

WEST OF THE MS.

by

Bill Lee Janiec

FADE IN:

INT. COUNTY JAIL - SOMEWHERE IN THE OLD WEST - VERY EARLY MORNING

Heavy SNORING. Moonlight wafting on a dirty adobe wall. We slowly MOVE down to a crudely carved heart on the wall, a heart bisected by a crack...now down to a roach crawling up the crack...down...down...to the hulk of a grizzled prisoner asleep on a bunk. A tiny lizard scurries out from under the bed...across the dim floor to WHISPERS where...

A CELLMATE is pressed against the window bars. He is listening intensely to two pony-tailed "coolies" outside. Their voices urgent. Accents so thick we can't understand them.

COOLIE

Goht-Rain. Nait hahs!...Wo dei zou  
le; tian wan le. Gong Xi Fa Cai!

Someone WHISTLES an alarm and the coolies vanish into the darkness.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY - A FEW HOURS LATER

A JAILER throws open the cell door, keys dangling.

JAILER

Okay, boys.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - CORRIDOR - DAY

The jailer leads the two inmates past the cells. The sleeper, LEW BLACKMORE, is a paunchy man in his fifties. The other, ROSS KELLY, thirties, is lean and strong in an archetypical cowboy way. Both look haggard, the worse for wear.

An INMATE cackles from a cell as they pass.

INMATE

So long, Kel.

EXT. MIDASVILLE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The sun's early rays fire low over desert ridges as two condors make lazy loops high in the morning sky. Midasville, a sprawling mining boomtown, crawls up the brown foothills, surrounded by sagebrush and sand.

EXT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

The men emerge from the jail and the jailer hands them their hats and gun belts.

JAILER  
No hard feelin's, Kel.

Kel creases the hat thoughtfully and sets it on his head. He fastens his gun belt. And without further deliberation, heads off the porch. The jailer and Lew exchange nervous glances.

LEW  
(to the jailer)  
Jus' one of those days, Nate.

EXT. MIDASVILLE - DAY

Kel and Lew walk into town. Tight-lipped, Kel doesn't look much like talking. He takes out his gun and checks it. Twirls it with a slick show of skill...and misses his holster. Lew notices.

KEL  
(meaning the jailer)  
Think he saw that?

Lew rolls his eyes. They turn a corner and head through...

EXT. STREET - DAY

A town on the verge of awakening. Kel pulls out a tobacco pouch, rolls a cigarette -- one-hand-on-the-move -- and sticks it in his mouth. He whips the pouch shut and places it back in his shirt pocket. He lights the cigarette.

Lew begins to whistle. An airy number. Gratingly. They walk a little ways, past a saloon whose window has been shattered.

Finally:

KEL  
(testily)  
Would you stop that?

LEW  
What's eatin' you today?

KEL  
You are.

LEW  
Me?

(CONTINUED)

KEL

Yeah, you. Here I am last night, a peaceful little card game with the boys, when my good friend Lew shows up. He's got a quart of liquor in his belly...

LEW

...a coupla gulps...

KEL

...a quart of liquor in his belly, an ace that ain't s'pose to be there on the table, and the sense of a donkey to make sure that everyone knows it's there.

LEW

(beat)

That was your ace.

KEL

Exactly what I'm talkin' about. Next thing I know, I'm flying like a lead tomato through some barroom window and wakin' up with a coupla coolies in my ear. And you're askin' what's eatin' me...

Kel stops and scrapes some horse dung from his boot.

KEL (CONT'D)

And there's another thing. Since when have you become so friendly with jailers?

(imitates Lew)

"One of those days, Nate..." These jailers are like women, you can never let on what you're thinkin', savvy? Aw, hell.

Kel starts walking again, resigned to a bad turn of fate. They turn a corner and find...

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

A row of well-armed horsemen waiting for them at the end of the block. This is all Kel needs.

One of the horsemen, leading a second horse by the reins, urges his mount ahead of the others. A big man. Gruff. All whiskers and jowls. His name is LARRY.

LARRY

(shouting)

Ross Kelly!

(CONTINUED)

LEW  
 (to Kel)  
 Ain't that your mount?

KEL  
 Yep.

LARRY  
 I got a warrant fer your arrest.

KEL  
 Law says I'm a free man.

LARRY  
 The law?...  
 (to his men, chuckling)  
 Money's the law. We're the law, far  
 as I know.

KEL  
 I got a nickel, maybe. How much law  
 will that buy? Mind tellin' me what  
 this is about?

LARRY  
 A train, thief. One belongin' to  
 Billie Natas. One we hear yer aimin'  
 to rob.

KEL  
 Yeah? And where would the "law"  
 hear somethin' like that?

LARRY  
 Oh, I don't know, a barroom maybe.  
 Some ol' pig turd with a gullet full  
 of whiskey, shootin' off at the mouth.

Kel glances at Lew, about to lay into him, and finds him running like mad halfway down the block. A GUNSHOT splits the air and Lew drops. Kel registers the shock as rifles COCK in unison. His fingers inch toward his gun...

Then fly to his lips. He whistles, diving sideways as his horse rears and throws Larry, then breaks in a full gallop down the street.

A volley of ill-aimed SHOTS ring out. An Independence Day banner, hung between two buildings, drops and catches the horse above the shoulders. Kel scrambles, grabs the trailing end of the banner as the horse charges past. Like a rope and pulley, it slings him to the sidewalk.

He spins to his feet and goes for his gun. It's gone, the whole holster torn from his belt. Bullets begin to rain around him. He somersaults through a shop window.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

Kel dashes toward the back of the shop, kicks open the door. Is met by gunfire, ducks back inside. He surveys the room. Grabs a plow blade off the wall and, cradling it like a battering ram, aims himself at the opposite wall. Head lowered, he charges across the room and busts through the wall into...

INT. SALOON - DAY

The adjacent saloon. Kel's momentum carries him crashing through tables and chairs. He slams into the oak bar.

A BAD GUY bursts through the front door, gun drawn.

Kel yanks the plow blade. It's stuck. A bullet PINGS off the iron handle. The bad guy catches the ricochet between the eyes.

Gunfire now blows out what's left of the front window. Kel dives over the bar, scoots the length of it, then up a flight of stairs.

A door at the top is locked. Kel kicks it open and find himself looking at sky and an uncompleted addition. A bullet CRASHES into the doorframe. Directly in the yard below, a SNIPER takes aim, FIRES...

A kerosene lamp EXPLODES behind Kel, fire boiling down the stairwell, torching TWO BAD GUYS on their way up.

Chased by flames, Kel heads across a narrow landing above the floor. TWO MORE MEN charge through the front door, open fire. Kel leaps to the chandelier. It breaks free from the ceiling, plummets toward the men -- then stops abruptly ten feet above them. The men leer and aim.

The chandelier drops another few feet. Kel KO's them with a coupla boot heels to their faces. And the chandelier now crashes to the floor.

Bullets come ZINGING through the front of the saloon. Dazed, Kel crawls behind the bar and comes face to face with...

A MONKEY?! Sunnuva -- where'd he come from?! The animal screeches and bares its fangs. Kel grabs a brass spittoon and takes a swing just as a burning curtain drops on the bar. Spooked, the monkey leapfrogs Kel and shrieks away.

Holy hell! Kel rolls on his back, breathing hard, needing a moment to think. He stares at the ceiling. The room goes strangely quiet. A slight wind. A strange veil of COLORS...

Something plops against his leg. KEL SEES IT! A stick of dynamite!

(CONTINUED)

A short, sizzling fuse...then before he has time to react...

WHITE LIGHT. KA-BOOM!

EXT. SALOON - DAY

Smoke scatters in the breeze. Larry and another man watch from their horses. The man is in his early fifties. Portly. Elegantly attired. Cigar in mouth. A commanding presence but...this isn't a man. On closer inspection, we see it's a woman. Pudgy face with steely eyes. Her name is BILLIE NATAS.

Another man, BRIDGE, mounts a horse beside them. Dark, glaring eyes, a chiseled chin, a black Stetson. A black patch covers the space where his nose once had been. He tucks a couple dynamite sticks in his pouch and in his black vest.

The saloon before them has vanished. It is now a smoldering pile.

BRIDGE

Well, Billie, that's that.

Natas stares a moment longer. Then tugs the reins and wheels her horse around.

NATAS

Bring the critter along.

Larry glowers at two men, COWBOY #1 AND #2, who have circled the monkey, teasing it with sticks.

LARRY

You heard. Stop your horsin' an' mount up!

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

To brilliant WHITE LIGHT. We seem to be streaking through it at an awesome speed. A tremendous ROAR, as if in a wind tunnel. We're zipping along. And now the ROAR begins to subside, the WHITE LIGHT dissolves, and we find ourselves at...

KEL'S POV...looking up from a lab table. An OLD WOMAN in white lab garb towers over him.

KEL

(mumbling)

God is...a woman?!

INT. LAB - MIDASVILLE UNIVERSITY - DAY - PRESENT

The woman, PROFESSOR ZOLA MARX -- sharp, energetic, early sixties -- stumbles backwards, stunned. She bumps a cage of rhesus monkeys which tumbles to the floor. Monkeys dart from the open hatch and scamper across the room.

Kel looks at himself. What the...? He's buck-ass naked! A monkey reaches toward him...and a very bad thought occurs.

KEL

Nuh-uh, this is hell!

Kel springs off the table, looks for an escape. THE LAB is a techno-storehouse of blinking computers and machines. The walls plastered with pictures of soaring condors. Zola stands speechless in the middle of them.

Another monkey sinks his teeth into Kel's ankle.

KEL (CONT'D)

OW!

Horrified, he kicks the monkey away. Double takes at Zola, then at himself...sees a door and goes for it.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Kel surveys the environs, heads down the hall. Adrenaline pumping, breathing hard. THREE COEDS round a corner. See him coming and scream, scattering in all directions.

Kel tries a few doors. All locked. A CAMPUS COP, making the rounds, enters the hall. He spots Kel. Yells. And comes after him.

Kel takes off. Turns a few corners. Then charges up some stairs.

ZOLA skids into the hallway, lab coat draped on her arm. Panicked, she heads down the hall.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Where FALLON PARKS, late twenties, is pacing in front of her women's studies class. A feisty, committed feminist, she's trying her best at the moment to motivate a class of coeds.

FALLON

So if mental skills have replaced physical skills as the primary means of survival, then it follows that women should be equal, if not superior, to men...

(CONTINUED)



She picks up a chalk and turns to the blackboard.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 Yet despite the fact that fifty  
 thousand feminist marchers convened  
 in Chicago in 1980...  
 (scribbles 'ERA, 1982')  
 ...two years later...the ERA lapsed  
 without ratification...

She turns to a sea of blank faces.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 (giving up)  
 What is the problem today?

Kel bursts through the door, winded and scared. Flattens up against the wall. Pencils hit the floor. Twenty-five pairs of unblinking eyes glued to him. Kel covers himself, scans the all-girl room.

KEL  
 Maybe this is heaven.

Fallon drops into a karate stance, fuming.

FALLON  
 Make a move, and you won't make  
 another.  
 (to class)  
 Who's got a cell?

The students snap to. ONE STUDENT to another:

STUDENT  
 So much for mental skills.

Fallon edges toward a phone just as Zola zips into the room with the cop. Zola throws the lab coat over Kel. Fallon looks at her, dumfounded.

ZOLA  
 (to Fallon)  
 Sorry.

FALLON  
 What the hell's going on here?!

ZOLA  
 It's all under control, Parks.  
 (sotto, to Kel)  
 If you wanna keep your limbs, follow  
 me.  
 (to cop)  
 You never know about these  
 experimental drugs.

(CONTINUED)

She hustles Kel from the classroom. Fallon, fazed, takes a moment to compose herself before turning to her students.

FALLON  
 (...on second thought)  
 Class dismissed.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Fallon fights her way through a mob of students, anxious.

EXT. MIDASVILLE UNIVERSITY - FACULTY PARKING LOT - DAY

The campus flavor is small town college. A little academia and a lot of civic pride. Cascading lawns. Leafy eucalyptus shading the sidewalk.

Fallon intercepts Zola's older Chevy pickup in the parking lot. She leans into the window, throws a sharp glance at Kel in the passenger seat.

FALLON  
 I want an explanation, Zola.

ZOLA  
 I don't have time now, Fallon.

FALLON  
 You're already on thin ice...

Zola puts the truck in gear, refusing to listen.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILLY STREET - DAY

As Zola's pickup approaches an old mining site under renovation. Flagmen. Detours. Dump trucks and tractors. A sign in front of a new building reads, "Future Home of the Condor Mine Museum."

INT. ZOLA'S PICKUP - DAY

Zola is ecstatic as she drives. Kel mystified, clutching not wearing, his seat belt. Eyes darting over the dashboard, every-which-way, outside. He ducks as a big rig cruises past his window. It's like nothing he's ever seen.

ZOLA  
 And at that precise moment, just  
 before the dynamite blew, you assumed  
 Mojo's coordinates...  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ZOLA (CONT'D)

(off Kel's look)

Mojo, the monkey...you took Mojo's place and were transported through time to the present! I can't believe it worked!

KEL

Sure I ain't dead?

ZOLA

No, you're not dead. You're proof! Proof that it works! You know what this means?

(Kel doesn't...)

I've saved the condors, mister!

(loud, out the window)

I've saved the condors!

(beat)

Who are you anyhow?

A delivery truck cuts in front of them.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

(lays on the horn)

Look out, you jerk!

The driver flips her off.

KEL

(totally zoned)

I'm just a cowboy, ma'am.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Fallon steams across the sidewalk, chip still firmly in place on her shoulder. A homeboy is juking to a BOOMBOX at the curb: "Da bitches be all snitches and ho, ho, ho's." Fallon swerves, kicks over the boombox.

FALLON

Oh. Sorry.

The homeboy glares as she heads inside the building.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

About twenty sweat-suited women are teamed in pairs, practicing throws and other self-defense techniques. A very intense Fallon parries with a partner.

(CONTINUED)

Their instructor, BOB SMITH, thirties, somewhat handsome, in state-of-the-art gym attire, strolls among them, offering encouragement.

BOB  
That's it, people. All right now,  
listen up. I need a volunteer.

All the students break except for Fallon, who drops her partner. The other students stare.

BOB (CONT'D)  
(finding his prey)  
Fallon.

FALLON  
(to partner)  
Sorry.

Fallon offers a hand and helps her up. The class forms a circle around Bob.

BOB  
Okay, what I'm gonna demonstrate now  
should be used only as a last resort.  
Though any perv who even thinks about  
touching you, deserves it.

FALLON  
Am I the rapist or victim this time?

BOB  
You seem to be rather assertive today,  
Fallon. Why don't you be the...  
perpetrator.

Bob turns to the class.

BOB (CONT'D)  
Okay, I'm walking on the sidewalk,  
heading home to my pad. Just back  
from cappuccino, whatever. It's  
late, the streets are deserted. All  
right, Fallon, gimme your best  
shottt...

Before Bob can finish, Fallon surprise attacks him from behind. He breaks her hold, reverses it; she throws him to the mat. Bob eyes her a moment, gauging her intention, then...

Kicks Fallon's legs out from under her. They scramble to their feet. Fallon charges again, furiously. Bob ducks, spins and subdues her with a deft half-nelson. Holds it a little longer and harder than he has to.

(CONTINUED)

BOB (CONT'D)  
 (breathing heavily;  
 to the class)  
 Disarmed and disabled.  
 (saccharinely)  
 Thank you, Fallon.

Bob releases her, Fallon seething as she rejoins the class.

EXT. CAMPUS - JOGGING PATH - DAY

Fallon and Bob, still in sweats, jog through a tree-lined lane. Fallon in an ill mood, her pace quick. She pushes a branch aside. It whips back and nails Bob in the face.

FALLON  
 It was emphatic and intentional.  
 You did it to prove a point.

BOB  
 What point?

FALLON  
 A male one.

BOB  
 C'mon, Fal. I can't believe you're  
 upset about this.

FALLON  
 Of course, you can't. The only thing  
 Bob believes in is Bob. Typical  
 male. Only worse because you hide  
 it in feminist clothing.

BOB  
 Now wait a minute. Who edits your  
 column for the "FemNow Review"? And  
 who donates time each week so women  
 can learn to defend themselves?

FALLON  
 Right, so you can subdue me in front  
 of my peers and prove what a big,  
 strong man you are. That was real  
 classy, Bob. Do you know who degraded  
 I felt?

Bob grabs her sleeve and stops her.

BOB  
 Hey, hey, time out. What's this  
 about?

Fallon studies him, catching her breath. There's something  
 unsteady beneath surface.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON

A naked guy runs into one of my classes today...and I married you this morning on a whim...at the courthouse...after only five years of deliberation. I wish I knew.

CUT TO:

INT. ZOLA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A cluttered flat. Condor posters, sculptures, and figurines everywhere. Zola in the kitchen, heating food in the microwave. Kel, fresh from the shower in a big white robe and terry cloth babushka, experimenting with a wall dimmer...

The light goes up. It goes down. Up. Down. Up, down. He takes in the room, marveling when...

On goes the A.C. Startled, Kel pulls his robe snug, passes a hand in front of the vent, peers into it.

ACROSS THE ROOM...the PC monitor catches his attention. He crosses to it. Perched on top is a cute furry critter, a vintage Furby. But it's the SCREEN SAVER that's got his eye. CONDORS soaring above cliffs in a continuous loop. Kel checks out the rear panel, the wiring...then back to the front, inches from the screen when the Furby awakens...

FURBY

Ee-no-wee-ha...Love. Coo...Coo...

It scares the hell out of him! Kel stumbles back and falls into a bean bag chair. The TV POPS ON! Kel bolts up -- off the REMOTE. And, curious, heads to the TV.

CLOSE ON THE TV...CONAN O'BRIEN.

Kel cocks his head, watches him. Glances at the cable box, a few of its buttons...what the hell. He pokes one, switches channels. Hmm...

THE TV...an old Western movie. Indian ambush. Kel cringes. Pokes another button...JERRY SPRINGER.

ZOLA peeks from the kitchen.

ZOLA

Quite a nifty world out here now, hey cowboy?

KEL

(slack jawed at  
SPRINGER)

You promise I ain't dead?

(CONTINUED)

The phone RINGS, catches Kel by surprise.

ZOLA (O.S.)  
Don't pick it up. Nobody I need to  
talk to right now.

Kel: pick what up? And now the ANSWERING MACHINE comes on.  
It's Fallon.

FALLON'S VOICE  
(filtered)  
Zola, Fallon Parks. We need to  
discuss what happened today. Please  
don't dodge me...

ZOLA (O.S.)  
Yeah, yeah, yeah...

FALLON'S VOICE  
I'd like some closure on this before  
Friday's Women's Faculty Board.  
Number's in the book. I'll be  
expecting your call.

Kel flinches at the CLICK. He lifts a butane log lighter  
off the fireplace mantle. Flicks it, startled, as Zola  
arrives with a TV dinner. She sets it on the table.

ZOLA  
Yep, nifty world...but there ain't  
no condors. Hungry?

Kel sits. Regards the filmy tray. Lifts it -- wow, that's  
hot!

