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The Man Who Came Back

By Chuck Walker

What are y'all doing?
Get back in the field.
Slavery's over.
We can leave if we want.
Mr. Duke, you think them Union
soldiers come back
if they hear tell of
black folks gettin' stopped?
Well, maybe you can go,
but you sure as hell ain't
takin' one of my mules.
This here my mule,
Mr. Duke.
You, uh,
made my buy him.
Deducted from my pay.
Well, in that case,
your animal is looking at me funny,
like he wants to
bite me.
Bite?
He barely got no teeth.
That's why you made
Winton buy him.
There. Now you can carry
your own stuff to Kansas.
Oh no no no no.
We got rights!
Hold my horse.
- Take it!
- You ain't got no cause, Mr. Billy!
We been free
a dozen years now.
Ever heard of a little struggle
called the Civil War?
Emancipation Proclamation
ever go by your ear?
How about this?
Did it ever
pass your ears?
You're just opening
old wounds.
Now you turn 'em over
so it browns on

both sides, you see?

You remember what I told you
about the onions?

Mr. Reese?

Mr. Reese?

There.

Turn around.

Did he do this?

Junebug got
the worst of it.

Next time,

I don't know.

Ain't gonna be
a next time.

- Sir.

- 'Morning.

When I first invited you,
a Confederate war hero,
onto my plantation,
you didn't present yourself
as Negro-soft.

You hired me to
oversee the hands.

If Billy lays on
the whip again,
he's gonna have to
deal with me.

Reese,

he's my blood son.

Then you warn him.

Warn who?

About what?

Daddy,

look at that.

That is my idea.

Right, Daddy?

You know the hands want
to be paid in cash.

No, you're paid in cash
'cause you're a white man.

Here's your month's pay.

Go make sure to buy your wife
something pretty.

This means trouble.

I tell you one thing:
Once the crop's in,
we'll say "Fare thee well, Mr. Duke,"
and we'll set up housekeeping
wherever your pretty heart desires...
California, Timbuktu,
I don't care.

I would just prefer
our cabin by the swamp.
Why'd you choose me
anyway?

I was old and poor
and beaten down
even before the war.

Mm-hmm.

I adore you.

Just adore you.

- 'Morning to you all.

- 'Morning.

- Good morning, sir.

- 'Morning.

Cash is kind of short
since the war, Winton.

Short for the Negro?

Still spends like money.

Not anymore.

They done raised all
the store prices.

Mm-hmm. How much?

So you pay them funny money
they can only spend here,
then you double and
triple the prices?

Uh, Reese, that's just
sound business practice.

Taking advantage of
a captive market.

Wanna hit me?

Hmm?

You're fired.

I knew guys like you
during the war.

When the battle started,
you'd hide.

When the fighting stopped,
you came out.
And you bayoneted
the wounded,
then you bragged about
how many Yankees you killed.
You coward.
Get up.
You want me to
arrest him?
No, just throw
his ungrateful ass
out of my overseer's
house.
See how his pride holds up
once he can't feed his family.
Y'all listen up!
From now on, I'll be
supervising y'all directly,
you lazy Negros!
I'll be working you
can to can't...
when you can see in the morning to
when you can't see at night.
You hear me?
No, sir.
I'm on strike.
We on strike.
What you mean,
you're on strike?
You don't even know
what a strike is!
Yes, we do.
And you about to find out
what one is too, sir.
What do you coloreds
expect to achieve?
You already got freedom.
Freedom?
Well, it sure don't feel like
no freedom, Judge Duke,
not when your son can
beat us whenever he pleases,
then pay us in

worthless paper.
Right!
You don't work,
you don't eat.
You don't get no rations.
What are you gonna eat?
Mule meat make a fine stew.
Sure made a mess of things
this time, Billy.
Ho! Ho!
I want to go.
My wife at a planter's meeting?
You can't.
Then give me
some money then.
You never buy anything.
This time,
spend what I give you.
You can afford to
buy you a pretty thing.
Oh, you go see to
men's business
and leave it to your wife
how frivolous to be.
In the olden days, when the heathens
took over the Promised Land,
the Crusaders wore a big
cross on themselves...
Judge, please,
they were knights
on a war horse.
They scared the living shit
out of those infidels.
All right, shut your fans.
Let the judge talk now.
There is no way
we can negotiate
with the strikers.
They're demanding that we
work them no more
than 12 hours a day.
And no work at all
on Sunday.
Now what's next?

