

REDBEAR

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

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FADE IN:

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

EXT. OLD WEST - DAY

Large grassy plain with rocky mountains in the distance.

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

Redbear's Appaloosa horse, APPLE, is his only best friend.

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

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

REDBEAR

Ang-ree?

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

REDBEAR

Might wanna' fix that.

EXT. TOWN OF AHNGRY - LATER THAT DAY

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

GRUBBY the panhandler, looking like a vagrant, walks up to Redbear who reaches in a shirt pocket and flips a gold coin to Grubby who bite ons it with rotten black teeth.

REDBEAR

Jail?

Grubby points a gnarled finger. Redbear tosses another coin.

REDBEAR

Sheriff?

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

Redbear stands in his stirrups to see their town's *Boot Hill*.

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

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

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

BUFORD
Lookee what I found.

REDBEAR
They t'weren't lost.

Buford studies Redbear up and down, then packhorse's bundle.

BUFORD
Bounty Hunter?
(no response)
Carryin' a corpse --
(moves hand to his gun)
don't make you a killer.

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

REDBEAR
Best think on it.

Buford draws. A sawed-off shotgun *blasts* a hole through Redbear's coat then a hole through Buford who's blown back into the bar. The two gold coins fall near Grubby's feet.

REDBEAR
Havin', begets keepin'.

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

RIFFRAFF ONE twitches his hand near his holster.

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

REDBEAR
Best think on it --harder.

All Riffraff step backwards into the bar. Redbear rides on.

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

AHNGRY MAYOR
Needs a Sheriff!

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

REDBEAR

Still do.

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

AHNGRY WOMAN

You could help us!

(no response)

Why don't you care?!

REDBEAR

Did. --Didn't take.

Redbear rides out of Ahngry.

EXT. AHNGRY BOOT HILL - MOMENTS LATER

Redbear stops outside its small cemetery's two-foot-high prairie wood fence to read a tall hand-carved wood tombstone.

REDBEAR

"Here lies beloved Sheriff Moore
with four slugs from a 44. No Less,
no more, so now no more Moore."

(thinks, nods)

Catchy.

Gunfire followed by earlier Ahngry Woman's scream.

Redbear spits black juice on the tombstone and rides on.

REDBEAR

Might wanna' fix that.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF SANDPEED IN THE MORNING - DAYS LATER

Redbear approaches another town. There is a slight ground freeze. He stops to read out-loud its "Welcome To" sign.

REDBEAR

"Welcome to Sandpeed. Friendliest
town in a hundred mile."

(spurs Apple on)

We'll see.

EXT. SANDPEED'S CENTER STREET - MOMENTS LATER

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

Redbear rides in pulling his Packhorse now with horseflies buzzing around its corpse. He stops to "take in" the town.

REDBEAR

Down right citified.

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

INT. SANDPEED SHERRIFF OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

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

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

INT. SANDPEED SHERRIFF OFFICE JAILCELL - IMMEDIATELY

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

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

REDBEAR

If you were aimin' fer the ground,
you missed.

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

BASS

Who, who, who ...?

REDBEAR

You imitatin' an owl?

Redbear exits back into the office.

Bass follows him fumble-holstering his pistol.

INT. SANDPEED SHERIFF OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bass enters to find Redbear standing by the bulletin board.

BASS
Why, why, why ...?

REDBEAR
You got a problem speakin' whole?

Redbear yanks a *Wanted Poster* off the bulletin board.

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

Bass runs outside, then back in with the poster.

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

REDBEAR
Might wanna' fix that.

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

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

REDBEAR
He was raisin' quite a stink.
before I shot him.

Redbear takes *Wanted Poster* from Bass and hands to Manager.

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

BASS
Yes sir, best in a hundred mile!

REDBEAR
We'll see.

BANK MANAGER

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

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

BASS

How much that even weigh?

BANK MANAGER

My, God! You're a abundant armory.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Bet you carry a boot-knife, too.

REDBEAR

One way to find out.

BANK MANAGER

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

REDBEAR

"Friendly" just left town, real sudden-like.

BANK MANAGER

Didn't catch your name?

REDBEAR

Didn't throw it.

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

EXT. SANDPEED SHERIFF OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Redbear, with spurs *jingling*, exits as Bank Manager and Bass follow with the *Wanted Poster*.

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

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

BASS

Done blew the back of his head
clean off!

REDBEAR

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

BASS

He be me, till the election.

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

ARKANSAW

Whens "me" becomes Sheriff!

BASS

(hand moves to his gun)
One way to find out.

Redbear steps between them. Bass helps Miss Minerva stand.

ARKANSAW

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

Redbear spits black tobacco juice on Jones's boot tip.

REDBEAR

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

BANK MANAGER

I still need your name, mister.

REDBEAR

Red Harding.

BASS

I heard a' you! You're famous!

BANK MANAGER

Infamous.

ARKANSAW

Neither way, I ain't heard a' you?

Arkansaw's hand moves towards his revolver. Redbear spits.

REDBEAR

You must be him, just growed
dumber.

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

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

ARKANSAW

Just funnin'.

REDBEAR

You see me grinnin'?

ARKANSAW

(backs up)

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

REDBEAR

Don't be lookin' forward to it.

(turns to Bass)

Sheriff ...

BASS

Deputy.

REDBEAR

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

Redbear *spits* a huge ungodly glob of black juice.

Miss Minerva sees it and faints most delicate.

Redbear and Bass look down at her.

REDBEAR

She do this regular?

BASS

She do.

REDBEAR

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

BANK MANAGER

Doubt our Blacksmith will want your
thievin' business.

REDBEAR

You're gettin' real hard to like.

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

BLACKIE

He don't.

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

HOTEL OWNER

Hotel's fully booked.

TOWNLADIES *hiss*. Redbear looks around.

REDBEAR

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

Townladies lift their noses *harrumphing*.

REDBEAR

After I wet my whistle, a' course.

BASS

A' course

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

BARKEEP

Bar's closed.

REDBEAR

(scans town's sour faces)
Sees the welcome mat in this town,
got two sides to it.

Redbear tosses Packhorse's lead to Bass who catches. Redbear mounts Apple and trots out of town. Townladies *hiss* more. Redbear searches the ground for diamondbacks.

EXT. EDGE OF SANDPEED - MOMENTS LATER

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

REDBEAR
Might wanna' fix that.

EXT. SANDPEED OUTSKIRTS - LATER THAT DAY

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

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

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

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

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

REDBEAR
Where is he now?

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

REDBEAR
Bet he saw a reason then.

