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How the West Was Won

By James R. Webb

This land has a name today
and is marked on maps.
But the names and the marks and the land
all had to be won.
Won from nature and from primitive man.
Five generations ago,
a mere 125 years back...
... this land was known
only as the West.
Known only to a handful of white men...
... lonely trappers wandering its vastness
in search of beaver.
They were known as mountain men,
a new breed.
Men like Jim Bridger,
Franchre and Sublette, Linus Rawlings.
More Indian than the Indians
in all but blood.
They held to no law but their own...
... drifted free as the clouds,
settled nowhere, kept forever on the move.
Their mocassined feet and unshod horses
leaving no trace on the land.
Like the Indians,
with whom they were at peace...
... they wanted nothing beyond
what they found, and little of that.
The mountains, the forests,
the harsh country...
... were as unchanging to them
as the stars...
... and just as unyielding.
Far behind the mountains,
beyond the rolling plains...
... they had left the people of the East,
people who were restless in another way.
The kind who'd look at a mountain
and see a watershed...
... look at a forest
and see lumber for houses...
... look at a stony field and see a farm.
Their faces and their instincts
had been turned to the West...
... ever since Plymouth Rock

and Jamestown.
The trapper's road was the trail
of a wolf or the bend of a canyon.
But for whole families
chaffing to follow the sun...
... there had to be broader ways.
There were no roads into the wilderness,
only rivers.
And they flowed in the wrong direction:
North or south.
Or else they stopped at the Alleghenies.
Until one day, a new river took source
in the mind of a man named DeWitt Clinton.
He conceived of a river
that would go west.
And in the way Americans have
of acting out their dreams, it came to be.
The Erie Canal left the Hudson
above Albany...
... and carried clear across
to the Great Lakes.
People who yearned for virgin land
and a new life...
... now had a highway to take them.
And they moved along.
Pride of Utica now loading!
All aboard for the Pride of Utica!
The Ramsey family, Peter Smith...
...the Skoga family!
All eight of them!
All aboard for the Pride of Utica!
Is the laddie's health
the reason you're heading west?
Partly.
Only partly.
Mostly our trouble East was rocks.
I had me a farm where some years
I'd raise 100 bushels of rocks to the acre.
Zebulon, you hadn't
ought to lie to the man like that.
Wife, I'm a God-fearing soul,
and I tell the truth as I see it.
Now, I never used a plow.
I'd blast out the furrows with gunpowder.

And then one morning,
I hauled the bucket up out of the well...
...and so help me,
the bucket was full of rocks.
Rocks.
I just stood there right still
trying not to blaspheme.
I said to myself,
"You've got a son that's ailing...
...you've got a daughter
what won't take to herself a husband."
- There she sits there, mooning as usual.
- Pa.
You've got another who don't seem
quite right in the head.
Lilith?
Yes, Pa?
Now, I'll remind you, sir.
I'm still standing there
holding a bucket full of rocks...
...and staring into a bleak old age.
So I made me a vow
right then and there. I said:
"If I can find a man with \$500
who likes rocks...
...then there's gonna be another fool
owning this farm."
Well, sir, the Lord provided such a man...
...and here I am.
He ain't told you one word of truth,
Mr. Harvey.
We had the best farm in the township.
Yeah, Rockville Township it was.
Stone County.
Oh, it was not.
It was his itching foot
that brought us here.
Heaven knows where we'll end up.
Oh, these are my laddies.
Angus, Brutus and Colin.
- How do you do?
- Hello.
I think they're already acquainted
with your daughters.

- Be they single?

- Aye, single so far.

Well, this Illinois country's beginning
to sound better to me.

Lilith?

Lilith, here. Strike up a little tune
for these handsome lads.

- Oh, I ain't in no mood, Pa.

- Lilith, there's a time for coaxing...

...this ain't the time.

All right.

All right.

A captain bold in Halifax
Who lived in country quarters
Betrayed a maid who hanged herself
One morning in her garters...

Lilith.

Now, you know better
than to sing a song like that.

- What ones do you know?

- We know "Yankee Doodle."

- "Yankee Doodle"?

- Their mother's dead.

They haven't had much learning
in the social graces.

All right, give them
"A Home in the Meadow."

Eve, come on, you too.

That's it.

Come on, join in.

That's it.

Come on.

Stop.

Loading for the Flying Arrow!

All aboard for the Flying Arrow!

- The Prescott family!

- Here we be. Come on.

Alec Harvey and three sons!

Jeffrey Rose and family!

But the canal was only the first step
toward the promised land.

The next steps were longer and harder.

Those who could raise the fare
went by steamboat to the end of the line.

Others found a cheaper way
to head for Ohio, Illinois...
... and the open spaces beyond.
Lilith. Lilith, listen to this:
"Theirs was a poignant parting
in the forest.
The handsome young backwoodsman
carved two hearts on a tree trunk...
...then from ten paces, hurled a knife
at the junction of the two hearts."
Junction. What's that?
Well, that's where the two hearts meet.

Now, listen:

"His marksmanship was uncanny.
Three times he hurled the knife on target.
'That was for luck,, he said the first time.
'That was for love. Deep, divine love"
he said the second.
And the third time, 'That was a prayer,
a plea for love undying."'
Isn't that beautiful?
I reckon. If anybody ever talks like that.
Well, it's the sentiments, not the talk.
There ain't no sense to you, Eve.
You wanna to be a farm wife,
but you don't wanna marry a farmer.
Neither do you.
Of course not.
I don't wanna have
nothing to do with farms.
I want silk dresses and fine carriages
and a man to smell good.
What I want's back East, not West.
But I'll get there yet. You watch.
You don't know what you want yet.
It's the man that counts,
not where he lives.
- Ready, now?
Ready.
Daddy, Daddy, something coming upriver.
Hostile Indians, I suspect.
- Could it be river pirates, Zebulon?
- Don't know.

They say no honest man
travels this river at night.
I can only see one man, Pa.
I hear that's a favorite pirate trick.
They hide in the bottom of the boat...
...till they're ready to jump you.
- Get my gun, Colin.
- All right, Pa.
Just come in slow and easy, stranger.
And keep your hands
where we can see them.
Name's Linus Rawlings.
I'm hungrier than sin
and real peaceful like.
- What have you got in the craft?
- Beaver pelts.
I said beaver pelts.
I never had a chance to see a beaver pelt,
Mr. Rawlings.
Well, in that case, ma'am,
I'll show you one.
There you are.
That's real soft.
It's a fine pelt, ma'am.
Now, my apologies, sir.
- We was afeared you might be a pirate.
- I ain't no pirate.
Come on, let's have supper
and get acquainted.
No, no, no. That's yours.
Keep that, ma'am.
Well, you sure set your cap in a hurry.
Is he the backwoodsman
you've been waiting for?
More than likely he's got
a wife and six kids waiting for him.
Thank you, ma'am, that was right tasty.
You've only had four plates.
I was beginning to think you didn't like it.
Well, it don't pay to eat too much
on an empty stomach, ma'am.
How come you're to be traveling
so late at night?
Well, I'm kind of anxious

to get to Pittsburgh.
I ain't seen a city for a long time.
I aim to whoop it up a little.
Well, now, we've never seen
a mountain man before.
Tell me, them Rocky Mountains
as high as they say?
Well, now, I just don't rightly know.
I never climbed one. I've...
Uh...
Well, you know,
that just ain't exactly true.
Jim Bridger and me...
...we started up one of them little-bitty
Rocky Mountain foothills, you know.
And then, one day, we see this fella...
...and he has a great big pair
of white wings...
...and a harp in his hand.
And I said to Jim...
...I said, "Jim, I don't like the way
that fella's looking at us."
And Jim said he didn't care too much
for it neither...
...so we both skedaddled down
out of there...
...and to this day I ain't never had
a good look at the Rocky Mountains.
- Well, I remember one time...
- Zebulon.
- What?
- One liar at a time is enough.
Well, then, I reckon it's about bedtime.
Gotta get an early start in the morning.
We'll be expecting you for breakfast.
Oh, well, that's mighty hospitable,
Mr. Prescott...
...but sometimes I wake up
and get the urge to move.
I might be long gone by sunup,
but thank you.
- I wanna thank all of you. Good night.
- Good night.
- Strange fellas, these mountain men.

