This time when she ladles some water to his mouth, his hand
cups her own. The guard grunts.

DANIEL
I take it by what you said that I
ain't the first that seen that
tree?

The guard moves forward just as she starts to respond. He
grabs her by the arm roughly. Daniel moves to teach the
guard some manners but the beating his body had taken
portrayed him again and he collapsed.

GUARD
Enough woman. You are supposed to
give him the water and see he ain't
broken. You done given him both in
my take, so off with yas. The
soldier boy needs his beauty
sleep. (Laugh)

Sara shakes him off her.

SARA
Fine! At least let me see quick as
can be to his blood less you want
to be cleaning out this cell of it
all over the floors.

The guard reluctantly grunts. Sara opens the bag and removes
some linen that she dips in the water barrel.

SARA (CONT'D)
They done did a number on your
face. It might go easier if you
just submit to The Shepard. Noone
last more then 3 days on the tree,
and that one's bones is hung up on
a cross outside the gate.

She cleans his face and he winces a little.

DANIEL

My Ma and Pa taught me as a youngster that when you see a bully pushin' you push back. So I thank ya for your kindness, I do appreciate it greatly but the likelihood of me cowing to that crazy banshee is less then a bear walking by a cone of honey. I have seen far worse then these boys can dish out and I am still walkin' the green. I won't keep you though I wouldn't want to be the cause of trouble for ya.

She gave him a look of bewilderment and oddly enough of hope. The guard had had enough and grabbed her roughly again giving her barely enough time to grab her bag. He shoved her out the door. He looked back at Daniel.

GUARD

Get yourself some sleep soldier boy. You gonna need it, more then you know.

With that the guard slams the door but not before he saw Sara look back at him forlornly. Daniel managed to take himself a couple more scoopfuls of water then dumped some handfuls of water over his head.

DANIEL

Damn all to hell. How in the walk of the river am I gonna swim my way out of this twist of slope. Well as Sgt. Johns always said "Let the day bring the truth of the road."

Daniel leaned against the wall in an attempt to get some sleep. He started to doze off when something hit him on the head. He looked down to see a hard biscuit. He looked up to the window to outside just another hit him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Who the?

JEBEDIAH

My momma said you a good man.

Daniel attempts to stand and lift up to the window which was too high to get to.

DANIEL

Jebediah, is that you?

JEBEDIAH

No time. They coming. But I'm taking real good care of your horse and mule, like I said.

DANIEL

Jebediah? Jebediah?

When he hears no answer he collapses back down and looks at the hard biscuits like steaks and smiles.

INT. CELL -- DAWN

It seemed like he had barely closed his eyes when he was being roughly picked up by Taylor and Jenks. The Shepard stood before him with Tuck behind him, this time with his club visible in his hand.

THE SHEPARD

So Daniel Williamson you have spent one day upon the Tree of our Lord and one night in contemplation of the Devil that dances your veins. What say you? Have you come to understand the truth of the spirit and my role as the Voice of the Heavens within the green of this Earth?

Daniel being held upright between the two thugs and looks directly in the eyes of the insane. He spits on the ground.

DANIEL

What I understand is the same thing I reckoned yesterday. You all are rabid dogs, and there is only one thing to do with rabid dogs. Put them down quick and clean, though for you, I would hazard to guess long and messy might be a more fitting end.

He already knew it was coming and could see it in Tuck's eyes and the Shepard's steely angered gaze. Tuck's hand came whittling down.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- DAWN

Daniel wakes to again having blood trickle into his face. Even more crows sit upon the ground and more are heard above. This time noone is around.

DANIEL

Damn my head can only take so many love taps. I need to throw some hugs back that Tuck's way when I get the chance.(Laugh) Who am I kidden'. I will probably die swinging my nuts in the wind on this forsaken tree with a fucking crow chewing my eyes.

Daniel's eyes glaze hard.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Damn I don't feel so good.

The sound of crows cawing to the wind.

EXT. SOUTH VIRGINIA, CONFEDERATE SUPPLY BASE, 1862 -- DUSK

Daniel lay skulking in the trees with Sgt. Johns next to him as well as Diggs and two others, one man from New York by the name of Luigi and one from Boston named Fesenko. They are watching four sentries two hundred yards distant Sgt. Johns with a spy glass.

SGT. JOHNS

We gots to take those sentries quietly and roll our own take on the 4th of July to their comfy home without them no mind of what we up to till the Cap'n and the rest hit'em from the front.

Sgt. Johns looks at Daniel his gaze coming to rest on the forearm sheaths of the blades he'd given him.

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)

You been practicing with the blades like I be showin' ya?

Daniel looked at him with pride.

DANIEL

Every day. Hitten' the mark 9 out of 10.

Johns smiles.

SGT. JOHNS

I knew anyone that could shoot a Henry like you do would take to blades like a duck to a pinch of water.

Daniel smiles back in the dwindling dusk to eve. Diggs grunts.

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)

You got the right of it Diggs, time to do some work. Diggs take those two and put silencio on the ones to the left, and that was my italian for you Luigi, me and Williamson will take the ones on the right. Ok gents quiet as a church mouse, and give it till the dark done sunk the light.

Diggs grunts and motions to the other two. They all pull their belt knives as Diggs pulls his tomahawks. They canter off into the woods to the left. Johns taps Daniel and points to the woods to the right. The southerners had chosen their site smartly at least to their northern side which had open clearing and a bridge that crossed the small river and no woods starting not closer then a 100 yards to the north of it, which is where Captain Blackstone and the rest of the Misfits held, waiting for the fire. They were dumb in not thinking people could ford the river a couple miles down and come up behind them with trees giving cover all the way to their doorstep which is what they had done. Though they had posted sentries so not completely stupid. Him and Johns move off to the right slinking through the spread of trees till they came up 50 yards to the backside of the two sentries to the right. No telling how many were in the camp, though John's estimated 40 or 50, double what the Misfits held, but though this was his first mission in the couple months Daniel had been with the group, he knew well enough by the training he had undergone that the Misfits rarely fought fair. Johns leaned back against a rock behind the trees they covered in waiting for the last of the sun to sink over the dip of landscape. The southerners are making enough noise to drown out fireworks on the 4th.

DANIEL

How the hell did Diggs lose his tongue?

Sgt. Johns takes a look back at the sentries pissing away their time shooting the bull.

SGT. JOHNS

And why he's always as pissy as a nest 'o' wasps on mating day?(Smile) Well as I hear the Cap'n say once.

(MORE)

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)

He's originally from Texas, raised by Comanche after some southerners killed his whole family and took his tongue, left him in the desert to die, but after two days some Comanche scouts found him, said the Great Spirit was strong in him or such. I say it just made him a mad dog who's good at killin' Stay clear of that one son. It's one thing to do what needs doin' son it's another to enjoy it. Know the difference son, know the difference. You start enjoyin' killen', do something else.

Johns sees the veil of darkness drift down upon the green. He notices Daniel's nerves rattling in his bones.

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)

You ready for this son? Will be your first blood to spill and for many a men a hard road to start and an even more piece 'o' iron to finish.

Daniel whose nerves wrangled sweat from his flesh nodded his head.

DANIEL

I am as ready as I will ever be.
(Pause) I won't let you down.

Johns tapped him on the knee.

SGT. JOHNS

I know you won't son. I know you won't.

Johns removed his throwing knives he held on his back waist, small and slim only meant for throwing, not like what he called his butcher blades he held strapped to his thighs, for his close in work he told Daniel when he had been teaching him throwing and close combat knife fighting. Daniel removed his forearm sheathed blades which were slightly wider, good for throwing or knife fighting. The sun dipped below the horizon and Johns tapped him. They both slinkered out from the tree low to the ground Johns taking the lead. Both of their targets slouched on some bagged stacked oats talking with the other sentries parked on the other side.

The sentries had been planted at least 50 yards from the main camp where most of the southerners were eating and laughing and drinking thinking themselves safe 50 miles from the nearest battle front. Johns gave a nod, Diggs had been waiting for a call, Johns gave it to him with a bird call.

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)

Let's give them the sweet song
goodnight.

DANIEL

I'm with you.

Daniel had never been more nervous in his life. It was one thing shooting animals hunting with his Pa, another to take a man's life, yet people were relying on him. They turned and started running low to the ground. John's hand was a blur as his hand whipped one of his throwing knives taking the one man just as he turned right in the throat. Daniel threw one of his but knew as soon as he had he pulled to the left. It sunk itself in the other sentry's shoulder but he still had time to silence him, still had time to do his job, but saw the man's face in the nearby torch light, saw his youth, the same age as Daniel, saw his utter fear playing in his eyes and Daniel hesitated. The sentry seeing that begin to yell when John's blade took him between the eyes. Daniel just looked on blankly. Diggs was removing one of his tomahawks from a man's forehead while the other two together had silenced the other with standard issued utility knives. Daniel didn't know what to say with his failure. Johns walked up with his blade handing it back to Daniel as he stared dumbly. Johns grabbed him hard by the arms he spit out a whisper.

SGT. JOHNS

Rock your head about it another eve
son, we got work to do. Pull that
Henry and watch our backs.

Diggs spit tobacco right at Daniel's feet. Then he and Johns and Luigi moved to the back of the southerner's camp lighting a few sticks of dynamite while Fesenko removed his Spencer and joined Daniel moving forward covering the main camp. Johns and Diggs and Luigi all threw their lit sticks right near the main campfire. One southerner was intelligent enough, and sober enough to realize what just fell in their lap and stamped one stick's fuse into the dirt, but the other two went off and were followed by three more. The smart southerner and quite a few of his fellas went flying with not all their limbs attached as others went scrambling to find their muskets and others called out warning to arms.

Fesenko started firing at soldiers who noticed the northerners taking two of the four down that were moving towards them, another went down to Johns Dragoon who looked back at Daniel with fire in his eyes. It was all it took to unleash a beast within Daniel he never knew he had. He unleashed the demon in the Henry and started dropping southerners like pea shooting on fair day as he heard the thunder of hooves of Captain Blackstone and the Misfits bringing the dogs of Hell down onto the good green. Close up on The Captain, a large man with a craggy countenance, a saber in one hand and a dragoon in the other reaping mad bloody murder with Lt. Chuggers at his side. Cut the camera back to Johns killing several with his dragoon and a few with thrown blades. He doesn't see 2 southerners with bayonets coming on his back. They both go down with their heads blown to Heaven's kingdom, then comes in Daniel taking another southerner with the Henry's butt end across his head followed by Daniel pulling a blade from his forearm taking the same man in the throat followed by Johns thrown blade into another's. Daniel felt a shadow behind him as the Captain decapitated a southerner about to stick Daniel in the back. In the background is Diggs the wild man with Dragoon firing and his tomahawk swinging whooping. Captain rears his horse backing up three southerners in front, shooting two more southerners with his dragoon to his left.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE
Misfits!!!!!!

His yell is echoed around the camp as the Misfits slaughter, Daniel joining the scream with blood of others drowning his features as he drops the Henry and pulls the Dragoon, his blade in hand, he shoots the two in front of the Captain's horse, then throws his blade into the chest of another. He moves over pulling the knife and slicing the man's throat to be sure.

DANIEL
Misfits!!!!!!

The Captain grins down at him. Sgt. Johns is in the background with a disturbed look on his face.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- LATE AFTERNOON

Daniel is hanging from the tree, a close up of his face.

DANIEL
(Croak) Misfits!!

He wakes to Sara looking startled by his talking. She has been wiping blood from his forehead, but had stepped back with his incoherency. He looks at her dazed.

She steps forward again wiping his brow and bringing up a ladle of water. He drinks thirstily.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What? What are you doing here?

Sara finished ladling him more water.

SARA

To be honest. I don't know. It certainly wouldna be helping me if I was caught.

Daniel didn't know what to say to that.

DANIEL

You should leave. You got that boy to think about.

Sara looks at him, then out of nowhere caresses his cheek.

SARA

It's cause of that boy I'm here. He thinks your some big war hero here to free us. A child's fancy I'd reckon, but he sees somethin' in you, and mayhap I do to. Ain't noone stood up to The Shepard like you done.

Daniel starts to protest but she puts her fingers to his lips.

SARA (CONT'D)

Mayhap my boy be writin' fables in the sand in what he sees in you but if that be so, fables is what I be pennin' too. You got something in you Daniel Williamson, something I want to see live.

Daniel doesn't know what to say.

DANIEL

But if they catch you? I, I don't want to see anything happening to you or the boy, not on my count. I got too much blood on me already.

Sara looks at him in a new light as if a truth that she had struggled to believe now found concrete.

SARA

Daniel, I think you judge yourself too hard, but wether you do or don't ain't a briar patch in this tangle. My boy right now is watching out. You still have another hour up on that devil tree. I am supposed to come to you tonight again to help. I will see you then.

Sara again touches his cheek.

SARA (CONT'D)

You remember one thing. People here including my boy see in you, hope. Call it dumb as an ox on a cliff edge, still it's there. And as my Momma used to say, who we think we are and what the world sees us as is sometimes as different as a pretty posey and a dog's fart.

Sara curtsies like out a fairy tale and damn if Daniel didn't think in that moment she wasn't the prettiest thing he ever done see. As she walks away he sighs.

DANIEL

Damn if I don't got to win the day after that bit of jeweled wisdom.

He smiles.

INT. THE SHEPARD'S OFFICE -- LATE EVENING

Jenks sits with his feet up on The Shepard's desk picking his nails with one of Daniel's blades as Taylor oils the Henry.

JENKS

Do you know Taylor why The Shepard just don't kill the soldier boy? I can't quite figure it. I mean I know he like that tree of his and with most of these scallywags, a day, two at the most they crying and beggin' to bow down and say them prayers and halleluyahs and such. But I reckon with soldier boy that ain't ever gonna be the way the boat drifts the river. What you make of it?

Taylor stops in his oiling. He Ponders what Jenks said.

TAYLOR

I don't figure it either Jenks. It
make no sense to me, but Cap'n
Royster be here in a few days,
he'll sort it out, probably just
shoot the soldier boy in the head
and dare The Shepard to say
somethin's about it.

Jenks laughs and shakes his head.

JENKS

Love good ole' Cap'n, such a mean
one eyed son of a bitch. Why is it
again that he leave us here Taylor?
The Shepard and his rules startin'
to ride my britches mighty
fearsome. We can't stick the
women, we only get to drink one day
a week, no cussin', next thing you
know he'll say I can't be spitten'
me tobacco neither, and these
bleedin' crosses, I hate'em I do.

Taylor looks at his own cross.

TAYLOR

I kinda like my cross, reminds of
my dear departed Ma.

Jenks laughs outloud.

JENKS

Didn't you tell me you hated your
Ma with a passion, that she used to
beat you silly every day of your
life.

Taylor smiles quick.

TAYLOR

That's true, but she did make a
mouth waterin' apple pie, almost
made the beatings worth it. I
almost felt bad when I killed her.

Taylor shakes his head as if clearing a pleasant memory.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Now backs to what you was sayin'. I don't reckon I know Jenks, to keep an eye on The Shepard is what the Cap'n told us, an eye for what, have no idear, but Royster don't do nothing without a plan, and I know I done seen mining tools laying around though I ain't seen no mining bein' done, but Cap'n a big planner that one. Why the Cap'n dealin' with the Shepard to begin with, don't know that neither. The Cap'n always do us fine though so I reckon we just keep a doin' what we be doin'

Jenks grumbled and almost spit on the ground before he noticed where he was and the expensive rugs in The Shepard's floor.

JENKS

I reckon your right Taylor though it would be nice to wet my willy in one of these women, take the edge off so to say. Especially that Sara gal, what a body she got, and she in there right now with the soldier boy playing doctor. You see how she look at him, her batting eyes. How the Shepard don't see it I don't reckon. Maybe cause he be plowing that field every night he don't care.