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
Oh, careful now.

She preps it for him and Kel starts to eat.

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
How is it?

KEL  
Mushy. Salty. Sure this is grub?

ZOLA  
(laughs)  
Rumor has it.

She watches a moment. Then:

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
You're more than just a cowboy, aren't  
you?

(CONTINUED)

KEL

Well, I do a few things here 'n there.

ZOLA

Ever rob anything?

Kel is caught totally off guard.

KEL

Now what would make you think a thing like that? Do I look like a thief?

ZOLA

Calm down, cowboy, every man does. If you aren't stealin' hearts, you're stealin' somethin' else. Like dignity, for example.

Kel doesn't get it. Zola smiles, gets up and crosses to a bureau.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

I'm a biologist, mister. I study birds...condors, if you haven't guessed. I started dabbling with time with the vague idea that relocating these animals to the here and now would be a nice way of restoring them.

She retrieves something from a drawer. Then heads back to the table.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

About a year ago as my work progressed, I became a very good scientist...Suddenly I wasn't so harmless anymore. I was erratic. That woman. Starch in the ol' boys' shorts...To make a long story short, my funding began to dry up, then this morning I received this...

She drops a document in front of Kel.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

...my ticket to pasture. They've given me a week to clear my lab.

Zola stares at him, soberly. Then lowers the boom.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

I've got a proposition for you, cowboy. I'll send you home but I'm gonna come with you.

(CONTINUED)



KEL  
Hold on here...

ZOLA  
And you, in turn, are gonna help me  
with a plan...

KEL  
Now wait just a damned minute...

ZOLA  
...to complete my project.

KEL  
You're gonna come back with me?...Now  
that is the most mule-brained thing  
I ever heard. Nope. No thank you,  
ma'am. I'll pass on this hand.

ZOLA  
Do you really wanna go home?

Of course he does.

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
Then you better hear me out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zola sits in front of the PC monitor. Kel ranging beside  
her.

ZOLA  
While you were in the tub, I was  
reading a little history of the area.  
It seems...well, I don't need to  
repeat it, you know your own bio...

INSERT - WEBSITE - MIDASVILLE HOME PAGE

Which displays a worn, sepia-tinted photo of Kel with a thirty-  
ish woman in front of what could be a saloon. A crooked  
smile on his face. The caption below reading: "Ross Kelly,  
alias 'Kel,' a smalltime drifter turned train robber, made  
local history with the Independence Day Holdup, July 4, 1878."

BACK TO SCENE

Kel mouths the word "smalltime," noticeably disillusioned.

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
After we rob that train, I'm gonna  
bury my little share, then exhume it  
when I return.

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
Exhume?

ZOLA  
Dig it up.

KEL  
And you're plannin' on pullin'  
somethin' like that off?

ZOLA  
I'm staking my dignity on it.

KEL  
You'll be stakin' more than that.

It dawns on him...

KEL (CONT'D)  
And just how do you know you can  
trust me?

ZOLA  
You're a cowboy. I'll have your  
word.

KEL  
And if I agreed, and I ain't sayin'  
that I am...

ZOLA  
We'll leave right after you eat. Do  
we have a deal?

Zola sticks out her hand.

KEL  
Aw, hell...

Kel shakes it. Zola slaps him on the shoulder.

ZOLA  
Oh...and you can lose that log lighter  
in your pocket. Only organic things  
can make this trip.

Kel reaches for his pocket. Frowns.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAYS - MIDASVILLE UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

Zola and Kel hustle down the hall. No one around.

(CONTINUED)

ZOLA

I've given us a week. That enough time?

KEL

Yeah, providin' you still got air in your lungs and not a round or two a lead.

ZOLA

...though by my clock, I'll arrive here yesterday.

KEL

Yesterday?!

ZOLA

I've pre-dated my return. I wanna see those bastards faces when they hand me my pink slip and I tell them to stuff it.

Zola double checks her clipboard.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

I've set the co-ordinate here...

(shows him)

The old Condor Mine. The heart of the shaft entrance. That's where we'll be landing and where I'll be picked up. Two p.m., a week from today.

They turn a corner.

KEL

May I ask one thing? How much loot you gonna need?

ZOLA

One million dollars.

Kel stops abruptly.

KEL

ONE MILLION DOLLARS?!

ZOLA

Relax, cowboy. Just kiddin'. You've really gotta learn to loosen up.

They start moving again.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

My life savings have gone into this thing.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ZOLA (CONT'D)

I'm short about a half a bar a gold  
is all. Couple hundred grand, give  
or take a few cents.

They turn another corner and enter another hall. Zola opens  
a door. And steps into...

INT. LAB - NIGHT

AN EAR SHATTERING MONKEY HOWL! Kel freezes, instinctively  
puts up his dukes. Fallon turns, surprised. She's in a  
summer dress and hat...caressing a baby monkey.

ZOLA

Fallon! What are you doing here?!  
Put that monkey back!  
(to Kel)  
Don't worry, she won't bite.

KEL

(eyeing Fallon)  
No, but I reckon she can kick.

The monkey screeches, swipes at Fallon and knocks off her  
hat. Kel chuckles. Zola comes over, perturbed and pressed  
for time.

ZOLA

Little late to be feeding the animals.

FALLON

It's not just the early bird that  
catches the worm. What are you up  
to, Zola?

ZOLA

Here, give me.

She takes the monkey and heads toward the cage.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

(to Fallon)  
You're stubborn, aren't you?

Fallon bends to get her hat. Sees Kel eyeing her ass. She  
throws him an icy glare. He serves one right back at her.

ZOLA (CONT'D)

I wish I had time to explain, but we  
just dropped by to pick up our  
reports. We've got a conference in  
an hour.

FALLON

We?

(CONTINUED)

Fallon glances at Kel, curious. Sets her hat on a table.

ZOLA  
Dr. Kelly and I.

FALLON  
Zola, what's going on? What was he  
doing in my classroom?

ZOLA  
Classified, honey. I really can't  
talk about it.

KEL  
Government business, ma'am.  
(extends a hand)  
Kel Kelly. Colonel. U.S. Cavalry.

FALLON  
Cavalry?!

ZOLA  
The army, Fallon.

FALLON  
(to Zola)  
I thought you said doctor.

KEL  
Right. Army doctor.

Zola gives Kel a frosty stare; takes Fallon's arm and aims  
her toward the door.

ZOLA  
I apologize for the disruption,  
Fallon. Hope it didn't cause too  
much alarm. I don't mean to be rude,  
but we really do have this  
engagement...

Fallon takes one last look at Kel. Lifts her notebook off a  
chair...

KEL  
Pleased to meet you, ma'am.

And she's out the door. Zola grimaces.

ZOLA  
Colonel?

Kel shrugs. Zola heads to a panel and starts flipping  
switches.

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
We gotta move.

(CONTINUED)

She moves quickly to the lab table and an array of computer screens. Presses buttons. The equipment begins to HUM, drawing nervous chatter from the monkeys. Zola glances at Kel, bugged.

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
Don't just stand there!

KEL  
Whadda ya want me to do?

ZOLA  
Head to that wall and make like a statue.

Kel does as directed.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Fallon shuffles down the hall, in a bit of a daze. She scratches her head. Realizes she's missing her hat.

INT. LAB - NIGHT

Above Kel, a bank of laser-like lighting begins to glow.

KEL  
Now what?

The HUM in the room suddenly REVS to a ROAR! Kel recoils. Zola joins him.

ZOLA  
You're not scared are ya, cowboy?

KEL  
Ain't gonna hurt, is it?

ZOLA  
We'll feel only a breeze...the winds of time. And then we're vamanos.

Kel checks the lights, not too convinced. A broad smile spreads across Zola's face as a wind lifts her hair. The light intensifies. Around them...

THE ROOM begins to swirl with paper and debris. LAB LIGHTS flicker...WINDOWS RATTLE...FURNITURE SHAKES...MONKEYS SCREAM...EQUIPMENT ROARING like a turbo jet. Stuff flying everywhere, when into this maelstrom...

THE LAB DOOR opens and Fallon walks in. She immediately shields her face, ducks as her hat comes sailing, almost nails her.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON

Oh my god!

Papers flutter from her notebook and soar across the room. She squints, sees Kel and Zola enveloped in a cone of pulsing amber light. Now red...now blue. They're waving and shouting.

FALLON (CONT'D)

(can't hear them)

What?

She takes a step forward and the door blows shut, knocking her on her rump. ZOLA observes this, not amused.

ZOLA

Great. This is just friggin' great.

A big portable lab counter breaks free from the wall. Picks up speed as it rolls across the room. From the floor, Fallon eyes this huge, boxcar-like thing barreling toward her. KEL sees it, too...

ZOLA (CONT'D)

NOOO!...

He tears across the room, drives the counter safely into the wall. He shakes off the impact, gives Fallon a loopy grin. She's not impressed.

FALLON

You want a medal?

KEL

I jus' saved your sweet neck.

FALLON

Right.

They get up. Kel heads toward Zola.

FALLON (CONT'D)

Hey, where you going? Whadda I do?

KEL

(over his shoulder)

Jus' don't spit.

Stymied, Fallon backs up against the lab table, accidentally hits a few keys on a keyboard.

FALLON

Oh, no.

(CONTINUED)

INSERT - COMPUTER - SPLIT SCREEN

Which shows the DESTINATION VECTOR moving from the Condor Mine to...who knows? Then onto the second screen, the RETURN VECTOR moving from the mine to...who knows?

NEW SCREEN: a 3-D depiction of the lab's light beams adjusting to a new target: Fallon.

BACK TO SCENE

Fallon stands there, zoned, as the light bank starts to rotate toward her. Kel watches the beams sweeping quickly across the room. GROWING INTENSE! Oh, God! Kel races the light, reaching Fallon just as the beams EXPLODE upon them in a brilliant flash of white.

WHITE DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - SOMEWHERE IN THE OLD WEST - DAY

Rattlesnake country. Real rugged terrain. The sun pounding off stony earth. A few skeletal trees and bushes. Distant desert ridges.

Fallon peeks out from behind a bush. Woozy, confused...and quite naked. She looks at herself. Then at the land. Then starts to cry. Real heartfelt sobs.

KEL (O.S.)

Oh, stop that, will ya?

Kel enters the FRAME in coolie garb. Tosses her a bundle of clothes.

KEL (CONT'D)

Here, rouse yourself.

Fallon doesn't budge.

KEL (CONT'D)

Well, fine. Suit yourself. You can come along dressed or you can come along naked. Hell, you can even stay. Makes no difference to me. I ain't got time to argue.

He turns to leave.

FALLON

WHERE AM I?! WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?!

(CONTINUED)



KEL

What did I do to you? Now let's set things straight here. I'm a part of this plan. I'm s'pose to be here, get it? Now we got seven days to get over that ridge there...

FALLON

What plan? What the hell are you talking about?...OWWWW!!!

Fallon fingers a tooth.

FALLON (CONT'D)

I lost my filling.

KEL

...That plan.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Kel squints at the hot sky, mops his brow as Fallon dresses behind a boulder. He finds a tobacco pouch in his pant pocket and starts rolling a cigarette.

KEL

If you don't hurry, you can forget about makin' that ridge. Forget about findin' food and water, too. You can even forget about that toothache of yours, 'cause...

FALLON

Would you just chill. I'm busy here.

ON FALLON

Mumbling to herself as she dresses.

FALLON (CONT'D)

Busy doing what? I am putting on clothes...right, someone's clothes...a strange man's clothes... because... because...

(she loses it)

I'M NAKED IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE!!!

(sobs; beat)

Okay, compose yourself, Fallon. Just go with the flow. He said he'd get you home, so just maintain. Just convince yourself it's real.

ON KEL

Growing weary.

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
Better get a move on, miss.

FALLON (O.S.)  
Whadda you want from me?!

KEL  
(thinks...)  
A medal.

Kel seals the cigarette and sticks it in his mouth as Fallon steps out from behind the rock. She looks, well, outrageous! A coolie-clothed, female version of Hop Sing. The cigarette just dangles on Kel's lip.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - WAGON TRAIL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Two coolies clad only in long johns lie beside the trail in a clump of bush. The ropes from which they'd been hanged still around their necks, slack from the tree limbs above.

Kel and Fallon walk past the corpses, eyes straight ahead. Fallon is mouthing a lump of tobacco; Kel taking drags off his cigarette.

FALLON  
(re: the bodies)  
We just gonna leave them there?

KEL  
Yep.

FALLON  
...I can't accept that.

KEL  
Fine. Then do something about it.

Fallon peers back over her shoulder and decides, right, she better not.

FALLON  
Who do you think they were?

KEL  
I didn't ask.

They walk a little ways. Something in Fallon's shoe begins to bug her.

FALLON  
Hold on a minute.

Kel stops, begrudgingly. She sits in the dirt and slips off a shoe. Shakes it. A twenty dollar gold coin falls out. Kel sees it immediately.

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
Here, better gimme that.

FALLON  
No. Whadda you want with it?

KEL  
I jus' might need it.

FALLON  
And I might, too.

KEL  
C'mon.

FALLON  
No way.

She pulls on her shoe and stands. Tucks the coin into her pant pocket as they begin walking again.

KEL  
Well, good luck spendin' it.

They hike a little further, Fallon tonguing the tobacco lump in her cheek.

FALLON  
Thanks for the tobacco.

KEL  
Next time it's gonna cost.

FALLON  
The toothache's gone, but I feel like I'm gonna puke. How can you smoke?

He doesn't answer.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
(to herself)  
You always this friendly? Why do I care?

Fallon pulls the plug out of her mouth. Yuk. Drops it on the ground.

The sky is washed in a hot milky haze. Fallon checks out the landscape: bleached earth dotted with sage, a few rocky outcrops. It all looks pretty much the same.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
Where are we?

KEL  
Don't know.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON

You don't know? I thought you said we have to get over that ridge.

KEL

We do. If it's the right ridge. Could be that one back there...

He nods behind them. Fallon looks. The ridge at the rear of the basin is almost indistinguishable from the one in front.

FALLON

(uneasily)

You're joking, right?

KEL

Nope.

FALLON

Then why are we even walking this way?

KEL

I got a hunch.

FALLON

I'm out here dehydrating in dead people's clothes because you got a hunch?

KEL

Guess so.

She stops.

FALLON

Then why am I following you?

Kel turns and faces her.

KEL

Look, it's a free country, do as you please. You wanna head that way, go ahead. I'll stick with my hunch. Jus' don't start bawlin' again...

FALLON

I wasn't "bawlin." I was disoriented, confused.

KEL

Right. Jus' don't start bawlin' again when you don't get back.

He tosses his cigarette and walks away.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON  
WE'RE LOST! YOU GET IT?! HEY!

She lingers a moment...checks out the bleak terrain behind her. Then catches up, infuriated.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
This is not fair. No, uh-uh.

KEL  
Oh, don't get so hot.

FALLON  
It's not fair and it's unacceptable.  
I will not be excluded from the  
decision process. Understand?

KEL  
I understand, all right. Without  
me, you ain't gonna make it.

FALLON  
What?!

Kel's eyes rove over her.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
Because I'm a woman?

KEL  
Somethin' like that.

FALLON  
Oh, bogus! That is so absolutely  
bogus!

She fires a glance toward the horizon.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
How far to that ridge?

KEL  
Four, five days if we're...

FALLON  
We'll make it in three.

A challenging stare. Then she cuts ahead of him, picks up the pace.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL - DAY - A HALF HOUR LATER

Fallon leads Kel by a good ten yards. Cocky. Almost gloating.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON  
 (calling)  
 You're lagging back there, tail pipe.  
 Pick it up.

Kel chucks his cigarette. Like he needs this kind of grief.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL - DAY - AND LATER

A hot orb that is the sun. Fallon is starting to struggle, face rimmed with sweat. She sets her eyes, determined.

FALLON  
 Remember. StairMaster, Fallie,  
 StairMaster...

She peeks over her shoulder at Kel lagging twenty yards behind.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL - DAY - FINALLY

Fallon's shoes drag across the dirt. Kel trudging thirty yards behind. Both haggard, on their last leg. Kel mops his brow. Notices a small bird in a trail-side bush. Something in its beak.

CLOSE on the bird, holding a minnow. Another bird emerges from the bush. Kel follows its flight across the sky...

FALLON licks her lips, tries to sing:

FALLON  
 Wee...are the champions...my  
 friends...But we'll keep on  
 fighting...'til the end...

She glances back at Kel.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 Wassa matter, givin' up?

But Kel's not there. The SOUND of splashes. Kel's WHOOPS and YELLS. Fallon takes off in their direction.

EXT. POND - DAY

Kel splashes in the pond, fully clothed and jubilant. Fallon rushes up and dives in.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PONDSIDE - DAY

Kel studies the tobacco pouch, a dismal, soggy lump. Sets it on a boulder where his shirt is drying. Fallon wrings out her hair by the pond.

KEL

We're gonna need food, we sure could use a gun, and we're gonna need water.

FALLON

Don't forget directions.

KEL

We'll rest up here 'til the sun goes down...and do me a favor, will ya? When we get goin' again, no more shenanigans.

Kel spreads the tobacco over the shirt. Meticulously wrings the pouch over it for good measure.

FALLON

(watching him)

Get a life.

She lies back in the grass and settles in for a nap.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL - NIGHT

A brilliant, moonlit night. Fallon and Kel head over a small rise. Except for the glow of Kel's cigarette, silhouettes against the sky.

FALLON

The problem is we've been brainwashed by these billboards and movies...media ads. It's sexy, exciting. It's macho. An entire nation's health being undermined by sugar-coated images.

KEL

I got not idea what you're yappin' about.

FALLON

Smoking.

KEL

What?

FALLON

Your smoking. Why do you smoke?

(CONTINUED)

KEL

I jus' do.

FALLON

But why? Admit it, it's an image thing, isn't it?

KEL

(amazed)

You married?

FALLON

What's that got to do with anything?

KEL

I was pityin' the poor fellow, that's all.

FALLON

Yes, I'm married, and that issue's off limits...and you don't need to pity him. Now just answer me. Why? Why do you smoke?...And don't tell me because you enjoy the flavor. I won't accept that.

KEL

Okay...I smoke because it fills the time. When I'm out on my horse, ridin' the range and there ain't nothin' better to do but stare at the sage brush and sky, I smoke...

(takes a satisfying drag)

And lady, I enjoy it.

FALLON

There ya go. I rest my case. You think you're the Marlboro man.

KEL

You get enough sleep back there?

Fallon points.

FALLON

Look! Down there!

IN THE VALLEY BELOW a cabin sits nestled in brush and cottonwood beside the trail. Light shines from its windows. Chimney smoke trickles into the night sky.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Crickets CHIRPING up a storm. Kel and Fallon crouch in the brush, monitoring the cabin from a safe distance.

(CONTINUED)



A half dozens horses graze near the cabin's door, a few chickens scratching in the yard. Shadows pass in the lamplit windows, voices MURMURING from within.

KEL looks tense. Fallon restless.

FALLON  
This is ridiculous.

KEL  
Shhh...

FALLON  
We've been squatting here for a half an hour, we need assistance.

Kel doesn't answer.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
What is it with you? Your ego?  
You're too manly to ask?