Christmas in July?

Is that all right
with you, Sheriff?

No, sir!

That all right with you?

- No! No!

- No!

Your Honor, uh, we could
just start busting some heads
and fix this real fast.

We all got some Negro-lovin'
white folks

could use

a head-whopping too.

This is not as big a cabin
as you're used to, my boy.

- What've you got there?

- Oh, this is heavy.

Oh, give me that.

Give it here.

- There we go.

- Thank you.

You want some water?

Here.

Darlin', heaven's
where you make it.

They ran us out.

Said if we won't chop cotton,
we can't stay in them quarters.

Them cabins weren't fit
for living in no-how.

Besides, back in
slavery days,

the runaway slaves used to hide
in these thicketts and get fat.

- Ain't that right, y'all?

- Yeah.

We gonna be all right.

We gonna be

all right.

- Ain't that right, y'all?

- Yes, sir.

Whoa. Whoa.

This your wife and

boy here?
Just on patrol.
Don't want no trouble.
- Let's go.
- Junebug!
Come on.
Let's move.
You take 'em to the thicket. I'm gonna
stay here and give you some time.
I'll stay.
You go.
Junebug,
I'll stay.
You go.
Get on.
They comin'.
Y'all gonna quit
before my harvest?
We're striking.
Striking.
Listen, you stupid darky,
you still got to pay
room and board.
You gotta pay tool fees,
mule fees.
You gonna owe Duke Plantation
so deep,
I'm gonna work you a full year,
you're still gonna be in debt.
My hands're going
back to work.
What hands, master?
'Cause I don't see
nobody.
Wait! Please...
- Preacher!
- No. No worries...
Preacher, please please
please, don't let 'em do this.
Please don't let 'em
do this.
Preacher, Preacher,
don't let 'em do this.
Lord's work, boy.

You Negroes got to learn to
render unto Caesar.
Please don't, please.
Please...
please don't do this!
Please don't do this.
Please please don't...
There you go.
What is...
Gabe,
come over here.
- Gabe, don't you look.
- Yes, ma'am.
No, you let him look.
Let him see what evil men
do when good men let them.
- We might have lost Vicksburg...
- Hey, Reba.
...we might have lost
Gettysburg,
but praise God for
our victory today, huh?
I believe my daddy may even
say things were handled well today.
This is your day off!
Most days we're
working in the fields.
My friend, who's the biggest
toad in this puddle?
Harder!
That wasn't a fur-ball,
that was a whole cat, wasn't it?
Sir, allow me to
introduce myself.
My name is Ezra Tarwell.
I am an attorney.
Bumpy road back there.
I'm an attorney.
Your accent hardly
hangs with Spanish moss, Mr. Tarwell.
Yeah, I am a product of
Oswego, New York, sir.
But we mustn't let unfortunate
regional differences

stand in the way of civility.
Yeah, all that.
Let me speculate
on something.
When the war was over,
you and your carpet bag
decided to come down here
and make a profit out
of the tragedy
that they call
"Reconstruction. "
Now the federal army's
moved on
and all of a sudden, you decide
to switch over to the white man's side.
Am... am I close?
Nearly.
Um, I... I am devoted
to justice
and prosperity.
Since justice is blind,
the only color I really care about
is green.
Damn your accent!
I love the way you talk.
Sit down, Mr. Tarwell.
- Sit down.
- That looks like someone was...
I want to report a murder.
Reese Paxton,
y'all know there ain't
no niggers allowed in here.
I know justice
for a black man
lies way below
what we expect for ourselves.
This was a human being.
What sanction
would you suggest
if our sheriff were to arrest
one of our fine citizens?
I ponder that question.
I know that pigs will fly before
this town will jail a white man