Bass is eyeing the cooked squirrel with envy.

REDBEAR
Help yourself.

Bass pulls off a squirrel leg to gnaw on.

BASS

Didn't hear no gunshot?

Redbear pulls a throwing knife from behind his neck to snap-throw over-handed. Its blade sticks deep in the tree's bark.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Folks say you killed fifty men?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

When I were eight.

REDBEAR

Who fed ya' then?

BASS

Owner.

REDBEAR

You're a slave?

BASS

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

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Good to set limits. And --?

BASS

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

REDBEAR
Human Being?

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

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

REDBEAR
Amend-ment. Who fed ya' then?

BASS
Sheriff. Let me sleep in cell for
chores. Been sleepin' there since.

REDBEAR
What happened to him?

Bass stands wiping both hands off on his shirt front.

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

REDBEAR
Telegrapher.

BASS
Him, too. Both rode out to check
The Line. It might be repaired late
this week. Maybe next.

REDBEAR
Mind ridin' out and lettin' me
know? Bring some Adam's Ale and
oats, please. Don't want to wear my
thin welcome in town any thinner.

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

REDBEAR
You could a' said somethin' then.
How long you been a Sheriff?

BASS
Two month.

EXT. SANDPEED OUTSKIRTS - DAYS LATER

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

BASS
(rides in)
Fixed.

REDBEAR
What'd they do, make the parts?

BASS
How'd you know?

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

REDBEAR
Never touch another peacemaker's --
peacemakers.

BASS
(steps back, hands up)
Didn't mean to offend.

REDBEAR
Most don't.

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

BASS
Can I asks a question?

REDBEAR
Rhetorical?

BASS
No sir, straight on.

Redbear *coughs* smirking, then nods. Bass drops his hands.

BASS
Teach me to draw fast?

Redbear doesn't answer. He fills his hat's crown with oats from a saddlebag hanging on the same tree and feeds them to Apple.

BASS

Gonna' answer?

REDBEAR

Just did. Why'd you pin on tin?

BASS

Seemed the right thing to do.

REDBEAR

Right'll get you killed quicker
than wrong everyday.

BASS

Maybe, but I had to. Maybe also
because, no one else wanted to.

REDBEAR

What about razorback? He seems
eager-beaver.

BASS

Folk still too upset he shot him.

REDBEAR

"Him?!" Arkansaw shot your Sheriff?
Why?

BASS

Personal.

Redbear gets more oats in his hat to feed the packhorse.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Sounds like you was one.

REDBEAR

"Was."

BASS

Why'd you quit?

REDBEAR

"Personal."

BASS

I likes how it feel, standin' up
for folk that can't. Didn't have no
one ever stand up for me.

REDBEAR
Sounds like your Sheriff did.

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

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

BASS
If you really was one, why won't
you teach me to do it right?

REDBEAR
What makes you think I know how?

BASS
'Cause you're still standin'.

REDBEAR
Can't fault your reasonin'.

Redbear goes to his canteen hanging on the tree and drinks.

BASS
You help me. I help you.

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

REDBEAR
You already did, so it's a draw.

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

REDBEAR
This, is how fast it happens!

BASS
(looks up at sky)
Looks like rain.

REDBEAR
It do. So --?

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

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

Redbear spits black juice, then sheathes knife behind neck.

REDBEAR
Lord --help us both.

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

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

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

Bass and Redbear, pulling packhorse, ride up.

BASS
Mornin'.

AIYANA
Well past morning, Davey.

Redbear slow-turns in his saddle to Bass.

REDBEAR
"Davey?"

BASS
David Bass Reeves. So --?

REDBEAR
"So" lessen your last name's
Crockett, might wanna' fix that.

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

BASS
This be he, Aiyana.

REDBEAR
"Aiyana?"

AIYANA
Yeah, so?

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

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

REDBEAR

Ain't? Don't?

(puts on hat)

Just call 'em as I sees 'em, ma'am.

AIYANA

Then you "sees" my barn.

(walks manly to house)

Supper's at sundown, won't be no
callin' out.

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

REDBEAR

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

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

AIYANA

Ain't! Don't! And don't call me
"ma'am!"

Bass *swats* Redbear's shoulder with his hat.

INT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

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

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

AIYANA

Boots, OFF!

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

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

Both stare as poker players. Redbear folds.

REDBEAR

Drownin' out here, ma'am.

AIYANA

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

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

AIYANA

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

REDBEAR

(takes off socks)
I'm touched by your overwhelmin'
concern --"ma'am."

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

AIYANA

Just because you called Redbear,
didn't mean you had to grow claws.

Redbear hangs socks and sits at table. Chair rocks. He stands pulling neck-knife and shaves the edge off a leg's bottom, then re-sits. No more rocking. Aiyana watches open-mouthed.

REDBEAR

How'd you come to learn my Indian
name?

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

AIYANA

If you can do two things at once,
wash hands, soak feet, then eat.

REDBEAR

Didn't answer my question?

AIYANA

(knocks on his forehead)
Porch lantern lit, but no one home.
I'm Indian. Wash hands, a-ya-ni.

REDBEAR

Stupid?! I can't remember the last
time I been spoken to so kindly. Do
believe, God's tears already did.

Redbear holds up his clean bear-paws with long broken nails. Aiyana studies his filthy fingernails.

AIYANA

Then you walk between drops.

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

AIYANA

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

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

REDBEAR

Tryin' to kill me, woman?!

AIYANA

If I were --.

Aiyana moves fast to hold her cooking knife under his chin.

AIYANA

You be dead, twice.

Redbear eye-motions down. Aiyana looks down. Redbear has his neck-knife's point in her skirt's crotch. Aiyana steps back putting down her knife, then shakes head.

AIYANA

Why all men usdi?

REDBEAR

"Babies?!"

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

AIYANA

Coat, Out! Now! Smell like wet
coyote drowned two year.

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

AIYANA

Feel better, usdi?

Red sticks out his tongue to Aiyana who slops a big spoonful of stew on it. He eats it angry, then his eyes open wide as he registers it tastes good.

AIYANA

(Indian for "meal")
Tiffin!

Aiyana *plops* more stew on Redbear's plate who digs in.

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

AIYANA
This my son, Bimisi.

REDBEAR
(chokes on his food)
Slippery?!

AIYANA
First thing his daddy say when
delivering him.

REDBEAR
What's daddy deliverin' now?

Aiyana and Bimisi look hurt. Redbear regrets his question.

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

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

REDBEAR
You build that?

Bimisi smiles, then looks to Aiyana who nods proud.

AIYANA
He can build fire, underwater.