Kel's eyes narrow in on one of the horses, the distinctive blaze around the eye...It's Kel's horse.

The cabin door opens. Cowboy #1 wanders out on the porch. He stretches, taking a deep breath of night air. Before Kel can blink, Fallon is up and heading toward the cabin.

KEL  
(a panicky whisper)  
Hey!...Hey!...

Fallon ignores him. Kel retreats into the brush, watches uneasily.

Cowboy #1 freezes in mid-stretch as Fallon approaches.

FALLON  
Excuse me. Hi. My friend and I  
are...well, we're lost. Could you  
help us?

The cowboy gawks at her.

COWBOY #1  
(calls inside)  
Larry?...

Larry moseys to the door. Shotgun in hand. A real badass scowl.

FALLON  
Hi. My friend and I...

She extends a hand. He walks right past it into the yard, eyes scanning the perimeter.

(CONTINUED)

LARRY  
Where's your friend?

FALLON  
(hesitant)  
My friend? Uh, he's, uh...

Four other mean-looking COWBOYS (#'s 2-5) have emerged from the cabin, joining the first on the porch. Their eyes rove the terrain as they step past Fallon and fan into the yard. She turns to Larry.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
Look, if you could just point the way to Midasville.

Larry ignores her.

LARRY  
(to men)  
I don't want this messed up. Find the friend.

COWBOY #1  
Whadda I do with her?

LARRY  
She's a woman, ain't she?

FALLON  
Excuse me?!

Larry turns. Gives her a cool once over.

LARRY  
...Then get rid of her.

KEL cringes.

COWBOY #1 lunges at Fallon and she stuns him with a backhand to the side of the head, judos him over her shoulder and drops him to the ground. The men wheel in one fluid motion, guns COCKING. Larry shakes his head. Levels his shotgun.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Say yer prayers, missy.

And now, Kel's voice:

KEL (O.S.)  
(singing)  
Along came a cowboy...yodel-ladee-yi-  
oh...

The men turn in unison. KEL stands in a clearing twenty yards away, a cocky grin.

(CONTINUED)

KEL (CONT'D)

Care ta dance?

He whistles. His horse rears and charges. Kel dives behind a boulder as the guns EXPLODE! And now ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE...Whinnying, frenzied horses stampeding past the men as they crisscross into the brush...chickens bawking, erupting in the air.

FALLON grabs Cowboy #1's gun, conks him. Rolls under the porch as BULLETS pepper a trail behind her.

KEL leaps on his horse. Another loose horse tears past. Kel shakes the reins and goes after it.

EXT. BRUSH - NIGHT

Larry and his men huddle in thickets, confused.

COWBOY #2

That was Kel!

COWBOY #3

He's s'pose to be blowed up!

Larry looks around, anxious.

LARRY

(to Cowboys #3 and #5)

Find him.

The men split up, guns drawn, moving cautiously.

EXT. TRAIL - NIGHT

Kel grabs a saddle rope. Lassoes the loose horse on a dead run. He wheels and gallops back toward the cabin, horse in tow.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Fallon peeks out from under the porch. From behind a barrel in the yard, Cowboy #2 takes a shot. KA-POW! Wood splinters near Fallon's head and she ducks back under.

LARRY AND COWBOY #4 creep along the cabin wall. They move up to the porch.

EXT. BRUSH - NIGHT

WHOOSH, WHOOSH, WHOOSH. Sounds like a threshing machine. Cowboy #3 and Cowboy #5 look up...

(CONTINUED)

KEL charges through the brush, the lasso taugt between him and the other horse. The cowboys get clotheslined at the collarbone, are flipped like pancakes and tossed to the ground. More shots RING out from the cabin. Kel heads that way.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Larry nods at Cowboy #2 in the yard, meaning "cover the end of the porch." He fires his shotgun into the porch plank and blows a hole near Fallon below. Startled, she scoots a few feet. Larry takes another step. Fires again, forcing Fallon toward the porch end.

COWBOY #2 smirks. Aims, waiting for Fallon to emerge when...

KA-KA-THUMP, KA-KA-THUMP. Kel gallops out of the brush, weaves in toward the lassoed horse. The lasso slackens and catches Cowboy #2 at the armpit, drags him SMACK! into the barrel. The men on the porch unload. POW! POW! POW! Kel dodges the barrage...

POW!

Larry cringes oddly, a stream of blood trickling from his mouth. Then pitches headfirst off the porch, dead. Cowboy #4 looks at him, stunned. Then toward the porch.

Fallon's gun barrel pokes through a shotgun hole in the plank, smoke wafting from its tip.

Cowboy #4 stares at Kel galloping toward him. Hightails it into the brush. Kel pulls up to the cabin. Fallon clammers out from under the porch and hops behind him.

Cowboy #3 and Cowboy #5 stagger out from cover and watch them ride off.

EXT. HILLS - NIGHT

The night sky stretches over rolling grassland as Kel and Fallon ride along a narrow trail. Fallon flush with victory and in a mood to talk. Kel tense, cigarette jammed in his lips, deep in thought.

FALLON

Well, the good news is we got a horse...The bad news is we only got one...The good news is, we know where we are now, right, or so you say?...But the bad news is, if they wanna come after us, so do they...sorta. The good new is...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 (a sudden pang of  
 conscience)  
 I nailed one of them good.

KEL  
 (bitterly)  
 The bad news is, the one you nailed  
 good was Billie Natas's brother.  
 The bad news is, since they know  
 where we are "sorta," we gotta take  
 this cock-eyed back road out through  
 the boondocks an' we'll lose a  
 day...Bad news wins, four ta three.

FALLON  
 Wait a minute, wait a minute. Billie  
 Natas's brother? Who the hell is  
 Billie Natas's brother?...Who the  
 hell is Billie Natas? Did you know  
 them?

KEL  
 Yeah, kinda.

FALLON  
 Whadda you mean, "kinda"?...Are you  
 gonna answer me?!

Fallon reaches over and grabs the reins.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 Who are you anyway?

KEL  
 Me? I'm jus' a cowboy, ma'am.

Kel swings his legs over the saddle. Dismounts.

KEL (CONT'D)  
 Well, this looks as good as anyplace  
 to set for the night.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Fallon sits by a crackling campfire, lost in the flames. A  
 can of something murky boils on the coals. Kel circles the  
 campsite a few yards away, carrying a large stone. Every  
 few feet, he raises the stone, then drops it on the ground  
 with a loud THUMP.

FALLON  
 So you're really not a colonel in  
 the army?

(CONTINUED)

KEL

Nope. Not a colonel, not a doctor,  
not even a bugle boy.

(drops stone)

I'm jus' plain ol' Ross Kelly outta  
Gatlin, Missouri.

FALLON

That's your name? Ross?

KEL

Yep. But folks call me Kel.

FALLON

Kel?

KEL

Uh-huh.

FALLON

Hmm...And you really weren't involved  
with Zola's experiment?

KEL

(picks up the stone)

That's right. It was just a case of  
me being in the wrong place at the  
right time. Or vice versa.

FALLON

So it was all over some crackpot  
condor research...

KEL

...that we're stuck in this together.  
Ya ask me, it's for the birds.

FALLON

Unbelievable.

Kel drops the stone...THUMP. Fallon turns to him.

FALLON (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

KEL

Stirrin' up reptiles. If there's  
any about, this thumpin'll bring em  
out of the ground.

FALLON

Snakes?

Fallon stands, alarmed.

KEL

Reptiles.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON

I hate snakes.

KEL

Relax. They're probably none too fond of us neither.

Kel puts a hand on her shoulder and eases her down. He finds a stump, looks around it, sits. Picks up a stick and stirs the coals.

FALLON

So there you were, just this saddlesore cowpoke minding your own business in some local saloon and, pfft!, just like that you were zapped buck naked to the twenty-first century.

KEL

Yep. 'Bout sums it.

Kel pokes the stick in the can and pulls out a tomato.

KEL (CONT'D)

Tomata?

FALLON

(drifting)

What? No, uh-uh. Fleshy fruits. I've never been fond of them.

She looks at Kel, concerned as he eats.

FALLON (CONT'D)

So who's this Natas? And why'd those men want to kill us?

KEL

Billie Natas owns most of the land in this territory. Most of the cattle and most of the gold. She's aimin' to own it all.

FALLON

She's a woman?

KEL

Well, she's usually are. And this one ain't gonna let nothin' this side of the Inferno stop her.

FALLON

But I wasn't trying to stop her. I was just asking for directions.

(CONTINUED)

KEL

(gestures)  
Lookin' like that, you were askin'  
for trouble.

FALLON

Like what?

KEL

A Chinaman.

FALLON

You mean Asian American.

KEL

No, I mean a Chinaman. Rumor has it  
the local Orientals are stirred up  
and bent on robbin' one of her trains.

FALLON

A train?!

KEL

(nods)  
Loaded with enough gold to buy every  
scrap a track and every crooked  
senator west of the Mississippi.

FALLON

But why would these Asian Americans...  
why would they want to rob her?

KEL

Natas's been tryin' to buffalo these  
poor folk off their property for the  
better part of a year. Guess they  
figured it's time to fight back.

FALLON

Can they pull it off?

KEL

Not without help.

FALLON

From whom?

KEL

A professional.

Kel spears the stick in the ground. Fallon looks at him,  
worried. A lingering beat.

FALLON

(guessing)  
...You?

(CONTINUED)



KEL

Yep.

FALLON

But you said you were a cowboy! And now you're telling me you're a train robber?!

KEL

Now don't go gettin' hysterical.

FALLON

I'm relying on a hired felon to get me home?

KEL

Now, hold on...

FALLON

Whadda you gonna tell me next?

Kel pauses...

KEL

Good night.

Kel rises, starts rummaging in the saddle pack. Fallon lays back on the blanket and stares up at the stars.

FALLON

I'm sorry. I'm hungry, I'm tired, and I just wanna go home. Bob's probably freaking out about me.

KEL

Oh, that guy I was pityin'.

FALLON

(without pizazz)

Yep, Bob. My husband. As of yesterday.

KEL

Must be a real gent.

FALLON

(mechanically)

He's smart, successful, handsome. Sensitive to a cause that, frankly, isn't front page news anymore.

KEL

You got married yesterday?

Fallon nods.

(CONTINUED)

KEL (CONT'D)  
 Congratulations...I think.

Kel starts laying a rope around her blanket.

FALLON  
Now what are you doing?

KEL  
 Keepin' the snakes away.

FALLON  
 Reptiles?

KEL  
 No, snakes. Horsehair irritates  
 their bellies. They won't cross it.

Kel goes to his blanket and lays down.

KEL (CONT'D)  
 Well, I'm turnin' in. Stir them  
 coals before you retire. Good night,  
 ma'am.

Fallon throws him a peek, then looks up at the stars. She just can't figure him out. After a moment...

FALLON  
 Kel?...My name's Fallon.  
 (he rolls over; now,  
 to herself)  
 Fallon Parks, outta Glendale,  
 California...  
 (beat)  
 But folks jus' call me Parks.

She glances at Kel. He is fast asleep.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT - LATER

It starts to rain, a few light drops. Fallon wakes. She tip toes over and pulls the blanket over Kel's face, let's him sleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY - THE NEXT MORNING

Bright sun. Nearby WHISTLING. A happy, upbeat tune. Fallon rises to find Kel hovering over the campfire, preparing breakfast. She takes a divine breath of it.

FALLON  
 Ummmm...

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
Good morning.

FALLON  
Wow, that smells delicious.

KEL  
Sure does.

Fallon double takes. Delicious?! She scrambles to the campfire, notices that Kel is fully clothed in cowboy gear. Gun belt. Even a hat.

FALLON  
Where'd you get those?

Kel points to a cabin off yonder. Its front door open, a few chickens in the yard, a small corral to the side.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
That was kind of them. Shame we couldn't have stayed there last night.

KEL  
Plenty of room. No one's home.

FALLON  
They're gone and you just walked in and stole their food and clothes?

KEL  
Now don't start yappin' again. C'mon, eat up. I put some gear out for ya. You're gonna need it.

INT. HOMESTEAD CABIN - DAY

Kel raids the cupboards, stuffing canned goods into a leather pouch as Fallon changes clothes behind a make-shift partition, a blanket hung on a rope. She lifts a plaid shirt off the line; and now a belt with a large shiny buckle.

FALLON  
Sure they won't care?

KEL  
Code of the West. People don't ask for returns. Only tell em what you took and why for. And if you get a chance, to do the same some day for the next fella that might be needin' it.

Kel opens another cupboard and takes out a biscuit tin. He sets it on a table, spots a newspaper clipping. Starts to read.

(CONTINUED)

KEL (CONT'D)

Ha! So that's where he went.

FALLON

Who?

KEL

Our gracious host. Went to fetch his bride. Found himself a woman from St. Louis who can...  
 (reads from clipping)  
 ..."cook, spin, weave and feed the pigs. Her age is none of your business, yet an old man need not apply...nor any who have not a little gold, for this must be five thousand settled on her before she will bind herself to perform all of the above..."

Fallon steps from behind the blanket, wearing dungarees, the shirt, a belt...and a frown.

FALLON

That disgusts me. No, I'm equally disgusted and surprised...  
 (heads toward Kel)  
 Surprised because you know how to read. Disgusted because this man isn't "fetching" a bride, he's purchasing chattel.

KEL

For five thousand bucks, sounds like the chattel made a helluva deal.

FALLON

(irate)  
 She's selling herself into slavery!  
 (snatches the clipping,  
 waves it)  
 ...Binding herself to perform?!

KEL

She's hitching herself to a man who's gonna provide and take care of her!

FALLON

And you think that's what she wants?

KEL

Ain't that what every woman wants?

FALLON

Excuse me?!

Kel grabs the clipping. Waves it emphatically.

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
 THAT'S WHAT SHE WAS ADVERTISING FOR!

Fallon grabs the clipping back, waves it harder.

FALLON  
 ONLY BECAUSE SHE HAD NO ALTERNATIVE!

Kel grabs the clipping and slams it on the table!

KEL  
 You're damn right, she didn't. The West ain't no cotillion dance. It's a dangerous, brutal and unforgiving land. It takes a man in the prime of his physical powers jus' to make it through a day. You think a woman stands a chance out here alone?

FALLON  
 I think she deserves the chance to find out!

KEL  
 And any man who'd let her would be abetting her demise!...What is your problem? What are you so afraid of, anyhow?

Fallon locks eyes with Kel. Her whole body bristling. She heads to the door.

KEL (CONT'D)  
 And Parks!...

Fallon turns.

KEL (CONT'D)  
 Get rid of that belt buckle! In a bright sun, that shinin' will give you away to anybody within five miles!

Fallon glances at the buckle, then angrily at Kel. She wheels and slams the door on her way out.

EXT. CORRAL - DAY

Fallon hangs the belt on the corral fence. Leans against the rail and gazes into the hot, hazy distance. Kel comes out of the cabin.

KEL  
 (a bit conciliatory)  
 Watch it. Favorite place for rattlers.

(CONTINUED)

He indicates the tall grass below Fallon's feet. He steps off the porch and joins her at the corral. Snubbing him, Fallon moves to a small wood crate and starts to sit...

KEL (CONT'D)

And always look before you sit.

Kel kicks the crate over. A gopher snake slithers out from underneath. Fallon gasps.

KEL (CONT'D)

Just a gopher snake. He's harmless...  
unless you're a gopher.

Kel rights the crate, makes a particular point of looking before he sits...and sits.

KEL (CONT'D)

You can always tell a cowboy by the  
way he sits.

(smiles)

You got a lot to learn you wanna get  
home.

Fallon looks at him, chagrined.

EXT. CORRAL - DAY - LATER

Fallon at his side, Kel swings the lasso high above his head as the horse circles the corral.

KEL

You pretend you're makin' a hole in  
the wind. Then lead the big fella  
and let him fall into it.

Kel pitches the lasso across the corral in a perfect arc over the horse's head. He tugs the rope and halts the horse.

KEL (CONT'D)

Give it a try?

EXT. CORRAL - DAY - SERIES OF SHOTS

- 1) Kel stands at Fallon's side as she attempts to lasso the horse, a feeble toss that lands without success.
- 2) Now Fallon succeeds. And the horse takes off, almost pulling her out of her shoes. Kel rushes over and helps.
- 3) Kel gives Fallon a leg up in the saddle.
- 4) He walks alongside her as she takes the horse at a slow trot around the corral.
- 5) Faster now, cantering. She's getting the hang of it.

(CONTINUED)

## SERIES OF SHOTS (CONT'D)

6) Standing in the middle of the corral, Fallon watches as Kel rides full speed, performing a "running dismount," swinging a leg over the saddle and sliding on the diagonal to a stop.

7) Kel hands Fallon a Colt .45 revolver. The weight of it catches her off guard and she nearly drops it.

8) He shows her how to hold the gun and aim.

9) Six cans on the fence. Fallon fires, misses. Fires, misses. Splinters the rail. Now hits a can. Kel nods his approval.

10) Kel twirls the gun and fires. Six shots. The cans haven't budged. Fallon looks quizzical. Kel nods...A sapling twenty yards beyond the fence has been neatly pruned of its branches.

## EXT. HOMESTEAD CABIN - DAY - LATER

Fallon dusts off her pants as she heads to the porch. She starts to sit, checks below her... then settles on a step. She gazes toward Kel in the corral. Humble, curious, happy. Mostly confused.

Kel leads the horse to the side yard. Sets the saddle on the porch, then sits next to Fallon. He pulls out his tobacco pouch and rolls a cigarette.

FALLON

You're pretty good. Where'd you learn all that stuff?

Kel plants the cigarette in his mouth, lights it.

KEL

You learn a lot, you live in the West, or you don't live. Ropin' I learned from Wichita Willie on the Big Forty outta Casper. The best there was. He could lasso a mouse with shirt thread, blindfolded and wobbly with drink...I learned to shoot from Blackjack Higgins, God rest his soul, the second best gunman in Tombstone. Hell, I even learned to fight Chinaman-style from a coolie I knew up in Frisco. Y'never know what's gonna come in handy out here.

FALLON

(surprised)  
You know Kung Fu?

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
Name sounds familiar, but the face  
escapes me.

FALLON  
No, I mean the martial art. You  
know, the fighting technique.

KEL  
Oh, that. Sure. But I got somethin'  
even better.

FALLON  
You do?

KEL  
Sure I do. C'mon, I'll show ya.

Kel puts out his cigarette and pulls her off the porch.

KEL (CONT'D)  
(faces her)  
Now this is a gimmick I developed  
myself. I call it the "atheist  
punch."

FALLON  
Why's that?

KEL  
'Cause you hit someone with it, they  
ain't got a prayer. Now I never  
showed this to no one, so you gotta  
promise to keep it a secret.

FALLON  
(very solemnly)  
Oh, I swear.

KEL  
I ain't gonna hurt ya now, I jus'  
wanna demonstrate. Okay, put up  
your dukes and pretend like you're  
gettin' ready to belt me.

Fallon adopts a boxing pose. Starts to giggle.

KEL (CONT'D)  
Whadda you laughin' at?

FALLON  
(trying for a straight  
face)  
Nothing.