- Yeah, kind of like a wisp of smoke.
- By golly, that looks like my blanket.
- It is.

Well, then, I'm a mite confused, ma'am.
Whose bed would it be?

Yours.

I ain't ever saw a bed like that
since last time I come east.

Why'd you do it?

Ain't polite to ask a girl
why she done something for a man.

No. Well, I reckon my manners
ain't much at that.

Anyway, I sure thank you.

Good night, ma'am.

Are them Indian girls pretty?

Well, now, I reckon that all depends
on just how long a man has gone...

...without seeing one.

How long's it been

since you seen a white girl?

I ain't quite sure why you asked that.

How pretty do I look to you?

But, ma'am...

...ain't you just being a little bit forward?

Well, you're headed upriver
and I'm headed down.

There's no time

to get these questions answered.

You dead sure you want them answered?

Yes.

Glory be.

Ma'am, it seems like
you've been kissed before.

I've never been kissed permanent before.

By golly, you sure use surprising words.

I never heard "permanent" mixed up
with a thing like a kiss before.

I can still feel that kiss.

- Can you?

- Well, you said something before...

...that we had not forget:

I'm heading upstream

and you're headed downstream.

Lovers have parted before
and come together again.

- Ma'am.

- Eve.

Eve, I'm a sinful man.

Deep, dark, sinful.

I'm on my way to Pittsburgh
to be sinful again.

Likely I'll stay drunk for a month.

I won't even remember

the fancy gals I dally with...

...or the men I carve up

just out of pure cussedness...

...any more than I'll remember you.

Linus, I'm asking you.

Can you still feel that kiss?

Eve...

Eve, you make me feel like a man
standing on a narrow ledge...

...coming face-to-face with a grizzly bear.

There just ain't no ignoring the situation.

Eve!

Eve!

- Eve! Where is she?

- Zeb, what's the matter?

Anyways, you're here.

I thought you'd gone with him.

- Gone?

- Yes, gone.

I knowed you were setting with him...

...but I kept telling myself,

"At least she's looking at a man."

Even a wisp of smoke like that
is better than...

Are you crying? Crying for him?

Now, what does that mean?

Now, tell me what that means.

Nothing, Pa.

What time did you come to bed?

It was early, Pa.

It wasn't. It was late.

Daughter, I'm only gonna ask you once.

Is there anything for your ma and pa
to worry about?

No, Pa, there ain't.
He'll be back.
I'll see him again.
But you expected to see him this morning.
You know you did.
I don't care. I'll see him again.
Look.
- You got a growed man to do that?
- I did. Just like in the book.
Did you get him to say them crazy words?
I told you before, it ain't the words,
it's the sentiment.
You mean, he didn't even giggle nor nothing
at such foolishness?
He said it was a real solemn occasion.
Like shooting the rapids without a paddle.
No matter what he said, he did it just
to get rid of you so as he could clear out.
You know that's so.
And you're lucky he did. Do you wanna
live like a squaw all your life?
Go on, say anything you like...
...but I'll see him again. I know I will.
And he ain't got a wife and six kids.
He ain't got a wife at all yet.
Hey, Pierre!
Someone's coming upriver.
Customer.
Trapper, seems like.
See how that cover bellies up?
Could be furs.
Thirsty, mister?
Drier than a grasshopper on a hot griddle.
Well, welcome to our little inn, sir.
My name is Jeb Hawkins,
late colonel of the Alabama militia.
- Where you bound for?
- Pittsburgh.
Pittsburgh? Well.
Looks like he's got
a whole canoe of furs, Pop.
- Sure enough mountain man.
- Indeed.
One of our explorers gonna extend

our domain to the far shores of the Pacific.

Well, nothing but the finest for you, sir.

Whiskey?

- Right.

- No pepper or rattlesnake heads in this.

Nothing but the pure grain

and the sweet kiss of the malt.

- Never mind the cup, I'll just take the jug.

- Oh, a real mountain man, huh?

- I trust you'll toast our noble banner, sir.

- Sure will.

Golly, you're right.

That's real sipping liquor.

Pa, him being a trapper, you suppose he might know what that varmint is we got?

Well, say, now, he might.

Yes, sir, he just might.

Sir, we caught us

a cave-dwelling critter...

...that no man in these parts

has seen before.

You know, it'd be right satisfying to having you tell us what it is.

Well, I don't know too much about cave-dwelling varmints.

Just yonder. Take your jug.

Well, I...

I don't know.

WOIt's right over here.

You know any sweet-talking gals in Pittsburgh?

No, no. Nary a one, yet.

Well, Pop and I are hoping we'll vacation there.

I'll be at the Duquesne House if it ain't burned down.

Hey, there, now, you pretty girl, you sure you got a varmint in here?

Now, you...

WODO you hear him?

Huh?

WOHe breathes loud and fierce.

- We keep him in this hole just yonder.

You keep him in there?

You gotta look a little closer.
Well, he seen the varmint, Pa.
- Well done, daughter.
- I ain't so sure.
He was hard muscled. I could feel
the blade just skitter along his ribs.
Oh, you just need more practice,
that's all.
It's a pity you ain't got the knack
your ma had.
Lord rest her soul.
All right, men, lay it on, men.
Come on, come on.
We got more fish to fry.
Down to the island.
Tell Pa them settlers, rafts are coming.
Can't I have this toilet water, Pa?
- Genuine Parisian accent, it says.
- How much is it?
It's only 15 cents.
Fifteen cents? Put it back.
You're right, sir. Absolutely right.
You save the pennies and dollars will grow.
Likely you've growed many a dollar.
Mr. Bedloe, all my life I've been striving
to avoid becoming a millionaire.
I think I've succeeded right well.
I've got a little put away in the sock.
It'll stay there.
Well, now, them's my sentiments exactly.
Now, you, sir.
You look like a man of property.
Now, if I was to bet, I'd say
you was worth, say, a thousand dollars.
- Pretty close to the mark?
- Well, close, maybe.
Colin, how much powder we got left?
- Don't be afraid, now, don't be afraid.
Now, there's women and children here.
You gents wouldn't want us to have
to start shooting, now, would you?
Be of good cheer, folks.
It's in our noble tradition
that we conquer the wilderness...

...with nothing but our bare hands
and stout hearts.
You can build new rafts and sally forth
in the spirit of your forefathers.
Why, you pious old scoundrel.
I'll see you burn.
Americans can't be whipped.
It's him.
I knew he'd come back. It's him.
Now let us pray.
O Lord...
...we thank thee for our salvation.
We commit the souls of our dead
to thy gentle keeping.
We pray for a speedy recovery
of our wounded.
And now another matter.
O Lord...
...without consulting with thee...
...we have sent thy way some souls
whose evil ways passeth all understanding.
We ask thee humbly to receive them.
Whether you want them or not.
Amen.
Now, it'll be a job...
...but I guess I can patch her up
good enough to get to Pittsburgh.
- Linus.
- Now, Eve...
...let's just not talk any more about it.
Linus, I'm telling you,
you don't know your own mind.
Well, maybe so, maybe not.
You know, I ain't saying
that you haven't been on my mind some.
I ain't saying that.
But I still went to see the varmint
with that pirate girl.
I'll always be
going to see the varmint, Eve.
I just ain't cut out
to be a farmer or a husband.
Linus, I ain't never bringing up
the subject again...