REDBEAR
Then I will call you, Bodaway.

BIMISI
Fire Maker?!

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

AIYANA
Then your name, shall be so.

All Three eat. Redbear tells a story. All *laugh*. Aiyana tilts her head looking at Redbear different now. She gets up to take his plate bending over, so her blouse opens. Redbear tries not to look, but does, and now looks at her different.

EXT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - NEXT DAY

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

Bodaway tills the still wet garden.

Redbear, same pistol in his belt, sits in same dining chair, but now outside as Aiyana uses tailor shears and Blacksmith's rasp on his hard toenails.

Bass rides up and sits on his horse staring.

REDBEAR

Move your jowls or move on.

BASS

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

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

I'm not laughin' at you, just the
situation. You two look --hitched.

Redbear and Aiyana stare at each other, then break out *guffawing*. Redbear laughs so hard with his head back, he chokes on his chaw.

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

AIYANA

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

Redbear glares, then nods animated. Aiyana raises a hand.

AIYANA

Swear.

Redbear glares more, then raises a hand.

Aiyana flat-palms his back hard. His cud flies into the water-pan *splashing*. Redbear *coughs*.

REDBEAR

Socks?

AIYANA

Only one pair got?

REDBEAR

Only got one pair, a' feet?

Aiyana carries the pan away to pour on her garden.

AIYANA

Dirt to dirt.

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

Bodaway walks over *laughing*.

REDBEAR

What you laughin' at, boy?

BODAWAY

You two.

BASS

I'm here to learn Sheriffin'!

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

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

Sweet Bread ready when you come back, Davey.

BASS

Bass.

AIYANA

"Bass?" Like fish?

BASS

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

BODAWAY
(points to own chest)
Me Bodaway now.

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

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

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

BASS
Just Deputy, till the elec...

Redbear throws a rock at Bass who ducks.

AIYANA
His name change, your doing?

Redbear shrugs shoulders, then puts his calvary boots on.

REDBEAR
Coat?

Aiyana mumbles something in Indian. Redbear understands her.

REDBEAR
I'm used to bein' wet.

AIYANA
Good, then take a bath.

Redbear stands to *stomp* a boot on stumbling back like shot.

REDBEAR
"Bath?!"

AIYANA
Yes, all three go, now
(points to distance)
In river, now!

BASS
Why I gotta' go?

Aiyana lifts her nose smelling him like a wolf and *Ewww's*.

AIYANA
You want bread? I want bath.

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

AIYANA

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

Aiyana stands hands-on-hips. Only Bodaway begins to strip.

AIYANA

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

Aiyana turns her back to them with arms folded, Go on.

BODAWAY

"If a woman wants to be a legend, she should just go ahead and be one." Miss Calamity Jane.

Redbear and Bass side-glance, shrug shoulders, then strip.

EXT. AIYANA'S NEARBY RIVER - LATER THAT DAY

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

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

REDBEAR

Draw.

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

REDBEAR

Again.

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

REDBEAR

Watch.

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

REDBEAR

Let your thumb, help your hand.

Bass tries several times with thumb out. It works.

REDBEAR

Drop same side hip you draw from.

Bass tries it several times, he likes it.

BASS
Brings your whole body into play.

REDBEAR
Plus a moving target, be harder to
hit.

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

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

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

BASS
Wind shift.

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

REDBEAR
Not about who's first, it's about
who's last --standin'. Lesson One,
always fire two for effect. Gets
them to thinkin', then --
(*inhales slow, exhales*)
breathe, and let go of all feelin'.
(squints one eye)
Then do a come-to-Jesus serious one-
eyed stare. And above all, take
your time aimin'.

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

BASS
How, how, how ...?

REDBEAR
Might wanna fix that.

BASS
No, I meant --?

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

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

REDBEAR

Always take your spents, cheaper to reload.

BODAWAY

I want to learn.

REDBEAR

Someday, but not today.

(Indian for "home")

Welù.

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

REDBEAR

Your ma's quite an interestin' human being.

BODAWAY

Noticed that, did ya'?

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

INT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

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

AIYANA

Better.

BASS

Best!

Bass licks his plate. Redbear's hand makes him put it down then Redbear uses two fingers to wipe his own plate clean then sucks his fingers one-by-one.

REDBEAR

Finger lickin' is one thing, son, but always mind your manners around a lady.

(to Aiyana)

I will admit, ma'am, you're a mighty fine cook.

AIYANA

Don't turn blue complimentin' me.

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

BODAWAY

Redbear teach me to shoot.

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

AIYANA

No! Dumb-bear, not.

REDBEAR

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

BODAWAY

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

The Three look at Bodaway.

BODAWAY

What? I read?

REDBEAR

Write and cipher, too?

AIYANA

Yes. I taught him. Why?

REDBEAR

Mind teachin' same to your wanna-be
Sheriff?

BASS

I don't have time to ...!

If looks could kill, Redbear just murdered Bass. Twice.

REDBEAR

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

(scoots chair back)

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

BODAWAY

Can I go?

AIYANA

No!

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

He, we, we are not welcome in town.

REDBEAR

Bass said you do all the townladies
sewin'?

AIYANA

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

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

Look to your own son.

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

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

BODAWAY

Why he so angry?

BASS

Personal.

EXT. AIYANA'S BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Redbear is angry-saddling Apple. Aiyana approaches regretful.

AIYANA

How he die?

Redbear knees Apple's belly who *Oofs* to tighten cinch strap.

REDBEAR

Alone.

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

AIYANA

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

Redbear spins grabbing her by the shoulders.

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

Then why do?

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

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

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

REDBEAR

There will always be bad men that
deserve a good bullet. Men who need
to die, so the rest of us can live.

AIYANA

(quotes Bible back)

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

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

REDBEAR

Romans, 6, 14.

(drops bible back in)

We gonna' do this all day?

AIYANA

How death happen?

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

Aiyana crouches concerned next to him.

REDBEAR

Doctor said our boy needed "dry air." But my Sheriff pay barely covered room and board. Wanted Poster came in, enough money to retire on, so I went out. Some bad bank robber named Charon. I got him, too. But by the time I got back with the money --.

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

REDBEAR

Grippe, gripped 'em both.

Redbear tries to stand. Aiyana holds his shoulder down quoting an Indian saying.

AIYANA

"The Healing Journey, is on the path back from your heart --

Aiyana touches Redbear's heart, then his head. He shudders.

AIYANA

to your head."

REDBEAR

Think a storm done covered mine's trail, long ago.

Redbear stands to retrieve gun-belt hanging over saddle-horn.