(CONTINUED)



KEL  
This ain't funny, got it? This is  
serious business.

FALLON  
Okay.

KEL  
Now, c'mon.

Fallon resumes the pose.

KEL (CONT'D)  
That's right...See, where most fellas  
go wrong in a fight is they let their  
blood take em over. That's why they  
lose. Not me. No sir, not I. I  
keep my head.

Kel begins to circle her, throwing jabs in the air.

KEL (CONT'D)  
I jus' fool around a little while  
and wait for my opportunity. If  
they think I'm yellow, why that's  
even better. Hell, I'm jus'  
practicin' patience. Then, when I  
see my chance, I give em one these,  
like this...  
(throws a hand skyward)  
Then kaboom...  
(an uppercut punch  
with the other hand)  
...I come up with the ol' "atheist."  
Works every time.

Fallon prods him.

FALLON  
Okay. Try it.

KEL  
For real? You wanna mix it up with  
me?

FALLON  
Yeah, let's go.

KEL  
No way.

FALLON  
C'mon. I promise I won't hurt you.

KEL  
Hurt me?

(CONTINUED)

FALLON

You've seen what I'm capable of.

KEL

Parks, I've taken on a half dozen Comanche armed with nothin' buy my bare fists, and I'm still walkin'.

FALLON

Then why won't you fight me?

KEL

'Cause you're a woman! A man don't hit a woman.

FALLON

Are you kidding? You know how many cases of domestic violence there are in the U.S. each year?

KEL

Parks, I dunno where you come from, but where I do a man honors a woman, he don't strike her. I ain't gonna fight you. Period.

Kel heads toward the cabin.

FALLON

(taunting him)

I think you're afraid, cowboy.

KEL

Have it your way.

FALLON

Man up, Mr. Macho!

KEL

Period!

Suddenly, the air is shattered by a horrifying WHINNY. Kel wheels, alarmed. In the side yard, the horse is bucking and pawing. Kel knows instinctively something's not right. Grabs a rifle off the porch.

EXT. SIDE YARD - DAY

Kel stops twenty yards from the horse. It's staggering now, making low sickening rumbles. He yanks a spindly weed from the grass as Fallon rushes up.

KEL

Damn, sonnuvabitch! Damn!

(CONTINUED)

FALLON  
What...what is it?

KEL  
Loco weed. He's gone mad.

Without warning, the horse now lurches and charges them. Kel raises the rifle. Waits. And fires! The horse drops in its tracks.

Kel goes over. The horse snorting blood, struggling to rise. Kel aims at its head, trying to gather the courage...

Fallon winces as...BANG.

Kel stands over the carcass, still as stone.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A sluggish creek in the back of the cabin. Kel douses his face as Fallon comes over to console him.

FALLON  
Hey...you okay?

Kel nods. He gets up and looks toward the mountains...then back at the creek. A streak of rusty discoloration flows down its center.

KEL  
(ruefully)  
Mine runoff from the mountains.  
Natas's mines. She's ruinin' the  
land...ruinin' everythin'.

He turns to Fallon, somber.

KEL (CONT'D)  
Without a horse, we ain't gonna make  
it.

A steady beat. Then something in the creek catches Kel's eyes. He drops to his knees. The water is vibrating. He gets up, looks around. Then splashes across the creek into the field. Kel drops to the ground, screams to Fallon:

KEL (CONT'D)  
Yay hey! Yahoo!

Fallon runs over. Kel's ear is pressed to a train rail. He jumps to his feet and stares down the length of it.

FALLON  
What do you see?

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
 (exulting)  
 It's what I heard, Parks. A train!  
 Your ticket home!

A faint puff of black smoke appears above the plains.

FALLON  
 Oh, god, yes!

KEL  
 Take us right into Midasville.  
 Yahooo!!!

They hug and do a happy little ring dance. She pulls away.

FALLON  
 Wait a minute. How we gonna stop  
 it?

KEL  
 What?

FALLON  
 I mean what if the engineer doesn't  
 see us? Or what if he thinks we're  
 robbers? Or what...

KEL  
 Aw, don't worry 'bout it, you're  
 standin' with the best train stopper  
 this side of the Rockies. Why I've  
 stopped more trains than a pine tree  
 has needles. Learned it from Sleepy  
 Sid Baines up in Kalispell, Montana.  
 Now you just step back there and  
 watch how a pro does it.

FALLON  
 You mean there's a trick to it?

KEL  
 (winks)  
 Ain't no trick, it's an art.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD - DAY - LATER

A train approaches five hundred yards away, belching thick  
 clouds of smoke. Kel waves Fallon off the tracks with a  
 cocky flick of his fingers.

KEL  
 Stand clear.

(CONTINUED)

Fallon moves aside. Kel pastes a smile on his face, takes off his hat and makes a broad sweeping gesture with it as the train chugs closer...Kel waves the hat faster. He rises on his toes. The train isn't slowing.

Kel jumps up and down a couple times, waving both hands frantically.

KEL (CONT'D)

Slow down! Stop! STOP! HEY!!!

Kel dives off the tracks as the train barrels past, whistle blasting. He slumps dejected in the grass, when suddenly, thirty yards away, the train SCREECHES to a stop.

CLOSE ON FALLON inches in front of the puffing engine. Shoulders bare, her shirt parted, a smirk grazing her face. Kel's jaw drops a few feet as Fallon nonchalantly buttons up and starts walking alongside the train.

Pin drop time. The engineer stares bug-eyed. The bin tender frozen, a few coals trickling from his shovel. Kel is immobilized.

EXT. TRAIN - COACH CAR - DAY

The heads of a few curious miners poke out of the coach car windows. The MINE FOREMAN, a big blue-beard, leans over the platform as Fallon approaches.

FALLON

Hi. You headin' towards Midasville?

FOREMAN

Not towards. To. Need a lift?

FALLON

Thanks.

He offers a hand and helps her aboard. Kel steps forward and begins to board. The foreman frowns. Suspicious.

FOREMAN

Say, don't I know you?

Kel tries to place him, then quickly averts his eyes.

KEL

Not likely. I, uh, been in Paree.

FOREMAN

Paree?! Hmm...

Kel starts to move past but the foreman blocks him with a Popeye-sized arm.

(CONTINUED)

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Wait a minute, wait a minute...

(getting it)

You're the guy bilked me outta a sawbuck at the card table the other night. Now I know...

(cocks fist)

Why you, I oughtta...

Fallon holds out the gold coin.

FALLON

Will this settle it?

KEL

(protesting)

That's a twenty dollar gold piece!

FOREMAN

(snatches it)

Sure will.

He bows, huge grin, and motions Kel aboard.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

After you, Frenchie.

Kel grimaces wearily, and boards.

INT. TRAIN - COACH CAR - DAY

Packed with tired, dusty miners, heading, by the looks of them, someplace even more miserable. Kel follows Fallon down the aisle, absolutely confounded by her. An old, skin-and-bones miner politely rises and offers Fallon a seat beside the window.

FALLON

(sitting)

Thank you.

He tips his cap and sits back down. Kel taps his shoulder. UP! The miner takes one look at him and scrambles to the back.

Kel sits. Takes a sidelong glance at Fallon...about to speak...then gives up. He leans back in his seat, resolutely slides his hat over his eyes and stretches out for a long nap.

EXT. TRAIN - SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY/DUSK

- 1) Pistons and wheels grind into action.
- 2) The train knives through prairie, heading toward the mountain range in the distance.
- 3) Dusk. The train emerges from a mountain bend, smoke trailing behind it.

CUT TO:

INT. NATAS'S OFFICE - ANTEROOM - NIGHT

A Chinese woman dusts/eavesdrops near a conference room door.

INT. NATAS'S OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Plush and ornately appointed. At the head of a large conference table, Natas presides over a meeting of cronies -- crooked politicians, wheeler dealer banker and business types...upper crust scum. Natas's new pet monkey cracks peanut shells on the table beside her.

NATAS

(pounds the table,  
angry as hell)

Now I'm the biggest ore producer in these parts and I didn't get that way by dancin' with mice. Come hell or high water, I won't let these railroad men interfere with my interests.

CRONY

So what do you propose, Billie?

NATAS

I'm gonna beat em. Beat em, by God, at their own rotten game.

SENATOR

(piping in)

The road to riches, gentlemen, is not through production but through distribution. He who controls the middle steps, controls both the producer and the market and has them at his mercy.

NATAS

Exactly right, Senator.

Natas turns to a large table behind her. On it rests a model train, fortified with thick armor plating.

(CONTINUED)

NATAS (CONT'D)

In two days, on the Fourth of July, I'm sendin' a large shipment of gold to the east coast. There, I've instructed my agents to buy up every loose locomotive and friendly politician they can lay their hands on.

CYNICAL BIGWIG

What about the Chinamen? I hear there may be problems there.

NATAS

That's bein' handled.

CROOKED BANKER

And acquisitions, Billie. How's your access rights proceedin'?

NATAS

When the coolies go down, the rights will follow.

Natas presses her knuckles on the table.

NATAS (CONT'D)

I'm buildin' a railroad, gentlemen, the biggest railroad this country's ever seen. And with it, I intend not only to control the distribution end, I intend to be the distribution end.

Bridge catches Natas's eye, beckoning from a side chamber.

NATAS (CONT'D)

(to cronies)

Excuse me.

INT. NATAS'S OFFICE - SIDE CHAMBER - NIGHT

With Bridge are Cowboys #'s 1-5. Dusty and worn, reluctant and scared. Natas enters the room.

NATAS

What is it, Bridge?

BRIDGE

Kelly's alive.

NATAS

What?!

(CONTINUED)



BRIDGE  
 (to Cowboy #1)  
 Tell her.

COWBOY #1  
 We seen him at Brokenwood.

BRIDGE  
 Tell her the rest.

COWBOY #1  
 (hesitant)  
 We got bushwhacked...They kilt your  
 brother.

BRIDGE  
 A woman did it. She come with Kelly.

NATAS  
 Larry's dead?

All eyes head south as the news sinks in. Then Natas to  
 Bridge without a trace of emotion...

NATAS (CONT'D)  
 I want them found.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN - COACH CAR - NIGHT

The car is alive, men drinking, singing, blowing off steam  
 with a boisterous rendition of "Oh! Susanna." One HEFTY  
 MINER, banjo in hand, finishes a verse and all the miners  
 erupt in the chorus.

Fallon beams. Likewise Kel who, one of the boys, is smack  
 in his element. They watch as a bottle is passed to ANOTHER  
 MINER...who begins another comical spin on the verse...until  
 the chorus arrives and everyone raucously joins in.

The bottle is now passed to Kel, indicating -- his turn now.  
 He takes a swig and begins to sing. Fallon perks. In a  
 scary way, he's pretty damn good. The final chorus now comes  
 around and Kel and Fallon join all the miners in belting it  
 out until the song ends in an explosion of laughter.

Then utter silence. A somber mood descends upon the car as  
 something outside engages their attention.

POV...A hillside ravaged by mining works. Fire pots, skeletal  
 scaffolding, and mine shaft openings like gaping wounds in  
 the terrain. FURTHER ALONG...an ominous bank of water  
 cannons, jets full throttle, silhouetting men and metal in  
 enormous clouds of mist. An entire mountainside being eroded  
 and washed away.

(CONTINUED)

KEL AND FALLON absorb the scene.

FALLON  
What is it?

KEL  
Natas's mining operations.

FALLON  
Are we stopping?

Kel shakes his head, no.

KEL  
This is jus' her copper works. These boys here are gold and silver labor. Mine her fields up north. It's even worse.  
(beat; darkly)  
...A whole mountain flattened for a sack of ore. A whole land leveled for a glint of gold.

And now, out of nowhere, Kel begins to sing. A sad, heartfelt ballad... "The Dying Cowboy."

It touches Fallon deeply, his voice drifting through the car, resonating in the miner's sullen faces. It touches them all, except for one man.

His name is GREGOR EAVES, forties. Tall, bespectacled, nattily dressed. From the back of the car he is eyeing Kel and Fallon with keen interest.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRAIN - COACH CAR - DAY

As it comes to a squeaking stop. Fallon awakes nestled on Kel's shoulder. Embarrassed, she pulls away. She immediately becomes aware of the miners rushing down the aisle toward the exit. Kel grins.

KEL  
Sweet dreams?

FALLON  
Are we here?...Where are they going?

KEL  
Well, no, we ain't here. We're still in the sticks, 'bout twenty miles outta Midasville. And them, they're goin'...

He whispers in her ear.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON

Oh.

She mulls this a moment. Looks out the window.

FALLON (CONT'D)

Why out here?

KEL

(dismissively)

Harlots ain't allowed in town.

She glances outside again. Suddenly stands...and like that, is heading to the door.

KEL (CONT'D)

Parks...

FALLON

Oh, no. This is totally unacceptable.

KEL

(calling)

Parks!...Whadda ya doin'? Wait a minute. Parks!

Kel gives chase. Eaves rises on a cane and discreetly follows.

EXT. SOCIAL CLUB - DAY

A swarm of "soiled doves" surround the miners as they head to a single wooden building tucked against a hillside. Fallon marches toward them. She doesn't stop as Kel catches up to her.

KEL

No more shenanigans, remember?

FALLON

Mind you, I don't condone this... objectification of women...

KEL

Objectifi-what?

FALLON

...but if they have no choice but to be objectified, they should at least have the choice of where.

KEL

So that's what your beef is.

FALLON

The meat of the matter.

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
Well, plain and simple, these gals  
have been...

FALLON  
Banished!...  
(stops, gestures)  
...Here!  
(moving again)  
Yet men are freely and openly paying  
for their services...  
(stops, gestures)  
...Here!  
(moving again)  
It's a total hypocrisy, a downright  
double standard!

KEL  
And downright the way it is!

FALLON  
But downright not the way it oughtta  
be!

A woman sporting a parasol blindsides Kel, hooks his arm and spins him around.

GINNY  
(enthusiastically)  
Kel!

It's GINNY PEARL, early thirties, everyone's favorite party girl. There's obviously been a history between them. She gives Kel an overripe smooch as Fallon continues without missing a beat to the whorehouse.

GINNY (CONT'D)  
I thought you were dead!

Kel steals a nervous peek toward Fallon. And now:

A MAN'S VOICE  
Another one for the camera, please.

A NEWSPAPER REPORTER ducks under a camera hood a few feet away. Ginny kisses Kel. POP!

FREEZE FRAME ON THE IMAGE (Note: it's the PHOTO appearing earlier on Zola's Midasville web page, sans the sepia tinting.)

BACK TO SCENE

GINNY  
(to Kel)  
East Coast reporter.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GINNY (CONT'D)

Come all the way from Boston to show  
the world the West...

(nods)

Who's your friend?

Kel throws another worrisome glance at Fallon as she enters  
the whorehouse. Wishes he knew.

CUT TO:

INT. TELEGRAPH KIOSK - DAY

Eaves bursts through the door. The TELEGRAPH OPERATOR spins  
in his chair. Eaves disregards him, begins scribbling at  
the man's desk.

EAVES

I need this sent.

OPERATOR

Hold up there, mister. You cain't  
jus'...

Eaves shoves the paper in his face.

EAVES

Send it, you mule.

The operator begins to read...then:

OPERATOR

Right away, sir.

His fingers fly to the transmitter button, and over the BEEP-  
BEEP-BEEP...

INSERT NOTE which reads: "Natas. Kelly's alive. With girl.  
Midasville. Send men. G.E."

CUT TO:

EXT. SOCIAL CLUB - DAY

The reporter lugs his camera toward an awaiting stage. An  
acknowledging wave.

REPORTER

Thanks, Miss Ginny.

Ginny winks. Then turns to Kel, concerned.

(CONTINUED)

GINNY

Five of Natas's men came ridin'  
through last night. Seemed in a  
hurry.

KEL

They say anythin'?

GINNY

Nope. Stopped for nothin' more but  
to water their horses.

KEL

Listen, Ginny, not a word to anyone.  
You ain't seen me nor the gal.

Kel glances at the whorehouse again, nervous. Ginny ventures:

GINNY

So, do you love her?

But before Kel can answer, a huge ROAR erupts from within.

INT. SOCIAL CLUB - DAY

The main floor is packed with miners and girls. All eyes on Fallon, spiritedly pacing atop a bar. The whores attentive, the miners pissed.

FALLON

It's your choice, ladies. You have  
the choice to live your lives where  
and how you want! A freedom of choice  
almost guaranteed by the Constitution  
of the United States...

WHORE #1

...Amen, sister!

FALLON

...and by God above.

MINER #1

(yelling)  
Yeah, tell it to the law.

WHORE #2

(angrily)  
It's men what made them laws...

FALLON

And women that will change them!

MINER #2

Over my dead body.

(CONTINUED)

WHORE #3  
 Charlie, yer body's been dead fer as  
 long as I can remember.

A huge laugh. Another miner hops on the bar.

MINER #3  
 Let's take a vote. All in favor of  
 keepin' em here?

The men all scream "Aye!"

MINER #3 (CONT'D)  
 (to Fallon)  
 You lose, lady.

FALLON  
 (undaunted)  
 All in favor of raisin' your rates?

The whores yell back "Aye!"

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 (to Miner #3)  
 Think again, mister.  
 (to whores)  
 Ladies, we're gonna hit em where it  
 hurts!

WHORE #4  
 In their pockets!...

WHORE #5  
 And what's in between!

MINER #4  
 And what if we don't pay?

The miners mumble in agreement. And now a meek young GIRL  
 holding a broom squeezes out from the crowd.

MEEK GIRL  
 Strike.

MINER #5  
 What?!

WHORE #6  
 We'll call a strike!

FALLON  
 (rallying them)  
 A WHAT?

WHORES  
 (in unison)  
 STRIKE!

(CONTINUED)

FALLON  
I CAN'T HEAR YOU!

WHORES  
(clapping)  
STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE! STRIKE!

Over the deafening chorus, Kel and Ginny enter the room. Kel's face contorts. Uh-oh. Now above the rally:

FALLON  
Ladies, as mental skills have replaced physical skills as the primary means of survival...

ONE MINER to another:

MINER #6  
Who is that she-devil?

THE FOREMAN points an irate finger at Kel.

FOREMAN  
He's the one! He's the one that  
brung her!

MINER #7  
Get 'im!

A miner swings. Kel ducks the punch. It jaw-snaps the miner behind him. A second punch nails Kel. Ginny shin-kicks the puncher. Someone grabs her. The second miner goes after the first. Fists start flying, bodies sailing, miner vs. miner, miners vs. whores, grunts and screams.

Kel works his way through the melee toward the bar. Fallon is still raving, dodging a barrage of flying objects.

FALLON  
...have replace physical skills as  
the primary...

KEL  
Beautiful, Parks. This is jus'  
beautiful.

Kel yanks her off the bar and slings her over his shoulder... to where? A chair smashes out the front window. There. He fights through the crowd and exits through it.

EXT. SOCIAL CLUB - DAY

Outside the stagecoach is ready to go. Kel plunks Fallon inside, follows her in. A few whores pile in behind them.

(CONTINUED)



KEL  
 (to whores)  
 Where you goin'?

WHORE #7  
 We're followin' her.