...whether ever I see you or not.
No, it's for the best.
I wish you Godspeed, Eve.
And I ain't said that to anybody
for a long time.
I can see rapids ahead, Pa. White water.
Look. Look.
Oh, we must've taken the wrong fork.
Let's beach her on this side.
Harvey!
Rapids!
Rapids ahead! Beach her!
Beach her!
Hold her steady.
Rein!
Pa, we're in the current!
Get inside, Zeke.
No, I don't wanna.
Straighten her, Pa.
Lilith!
Hold it steady!
I can't!
Go on. Go on to help Pa.
I'll get it.
Lilith! Lilith!
Lie down!
Lie down!
What happened?
They took the wrong fork of the river
and they went over the falls.
Did you happen to hear
the name of the family?
Uh... Prescott, I think.
Something like that.
As soon as they're buried decent...
...I'm heading back East
on the first boat that comes along.
And if you were in your right mind,
you would too.
Oh, Linus.
Would you walk with me a piece, Eve?
Eve, I...
Eve, all the time I was paddling down here
I was thinking...

...if I found you alive, I'd...
Would you come
to Pittsburgh with me, Eve?
Oh, Linus.
I'm staying right here.
I ain't moving a foot
one way or the other.
Now, would you explain that a little?
Ma and Pa,
they wanted a farm in the West...
...and this is as far as they got.
Seems to me this is where the Lord
wanted the farm to be.
But your brother, Sam, he's bad hurt,
and winter's coming...
There's no sense talking about it.
I'm gonna do it.
Eve, you just ain't making much sense.
Well, half the people that come West
don't make much sense, I reckon.
All right.
All right.
By golly, you're a strong-minded woman.
I reckon I seen that varmint
for the last time.
The westward course was no smoother
than that of true love.
Not only the hard hand of nature
was against it, but the impediment of war.
Trouble over land
smoldered along the Mexican border.
Not all Americans were for war, including
Congressman Abe Lincoln of Illinois.
But a war did break out,
and in the end...
... vast new territories came into the Union
along with their rich Spanish names:
Rio Grande, Santa Fe,
Albuquerque, El Paso.
And most glittering of all, California...
... named after a mythical island
of pearls and gold in a 15th-century novel.
Here, in 1848...
... at Sutter's Mill, a man found something

he wasn't even looking for...
... at the bottom of a ditch.
And the cry of his discovery was heard
clear across the continent...
... in Boston, New York, Savannah...
... and across the oceans
in London, Paris, Berlin.
But nowhere was the clamor of gold
heard more eagerly than in St. Louis...
... the busiest fur-trading center
in the world...
... and the noisiest, bawdiest,
most uppity town west of New York.
I say there's no more than three.
- Six.
- Six?
It's that lace that fooled you. I say three.
Watch him. I hear Cleve's an expert on
petticoats. Anyway, you can never prove it.
We're going to be late
for that poker game.
Look, I've just stuck you
for the most expensive dinner in St. Louis.
I don't mind sticking you a bit deeper.
I'll lay you a hundred it's no less than six.
- How will you prove it?
- Go backstage and find out.
- If I go back and check with you.
- Fair enough.
Second girl.
- Miss Prescott? Miss Prescott?
- Later.
It's rather important.
It's always important.
The older they are,
the more important it gets.
Miss Prescott, please.
I am Hylan Seabury...
...attorney in the matter
of Jonathan Brooks.
He means nothing to you?
That old goat?
Well, you must've meant
something to him, Miss Prescott.

- Why?
- You're included in his will.
Of course, you have to make the trip
to California to claim the bequest.
Well, now, I wouldn't go to California...
...if John Jacob Astor left me
San Francisco.
I don't think Mr. Astor
had holdings there, no.
However, the yield from
Mr. Brooks, property is not to be scorned.
- Yield of what?
- Gold, Miss Prescott. Gold.
- Gold?
- Precisely.
You own a gold mine, Miss Prescott.
It yielded \$3500 the very first week.
Gold mine?
Well. Well, I...
That sweet old goat.
For heavens...
Well.
This is an unexpected pleasure.
- Where's the money?
- Money?
Money?
Oh, yes. You're referring, of course,
to our little agreement.
One hundred to start you off...
...and my share of the winnings.
Well, I'm somewhat embarrassed to report
that the hundred no longer exists.
That \$100, I assure you...
...will turn out to be the best investment
you have ever made.
I have plans, gentlemen...
...beyond your wildest dreams.
I'm gonna earn you
a piece of a gold mine.
Gold mine.
You ain't gonna earn nothing.
You ain't gonna be nothing,
you ain't gonna do nothing...
...unless we get that 100 back

by the morning.

Grimes, you don't mean that.

- You're gonna kill off the golden goose.

- Call it what you want, mister.

We'll be waiting.

Independence, Missouri, was the jump-off point for emigrants from everywhere.

Solid, God-fearing families bound for the farmlands of Oregon...

... and get-rich-quick adventurers racing for the gold of California.

Try it.

- You got a wagon, I suppose?

- I can get one.

And a team to pull it?

I can get everything I need.

- You got a husband?

- I'm single, Mr. Morgan.

No traveling companion?

- No, I'm traveling alone.

- Not on my wagon train.

Alone and single brings out the deviltry in a man.

Gets them all worked up and they're wild enough already.

I intend to keep to myself, Mr. Morgan.

Oh, woman of your sort?

One day you'd find yourself in trouble, and there'd be hell to pay just figuring out who.

What did you say, Mr. Morgan?

Well, now, ain't you the feisty one.

I like spirit in a woman.

Hey, you got a pretty face under that powder too.

And a fine, sturdy body under them clothes, I wager.

There's a woman named Clegg, Aggie Clegg.

Why don't you go see her?

Thanks.

I told you, no.

I was hoping to make this trip with a husband.

Nearly got one last week.

Look, I hear there's 40 men
to every woman in California.
- Miss Clegg, I'd be willing to pay you.
- I don't need money.
I need a man.
Any man.
Morning, ladies.
Beautiful morning.
Would you, by any chance,
happen to be Miss Lily Prescott?
Not unless you got a big imagination.
Then you must be the lady in question.
Cleve Van Valen, Miss Prescott,
at your service.
At your every command
from here to California.
Well, thank you.
But whatever you're offering,
I don't need.
Perhaps you don't understand.
Yes, I do.
I know a tinhorn when I see one.
Miss Prescott.
I'm offering you an honest day's work
for an honest day's pay.
Goodbye, Mr. Van Valen. Goodbye.
Well, it's been a pleasure to meet you,
Miss Clegg.
May I say I have never seen a woman
with more beautiful hair.
What a prize catch it'll make...
...hanging from the waist of an Indian.
Beauty alone in the wilderness,
and who's to protect you?
No one.
Not one person
won't be looking after himself.
Well...
Good day, ladies. Good day.
Nobody ever said that to me before.
What?
That I had such... Such beautiful hair.
You know something?
I got a hunch you're gonna draw men

like fish to the bait.
Maybe I can catch one of them
while they swim by.
You got yourself a partner.
Thank you.
How's it, men?
It's all clear through here. Look for
a little mudhole up through the next pocket.
How far?
Oh, maybe half a quarter.
Well, thanks.
Looks a little higher up on that ridge.
There's a water hole up there
about half a mile. Let's head for it.
Water hole about a half a mile ahead.
Hey, you're driving.
I was raised on a farm.
Water hole about a half a mile ahead.
Hey, Aggie?
- Can you use these?
Yeah, sure.
Thanks.
Ladies.
At your service.
I thought we'd gotten rid of you.
Well, I just couldn't bear to think of
you two making this trip without my help.
If I was to hear later on that something
happened to you, I'd never forgive myself.
You came 100 miles alone?
Well, I had no way of counting the miles,
Mr. Morgan, but I'll take your word for it.
Well, you've got another 100, mister.
Going back.
I told you, when a wagon breaks down,
I want men who can fix it...
...not bet how long it'll take.
You don't mean you'll turn me out?
Pass me adrift at the mercy
of savage Indians?
If you don't get moving,
I'll cast you adrift...
Uh-uh-uh.
I appeal to your sporting instinct, sir.