AIYANA

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

REDBEAR

Wherever I'm goin' --.

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

REDBEAR

I ain't goin' there, alone.

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

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

Like I said --where's mine?

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

REDBEAR

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

Aiyana turns her back to Redbear folding her arms.

AIYANA

He can go.

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

Bass and Bodaway exit the house with their mouths full.

REDBEAR

Saddle-up, we're all leavin'!

Bass walks to the barn chewing. Bodaway stands still.

REDBEAR

You growin' moss underfoot, boy?!

BODAWAY

(points to chest)

Me --come, too?

Aiyana turns back faking a smile at him and nods.

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

REDBEAR

Saddle the packhorse.

BODAWAY

What his name?

REDBEAR

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

Bodaway doesn't understand.

REDBEAR

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

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

AIYANA

Thank you.

Redbear points down to where they had been talking.

REDBEAR

Thank, you.

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

EXT. SANDPEED SHERIFF OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Why I gots to "check-in?"

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

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

BASS

Why the hell--?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

You win a cookie.

Redbear flips a gold coin to Bodaway.

REDBEAR

Go get yourself some sweet-bait.

Bodaway catches the coin, then bites it.

BODAWAY

What's that?

Bass jumps up and down little-boy excited.

BASS

I'll teach him!

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

REDBEAR

And get me some tooth-powder.

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

REDBEAR

And a horse-hair tooffer!

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

Redbear smiles at her covering his smile with one hand while tipping his hat with the other.

INT. SANDPEED BANK - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

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

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

BANK ROBBER TWO

We're makin' --a withdrawal!

BANK ROBBER ONE

Permanent-like.

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

MISS MINERVA

You're both --Brutes!

BANK ROBBER ONE

Oh yeah? Well, brute this --!

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

REDBEAR
(back to Robbers)
Shouldn't a' aughta' done that.

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

REDBEAR
Shouldn't a' aughta' done that
neither.

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

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

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

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

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

Redbear looks back at the surprised Bank Manager.

REDBEAR
Mounted Revolver?

Bank Manager nods wide-eyed. Redbear fans one hand sideways.

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

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

Redbear goes to help Miss Minerva stand.

REDBEAR
You okay, ma'am?

Miss Minerva nods disorientated. Redbear straightens her hat.

REDBEAR

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

Miss Minerva nods, *Uh-huh*.

REDBEAR

Good, tea with brandy should soothe
your delicate constitution.

Redbear goes behind the counter to help the Teller stand.

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

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

Bank Teller nods disoriented, then helps Miss Minerva exit.

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

Redbear picks up the Bank Robber's two guns off the floor.

REDBEAR

Mind if I keep these?

Bank Manager shakes head "No" animated. Redbear flips their
lariat up and off the safe to coil it over a shoulder.

REDBEAR

Might wanna' fix that.

Bank Manager jumps up to congratulate Redbear back-slapping.

BANK MANAGER

Of course, thank you! And your
reward money did come in!

REDBEAR

Just like that?

Bass runs in with his pistol drawn.

BASS

What happened?

BANK MANAGER

Your job, he did it!

REDBEAR

T'weren't his fault. I have a
penchant for bein' in the wrong
place at the right time.
Where's the boy?

BASS

In the sto'?

Redbear tosses a third gold coin to Bass.

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

Think I'd like to open an account.

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

REDBEAR

Put my reward money in it, please.

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

Bank Manager rubs his hands together, just like King Midas.

EXT. SANDPEED GENERAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

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

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

REDBEAR

Time you and I had, a serious
disagreement.

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

ARKANSAW
Should warn ya' --.

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

ARKANSAW
I fights dirty!

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

REDBEAR
I never warns --.

Redbear head-butts Arkansaw, then rolls him so he is on top.

REDBEAR
I fights dirtier!

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

BASS
That's enough, Redbear.

Redbear gets a second-wind punching Arkansaw crazed.

REDBEAR
If you ever touch that boy --!

Redbear pulls Arkansaw's bloody face up nose-to-nose.

REDBEAR
I, will, end, you.

Redbear punches Arkansaw whose face now looks like raw meat.

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

Bodaway runs over to grab Redbear's threatening arm.

BODAWAY
Stop!

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

REDBEAR

Sorry 'bout that, son. But never be
sorry for goin' mad-dog mean when
standin' up for someone who can't.

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

REDBEAR

Lesson Three, if you're gonna' put
a man down, put him down to stay.
(head-motions to Arkansaw)
Help Rackensack to the town's Doc,
then to the town's jail.

BASS

What's his charge?

REDBEAR

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

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

BASS

Don't leave home without 'em.

Crowd of Townspeople have formed.

Redbear puts his arm around Bodaway and announces.

REDBEAR

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

SANDPEED TOWNSPEOPLE

(agreement-fear)

Yes, Sir ...Absolutely ...Makes
sense ...Of course ...Wouldn't have
it any other way ...etc.

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

REDBEAR

Ever had rock candy?

Bodaway's face lights up. Redbear tilts his head looking at
him different. Redbear escorts Bodaway to the general store.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

INT. SANDPEED SALOON - CONTINUOUS

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

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

Bass, Redbear, and Bodaway, enter.

BARKEEP

He can't come in here!

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

BARKEEP

Oh?! Of course except when with you, Mister Redbear.

REDBEAR

Three sarsaparillas, please.

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

COWBOY ONE

Hear that, boys! Done got a teetotaler in the house!

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

REDBEAR

Never make fun of a' ugly person.
(snarls like a cave beast)
They got nothin' to lose.

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

REDBEAR

For our drinks. The rest, a round for the waddies!

Redbear back-slaps Cowboy One hard making him choke.

REDBEAR
How long you boys on the trail?

COWBOY TWO
Two month?

REDBEAR
Well, hell, son.

Redbear tosses a second coin to Barkeep who bites harder.

REDBEAR
Then you boys earned two rounds.

The Ten Cowboys *cheer*.

REDBEAR
What'd you bring in?

COWBOY THREE
Two hundred head a' steer.

REDBEAR
Any cow?

Ten Cowboys look at each other trying to remember.

COWBOY FOUR
Found a heifer stray last week?

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

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

BASS
Why'd you drag me way back here?

REDBEAR
Your job as Sheriff ...

BASS
Deputy.

REDBEAR
Put your non-shootin' hand flat on
the table.

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

BASS
What'd you do that for?!

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Till the election.

Bass put same hand back on the table. Redbear *hammers* it.

Too painful for Bass to cry out, he just sits open-mouthed.