Taylor raises his hand to silence Jenks just as the door opens and The Shepard and Tuck walk in. The Shepard as he comes around the desk sternly gazes at Jenks feet up on his desk. Tuck backhands Jenks head from behind hard sending Jenks to the ground and the chair tumbling.

TUCK

Show your manners in the Shepard's presence.

Tuck goes to hit Jenks again who had given him a hard look when The Shepard raises a hand forestalling him.

THE SHEPARD

I believe the gentleman has seen clear of the point Tuck. We can not expect much more from heathens of the field.

(MORE)

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

We must show mercy and understanding and the clarity to reach beyond their animal spirit and show them the path to righteousness.

Tuck bows his head.

TUCK

Yes Shepard.

The Shepard looks at the two.

THE SHEPARD

The reason I called you two gentleman is simple. I have heard tell your esteemed leader is a couple days out currently on track from Shelton most likely heading here. I would like you to meet him in the path and tell him I require the fortuitous services of a few more women and a couple of young men to add to my blessed flock. So see if he could use his powers of persuasion and accommodate me in this manner, their are always lone homesteaders here and there. I also hope on the largesse of our past dealings that he under God's grace and strength that lay upon his shoulders has purloined the spencer rifles he promised the last time he parlayed upon our generosity. For our plans to proceed my men must have more then single shot muskets.

The two gentleman looked at him dumbly. Tuck sighed.

TUCK

He wants you to meet your Captain and tell him to bring the spencer rifles and a few more women and young men with him.

Understanding ballooned in the two thugs eyes.

JENKS

I get yas. Why didn't he just say that.

TAYLOR

I'm with yas on that Jenks, didn't understand one muckity muck out of all that.

Tuck loses his patience.

TUCK

Get on with it you two worthless penny bums. Jebediah has two horses already saddled out front.

The two nod their heads, gather their stuff and head out.

TAYLOR

What's a penny bum Jenks?

JENKS

I don't rightly know Taylor but I don't reckon to ever put a penny there.

The door closes. Tuck turns back to The Shepard.

THE SHEPARD

Yes I know my friend but they are two burdens we must work our way through while dealing with that jackanape Royster. And unfortunately we still need him to keep the surrounding towns attention upon his sin and his deprecations and our hands clean as angels singing lullabies. In addition his wartime connections will provide us with the spencers which will secure our future.

Tuck looked doubtful.

TUCK

I trust you with all that I am Shepard and know the insight of our heavenly father lies upon your brow but what happens when you finally give the information the Captain is so keen to get. I can only keep those two in the dark for so long. You do know he will then attempt to kill us where we stand. I dare not question you but it seems to me a history lies between you two.

The Shepard's smile was as wicked and cunning as a viper in the shade.

THE SHEPARD

There does but that was a long road ago my son, and I know he shall certainly seek to take our breath but trust in our blessed God Tuck and the Voice he utilizes through my undeserving flesh. All shall lay where we deem in the road we build.

Tuck look unconvinced but did his best to nod his head.

TUCK

Of course Shepard. I have faith. And what of this soldier. The Tree does not seem to be bending his spirit. He is just as recalcitrant as when first laid upon it. I believe we should just lay him to rest and use his bones upon the crosses on the hill.

The Shepard seemed perturbed for a moment, unsure.

THE SHEPARD

I have had dreams my old friend, deep dreams, which tell me to keep our good Daniel breathing a bit more. DO not ask me why for I don't fathom God's weave in this, but trust and have faith as you always do. God shall bring clarity to our blindness. The Tree will break him upon it's boughs like it has all others. Let us pray, then you shall bring me my daughter under God's hand Sara. Her and I must commune to the Great Spirit.

Tuck nodded and they both bowed their heads.

INT. CELL -- EARLY EVENING

Daniel sat in his cell feeling like two miles of bad road. He was more exhausted then he could ever imagine. His legs ached and he attempted to massage his ankles, chafed and rope burned, and swollen. He heard the keys to the cell door. This time the guard let Sara in then closed the door again and he could hear the footsteps walking away. He looked at her questioningly.

She looked embarrassed and immediately went to her knees laying the bucket of water and ladle, a bag in her other hand rested next o it. She helped him to sit while she ladled water. Before he took a sip he stopped her hand and looked her in the eyes.

DANIEL

How did you get the guard to saunter off and leave us alone?

She pulled her hand away and looked towards the wall.

SARA

It don't matter.

She reached into her bag and pulled out a couple biscuits, an apple, and an actual small piece of pheasant. As her hand had pulled out the meat his hand closed on hers again.

DANIEL

It does matter. What did you do? What did that guard ask for?

Sara looks up right into his eyes with a steely reserve.

SARA

What every man asks for.

Daniel looks away guilt rolling across his fame.

DANIEL

You shouldna done that. You shouldna. What did you do?!

At first Sara 's face flecks shame then quickly turning to anger. She slaps Daniel across the face.

SARA

How dare you!!! Damn your eyes and heart!!!

Sara starts to get up and pull away. Daniel rifts through shock then gathers whatever strength he has left and grabs her leg.

DANIEL

No! No, don't go! Please Sara, don't go!? Please!

Daniel's strength gives out. Sara turns and looks upon the battered form that he has come to in two quick days. She leans down and moves him back against the wall. He groans and attempts to help her but she brushes his feeble action.

She reaches in her bag and removes some dried pieces of meat and some biscuits and water dipping the food into the water softening it as he tries to feed himself.

SARA

At least for one moon rolling the river can you not be a man. Let me feed you. We not be havin' the time for the silliness a man can get to.

He sighed then let her feed him.

DANIEL

Why are you helping me? I know the words you threw out when I was hanging around(smile), hope and all, savior, but I ain't no savior, and hope? I can barely move after two days as crow bait on that wood out there. So again, I ask ya? Why you helping me? Why don't ya all help yourselves? There is more of you all then the rats The Shepard got scurrying in his boat.

Sara looks at him then stops, hand raised with food to his lips.

SARA

We have walked that road twice in the ten years The Shepard has strutted within these walls, the last time going on 3 years, and both ended up with too many of us as bones on crosses on the hill.

His surprise was obvious.

DANIEL

Wait? The settlement been here 10 years?

Sara shakes her head.

SARA

No. My Pa and a bunch of piss drunk miners dug this settlement out of the hill going on I'd say, 20 years. I remember I was 7, my Ma had just passed the year before and the place scared me something awful when my Pa first showed it to me.

(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)

Though I'm the only one still
walking the green, the only one
that saw the earth first turned in
the buildin' of this place. The
Shepard killed all the others when
he first took it, my Pa's blood
painting the ground, screaming
God's name off his tongue, but not
the last, the moon ran red back
then and still does if you was
askin' me.

Daniel's face starts calculating, scheming.

DANIEL

Death, it seems be to the ticket of
the day for years beyond countin'.
So there's a mine around here?
That's what The Shepard really
wants? Gold?

She smiles.

SARA

Only two things most men I done met
want, Gold and women. Spend one and
fuck the other, and sometimes want
one to fuck the other.

Daniel gets angry.

DANIEL

Not all men dog down that road.
Some do got bigger dreams, better
dreams.

She looked at him. Her hand started to come up, tears in her
eyes and a smirk on her face.

SARA

Like you?

Daniel starts to say yes but then the demons of his past rile
up.

DANIEL

No. Maybe a long time ago, but too
many roads and too much blood, too
many Ma's I sent weeping for the
loss of their boys, sometimes my
eyes are as wide as a fireside
spook tale when I don't see stains
scarred on my palms.

He holds her hand to his face.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

That war done taken everything I
ever cared about and left it a
rotten carcass in a ditch.

He turns away and let's go of the past, her hand.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Now where is this mine? And how
does The Shepard get the people to
mine it?

Sara gazes at him like something precious just slipped
through her worn fingers.

SARA

There been no minin' for a couple
years, about the time that
mercenary bastard shown up with his
ragtag band and done holed up for
hours with The Shepard. But the
mine, well my Pa was as hard as
iron, but he was clever, right
clever.

Daniel looks at her turning his head.

SARA (CONT'D)

The mine is right underneath your
feet. He built the settlement on
top of it. The entrance is in the
main cabin underneath a rug.
Though we been told on pain of
breath still leavin' our lungs we
ain't to mention it to noone,
especially not those two
bushwhackers that the brigand left.

Daniel sighs.

DANIEL

This is a right mess I landed in
the middle of. Don't know enough
of what's goin' on to figure it.
And this mercenary. I take it the
fat boy Taylor and the weasel Jenks
are his?

She nods.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Hmmm. To be honest this is a hornets nest all roiled up and me the single bumble bee you think to squash that army. Now I done had the odds against me a time or two or three, but not that heavy. Meaning I don't quite know how that's gonna happen. I might if I got luck ridin' my hips get you and the boy out of here, but I don't reckon on doin' much else if I can even pull that out of the sky.

Her look has the loss of hope in it's countenance.

SARA

As I said I think it's just a woman and a child's fancy. Though the whole town I'm guessin' grabbin at straws. If push comes to shove for my boy's sake I might take you up on the offer to see us out, though I can't figure how you gonna even accomplish that much if after two days of the tree you can barely move. I will have to think upon it. I'd be hard pressed to leave all these people to such as The Shepard.

Daniel touches her arm.

DANIEL

You are a strong woman Sara, strong as the mountain, and if I be seein' away to do more, to help these people I'd do it, but the odds are just too long. But you must be thinkin' hard if'n you be up to this, it's as dangerous as a black widow waiting to sink her fangs.

Sara looks hard at him.

SARA

My Momma always said, let yesterday build it's own cairn and the morrow worry itself when it puts on today's face. Every day of my life Daniel Williamson for more years then I reckon is as dangerous, as how you put it? A black widow waiting to sink her fangs.

(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)

At least with this I see hope,
something I thought long dead and
gone.

Daniel smiles then winces from the bruised jaw.

DANIEL

You are a dream as bright as stars
woman. (Pause) I can get you and
the boy out of this snake pit but
for it to work, you'll have to
gather my weapons, and to do that
from those swamp toads that got
them I don't figure. I'll also have
to hold up someplace near where
they won't be finding us till I can
regain my strength, and we'll need
provisions to do so.

Sara ponders this for a moment.

SARA

You might have to lay upon that
wood another day maybe two if'n we
are gonna make this happen. It
will take me that long to figure
how to do what we is sayin is
impossible to do. The place I
think I gots dead to rights.
There's an ole' cave near a creek
further up in the hills my Pa used
to take me to when I was a wee
lass. It was our secret place
after my Ma passed. The only
people that know of it are all dead
exceptin' for me and I took
Jebediah up there a few times. It's
under an overhang around a bend,
hard to see if your not knowin'
what to look for. My Pa said he
found it by accident hunting, more
like drunk as a skunk in mating
season(smile).

Daniel stood up with all his strength, tottering but finding
his balance. He took her by her shoulders.

DANIEL

Thank you.

Sara softens to his touch.

SARA

For what?

He moves within inches of her face.

DANIEL

For being a small bit of light in
this soldier's road. Seemed like it
was dark as deep forest for as long
as I can remember.

Sara raised her hand to his face.

SARA

Sometimes even a man can get
somethin' right.(Smile)

He presses her hand to his face. They share a look then Daniel loses his balance and strength and falling as they hear the thump thump of many feet. The door bursts open as Tuck and two guards enter, Tuck taking in the rosey color of Sara's cheeks, the guard who had let her in is in the background with a bruise and cut on his face.

TUCK

Leave a woman to her own graces and
always and forever the whore shows
itself.

Sara's face takes on a crimson anger. Tuck motions for the guards to take her.

TUCK (CONT'D)

Take the harlot to The Shepard so
she may commune with the heavenly
Father and purge herself of her
lusts.

The guards grab her roughly by her arms yet she looks defiant and spits upon Tuck.

SARA

A whore?! If I be a whore it's the
Shepard that done make me one and
you be his pimp. Communion hah?
Is that what they call lifting my
dress and sticking his cock in me
is called.

He wipes the spittle from his face then backhands her causing the guards almost to stumble, blood trickles from her mouth. Daniel unsteadily clambers his way to his feet drunkenly stumbling at Tuck who places a hard kick into his chest sending him flying back against the wall. He motions the guards to carry on with their duty while the beat up guard stays. Tuck leans down into Daniel's face who is still lost of breath.

TUCK

Be careful soldier boy. The Shepard wants you on that tree to see the devil dance in your veins but I do not share his faith in this. I would rather cave your skull in where you sit and be done with it.

Tuck slams Daniel's head back against the wall.

TUCK (CONT'D)

Get what rest you can for the dawn comes hard upon the night.

With that Tuck leaves. The guard gathers the food and water, then for good measure kicks Daniel. The door slams. A close up of simmering anger and forlorn look covered in bruises.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- DAWN

Daniel was hanging upside down from the tree, a few crows had already gathered, the sun barely reaching over the horizon. Tuck was tying the last bit of his restraints. Two of the Shepard's men stood with The Shepard a few feet from Daniel. Tuck finishes and walks over to join the Shepard. The Shepard gazes upon Daniel his hands fingering the ornate cross hanging from his neck.

THE SHEPARD

You vex me Daniel Williamson. Part of me, in fact a veritable monumentous part of me wishes to acquiese my acolyte Tuck here and let him end your thread. You ask why I don't? No do not make a response. It was rhetorical. I have had dreams Daniel Williamson, dreams that tell me you are a key to see my plans, my weave in God's eyes set itself upon the road. So I tell Tuck, no my friend. He still has a part to enact upon the hedge wreath of this existence. SO I tell you Daniel Williamson, I sorely hope for the continued breath within your lungs that today is the day The Tree of Judgement alleviates you of your stubbornness and shows you the righteous path to perdition. But what is life without hope and the mercy of God.

(MORE)

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

So let us see what the burgeoning
day brings to our table.

Daniel starts to say something but Tuck's fourth glare in as many minutes as it took for The Shepard to converse stops him.

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

It has been enlightening speaking
with you Daniel Williamson. May
God show you the mirror reflective
within all of us. It will be good
to have you as a son within the
Lord's eyes. And just so you don't
fret, the lovely Sara will no
longer be able to cordial your
hurts this evening. Our communion
last night seemed to take something
out of her ardency. Such is the
power of revelation.

The Shepard grins and walks back towards the fort as Tuck gives one last baleful look and he and the guards move with him, leaving Daniel with the crows and the tree.

DANIEL

At least this be the first time I
didn't need a love tap to get
strung up, though I don't reckon
wether that's good or bad.

Daniel looks upon the crows who start to gather in numbers. He also sees a storm coming in the distance.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

A dog's rain thrown for good
measure. (Eyes the crows) At least
that pig of a storm might get rid
you carcass eaters.

The crows eye him hard.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- NOON

Rain was thundering down like God's own hammer and a few crows still sat staring hard at Daniel who was semi conscious.

DANIEL

Damn, you shit eaters are a
stubborn piece of trash.

Daniel passes out to black.

EXT. UNION WAR CAMP, 1863 -- LATE AFTERNOON

A large union army base, soldiers bustling everywhere, a train in the background soldiers are filling up with horses and supplies. The Misfits have their own area and Sgt. Johns and Daniel are having a knife throwing contest with a target set on a wooden board. Daniel now has two long knives almost short swords strapped to his thighs like Johns though Johns still has his bandolier of small throwing knives across his chest. A large crowd surrounds them making bets. Some soldiers who are not misfits comes up to Luigi and Fesenko on the backside of the crowd. Both the Misfits lick their chops when they see they are raw recruits come in on the train.

LUIGI

Hey lookie here Fesenko. We got
two green toadstools poppin' up out
of the ground.

Fesenko smiles. Both soldiers look nervous as hell but then they see the Misfit's Symbol of two crossbones on the uniforms.

SOLDIER #1

Yes sir. We done just joined out
of New York. Lookin' to get in on
the action sir.

Soldier # 2 shoves his musket with bayonet at an invisible foe.