I'm prepared to wager you
that I stay with this train.
- Well, you got a wager.
- Wait a minute, wait a minute.
The fact is, I hired this man.
We'll put up his stake.
Is that right, Miss Prescott?
If Miss Clegg says so.
Ma'am...
...I'll be forever grateful.
Now, I'll unpack my gear.
Agatha, have you gone crazy?
He says he's a man
wanting to do an honest day's work.
And he'll do it. I can promise you that.
Hey, you men on that last wagon,
keep up that slack.
Keep it up.
Get that team moving.
Keep them moving there.
Don't let those lines sag.
Keep them up. Keep them up.
Keep those teams moving.
Keep them moving.
Don't let those lines sag.
You, on that middle team,
keep them moving.
Get in there.
Over here, Pa.
Get in there.
Get in there. Get in there, mule.
I'm just overwhelmed by all this attention,
Miss Prescott.
I want to confess...
...I have lied about
why I wanted to work for you.
I know.
The real reason is, of course,
that I'm in love with you.
No.
It's the truth.
From the first moment I saw you,
I've known that I couldn't live without you.
Well, I'd hate to be the cause

of your death, Mr. Van Valen.
I don't speak lightly, Miss Prescott.
I'm prepared to assume
the responsibilities of a faithful husband.
Oh, and are you ready to assume
the responsibilities...
...of my property too, Mr. Van Valen?
Really?
What kind of property?
Gold, Mr. Van Valen.
Gold by the ton, from what I understand.
Bright, yellow, shiny gold.
Why, I had no idea.
- I'm sure you hadn't.
- Miss Prescott, I really mean...
Here comes Agatha.
If you must propose to somebody...
...I suggest you get on your knees to her.
Besides, she has beautiful hair.
Look at them.
Think they was getting ready
to bury somebody.
Ain't we worn down enough as it is?
Well, let's wake them up.
Listen, everybody.
That's the spirit! That's the way to feel!
Oh, hiya, Mr. Morgan!
Aggie. For lunch.
Thanks. Nice nest of fish.
What is it, Mr. Morgan?
Miss Prescott, I've been thinking.
Oh?
Wet or dry, you're the handsomest woman
I ever did see.
Spirit and a fine, sturdy body.
It's a noble combination, Miss Prescott.
Why, for you, childbearing would
come as easy as rolling off a log.
Well, I think I'd rather roll off a log,
Mr. Morgan.
Ma'am, I'm telling you,
you got the build for it.
I want you for my wife.
I've got a cattle ranch

just below the Merced.
I'll be settling down there, fit and proper.
I'm sure you're very fit and proper,
Mr. Morgan.
Well, then...
...you just couldn't do no better
than marrying me.
Why, we'd have ourselves a fine family
in no time at all.
I believe that.
I'm sorry, Mr. Morgan...
...but I can't accept your proposal.
Why not?
Well, a woman likes to hear something
a little more inviting.
Well, ain't that what I've been doing?
Inviting you?
Inviting you to share my life,
Miss Prescott.
I'm sorry, Mr. Morgan.
It's something else, ain't it?
Must be something else nagging at you.
Well...
...I don't aim to let it stop me,
Miss Prescott.
You can count on that.
What did he want?
Children.
Children?
Well, I'll be...
Why didn't he come shopping
at the right store?
- I'll take a look.
- Well.
Now, gentlemen, are we pikers?
I'm gonna see
and I'm gonna raise this fine pistol...
...London-made and loaded for bear.
I'll take part of that bet.
I told you I wouldn't stand
for you fleecing any...
Cheyennes.
There's too many to fight.
We'll have to run for it.

You can't outrun them with wagons.

The minute you get moving,

cut your teams loose.

- Have you gone crazy?

- Go on, get moving.

Chances are they want our stock

more than us.

Now, you're a gambler, ain't you?

All right, let's get moving.

Keep them closed up there.

I don't know how to unhook them.

Cleve, watch out!

Cleve!

Joe, pick me up.

We'll be moving at daybreak.

I'll take a few men,

see if we can find him.

Give him a decent, Christian burial.

Someone's coming! Someone's coming!

Well, I can let you have this rig for a dollar

a day, and I'll give you a good team.

- Pick it up in the morning.

- That'll be fine.

Could you tell me the way

to the Brooks claim?

Well, the claims are down by the river.

- Which road should I take?

- Only one road. Along the river.

- Thank you.

- Sure welcome.

We're looking for a Mr. Huggins.

You found him.

This is Miss Lilith Prescott.

I figured.

They told me you was a real looker.

Yup. It's all here for you.

Just the way Mr. Brooks staked it out.

Must've had 20 men working on it.

Well, where are they now?

Who's digging the gold?

Gold? I ain't never seen a better grade

since I come here with Millie.

It was just a pocket, though.

The whole shebang, nothing but a pocket.

Oh, we cleared 4200
before it played out.
Now, about that 4200...
Mr. Brooks, he spent three
before his heart give out.
I put up 600 for a brass-handled casket.
I figure the rest you owe me
for sitting on your claim.
Oh, miss, I mean, that's only fair, ain't it?
I mean, wouldn't you...?
Funny pair, all right.
How about you boys?
Come and see the brand-new attraction.
It's exciting and sensational.
Step right in, gentlemen.
Miss Prescott?
Hello, Mr. Morgan.
I'd invite you in, but it's a little cramped.
This is no life for a fine woman like you.
I heard your mine was played out.
But where's your fancy friend?
Cleve?
Last I heard, he was in Hangtown.
You mean that no-good went off
and left you?
He went off and left me.
But I don't agree that he's no good.
Cleve is Cleve, that's all.
You're a perplexing woman,
Miss Prescott.
When a skunk needs killing...
...well, it ain't enough just to say
a skunk's a skunk.
Mr. Morgan...
...all my life I've wanted
to marry a rich husband.
Can I blame Cleve for wanting
to marry a rich wife?
Both of us may have been born
for the poorhouse...
...but we're not the kind to like it.
Do you believe all this you've been saying,
or is it just words?
Now, tell me the truth.

The truth is...
...Cleve and I couldn't live alone
just on love.
Not for five minutes.
Then you've answered the question I've
been asking for better than 2000 miles.
I got the biggest ranch you ever did see.
You can't ride across it in a day.
That land's gonna mean money
sooner than you think.
You want a rich husband...
...you're looking at him.
There ain't a blessed thing you have to do
except mind the kids.
I'm sorry.
Not now.
Not ever.
What a waste.
Someone put together like you.
Aggie.
Those who struck it rich wanted
all the pleasures that money could buy.
And there were plenty to sell to them.
Even the Sacramento riverboats
took on luxury goods.
I'll see it.
It's up to you.
Betting?
What's the matter with you?
- I'm checking out.
- Checking out?
What's the matter with him?
Lily, I got to talk to you.
I found myself throwing in
a winning hand.
Well, I just never thought
I'd do that for any girl.
Lily.
How'd you like to hook up
with a no-good gambler?
Oh, hon, we are on our way.
I got \$1200 right here.
- What'll we do, open a gambling house?
- No.