REDBEAR

Gonna' win that election?

Bass nods putting his hurt hand under the other armpit.

REDBEAR

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

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

Bass stands.

REDBEAR

Where you goin'?

BASS

To do my job.

REDBEAR

Do it from here.

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

REDBEAR

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

Bass doesn't understand.

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

They wearin' guns?

Redbear squints to focus in the mirror at the Cowboys reflections.

BASS

Nope, took 'em off.

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

REDBEAR

Most important part of keeping the peace, is to know when to keep it. Less is more, so if you don't have to get involved --don't.

BODAWAY

You're smart.

REDBEAR

Trained.

BASS

I ain't.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

"Smallest?"

REDBEAR

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

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

BASS

Hold your glass up and touch it to others if a body wants to celebrate somethin'. Don't matter who.

Bodaway holds up his glass.

REDBEAR

Quickest way to stop a fire?

BODAWAY

Don't start one?

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

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

BODAWAY
This is good.

REDBEAR
(nods, then smiles)
Yes. Yes, it is.

Gunshot out in the street.

The Ten Cowboys exit on the run to investigate.

BODAWAY
This is a real interestin' town.

REDBEAR
Noticed that, huh?

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

EXT. SANDPEED SALOON - MOMENTS LATER

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

REDBEAR
Thought you locked him up?

BASS
Said he wouldn't do it again.

Redbear back-hand swings, but Bass was ducks. Redbear squats down to punch Bass in the nose who falls on his butt.

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

Bodaway nods reluctant.

REDBEAR
Promised your, ma, so I needs your
spoken word.

BODAWAY
I'll stay.

Redbear ruffles his hair.

REDBEAR
Good boy.

Bass goes to Arkansaw. Redbear follows, but at a distance.

Townspeople have gathered on boardwalks to watch.

ARKANSAW
Hold it right there, Deputy!

BASS
Sheriff.

ARKANSAW
Deputy till the election!

BASS
Till then, I need your gun.

ARKANSAW
Was a fair fight, I got witnesses!

BASS
Then they'll testify at your trial.

ARKANSAW
Ain't lettin' you put me in jail.

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

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

ARKANSAW
Ain't your concern, dead-bear!

Redbear pushes Bass in the back who starts walking again.

Redbear angles away pacing him.

ARKANSAW
I said butt out, ex-lawman!
(snort-laugh)
If'n you was one.

BASS
He was.

ARKANSAW
Why, 'cause he said so?

BASS
No, 'cause I know so.

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

BASS
Need your gun.

Arkansaw nods, then draws. Bass draws slower.

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

ARKANSAW
Again?!

Bass steps on Arkansaw's gun aiming his own.

BASS
You're under arrest.

ARKANSAW
Never get me there, copperhead.

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

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

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

TEN COWBOYS/TOWNSPEOPLE
Uuuuuuu --!

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

Redbear shakes his fist at Bass.

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

than a bullet.

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

REDBEAR

Broke your word! You walk back!

BODAWAY

Pain make one remember?

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

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

Wanna' run back?!

Bodaway runs to join them.

INT. AIYANA'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

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

AIYANA

Thank you for the milking calf.

REDBEAR

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

BODAWAY

"They" say, a lot.

AIYANA

How was your first visit to town?

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

BODAWAY

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

AIYANA

You were in a bar?!

REDBEAR

Now hold on, I can explain ...

BODAWAY

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

REDBEAR

Sas-parilla.

(to Aiyana)

See?

BODAWAY

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

AIYANA

There was shooting in the saloon?!

REDBEAR

Outside!

BODAWAY

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

AIYANA

And where were you during all this?

BODAWAY

Outside watching?

AIYANA

(glares at Redbear)

You, put my son in danger?!

REDBEAR

I put him --behind a dust barrel.

AIYANA

"Dust barrel?!"

Aiyana's face turns crimson. Redbear looks for escape route.

BODAWAY

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

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

AIYANA

You --made my son, walk home?

BODAWAY

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

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

REDBEAR

Steady on, there's a good ...

AIYANA

"Good" night.

REDBEAR

But I haven't finished my ...?

AIYANA

Yes, you have.

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

AIYANA

So you not forget.

Redbear stammers, then exits. He's heard tripping over something, then curse-mumbling, finally throwing something.

EXT. OUTSIDE AIYANA'S BARN - NEXT MORNING

Redbear finishes saddling Apple. Aiyana walks up.

AIYANA

When you come back?

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

Sorry I hurt your feelings.

REDBEAR

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

Redbear stands in both stirrups as a dust cloud approaches.

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

AIYANA

One horse. Rider hurt.

REDBEAR

Eagle eye, woman.

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

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

BASS

Escaped --.

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

Aiyana kneels to tend Bass.

Redbear dismounts and kneels with his canteen.

REDBEAR

Easy son, catch your wind.

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

BASS

*Arkansaw --two men --broke him out
--broke in bank --dragged safe out
--kept hop-skippin' --hurt folk.*

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

BASS

Has to bring 'em in --to justice.

Redbear *spins* the barrel of one revolver, then the other one.

REDBEAR

More justice in one lawman's
bullet, than any one law book.

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

BASS

Not that way, this way.

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

REDBEAR

No, way!

Bass rolls over to get up to his feet wobbly.

AIYANA

You not well enough to go alone.

BASS

Has to, not lookin' forward to.

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

BASS

Hold up your right hand.

REDBEAR

What? No!

BASS

Only way you're goin'.

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

BASS

Other right.

REDBEAR

Hurry up before I change my mind!
What little's left.

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Toss me the G.D. star, boy.

BASS

Swear.

REDBEAR

Just did.

Bass tosses badge to Redbear who catches to put in a pocket.

Redbear takes Bank Robber One's pistols and holster out of Apple's saddle-bag and hands to Aiyana with a folded letter.

REDBEAR

Sold the other rig. Money is in the paper pocket for schoolin' Bass. You can give these to your boy when you think he's ready. Bass'll teach him to use 'em right. I, I wrote some words, read 'em if you wants.

Redbear takes Bass's exhausted horse into the barn, then walks out with Bass's saddle now on packhorse. Redbear tightens cinch-strap looking to Bass who mounts packhorse.

REDBEAR

Got any idea where they'll hold up?

BASS

One or three.

Bass rides off.

Redbear starts to mount, but Aiyana pulls him down into her.

AIYANA

Come, back.

Their eyes lock, romance sparks fly, but can't react, as is the time. Redbear mounts and rides off, stops to look back.

Bodaway has now joined Aiyana and both look sad.