SOLDIER #2

Yes sir. Gonna stick me some
rebels.

Soldier # 1 looks embarrassed by his fellow.

SOLDIER #1

Are you all a part of the Misfits?

Fesenko and Luigi look at each other with a grin as Johns and Daniel talkin' in the background with Diggs and Lt. Chuggers off to the side.

LUIGI

Why yes we are. You heard of us
have you?

Both soldiers clamor over themselves to be heard with yes. Luigi puts his hand up to stall them.

LUIGI (CONT'D)

One at a time boys. (Points at #1)
so what did ya hear?

Soldier #1 looks at him in awe.

SOLDIER #1

What haven' we heard?! Some say
the Misfits winnin' this war all by
themselves, Mad Dog Diggs, Iron
Johns and Blades Williamson,
Captain Blackstone himself, all
legends in bootcamp.

Luigi gets a sour look upon his face looking at Fesenko who
just shrugs.

LUIGI

Wait, no mention of Silvestri Luigi
or Jovann Fesenko, the Killers of
Creekwater?

The soldiers both look at each other in confusion.

SOLDIER #2

Uhh, no sir, never heard of them.

The soldiers see Daniel and Johns start to get ready for
another contest.

SOLDIER #1

Is that Iron Johns and Blades right
there, throwing knives? Damn me to
all get out, it is!!!! Come on!!!

Both soldiers push through Luigi as if he isn't there to get
close. Both grumble. Camera moves to Daniel and Johns.
Johns leans into Daniel.

SGT. JOHNS

You ready to take another go son?

Daniel' smile is bright as the day.

DANIEL

I've already taken ya twice old
man. Question is you ready for
another go? (Smile)

Johns shoves him then takes out his longer throwing knives
off his back waist sheaths.

SGT. JOHNS

Hey I haven't been using my sweet beauties. Didn't want to take unfair advantage of such a young tyke. (Taps his small throwing knives) and old did you say? Well maybe so, maybe so, but I still got it in me to toss you on your cheeky ass.

Daniel smiles and laughs.

DANIEL

That be true, those are beaunts. Didn't you say your Pa had to wait near a year for those to be sent, from Roday or some such place?

Johns throws his first toss a centimeter from the bull's-eye.

SGT. JOHNS

Romania, you know, Vlad the bloody King or some such, where the gypsies roll around I do reckon. Hmm, not bad for an old man huh?

Daniel looks at the throw.

DANIEL

Not bad at all.

He casually tosses his forearm blade dead center bull's-eye. Johns curses. He walks and pulls the blades handing Daniel his. He turns and looks at Daniel. Bets are flying, money changing hands.

SGT. JOHNS

Let's make it interesting shall we, one throw to call it.

Daniel smiles.

DANIEL

Sounds like a hell of a time. What ya got?

Johns smiles. He turns his back and shoos people to make a path. He takes ten steps and on the tenth step a good 40 feet from target whips around and throws, the blade quivers in the bull's-eye.

SGT. JOHNS

Hah!!!! Take that you young whipper snapper!

Daniel laughs hardy and long. He takes the same position and starts walking the same ten steps as he talks, his hands sliding out his forearm blades.

DANIEL

You are a wonder old man, a legend
of the green indeed.

He spins and flings both blades at once and they stand quivering each to either side of Johns throw. Johns cusses up a storm, many people grumbling, money changing hands. Luigi is taking money from both young soldiers.

LUIGI

And that's how it's done in the
Misfits lads.

Johns pulls the blades.

SGT. JOHNS

Ok folks shows over, Blades here
wins. (Leans into Daniel) I gots
a crink in my neck, I'll give you
this one. (Wink)

Johns grabs him and leads him off by themselves. They walk to a small creek running through the encampment. They both look out at the wilderness, silence coming from both of them.

DANIEL

What's up my Sgt.? It's not like
you to hand me anything.

Johns looks over and smiles.

SGT. JOHNS

Untrue lad. I gave you those
forearm blades you gots, and I had
those pig stickers on your legs
made special for yas not 5 months
back. Cost me two months pay they
did, modeled after the ole' roman
gladius.

Daniel pulls one, it's edged on both sides, slightly longer and thicker then Johns two thigh sheathed bowie knives.

DANIEL

They are an amazin' piece of work
Johns and I thank you for all you
ever done for me. I think I
would've long ago tasted the dirt
of a grave if not for ya and your
teachins'

Johns nods his head.

SGT. JOHNS
Remember me once tellin' ya if you
start down the road of lovin' to
kill, do somethin' different?

Daniel looks uncomfortable.

DANIEL
I reckon' so.

Johns turns to him seriously.

SGT. JOHNS
And where you reckon you at on that
front?

The silence becomes deafening.

DANIEL
To be honest. Hope this war ends
soon for the only thing left in me
is the beast, the beast and a whole
river of blood.

Johns nods his head.

SGT. JOHNS
Remember son, never lie to yourself
or to others all it'll get ya is a
house of cards.

Daniel looks at him in confusion.

DANIEL
What is that a meanin', a house of
cards?

Johns smirks.

SGT. JOHNS
When you understand that son, my
teachin' ya anythin' useful will be
done.

They both stare out over the wilderness, the camera P.O.V. Of
their view.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- LATE AFTERNOON

Daniel flickers in and out of consciousness. The rain is pouring, the crows gathered in flocks spreading their wings against the night, the loud crack of shots echoing and screams howling to the sky from the settlement. He weaves in and out of thought, his body swinging in the rising wind against the tree, madness but a drop step away.

DANIEL

Let the beast out! Let the beast
out! Let the blood run!

The flocks of crows swoop in figure eights then swing in front of the camera in a group edging all to a swirl of black feathers and sorrowful caws.

EXT. SOUTHERN ARMY FORT 1864 -- EVENING

LUIGI

Let the beast out! Let it out or
we fucked!!!!!! C'mon Blades, what
the high hell is up with you, do
your thing or we are fucking dead!

Daniel, Luigi and Fesenko and three other Misfits are pinned down behind wooden crates in a large southern fort, getting shot at from above and by a large group of at least 30 southern boys from across the other side of the fort behind sandbags. While Luigi is yelling at Daniel one of the nameless Misfits jumps back the back of his head blowing out. Fesenko returns a couple shots from his spencer hitting one of the southern boys up on the high wall sending him over. On the other side of the fort Johns and Chuggers and Blackstone and Diggs along with 14 other Misfits are backing out of the gate being haggard by another 20 southern boys as they retreat, pulling wounded Misfits along with them. Another 15 southerners are up on the walkways. The dead and dying of both sides are strewn everywhere. Daniel just hugs his Henry shaking back and forth.

DANIEL

Blood, a river, all a god damn
river of corpses. Death, I see
you, remember, corpses, more
corpses, blood to spill, a river of
death.

Fesenko and Luigi both look at each other and Blackstone and the others retreating as another one of theirs next to him gets shot in the chest, and bullets are raining upon them.

LUIGI

What a time for Blades to go plumb loco.

FESENKO

This was damn bushwhack from the get go. No big war plans here just a bunch of fucking southerners waitin' for us. Who the hell did Blackstone piss off to get us in this shit stick. Our ride is leavin' and if we don't get on that train we better start turnin' earth and layin' down.

Luigi leans over Daniel, shakes him and then smacks him across the face.

LUIGI

Wake up Blades and get to killen'!!!!!!

Daniel finally starts seeing, all the bodies, all the bullets ripping up the ground, the two Misfits dead next to him. He screams, grabbing his Henry leaping from behind the crates like a banshee from hell. The Henry roars as he lays into the southerners moving towards the gate, Fesenko and Luigi and the nameless Misfit behind him firing their spencers. Daniel kills 4 in as many breaths, firing and killing two more up on the parapets, the nameless misfit gets bayoneted from behind, while Luigi his Dragoon now out kills the southerner, the southerners now back pedaling from this beast from the pits fire wildly missing. Several start charging with their bayonets. Daniel shoulders his Henry at same time as throwing one of his forearm blades catching an approaching bayonet wielder in the throat. He unholsters his dragoon and with his left hand hauls out one of the gladius from his thigh. He charges firing his dragoon taking two down, spinning out of a bayonet lunge almost decapitating the fellow with a spinning strike with his gladius then spins using his hip to take another bayonet out of line his hand coming up with his dragoon right under the man's chin, firing, the head exploding, covering Daniel's face with blood, a rictus grin covering his features. Johns and Blackstone smell the rout and stop retreating, Diggs throwing one of his tomahawks in a southerner's back. Blackstone raises his calvary saber, his dragoon in his other hand.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Misfits!!!!!! Charge!!!!!!

Daniel smiles, drops his dragoon and pulls his other gladius a crazed maniacal grin of a beast. Daniel screams and charges a group of southerners, death incarnate.

A close up of Johns killing a southerner with his dragoon then a throwing blade into the eye of another. He stares at Daniel with a worried look. Daniel leaps upon a southerner with both blades tearing out the fellow's chest but not stopping ripping with his blades till it's unrecognizable meat. Southerners are jumping off the parapet outside the fort to escape.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- DUSK

Daniel's P.O.V. Upside down but with his eyes closed with aftershots of Daniel's last image of him covered in blood and guts. After the first line no flashbacks going to black.

JENKS

Wakey wakey soldier boy? You like that Taylor? Though the tired baby doesn't seem to be gettin' it.

TAYLOR

Very good Jenks and I see what ya sayin' I think you done missed something.

The sound of a loud thunk of a fist hitting flesh. Daniel's eyes slowly open, he sees a circling of crows up in the sky and a sliver of blue sky and way above an eagle flying, then his head rolls down and he sees an upside down Taylor rubbing his fists. Pull out of the P.O.V. Daniels spits blood on the ground. Both Taylor and Jenks are still dressed as before, still with his weapons. Jenks leans down next to Daniel and looks at Taylor. The rain has stopped though the grey skies are still present.

JENKS

Well well soldier boy is wide awake. Seems your love tap did the job.

Daniel spits again, his eyes somewhat raving, close to lunacy's cliff edge.

DANIEL

Ahh if it isn't the fat boy and his weasel love. I see you been takin' care of my gear for me, might nice of ya, (Hacking cough) might be makin' me kill yas quicker, make it less on the cryin' like a baby without his rattle way. (Hacking cough)

Jenks walks towards Daniel as if to hit him but Taylor steps up and grabs his arm.

TAYLOR

You knowin' what the Capt'n been sayin' Jenks, one love tap be good but he said not to damage him up too good and by the sound of that cough he already closin' in on the end of the Green.

Daniel's eyes flicker the first breath of madness.

DANIEL

Is that what you be callin' the Shepard now?(Hacking cough)

Taylor and Jenks hold a bemused look with each other.

JENKS

He hasn't heard Taylor?

Taylor steps back and leans on the Henry.

TAYLOR

I don't reckon he has Jenks. Though to be honest I think been hung up so to speak.

Jenks laughs tremendously.

JENKS

A good one Taylor, real good one.

Daniel who looks as haggard as a man can look and not be a corpse in the ground.

DANIEL

Ok you two rejects from a cave man suare. I know you be dying to tell me whatever it is that's makin' your britches itch.(Cough) So get on with already, I been hanging upside down by my knackers in sun and rain for days, I ain't in the mood for you two jackals (Cough)and your feeble clawings at wit.

Taylor and Jenks lose the humour, their faces turning stone.

JENKS

Well there went all the air out of the balloon Taylor. Soldier boy just ain't no fun.

Jenks walks over and grabs Daniel by the head.

JENKS

Couldn't agree more Jenks, couldn't agree more. You see, The Shepard's days are over. There's a new Capt'n in town and oh what a hello he got for you soldier boy, an ole' friend he says he is, and more anger I never done seen steamin' from his eyes. Don't know what you done soldier boy, but I wouldna wanna be you. Wouldna you reckon Taylor?

Taylor nods walking over with the Henry in his hand.

TAYLOR

I don't reckon that quite covers the story Jenks, not according to the Cap'n.

Daniel looks confused, the madness rreceding behind consciousness rising up.

DANIEL

Well it's dusk fellas so why don't you start gettin' me down and be taken' me to this lost ole' chum of mine (cough)so I can give him a proper hello and all, though I gots no idea what you two inbred monkeys are talkin' about.(cough) It's like listening to two cows moo at each other though now that I reckon it I think I might of just insulted the good ole' bovine race.

Both Taylor and Jenks now stand over him with impatience riding them.

TAYLOR

I don't think he been hearing Jenks.

JENKS

I don't believe he has Taylor, must be hanging on that tree gettin's to him.

Jenks slaps Daniel hard and leans right into his face.

JENKS (CONT'D)

You ain't comin' down soldier boy.
The cap'n wants to celebrate
tonight and deal with you in the
mornin'. So you gets to, hang
around. (Laughter)

Switches to Daniel's P.O.V. Jenks pushes his face then gets up and walks away both him and Taylor laughing.

JENKS (CONT'D)

Have fun soldier boy. Enjoy your
last eve on the Green.

TAYLOR

Do you think we ought to wish him
some fun with his friends, the
crows, they do seem to be taken' a
liken' to each other.

Both laugh harder.

JENKS

Good one Taylor, you hit the nail
with the hammer alright. Yes
soldier boy, have yourself some
merry merry with the crows, we'll
be doin' the same with your little
lady Sara.

Daniel let's the beast slip the leash and the two back up a step before realizing that Daniel is tied to a tree, both lookin' up at his legs tied to a limb. They laugh but then Taylor turns back and starts walking back. Jenks looks back with a questioning look.

TAYLOR

I know what's I said to Jenks about
the Cap'n an all not wanting you
all black'n and bruised up but ah
hell.

The Henry's butt comes down ending in blackness and the caw of crows.

EXT. OUTSIDE A SOUTHERN SMALL TOWN 1865 -- DUSK

The Misfits are all arranged around a small cliff over looking the town, about 30 of them. Daniel is by himself on a ledge reaching out over the town with a hand telescope he is using. Johns joins him. Daniel looks up and sees him.

DANIEL

What are we doin' here Johns? We been holed up in the mountains for eight months freezin' our balls to the ice berg levels, no mission, no nothin', ever since that beaver fuck in the fort, and then all of sudden we be told we are hitting this town, some mummer's tale about a supply base. That don't look like no supply base, no fortifications, only twenty or so southerners with muskets who look like they been seein' better days. It figures to me to be just a normal small town of hicks, lots of old and little tykes and women rollin' around.

Johns looks at him, shakes his head.

SGT. JOHNS

I don't figure it either son. It's as confused as a bear between a honey cone and a nice winter cave. But I will let you in on somethin' that's shaken' this ole' soldier down to the quick. While we were up in those rocks, I slipped off and hear tell that the war is over, two months now. Now before you get your britches in a bunch, could be just hearsay, but I do agree with yas on this run, somethin' ain't hittin' the bull's-eye on this one.

They are interrupted by Lt. Chuggers with Luigi and Fesenko along.

LT. CHUGGERS

Ok boys up and at'em. The Captain says were rolling soon, a full frontal charge, horseback. So get your weapons up and ready and to your mounts.

Daniel and Johns share a look.

SGT. JOHNS

Yes sir, up we go.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, CURRENT TIME -- LATE NIGHT

P.O.V. Of Daniel starting off black then opening to close up of Sara's beat up face, hazy.

SARA

We have to get you out of here
Daniel, there gonna kill you.

It goes dark again. Then his eyes open seeing from being slung over his horse, Jebediah walking next to the horse leading his mule. Jebediah has a fat lip. The image is hazy.

JEBEDIAH

Hey Mr. Williamson. I took real
good care of your horse and mule
like I said I would.

It goes dark again. Then his eyes open hazy as all get out, a small fire him covered in blankets. Sara walking in the background then seeing his eyes open, walking up her face leaning in close.

SARA

Get some rest Daniel, your safe.

Daniel attempts to reach out to her. Black.