A married man should spend
his evenings at home.
Then we'll open a music hall
in San Francisco.

- No.

- I can still sing and dance.

No. A married woman should
spend her evenings at home.

- But we can't sit at home on \$1200 for...

- Lily.

Have you seen San Francisco?

It's ugly, and it's small,
and it's full of fleas.

And it burns down
about every five minutes...

...but each time they keep on rebuilding it
a little bigger and better than before.

It's alive and kicking
and nothing can stop it.

And it makes you
wanna build something too.

A railroad.

A steamship line.

Something to help the baby grow.

Cleve, on \$1200?

We could start out
with a wagon or a rowboat.

With the help of the devil,
I'll bet we make it.

Young America was not only
a union of East and West.

There were North and South too.

And between them,
the bonds were weakening.

Mr. Lincoln, now retired
from Congress and practicing law...

... realized that the South would fight...

... to mold the new and
uncommitted territories to its own image.

Still two years from the presidency...

... he pleaded that the free West
be allowed to remain free...

... and warned of the hazards
of a house divided against itself.

But the South,
seeing its power and influence wane...
... struggled against the inevitable
in dozens of Western towns.
And slowly, the bitter seeds of civil war
took root.
Howdy, Ms. Rawlings.
Whoa, Rosebud, whoa.
Say, Mr. Peterson,
what's that suit you got on?
Uniform, Mrs. Rawlings. A uniform.
Our militia company was sworn in...
...and I'm Corporal Peterson now,
Ohio Volunteers.
You won't be seeing me for a spell.
Hey, I got a letter for you,
from way out in California.
It must be from my sister, Lilith.
"Dear Eve..."
Mr. Peterson, could you wait a minute?
I wanna answer this right away.
Zeb?
Zeb, come on down here.
Well, we was hoping
that Zeb might be going with us.
His pa went when the first bugle blew.
Ain't one enough?
Hi, corporal.
Jeremiah, get Mr. Peterson
some buttermilk.
Buttermilk.
It's from your aunt Lilith.
She says there ain't no war out in California
and they don't expect there'll be one.
"Business is brisk.
Many opportunities
for an energetic young man."
There's talk of building a railroad east.
"Cleve has hopes of getting in
on the ground floor.
We would welcome Zeb
if he wants to come."
Ma, did you write her about me?
- Not exactly.

- Now, did you?
I told her you didn't like farming
any better than your pa did.
Ma, you got the wrong idea
about this war.
It ain't gonna be so bad, is it, corporal?
You know Pa's having the time of his life.
Now, Ms. Rawlings,
I got it from the captain himself...
...that we ain't gonna be gone
no time at all.
Pa left it up to you whether I go or not.
But you know what he really felt.
Ms. Rawlings, there ain't much glory
in tromping behind a plow.
Reckon there's no hurry
in answering this letter.
Thank you for waiting.
You mean I can go?
Oh, there'll be things to do.
Ma...
Gotta get your underwear washed
and your socks darned.
Do they give you one of them suits?
One of them uniforms?
I reckon.
Might not give you no shirts, though.
Take that one off, I'll wash it for you.
I got the others washed,
they aren't ironed yet.
Mother, I...
Why'd you call me that?
It's always been "Ma" before.
I don't know.
All of a sudden...
..."Ma" didn't seem enough somehow.
Hey, cowpoke!
Go on back, dog!
Go on!
What could I do, Pa?
He's Linus, boy.
Always was more Linus, blood.
I guess that's why I love him so much.
But you've gotta help me pray, Pa.

Help me pray.

Ohio.

Battery B, Ohio!

- Let's go!

On the double, come on!

Anybody here from the 12th Michigan?

Thirty-sixth Indiana.

Evening of April 6th, 1862.

The guns that had roared all day
fell silent...

... around a little church
called the Shiloh Meeting House.

Many a man had met his God
that Sunday...

... but not in church.

You wasted your time, men. He's dead.

- But, doc, this here is Captain Rawlings.

- Captain Linus Rawlings.

- Take him out.

- Keep moving, men.

- Why can't you look where you're going?

- I'm sorry, soldier.

Watch it.

Saw. Brandy.

Chloroform.

Get it all down. Come on, all of it.

Come on, we're just in the way here.

It had been the bloodiest day
of the war on the Western front.

In the morning, it had looked like
a Confederate victory, but by nightfall...

... no man cared to use
the words "win" or "lose."

After Shiloh...

... the South never smiled.

- You tasted that water yet?

- No.

Well, try it.

- Tastes funny, huh?

- Yeah.

I seen it before sundown. It was pink.

Pinker than sassafras tea.

You mean...?

It don't seem fitting a man should have

to drink water like that.
Don't seem fitting a man should have
to do any of the things we've done today.
Did you kill anybody?
I don't think so.
I got knocked dizzy right off.
And when I come to, found my rifle,
it was busted.
And then some more soldiers come along
and tried to stick me in the arm.
All the rest is mixed up after that.
Well, I ain't killed nobody, neither.
And I don't want to.
- Hey, where you from?
- Ohio.
This fool war started in the East.
What's us Westerners doing in it?
I don't rightly know anymore.
It ain't quite what I expected.
There ain't much glory looking at a man
with his guts hanging out.
- Where are you from?
- Texas.
Say...
You ain't a Reb, are you?
Well, I was this morning.
Tonight, I ain't so sure.
Seems like I ought to be shooting you.
Well, you got anything to shoot with?
No.
All I got's this bayonet.
I got a pistol.
I took it off a dead officer.
Hey, why don't we
skedaddle out of here?
- You mean desert?
- I mean, why don't...?
Just leave this here war
to the folks who'd want it.
They say there ain't no war
out in California.
Get that battery over here.
Stragglers, join your regiment.
Stragglers. Hey, you!

I'm planning to move Rousseau's brigade
into this area.
Hidden battery, placed well before dawn.
Do you approve?
I'll approve any dispositions
you wanna make.
If you hadn't held the flank today,
we'd have been whipped for fair.
Sherman, let's sit down a minute.
There's something I wanna say to you.
Lantern.
You may find yourself in command here.
Why?
I've seen some of the dispatches the
newspaper correspondents have filed today.
They're saying
I was taken by surprise this morning.
You weren't taken by surprise.
I was.
No matter.
They're saying...
...I was drunk again last night.
Were you?
No.
But you can't fight front and rear.
Win or lose, tomorrow...
...I intend to resign.
Because of the newspapers?
Because of a general
lack of confidence in me.
Oh, don't you think
I've ever felt like that?
A month ago they were saying
I was crazy. Insane.
Now they're calling me a hero.
A hero or crazy, I'm the same man.
It doesn't matter what the people think.
It's what you think, Grant.
You mean that's Grant?
I reckon.
General Grant.
You know this war's gonna be won
in the West, and how to win it.
Everything you've done proves it.

And I say that a man has the right
to resign only if he's wrong.
Not if he's right.
I guess I never thought of it that way.
I'll think it over.
What is there to think about?
The Army's better off with you
than without you. That's the test.
All right.
Thanks.
There's a lot to do
before morning, Sherman.
What are you doing?
Why did you make me do that?
Fire.
Hey, Zeb!
Didn't you get my letter?
I wrote more than four months ago.
She never was...
...quite the same
after she got the news about Pa.
I don't think she minded going,
Zeb, except...
...she wanted to see you again.
Of course Pa ain't really there.
I put up a stone anyway.
Well...
...better be on my way.
Way? Where?
I need you, Zeb.
Only one thing brought me back.
She's...
Well, this farm is half yours.
I was thinking we'd finally clear away that
patch of woods down by the river and...
You're twice the farmer I am.
You don't need me.
Farm's all yours. It's only fair.
Sure don't feel right about this.
What are you gonna do?
I haven't mustered out yet.
I can still transfer to the regulars.
Cavalry, maybe. Go west.
Have to fight Indians?