INT. STAGECOACH - DAY

The brawl migrates into the street as the wheels start to roll. Kel turns from the window, scowls at Fallon, sits back to relax. Two men squished across from him are speechless. It's the reporter and Eaves. Kel tip his hat. Howdy.

The SHOTGUN RIDER pokes his head in the window.

SHOTGUN RIDER  
 Eight bits for the ride.

The whores hand him money. Kel reaches for his pocket, then remembers...that coin. Coal-rakes Fallon. She's like, what? Eaves digs in a change purse.

EAVES  
 Allow me.

REPORTER  
 (waving him off)  
 No, I've got it.

He pays the shotgun rider, then extends a hand to Fallon.

REPORTER (CONT'D)  
 Bert Hume. I'm with the Boston Herald. Doin' a story on the West.

FALLON  
 Fallon Parks.  
 (shakes hand; then to Eaves)  
 Fallon...

EAVES  
 (shakes her hand)  
 Gregor Eaves.

FALLON  
 (coolly, meaning Kel)  
 And this is mister...

REPORTER  
 (acknowledges Kel)  
 We've met.  
 (beat; gingerly)  
 So how long you two been married?...

EXT. STAGECOACH - DAY

An ear splitting "AWWW-YAWWW!" blasts from the STAGE DRIVER'S mouth as he whips his horses.

INT. STAGECOACH - DAY

FALLON

No!...What I mean is, we're not!

KEL

Got that right!

FALLON

Mr. Kelly is safeguarding my journey to Midasville. Not that I couldn't make it myself. Mr. Kelly is... familiar with the route.

REPORTER

Where you hail from?

KEL

Oh, she's from a "different" part of the country.

REPORTER

And what part is that?

FALLON

The civilized part.

KEL

Like it was civil what you did back there.

FALLON

If you were a real man, you would've stood up for me. For them.

KEL

Yeah? And jus' what is a "real" man?

Fallon pauses, aware of an audience.

FALLON

I'm sorry gentlemen. We've been...

EAVES

No, go on. I'd like to hear.

KEL

Oh, lord!

(CONTINUED)

Kel whips out his tobacco pouch with a show of disdain, and starts rolling a smoke.

FALLON

Well, okay, a real man...A real man is a man who's secure enough that he doesn't feel threatened by women. In his heart of hearts, he doesn't feel they're weaker than him, not as smart, nor more unstable. He's capable of understanding that before everything else, a woman is his equal. And he knows that...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STAGECOACH - SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY

- 1) The big wheels keep on turnin' and turnin'.
- 2) The stage winding up a switchback in rugged terrain.
- 3) CLOSE on the shotgun rider, ears cocked to the conversation below.

INT. STAGECOACH - DAY - LATER

A half dozen cigarette butts lie near Kel's boot. Smoking another, he listens half-heartedly as Fallon continues. The whores rapt. The reporter scribbling notes. Eaves sipping casually from a flask.

FALLON

And so our aim is simple: we ask not to be forced to choose between common fairness and basic peace...to be free to define ourselves rather than having our mold cast for us by men.

REPORTER

Well stated, Miss Parks. Yes, indeedy.

KEL

Whose side are you on?

EAVES

And what are your views, Mr. Kelly?

KEL

Mine?

FALLON

Yes, Mr. Kelly, we'd all like to know. That is, if you have any. Any we might comprehend.

(CONTINUED)

KEL

Hmm...well...all right.

He boot snuffs his cigarette, the equivalence of rolling up his sleeves.

KEL (CONT'D)

Who says I defined you? The way I see it, your feud ain't with men, it's with Nature. That God made us as different as a mule from a hen is as plain as day, and all the words this side of the Rockies ain't gonna change it. Jus' survey a lookin' glass...A man is robust and strong and fitted for hard labor, while a woman, less so, is fitted for the home. A man possesses courage and solid judgment to be her protector; a woman, more polish and imagination, to tame down his soul. To think contrary-wise is just tomfoolery. So obvious, in fact, it hoodwinks the problem.

FALLON

Which is?

KEL

The way a man treats ya because of your differences. Now, I can't talk for your husband, but if he's a "real" man, he not only respects ya, he venerates ya and will bend a river around just to prove it...a fella devoted enough that he acts with all the passion and desire he can muster on your behalf, if you'll let him. And if ya don't, if the mule starts cluckin' and the hen grows ears, why it's a calamity for ya both. And that's the way I see it, Parks. Simple as that. It don't get any clearer.

And for once, surprisingly, Fallon has no reply. She glances out the window, fighting an urge to agree. The clarity...the simplicity...

FALLON

...The summit. We made it in three days. I win.

But it is a flaccid remark, lacking any punch.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Lead by Bridge, a dozen of Natas's men gallop over the open range.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDASVILLE - OUTSKIRTS - DAY

The stagecoach rolls in from the outskirts of town...

EXT. MIDASVILLE - CHINATOWN - DAY

...and slowly wends its way past a hodgepodge of Chinese shops and lodgings. Ideograms in the windows. Colorful Oriental flags and banners. Ducks, dogs, chickens and children in the narrow streets.

EXT. CHINATOWN - THE FONG - DAY

A two story wooden office, the fong serves as a central meeting place and lodgings. Out front, the stagecoach awaits while the reporter snaps a few atmosphere shots. Eaves observing from the carriage. Fallon and the whores dispersing in the street.

FALLON  
Good luck, ladies.

Kel emerges from the fong, a courtesy nod to the stage driver.

KEL  
Thanks for the lift.

He crosses to Fallon.

KEL (CONT'D)  
I'll be back in a coupla days. You're gonna wait here. Li Li'll watch after ya.

LI LI, a China doll in her early twenties, stands in the fong doorway, a young boy, about four, welded to her leg.

FALLON  
Where are you going?

KEL  
I got some business to attend.

He starts to move past her.

FALLON  
You just gonna leave?

(CONTINUED)

KEL

You're the one who said you could  
take care of yourself.

FALLON

But what about the...

KEL

Careful now, you're startin' to sound  
like a woman.

FALLON

Oh, stop a minute! How am I getting  
home?

KEL

You mean if I don't make it back?

For the first time, they communicate. It's a real  
possibility.

KEL (CONT'D)

I gotcha covered, Parks. You can  
lose the worry lines.

Kel winks an assurance, leaves. Eaves, watching from the  
stagecoach, slips into the street and, cane in hand, starts  
to trail him.

INT. THE FONG - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - DAY

Li Li and her child wait attentively as Fallon checks out  
the room.

LI LI

You will be comfortable?

Fallon nods, cordial. Press tests the mattress, fingers a  
small Buddha figurine atop the bureau, then wanders to the  
window. She lingers there long enough for Li Li to notice.

LI LI (CONT'D)

You are fond of him.

Fallon turns, surprised.

FALLON

That would be against my principles.  
He's a chauvinist.

Li Li doesn't quite understand. Fallon reiterates.

FALLON (CONT'D)

He doesn't support feminism.

Again Li Li doesn't get it. Fallon laughs.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON (CONT'D)

He's kind of a jerk. Not a good man.

LI LI

No, no. He is a good man. And he is fond of you.

FALLON

He's got a strange way of showing it...And I don't mean to ruin the fantasy, but that "good" man you're talking about is a bit of a hoodlum.

Li Li shrugs.

FALLON (CONT'D)

A rogue.

Still doesn't comprehend.

FALLON (CONT'D)

A thief. He's going off now to rob a train.

LI LI

Oh, and that is why he is good.

This she understands all too well.

EXT. THE FONG - BACKYARD FARM - DAY

An acre plot of thriving, green foliage, like an emerald in the sand. Women, young and old, labor in the rows under the hot sun. Weeding, hoeing, hefting yoke sacks. Fallon and Li Li observe them from the perimeter as the boy runs off to join them.

LI LI

Ku-Li...it mean, "bitter strength." They have been here since sunrise and will not return to their houses until it sets.

FALLON

Where are the men? Why aren't they helping?

LI LI

They are. And their work is much more difficult. There, in the mountain, they are carving our home.

Li Li points. A faint dust cloud hovers above a well-defined gap in the range.

(CONTINUED)

LI LI (CONT'D)

We all work together. We have our roles. The town people think us foolish. But it is our land now, purchase with a lotta hard labor in the mines and with the trains. Land no one wanted until Billie Natas decide she must have it.

FALLON

Why, is there gold?

LI LI

No gold. A way through the mountains. A way for trains.

Li Li shrugs, it's a bitter subject. A ladybug lands on the back of her hand. She focuses on it.

LI LI (CONT'D)

In the past year, she has raised hatred against us. Many of my countrymen...and women...have been frightened into leaving. Some have been harmed, others killed. My sister was one.

FALLON

Li Li, I'm sorry.

LI LI

And her child. And the father of that child who was Kel's brother... And that is why he is stopping the train.

Fallon is stunned.

FALLON

My God, for his brother.

LI LI

And to get us what we need with gold...lawyers for justice, to defend ourselves and our land.

The ladybug flies away.

LI LI (CONT'D)

So you see, you may be right to say he is a...hoodlum? But to say he is not a good man, you are wrong.

Fallon takes Li Li's hands, feeling guilty as hell.

(CONTINUED)



FALLON

Where is he, Li Li? I have to see  
him.

Li Li nods, wise beyond words.

LI LI

Come, I think I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

Natas's men gallop over a small hill. Midasville is visible  
in the distance.

CUT TO:

INT. CHINESE GENERAL STORE - DAY

Cramped and dusty. Floor to ceiling sundries. An old CHINESE  
WOMAN flashes a seller's grin behind the counter as she hands  
a string of firecrackers to two young town boys.

CHINESE WOMAN

They will put on big show. Lotta  
crackle and bang.

The boys snap up the goods and dash from the store. Kel  
catches the door before it slams. A young Chinese man, LIN,  
dressed like a cowboy, emerges from behind a curtain.  
Saddlebag on shoulder, ready to go.

KEL

Howdy, Lin.

LIN

Independence Day. Big business in  
small town.

KEL

If we're lucky, we'll be back in  
time to catch the hoopla.

Lin motions toward a side door. The old woman watches them  
leave. Starts re-stocking the counter with rockets and flares  
and things that go crackle and bang.

INT. LOADING BARN - DAY

Dark. Barn doors closed. Sunlight angling through the  
rafters. A tarpaulin-covered transport wagon, horses  
harnessed, sits ready in the bay. Lin passes Kel the  
saddlebag, then heads toward a stall.

(CONTINUED)

LIN

I got fifty men position near the ambush point. Ten more at pass, pretending business as usual, blowing up stone. I go there now. We meet you and the others tomorrow at sunrise.

Lin untethers a horse, brings it to Kel. Kel digs in the saddlebag, comes up with a stick of dynamite.

KEL

Lotta crackle and bang.

LIN

Be a really big show.

Lin hands him the reins, pats the horse.

LIN (CONT'D)

Her name, Lotus. You need her, you whistle like this...

(sexy whistle, ala  
Bogie and Bacall)

She my favorite lady, after my mama. Slightly worse temper, so be gentle with her.

He throws the tarpaulin off a corner of the wagon, revealing a half dozen Winchester rifles inside.

LIN (CONT'D)

Six more rifle. That make fifteen total. Best I could do.

He takes one out and slides it into Kel's saddle holster.

LIN (CONT'D)

You sure that big ol' train'll stop?

KEL

Sure I'm sure. You're lookin' at the best train stopper this side of the Rockies.

Kel finger twirls the dynamite stick. Clutches it.

EXT. CHINATOWN - STREET - DAY

Natas's men enter Chinatown, horses slowing to a parade-like gait. Bridge retrieves a rifle from the saddle holster. The grim-faced men inspect the environs as a few Chinese old folk and kids clear the street. They round a corner like a slow moving snake.

EXT. LOADING BARN - DAY

Kel mounts his horse as Lin departs in the wagon. Now something on the periphery catches Kel's eye -- the last of Natas's men disappearing around the corner.

EXT. CHINATOWN - ANOTHER STREET - DAY

Fallon and Li Li head onto a wooden sidewalk, picking up the pace.

LI LI

I not so sure. The train have many men, many gun. Kel say for me to tell you. Condor Mine. Heart of the shaft entrance. Two o'clock in two day. I don't know what that mean, but he say you know.

FALLON

What are his chances?

LI LI

He try his best.

They move to the next street...

EXT. CHINATOWN - NEW STREET - DAY

...and immediately encounter Natas's horsemen. Clumping hooves, surly glances. One horseman plodding past peers down at Fallon and, for the briefest of moments, their eyes connect.

He stops, reins his horse around. It's Cowboy #1 from the cabin.

COWBOY #1

Well, well, well...lookie here.

(calls to the men)

Hey, fellas! Come see what I found!

Fallon whispers to Li Li:

FALLON

Go, Li Li! They only want me. Run!

Li Li hesitates, then dispatches across the street and disappears into an alley. Fallon braces herself as the men pivot and approach in a line. Bridge urges his mount forward.

BRIDGE

This her?

(CONTINUED)

Then suddenly, a barrage of: POP-POP-POP-POP! The men wheel, reaching for their guns...

Startled out of their britches, the two town boys ditch their string of firecrackers and scatter. Bridge snickers, turns to find...

Fallon sprinting down the street. The men give chase.

CLOSE ON FALLON...running, terrified. Stumbling. Trying to recover. The horsemen bearing down as she nears the end of the block, when...

Out of nowhere, Kel streaks like a rocket on his horse through the intersection and scoops Fallon up.

EXT. CHINATOWN - SIDE STREET - DAY

Fallon dangles in Kel's arms. He heaves ho and plops her behind him. BAM - BAM. Shots ring out. Kel shakes the reins.

EXT. CHINATOWN - ALLEY - DAY

Hiding in the shadows, Eaves clamps a hand over Li Li's mouth. She cringes as she HEARS shots.

EXT. CHINATOWN - STREETS - THE CHASE - DAY

Kel and Fallon gallop wildly down the block. Shops whizzing past. Pedestrians spinning out of the way. More SHOTS as the horsemen charge after them. Ahead, the road "T"'s. Kel goes one way. The bad guys split behind him.

There's a vacant lot between buildings. Kel veers into it. Hurdles a garbage pile. Scatters a few stray mutts. Horsemen in hot pursuit as...

The lot spills into a wide street. Kel one-hands the reins. Slaps the horse's shoulder, gaining speed as bullets rain around them. Impulsively, Fallon grabs Kel's pistol, turns and fires. BAM-BAM-BAM! One bad guy down. She's shocked. Elated. Rips off three more rounds. BAM-BAM-BAM-click-click-click. Fallon shakes the gun: huh? Jams it back in Kel's holster.

Uh-oh. Straight ahead, here come the other half of the bad guys. Kel makes an abrupt turn, heads directly for an open air prayer shrine. Massive Bau gong inside. Fat Buddha on the alter. A handful of prostrate monks in prayer. Kel and Fallon blow past them, the monks diving for cover as bullets PING off the gong.

## EXT. MIDASVILLE - STREETS - THE CHASE CONTINUES

Townsfolk flee as Kel and Fallon round a corner and charge into town, the bad guys following. Kel weaves through a maze of people, horses, wagons and coaches. Slices through a herd of meandering sheep. Now...

A pigpen at the end of the street approaching fast. They've got no choice. They jump a fence and plunge in. Pigs scampering, oinking. They leap a water trough, another fence, and land in a chicken yard. An explosion of feathers. And now hurdling another fence, they're back on a street. Natas's horsemen still on their tail.

Kel tries to outdistance them. They fly past a mercantile, a barber shop, a bank. Bullets BAM-BAMming, POWing, PINGing.

Ahead the street narrows between two large stamp mills. A horseman galloping out from the shadows. It's Bridge, rifle drawn, heading right at them. Kel yanks the reins. There's only one way out: a boarding house, its door propped open by orphaned luggage. He spurs the horse and they gallop in.

## INT. BOARDING HOUSE - LOBBY - DAY

No rear exit, rickety stairs, a dazed proprietor, the horse bucking and whinnying, the bad guys due at any minute. Kel makes a decision, wheels to the counter. Plops Fallon on top.

KEL

Get us a room -- and make it a suite.

She can barely react before Kel heads for the stairs and clomps up them. Fallon slides behind the counter just as...

Bridge rides in, sees: the hind quarter of Kel's horse disappear onto the upper floor. His men rush in and follow Bridge up the stairs...

KUH-RASH! The stairway collapses and sends the men tumbling as Bridge's mount claws the last few steps and reaches the landing. The men untangle and scramble out the door. Behind the counter, Fallon exhales.

## INT. BOARDING HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

At the stairhead, Bridge dismounts, grabs his rifle. He examines one end of the hall: a few startled faces retreat in the doorways. He walks to the other end. Kicks open a door. Nothing. Tries another. Nothing -- but something. The open window. Someone outside WHISTLING.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE/BUILDING ROOFTOP - DAY

From the roof of an adjacent building, Kel coaxes his horse -- perched precariously below a boarding house window -- across a three foot gap that separates them.

KEL

C'mon, Lotus, easy does it.

He whistles again. POW! A bullet splinters wood off the cupola behind him. Kel ducks for cover behind it, peeks around the edge. POW! Bridge lets loose with another round from a second window. Kel loads his gun, waits. Then fires! Bridge ducks.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The bad guys look up from the street. Bridge nods, indicating Kel's location.

EXT. BUILDING ROOFTOP - DAY

A deadlock. Kel steals a glance at his horse, tries the sexy whistle one more time. Forget it.

KEL

Jus' like a woman.

(raises his gun)

Well, she ain't gonna like this...

He wheels and fires, blows out the window behind the horse. It rears and leaps the gap. Kel mounts it on the run. TING! A shot sends the cupola's weather vane spinning. Kel gallops across the roof and vaults to the next rooftop.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE WINDOW - DAY

Bridge loses his target, lowers the rifle.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - LOBBY - DAY

Fallon peeks over the counter. Sees the bad guys outside mounting up.

EXT. ANOTHER BUILDING ROOFTOP/STREET - DAY

Hunkered against the building facade, Kel plods across the roof. Ahead, eight feet of air separate Kel from the next building.

BAM, BAM, BAM! In the street below, the men fire too late as Kel's horse leaps the gap.

(CONTINUED)

A horseman, Cowboy #2, nods towards a hotel. Heads that way.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - LOBBY - DAY

Fallon creeps to the doorway. Slips outside.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Moving cautiously, Fallon surveys the street. SEES the horsemen, eyes trained at the rooftops, move around a corner. In the other direction...trouble. A solo rear guard rider, trotting slowly, gun in hand. Cowboy #1. She ducks into a shop.

INT. FREIGHT OFFICE - DAY

Fallon shushes the clerk as Cowboy #1 pauses outside to smoke. She spots a lasso hanging on the wall. Grabs it. Takes a deep breath, then...

EXT. FREIGHT OFFICE/STREET - DAY

...spins out the doorway and lets it fly, snaring Cowboy #1. He grabs the slack, yanks Fallon up to him, snickers eye to eye. She whips his rifle from the saddle holster, shoots him dead. Fallon mounts up. And rides off.

EXT. CART PATH - DAY

Behind the shops, Fallon HEARS gunfire, and spurs the horse faster.