EXT. STREETS OF SOUTHERN TOWN 1865 -- EVENING

Daniel leads his horse through a town strewn with corpses, only a few his fellow Misfits, the rest southernors but even a few women which Daniel stares at with sadness in his eyes. Off in the distance Captain Blackstone sits on his horse conferring with Diggs who is on the ground with three nameless Misfits surrounding him. Diggs nods his head then takes off with the soldiers in tow. The town is being ransacked as if they are looking for something. Daniel wonders off tying his horse to a post, flecks of blood cover his face. He leans down and looks at a dead child shot in the chest.

DANIEL

What have we become.

Suddenly several screams blare out from the other side of town, his Henry on his horse sheathed, he pulls his dragoon and a forearm blade and runs in the direction of the sound skirting the backs of buildings. Some more screams suddenly cut off. Daniel sees they are coming from a house at edge of town. The door is cracked a sliver.

He opens it with the tip of his dragoon, entering softly his blade held ready to throw.

INT. SMALL HOUSE 1865-- EVENING

Daniel walks into a nightmare, a one room house, a couple of beds against the far wall, a large oak table in the middle, lit by two hanging lamps. Luigi is screwing a young teenage girl on one of the beds her face into the pillow and Lt. Chuggers is screwing an older lady over the table while Fesenko has his pistol drawn watching two cowering sobbing younger children against the far wall. Both the older woman and teenage girl have bruised up faces. At first Daniel is shocked by everything. He stands slack jawed, then Johns comes in behind him, sees the same thing but immediately covers the distance between him and the Lt. In the blink of an eye, the taking of a breath, grabs him by the neck and tosses him against the wall at the same time as pulling his dragoon and aiming at Luigi who is in mid stroke staring at the pistol. Fesenko starts to pull his pistol but Daniel finally wakes up and aims his pistol right at Fesenko's head. The Lt. Gets back up off the ground pulling his breeches up and starts walking at Johns. Johns shifts aim and pulls one of his bandolier throwing knives.

SGT. JOHNS

That will be far enough I reckon.

The Lt. is fuming.

LT. CHUGGERS

You are pointing your firearm at a superior officer Sgt. You will stand down now!

The gun never dips.

SGT. JOHNS

I do apologize, SIR! I don't reckon I can do that. Since when is raping women and children and for that matter killin' them ever been our mission?

Luigi laughs as he pulls his suspenders up and over.

LUIGI

Iron Johns huh, more like pansy Johns. We was just letting off some steam and haven' some fun with these southern whores before you two showen' up and ruining it for us.

The Lt. moves a step closer before Daniel points his dragoon at him. He eyes me.

LT. CHUGGERS

That will be enough Sgt. And you too Williamson. I am your commanding officer and I tell you both to stand down. If you don't want to partake, feel free to mosey somewhere else, but you will stand down or I will have you hung from the highest tree they can find in this shit piss town.

While the Lt. Is talking Luigi goes for his gun, the women and children sobbing huddled in the corner with each other.

LT. CHUGGERS (CONT'D)

Luigi, no!

Luigi's hand barely leaves his holster with his pistol when he falls back with a hole in his forehead and the back of his head blown out as Sgt. Johns fires, then moves his weapon to the Lt. who started going for his own pistol. Daniel takes a step forward covering Fesenko who is looking at shock at his best friend. Daniel moves abruptly to the right as Captain Blackstone and Diggs fly in the door, Blackstone with his pistol out and Diggs with one of his tomahawks in hand and his pistol. Blackstone takes in the scene then places his pistol back in holster.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

What is the meaning of this?

The Lt. stares at the Sgt. then salutes to the Captain.

LT. CHUGGERS

Sir. The Sgt. here gunned Luigi down to an early grave. He doesn't seem to approve of our handling of the southern whores, Williamson here is covering his play.

DANIEL

Sir, respectively, Luigi drew on the Sgt. with death in his eyes. And all we did is put a stop to three men raping two women, southerner or no southerner. I ain't watching women get raped by noone.

The Sgt. nods his head.

SGT. JOHNS

Well said son, well said.

Diggs moves to the side fingering his tomahawk. The Captain takes a breath.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Sgt. Johns you will stand down. I gave the boys permission to have some fun with the southern trash. We will just chalk up Luigi as bad business and forget it.

Both Daniel and the Sgt. look at the Captain like they didn't hear him right.

SGT. JOHNS

I must of been hearin' you wrong Captain. Did you say you told them to be about rapen' women and beating and killen' children.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

You heard me correctly Sgt. This is southern gutter rats not good for nothing but that and dying. The war is over Sgt. Has been for a few months but I heard tell that Jefferson had a gold stash here in this little quaint town and I will have it for the attempt on my life in the last mission they sent us on. Now stand down, it will be the last time I say it.

Sgt. Starts to lower his pistol but then sees Daniel's face, the look of the beast and his resolve irons. His gun raises again.

SGT. JOHNS

Afraid I can't do that Capt'n. Iron Johns is a lot of things, killer mostly, but I still got a shred of morals and a line that I'll not cross nor see anyone else cross, and this is it.

The Captain looks disappointed then nods to Diggs.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

That is unfortunate Sgt.

Just as his words finished Johns crumbled to the ground a tomahawk planted in his back.

Daniel yells and rushes to him. Diggs walks around him and pulls the tomahawk to a gush of blood. Daniel looks down at Johns, blood bubbling from his lips but still alive.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

Diggs, finish what you started and take Johns out back. The rest of you take Luigi and bury him then start lookin' for that gold and Williamson you will get to your horse and head back to camp and wait for further orders.

Diggs takes a step towards Johns.

DANIEL

(Whispers) You will not touch him.

The Captain who had started turning away turns back.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

What did you say?

Daniel palms Johns throwing blade he had had in his hand. The beast dances in his eyes. His other hand slides towards his left thigh gladius.

DANIEL

You will not touch him!!!!

The beast moves the dagger thrown into Blackstone's eye, a sweep of the gladius across Digg's throat then him spinning planting the gladius through the side of the Lt.'s head, then his hand pulling his dragoon before Fesenko can do anything but look wide eyed as Daniel puts two right into his chest. He holsters both of his weapons then runs to gather Johns. He sees the women and children still huddled sobbing.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Run!

They look at him in shock.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I said run God dammit!!!

The older woman finally registers and gathers them all running out the door into the night

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(Whisper) Run like the Devil is on your heels.

He stands up with Johns over his shoulder, Blackstone screaming, Diggs gurglin holding his throat.

INT. CAVE IN THE HILLS, PRESENT TIME --INDETERMINATE

P.O.V. of Daniel, his eyes fluttering open for a moment with Jebediah standing behind Sara who has a damp cloth to his forehead.

JEBEDIAH

Momma, it's been two days. Is he gonna die?

Sara looks back at her son then back at Daniel whose eyes are opening and closing, then drifting shut.

SARA

No son, no. He's got iron in that spirit!.

EXT. SECLUDED FOREST 1865 -- DAY

Daniel knelt next to his horse, holding Johns. Johns has a makeshift bandage wrapped around his chest, blood stains and fresh blood dribble from Johns mouth and onto his chest.

DANIEL

Damn, damn all to Hell an Highwater. How did we come to this Johns?

Johns smiles.

SGT. JOHNS

Don't much matter son. My number been punched, and no don't be starten' to feed this ole' soldier about how I'm a gonna make it all that shite. We both know I got a few breaths left in this battered husk.

Daniel's eyes get teary.

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)

None of that boy. I am damn proud of ya, damn proud. You put chains on the beast. You didn't sell yourself down the river. Damn proud. (Hacking cough with blood) I want you take my beauties son.

(MORE)

SGT. JOHNS (CONT'D)
 (Motions to bandoleer) only thing I
 got worth anythin' (more
 hacking) Give 'em Hell son, giv' em
 hell!

Johns dies. Daniel wipes tears away from his face.

EXT. SECLUDED FOREST 1865 -- LATE AFTERNOON

Daniel mounts his horse. He is wearing Johns bandolier of
 throwing knives. He rides off. The camera zooms in on a
 makeshift cross on a grave. Carved into it reads "Iron Johns
 -- Proud and True, a man to walk the Green with"

EXT. CAVE IN THE HILLS, PRESENT TIME -- INDETERMINATE

Daniel wakes in a cave with sunlight filtering in from the
 opening. Sara is near opening cutting fish up with Jebediah
 near her. A small cooking fire is a few feet from Daniel
 covered in a lean to of canvas to curtail smoke. Jebediah
 sees Daniel awake and sitting up. Both of them have fading
 bruises and cuts on their face.

JEBEDIAH
 Momma, he's awake, he's awake.

He runs over.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)
 How you feelin' Mr. Williamson? We
 was sure worried, it's been 3 days
 of you just layin' there doing
 nothing except thrashing around and
 mumblin' stuff. To be honest I
 think you wasn't gonna make it but
 Momma said you was strong and you
 would be just fine.

Sara looks exasperated and walks over kneeling down to Daniel
 feeling his forehead.

SARA
 Enough Jebediah. To all tarnation
 you let him get goin' and he will
 ramble on till he passes out from
 wont of breathin'.

Daniel smiles.

DANIEL
 It's ok son and you can call me
 Daniel.

Jebediah has a big grin from ear to ear.

JEBEDIAH

Ok Mr., I mean, Daniel.

Sara smiles and looks at Daniel.

SARA

Son, can ya please give me and Daniel a moment to talk. Go catch us some more fish, but be careful and on look out. If you see anything you hightail it back.

Jebediah looks disappointed he can't stay.

DANIEL

Hey that sounds like being a scout in the army. A very important job that, saves lives. Only the ones brave and as tough as leather can be a scout in the union army. And now that I hear my belly rumbling I am plumb famished and I be haven' a mighty hunger for some fish about now. I reckon I could eat a dozen by myself.

Jebediah is jumping up and down in excitement, the bruises on his face painting the hardship he has travailed.

JEBEDIAH

Oh, I won't let you down Mr. William, I mean Daniel, just like the horse and the mule, I took real good care of them, I'll do even better as a scout and fishin'. My momma taught me to fish ever since I can remember. I caught those ones my momma been done cuttin'. I'll reckon I catch twice as much this time.

Jebediah runs and grabs some line and hooks and a can of worms near the cave entrance then runs full sprint out the cave. Sara and Daniel share a laugh and then she gazes at him with a shy but determined look.

SARA

Thank you for that, might kind of ya. He has a rough few days.

His hand reaches up weakly to her own cut lip and bruise.

DANIEL

It seems like he ain't the only one. What a fine mess we all in. I seem to be in the shade of a cave in more ways then one.

Daniel falls back onto the blanket, weak. His hand goes to his forehead.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

How many days I been out?

Sara looks at him.

SARA

Almost comin' on 3 days.

Daniel looks around fearful.

DANIEL

And ya be thinkin' were safe here. They could of tracked us.

Sara shakes her head putting her hand to his chest.

SARA

Now you listen here soldier. I been raised in the woods all my life I know what I be doin'. I tied brush behind the mule all the way up here. And as I said my Pa and I and Jebediah are the only ones who know this place. We a good 10 miles north of Lonesome Hill on the other side of the hills, mostly a deer track to get us here and a hell of a time it was we did doin' it.

Daniel looks ashamed.

DANIEL

I owe you a deep sorry Sara and a great thank you for gettin' my backside out of there and of that damn piece of wood. Now those bruises and cuts on both of you and my weapons sittin' there as pretty as sunshine tell me there be a lot I'm in the dark on.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What happened? Tell it to me from the beginning.

Sara takes a deep breath.

SARA

It started in the late afternoon of your last day on the tree, when the mercenaries arrived.

INT. SHEPARD'S BEDROOM, 3 DAYS PRIOR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Sara sat on The Shepard's bed in his small room off the back of his office, which adjoined the main cabin. She was slowly pulling up her undergarments with her back to camera in front of a small window rain pattering against it. Her back had old scars and new ones from a whip, and her face had a cut and bruise, freshly given. The Shepard was pulling his suspenders back up and putting on his overcoat near the door his back to Sara. The Shepard turned to her.

THE SHEPARD

Your absolution is complete my child. Do you feel the sanctity I have given you in my attentions?

Sara nodded dumbly.

SARA

Yes, thank you Shepard.

The Shepard walks over to lay a hand on her shoulder, she flinches slightly.

THE SHEPARD

It does not sit well within me to inflict pain upon your flesh my child, but the taint of Daniel Williamson and the devil that moves within him had taken it's hold within your spirit. I am sorry now that I acquiesced to your request to minister his hurts. The man is dangerous in his blasphemy. I will no longer allow you to be in his presence until he is cleansed or his bones rest upon the cross.

She bows her head.

SARA

Yes, Shepard, thank you Shepard.

A knock comes upon the door. The Shepard's face holds a tremor of irritation at the interruption. He walks to the door and opens it to see Tuck holding the young on Jebediah by the scruff, the child holding a little blood and bruised face, both soaking wet. The Shepard looked at him in extreme annoyance.

THE SHEPARD

What is the meaning of this? You know better then to disturb my communion. Please inform me that the reason behind your choice is sound before my righteous anger lays itself upon your flesh.

Tuck went to one knee still holding Jebediah by the arm.

TUCK

I apologize Shepard. Please forgive me. The mercenaries are approaching. One of the foresters laid eyes upon them. And young Jebediah here was found with a bag of food and a bucket of water heading out towards the tree.

Tuck shoved the boy forward. The Shepard looked down upon him with disdain, then motioned for him to his mother as Sara runs to him to hold him.

THE SHEPARD

The boy can stay with his mother and I will deal with his transgressions when I am back. We will go to meet our esteemed Captain Royster.

The Shepard looks back at Sara.

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

You will both not leave this room. Is this understood?

Sara holding Jebediah nods her head.

THE SHEPARD (CONT'D)

Good, see it is so.

The Shepard leaves and Tuck closes the door glaring at both of them. Sara pulls Jebediah over to the window but it looks down into only the back end of the fort, rain hammering the ground.

JEBEDIAH

What's happenin' momma! I was only tryin' to take some food to Mr. Williamson and that mean Tuck saw me. Momma he hit me hard, my jaw hurts. He called me names and said he was gonna kill me. Please momma, don't let him kill me. You won't let him kill me.

She soothes his head.

SARA

It's gonna be fine son, I won't let noone kill ya. It's gonna be fine. Now be quiet for momma and let her listen.

He quiets. They both hear many many horses approaching the town, then all hell breaks loose as they hear the loud cracks of rifles firing, a litany endless sound of guns firing. Both jump and she holds her son tightly.

JEBEDIAH

Make it stop momma, make it stop. They gonna kill us, kill everyone.

She holds him.

SARA

Everythin's gonna be fine Jebediah. I'm not gonna let anyone touch ya, not anyone.

The gunshots keep firing and firing, people screaming, dying. Sara looking out the window sees a woman and a man, people she had known for years running to back of fort and being shot in the back, the blood mingling with rain. She huddles Jebediah away from the window to behind the bed. She hears people enter the main cabin.

JEBEDIAH

Are they comin' to kill us momma? Are we gonna die?

SARA

No son, quiet now. I won't let anyone kill ya. We just have to be quiet as a cougar on the hunt.

JEBEDIAH

Ok momma, I can be a cougar, I'd be a good cougar.

She thinks she hears the Shepard's voice and others in the main cabin but barely. All of a sudden she hears the main office door kicked in. Then footsteps directly towards the bedroom. She stands and puts her son behind her. The door shakes from a kick then blows in on the second and there are Jenks and Taylor lookin' as if they just found the prized rooster in the state fair.

JENKS

Ahh there's the golden goose egg
Taylor. We done found it. The
Cap'n gonna love her don't you be
thinkin' Taylor?

Taylor with the Henry as always in hand and Jenks twirling Daniel's forearm blade not very well.

TAYLOR

I do believe so Jenks. We hit the
county jack pot.