You sure are hard to make out, Zeb.
Now, what do you wanna do that for?
Do you like fighting?
You remember the story Pa used to tell us
about fighting that grizzly bear?
Yeah.
And I asked him, I said,
"Well, why'd you get in such a fix?
Do you like fighting grizzlies?"

He said:

"Well, uh, not especially. Uh...
I just wanted to go somewhere
and the bear was there first."
Well, I...
I guess I just wanna go somewhere too.
- So long.
- So long, Zeb.
Even while North and South
were being torn apart...
... East and West had been
drawn together by the Pony Express...
... the most daring mail route in history.
Eighty riders were in the saddle
at all times, night and day, in all weather.
Half of them riding east,
half riding west...
... between Missouri and Sacramento...
... carrying mail across country
in days instead of months.
Unarmed, they rode to save weight.
Five dollars a letter, the mail cost,
and on thin paper too.
It was courage, skill and speed...
... against hostile Indians, bandits,
hell and occasional high water.
Even as they rode,
men were already building...
... a faster message carrier across

the country:

And the Indians found
a new amusement...
... listening to the level tune

of the singing wires.
But far less amusing to the Indians...
... was the coming of the steel roadway
of the iron horse.
The surveyors, route lay through immense
natural barriers, the Rocky Mountains...
... and the equally discouraging
High Sierras.
But range upon range could never stop
the titanic contest...
... between two corporate giants
racing to put down...
... the greatest mileage of track
before they met.
The Central Pacific eastward
from Sacramento through the Sierras.
And the Union Pacific,
forging westward across the plains...
... with the Rockies still to come.
The prize in the race was free land,
vast parcels for every mile of track laid.
Land that would one day
be worth millions.
Hold it.
Set it down.
Workers, up.
Where'd you find them?
About a mile back yonder.
That's Johnny Hormatz.
That's Jack Perkin.
What the hell is this? A picnic?
- Well, the Indians got a couple of our men...
- Mister, you were the foreman here.
Now you're a tracklayer.
Now get back to work, all of you!
Move it!
Fast!
- You.
- Yes, sir.
You're the foreman
till I can find somebody better.
- Yes, sir.
- Get them at it.
- Wait a minute.

- Move it!

Your name Jethro Stuart?

All right, get at it.

Well, Mr. Jethro Stuart, you're hired
to hunt buffalo to feed these men...

...not to stop their work.

Why'd you bring these bodies here?

They're railroaders. I thought somebody
in the railroad might be interested.

I'm the railroad and I'm not interested.

You should've buried them,
then tracked down the Indians who did it.

Well, Mr. King, like you said,

I was hired to hunt...

...not to dig graves or fight Indians.

Those fellas are mostly old soldiers.

You wouldn't think a couple
dead men bother them much.

I don't want anything in their thick skulls
but their work. Do you understand?

Now, get rid of those bodies.

Start tracking those Indians.

You keep forgetting, Mr. King,
my job's buffalo.

It was buffalo.

Go to the paymaster and draw your time.

Well, now, that foreman fella,
you didn't fire him.

You just took him down a peg
because you needed him.

Who's gonna shoot buffalo? You?

- What the devil is that?

- Milk.

Milk?

The Army must've changed
since I was in it.

- Just rode in. I'm hungry.

- You are, huh?

But you'd rather watch them than eat.

- Is that it?

- That's it.

Well, I wish you were as eager
to protect this railroad.

Did you get any word about those two men

who were killed today?

I tracked the Arapahos
and talked to the chief.

Those men were a mile off
the right-of-way...

...where they had no business,
drunk and chasing squaws.

- As much their fault as it was the Indians'.

- That a fact?

Well, soldier boy, your job
is to fight Indians, not to agree with them.

Mr. King, there were 200 Arapahos
and I had 20 men.

Now, to me...

...agreeing seemed wiser than fighting.

To you, huh?

Well, you know, I might just send off
a wire to the colonel.

He may not agree.

I already reported. He does agree.

Acknowledged and understood. Sergeant.

Trouble, sir?

I don't know.

Hey, lieutenant.

I got a message:

Indians are up to something.

You know anything about it?

Chief says railroad busted the agreement.

Changed the route, come smack
through Arapaho hunting grounds.

- You sure the chief's right?

- Plenty sure.

They're getting the war paint ready.

Can you stand there and tell me...

...that one little change is gonna cost
the Arapahos one buffalo.

- Or even one jackrabbit?

- Mr. King.

They can be made to see it differently.

Who's hurting them?

What's a railroad anyway?

Two tracks and a whistle.

It's not the tracks they're afraid of.

It's what the tracks bring.
The buffalo hunters slaughtering off
their herds.
And then the settlers coming in.
And when will that be?
Twenty, 30 years, maybe?
By then, we'll all be dead.
Right now we're just crossing the land.
That's all. Land that's safe
to the Arapahos for our lifetime.
Now, you go talk to them.
Smoke a peace pipe with them.
Do anything they want.
Just get them to make a new agreement.
That's your job, isn't it?
Keeping the peace?
I'll keep the peace, Mr. King...
...but you keep your promise.
Hear your name's Rawlings,
you're from Ohio.
Your pa's name couldn't be
Linus Rawlings, could it?
- Could be.
- Knew him.
Jethro Stuart.
- He used to speak of you.
- Used to?
Pa was killed at Shiloh.
Sit down, Mr. Stuart.
Well, better than dying behind a plow.
I tried it. Settled down for a year once.
Took 10 years off my life.
Your ma...
She must've been something real special
getting old Linus to stay put.
She was, Mr. Stuart. Very special.
Old Linus.
Two years running once.
Your pa and me trapped together.
Up along the Waunakee.
Got so many beaver,
we had to tie them tail-to-tail...
...just to drag them down the mountain.
Over a mile long it was,

that line of beaver pelts.
Mr. Stuart, my father could take the truth
and stretch it about six ways.
You sound just like him.
I'll take it you meant that kindly.
Well, I'd think twice
before I called you a liar.
Tell me something,
talking about liars.
Why would a son of old Linus
get mixed up with a man like Mike King?
I know what you mean.
- But Mike King isn't the railroad.
- Oh?
I don't think he knows that.
He's changing the route back, is he?
No.
I know.
But he'd do anything
to gain a day on the Central Pacific.
He's not a fool. He doesn't want a war,
and neither do the Arapahos.
I think I could get them to agree
to this change in route...
...if I sit down and talk with them
for a while.
- How you gonna get them to do it?
- That's just it.
I need somebody that knows
the language and who they trust.
You wouldn't happen to know someone
like that, would you, Mr. Stuart?
Your pa could set a trap
like no man I ever come across.
Just coax them on and, bam.
You'd better do something
so he'll know you're pledging your word.
That blame whistle's like the crack of doom
for all that's natural.
My ma felt a man ought to
make his scratch on the land.
Leave it a little different
than when he come.
Anyway, thanks for fixing things

with the chief.

Me? I fixed nothing.

You put the words to my mouth
but that won't make them come true.

Jethro, I said what I had to
to keep the peace.

- I know there's a risk.

- Risk?

Maybe you don't understand.

You pledged your word back there.

Not mine, not the Army's,
not the railroad's.

It's your word told them
they'd keep their hunting grounds.

- I think they will.

- I think you got your neck stuck out...

...like a prairie chicken waiting for one side
or the other to chop it off.

Your pa and me got kicked out
of one territory after another...

...with people pouring in,
killing off game, putting up towns.

It ain't gonna stop.

Your treaty's gonna get broke and
I don't wanna be around to see it happen.