EXT. ANOTHER BUILDING ROOFTOP - DAY

Kel dodges a round of BULLETS as he leaps to the next building. There's a couple more shops ahead, then a broad ramp leading to the roof of a huge stamp mill. Five monstrous smoke stacks upon it, the roof thirty yards long.

EXT. HOTEL - ROOF - DAY

Cowboy #2 flattens up against the roof, resting his rifle barrel on the ridge of a dormer window. FINDS Kel riding toward the stamp mill. He tracks to the end of it. No obstacles. A clean shot.

EXT. STAMP MILL - ROOF - DAY

PING! A bullet hits a vent pipe. Kel glances behind him. It's Bridge, two rooftops back -- rifle drawn, approaching fast! Kel takes off. BAM, BAM, BAM! Bullets rip chunks off the smokestacks as Kel slaloms around them.

EXT. CART PATH - DAY

CLOSE on Fallon riding with abandon.

EXT. STAMP MILL - ROOF - DAY

Kel gallops to the end of the building. Nowhere to go. An impossible fifteen foot gap between the stamp mill and the next row of roofs...

EXT. HOTEL - ROOF - DAY

Cowboy #2 aligns Kel in his gun sight.

EXT. STAMP MILL - ROOF - DAY

Kel has no choice. He wheels the horse to make a run, then...

KEL  
(hollering)  
H'yaw, Lotus! C'mon, girl!

They charge across the roof, picking up speed, the breach approaching fast. Terror in the horse's eyes, when: just before the edge, the horse balks, tossing Kel off the roof.

Almost.

CLOSE on Kel clinging to the bridle strap thirty feet above the street. He lunges for the saddlebag.

EXT. HOTEL - ROOF - DAY

KEL in the rifle sight. Cowboy #2 squeezes the trigger. BLAM!

EXT. STAMP MILL - ROOF - DAY

The bullet misses its mark, creases the saddlebag strap. It breaks. Kel falls.



EXT. STAMP MILL - DAY

Kel plows onto a tin awning, dynamite sticks tumbling from the bag. Kel grabs the bag, slides off the awning, and drops into the saddle behind Fallon, who's pulled up below. Now, GUNFIRE raging as the horsemen round the corner of the stamp mill. Fallon spurs the horse and off they go.

BRIDGE stops at the edge of the roof, watches in silence as the pursuit continues.

EXT. MIDASVILLE - STREETS - DAY

Fallon rein whips the horse, the bad guys close behind. She hurdles a set of railroad tracks. One horseman stumbles, falls. She jumps a lumber pile. And there goes another. She cuts a corner, weaves around a wagon and scatters a group of mill workers.

A scrap heap burns where the saloon once stood. Kel reaches in the saddlebag, finds only two dynamite sticks. He stuffs one in his shirt. And the other...

KEL  
(directing Fallon)  
Over there.

They swerve toward the scrap fire. Without missing a beat, Kel lights the dynamite, chucks it at the bad guys. KA-BOOM! There goes six more. Fallon gives him a wink, a big thumbs up. But...

CHUGGA-CHUGGA CHUGGA-CHUGGA...

Here comes a freight train, blocking their escape. Fallon spots an empty flatcar between boxcars. Tenses. Aims right for it. Kel flinches, clutching her waist.

KEL (CONT'D)  
Parks?!...

She launches the horse skyward and they soar through the gap. Then...only a blurrrrrrrrrr of boxcars behind them.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRAIN Cowboys #3 - 5 and the other men rein their horses, watch helplessly as the cars roll past.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Fallon and Kel ride through rolling hills toward the mountains. She throws him a radiant smile. He gives her a big pat on the shoulder. Job well done.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

The foothills under a broad moonlit sky. A SCOUT rides toward Bridge who is waiting on horseback with a few other men. He pulls up winded and worn.

SCOUT  
No sign of em.

Bridge nods soberly. Turns to Cowboy #2.

BRIDGE  
Wire Natas. See what she wants us  
to do.

Cowboy #2 departs.

EXT. THE HILLS - NIGHT

Moonlight trickling through pine at a clearing near a creek. Kel throws the saddle over the horse as it drinks its fill. Fallon lugs over a neatly rolled blanket.

FALLON  
What's our plan now?

KEL  
My plan.

FALLON  
Okay. Your plan.

KEL  
I'm gonna put you someplace to stay  
outta trouble till I get you home.

Kel busies himself with the saddle. Fallon secures the blanket behind it.

FALLON  
I apologize for being such  
a...handful.

Kel fastens a buckle near the horse's belly, doesn't reply.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
Can I help?

KEL  
Here, fetch me that strap.

She does. And Kel begins to tighten it.

FALLON  
Why didn't you tell me why you were  
robbing the train?

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
Code of the West. You smile and  
swallow your past like your food.  
What Natas did is my business and  
mine alone.

He heads to the creek to refill the canteen. The dim light of Midasville, a mere speck, can be SEEN in the distance. Kel ties a piece of bandanna around a tree limb near the creek.

KEL (CONT'D)  
Tomorrow night you ride down the  
creek bed till ya get here. This is  
where the trailhead starts. Follow  
them other markers I been settin' up  
and they'll lead you to town. Did  
Li Li talk to you?

FALLON  
(nods)  
The Condor Mine. Two o'clock.

KEL  
The heart of the shaft entrance.

He moves to the horse. Drapes the canteen over the saddle horn.

FALLON  
Where will you be?

KEL  
If I ain't here?

Fallon nods. She needs to know. Kel flashes an impish smile.

KEL (CONT'D)  
Spendin' the gold.

INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - MIDASVILLE - DAY

Li Li huddles in a corner, bound and frightened. An intimidated telegraph operator sits sandwiched between Cowboy's #2 and #3, their feet on his desk.

EXT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - MIDASVILLE - DAY

Bridge moseys from the doorway, joins Eaves on the porch.

EAVES  
Anything from the girl?

(CONTINUED)

BRIDGE

Still claimin' she's got nothin' to tell.

Bridge lifts his nose patch, blows snot on the ground. Cowboy #4 rides up. Li Li's son, bound and gagged, bouncing in his lap.

BRIDGE (CONT'D)

Here's a surprise might change her mind.

Cowboy #2 comes out of the office, holding a note.

COWBOY #2

Wire just come in from Natas.

Bridge gives it a glance, passes it to Eaves.

EAVES

(as he reads)

Looks like Mr. Kelly's in for one, too.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Dense timber. Moonlight scattered across the forest floor. Kel and Fallon approach a cabin. Lights off. No one home. They dismount and go inside.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Kel fires a lantern near the door. Heads to the cupboards as Fallon checks out the room. Furs, a fireplace, two cots, a tub. Kel uncaps a jar, smells it. Eeuw! Grabs another.

FALLON

Where are they?

KEL

Him. My friend, Lew. He's on the long trail to Kingdom Come...

Kel toasts the sky, then returns to the cupboards.

KEL (CONT'D)

Natas's men got him back in town. The place is all yours.

He retrieves a frying pan, some cooking utensils. Suddenly:

FALLON

I can't stay here.

(CONTINUED)

KEL

Here we go.

FALLON

I can't. There's a...a...

Fallon raises a wobbly finger toward the tub. Kel grimaces. Walks over, frying pan in hand. A skinny snake lies coiled in the corner. Kel smiles. Picks it up, almost cuddly.

KEL

Sue. Lew's pet kingsnake. Keeps the rattlers away. Poor thing looks hungry. And that's a good sign, if ya catch my drift.

He notices the tub. Strange, it's full. Sets the snake down and feels the water. Sees a pint of whiskey beside the tub. An empty holster on the wall. The window ajar...

The front door BANGS open. Kel and Fallon wheel...

Lew stands naked in the doorway. Dripping wet. Gun drawn. Kel explodes in laughter. Fallon averts her eyes. Lew is just stunned. Kel tosses him the frying pan.

KEL (CONT'D)

Here, cover up.

LEW

I thought you were dead.

KEL

And me, you.

LEW

Naw, I only got creased.  
(shows them)  
'Scuse me, miss.

Lew scoots to the cot and awkwardly throws on some pants.

LEW (CONT'D)

(to Kel)

I seen you standin' there, I thought it was a damned apparition. That or a bad batch a hooch.

His gaze wanders toward Fallon.

KEL

Oh, Lew, this Parks...uh, Miss Fallon Parks. She's a...

FALLON

A friend of Mr. Kelly's. Just passing through.

(CONTINUED)

She shakes Lew's hand. He is enamored with her.

KEL  
 Didn't think you'd mind if she put  
 up here for the night.

LEW  
 'T'would be an honor.  
 (to Kel)  
 Why, where you off to?

KEL  
 I got some work to do.

LEW  
 If it's the kinda work I'm thinkin',  
 ya better reckon twice.

KEL  
 How's that?

LEW  
 (to Fallon)  
 'Scuse me, miss.

Lew grabs the whiskey and crosses to the cupboards.

LEW (CONT'D)  
 (to Kel)  
 Chinese got roused. Scattered all  
 over the hills.

KEL  
 What?!

LEW  
 I was over at the social club...uh,  
 pickin' up supplies...and the word  
 come through. U.S. Cavalry found  
 them layin' in ambush for the train.  
 Sent em runnin' with their tales  
 between their legs. Course, everyone  
 knows Natas was behind it.

Kel listens intently, Lew clinking a few pots as Fallon  
 sits on a chair.

LEW (CONT'D)  
 Don't really make no matter though,  
 'cause no one was gonna stop it  
 anyhow. Feller told me the train's  
 outfitted with gatlin guns on the  
 cowcatcher and caboose. Down right  
 impregnable.

Lew comes back with booze, a tin, some jars, knives, and  
 forks. Sets them on a table.

(CONTINUED)

LEW (CONT'D)  
 Yep, looks like things've changed.

FALLON  
 (to Kel)  
 What are you gonna do?

Kel doesn't answer; something's brewing. Lew starts scooping the food.

KEL  
 (after a beat)  
 Not at all.

LEW  
 How's that?

KEL  
 I said, Not at all. Things ain't changed at all. Why, this is pertnear perfect.

Fallon and Lew exchange glances. What?

KEL (CONT'D)  
 You know the Chinese homestead up in the pass?

LEW  
 Maybe.

KEL  
 I want you to go there...

LEW  
 (overlapping)  
 Oh, no, I ain't...

KEL  
 I want you to go up there now...

LEW  
 I've been nicked...

KEL  
 Listen to me. I want you to...

LEW  
 ...and damn near sent to...

KEL  
 (firmly)  
 Would you just shut your bazoo an' listen?!

Lew does.

(CONTINUED)

KEL (CONT'D)

I want you to go up there now and find Lin and his crew. Should be about a dozen of em. Let em know what happened if they haven't heard. Tell him the plan's changed...Where's your mules?

LEW

Out back in the wood.

Kel nods. Grabs a knife, uses it as pointer on the table.

KEL

Tomorrow mornin' you and Lin are gonna set up here, jus' past the tunnel...Are you listenin'?

Lew lowers the whiskey bottle.

KEL (CONT'D)

Set up here, jus' past the tunnel...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Kel tightens a saddle strap on a mule by the porch, the horse and another mule hitched beside it. Fallon sits near the creek in the b.g., quiet and glum.

KEL

Well, I guess this is it.

Kel examines a rifle, slides it back into the saddle holster. Glances at Fallon who doesn't respond.

KEL (CONT'D)

Ain't you gonna wish me luck?

FALLON

Good luck.

Ookay. He opens the saddlebag, removes the stick of dynamite, perfunctorily checks it...but this is ridiculous. He tosses the stick back in the bag and heads over to Fallon.

KEL

This is a helluva send off, Parks. So what is it? What's eatin' ya now?

Fallon stands, angry.

(CONTINUED)



FALLON

You. You are. You and your stupid posturing.

KEL

My what?

FALLON

Your swagger. Your bravado. Your dumb nicknames, your cigarettes, your "big" game plan, your "this is pertnear perfect," your "Code of the West" or whatever you call it...

KEL

(rolls eyes)

We'll never understand them, will we?

FALLON

There's codes and there's reality, Kel. And the reality is you're outgunned and outnumbered, and you can't pull it off and you know it. So tell me...and I think I already know the answer...is it really a matter of honor with you, or is it just pride? Is it loyalty, or just some "man" thing you guys do? Just confirm what I'm thinking. I really wanna know.

KEL

You're right, Parks. It's a man thing we do. And since you ain't never gonna be one, I got nothin' more to say...

FALLON

Ohhh...

KEL

...except those cigarettes you mentioned? I'm in need of one now. So, so long, Parks.

Kel tips his hat and just as he turns, the animals begin to stir at the porch, bucking and rearing. (CLOSE ON THE SADDLEBAG...ejecting the stick of dynamite -- which we see, though Kel doesn't.) He moves quickly to calm them.

KEL (CONT'D)

Whoa! Easy now, easy.

He spots what the trouble is: Lew's snake coiled in the doorway. Kel hisses, and as if by command, the snake retreats and the animals settle.

(CONTINUED)

Kel dusts off his hat and sets it on his head. Buckles the saddlebag, unhitches his mule. And without further ado, mounts up. Fallon hasn't budged.

FALLON

Kel!

KEL

(turns)

What?

She tosses him a coin.

FALLON

There were two.

(beat)

Good luck.

And she means it. Kel grimaces, and departs.

INT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Fallon sits in a chair, encircled by snake repellent rope, waiting. Agonizing. Ticktock, ticktock. She can't just do nothing. Tick. Tock. Finally, Fallon can't take it anymore. She gets up and leaves.

EXT. MOUNTAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Fallon unhitches the horse. As she begins to mount up, she spies something in the grass...Kel's last stick of dynamite. She grabs it. And now with a greater sense of urgency, she mounts and rides off.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

THE OMINOUS BARREL of a big black Gatlin gun against the blue sky.

THE TRAIN chugs up an incline. Engine, coal car, coach car, and an armor-plated boxcar. Gatlin guns mounted on flatcars on each end of the train. Rifles poke from the coach car windows and from gun portals in the boxcar.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - THE SUMMIT - DAY

Kel waits on the tracks. Saddlebag on shoulder, cigarette in mouth. He winces at the sun. This ain't gonna be easy.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Lew and Lin squat behind boulders, guns in hand, the tunnel and railroad tracks a hundred yards below. Lin waves toward the opposite hillside. A half dozen hands wave back.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

The engine barrels around mountain curve, black smoke curling from its stack.

INT. BOXCAR - DAY

A gigantic strongbox surrounded by four armed guards. Four more guards shoulder rifles at the boxcar's slit-like gun ports.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

Kel sees puffs of smoke in the mountain folds below.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Lew slugs a shot of whiskey. Lin glances at a pocket watch as the TRAIN WHISTLE blows.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

Kel HEARS it. Slings the saddlebag off his shoulder.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

The engineer gives the WHISTLE another pull. White piston steam plumes around the Gatlin gunner.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

Kel reaches in the bag. Empty? Momentary confusion as he upends it. The WHISTLE blows again. Louder, closer. Smoke around the next bend. Kel chucks the bag.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

As it rumbles into the shadow of a tunnel.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

Kel plants his feet, does one of those no-nonsense rifle spins as the train roars out of the tunnel. Raises the gun. CLOSE on Kel's eyes. Narrowing, rock steady. He ain't gonna move.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

CLOSE on the engineer, frowning as Kel comes into VIEW. Then sudden bewilderment as his eyes gravitate beyond Kel.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - FLATCAR - DAY

The Gatlin gunner cranes his neck, stunned.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Lew takes an eye-popping gulp of whiskey.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

Kel stands implacable, rifle pointed at the train.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

Panicking, the engineer yanks the brake handle! A horrendous shriek of metal as...

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

The train skids to a stop. The engine belches as the Gatlin gunner stares transfixed on something ahead. REV POV...Kel peers down the rifle sight. Waiting. Waiting for something to happen. Then...

Fallon's VOICE:

FALLON

Yoo-hoo!

Kel cautiously looks over his shoulder. What the...?!

Twenty yards up the track, Ginny and the whores are in a can-can line. Skirts hiked. Patting their rumps. Really teasing it up with full on petticoated moons.

FALLON waves "howdy" from a perch atop a rock. Turns dead serious as she gives the ol' "atheist punch" sign and motions Kel to move aside. Quickly now, the whores part revealing a freight wagon. A tarp is torn off it.

(CONTINUED)

Sitting in the wagon's bed...a Holy Roman Empire-sized skyrocket aimed at the train. The old Chinese shopkeeper lights the fuse. WHOOSH!

Kel dives out of the way. ROCKET'S POV...heading right for the Gatlin gunner. The gunner leaps off the flatcar. The rocket smashes...KABOOM!...into the engine with a shower of sparks. The whores scramble for cover. Kel fires his rifle. BAM! Nails the Gatlin gunner before he can draw his sidearm. GUNFIRE now erupts from the hills.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Lew and Lin blast away as bullets from the train begin to rain on them.

INT. COACH CAR - DAY

Riflemen at the windows unleash a wicked volley toward the hills.

EXT. BOXCAR - DAY

Bullets PING-PING-PING off the armored plating.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

The Chinese marksmen unload from the rocks.

INT. BOXCAR - DAY

The guards fire furiously from the gun ports.

EXT. REAR FLATCAR - DAY

Close on the Gatling gunner strafing wildly in all directions.

EXT. THICKETS - DAY

PFTT-PFTT-PFTT-PFTT! A barrage of rockets and Roman candle shells launch from the bushes, exploding against the coach car. A couple of CHINESE WOMEN, hiding behind scrub, target another rocket and send it flying.

INT. COACH CAR - DAY

A shell BA-BOOMS inside the car. Men scream, showered with flames.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

Kel sees the rear Gatlin gunner wreaking havoc in the hills. He runs to the coal car for cover, creeps alongside. A pistol appears, leveled at his back. It belongs to the engineer.

RAT-A-TAT-TAT! Bullets CHING off the metal near the engineer's head. He tosses the pistol, raises his hands. Fallon has the Gatlin gun aimed at his chest.

Kel winks a "thanks," now rolls under the train and belly crawls toward the rear. Fallon jumps off the flatcar, gathers the pistol, and heads to the bushes.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Bullets RICOCHET off the terrain, Lew and Lin completely hemmed in. Lin assesses the situation as Lew takes a swig of whiskey; then without a word, slips away.

LEW

Hey!

BLAM! The whiskey bottle gets blown out of Lew's hand. Now this pisses him off! He rips off a few angry rounds.

EXT. REAR FLATCAR - DAY

The Gatlin gunner BLASTS away, shell casings spilling at his feet.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

A Chinese guy gets hit, topples down the hillside.

INT. BOXCAR - DAY

Relentless gunfire from the guards inside.

EXT. BUSHES - DAY

Fallon FIRES. FIRES again.

EXT. MORE THICKETS - DAY

Ginny and the whores watch intensely from behind the rocks.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

Nonstop GUNFIRE rages from the train as another rocket SMASHES into the coach car.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Lin skids down the slope, zigzags through dense brush.

EXT. THICKETS - DAY

Chinese women ferry arms from a freight wagon. In the thickets, one launches a rocket...PHOOMP!...as another hustles over with a replacement.