Redbear sits upright in his saddle like electrocuted.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. REDBEAR'S MONTAGE OF MEMORIES - YEARS AGO

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

RETURN TO.

EXT. ON THE PLAIN - LATER PRESENT DAY

Redbear and Bass trot towards mountains ahead.

REDBEAR

Where we headed?

BASS

Set of caves Aiyana told me about.

BASS

Quite a woman.

REDBEAR

Noticed that, huh?

Redbear opens his canteen for a drink.

BASS

She likes you.

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

REDBEAR

Did that on purpose.

BASS

(grins mischievous)

I think ...

Redbear reels his horse to a stop. Bass stops.

BASS

What's wrong?

REDBEAR

What you're doin'.

BASS

What I "doin'?"

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Such as --?

Redbear starts riding. Bass follows alongside.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Strat-a what-in?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Duck?

Redbear glares. Bass smiles.

BASS

Spur to that dry creek-bed ahead.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Strategy equals live?

REDBEAR

Yeah, if you're gonna' keep doin' this for a livin'.

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Don't matta' what I think or anyone else does. Only matters what you believe in yourself. Do you?

BASS

It do seem a might, overwhelmin'.

REDBEAR

How many fingers you got?

BASS

Ten?

REDBEAR

Toes?

BASS

Same.

REDBEAR

Altogether?

BASS

Twenty.

REDBEAR

Ears and eyes?

BASS

Two and two, so four.

REDBEAR

Mouth and nose?

BASS

One and one, makes two, so --
(slow-counts in head)
twenty-six?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Well, I'll be --.

REDBEAR

And you will be right off, 'lesson
something of yours gets shot off.
Only twenty-six letters in our
whole dang alphabet, so --.

BASS

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Mouth?

REDBEAR

What sound comes out it when you're
"stupified?"

BASS

Ahhh --?

REDBEAR

There's your first vowel "a." Only
its shorty sound.

BASS

Vow --?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Why?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

I gotta' learn fifty-two letter!

Redbear stops riding. Bass stops. They're closer to
mountains. Redbear lets Apple graze as he talks fatherly.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

"So" a short sound is like a short
man. Softer, gentler?

REDBEAR

Depends on the man, but yeah.

Redbear holds out a hand. Bass shakes.

BASS

Why we shakin'?

REDBEAR

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

Redbear starts to ride. Bass follows beside shaking his head.

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Yeah? So whatcha thinkin' on now?

BASS

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

"What, else?"

REDBEAR

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

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

REDBEAR

We all do it. Just most don't pay
attention that we be doin' it.

BASS

Great. What we doin'?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Can see more trees, bushes, uh --?

REDBEAR

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Good, that's called "full vision."
You're lookin' at one thing while
seein' another. When on the trail,
you wanna' be doin' that always.

Bass smiles like he discovered fire.

REDBEAR

Now, still starin' at that tree,
see anything flashin' anywheres?

BASS

Well, I'll be --.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

It be, we done.

BASS

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

Redbear spurs to a full gallop heading for the tree-line.

REDBEAR

NOW!

Rifle shots echo as rifle rounds ricochet off rocks around
them. Bass spurs packhorse harder to gallop after Redbear.

REDBEAR

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

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

EXT. MOUNTAIN'S EAGLE NEST - IMMEDIATELY

A large flat rock cliff juts out of the mountain's face as a
natural viewpoint.

Laying near its edge is BURNING CLOUD, Sioux, in fringed leather clothing, scanning the forest below with a .44 caliber Winchester *Yellowboy*.

Arkansaw walks up behind him.

ARKANSAW

Well?

BURNING CLOUD

Is for water.

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

BURNING CLOUD

(Indian for, *colored man*)

You not say hà-sapa friend of Redbear.

ARKANSAW

They both down there?

BURNING CLOUD

Up here soon I think.

ARKANSAW

Can't flush us out of our cave.

BURNING CLOUD

You not know Redbear. We should go.

ARKANSAW

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

BURNING CLOUD

(stands)

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

Burning Cloud turns to leave. Arkansaw draws.

ARKANSAW

You leaves, when I says.

BURNING CLOUD

(Indian warning)

Hoka Hey.

ARKANSAW

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

BURNING CLOUD

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

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

MESQUITE

Cuantos?

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

BURNING CLOUD

Two. One be Redbear.

Mexico Mesquite glares at Arkansaw mumbling in Spanish.

MESQUITE

Ay, caramba.

ARKANSAW

A bullet goes through his coat like
any other bear.

MESQUITE

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

ARKANSAW

Don't squat with your spurs on.
Get the safe open?

MESQUITE

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

ARKANSAW

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

REDBEAR (ECHOING)

'Preciate you boys waitin' for us!

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

EXT. NEAR BAD GUYS CAVE - SIMULTANEOUS

Redbear and Bass have tied their horses off below.

Redbear is using his machete to clear a way up through the undergrowth.

REDBEAR
Stratagizin'?

BASS
Might help, if I know how.

REDBEAR
They'd only still be here, if they
can't get the safe open. It's too
heavy to haul up this piedmont.
Ever see a cornered mountain lion?
'Cause they ain't goin' back quiet-
like, you know that.

BASS
Need Arkansaw alive to stand trial.

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

BASS
Promise you won't kill him.

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

Bass grabs Redbear's coat. Redbear spins with his machete.

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

Bass nods.

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

Bass goes off. Redbear grumbles building a starter-fire.

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

INT. BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

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

ARKANSAW

Reckon he gonna' smoke us out?

Burning Cloud and Mexico Mesquite look at each other.

BURNING CLOUD

Not try --do.

ARKANSAW

He'd have to get in close, to throw any in, that's when we ride out.

MESQUITE

Adiós, al dinero?

Arkansaw shakes his head angry.

ARKANSAW

Hell no! We surprise 'em, kill 'em, bury the bodies here with the safe, then come back with nitro to blow it. Meantime, we sell their horses for a grub-stake. Comprendais?

(no response)

You boys as timid as new-sheared sheep. Mount up, load up, 'cause we's havin' ourselves a walkdown.

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

EXT. NEARER BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

Redbear has a small fire going. Bass is using machete to cut saplings still with green leaves and hand them to Redbear.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Still need your word.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Still playing checkers?

Bass's smile turns upside down.

INT. BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

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

ARKANSAW

He be --?

Sound of tree-wood *splintering*.

BURNING CLOUD

He be.

The unmistakable sound of a cut-tree *cracking* loose, then a small tree falls across the mouth of their cave.

REDBEAR

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

No response. A burning bunch of brush is thrown in.