for killing a black,
but maybe you can fine them,
each according to what he can pay.
And him with
the deepest pockets
should give up
a piece of land
and give it to
this poor boy's family
so that they have
something of their own.
Reese?
Reese, maybe you
didn't notice,
but them Yankee soldiers,
they packed up; they gone home.
Maybe I get 'em
to come back.
Maybe I'll go
to Washington
with my Confederate medals,
of which you have none,
and maybe I'll tell them
that things down here have gone sour
way beyond what
I can swallow.
I have seen more killing...
than you can ever imagine.
You know, Reese,
you're right.
The man who's responsible for this,
he's got to be brought to justice.
Right!
I personally seen Reese Paxton
hang and shoot this here Negro.
You won't need
to arrest him.
Grab his arms.
Hold him! All right!
That's enough, that's enough.
Right now!
Our beloved federal government
promises a speedy trial.
Well, we'll give him one

right now.
We even got him
a lawyer.
Wait. What, me?
The right kind of
young attorney
could prosper mightily
in this town.
I want everything
done by the book.
I do not want this man getting out
on any kind of an appeal.
Hear ye, hear ye,
this court is now in
ad hoc session
in the saloon of
the Whore Palace
'cause the Yankees
burned down our courthouse;
Judge William Duke, Sr.
Presiding;
Mr. William Duke, Jr.,
special prosecutor.
I'm doing my job here.
I'm out investigating
the strike labor activities.
I come upon Reese,
he's drawing a bead.
Ere he pulled back,
he plugged the nigger dead.
I said, "What'd you do?"
He says, "I just took
a damn fine shot. "
What are you talking about?
- You swear to tell the truth?
- Yeah.
Hold on, I think
I'm supposed to interview the witness.
You were at Mr. Paxton's
cabin on the day in question?
Right. Right.
I remember it 'cause,
well, it ain't nothing to
see a nigger get whipped.

Ain't that often you get to see one shot cold.

Reese Paxton shot that nigger like a big old swamp rabbit. This is bad.

Preacher, do you swear to tell the truth?

I do.

Wait, now hold on...

Now hold on a minute.

- I did not cross-examine...

- Let me cut to the chase here.

Now you seen Reese Paxton shoot that Negro?

- Well, actually it...

- Just answer the damn question.

- Yeah. Yeah, I saw it.

- That's good. Sit down.

No, excuse me.

Would you kindly ask him about the Ninth Commandment?

What about

the Ninth Commandment?

Which is what?

"Thou shalt not bear false witness. "

"The servant will be severely punished, for though he knew his duty, he refused to do it. "... Luke 12.

How about the commandment,

"Thou shalt not kill"?

"As for these enemies of mine who do not want me to be king of them and slaughter them in my presence. "

- Luke 19:

You're a preacher?

What about your wife?

Now you said that she saw...

- You keep my wife out of it.

- Fine.

Is there anyone who can support your claim?

Him? Skinny one,
with the hat?
- Not exactly.
- Excuse me, sir, I'd like to
call you to the witness...
Ho!
Hey, there.
Hey, what goes on in there?
Billy Duke,
what are you doing?
Let Reese holler!
No one will listen.
You gonna refuse
to help mete out justice
for Reese Paxton,
are you, Caleb?
Well, you're gonna
find yourself refused.
Maybe you don't want my help
rebuilding that saw mill of yours
them federal boys
set on fire.
You hear me?
In there.
St... stand up, Caleb.
What do they want
you to do?
They want me to lie.
Daddy, Caleb is
feeling sickly.
I don't think his testimony's
gonna be missed.
I'd like to hear what
an appeals court has to say about that.
Oh, come on.
For a moment there, I thought
you managed to handle the situation.
Hey, Kate? Kate?
Kate, this is
a sporting house, you know?
Go on.
I understood it was
a courtroom.
Your Honor, I was at

