

For the Love of Scarlett

Two women discover a hidden world of their mute aunt after her death.  
A mute is saved by an educated Native American during a native uprising.

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INT. KITCHEN 1940S - DAY

1940s kitchen. A stack of old books of different sizes and shapes on the table. GRACE (70s) and DORIS (70s) enter. Both are dressed in funeral black.

Doris sets a funeral pamphlet and some flowers on the table. A picture of an old woman on the cover. Words on the pamphlet "In Loving Memory 1841-1942".

GRACE

What's with the ancient books?

Doris talks as she leaves the room.

DORIS (O.S.)

They're Scarlett's I had no idea she  
kept a diary until I found them. She  
kept them in a chest at the foot of  
her bed.

Doris returns and hands Grace a badly tattered note book. The edges are torn and the binding is falling apart. The pages are wrinkled and stained at the edges.

DORIS (CONT'D)

Be very careful with this one.

GRACE

Oh My! 1859? Good God!

Grace very carefully opens to the first page and starts to read.

GRACE (CONT'D)

June 5th, 1859. The day is hot and  
muggy. I arrived by stage.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUSTIC TOWN 1850S - DAY

Arial view follows a stage coach passing rows of army tents then entering a small group of buildings on a road.

EXT. STAGE COACH - DAY

Covered porch overlooking a main road in town.

MAX (18), Native American slim build with well toned body. Max has no shirt on with a towel over his shoulder and razor in hand.

He dabs some shaving cream on his chin and whips a dirty mirror hanging from a post with his towel then begins to shave.

A stage coach pulls up and stops across the road. The driver dismounts as people start to exit the main section. SCARLETT (18) appears in the door of the coach.

Just as Scarlett is about to embark shots from a shooting range ring out. The horses of the coach rile up, their reins become dislodged from the hitching post and the stage takes off throwing Scarlett back into the cabin.

Max looks at the commotion for a brief second. Then to his horse (with no saddle). Max runs the front deck of his building while whipping shaving cream from his face and tossing the towel.

Max jumps from the deck frog leaping over the rear of the horse and grabs the reigns. Max chases the driverless stage coach.

Max catches up to the coach and jumps onto one of the coaches horses. He grabs the reigns and rears the horse. The coach comes to a halt. He pats the horse he is on.

MAX  
That's a good girl.

Max balances himself on the rail between the horses. Max gathers the rest of the reigns and mounts the driver seat. Once seated he leans over the side.

MAX (CONT'D)  
Don't worry mam. I'll get you back  
to town.

Max turns the carriage around and heads for town. His horse follows.

The coach arrives in town and parks in the same spot it left from. The driver thanks Max as a woman helps Scarlett from the carriage. Max and Scarlett lock eyes for a brief moment before Scarlett is whisked away.

FADE

INT. MESS HALL 1850S - DAY

SCARLETT (18) is sitting at a table in a mess hall writing in a journal. Men in blue uniforms enter laughing and talking. Scarlett takes her place on a lunch serving line.

BRUCE (19), large brute of a man and Max enter with a line of men in army uniform.

Scarlett watches Max enter the room. She straightens her hair then wipes her dress.

The men proceed down the line BRUCE (19) approaches Scarlett. Scarlett plops some mashed potatoes on Bruce's plate Bruce grabs Scarlett's wrist. Scarlett pulls back quickly but Bruce keeps hold.

BRUCE

(Snarly)

How about you and I find a nice corner later?

Max places his hand on Bruce's shoulder.

MAX

Don't hold up the line. Only twenty minutes for chow!

BRUCE

Ah, never enough time to play!

Bruce lets go of Scarlett. As Scarlett serves Max their eyes lock again for a brief moment. Max winks.

Scarlett smiles then shyly lowers her gaze and scoops another spoonful.

Max continues down the line and then to his table he glances repeatedly in Scarlett's direction.

MAX

Do you know her name?

BRUCE

Who's name?

MAX

The new girl.

BRUCE

Scarlett, I think. Doesn't talk at all.

MAX

Well if you weren't such a brute, maybe she would.

BRUCE

No, she's mute! Can't talk.

Max looks at Scarlett as she cleans a table. Scarlet glances at Max and smiles for a moment before turning her head.

EXT. PORCH STEP 1850S - DAY

Scarlett is pealing potatoes. Max approaches.

MAX

I am sorry about Bruce. He can be quite umm un-couth. Can I help?

Scarlett tosses her potato into the pot and pulls a small slate and chalk from her dress. Scarlett scribbles on the board then shows it to Max.

SCARLETT

(Slate)

Yes!

Max looks puzzled for a moment.

MAX

Ahh you can hear but not talk?

Scarlett smiles, scribbles again and shows him the slate.

SCARLETT

(Slate)

You read?

MAX

Yes, my brother and I were raised and educated by a white family.

Scarlett looks at Max with a puzzled stare.

MAX (CONT'D)

My brother is Deaf. He doesn't talk either.

Scarlett wipes the slate and scribbles again.

SCARLETT

(Slate)

Does he use chalk?

MAX

Ha ha. No, mostly he points to stuff but we have hand signals.

MAX (CONT'D)

Our native tongue uses hand signals  
almost as much as speech. We can  
communicate.

Scarlett looks at her hands then at Max.

MAX (CONT'D)

Here I will show you. My original  
name is Black Wolf. It is signed  
like this.