Look me up when you get your bellyful.

- Where you going?

- Heading back to the mountains.

A high lonesome
where there ain't no people at all yet.
So long.

By now, the Central Pacific had broken
through the wall of the high Sierras...

... and was straining eastward
across the flatlands of Nevada.

While the Union Pacific,
thanks to its long peace with the Indians...

... was able to keep up pressure
just as avidly in the opposite direction.

The competition was exciting,
but also costly...

... and both companies were itching
to earn money from tracks already laid.

Did the horses ride all right, Jake?

- No better than I did.
We'll have to rest them a day before we can
start hunting rabbits, much less buffalo.
Just get them to water right away.
You say no buffalo hunter come.
White man, liar.
We scout for you no more.
Not in our lifetime, you said.
And there they are.
The buffalo slaughterers and the settlers.
All right, it's sooner than I figured.
But the railroad's broke.
They need money to keep moving on.
No people, no money.
No money, no railroad.
- It's as simple as that.
- What about the Arapahos?
Just take a look at those people.
Half of them straight from Europe.
They'll have a rough time,
but they'll make it.
And do you wanna know
why they'll make it?
Because they're willing
to change their ways.
Arapahos will have to change too.
If they don't, they're finished.
I know they have to
and someday the land will be taken over...
...by these farmers
with their towns and their cattle.
But not like this.
They don't have to be double-crossed,
and I don't have to be a part of it.
You don't, lieutenant?
Well, aren't you forgetting that uniform?
That's right, Mr. King, I'm forgetting it.
If the Army hasn't got any authority
out here, I'm resigning. And now.
I don't see how that's
gonna help the Arapahos.
Nothing will help them.
But nothing's gonna stop them.
Indian attack!

Indian attack! Take cover!
Take a good look.
You wanted a war and you got one.
I hope you're the first man killed in it.
Turn those wagons over!
Shoot for the lead horses.
Pick off the chief.
Rawlings, try that.
The Indians are stampeding the buffalo.
Dirty skunks. Come on.
I told you there'd be no war.
Look at them.
They've quit.
They'll be back.
They just sent a bunch of animals
to kill an animal they call the "iron horse."
Well, it's still standing, isn't it?
And nothing's gonna stop it.
You think you can live with that?
I can live with it, or I can die with it.
Just listen.
You can live with that?
That?
That ain't crying.
That's just new life going on.
Pick up this woman and put the rest
of the injured in the tent house.
Hey, Merv...
The rest of you, back to work.
We got a railroad to build.
Well...
Looks like you finally got your bellyful.
Hello, Jethro.
Appears you're doing well.
Can't complain.
Creek's loaded with beavers,
fighting their way into the trap.
No white men looking
over my shoulder...
...and the Indians are plumb cordial.
Toss your stuff in there.
Plenty of room for two.
Thanks.
You'll be bunking yonder.

Take your bearings now
so you can find it when you need it.
If you don't like my snoring,
you can build your own cabin.
I'll furnish the ax.
- Thanks. I'm just passing through.
- Through to where?
Anywhere you go is like
where you've been.
Ain't you lost enough tail feathers
back there?
I've been plucked some.
But that's what I like about this country.
There's always greener grass
over the next hill.
Not no more.
Not since that damn railroad come.
All the grass is being staked out now,
with a lock on it.
Maybe I'll just have to climb
a little higher hill to find it.
How about coming along?
You crazy?
Like the Indians say, "These rocks
and trees around here feel no call to move."
Why should I?
Guess I'm not an Indian, Jethro.
But I'm sure not a rock nor a tree.
Man belongs his own kind,
like him or not.
The coming of railroads brought changes
in the land through which they passed.
Now immense herds of cattle were driven
hundreds of miles to meet the lines...
... bound for markets in the East.
Fences went up, cattle trails were barred...
... and a long and bloody wrangle began
between cattlemen and homesteaders.
The law was in the hands of whoever
could shoot fast and straight...
... except where there was somebody
determined to stand for law.
Others might look on sheep and a shepherd
as a pastoral scene.

Not the cattleman.
To him, sheep destroyed grass,
and grass came dear.
And if a man's life were held cheaper
than grass...
... it was considered a casualty of war,
not a crime.
And, in all this, the man with the star
was only one against many.
But time was running out
for the reckless ones...
... the desperadoes,
the gallop-and-gunshot boys...
... as more and more citizens demanded
respect for the law...
... and showed themselves ready to fight
to uphold it.
And the raw new towns that sprung up
in the West began to dream...
... of becoming as refined as that one-time
hooligan city by the Golden Gate.
San Francisco was now respectable.
So sophisticated, in fact,
it even had mansions up for auction.
Two thousand dollars.
Two thousand dollars.
Is that your last bid?
Ladies and gentlemen,
this trophy is solid gold and fully inscribed.
"Mr. Cleve Van Valen, president.
San Francisco-Kansas City Railroad."
It's a treasure he held dear to his heart.
Do I hear \$3000
for this priceless possession?
Priceless, my foot.
We used it for a doorstop.
- Twenty-five hundred.
- Twenty-five hundred dollars.
Twenty-five hundred dollars.
Twenty-five hundred? Sold \$2500.
It's a sad day, Lilith.
Sad?
We made and spent
three fortunes together.

What's so sad about that?

And if he'd lived a little longer,
we would've made and spent another.

- I beg your pardon, Mrs. Van Valen.

- What?

The chair, it's been sold. I'm sorry.

Well then, take it.

Quit apologizing and take it.

Thank you, madam.

If there'd been some other way
to pay off the debts...

It doesn't matter.

I've got two things

no one can ever take from me:

This and my land in Arizona.

Lilith, I don't want to dash any hopes...

...but that ranch is nearly worthless.

Well, it's there, isn't it?

Yes, but most of the cattle
have been sold off or stolen.

- I'll get cattle.

- You'll need someone to work it.

- Someone to manage it for you.

- I'll get that too.

Who?

My nephew.

He's a marshal out there somewhere.

Now, Lilith, at your age,
it might be kind of rough.

Rough?

My ma and pa were killed
going down the river just looking for land.

I guess I got a little of that Prescott blood
in me after all.

Pa?

Is Aunt Lilith's house on Nob Hill
as high as that?

I don't know, son.

On our way home, you ask your aunt Lilith.

She'll tell you.

Honey? Do you think you'll know her?

- What?

- You aunt Lilith.

- Do you think you'll recognize her?

- Sure.

Zeb? What's the matter?

Nothing.

Come on.

Thank you.

- Ma'am, are you our great-aunt Lilith?

- If you're Zeb's children, I am.

- Lilith.

- Zeb.

Zeb Rawlings.

Oh, goodness.

I swore up and down I wasn't gonna cry.

You're just as pretty as Ma said you was.

I'd like you to meet my wife, Julie.

Pleased to meet you.

I'm pleased to meet you too.

I just can't tell you how pleased.

This here's Eve, underneath all the jam.

- Come on and meet Sam now.

- Sam?

Sam's our horse.

He could pull two wagons if he wanted.

Oh, well, if you'll excuse me,

I have my orders to meet Sam.

Come on.

- Oh, just a minute now, boys.

- But he's on the other side.

Come on.

Okay.

Come on.

Just a minute.

I think this means a whole lot to her.

You have no idea how much

it means to me...

...to be able to settle down

to a life of peace and quiet.

I'll get the luggage.

Hello, boys.

Jake.

Tom.

Pablo.

Zeb. Let's go.

Now, marshal, don't tell me you come
all the way to Gold City just to meet me?