INT. COACH CAR - DAY

Men barricade a window with a seat bench. A rocket EXPLODES into it.

EXT. COACH CAR - DAY

Sparks shower Kel as he crawls beneath the train. He reaches the end of the coach car, sees a rifleman crouching on the coupler. Their eyes meet simultaneously. Trigger quick, Kel BLASTS him dead. Kel moves under the boxcar.

EXT. THICKETS - DAY

Lin appears at the arms wagon. Rummages through the explosives. Retrieves two fist-size canisters and heads towards the train.

EXT. BUSHES - DAY

Fallon FIRES until she empties the gun chamber. From the corner of her eye, she sees Lin leap to the flatcar and clamber to the top of the engine.

EXT. HILLS - DAY

Peering over a rock, Lew watches Lin move across the top of the train.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

Lin hops to the coach car roof. Lights a canister and drops it in an air vent. Lights the other and drops it in a second vent.

INT. COACH CAR - DAY

The men see the sizzling canisters on the floor. Too late. POOMPH!...POOMPH! Choking red and yellow smoke envelope the car.

EXT. COACH CAR - DAY

A couple men stagger out, coughing. Get dropped where they stand.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

Lin leaps to the boxcar roof, moves toward the rear flatcar. The Gatlin gunner comes into VIEW.

INT. BOXCAR - DAY

Firing through the portals, a guard glimpses Lin in the wing mirror.

EXT. BOXCAR - DAY

BOOM-BOOM-BOOM! The guard opens up at the ceiling, blowing...

EXT. BOXCAR - DAY

Holes near Lin's feet. Lin gets winged, spins toward...

EXT. REAR FLATCAR - DAY

The Gatlin gunner, who swivels the gun, about to annihilate him when...

Kel body slams the gunner off the flatcar. Kel commands the Gatlin gun, BLASTS into the unarmored end of the boxcar, wood shredding as bullets rip inside.

EXT. GOLD TRAIN - DAY

The boxcar door slides open. Two wounded guards tumble out as Kel continues to unload. Then silence. Kel throws a quick glance at Lin, who signals he's okay.

Now the SOUND of coughing men filters through the air. Arms raised, gunmen stagger single file from the smoking coach car, gasping for breath. A handful of Chinese men descend from the hills, covering them.

(CONTINUED)



Rifles are jettisoned from the boxcar, followed by more defeated men.

Then a ROAR goes up from the hills and surrounding brush. Kel shoots both arms skyward:

KEL  
Yaaa-hooo!!!

FALLON, an end zone shuffle:

FALLON  
Yaaayyy!!!

LEW leaps up on the rocks:

LEW  
Yeee-hawww!!!

Chinese women rush the train. Ginny and the whores rise off the ground. Men scramble from the hills. Lin does a victory dance atop the boxcar. Everyone screaming in wild jubilation.

Kel and Fallon spot each other in the crowd. Kel nods: Good job, Parks. She returns the gesture: Likewise, Kel.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CANYON CAMP - DAY

A rowdy HARMONICA echoes from the depths of a box canyon. Around a bonfire, Lin blows a tune while the whores and Chinese dance and clap in celebration.

Sitting apart from them on a wagon tailgate, Kel and Fallon, aglow in victory, are chatting up a storm -- while Lew kicks back in the wagon bed, bottle in hand.

KEL  
Well, we did it. That was one heckuva trick you pulled off, Parks. A brigade of petticoats stoppin' a train. Now who in his wildest dreams would've imagined?

FALLON  
Wasn't a trick, cowboy. Women've been stopping traffic since the wheel was invented...  
(winks)  
It's an art.

She nods enthusiastically across the way to where some Chinese women are rigging another wagon.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON (CONT'D)

Oh...but you! Now recruiting NASA over there, that was truly brilliant.

KEL

Yep. What?

FALLON

The rockets. You know, shhh-boom!

KEL

Yeah, I know shhh-boom, but...

FALLON

You mean you didn't...but they were there when I arrived with the...

KEL

Well, I'll be...

LEW

Ahem...

KEL

Lew!

Lew looks up, guilty.

LEW

It was the right thing to do, Kel, and I ain't gonna defend myself fer it.

KEL

Who's accusin' you? But how in the...

LEW

On my way to fetch Lin. I was takin' a turn thru town to pick up some grub...

KEL

You risked runnin' afoul of Natas's men to pick up some grub?

LEW

See, I'm already defendin' myself.

FALLON

Guys, please.

(to Kel)

Something tells me Li Li was behind this.

(CONTINUED)

LEW

Nope. Didn't see her. It was one of them Chinese gals down at the saloon spread the word.

KEL

Saloon?!

LEW

Uh, yeah, well anyways...

(nods)

They got what they wanted, the girls got theirs...

Fallon taps the bulky saddlebag in the wagon bed.

FALLON

And Zola got hers.

Something catches Kel's eye high in the sky. It triggers a thought.

KEL

Not quite. C'mon, Parks.

Kel bounces off the wagon, grabs Fallon's hand.

FALLON

Where we going?

KEL

You'll see.

He starts to lead her away as Ginny approaches, parasol at side.

KEL (CONT'D)

Borrow that, Ginny?

(takes parasol)

Thanks.

And off they go toward the horses. Ginny gives Lew a nod, a tad jealous.

GINNY

Where they headin'?

Lew shrugs. Looks up at the sky where two condors are gliding lazily on a warm breeze.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS - THE BAD GUY SEQUENCE

1) Teetering with exhaustion, the train engineer hails an approaching stage.

(CONTINUED)

SERIES OF SHOTS (CONT'D)

- 2) An anguished Natas dashes from her office.
- 3) Bridge leads a posse of men out of a stable, ready for action.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLIFF - DAY

Kel dangles on a rope as Fallon watches from a ledge above. He swings towards a rocky outcrop and grabs a condor egg from a nest.

KEL

Got it!

EXT. MESA - DUSK

Two condor eggs sit in the inverted parasol near a small campfire. Kel and Fallon resting on a blanket nearby, taking in the view -- a breathtaking panorama of a red rock canyon at sunset. Fallon leans over and rotates the "nest."

KEL

Careful now. We want em to hatch,  
not cook.

Fallon smiles, sits back, admiring the scene. A bird caws overhead as the canyon radiates a blaze of colors.

KEL (CONT'D)

God created that in a fit of anger.

FALLON

And painted it in a moment of joy.  
This is beautiful.

KEL

About as much as a person can ask  
for. You know, we're pretty much  
akin.

FALLON

You and me?

KEL

Men and women. For all out bickerin',  
I reckon at the end of the day, we  
all want the same. A view like this  
kinda sums it all up.

FALLON

And having someone to share it with.

(CONTINUED)

KEL

Yep. Someone to share it with...to hold yer hand, lend ya an ear and put up with the snorin'. That's what it all boils down to.

A heat is beginning to simmer between them that has nothing to do with the campfire. Fallon senses it; it's been there for awhile. She gets up, strolls to the cliff.

FALLON

So what are you going to do?

KEL

I'm gonna hide Zola's gold. Draw you a map, which you're gonna remember...

FALLON

No, I mean, Natas will be looking for you.

KEL

Well, I could go north. It's a big country up there, plenty of room for a feller to...

(resigning)

Aw, hell. Sooner or later, I'm gonna have to face her.

FALLON

She'll kill you...

(suddenly)

Come back with me.

KEL

What?

FALLON

You could join me at the mine.

KEL

And then what?

FALLON

Well, when we get back we...we could get you a job. That shouldn't be hard. And we've got a garden shed out back that we could convert into a room. You and Bob could...

KEL

Bob and I could what?

FALLON

You and Bob...could...

(CONTINUED)

KEL  
No, Parks, it ain't gonna work. I'd  
be like a fish outta water, or...

FALLON  
Or what, Kel?

KEL  
Or followin' you around like a mule  
outta hay.

Fallon turns from him, tears forming quickly. He stands,  
reining his emotions.

KEL (CONT'D)  
So what about you?

Fallon tries to gather herself.

FALLON  
Teach. I've got a ton of mid-terms  
coming up and Bob's got a tenure  
review. Then after that...we'll  
honeymoon...a cruise...to the...

Fallon starts to sob. Kel finds the rope coiled beside the  
blanket...

The lasso falls in a perfect loop around Fallon's shoulders.  
Kel reels her into his arms. They kiss and ease back onto  
the blanket. Kiss again, passions flowing, as Fallon offers  
her last whisper of resistance:

FALLON (CONT'D)  
I can't...There's codes and reality,  
Kel. I'm married and...

KEL  
Not yet, not here, you aren't. Damn  
those codes. This is reality...

This is their moment together.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MESA - DAY - THE NEXT MORNING

A length of rope curls around the blanket under which Kel  
and Fallon are sleeping. A peaceful desert sunrise, golden  
light over the canyon. Now distant GUNSHOTS awaken them.  
More GUNSHOTS.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Kel and Fallon, galloping on horseback, are met by Lew and Ginny scurrying up the hill. Kel dismounts, Fallon behind him.

LEW

Been lookin' all over fer ya. Natas's men ambushed the camp. They got the gold.

KEL

Which way they headin'?

LEW

Up canyon road.

KEL

How many were they?

LEW

A dozen, give or take. Natas was with them, so was Bridge. Soon as the shootin' started, we lit to the rocks. The gals scattered up the hills and the rest of us fought it out till the...

KEL

How many men we got left?

LEW

Three, maybe four includin' me. Lin got hit bad...Kel, he ain't gonna make it.

Kel moves to his horse and mounts up.

KEL

Get Parks to the Condor Mine. And stay with her.

FALLON

I'm going with you.

KEL

No! I'll be back.  
(not a doubt)  
You got my word.

Kel gives the reins a shake and blows past them. Fallon tenses as she watches him leave.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Kel rides furiously over a salt-washed plain, three Chinese horsemen galloping alongside.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A six horse team tugs the gold-filled freight wagon at a lumbering pace over a rutted road. Natas plods ahead of Bridge, Cowboys #2-5, and six other saddle worn men, the monkey in her lap.

EXT. WAGON TRAIL - DAY

LIN'S POCKET WATCH reads eight o'clock in Lew's limp hand. Drunk and babbling loudly, he lay sprawled in the back of a buckboard, an empty whiskey bottle near the condor eggs poking out from the saddlebag.

Up front, Ginny handles the reins, Fallon beside her in a world far away. Ginny nods at Lew.

GINNY

Sure likes to chatter, huh, sister?

FALLON

(not really listening)

How long before we get there?

GINNY

Oh, four an' a half, five hours maybe...

(beat; a sly glance  
at Fallon)

He's not coming back, you know.

This gets Fallon's attention.

GINNY (CONT'D)

I mean after he deals with Natas.  
If he deals with her. Either way...

FALLON

Yes?...

GINNY

Last night. You think there's some fondness between you. Well, lemme steer ya straight, sister. Women to Kel are like bubbles to a beer. A couple quick sips and they're gone. No, Kel's after one thing and one thing only: the gold.

(CONTINUED)



Fallon absorbs herself in the distance. Then:

FALLON  
(softly)  
He'll be back.

GINNY  
Oh, and how do you know?

FALLON  
Two things you can count on a cowboy  
having, sister. His word...

GINNY  
And?...

But Fallon turns away, not really sure.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Kel and the men ride up a hill. Over the crest, Natas's caravan appears in the barren expanse below.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

PAP! A bad guy topples off his horse. Another bullet SNAPS off the wagon's siding. Two men draw their weapons and get immediately knocked from their saddles. Suddenly, a torrent of incoming lead as...

THE CHINESE HORSEMEN charge, rifles blasting.

AT THE WAGON...confusion, chaos. Cowboys #2, #3 and three other bad guys jump from their horses and belly up behind rocks, randomly returning fire. Bridge and Cowboys #4 and #5 take cover behind the wagon. Natas scrambles beneath the undercarriage, flattens in a road rut.

A CHINESE HORSEMAN gets picked off.

TWO BAD GUYS at the rocks get hit, roll over in the dust.

BRIDGE and Cowboys #4 and #5, firing over the top of the wagon, take out another CHINESE HORSEMAN, who tumbles off his mount.

A THIRD BAD GUY at the rocks gets hit, clutches his wound.

BRIDGE takes aim. POW! Nails the FINAL CHINESE HORSEMAN, just as...

COWBOY #4 beside Bridge gets shot from behind. Cowboy #5 turns; gets hit, slumps to the ground.

(CONTINUED)

It's KEL...rifle leveled, charging thirty yards away. Bridge aims...too late. BAM!

But it's KEL who's blown out of the saddle.

NATAS, peering through the barrel sight, lowers her gun.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONDOR MINE - SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

At the base of a foothill, an abandoned wooden building sits in neglect. Windows broken, loading bay door at the entrance slightly ajar. Paint faded and chipped on the once proud logo that says, "CONDOR" in Romanesque lettering. Railroad tracks leading from the shaft house disappear into the dust.

The buckboard has stopped on top of a small escarpment in front of the building. Fallon retrieves the saddlebag, gives Lew, who's sleeping, a tender farewell tap, then walks away. Ginny calls after her:

GINNY

Well, good luck, sister. Don't wait too long.

Ginny shakes the reins and leaves. Fallon heads toward the shaft house. Glances at Lin's pocket watch. It READS: 1:15. She enters the building.

INT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

Big and cavernous. Sunlight filters through the rotted roof and dusty windows. Scrap iron, lumber, barrels and crates on the floor. Gear and pulley mechanisms on the thick beams above. Cart rails lead into a shadowy tunnel. Barely visible in the darkness is the upper apparatus of the shaft elevators. It hangs above the mining shaft -- a dark and very deep hole.

Fallon surveys the surroundings, wandering a few steps when a light now appears in the tunnel. It stops her. Eaves shambles from the entrance, holding his cane and a lantern.

FALLON

Mr. Eaves!

The light illuminates the darker recesses of the shaft house. And now Fallon sees them: Li Li and her son gagged and bound together against a wall. She gives a small yelp and turns back to Eaves who has produced a gun.

EAVES

Drop the bags, Miss Parks.

She sets the bag down gently.

(CONTINUED)

EAVES (CONT'D)

Now take a seat.  
 (as she starts to  
 move)  
 Right there'll be fine.

He motions to where she stands, in the middle of the floor. Gun aimed, Eaves puts the lantern down and inspects the saddlebag. He removes an egg.

EAVES (CONT'D)

Breakfast?...  
 (weighing it in his  
 hand)  
 Love to see the size of that hen.

He laughs, tosses the egg at Fallon who lunges to catch it. She sets the egg near the lantern.

FALLON

What do you want with us?

EAVES

It's not what I want, it's what Miss Natas wants. And she doesn't want "us," she wants you.

Fallon's eyes dart around the building, then fall to the watch. Eaves plucks it from her hands with his cane. He glances at the dial.

EAVES (CONT'D)

Two o'clock, right? Or did your friend there get the timing wrong? That gives us less than an hour before...well, before Miss Natas arrives.

He wedges the cane in floorboards, hangs the watch on its handle, and sits. He removes a flask from under his coat and offers it to Fallon.

EAVES (CONT'D)

Water. I'm strictly a teetotaler, Miss Parks. Sip?

She declines. Eaves takes a sip and puts down the flask.

EAVES (CONT'D)

So...

CUT TO:

EXT. HILLY ROAD - DAY

The buckboard wobbles along a bumpy road in the hills. Lew rattles awake in the back seat, sees Ginny driving.

LEW  
(groggily)  
Where's Miss Parks?

GINNY  
Dropped her off at the Condor Mine.

LEW  
How long ago?

GINNY  
'Bout two hills back.

Lew looks. Hills? He sobers instantly.

LEW  
We gotta turn 'round.

GINNY  
The social club's this a way.

LEW  
Gotta stay with Miss Parks till Kel shows up. I give him my word.

Lew clambers up front and grabs the reins.

GINNY  
Hey, whadda ya doin'?

She fights for the reins. A big struggle.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILLY ROAD - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Ginny fidgets in the road, bound with rope. Lew has the buckboard aimed toward the mine.

LEW  
Tied them knots loose enough, you work em a bit, they'll come right off ya.

GINNY  
Lew, you can't leave me!

He tosses her the parasol.

(CONTINUED)

LEW  
Sun's a tad warm. Ya might need it.  
See ya around.

GINNY  
Lew!!!

Lew shakes the reins and he's off.

CUT TO:

INT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

THE WATCH reads: 1:45. Fallon's eye's flit from it to the shaft entrance as Eaves drones on.

EAVES  
And so the point I'm making is this...  
(indicates gun)  
This what defines us and gives us  
our identities...and not just who  
has it, but who wants to have it.  
Do women want to hold the gun, Miss  
Parks? Do they really want that?

FALLON  
Why don't we just find out.

Eaves laughs, but is cut short by the loading bay door opening.

EAVES  
Ah, visitors.

Eaves pulls himself up with the cane, cocks the gun. Sunlight wedges through the creaking doorway and Kel steps into it. Fallon rises, hopeful.

FALLON  
Kel!

Now Natas, then Bridge holding a rifle appear behind him. Kel staggers forward, bloodied and battered. They stop a few feet away. Natas gives Fallon the once over.

NATAS  
(to Eaves)  
This her?

Eaves nods. Natas turns to Bridge.

NATAS (CONT'D)  
Drop the bodies down the mine shaft.

She starts to leave when...CHIRP...a momentary distraction as a CONDOR CHICK breaks through the eggshell.

(CONTINUED)

THWAP! Fallon nails Eaves with a roundhouse kick. The cane, watch and gun go flying. Kel dives for Eaves' gun, shoots Bridge in the hand as he's about to fire. Fallon scoops up Bridge's rifle, BLASTS Eaves, who is coming at Kel with a steel bar, blows him back toward the tunnel. Natas dives behind a scrap pile. COWBOY #2 and #3 rush in from outside, guns drawn. Kel FIRES, misses. They -- and everyone else -- scramble for cover.

Kel flattens against a post. Listening, thinking, pumped as hell. He can see Fallon, same side of the building, coiled behind a shipping crate. They make eye contact. But now another concern: Li Li and her son are exposed at the wall, terrified.

BEHIND A RAIL PILE, Bridge whips off his nose patch to tourniquet his bloodied hand, his face now grisly and hideous. He snaps shut the chamber on his revolver. NATAS glances at Cowboy #2 and #3 who have taken positions behind two large slag barrels. An expanse of floor sits between the four of them, and Kel and Fallon.

Kel scans the building. Hones in on a plank of sheet metal under his feet. He glances again toward Li Li, signals Fallon his intention, mouthing the words: "cover me." Then moves off the plank...

PING, PING, PING! Bullets blister metal as Kel bolts for Li Li, crouching behind the plank. Fallon returns fire as Kel drags Li Li and the boy to safety beside her. Fallon, rifle trained, steals a quick glance at the watch. It reads: 1:50.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The buckboard flies over a hill, Lew flexing upright as the shaft house comes into VIEW. The freight wagon sits atop the escarpment, unguarded.

INT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

Bridge reloads his pistol. Near the wall, he notices a slag car, his eyes quickly tracking rails that lead to the loading bay door. He gets Natas's attention, nodding toward the car, then scrambles behind it and rolls down the line where Natas joins him. Bridge removes a stick of dynamite from his vest.