Max shows Scarlett his name in sign.

A bell rings in the distance. Max looks over his shoulder  
towards the noise.

MAX (CONT'D)

Crap, I am going to be late.

Max looks back to Scarlett.

MAX (CONT'D)

I will be back.

Scarlett smiles and waves him off.

FADE

INT. MESS HALL 1850s - DAY

The dining area is about half full. Sounds of talking and  
dishes clanging comes from the kitchen. Scarlett is whipping a  
dish and looks at Max then turns back to the kitchen.

Max is reading a book. Time goes by.

Max hears a loud crash away from the kitchen and goes to  
investigate. He walks down a hallway and hears another crash  
from behind a door. He reaches for the door.

BRUCE (O.S.)

You know you want it!

MAX

Hey! What's going on in there?

Max flings the door open. Scarlett is pinned under Bruce.  
Broken dishes are scattered. Scarlet's blouse is ripped and  
Bruce unclasps his suspenders. The suspende straps fly over  
his shoulders.

BRUCE

I know you want it!

MAX  
Hey! Get your hands off her!

Scarlett knees Bruce in the groin. Max grabs Bruce by the back of his shirt and throws him into the hallway then turns to Scarlett as she tries to cover her chest.

BRUCE  
She's mine!

Bruce grabs Max's arm and pulls him into the hallway. They exchange blows as Scarlet runs away. Max throws an uppercut to Bruce's jaw. Bruce stumbles back to the mess hall doors.

Max jumps and thrusts his foot into Bruce's chest. Bruce flies through the doors into the mess hall. Bruce and Max continue to fight as men in the mess hall cheer them on.

A half a dozen officers run in blowing whistles and secure both Bruce and Max as they struggle. A well dressed OFFICER (40s) enters.

OFFICER  
(Yelling)  
That's enough! Take them to the stockade!

The officers holding Bruce and Max drag them from the room.

OFFICER (CONT'D)  
And for the rest of you. You're done eating! Get to the yard!

FADE

INT. KITCHEN 1940S - DAY

Grace and Doris Look at each other.

GRACE  
Can you believe this?

DORIS  
Go on! What happens next?

GRACE  
She wrote that Max was in the stockade for weeks. Scarlett would meet with him every day. Oh Max's horse Dusty followed her one day.

CUT TO:

EXT. STOCKADE 1850S - DAY

Scarlet arrives at the stockade followed by Max's horse. Max reaches to pet his horse.

MAX  
Dusty!

The horse turns to Scarlett and nudges her dress.

SCARLETT  
(Signed)  
He follows me.

MAX  
I bet you have an apple in your pocket.

Scarlett pulls an apple from her dress. Dusty sniffs the apple.

MAX (CONT'D)  
He is crazy for apples.

Scarlett opens her hand and Dusty scarf's down the apple then sniffs her dress again.

Scarlett writes on her slate.

SCARLETT  
(Slate)  
Saddle?

MAX  
Good luck with that. He hates em.  
It's bareback or nothing.

Max reaches through the fence and pets Dusty.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN 1940S - DAY

They also rounded up other Native Americans from the unit.

GRACE  
Scarlet and Dusty would visit him.  
Max would show Scarlett signs.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Oh my! The town is getting attacked daily.

DORIS

By who?

Grace flips a page.

GRACE

She writes that Max escaped in one of the raids.

DORIS

Who is attacking them?

GRACE

Indians!

Grace silently flips page after page.

DORIS

Grace! What is she writing?

GRACE

She goes on for pages about caring for the wounded in the mess hall.

DORIS

And... And...

GRACE

Ah here it is. On the fifth day a large attack happened.

CUT TO:

INT. MESS HALL 1850S - DAY

Chaos. Tables are overturned, some blocking windows others filled with wounded. Men fire guns out the windows. Scarlett hides behind an old piano.

A well dressed but wounded officer runs into the room.

OFFICER

Barricade the door!

Flaming arrows crash through windows and embed into wood. The front door explodes. Indians in full war paint flood in swinging knives and hatchets as the soldiers fight them.

Max, in only his trousers and full war paint rides dusty through the doorway leaping over debris. He looks around as his horse circles in the mayhem.

MAX  
Scarlet!

Scarlett waves her slate above the piano. Max rides to her and grabs her arm. In one fell swoop he throws her on his horse behind him. Max is grazed in his shoulder by a stray bullet.

MAX (CONT'D)  
Yiaaaa

Max kicks his horse and hangs onto the reins and Scarlett hugs him tightly as they duck their heads and disappear through a doorway.

FADE

EXT. HILL OVERLOOKING TOWN 1850S - DAY

Max and Scarlett are looking at the town as it is burning. Native Americans leave in a direction away from Scarlet and Max. Scarlett has ripped one arm off her dress and is slinging Max's wounded arm.

Once secured they both look at the town. Scarlet nestles her head into the back of Max's good shoulder then holds onto his waist.

Max turns the horse away from the town and they ride out of view.

FADE:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Grace looks at the last page for a moment then closes the back cover and looks at Doris.

GRACE  
That's it! End of the book!

Grace and Doris riffle through books on the table, looking at the bindings.

DORIS  
Where's the next one!

GRACE

It must be in the trunk!

Grace and Doris run out of the room.

Words on screen. "The End...For now."

FADE OUT.