I hardly expected it.
And the beautiful... Mrs. Rawlings?
What a pleasure.
I envy you, marshal.
A well-favored, bright-eyed wife...
...just as dazzling as that sun up there.
Makes you almost thankful, don't it?
It makes a person wanna live.
That's Charlie Gant.
I thought you said he was in Montana.
Zeb?
I'm just gonna get the luggage, that's all.
See to the rooms, will you, Julie?
- Prescott, take care of the horses.
- Yes, sir.
- Linus, help your mother.
- Yes, sir.
Anything wrong, Julie?
No. No, nothing.
Come on, Eve.
- Lou.
- Zeb.
Got a minute?
Of course I got a minute.
Here.
Now, I urge you,
most respectfully to peruse the...
- Cigar?
- No, thanks.
Well, what can I do for you?
Go ahead, name it.
I saw Gant get off the train this morning.
There were three men waiting for him.
That's why you're here, huh?
That's it.
Look, there ain't a thing we can do...
...to keep Charlie Gant from going
where he wants to in this territory.
I know. I know what he was...
...but that's over now.
It was over the day his brother got...
Should've killed them both
that day, but...
Well, you didn't.

There ain't a thing I can do about it now.
What's he doing here, Lou?
Ain't you even curious?
Well, what do you want me to do?
Run him out of town at the point of a gun?
Do you think we still put the law
inside a holster here?
Look over there, Zeb. There's the law.
With all its writs and decrees and...
- We abide by that circuit judge now.
- How many get killed meantime?
Nobody's got killed. Nobody's going to.
Doc Holliday, the Clantons, the Youngers...
- They're all gone now.
- Charlie Gant ain't gone.
You get me a warrant. I'll get you Gant.
Lou? They want three guards in the wagon
with the gold shipment tomorrow.
- Three?
- This is a big one. Over \$100,000 worth.
I'll take Clayton and Sims with me,
all right?
Well?
Well what?
Doesn't that mean anything to you?
- It means we put on a three-man guard.
- To the train.
What happens then?
You know there's gold going out here
every month or so.
There hasn't been a train robbery
since Jesse James was killed.
Now, if the councilors
wish to have a conference, we'll have one.
Zeb.
I don't want any trouble here now.
We've been friends a long time.
As a friend...
...I'd like you to leave town.
Boys, get back from there.
Look down there, son.
- Do you know how deep that shaft is?
- Uh-uh.
That's a thousand foot deep.

Do you know how deep
a thousand foot is?
Uh-uh.
Well, if you had 200 brothers,
all standing on your shoulders...
...you wouldn't be able to see over the top.
- I'd be squished.
Come on.
I'll show you boys the donkey engine.
You boys go ahead.
I'll be along in a minute.
I hear you've been talking
to the local marshal about me.
- Would you call that friendly?
- I never considered us exactly friendly.
I don't like you, marshal.
I don't like what you and your kind
are doing to this country.
Now, I don't want any trouble.
But you wanna put things on the old basis,
just you and me?
That's fine.
I'm not gonna
get in a fight with you, Gant.
It's peace you want, huh, marshal?
Peace?
There's only one kind I know of.
That's the kind my brother's got.
What happened to your brother
didn't teach you very much, did it?
Easy, marshal.
Floyd never made mistakes...
...except the one time he trusted you.
And you're the one that got away.
One of these days, I'm likely
to pay you Rawlingses a little visit.
Come on, move along.
Get those gold boxes up there.
That's a lot of gold.
Come on, keep moving, boys.
Zeb?
Lou Ramsey's here.
Lou.
- I warned you, Zeb.

- What is it?
Gant came to see me last night.
Said you tried to start
some trouble with him.
You believe him?
I'm telling you, Zeb,
you take your trouble to your own territory.
I don't want any more of it here.
There won't be any more trouble, Lou.
Gant's gone.
Rode out of here early this morning.
With who?
His gang.
They should be somewhere
between here and Kingman...
...waiting on that train.
You don't fool me for a minute, Zeb.
You are not looking for a robbery,
you're looking for Gant.
You still carry lead where he shot you.
That was Texas.
And Oklahoma, where you killed Floyd.
And now this.
I'm sorry, Julie...
...but I don't want my office
to be any part of this.
Zeb?
The boys have got the team hitched.
I know.
It's almost time to go.
Zeb?
- Julie.
- No one's asking you to face Gant.
No one's making you.
We could ride out of here right now.
We could forget it.
Maybe there's
something you haven't told me.
Is there, Zeb?
I'm asking you not to go.
Please.
Don't go.
Sorry, Julie.
I guess there's nothing more pigheaded

in a man than his sense of honor.
They're all the same, every one of them.
You take my Cleve now.
Never could turn down a poker game.
Felt duty-bound to go.
Three nights running sometimes,
but he wouldn't quit...
...not if his life depended on it. He...
I guess it isn't very funny.
Ma?
Where's Pa?
Out. That's where he is.
- What's the matter with Mom?
Nothing's the matter.
Come on, now, in the other room.
- What's the matter?
Come on, we're gonna play.
That's a good girl. That's better.
What's the matter with Mama?
- Nothing's the matter.
Do you know any games?
We know tag.
Musical chairs.
- Ugh. Tag.
- I know hide-and-seek.
Well, do you know how to play poker?
- Poker?
- Poker?
You're in luck. Sit down right there.
Now, come on, sit down. That's it.
But we don't know how to play poker.
Well, it's time you learned.
First, we'll start off
with a little five-card stud.
I'll take that rifle, Zeb.
Your pistol too.
Sorry, Lou.
I just can't oblige.
Thought the law wouldn't let you
use that anymore.
I'll use it if I have to.
I'm going out of here, Lou,
and I'm taking this with me.
To kill Gant.

That's what you think, isn't it?
It's something personal
between him and me.
Well, Lou, it could be...
...if I settle down with my family
and wait for him to come.
And he'll come
if I don't stop him here and now.
I'm gonna catch Gant red-handed,
breaking the law...
...and then I'm gonna use the law
to put him away once and for all.
The law, Lou.
I'm gonna use the law...
...but I haven't got much chance
without your help.
How many men in the caboose?
Just one brakeman.
- Is he armed?
- No, never has been.
I'll be in the express car.
Thanks, Lou.
Marshal?
There's some riders up ahead.
I'll take a look.
Engineer, there's a barricade ahead!
Open it up, wide open.
Zeb!
Come on. Come on.
Everyone make it?
- Frenchy's horse fell.
- I don't think he made it.
- Well, let's move.
It's a long way from here to that gold.
There's no danger. Just keep going.
It's Rawlings.
Back this train up!
And fast!
How come we're leaving so early, Pa?
We got a long way to go, son.
Here.
Auntie, when we going to your house?
Your daddy will decide
when we get to your home.

Auntie, can we take Sam with us?
I think Sam is taking us.
Pa, how much further is it
to Aunt Lilith's ranch?
Well, son, it's around the next bend,
the next bend...
...and the valley beyond.
- Oh.
- Aunt Lilith, do you know that song?

LINUS:

Your song?
I sang that song
long before your pa was ever born.
Come on.
Zeb.
The West that was won by its pioneers,
settlers, adventurers is long gone now.
Yet it is theirs forever.
For they left tracks in history
that will never be eroded by wind or rain...
... never plowed under by tractors,
never buried in the compost of events.
Out of the hard simplicity of their lives,
out of their vitality...
... their hopes and their sorrows...
... grew legends of courage and pride...
... to inspire their children
and their children's children.
From soil enriched by their blood...
... out of their fever to explore and build...
... came lakes where once
were burning deserts...
... came the goods of the earth,
mines and wheat fields...
... orchards and great lumber mills...
... all the sinews of a growing country.
Out of their rude settlements,
their trading posts, came cities...
... to rank among the great ones
of the world.
All the heritage of a people
free to dream...
... free to act,

free to mold their own destiny.