EXT. BAD GUYS CAVE OPENING - MOMENTS LATER

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

Redbear and Bass are on either side of the cave and whisper.

BASS

They got horses with 'em.

REDBEAR

Ya' think?

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

REDBEAR

Aim up, okay? Try not to shoot me.

BASS

You sure they gonna' try?

REDBEAR

Wouldn't you? At least yell out to make it sound legal for the judge.

BASS

Sheriff! Come out with your ...!

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

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

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

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

Redbear holsters rifle to grab his machete leaning nearby.

REDBEAR

Best think on it.

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

Redbear drops coat, hat, and machete in one shrug to follow.

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

BASS

Hands, Up!

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

TIME LAPSE:

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

END TIME LAPSE.

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

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

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

BASS

You have the right to remain --dead
silent.

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

BASS

Well now --all that were new.

EXT. FAR AWAY FROM BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

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

TIME LAPSE:

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

TIME LAPSE ENDS.

EXT. BOTTOM OF FALLS UNDERWATER - MOMENTS LATER

Water is churning making it hard to see. Redbear scans when Burning Cloud's knife slices his shoulder from behind. His blood clouds the water as he turns *firing*. His bullets leave tracer-wakes missing. Both guns *click* empty. Redbear sticks both guns under pants-belt and pulls his neck-knife.

Burning Cloud's knife cuts Redbear's other shoulder making him drop his neck-knife.

Redbear spins grabbing two-handed Burning Cloud's knife-wrist who tries to punch with his other fist, but can't underwater, then tries to thumb-gouge Redbear's eyes.

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

EXT. SURFACE OF FALLS WATER - CONTINUOUS

Redbear's bubbles carry his fierce war-cry up breaking the surface. Small animals scurry away. Birds fly out of trees.

EXT. BAD GUYS CAVE - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

BASS

Ain't we a sight?

REDBEAR

Pain --means we're alive.

Redbear sees Mesquite's bloody corpse.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Didn't have time to get particular.

Redbear walks past Bass dropping rifle-belt grabbing machete.

BASS

Where you goin'?

REDBEAR

To heat this up, then burn our wounds closed.

Bass looks at his bleeding shoulder, then passes out.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS - MUCH LATER SAME DAY

Business as usual as Townsfolk stroll.

Redbear and Bass, tired and dirty with dried blood on their shirts, ride in on Apple and packhorse. Bank's safe is tied between Burning Cloud and Mesquite's horses walking in tandem. Burning Cloud and Mesquite are tied over the saddles. Burning Cloud's horse has moss covering it wound.

Redbear tips his hat to Miss Minerva walking under a French parasol.

REDBEAR

Ma'am.

Miss Minerva turns to PASSERBY FEMALE.

MISS MINERVA

He's such a gentleman.

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

BANK MANAGER

And its money?

BASS

(nods to safe)

Might wanna' bolt that down.

REDBEAR

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

BANK MANAGER

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

REDBEAR

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

Redbear and Bass toss the safe's Two Horse's reins to Bank Manager. Redbear and Bass turn their mounts to the hotel.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Sure could go for a sarsaparilla.

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

BARKEEP

Sure earned it.

BASS

Make it two.

BARKEEP

Sure thing. I'll bring 'em over.

REDBEAR

Well ain't you the good Christian.

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

HOTEL OWNER

I'll tie up your mounts.
(hands out two keys)
You go on up to your rooms and get
doctored. I'll have hot water ready
when you come down. That'll be ...

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

BASS

He's payin'.

Bass takes his hand away to reveal Hotel Owner now *spitting*.

REDBEAR

Got a haircutter in town?

HOTEL OWNER

Best barber in a hundred mile.

REDBEAR

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

BASS

Done this before I take it?

Redbear *raspberries*.

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

BASS

I could get used to this.

REDBEAR

It passes.

INT. HOTEL'S DINING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

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

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

They are ignored by the other DINERS and sit themselves.

BASS

They forgets quick.

REDBEAR

That's what "they" pay you for.

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

Bodaway nods smiling at Bass who ruffles his hair.

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

AIYANA

I'll mend it tomorrow.

REDBEAR

Appreciate it, but all the same,
I'll buy a new one. This one --
has memories.

(points to Bass's shirt)

Might wanna' fix that.

BASS

Don't wanna' remember the pain?

REDBEAR

Don't wanna' relive the past. Best
to always be lookin' forward.

(horizontal-waves palm)

Keeps all your faculties focused in
the right direction.

BASS

Always a professional?

REDBEAR

We're still standin' ain't we?

BASS

"Can't fault your reasonin'."

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

BASS

Steak dinner, rare please.

(to Aiyana)

And for the lovely lady?

WAITRESS

(whispers to Redbear)

I'm not allowed to serve neither.

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

REDBEAR

TIFFIN!

Hotel Owner enters running.

REDBEAR

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

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

Redbear sits explaining to Bass.

REDBEAR

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

(to Aiyana)

How'd you know we were here?

Aiyana stares back, *Really?* Redbear nods, *Indian, Got it.*

BODAWAY

What happened to the bad man?

Outside in the street, Arkansaw yells.

ARKANSAW (O.S.)

REDBEAR! --We gots unfinished business!

Redbear goes to stand, but Bass stops him.

BASS

I'm, the Sheriff.

Bass exits. Redbear stares from Aiyana to Bodaway.

REDBEAR

Stay, here.

Redbear stands. Aiyana stands. Redbear glares.

BODAWAY

Mom, sit.

Aiyana stares, then sits. Redbear exits up the stairs.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS AT NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

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

Arkansaw stands centered up the street. Bass exits hotel.

ARKANSAW

You're personal, Redbear's business!

BASS

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

ARKANSAW

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

BASS

Told him to stay inside.

ARKANSAW

(still searching)
Since when he listen to you?

BASS
Since I graduated.

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

ARKANSAW
Fine, first you, then badbear
second.

Bass steps out into center of the street.

BASS
Doesn't have to be this way.

ARKANSAW
Sure it do.

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

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. SANDPEED ROOFTOP BEHIND ARKANSAW - MOMENTS AGO

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

WHITE CLOUD
Hà-sapa, die.

From behind, Redbear gives earlier Sioux warning call.

REDBEAR
Ah-ah.

White Cloud tenses, but does not turn.

WHITE CLOUD
Redbear?

Redbear steps out of the shadows.

REDBEAR
Ah-ah.

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

REDBEAR
I, killed your brother.

White Cloud tenses as he grips his rifle tighter.

REDBEAR

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

WHITE CLOUD

Now mine, no choice.