the Paxton house that day.
And just as Caleb did,
I saw Reese Paxton
shoot that Negro.
Paxton...
your lawyer's here
to see you.
How you doing?
I was... was in prison
briefly.
Twice.
And a good attitude helps.
Preacher, I do not have
the time to listen
to the phantoms of
your guilty conscience.
A phantom...
that's just what Reese was.
During the war, he was
an assassin for the Confederacy,
going back and forth
between enemy lines.
Nobody knew how he did it...
just showing up
dealing death.
There's not a prison around that's
gonna hold a man like that.
Will you shut the hell up?
As long as I can remember,
I always wanted to be a lawyer.
I guess I should have
practiced, huh?
Get out.
Good luck.
The evildoer that repents
shall escape
everlasting fire.
Brother Reese, it says in
the Good Book, in Psalms
Chapter 34,
"Depart from evil, brother,
and do good. Seek ye peace
and pursue it. "
"The face of the Lord is

against them that do evil.

...from this earth. "

Hey!

Get back to work!

"... nurture your soul
and bring it out of you. "

Old strike petered out,
did it?

Should give them a notion
of consequences.

Well, we owe you a debt, Amos.

No one's denying that.

Y'all should consider me
for being overseer here.

Let's take the long way
by Reese's cabin.

"... and I think I should
find it.

I think we can work together
and bring that out... "

Are you okay?

My God.

What is he doing in here?

Let him out of here!

You're just like

a one-eyed dog, Reese.

- I'm gonna get you out!

- I just want you to know,
while you're in prison

I'm gonna be taking care of your wife.

No! Ah, Billy!

Let go of me, Billy.

Gabe, get away.

Get away! Oh!

Someone find help!

Get some help, boy!

Your husband...

your husband...

is found guilty of hanging
and shooting a Negro.

Hang on, Angelique.

Your husband...

No no no!

Oh no no!

Get away from me!
Get!
Billy, his skull
is cracked.
He ain't gonna make it.
No, he's gonna be fine.
He's gonna be just fine!
Get away. Leave him alone.
Get away from him.
- Let me see.
- You get away from him.
- Get away from him!
- Let me see him now.
Get away!
Throw him in the well.
Throw him in the well!
Hey, wait a minute.
Hey.
Let's just ride out
of here.
- Amos, wait a minute!
- Whoa whoa.
Now he's gonna get
none of our ears.
She ain't.
Amos is right, Billy.
She's gonna talk.
I know that.
What did you do
to my son?
Where is he?
Please!
- Why we gotta rush it?
- My boy, where is he?
Hold her down, boy.
- I'm going second.
- No no no!
Preacher, looks like
you're going last.
You gonna ride this bitch
just like the rest of us.
Please, no!
Move on.
Oh, a fresh herd

of cattle.
Yeah!
Better face it, boy,
you ain't gonna live out
your sentence in there.
You done poked your last woman and
had your last sip of whiskey.
We got a system here:
Prisoners are not men...
they're livestock.
Moving in!
When a man does evil,
he ought to
pay for his crime.
Agree?
I wholeheartedly agree.
Then you and me will
get on fine.
I doubt it.
Oh, you doubt it?
Get back in line!
Let that
ease your doubt.
- Done?
- Done.
Next.
Chow line, single file.
They're coming in!
Open the gate.
Get on in there.
Hurry it up.
Ain't got all day.
Get on up!
Get up off him, boy!
I'm talking to you, newbie!
Get up!
Get up!
Hold it right there.
Get back to work!
All right, back to work.
All right, everybody,
back to work.
Come on, new meat, get up!
Get up!