At that moment Jenks cuts himself and drops the blade cussin' then quickly picks up the blade and sheaths it after two attempts. Jebediah stifles a laugh. Jenks takes a step towards him but Sara lifts herself up proud and strong and steps forward.

SARA

You know Daniel could give you some
lessons so ya don't hurt ya self
too much.

Jenks anger switches to Sara and he moves to strike her but Taylor stops him.

TAYLOR

She ain't worth spit Jenks, let's
just get her to her invite from the
Cap'n.

Jenks spits his tobacco right on the Shepard's floor.

JENKS

You right as usual Taylor at least
I can now spit on the Shepard's
floor. Been wanting to do that
forever and a day.

He spits again then bows and motions for Sara.

JENKS (CONT'D)

After you good lady (Laugh) the
Cap'n would like to see ya up
close.

She stiffly pushes past him. Jebediah as he moves past sticks his tongue out at Jenks. Jenks moves to hit him but again Taylor stops him. Jenks spits again.

JENKS (CONT'D)

Damn little brat.

INT. MAIN CABIN -- LATE AFTERNOON

Sara and Jebediah get escorted into the main cabin where soldiers line up everywhere. Sitting on the end of the long table furthest from her next to his normal chair is The Shepard looking like he had been pistol whipped on the side of the head, blood dripping. Hands tied behind his back kneeling on the ground is Tuck who has a gunshot wound in his shoulder but is looking angry. A man stands behind the ornate head chair with his back to Sara, spinning a small blade. The Shepard looks at Sara and for the first time she sees weakness, desperation. A man dressed in full Union army dress with some strange sword strapped to his back and two pistols on his waist looks up as Sara enters. (Lt. Sark)

LT. SARK

Ahh this must be the lady in
question. Good of you to join us,
now the festivities can truly
commence.

Sara looks up at him and sees how cock sure he is. He has a strange english accent.

SARA

And you are?

Sara is standing proud, enough of the demure act she put on for the Shepard. It would do no good anymore.

LT. SARK

Forgive me, what bad manners. My
mum would be embarrassed surly if
she still graced the living.

He walks over to Sara who backs up a step. He bends and kisses her hand.

LT. SARK (CONT'D)

I am Lt. Jeramy Sark, formerly of the british army, formerly son of a well to do merchant who spent his time in the far east trading in what shall we call them, exotic goods. Now I hold the most esoterically filling position I have yet to entertain I.e. right hand man to the good Captain here.

The man with his back to her is till smoking a pipe and just grunts in acknowledgment, his hand still spinning a small blade.

LT. SARK (CONT'D)

Yes, a man of few words our Captain, action is more his forte, planning and such. And you must be Sara and young Jebediah. We have heard so much about you from our worthwhile representatives here at Lonesome Hill. (Motions to Jenks and Taylor) Well they do have something left to be desired but alas you work with what you have.

Jenks and Taylor look at each other.

JENKS

Hey did he just go and insult us Taylor?

TAYLOR

I don't rightly know Jenks but may no mind as he could kill us as soon as look at us. Ya seen him use that sticker of his just like me.

Jenks rubs his head.

JENKS

You got somethin' there Taylor, never you mind.

The Lt. Rolls his eyes and looks at the pair.

LT. SARK

Pushah, pushah gentleman. I was in the middle of a grand speech and you two go an interrupt..

A fist slams into a wall. It was the Captain. He still faces the wall and takes a big puff of smoke. The hand he pounds against the wall has some kind of small blade in it and is bleeding from gripping it.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Enough of your prattle Lt. If you weren't as good at killen' as you are talking I would of had your head a long time ago. Now Lawrence, what to do with you, what to do.

The Shepard fidgets and fear paints his features.

THE SHEPARD

Lawrence died a long time ago, only The Shepard remains Captain Royster.

Blackstone rumbles in laughter.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Ahh, we have known each other far too long Lawrence Winterbourne III. Time for masks has lived it's measure, my own included. No more Royster.

He turns, an eyepatch covering his left eye, and slams a small throwing knife into the wood of the table.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

Nathaniel Blackstone was the name I entered into this mud with and long past time to grip once more.

INT. CAVE IN THE HILLS, PRESENT TIME --INDETERMINATE

Daniel was shaking Sara by the arms.

DANIEL

Did you say Blackstone?! It can't be, he's dead! I served him death up close! It can't be. Are you sure that be what ya hearin'?

Sara looks him in concern and some fear.

SARA

Yes, it is what he said. He had an eye patch and was stone cold obsessed with a small knife, twirlin' it and playin' with it constantly, like the ones in your chest holder. Daniel, your hurtin' me.

Daniel looks at his arms and immediately lets go, sees the red marks he left and looks ashamed.

DANIEL

I'm sorry Sara, here you are riskin' everything, abused by every man that walks upon your road, and all I can do is spit and holler. I am as lousy as a cockroach in the pantry.

Sara looks at him, her eyes soft.

SARA

It's ok Daniel, (He shakes his head, she puts her hand to his No face) No, it's ok, didn't you say I was strong as mountains? I can handle a few licks on my arms.

They share a moment, his hand covering the hand on his face.

DANIEL

I'm sorry.

SARA

No Daniel, no sorrys between us, ever, I've had a life of sorrys, sorry for myself, my pa, my ma, life. You been in your own storm of misery, the tree, the Shepard, all of it, and whatever dogged your trail from the war, whatever blood and brimstone that drove you out here. Who is this man? You all pissin' and growlin' around each other and he seems to hold a deep hate in his flesh for you, and you just as headstrong swimmin' the same water.

Daniel leans back then turns and stands wobbly as all get out. Sara moves to help him but he puts his hand up his own strength needing to test itself. He stands but looks shaky and about to keel over.

Then everything spins and he collapses to the ground. Sara rushes to his side and he attempts to get up again but then they get tangled and he collapses dragging her down as well, they collapse together and laugh. A genuine moment of smiles and eyes locked. She leans in and kisses him, a soft light kiss. She leans back and smiles.

SARA (CONT'D)

You ain't ready yet. You need to regain what you lost on that tree.

He sighs.

DANIEL

Ain't that the hammer poundin' the nail.

SARA

Who is this man Daniel?

He looks at her warring with the demons dancing his bones.

DANIEL

He, he was my commanding officer. I was part of a special missions unit for the Union, funnily enough called Blackstone's misfits, and misfits fit us. We were all misfits one way or another but we was all good at killen' which I guess in the end, all that mattered.

The tiredness of his spirit rolled through his frame.

SARA

War ain't pretty by no means, and killen' is what it comes down to. There ain't no right or wrong to it, or it's all right and wrong, I figure it all comes to the same. Daniel you got to let go.

He looks at her with a smile.

DANIEL

Too much to let go of. They made us into mad beasts, rabid beasts, but I had a friend, a father in some ways, a brother in others, Sgt Johns, Iron Johns they called him. And he taught me to chain the beast, to stay just this side of the cliff.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

To hold to my heart and when to pull it back in, without him, I would of been nothin' but a beast. And Blackstone, Blackstone and his mad dog killed him, and I thought, up to this point I had returned the favor. I shoulda known better then to think the road that easy. The man is the Devil incarnate, makes The Shepard look like a school boy, and then God's cosmic joke that the two know each other, that I find'em both as cozy as two coons in a trash heap.

Sara laughs.

SARA

I wouldna bein' sayin' that. Maybe once, but their own no coziness in that bramble. I would be sayin' the Shepard right now is not be haven' any brotherly love with this Blackstone.

Daniel grunts and stands up waving off Sara's help walking over to his weapons, pulling a forearm blade, twirling it, his dexterity off, dropping it but catching it with his other hand before it hits ground.

DANIEL

How you got these and yourself and the boy out of that snake pit and what Blackstone plannin' I need to know. I have to know. I have to finish what was started long ago, in the river of dancing bones.

Sara walks near him, sighing, taking a deep swallow.

SARA

It ain't pretty Daniel, ain't pretty at all. I had never seen the weak gaze of a trapped rat as well as I be doin' in the Shepard's eyes that storm spit day.

INT. MAIN CABIN. 3 DAYS PRIOR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Blackstone stands above the quivering small blade in the table. The Shepard looks defeated, Tuck his head bowed praying.

THE SHEPARD

I am no longer that person
Nathanial. I am the voice of God
on Earth.

Blackstone laughs a hardy laugh.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Lawrence, Lawrence, Lawrence. We
have known each other since we were
young gallivanting on the streets
of New York, the two black sheep of
our well to do families, both of us
running every con we could think of
until so many people were after us
you ran out here and I joined the
military. This is just another of
your cons my friend, but one it
seems, you've bought into yourself.

Tuck attempts to rise in defense only to have his legs kicked
out from under him by the Lt.

TUCK

Tell him it isn't true Shepard!
God strike you for your blasphemes
against the Voice of the Heavenly
Choir!

Jenks and Taylor laugh hard. Blackstone smiles at Tuck's
outburst. He walks over and grabs Tuck's face, looking back
to the downtrodden Shepard.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Ahh, he doesn't know Lawrence? You
found a real keeper here, the only
one of worth you had here, killed 3
of my men with a club if you would
believe it. Too bad he is a zealot
and a gullible one at that. You
didn't know Lawrence here was a
charlatan hmm? That his plans for
everyone was to use the gold and
the rifles he wanted from me to
take over the area. Sad sad man
you are.

Tuck looks to the Shepard and sees the truth in his eyes.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

I could use a man like you though,
Tuck, was it, a good fighter,
willing and able to shed blood,
what say you?

(MORE)

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

Would you like to be a part of the new and improved Misfits, though you would have to let go of that naivety?

Tucks spits on the Captain's feet.

TUCK

Never! He might be false to the Lord but I am not. I will see you all split asunder under God's might.

Captain stands up after wiping his boot with a handkerchief from his pocket leaving it on the floor.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Unfortunate, unfortunate indeed.

The Shepard looks at Blackstone. More gunshots echo out in the yard with screams then more shots and silence.

THE SHEPARD

Why did you kill so many Nathaniel?
Why so much death?

Blackstone laughs again.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Ahh you are precious Lawrence, how I have missed you. Many? You who crucifies people and hangs them from trees. If my men followed orders, I killed them all. Well that is except you, your man here and the woman and her child, though all of them shall meet your precious God tomorrow while you Lawrence, you I will keep around for a while for old times sake. The woman and her child's death will be my gift for Williamson. (He motions to his eye) I owe him a hard measure. Providence wouldn't you say Lawrence that all our threads meet here at a place called Lonesome Hill, fitting as fitting gets. Some who believe in such might call it destiny, but as all know fate is a fickle beast. Unfortunate Diggs is another week out, he would of enjoyed taking young Daniel's life himself. Now back to your query my old friend.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

Why kill, well to be honest. I needed to vent, to blood my men and well, cause I could and to prove a point to you Lawrence. To make you understand the futility of your paltry dreams. You always thought too small, one of your regrettable traits I would say. With the chaos of the war and with my men and arms and gold. I will take over the whole territory. Governor Blackstone, has a certain ring don't you think?

Sara spits on the ground.

SARA

You all as crazy as a mare in heat.

Jenks grabs her by the back of her head while Jebediah kicks his chin and he hops around then moves to strike the lad.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Enough you mangy mutts. Take the woman where you will and do your heart's desire and with her child but out of my sight, just make sure they both stay alive and are at the tree in the morning to surprise our young soldier. The Shepard here and I need some privacy to talk about gold and the future of my Governorship. Sark take the misguided servant of the almighty and stake him out on one of those crosses out front.

Everyone moves to his orders, Jenks and Taylor roughly grabbing her and Jebediah out the front door.

EXT. CAVE IN THE HILLS, PRESENT TIME --INDETERMINATE

Daniel, still twirling his knife, grips it hard then throws it, dead center into the fish Sara had been filleting.

DANIEL

A house of cards indeed Johns. I hear ya and understand.

He looks at Sara who stands with some shame walking her eyes.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Did they?

Sara looks at him.

SARA

Men Daniel, men, of course they did, but they got drunk out of their minds to work themselves up to it and the whole camp was drunk by the time I rode out of there with Jebediah and your weapons. I had a hard hankering to gut those rats, but getting to you and knowing the hell they'd catch when Blackstone found out stayed my hand.

She turns around to not see the anger and tears.

SARA (CONT'D)

How I wanted to gut them. (Whisper)

INT. HOUSE IN SETTLEMENT -- NIGHT

Jenks has Sara bent over on all fours doing her from behind while Taylor is in front of her with his hand on the back of her head forcing his cock in her mouth, both of them with whiskey bottles in their hands. They are both drunk.

JENKS

Remember whore! If you don't be actin' like you enjoyin' us double diddlin' ya we will take it out on ya boy, you hear! (He slaps her ass) Ya hear me whore?!

She nods as the camera pulls out of that room into the other room Jebediah chained to the wall.

JEBEDIAH

What ya doin' to my momma?! Momma, are you alright, Momma?! I gonna kill you, kill you both if you hurt my momma!!!!!! See if I don't (Tears) see if I don't.

INT. CAVE IN THE HILLS, PRESENT TIME --INDETERMINATE

Daniels arms come around her in a hard embrace, her tears sheddin' as she keeps whispering "Gut them" over and over again.

DANIEL
 It'll be alright, right as rain.
 They ain't gonna be living much
 longer I promise ya that!

He turns her around, his fingers collecting a tear, he grabs her and kisses her, she struggles at first then melts into it. He kisses her face, her cheeks, her hair.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
 Strong as mountains.

They collapse to the floor clothes being peeled in a ferocious need.

EXT. STREAM OUTSIDE CAVE -- DAY

Daniel exits cave doing up his breeches, then stretches in the sun and sees Jebediah 50 feet downslope with his string at the feet of a pretty good size stream. Daniel strolls towards him and sees already to fish, one still flopping on the ground near Jebediah. Jebediah sees him as he gets close. He waves excitedly at Daniel then at the fish.

JEBEDIAH
 Do ya see Daniel? Do ya see? I
 got me 2 already and I been keeping
 look out. I told ya I be a good
 scout and good at fishin'.

Daniel's smile becomes bigger.

DANIEL
 I see that Jebediah, a damn natural
 scout in the makin' ya are. And
 your momma almost ready to start
 cooking up the food so you better
 get those ones you caught up to
 her. Y'all need to get some food
 in ya. Ya both headin' out in the
 mornin'.

Jebediah hurries up and pulls his string out of the water and starts gathering the fish, one still squirming he almost drops then gets a hold of.

JEBEDIAH
 Yous comin' with us Daniel? Say
 you are. I mean I'm tough as
 leather but, well momma might need
 both of us to protect her an all.

Daniel smiles.

DANIEL

You'll have to protect her for me
for now Jebediah. I got some
business I need seein' to then I'll
be hitten' the road hard and strong
as the north wind on your trail.
You ain't gettin' rid of me that
easy. I got to stick around and
teach ya how to be a bona fide
scout.

Daniel leans down and rustles Jebediah's hair.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Now let's get up there before your
momma start worryin'.

Jebediah walks with him up to the cave as he continues to
almost drop the fish.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I can carry those slick baddies for
ya if ya be wantin'.

Jebediah fervently shakes his head as the fish almost slip
through his grasp again but he doggedly wrestles them back
into submission.

JEBEDIAH

No I got'em Daniel. A real man
takes care of his business, that's
what momma said once. Though I do
think you should be goin' with us
if we be goin'. But I reckon ya
should take care of your business
like my momma said a man should.
My momma the smartest momma in the
world, and that's where I get the
tough as leather part, my momma
told me that.

Daniel laughs as they enter the cave.

DANIEL

I'm sure she did and right as rain
she is.

EXT. TREE OUTSIDE FORT, 2 DAYS PRIOR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Jenks and Taylor hang upside down from the tree. Crows dance
around hopping and flying.

JENKS

Damn Taylor we been up here all day. You think they gonna let us die up here?

Taylor looks pissed at Jenks.