BRIDGE

I'll put it in play when we reach  
the door.

Natas nods. They guide the car to Cowboy #2 and #3, who join them.

EXT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

Gun in hand, Lew hops off the buckboard, goes to the freight wagon. In its bed is a ghastly sight: a monkey picking lice off the lifeless head of the wounded bad guy, surrounded by stacks of gold bars.

INT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

Kel eyes the slag car inching toward the door, uneasy. Fallon finishes untying Li Li and rejoins him.

THE CAR now abruptly stops, stuck. Bridge and the cowboys give it a shove. It won't budge.

COWBOY #2

Rail's bent.

Bridge thinks, gestures toward the door.

BRIDGE

On a count a three.

He strikes a match, finger counts...one, two, three...then lights the dynamite and lofts it. They make a run for it. BAM, BAM! KEL AND FALLON miss. Their eyes pivot to the dynamite, sizzling near the lantern.

EXT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

Cowboys #2 and #3 are the first out of the building. Lew quick draws from the freight wagon. BAM, BAM! Drops them both in their tracks. Bridge and Natas retreat inside.

INT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

They regroup behind the slag car.

CLOSE ON KEL AND FALLON...staring at the dynamite.

CLOSE ON BRIDGE AND NATAS...doing the same.

CLOSE ON THE DYNAMITE...four inches of fuse, sputtering in the spill of Eave's bullet-punctured flask. A slow, heart-stopping burn.

EXT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

Lew yells toward the building:

LEW

Kel?...

(CONTINUED)

KEL (O.S.)  
 (calling out)  
 Don't come in.

Lew looks down the escarpment, then to the freight wagon. Ponders an idea as the monkey scampers unnoticed into the shaft house.

INT. SHAFT HOUSE - DAY

Kel's eyes haven't left the dynamite.

KEL  
 (to Natas and Bridge)  
 Drop your guns and move outside.  
 You won't get hurt.

NATAS  
 Not a chance. You and the girl are  
 gonna die.

FALLON  
 (loud)  
 We all are!

CLOSE ON THE FUSE burning erratically in the puddle.

THE WATCH READS: 1:58. Kel looks at Fallon.

KEL  
 I'm givin' myself up.

FALLON  
 No!

KEL  
 (calls)  
 Lew, if I ain't out in about thirty  
 seconds, clear the building.  
 (to Fallon)  
 Head to the shaft entrance. I'll  
 keep em busy. Well...

He kisses her. Kisses her again. Tosses his gun.

FALLON  
 Kel, no!

Kel walks toward the dynamite, hands held high. Natas' and Bridge's guns trained on him.

(CONTINUED)



KEL

(to Natas and Bridge)

We're lookin' at two options here...  
 You let my friends go, I put out the  
 fuse and you live. You kill me now  
 and try to put it out yourselves and  
 one of you is gonna die sooner than  
 the other. I've seen Parks shoot.  
 She can pick a needle off a prickly  
 pear at thirty yards...So what's it  
 gonna be?

Fallon sees something, screams:

FALLON

Kel!!!

Eaves springs from the tunnel, lunges past Kel and smothers  
 the fuse. Bridge sneers, raises his gun when...

CAH-RASH!!! The horse drawn freight wagon SMASHES through  
 the loading door, Lew reckless at the reins. Kel dives from  
 its path. Eaves looks up. Gets a face full of horse hooves  
 and is trampled. The wagon careens, Lew jumping as it flips,  
 gold spilling to the lip of the mine shaft. Bridge FIRES;  
 Kel tumble rolls, dodging the bullet. Bridge FIRES again,  
 spinning Lew around. Bridge wheels towards Fallon. Kel  
 scrambles for his gun, nails Bridge with three rapid shots.  
 Natas staggers from the shadows, gun shaking in her  
 hand...then falls. Fallon moves to her, fazed, smoke curling  
 from her rifle tip.

Kel hustles to Lew. He's winged and not happy about it, the  
 horses raising hell in the b.g.

LEW

I'm fine, I'm fine. Fine and crazy  
 fer havin' a pardner like you. Grazed  
 twice in a week! Why don't I jus'  
 put a gun ta my head and get it over  
 with, save me the...

(off the horses'  
 distress calls)

Whoa!...Geez!...

Kel grins; now senses something in the air. Fallon feels  
 it, too...a light breeze lifting her hair. Colors of light  
 begin to shimmer at the mine shaft.

KEL

Parks!

FALLON

(beat)

...The birds!

(CONTINUED)

She drops her rifle, heads to the saddlebag and removes the condor egg, still miraculously intact. Starts searching for the chick.

KEL  
Parks, get a move on.

FALLON  
But I have to find the chick.

KEL  
You're goin'!...Now!

FALLON  
But the chick..

Kel tugs her to the light beams...past Lew, who stares bewildered. Li Li's little boy runs over, the bird cupped in his palms. He offers it to Fallon. She looks at Kel as the lights begin to intensify, a million words unspoken.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
Come with me.

She starts to tear. Desperate. Pleading.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
Come back with me, Kel.

His eyes travel to the gold. He looks back at Fallon; holds her gaze for a tortured beat. Then walks away.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
Kel!

He turns suddenly. Now...

HIGH ABOVE FALLON on a crossbeam, the monkey leaps and knocks over a pail.

FALLON'S POV...Attached to a rope, the pail swooshing down, headed right at her. And we...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - EARLY MORNING - THE PRESENT

A duck waddling by a lake, followed by a row of ducklings and two large "chicks." Baby condors.

Fallon awakens, groggy. She rubs her head. Ow! Gets up. Looks around. A beautiful lake. A gorgeous morning. She starts walking along the shore.

(CONTINUED)

A couple smile as they pass. And now a few more smiling faces. Everyone...everything so pleasant. But something... Fallon turns. The people are naked. And so is she.

EXT. PARK - DOCK - DAY

Fallon walks onto a dock under a banner that reads: "Lakeside Nudist Resort." It's almost as if she's in a dream. Two swimmers are heading her way. An old couple. Fallon tries to focus. She collapses. The old folks make waves.

INT. OLD MAN'S CAR - DAY

The OLD MAN driving, the WIFE beside him. Fallon sits in the back, dressed in Sun City wear. Numbed, she stares out the window.

OLD MAN  
Sure now you don't want us to take  
you to the hospital?

FALLON  
No, um, I'm getting married today.

The old man checks her out in the rear view mirror.

OLD MAN  
Big weddin'?

FALLON  
Huh?

OLD MAN  
Big weddin'...are ya havin' a big  
weddin'?

FALLON  
No, courthouse.

A HORN blasts. The old man, ignoring it, turns a corner.

OLD MAN  
That's how we did it. Right, mommy?  
Fifty-six years ago.  
(beat)  
Don't know how young folks manage  
today. Back then it was simpler,  
more natural. The men went to work  
and the women stayed home with the  
kids. None of this workforce  
competition and day care and pregnancy  
leave and whatnot you have. And  
sexual harassment? Hell, that used  
to be called a compliment.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OLD MAN (CONT'D)  
 Men knew who they were and women  
 knew who they were. Nope, it was a  
 different world back then.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FALLON'S CONDO - MIDASVILLE - DAY

The car pulls to curb in front of nondescript, brownstone  
 condo. Trim yard, clean sidewalk. Fallon gets out of the  
 car, a little half-wave with a slip of paper

FALLON  
 (to the wife; meaning  
 the clothes)  
 I'll have them cleaned.

OLD MAN  
 You take care, honey. Good luck.

Fallon heads to the door, still dazed, and goes inside.

INT. CONDO - DAY

Bob is at the dining room table. Coffee. Papers. He's  
 buried in them. He throws Fallon the stingiest of glances  
 as, oblivious, she crosses into the kitchen.

BOB  
 Hey.

Fallon flips the brew switch on a coffee maker. Retrieves a  
 cup from the cupboard. A digital kitchen clocks says: 7:00  
 a.m.

BOB (CONT'D)  
 Unbelievable some of the dreck these  
 kids write. What time is it?  
 (feigning alarm)  
 Oh, shit. We're getting married  
 today.  
 (winks)  
 New outfit?

INT. COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

Zola sits in a room with three men in suits. Administrative  
 henchmen, all taking this very seriously. She is holding an  
 official looking envelope.

(CONTINUED)

ADMINISTRATOR

The bottom line, Zola, is that we're dependent upon grants that require a less...fringe element to the research. While condors are a noble cause...

Blah, blah, blah. Zola is simmering inside.

INT. BOB'S CAR - DAY

Bob drives, absent-minded, hurried. Fallon still in a funk. Commuter traffic is starting to gear up.

BOB

The courthouse should take a half hour, hour tops. Ten minute drive time. That gets you to your eight-thirty with "fix me" time to spare. I'll be late for my spinning class... damn.

INT. LAB - DAY

Zola removes a monkey from a cage, grumbles as she crosses the room.

ZOLA

(to monkey)

Those jerks think they can push me around. Well, we're not gonna let em do it, right, kiddo? We'll show em.

INT. BOB'S CAR - DAY

Midasville, the city. A hilly street where traffic has come to a complete stop.

BOB

What the hell is this?

Bob BEEPS his horn. Turns to Fallon.

BOB (CONT'D)

Sure you wanna go through with this?

But the joke has already played out. He starts to whistle. Flicks on the RADIO. The "all news" channel. Fallon doesn't even notice.

INT. LAB - DAY

Zola straps the monkey to the lab table beneath the light bank.

ZOLA  
Ain't gonna hurt a bit. I promise.

Behind her back, she uncrosses her fingers and heads to the computers.

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDASVILLE - THE OLD WEST - DAY

Kel searches the rubble of the burned down saloon. Cigarette in mouth, desperate. Lew is watching in disbelief while struggling with the monkey on a makeshift leash.

LEW  
This is the damn'dest thing I ever seen. There a chance a bullet grazed your summit back there?

KEL  
Quit your yackin' and help me find where the bar was.

LEW  
Would that be a bar in this century or the next? C'mon, Kel, this is downright nonsense. Ain't no such thing as a time travel device.

KEL  
Then you tell me about Parks. You tell me where she vanished to.

LEW  
(sympathetic)  
Look, pardner, I know how you felt about her. But she's gone. That pail come down and knocked her back into the mine shaft.

KEL  
You tell me about them lights then, Lew, and them winds.

LEW  
Aw, hell, Kel...the sun plays all kinds a tricks out here. And so do them dust devils. Seen em sweep right through a house an' leave the floor so clean you could eat jam offa it.

(CONTINUED)

Kel is getting a little more frantic. Stars reasoning out loud.

KEL

Yesterday...Zola said she set the return for yesterday. But since she never made it back, she's gotta be goin' through the same motions and doin' the same routine she did the mornin' she snatched me up.

(looks at Lew)

Doncha get it, Lew? The second Parks got back, Zola was on her way to gettin' let go from her job. And from there, to puttin' the monkey in the time machine...

(points)

...that monkey!

The monkey answers him: ooh-oo-ah-ah.

LEW

(testily)

This was Natas's monkey.

(to the monkey)

I don't know which one a you is makin' more sense.

KEL

Jus' get over here and...

Kel spots a brass spittoon in the rubble. Picks it up.

KEL (CONT'D)

Nevermind. Found it.

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S CAR - DAY

Bob and Fallon just inching along. Bob is pissed.

BOB

Better call the school. Looks like sub time. Damn...dammit.

Fallon gets on the cell and dials. Her attention is drawn to the curb, where a huge crowd has gathered. Police, news crews. Traffic diversion. It's the "new" old Condor Mine. Fallon stares at the scene. Wistfully

INT. LAB - DAY

Humming, "She'll be comin' 'round the mountain..." Zola taps a few computer keys.

(CONTINUED)

She takes a deep breath, pushes the last; then faces the transport. A wind whips a few papers off the lab tables. Colors begin to radiate from the light bank.

EXT. MIDASVILLE - THE OLD WEST - DAY

The wind starts to kick up around Kel. He looks at Lew, thrilled.

KEL  
Lew, this is it!

Colors begin to flicker around him. Lew is slack-jawed.

KEL (CONT'D)  
Make sure that gold gets to Li Li.  
Remember the map, remember to bury  
Zola's share. What's down in the  
shaft's yours, if you can fetch it...  
(tries to get Lew's  
attention)  
Lew!!!...

CUT TO:

INT. BOB'S CAR - DAY

Fallon lingers on the scene outside as the traffic starts to break. News comes over the RADIO:

RADIO ANNOUNCER (O.S.)  
Officials are stymied over a discovery  
this morning at the old Condor Mine...  
Gold. Yes, that's right...gold...

EXT. CONDOR MINE SITE - DAY

TV NEWS ANNOUNCER talks to a camera.

NEWS ANNOUNCER  
...where renovation workers five  
hundred feet down found a solid bar  
of gold weighing slightly over twenty-  
seven pounds. Gold they claim wasn't  
there yesterday. Police are  
investigating a possible...

CUT TO:

EXT. MIDASVILLE - THE OLD WEST - DAY

The colors and wind whip more intensely around Kel. He's waving his hat, grinning ear to ear.

(CONTINUED)



KEL

This is it! This is it! Yee-hawww!  
Yee-hawww! So long, Lew!

Kel salutes good-bye. Lew raises a hand. And then Kel is gone.

Lew waits a moment, dumbstruck. Then walks over to Kel's clothes on the ground. He lifts the shirt, feels something heavy in the pocket. He removes the tobacco pouch and dumps it in his hand.

CLOSE ON LEW'S HAND...holding a twenty dollar gold piece. It has a bullet imbedded in its center.

CUT TO:

INT. LAB - DAY

Zola waits at the lab table, on pins and needles. Now WINDS, COLORS...and Kel. He's holding her monkey. Zola is stunned, backpedals, crashes into the cages. Kel hands her the monkey as he moves past her. Grabs a lab coat. And heads out.

INT. HALLWAY/STAIRWELL - DAY

Kel passes the three coeds in the hall, exchanges smiles. He waves at the campus cop. Heads quickly up stairs. He turns into Fallon's classroom, expectant.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The substitute TEACHER stops in mid-sentence. The students stare. Kel is crestfallen.

KEL

Where's Parks?

TEACHER

Traffic. She got caught in...She's,  
um...

STUDENT

(blurting out)  
She's getting married.

KEL

Where?

ANOTHER STUDENT

Romance central.

EXT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - PARKING LOT - DAY

Bob's car peels into the lot.

INT. ZOLA'S PICKUP - DAY

Zola drives, digesting it all. Kel looks anxious.

ZOLA  
So you're really a cowboy, a true to  
life cowboy?

KEL  
Yep. Flesh an' bone Westerner.

Zola slaps the wheel, ecstatic.

ZOLA  
I still can't believe it worked! It  
really did work! You know what that  
means?!

KEL  
(points)  
Watch that big wagon over there.

Sure enough, a delivery truck cuts them off.

ZOLA  
(lays on the horn)  
Look out, you jerk!

The driver flips her off. She notices a traffic jam ahead.

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
What's this?

It's the Condor Mine site. The car grinds to a stop.  
Horns. Chaos. Kel looks worried.

KEL  
How far to the courthouse?

ZOLA  
Courthouse? It's a mile up there on  
the left. Why?

Kel thinks, frantic. Gets out.

ZOLA (CONT'D)  
Hey, whadda ya doin'?

EXT. MIDASVILLE - STREET/SIDEWALK - DAY

Kel zigzags through a few stopped cars, hustles up the sidewalk. He sidesteps a camera crew. Bumps a couple pedestrians. In the park off yonder, a mounted policeman is talking to some kids. Kel whistles at the horse. It bolts, throwing the cop, and Kel mounts it on the run.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

A bored counter CLERK has her nose in paperwork, helping a couple. A RADIO is playing in the b.g.

RADIO ANNOUNCER #2

In other news today. Two condor chicks were captured at the Lakeside Resort this morning...leaving puzzled game officials scratching their heads...

Fallon and Bob are seated along a wall with a few other couples. Bob's head to a clipboard, filling out forms. Fallon looking miserable, wrestling with a million thoughts.

FALLON

(quietly)

Mules and hens.

BOB

Did you say something?

FALLON

What do you think about mules and hens?

BOB

Mules and hens? Is this like code?

FALLON

Nevermind.

Fallon falls silent. Bob goes back to the form. The clerk calls out:

CLERK

Robert Smith.

Fallon and Bob step to the counter. The clerk takes the clipboard. Bob impatient, waiting. Fallon withering. The clerk returns a form.

CLERK (CONT'D)

I need you to sign.

Bob starts to sign. Fallon is dying.

(CONTINUED)

FALLON  
 (suddenly)  
 I can't do it...

Bob looks.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 I won't do it. I'm sorry, Bob.

Bob takes Fallon's hand, hold out the pen.

BOB  
 C'mon, Fallon. Sign the paper.  
 Trust me, it's gonna be fine.

Fallon is dying dying, attempting to decide the impossible.  
 The impatient clerk taps a pen.

BOB (CONT'D)  
 C'mon, babe.

Fallon studies Bob's face, in absolute torment...Impulsively  
 reaches for the pen. When, WHOOSH, a lasso snares her hand.  
 She turns.

It's Kel in the doorway, holding the rope. Fallon lets the  
 emotions flood from her, a smile beyond belief as she runs  
 and throws herself in his arms. They kiss. Kel pulls back,  
 smiles.

KEL  
 Two things you can count on a cowboy  
 havin': his rope...  
 (she kisses him)  
 ...and his lips.

They kiss again. Bob lingers, floored.

FALLON  
 I'm sorry, Bob. I'm sorry.

Then, arm in arm, she and Kel head toward the door.

FALLON (CONT'D)  
 So how in the world did you manage  
 to...

KEL  
 When a man's up against it, he uses  
 his head. Somethin' I learned from  
 Ol' Injun John up on the west fork  
 of the Yellow Dog River. After you  
 disappeared, I did some heavy  
 thinkin'...

Kel hangs the lasso on the wall with the other Western items  
 on display as they leave the room.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Kel and Fallon head down the steps, stop on the sidewalk.

KEL

And that about sums it. Hope Lew's  
okay with that critter...Well, where  
we headin'?

He starts to whistle for the horse -- it's grazing on the  
lawn -- but Fallon stops him.

FALLON

No, let me.

She whistles. A cab zooms up. They both start laughing as  
Kel opens the door. Arriving out of breath, Zola collars  
them as they climb inside.

ZOLA

Hey, where ya goin'?

CUT TO:

EXT. MESA - DUSK

Kel and Fallon are snuggled under a blanket. Happy, alive.  
And totally in love. His hand moves playfully under the  
covers. She giggles, liking it.

KEL

Now this is somethin' I learned up  
in Carson City, spring of sixty-nine,  
in the...

And we PULL OUT as he hoists the covers up, PAUSING briefly  
on the nicotine patch on his shoulder...then HIGHER above  
the two lovers under covers at cliffside...as the grandeur  
of sunset on this high desert mesa spreads before us...and  
HIGHER still as two condors swoop across fiery cirrus clouds  
in the distant sky. It's a beautiful world.

FADE OUT:

THE END