REDBEAR

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

Redbear slices the air with his palm horizontal again.

REDBEAR

Let enough --be enough.

WHITE CLOUD

Why you kill brother?

REDBEAR

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

WHITE CLOUD

But he was.

REDBEAR

Yes, and attacked me from behind,
twice.

Redbear tears his damaged sleeves at the shoulders turning
just enough to reveal his two now-burned scarred cuts.

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

WHITE CLOUD

Cuts are from behind as you say.

(nods)

You also say, he die well?

REDBEAR

By my knife, fighting till the end.

White Cloud slowly releases his rifle's hammer.

REDBEAR

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

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

WHITE CLOUD

Now we blood brother. We not spill
each other's blood. Not today.

REDBEAR

"Not --today."

Redbear nods grabbing White Cloud's shoulder with his free hand. White Cloud grabs Redbear's shoulder with his free hand. Redbear grimaces. White Cloud smiles, then grips shoulder harder. Redbear grimaces more. Both release.

WHITE CLOUD

We shall be so.

REDBEAR

(*wash-tey, good*)
Wa'ste. --"Shall we?"

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

RETURN TO.

EXT. SANDPEED STREETS - PRESENT NIGHT

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

ARKANSAW

Stop right there!

Bass keeps walking to him.

BASS

I'm not going to kill you.

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

BASS

You have to stand trial for your
crimes. It is --The Law.

ARKANSAW

You ain't no law man.

BASS

One way to find out.

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

BASS

Holster.

Arkansaw is confused. Bass holsters his gun while walking.

BASS

Let's do it again till you're sure.

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

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

ARKANSAW

Ow, #@\$%!

BASS

Holster.

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

BASS

You are going to jail. Your choice
--how much of you gets there.

Arkansaw draws again, but faster. Arkansaw's bullet cuts the side of Bass's leather gun-belt slicing through so it drops off (*true*), but not before Bass quick-draws and *fires*. His bullet hits Arkansaw in his shooting shoulder knocking his gun away. Bass covers Arkansaw never breaking stride.

BASS

Hands --Up!

Arkansaw raises his hands slightly because of his hurt arms.

BASS

On your knees, criminal.

Arkansaw threaten-grumbles as he gets on both knees.

ARKANSAW

No jail can hold me.

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

BASS

We'll see.

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

BASS

You can walk --yourself to jail.

Bass escorts Arkansaw to Sheriff's Office smiling.

BASS

And there ended the lesson.

EXT. SANDPEED ROOFTOP BEHIND ARKANSAW - MOMENTS LATER

Redbear and White Cloud watch all below.

WHITE CLOUD

White man prison?

REDBEAR

White man hang.

WHITE CLOUD

Wa'ste.

White Cloud holds up a splayed-finger hand.

WHITE CLOUD

Five --"good beef."

REDBEAR

(P-ksah-Pay, wise)

Pksape.

INT. HOTEL'S DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

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

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

AIYANA

Now --you buy new shirt.

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

REDBEAR

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

Waitress never takes her star-struck eyes off Bass.

WAITRESS

Anything for you, Sheriff Bass.

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

BODAWAY

Where bad man?

BASS

Takin' a dirt nap.

REDBEAR

I say you finally learned the last
lesson of Sheriffin'.

BASS/REDBEAR

"Till you gets 'em to jail!"

Bass and Redbear *laugh*, then high-five.

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

BODAWAY

Called a toasty, mom.

She raises an eyebrow, then her glass.

REDBEAR

To --Sheriffin'.

BASS/BODAWAY

"Sheriffin'."

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

AIYANA

What you do now?

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

What I do now?

REDBEAR

You'll ride in everyday and school
your Sheriff. We'll both be back
before the Circuit Judge arrives.

Waitress brings re-heated steaks. Redbear rubs his hands.

REDBEAR

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

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

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

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

"Honey?"

BODAWAY

Means he likes you, ma.

AIYANA

Just --"like?"

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

REDBEAR

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

Redbear throws her hands away to begin eating again.

REDBEAR

There. Satisfied?

Aiyana sits speechless. Bass *chuckles*.

BASS

I do believe --she's stupified.

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

BASS

Now what?

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

BASS

I's already --"satisfied."
(holsters gun)
Thankee for askin'.

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

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

REDBEAR

Aiyana?

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

What's stoppin' them?

REDBEAR

No sheriff.

Bass stops eating. He and Aiyana look up.

BASS

You applyin'?

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

REDBEAR

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

AIYANA

You --start over?

REDBEAR

We --start over. New town, new life.

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

REDBEAR (CONT'D)

Didn't see no school house there,
so you could be their teach, I
their Sheriff. You and the boy
would be treated well there. I'll
see to that. Better'n here.

AIYANA

You --treat us good?

REDBEAR

Been a long time since I felt agape
for, or from someone. Yes, I treat
you good.

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

AIYANA

Circle of Life.

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

REDBEAR

Never did get your last name?

AIYANA

Smythe.

BASS

Sheriff Smythe --was her husband.

Redbear is open-mouth speechless.

BASS

Now I believe --he's stupified.

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

REDBEAR

Don't go becomin' no newspaperman.
You're little slow, on spreadin'
the news.

BASS

Don't worry, after the election ...

REDBEAR

When you're Sheriff with Sheriff's
pay.

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

BASS

I'll probably get married.

REDBEAR

(sees Waitress's smile)

"Probably." Then what?

BASS

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

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

REDBEAR

Irrigation.

BODAWAY

Bless you.

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

REDBEAR

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

BASS

I could do both.

REDBEAR

Lotta' hard work.

BASS

Most thing are.

REDBEAR

Heard a preacher pulpit once, "God
moves in mysterious ways."

(pats Aiyana's hand)

There's mystery, then there's darn
right stupifyin'.

BODAWAY

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

The Other Three are shocked open-mouthed silent.

EXT. SANDPEED OUTSKIRTS NEAR REDBEAR'S TREE - IMMEDIATELY

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

REDBEAR (V.O.)

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

BASS (V.O.)

I wrote the first police training manual titled, "Hands Up."

AIYANA (V.O.)

Bass's great-great grandson became the first African-American United States Federal Judge.

BODAWAY (V.O.)

Marshal Reeve's exploits became the basis for the hit television series, "The Lone Ranger."

COYOTE *howls* at its full moon followed by the fourth movement from the *William Tell Overture* with announcement from the T.V. Show's original "The Lone Ranger."

ORIGINAL ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

"A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust, and a hearty Hi-O Silver!"

Overture continues.

FADE OUT.