TAYLOR

You got us strung up like two sides of beef Jenks. You wantin' to stick that woman and get piss drunk.

Jenks looks at him with anger in his eyes.

JENKS

You son of a whore. I don't remember ya pulling back your wanker when it came time to be usin it. And noone force fed ya moonshine you giant fat piece of lard shit.

Applause echoes. Lt. Sark stands there with two soldiers.

LT. SARK

Okay laddies. No more hanging around for you two gents. (Laughter) You are ordered to remedy this debacle by the Captain himself. Three other groups have already been sent out to find our escaped little birdies but I assured our esteemed leader you were the two gents to do the job. At the very least I will find it highly amusing to see you fail again and the Captain has acquiesced to my request. So up and at em and foot to the trail and all that. Bring me the soldier boy, do what your dogged hearts deem prudent with the whore and her brat. But I truly want to see what all the hooplah is about with this Blades Williamson, the man that took the great Blackstone's eye and put a new smile on our beloved Digg's countenance. So get to it already.

Taylor and Jenks look at each other then Sark.

JENKS

Uh Sir, we sure appreciate all of that, such a nice speech and all, but I think, uhh, it might help if, uhh, ya all let us down.

TAYLOR

Yea, what Jenks says.

Sark smiles then quicker then quick his pistols fly out of the holsters firing, both ropes are torched and the two fall to the ground.

LT. SARK

There you go gents. Now no excuses, no dilly dallying, get to the chasing of the birds. And remember you fail to capture the quarry and I will kill you myself.

EXT. STREAM OUTSIDE CAVE -- DAY

Daniel is cinching the saddle of his horse as Jebediah sits atop the mule. Daniel is fully armed his Henry on his back. Sara looks at him as he turns to her.

SARA

Daniel, come with us. Forget these gutter rats. We could, together, mosey somewhere else and start over. (Her hand goes to his face.) Please. I don't wanna see ya under a layer of dirt and lose, uh, lose what we found.

She turns away and laughs.

SARA (CONT'D)

Foolish Sara, here I am thinkin' it, it meant somethin', that I meant somethin', forget what I said, just runnin' my....

Daniel shuts her up with a hard kiss, Jebediah laughs excitingly.

DANIEL

It meant everythin' woman and you damn well should reckon it.

His smile takes the sting away.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I told ya once not all men are the same. (He kisses her) Some got bigger dreams, better dreams.

Tears form in her eyes.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I got ta do this if we be wantin' the life you be talkin' up. I got to put an end to my past, put an end to those rabid hounds. Otherwise they gonna bring the same misery they brought on you and all the corpses whose better days are over litterin' these hill to everyone, too all over this territory. Someone gotta put an end to that for all the days of the Great Green.

Sara looks at him, leaning her head into his shoulder.

SARA

But Daniel there's 30 or 40 of em', and more on the way. How is one man gonna stop that?

He smiles.

DANIEL

They never met Blades Williamson. One more time for the beast to hunt. And if'n I can cut the herd before that black mad dog Comanche orphan gets here, I have a good chance of seein' daylight and your beautiful face another day, and time to grow old and see this boy become the scout of all scouts. (Winks) but whatever story we tell ourselves, whatever slip of words I can coax out of this backwoods mouth to make your heart flutter when I'm around, none of it matters if I don't do this. My ma and Pa taught me when a bully starts bullyin' then it's time for a good man to stand up.

He hugs her hard.

SARA

Out of all the men I had to land
myself with I go and choose a hero.
My pa always said I had the sense
of a demented squirrel, forgetting
all the nuts on the ground for the
one of a different color at the top
of the tree. Ok Daniel Williamson,
do what you need to do but ya
better be keepin' yourself
breathin' or by all that's holy I
will reach until the grave and kill
ya again myself.

JEBEDIAH

Momma you did say to me a real man
takes care of his business.

Sara and Daniel both laugh.

DANIEL

Out of the mouth of babes.

Sara rustles her son's head.

SARA

You are by far too smart for your
own good.

Jebediah looks confused.

JEBEDIAH

I don't understand momma, you the
one that taught me, tough as
leather and smart as a fox in a hen
house. That's what you always say
to me and that we two peas in a
pod.

DANIEL

And I say she says true Jebediah.

SARA

Well it seems I'm outgunned and too
clever for my own good.

Jebediah laughs. Daniel walks over to him pulling out a
forearm blade.

DANIEL

I want you to take this Jebediah,
just in case.

Jebediah looks like he just received the best thing he ever done seen.

JEBEDIAH

Don't ya worry Daniel, I will.
 Noone gonna hurt my momma. I
 protect her real good, just like I
 took care of the horse and mule,
 and fishin' and scoutin'. I am
 good at whatever set my mind to and
 ain't noone gonna touch a hair on
 my momma's head.

Daniel smiles up at him.

DANIEL

I believe ya on all counts son.

He turns to Sara starting to pull out another blade but she stops him and out of a saddlebag pulls out a pistol.

SARA

You gonna need all those I think
 and your stuff wasn't the only
 thing I done took from those wastes
 of breath. I can take care of
 myself Daniel Williamson, best you
 get that right.

He raises his hands in surrender.

DANIEL

Yes mam!

He grabs her and hugs her tight with a deep kiss.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Now remember what I said. Lowell,
 talk to Mr. Stokes and keep to the
 trails till ya.

SHe shuts him up with another kiss.

SARA

I know Daniel, we done gone over it
 a hundred times. I grew up in
 these hills if you be forgettin and
 didn't we just have a talk about me
 taken' care of myself. Damn all to
 kingdom come, ya a slow learner.

A big laugh by Daniel.

DANIEL

Strong as mountains. You a fine
fine woman if I do say so myself.
Now git' while ya got daylight and
don't stop for noone till you get
to Lowell. I'll meet up with ya
there.

He kneels down to lift her up and she snorts. She leaps up
onto the horse like she was born there.

SARA

C'mon Jebediah let's leave the man
to his business. (Whisper) Slow
learner that one.

Jebediah waves excitedly and almost falls cause he's not
looking where he's going but then fervently starts waving to
Daniel again as they slip behind trees, and a branch twats
Jebediah in the head but he just laughs.

DANIEL

Damn fine woman and a hell of a
scout.

Daniel turns towards the direction of Lonesome Hill.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

I'm gonna giv'em Hell Johns, I'm
gonna giv'em hell.

EXT. COURTYARD OF LONESOME HILL --DUSK

Sarks fuming is pacing back and forth, growling, cussing as
Jenks and Taylor stand in front of him looking extremely
nervous. Other soldiers in the background are stacking bags
of gold in a wagon, coming and returning through the main
cabin. A few nameless soldiers stand behind Jenks and Taylor
also looking nervous.

LT. SARK

Are you meaning to tell me you
still can't locate one man, a woman
and a child? It's been 5 bloody
days. Blackstone left it to me to
retake this Williamson and you two
are making me look bad. Diggs will
be here in a few days and I want
that man captured before then,
Blackstone will know who he can
rely on, a proper English warrior
not some savage raised mute. Do I
make myself clear you buffoons.

Jenks and Taylor look at each other confused.

JENKS

Did he just call us some kinda ape
Taylor?

TAYLOR

I think he did Jenks, though I
think it's a real savage kind ape
that runs in packs so I don't
rightly know if it's an insult or a
compliment.

Sarks rolls his eyes then does a swirling spin his sword
flying out and stopping an inch from Taylor's fat face.

LT. SARK

That is baboon you useless gutter
tripe, buffoons, village idiots and
yes I did insult you both. This
Blades could be halfway to Texas by
now. You have cost me too much and
your toddler level intellect is
infuriating. Why should I not just
leave your headless corpses along
with all the others we threw down
the hill?

Taylor touches his finger to the point of the sword to
attempt to gently move it away from his face but ends up
cutting himself and grimaces. Jenks steps forward but then
sees the look in the Lt.'s eyes.

JENKS

Uhh sir, I don't reckon soldier boy
done gone nowhere.

Sark sighs and rolls his eyes but in a flourish sheathes his
sword.

LT. SARK

Besides a complete butchering of
the Queen's English I feel the
tremendous vibrational quake of
your brain attempting to disgorge
some insight. So continue and make
it a delectable bit of conversation
otherwise your heads will be
decorating one of those crosses out
there in what passes for decor to
you ignorant Americans.

Jenks and Taylor both look at each other and swallow.

JENKS

Uhh, not sure what all that gibber jabber meant, but, well, uhh, you tell him Taylor.

Sarks taps his foot fingering one of his pistols.

LT. SARK

One of you better loosen his tongue as my patience is wearing thin and the urge to shed blood is an ever present delight.

Taylor clears his throat.

TAYLOR

Well, what Jenks, is tryin' to say is, well, we found Davis and his men dead as a door nail up in the hills when we was comin' back, uhh, from our search.

JENKS

Yep right on the river Taylor. And they was done in by blades, Davis looked like a blade gone right up under his chin, half his jaw was hanging on by a thread.

Lt. Sark stops, thinking his fingers tapping some unseen rhythm on the handle of his pistol. Both Jenks and Taylor keep eyeing it.

LT. SARK

Any other people missing?

Taylor and Jenks both look at each other.

JENKS

Well now ya mention it, Drubbs and his group ain't checked in yet, they about an hour past due.

Sark smirks then whips back towards the two which makes them jump.

LT. SARK

Ah no need to be so jumpy my little doves, you actually just gave me a brilliant idea.

They look confused.

JENKS

We did?

TAYLOR

Well that's what were here for me and Jenks. IN fact I remember one time, don't you Jenks when the Captain himself.

Sark interrupts him.

LT. SARK

Enough of your prattle. 8 men this Blades took, and all knife work. He might be just as good as the illustrious Captain said he was. Absolutely riveting this is going to be. Alright my cheeky buffoons, this is what we will do.

EXT. FORESTED HILLY LANDSCAPE -- EVENING

Daniel sat against the trunk of a tree as the rain came down. His Henry sat next to him, leaning against the tree as Daniel slid a whetstone against one of his blades.

DANIEL

Twelve in less then a day. As good as a turkey shoot, though they gonna be tougher now. Gots to be careful Williamson, Johns always said a careless soldier was one already six feet under.

Daniel heard familiar voices ringing somewhere near. He smiled like a kid in a candy store, grabbed his rifle and set it under a hidden lean to he had made.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

This ain't your kinda work beauty. Your turn will come soon enough.

He pulled a gladius and a bandolier throwing blade, grinned like a devil then scampered into the trees, the rain drowning the night.

EXT. FORESTED HILLY LANDSCAPE -- NIGHT

Jenks and Taylor are trudging through the forest huffing and puffing with two soldiers in their shadow following. Rain coming down hard.

JENKS

God damn Taylor, my legs feel numb
in this pig shit. How much farther
ya think we need to walk in this
dog pour?

Taylor huffing and puffing attempts to respond.

TAYLOR

I don't rightly know Jenks, until
the English man says no more I
reckon. But I tell ya with a hand
on my ma's grave, if I never need
to walk again, I'd go to church
every Sunday till the end of my
days.

Jenks laughs.

JENKS

You never seen the inside of a
church in your entire speckled life
Taylor and didn't ya say you were
the one that killed your ma, don't
ya be thinkin' it's a little shady
of ya to be swearin' on her grave,
gives me the spooks just thinkin'
about it, ya might stir up her
ghost or hungry spirit or some such
with such talk.

Taylor stops and shudders, him and Jenks shoulder to shoulder
out of breath.

TAYLOR

Ya shouldn't be talking about
ghosts in a storm like this Jenks,
no creepys and crawlies it's bad
luck to be mentioning the dead like
that.

Jenks spits tobacco.

JENKS

What are you goin' on about Taylor,
you was the one swearin' on your
dead ma's grave who you killed
yourself, don't be chattering to me
about bad luck.

They both hear someone clearing their throat. They turn around to see Daniel with a bloody gladius in one hand and then pulling a small bandolier blade out of the throat of the other soldier, both soldiers corpses. Daniel has a big smile on his face.

DANIEL

You two done bickering and goin' at each other like two school girls? You all ready to meet embers and ash of what's due?

Jenks and Taylor look at Daniel and big shit eating grins roll across their face.

JENKS

Look Taylor, soldier boy right on cue.

TAYLOR

Right as rain Jenks, looks like our prayers are answered, no more walking except the steps that take us back to a warm fire.

Daniel looks confused, his body tense.

DANIEL

What are you two gutter rats scuttlin' about?

Daniel turns quickly as he hears a noise behind him and sees 6 soldiers carrying spencer rifles all aimed at him. He turns back to Taylor and Jenks and sees they have been joined by some foppish looking gentleman with two pistols on his waist and a large sword on his back.

LT. SARK

So this is the infamous Blades Williamson. To be honest I am not very impressed but then you Yankees have much lower expectations then a true child of the isles.

Daniel grips his blades.

DANIEL

You must be the Englishman. Sara did say ya reminded her of a peacock, now that I see yas and listen to ya squawk I can see she was bein' nice.

Sark's affable nature slips for a moment but regains his smirky smile once more.

LT. SARK

Well we will take care of that bird soon. (Paces hands behind back)
Killed ten of my men, very impressive that, though a bit unsporting from the shadows and all. Personally I prefer face to face, mano e mano, etc. etc.

DANIEL

And nine to one. I reckon there's honor in that somewhere, ya being a child of the isles and all, must be a different definition, courtly ways and such, far too much for a humble soldier to get. By the way it's 14 dead by my reckonin', and soon to be climben' the ladder on that count.

Sark looks at him with hurtful pride like everything wasn't going the way he planned.

LT. SARK

My oh my you are a cheeky bastard, though I think the game has come to an end for the infamous Blades. I knew you wouldn't be able to resist these two hallmarks of humanity staked out in the open and that it would make you careless. I heard they spent long hours sticking their unsavory manhood in that woman of yours, and according to them she actually enjoyed it, though I find that hard to understand in even the uppermost straining of my imagination.

Daniel eyes Jenks and Taylor like they were dinner. They both took a step back. He then stares right into the eyes of Sark and even he loses a little of his cockiness. The beast has lit it's fire.

JENKS

Did he just insult again Taylor?

TAYLOR

I think he did Jenks though hard to figure with all the words he uses.

Daniel takes a step forward Jenks and Taylor scuttle back.

DANIEL

Oh those two I'll save for later as
I most likely reckon there gonna
run here very shortly and I will be
a little too busy to give them
what's comin'.

Sark motions to the 6 soldiers they take a step closer and
all lock their weapons on Daniel.

LT. SARK

Interesting, and what do you
suppose you are going to do my
upstart soldier with as you
mentioned nine to one odds. I
think you should just lay down upon
the ground and let us send you to
sweet oblivion.

Daniel smiles the smile of a beast.

DANIEL

Are you ready?

Sarks seems perplexed.

LT. SARK

And pray tell, what is it you think
I should be read...

Before he finishes Daniel's left hand is a blur his throwing
blade in one's throat spinning his gladius almost
decapitating another, shoulder blocking another to the ground
slicing another's arm as he fires his rifle now into the sky.
Jenks and Taylor start back pedaling. Sarks pulls his
pistols and fires as Daniel spins the same soldier into the
bullets, his hand another blur as a soldier takes another
blade in his hand as he fires causing him to move his rifle
shooting his own companion, Daniel then spinning, keeping
that same soldier between him and Sark's pistols as he
finishes the spin behind the soldier and sticking his back
with the gladius three times at same time as pulling his
dagoon and killing the one that had fallen then aiming at
Sark as Sark aims at him. Jenks and Taylor run.

JENKS

Run Taylor he's a demon from hell!

TAYLOR

Right there with ya Jenks! I think
he has my ma's spirit in him. I'm
sorry ma!!!!!!

Sarks rolls his eyes and him and Daniel stand there both aiming weapons.

LT. SARK

Those are the two most worthless creatures I have ever had the misfortune to run across.

DANIEL

Well there's one thing I reckon we can agree on and I do believe my count is up to 20 if ya be keeping track of such things. I dare say you runnin' out of men.

LT. SARK

You have put me in somewhat of a predicament with the Good Captain I would agree, not the most forgiving gent I have ever been acquainted with but I believe between my charm and your head I can sashe myself within his good graces once more.

Daniel non chalantly shakes his gun.

DANIEL

I think ya gettin' ahead of yourself don't ya think?

Sark's smirk comes back alive.

LT. SARK

Well I must say I was impressed with the knife work there with the lads but alas still only a bump in the road. What say we handle this like the gentleman I know I am and hope somewhere in there one resides within you. We at the same time put down our firearms and settle this on the field of battle like unto olden times, blade to blade. Not to mention the rain is getting mighty tiresome and I would like to return fairly soon for a spot of tea to warm the bones. Well and to kill those two mentally challenged fellows that run out of here with such a lack of grace and aplomb.

Daniel looks at him eyeing the sword.

DANIEL

I'll take ya up on that generous offer. Count of 3 with the pistols?

LT. SARK

Very courageous of you dear chap.
3 it is. 1-2-3.

As Sark counts they both slowly lower their pistols into their holsters then unbuckle them together. They each other with their holsters in their hands then drop. Daniel takes out his two gladius as Sark takes out his katana. Sark twirls his katana with a smirk.

LT. SARK (CONT'D)

I insist in warning you my good fellow. I have been trained since I was a child in the use of the sword in the orient. You might have had more of a chance seeing which one of us could fire our pistols.

Daniel crouched low with his gladius.

DANIEL

Thanks for sharing, I'll remember to carve it on your grave stone, here lies an Englishmen that talked to much and played with a sword since he was little.

Sark lost it and like lightning attacked swinging his blade down Daniel using his left gladius to swing it out wide jabbing with his right but Sark was already spinning out of the way swiping with his sword at Daniel's back but Daniel leaped in a tumble roll forward still getting nicked on his back. He rolled back to his feet and turned only to find Sark already on him swinging again downward. Daniel used his gladius in a cross block but got a front kick for his troubles flying backwards to land on his rump from which he quickly scrambled to his feet. Sark smiled and the rain fell.

LT. SARK

I forgot to mention I also studied the arts martial as well as the sword. How invigorating this is, I am almost perspiring.

Daniel gritted his teeth and felt the blood trickling down his back.

DANIEL

You talk too much.

LT. SARK

Alas you are not the first to say
so but I find my own conversation
the only stimulating one to be
found.

Sark motioned for him that it was his turn to come forward as he nonchalantly held his blade down towards his feet. Daniel growled and charged a whirling dervish of blades and Sark parried all of them then swung his blade handle hitting Daniel across the head followed by his elbow then as Daniel started to go down hit him with a knee swinging up cracking against Daniel's chin and as Daniel stumbled back came in with a flying kick that tossed Daniel against a tree one of his gladius falling from his hand. Sark wasted no time and charged forward thrusting his blade through Daniel's shoulder pinning him to the tree, his hand releasing his other blade. Sark let go of his blade and stood back admiring his work as if it was a piece of art. Daniel bled from his lip and a cut across his temple and he grimaced from the blade through his shoulder.

LT. SARK (CONT'D)

Ah short and sweet, to say I am not
disappointed would be a deceptive
proposition to say the least. I
thought I would of experienced much
more of a challenge.

Daniel looks at him his anger rising into his gorge.

DANIEL

Are you done working your mouth?

Lt. Sark smiles as if he is dealing with a small toddler.

LT. SARK

Ahh, eager for Death's embrace
after such a meager showing. I
quite understand.

Daniel spits glob of blood out of his mouth onto the Englishmen's foot and the rain falls.

DANIEL

Are you ready?

Sark laughs.

LT. SARK

Ready?! (Laughter) and what would I
be..

Daniel's hand comes up with a clump of mud right into Sark's face. He screams as he wrenches the sword out of his shoulder throwing it ten feet in front of him as Sark is still peeling mud out of his eyes. Daniel kicks him in the nuts then as Sark bends over grabbing them Daniel grabs the top of his head and brings it to his knee and as Sark starts reeling back Daniel grabs his hair and punches him three times in the face then kicks him in the chest sending him flying near his sword to land in the mud. Daniel walks over and in a lot of pain picks up his two gladius. He then turns to find Sark attempting to crawl to his feet.

DANIEL

Round 2 I reckon is what I meant
with "are you ready?" I guess not
by what I be seeing. Oh I forgot
to mention. I was taught by Iron
Johns for say 3 or 4 years in the
art of dirty fightin'. Just to let
you know and all seein' as your big
on sharin'.

Sark looks up and sees Daniel standing there blades in hand and sees his sword near him. He stumbles to his feet and grabs his sword still looking woozy and his nose broke.

LT. SARK

You broke my nose you Yankee back
woods mongrel. I will eviscerate
you for this indignity. I will
take you apart piece by piece.

Lt.Sark slips a little in the mud and rain and Daniel eyes the englishman's feet. Daniel looks bored.

DANIEL

Enough talken' Englishman. Show
me!

Sark charges but this time Daniel charges back and as Sark swings he slides under twisting on his knees slicing the back of the Englishman's knee and keeps sliding a few feet more. He leaps to his feet and as Sark starts hobbling his way to his feet Daniel rolls onto the back of his legs ending with his left hand planting his gladius through the back of the Englishman's skull.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

As I said you talk too much.

Daniel collapses, his whole shirt drenched in blood.

EXT. BASE OF THE FORESTED HILLS -- MID AFTERNOON

Sara on the horse and Jebediah on mule are traveling through the forest on an old dirt miner's trail as the rain pours down.

JEBEDIAH

Momma how much longer? We been goin' for days and I am bushed and though I really like the mule, I really do, I named him Sunshine cause he's so friendly and likes to be pet and I do that every morning and every night though I do that for Brownie over there to but my bum is startin' to hurt momma.

Sara looks back.

SARA

We been travelin' only 2 days son and Sunshine and Brownie huh, those are right good names. Let's just focus on gettin' where we needs to get and remember we startin' a whole new life and Daniel is gonna join us and it's gonna be beautiful.

Jebediah smiles a giant smile.

JEBEDIAH

Momma and Daniel sittin' in a tree
k-I-s-s-I-n

A branch cracks up ahead of them around the bend. Sara immediately roots in the saddlebag and pulls out the pistol.

SARA

Quiet!

Jebediah looks scared. They come around the bend and there sit two armed men on horses.

MERCENARY #1

He is never wrong is he. Must be bein' raised by savages. He is uncanny with that trackin' of his.

MERCENARY #2

Yep he said you'd come out here and here ya are, though he didn't really say anything, bein' mute and all but kinda drew us a map. He should be strollin' up anytime now. I believe he went hikin' up to your backtrail to make sure you all didn't decide to change your destination.

Sara points her pistol which is shaken'.

SARA

I don't reckon to know what you all is talkin' about but we don't be wantin' no trouble. We would just like to continua' on our way if you would be so kind as to move.

The mercenaries smile at each other and scoot their horses up.

MERCENARY #2

Miss put the pistol away you ain't gonna use it. Were here to take ya back to Lonesome Hill, the Cap'n wasn't done conversin' with yas.

Sara points the pistol at the man speaking, then the other starts saddling the other way and she shifts to him then back at the other.

SARA

Stay back! We gonna be ridin' on and I don't want to kill noone so let us past!!

JEBEDIAH

You listen to my momma, ain't noone gonna hurt her, ain't noone. I'll stick ya I will!! I'll stick ya!!!!

Mercenary # 2 moves forward to grab the pistol, she fires, a hole blossoms in his chest as he flies back off the horse while the other mercenary jumps from his horse taking her with him as she lands on the ground and the pistol goes flying.

SARA

Run Jebediah!!!! Run!!!!

The mercenary backhands her.

MERCENARY #1

You killed him you crazy bitch!!!

All of a sudden a crazed Jebediah flies onto the back of the mercenary and sticks him with his knife.

JEBEDIAH

I'll kill ya!!!! I'll kill ya!

Noone hurt my momma!!!! Noone!!!

Jebediah stabs him a couple more times before the mercenary grabs him and hucks him against a tree. Jebediah lies unmoving bleeding from a cut scalp. A primal scream echoes from Sara's throat, the scream only a mother watching something hurt her son can make. She jumps at the mercenary, like a mythical harpy. clawing his face, him unable to get her off him. He backhands her once which only moves her back a step, then she launches again clawing his face, blood in funnels down his face from a mother's wild nails, until he punches her close fist. She falls back on her rump, lip split. She starts to get up but then stares behind the mercenary scared.

MERCENARY #1

I'm gonna kill both of ya crazy sons of bitches!!!! Ya fucking cut me ya little shit!!!! I gonna shoot ya both dead as dead gets!

He pulls his pistol but a hand grabs it and he turns to see Diggs shaking his head no, with 10 others behind him.

MERCENARY #1 (CONT'D)

But ya done seen it. She killed Salles and that little shit stabbed me.

Diggs bends his arm painfully jerking his head around with the pain and stares him down. The Mercenary attempts to rip his arm free.

MERCENARY #1 (CONT'D)

Dammit Diggs, let me kill'em, do ya see what she done to my face?!!!

Digg's arm comes up with a bowie knife and slices across the mercenary's throat as the mercenary's eyes widen in shock, then pan down to the fear in Sara's eyes and back to Digg's stony face, the rain falls.

EXT. FORESTED HILLS -- NIGHT

Daniel sits in front of a small fire no rain anymore though everything is still wet and clouds still cover the sky. Two of his blades sits in the flame. A big giant wound runs from his shoulder all the way through.

DANIEL

Damn Englishman. This is gonna hurt.

He puts a piece of wood in his mouth. He pulls the blade and shoves it against the front of the wound writhing and biting the piece of wood collapsing. He raises himself and grabs another and does it to the back of the wound, the piece of the wood snaps and he screams.

EXT. FORT COURTYARD -- DAY

Jenks and Taylor hang tied to two of the large crosses moved into the courtyard. a few soldiers stand in the corner laughing at them, a few more man the scaffolding. The Gate is closed. The sun is out.

JENKS

What'd we do wrong Taylor? The man was a demon, what do ya do when a demon be comin' at ya?

TAYLOR

We did right I reckon Jenks. He had my momma in him sure as molasses is sweet. I think the Cap'n just mad at the Englishman but the Englishman ain't here.

Captain Blackstone walks out of the main cabin with a new refurbished Shepard now dressed as an east coast business man. The two's jaws drop when they see the Shepard.

JENKS

Is that the Shepard?

TAYLOR

I believe it is Jenks. Don't that beat all, he look like some done up peacock you see out east.

JENKS

You ain't never been out east Taylor.

TAYLOR

No but I heard about it and I figure that's what they done looked like.

The Shepard sashes up to the two.

THE SHEPARD

Hello my dubious dullards. The Captain here has shown me the error of my ways. It's time for Lawrence Winterbourne III to make a dramatic reappearance.

The Captain laughs.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Good ole' Lawrence, always was good at shifting with the winds of favor. He will be our face back east currying parlay with the politicals once we have the territory under our thumb. But you two, what to do with you two. You and the Englishman have cost me a majority of my men here and still no Williamson to show for the trouble. Granted, Diggs should be here by tomorrow and if my messenger got through hopefully with something to salvage the situation and even if not he will be able to track down the lost souls and finish this. In fact poetic license that the Englishmen failed, Diggs should have his karmic vengeance I should think. Still, even with all the constant blathering the Englishman was good at killen' and will be hard to replace.

JENKS

But cap'n it was a demon in that man, we had no choice but to run, a demon from hell he was.

The Captain laughs but the Shepard looks uncomfortable.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Amusing. I am well aware of the beast within young Williamson. I used it many times to fulfill my desires.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

Unfortunate he is now on the wrong side of the fence though I must take some responsibility in allowing too much of his training to be done by Johns who was always too honorable for his own good but that is neither here nor there. What to do with you two. To be honest you are about as worthless as ticks on a dog, but at the same time you have at times provided me with amusement.

Blackstone motions to two guards who had been stationed by the gate. They come over and cut the bonds of the two.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

This will be the last opportunity for you both to show me something wether one final amusement or to finally show yourselves worthy soldiers in the future of my Governorship. We shall see. For now make yourselves scarce, drink yourself to oblivion with the whiskey good ole Lawrence has stock piled in the years of his avarice or stick your cocks in a tree, just stay out of my sight until Diggs arrives and we strategize upon the final days of young Williamson.

Both semi kneel and genuflect towards Blackstone.

JENKS

Thank ya Capt'n, so nice of ya. We won't let ya down.

TAYLOR

What Jenks says Cap'n, quiet as quiet gets we'll be, right Jenks?

JENKS

You got it in one pound of the hammer Taylor, now where would that whiskey be Cap'n? I don't be meanin' to bother yas, but you mentioned it and all.

Captain acts as if he is already regretting his order.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Just get out of my sight.

EXT. OUTSIDE FORT GATE -- DUSK

Tuck is tied to a cross and looks to be dehydrated, his lips chafed, his shoulder wound still bloody, half mad and delirious. The Shepard in his new wardrobe walks around to face him.

TUCK

What do you want?

The Shepard looks embarrassed and ashamed.

THE SHEPARD

Please my friend. Recant your words. I have talked to the Captain. If you apologize and swear to serve I can save you. Please for the years we have known each other, do this one thing for me.

Tuck spits at the Shepard's feet.

TUCK

You are nothing to me. You destroyed everything I held dear. I will see your corpse upon a hill of crows.

The Shepard takes a step back.

THE SHEPARD

You were once a wonder to behold with a pair of pistols in your hand, please, I know I took you upon a ride based on falsities and a prayer hollow in it's utterance, but please my friend, I do not want to see you die upon this cross.

Tuck looks at him. He whispers a hail Mary.

TUCK

I forgive you your blasphemy for I see the truth of your spirit, a shallow paltry thing. I gave up the pistols for reason you know and should understand. I promise you this for the salvation of your soul and redemption in the Lord's eyes. I shall make your death quick.

The Shepard bows his head.

THE SHEPARD

That was a long time ago Tuck,
forgive yourself as I know your
wife and daughter do.

TUCK

Don't you dare talk about them, you
lost that right. Guns in my hands
ended all the future they would
ever have. I changed my mind, your
death will not be quick.

THE SHEPARD

I am sorry I could not be you
within this path my friend. I am
sorry you will die upon this wood.
I wish I could be something other
then I am. 13 coins I spent upon
my path and it shall be the road.
Goodbye and may your avenues be
within God's grace.

Tuck looks into the distance resolute.

Ext. Fort COURTYARD -- early morning

Blackstone and the Shepard roll from the main cabin as well
as many soldiers lining the gate and the parapets and Taylor
and Jenks roll out of a house running their head as if hung
over. Diggs rolls in with 11 soldiers in his wake and Sara
and Jebediah tied to their mounts. The same horse and mule
they have ridden, Sunshine and Brownie. Both look haggard
but okay.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Diggs, you are a wonder, better
then I anticipated, fortunate
indeed it was the day I found you.

The look of fear when Sara sees the Shepard who is eyeing her
with punishment like a vulture perched above a corpse.

EXT. FORESTED HILLY LANDSCAPE -- LATE AFTERNOON

Jenks and Taylor are huffing and puffing again through the
forested hills.

JENKS

We need to get in another line of
work Taylor.

(MORE)

JENKS (CONT'D)

If we live through this let's go somewhere else, away from demons and mad black savages and mean Captains and insane preachers and even crazier women.

TAYLOR

I agree with ya Jenks. Maybe a nice saloon as a barkeep or a whorehouse as a madam.

JENKS

Taylor, madams are woman ya imbecile. Damn, how did I ever get stuck with such a slow witted fool as you.

Taylor stops and glares at Jenks.

TAYLOR

Me slow witted, my mind could out figure yours any day of the week. Remember the time you thought you was buying cattle from that cowpoke to bring out here and we ended up with a bunch of chickens.

Jenks stops and stares back.

JENKS

Hey that man was a good talker, he would of bamboozled you in half the time. And that wasn't all bad we ate good for a month.

Taylor starts to retort but then they both hear the cocking of a rifle. They both turn to see Daniel, a big bandage wrapped around his shoulder.

DANIEL

No, please continue talkin' about how stupid you two are. I think it's the first smart thing I heard come out of those flapping lips of yours.

They both have fear in their eyes.

JENKS

Hey no need to be insulting.

TAYLOR

I agree with Jenks, insultin' us
ain't gonna get ya any nearer to
your bonny lass.

Daniel's eyes flare and both of them take a step back looking to run.

DANIEL

What did ya say?!!!

Both of them see the turning of the conversation and start leering but with an underlaced vibrato of fear.

JENKS

The black savage done captured your
woman and the boy. The Cap's says
surrender yourself by two hours
after dark or they both enterin' an
early grave.

Daniel brings his rifle up to his eye and the two shake and take a step back. He lowers the henry.

DANIEL

You tell'em I'll be there and if
one of them is harmed, so much as a
bruise, I'll kill each and every
last one of ya.

They both have shaking legs.

JENKS

Can we go now?

DANIEL

Get and say whatever prayers ya
got.

EXT. OUTSIDE FORT GATE -- NIGHT

Tuck is on his cross haggard, looking to be on Death's door. Two guards have their back to them scanning the forest. The guards stand right on the edge of the forest a good 40 feet from gate which is closed.

TUCK

Please Lord give me the freedom and
strength so see these heathens fall
before the might of your vengeance.
I give my life to you and ask only
this in my darkest hour.

One of the soldiers looks back.

MERCENARY #1

Keep it quiet and just die already
or I'll help ya along.

As he says this the guard next him starts gurgling, the guard talking turns to see him on the ground with a blade in his throat and just in time to see a large blade coming towards his face as it enters his eye. Daniel recovers his thrown blade and wipes both on his trousers which are already heavily covered in blood. Tuck sees him and seems to make a decision.

TUCK

Free me soldier. Free me and I
shall reap the whirlwind among
them.

Daniel smiles real big.

EXT. FORT COURTYARD -- NIGHT

Blackstone, spinning a small blade in his hand, and The Shepard and Diggs all stand by the main cabin door with Jenks and Taylor off to the side. In the center of the courtyard kneeling in the dirt with their hands tied behind their back are Sara and Jebediah, mouths gagged, with 3 soldiers behind them with weapons drawn. Around the courtyard and up on the parapets are soldiers 12 in all.

THE SHEPARD

Do you really think he's going to
show Nathaniel?

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Oh he'll show alright. Young
Williamson has a soft spot in him
for women and children. And if by
some miracle he doesn't I am sure
Diggs will take great pleasure in
killing them both and tracking him
to the ground.

Blackstone hears something noone else does. He stops spinning the blade and cocks an ear, Diggs does as well and fingers one of his tomahawks, quietly removing it into his.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

Ok young Williamson I know your out
there.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE (CONT'D)

Show yourself before I have Diggs
here perform unspeakable acts upon
your woman! You know how he is
once he gets a head of steam.

Two bodies are rolled off the parapet at the back of the
fort. Daniel stands with Henry in hand resheathing one of
his gladius. He is covered in blood from head to toe.

DANIEL

I'm here Capt'n.

Blackstone looks furious, every gun even Jenks and Taylor all
focus on Daniel. The three soldiers who had been guarding
Sara and Jebediah move around to the other side to face in
Daniel's direction keeping their guns aimed at the two.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Dammit soldier quit killing my
men!!!!

DANIEL

Well there's a flip of page. You
used to pay me to kill men.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

I take it all that blood is the men
I had stationed in the forest?

Daniel smiles, his face a mask of blood.

DANIEL

You take it right there Capt'n.

Blackstone can't help but smile spinning the blade again.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

You are a wonder. The best killer
I have ever known besides Diggs
here. Ok young Williamson, the
game has come to the only
conclusion it could of. Surrender
yourself or I will have your woman
and the child killed.

Daniel pretends to think about it then raises his weapon
right at Blackstone.

DANIEL

I have a counter offer Capt'n. Let
them go and I won't kill everyone
here, starting with you.

(MORE)

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Take my offer and I will be off
with Sara and Jebediah and you'll
never see me again.

Blackstone can't help but stifle a laugh.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Somehow your offer lacks something.
I wouldn't feel warmth in my bones
knowing you were still breathing
behind me. I remember the last
time I made that mistake, it cost
me dearly. (Tapping his eye)

Daniel shrugs.

DANIEL

What did ya think would happen when
ya killed Johns right in front of
me.? I only regret not doin' a
better job in makin' sure. I think
maybe I will rectify that real
soon.

Blackstone slams the blade into the wood support beam of the
door.

CAPTAIN BLACKSTONE

Enough of this banter. Surrender
yourself or they die right here and
right now.

Daniel slowly nods his head.

DANIEL

Have it your way.

He slowly starts kneeling to lay down the Henry, a couple
soldiers up on the parapet start slowly walking to where
Daniel is with fear in their gait.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(Whisper) now would be a good time.

Blackstone and Diggs step out from the door frame. The gate
is kicked open and crashes against the fort as Tuck comes in
wielding two pistols.

TUCK

Get ready for the fires of
hell!!!!!!!!!!!!

Tuck starts killing soldiers, three in as many seconds, then fires at the two up on the parapet and wherever a bullet fires from him, a soldier drops dead and chaos breaks loose. Daniel raises his Henry from one knee and fires three times quickly, a head shot on each of the three who had been aiming at Sara and Jebediah. Diggs starts running towards Sara winding up to throw his tomahawk at her head as Daniel jumps from the parapet landing on a support strut to a pile of bags of flour the whole time watching Diggs move but then one of his own soldiers gets in his way as Tuck continues to fire, killing soldiers and gets shot himself once by Blackstone but he keeps going and fires a shot that hits the doorframe above Blackstone's head. Diggs throw the soldier out of his way and throws his tomahawk as Daniel jumps the few feet to the ground tumbling into a roll and up to his knee aiming his henry, slow motion, firing, the bullet in time slow leaving his rifle, the tomahawk swooping through the air, Sara's eyes getting wide seeing her death coming, then the bullet hitting the tomahawk shooting it right out of the air. Daniel bullets flying all around him spots two soldiers coming at him firing their spencers, he shifts aim and kills both then turns just as Diggs runs at him firing his dragoon with his other tomahawk in his hand and hits Daniel with the bullet in his hip his henry flying. Daniel pulls his dragoon and fires hitting Diggs in the shoulder just as he fires again, the bullet hit in the shoulder causes him to lose the pistol and Diggs bullet hits the wagon board right next to Daniel's head. He gathers himself and runs towards Diggs firing again but the gun misfires. Daniel tackles Diggs at a dead run howling like a mad man, they both tumble. Tuck is freeing Sara bleeding from a belly shot, then hands her the knife he used. He sees the Shepard slink in the main cabin along with Blackstone. He says Daniel rustling up with Diggs. He turns back towards Sara and shoots the last soldier in the compound who had been about to shoot Sara in the back. Sara looks at him then at where Blackstone and The Shepard disappeared. Tuck nods.

TUCK (CONT'D)

I'll take care of those swine.

Tuck runs in as he drops his used pistols and take two from two dead soldiers. He enters the main cabin. Jenks and Taylor who had been hiding behind the open gate see Sara with her back to them as she frees Jebediah. They both look at each other and smile.

JENKS

That's our ticket out of here
Taylor.

TAYLOR

I agree Jenks. Let's grab her and
the brat.

They both with pistols in hand stalk Sara. Jebediah just getting freed sees them.

JEBEDIAH
Momma! Behind you!

Sara starts to turn as Jenks grabs her hard jerking her to him with his pistol to her head, Taylor covering him, the blade falling from her hand. Jebediah who is still in her shadow and can't be seen by the two grabs the knife. She nods at him, he nods back.

JENKS
Now will see ourselves out of this shithole.

Just then Sara bites Jenks arm grabbin his pistol, her teeth drawing a big gush of blood and a scream from Jenks who yanks his arm but lets her have the pistol.

JENKS (CONT'D)
Damn crazy...

Sara turns with the pistol and fires twice into Jenks just as Jebediah runs from behind her stabbing Taylor in the groin.

JEBEDIAH
You were one of the ones that hurt my momma!!!!

Taylor sinks to his knees with a blood curdling scream quickly ended with a knife in his eye all the way to the hilt.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)
Noon hurts my momma!!!!!!

Daniel and Diggs face off with Tuck in the background running into the cabin and Jenks and Taylor sneaking up on Sara. Daniel's back is to it but Diggs sees and smiles, a tomahawk in his hand and a bowie knife in the other, and Daniel with his two gladius.

DANIEL
Time to put an end to a mad dog.

Diggs motions him forward with a wicked smile. Daniel charges with side sweeps of his gladius Diggs parries it with his tomahawk one then dodges the other swinging back with his bowie slicing Daniel's extended arm, blood spurting heavy, a deep cut, dropping that gladius. Daniel jerks his arm back and dodges back as Diggs tomahawk slams down where his head had been.

Diggs smirks a bloody grin and lunges with his bowie but Daniel close into the move spinning himself grabbing Diggs knife arm with his free hand and using his remaining gladius to block the tomahawk. He smashes his head back twice into Diggs face and slams Diggs knife hand down on his knee making him lose it but then Diggs shoves him off, his nose shattered, then brings his tomahawk up in both hands with Daniel's back to him off balance, but then Daniel spins fast and hard, taking the tomahawk into his shoulder instead of his head. Diggs's smile becomes blank as he looks down at the hilt of the gladius protruding from his upper stomach, and Daniel's hand holding it then back up to Daniel's face which is steely and has the beast dancing in it. Daniel steps back and wrenches the tomahawk out of his own shoulder then spins and plants it in Diggs head. Diggs falls to the ground. Daniel collapses to his knees holding his blood drenched shoulder his opposite arm still bleeding profusely.

INT. MAIN CABIN -- NIGHT

Tuck enters pistols drawn and sees The Shepard attempting to get the floor door to the mine open. He sees Tuck and yanks the door open to slam on the floor. Tuck cocks his pistol which echoes like thunder in the room.

TUCK

That's far enough Shepard, it's
time to pay for your sins.

The Shepard turns slowly towards him one hand up open begging. His other hand is slipping a small pistol out of the back of his pants.

THE SHEPARD

Please Tuck, please, mercy, mercy.
I'll give ya anything, anything.

The Shepard's hand swings forward but halfway there a hole opens in his chest, sending him to his knees, pistol falling to the floor, then a hole in his forehead.

TUCK

There's your mercy Shepard, more
then you ever showed anyone.

A shadow and blurred movement comes from behind him, he swings his pistol up.

EXT. COURTYARD OF LONESOME HILL --NIGHT

Daniel drags himself up and sees Sara holding Jebediah both kneeling on the ground with Jenks and Taylor dead next to them. He scans the area for danger and sees noone else. He grabs his dragoon off the nearby ground. He lifts himself up holding his left shoulder blood leaving a trail behind him as he moves to Sara. She sees him and runs to meet him halfway. She grabs him fiercely causing him to wince and Jebediah grabs his leg.

SARA

You are hurt, hurt bad Daniel. How dare ya when I just found ya get yourself all carved up like that.

Daniel smiles into her hair.

JEBEDIAH

And I Killed them that done hurt my momma Daniel, killed them good.

Daniel tousles his hair but knows it ain't done.

DANIEL

Proud of ya son, a damn fine scout and I'll be rememberin' to tell the people tryin' to kill me ya don't take kindly to them carvin' me up. Now where's Tuck and Blackstone and that damn Shepard? This ain't done yet.

SARA

Tuck went in after them both after freein'

She doesn't finish the thought as she sees tuck enter the main cabin doorframe, walking awkwardly, then a sword finishes bursting through his chest and Blackstone comes out from behind him with a pistol aimed at Daniel's back.

SARA (CONT'D)

Strong as mountains.

DANIEL

Wha..?

Sara spins him in her arms as Blackstone fires hitting her in the back. Daniel's eyes grow wide and Jebediah screams. Blackstone growls in frustration that ends quickly as his head explodes from two shots from Daniel's dragoon.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Sara!

INT. MR. STOKES'S GENERAL STORE, 1 WEEK LATER -- DAY

Daniel lays a bag on Mr. Stokes counter. Mr Stokes jumps for joy when he sees it's Daniel, whose his arm in a sling, shoulder bandaged, his other arm bandaged.

MR. STOKES

Daniel my boy, so good to see yas.
I'd never thunk to see ya again.
And what is this, some fur you need
to sell.

Daniel smiles and shakes his head.

DANIEL

Nah that's a bag of gold for ya to
see this town to booming. There's
also a map to where the mine is,
been pretty played out I think but
ya might still drag some shiny
stuff out of it, enough to make
this a real bona fide town.

Mr. Stokes jaw drops in wonder and excitement.

MR. STOKES

But Daniel, ya don't have ta, I
mean, where did ya, I don't know
what to say.

Daniel smiles.

DANIEL

Ya don't have to say nothin' except
thanks and use it right like I know
ya will. There might be some
cleaning up to do. I spent a
couple days burying some good
people, but the people that done
done that to'em I left where they
lay after bringin' justice to their
bones and flesh.

Mr. Stokes looks horrified.

MR. STOKES

Sounds like you been to hell and
back.

DANIEL

You could say that Mr. Stokes, you
could sure say that.

Mr Stokes grabs his arm.

MR. STOKES

Well you gonna stay on with us now?

Daniel shakes his head.

DANIEL

Nah Mr. Stokes I got somewhere I
needs to go.

MR. STOKES

Are ya sure son, ya'd be welcome.
Nevermind I see that same look in
your eye. Blessings to your road
Daniel, blessings to your road.

DANIEL

Thank ya Mr. Stokes, same to you.

Daniels starts to leave but turns back.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

Almost forgot. Thanks for your
advice Mr. Stokes, it came in
handy.

MR. STOKES

My advice?

DANIEL

I faced my beasts and I spit in
their eye.

Mr. Stokes laughs.

MR. STOKES

Good to know son, good to know.

DANIEL

See ya.

Daniel exits.

EXT. TOWN OF LOWELL OUTSIDE MR. STOKES STORE -- DAY

Daniel exits Mr. Stokes store with a big smile then we see what he's looking at and there sits Sara in a sling in the front seat of a wagon with Jebediah perched on some bags right behind her, a blanket covering the rest of the bags and Brownie and Sunshine tied to the back. Both of them are smiling at him. He walks down and gets into the driver seat.

SARA

What a family we are huh? All bandaged up lookin' like walkin' corpses.

Daniel smiles.

DANIEL

Family?

Sara hits his arm and he winces.

SARA

And ya saying we aren't Daniel Williamson? Ya can't get rid of us that easy.

DANIEL

Never in my days would I say such a thing nor want to see ya both anywhere but where ya are, next to me.

Sara smiles as Does Jebediah who hugs Daniel from behind.

SARA

So where we headed?

Daniel smiles again.

DANIEL

Vermont to see if my good ole' Ma is still kickin' the Green.

Sara nods like it's an amazin' idea.

Daniel starts the wagon going.

SARA

Good, I'd like to meet my future mother-n-law.

DANIEL

Mother'n'law?

Sara stares hard at him.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
Mother'n law it is.

Sara looks at Jebediah and thumbs at Daniel.

SARA
Slow leaner this one but he gets
there.

The wagon starts picking up speed into the horizon.

JEBEDIAH
Momma and Daniel sitting in a tree
k-I-s-s-I-n-g

The End.