Move it here!
Let's go!
Don't make trouble there.
You were right, Paxton.
We won't get along.
Get in there!
Hurry it up!
You thirsty in there?
How about some
liquid refreshments?
Whoo.
What the hell?
Oh!
Hey hey!
The prisoner's fled!
A tunnel break!
He tunneled out!
Doggone!
He's gone.
The hole's only three feet deep.
Where'd he go?
Through the door
you left open.
Idiot!
Find him!
Are you dumb and stupid?
You thought I was
gonna drown you?
I ain't that nice.
We got a system here.
Prisoners are not men...
Get your ass up.
Come on!
- They're livestock!
When you got a bull that's ornery,
you cut off his horns!
If he don't improve,
you cut off his balls!
It's a simple system.
Never give up.
No!
If I could have your attention?
We got a very
important announcement

from a man that really needs
no introduction.
He's part of this town;
been here for years... Judge Duke.
William?
This proud day
marks a return
to our treasured
Southern traditions.
Ladies and gentlemen,
I want to introduce you
to our new mayor...
my son, Billy Duke!
Thank you.
Thank you.
Thank you, Daddy.
Thank you, Judge Duke. Thank you all
for braving this gorgeous day
for coming out and welcoming
me as your new mayor.
You all know my daddy.
You all know me.
You know that this town's been very
good to us. We make a good living here.
There's no one with deeper
fortitude or greater incentive
to restore us to
our former glory
before them federal boys come down
and paint us that awful shade of blue.
My first item,
I'm gonna buy y'all a drink
at Shaman Brothers.
Come on over.
The first drink's on me.
Take him down.
Thought you was gonna leave him
hanging up there till you killed him?
I did.
What are you all
standing there for?
Get back to work.
Hey.
Came out of the woods.

Saw him at the end of
the street down here.
He was right
down there.
- What you all looking at?
- Nothing.
Preacher's imagination.
Come on in.
Thank you.
Thank you.
We'll give your house
back, of course.
This cabin is yours.
Thank you.
You know,
Amos Halpern's
living in your old house.
He's not the sheriff
anymore.
I guess with him
as overseer,
there's been no talk of
strikes and such.
Thank you.
Uh, we catch the runoff
in a rain barrel.
Dry spell, we send grandbabies
down to the creek.
Never at the well.
Amos?
It's...
Shh!
The house is burning, Amos!
I'm right here!
Come on out!
Show yourself!
Who was that?
Come on out!
Fire! Fire!
- Right here!
- Get it out!
- Come on!
- Put out the fire!
Then the Lord sent

the Spirit into me.
Then the Lord sent
the Spirit into me.
Then the Lord
sent the Spirit into me.
Hello?
Hello?
Is somebody out there?
You won't find
the fire here.
You gonna pay for that?
Everybody pays.
Fighting for the property
We earned by honest toil
And when our rights
were threatened
The cry rose
near and far
Hurrah for that bonnie blue flag
that bears a single star.
When I get his makeup on,
he's gonna look almost happy.
Lyle's the only
fellow I know
that can sleep through
his own murder.
It's pretty vile.
I better hear from that
goddamned penitentiary.
Hell's bells, Mayor, you gotta wait for
the telegram to be delivered.
Did you tell 'em
it was urgent?
Did you tell me to tell him
it was urgent?
Hurrah for that
bonnie blue flag
That bears
a single star
Hurrah hurrah...
I want two headstones...
reading "My faithful wife"
and "My beloved son. "
You take 'em up

to Bone's Landing.
That's where you'll find
two fresh graves.
You order more coffins.
First a devil,
then a ghost.
Now before the Headless
Horseman arrives, can we all just...
- What?
- It's addressed to him.
Then you read it!
But you read it
for all.
"Paxton died
four days past... "
There, you see?
"... stop.
Guard assigned to burial
- never came back. "
- You know he ain't in that box.
Reese Paxton's
in town.
Reese Paxton's in town!
He just left my parlor.
- He left alive?
- Certainly he was alive.
Are you absolutely
positive?
I'm an undertaker.
I ought to know
a dead man if I see one.
Come on, Sheriff!
Oh, damn it!
Oh oh oh ah ah!
You done?
Obviously.
So I'll see you
next week?
Yeah. 'Less'n Caleb
doesn't pay me again.
Ha! Which has been
known to happen.
Come on.
That's what I want!

Yeah.
Oh, yeah.
Oh, yeah.
Oh, yeah. Harder.
That's it.
I'm supposed to get
time in between.
Ladies and gentlemen,
could I have your
attention, please?
Everybody over here.
Mort, tie up your horse
and get over here.
This is important.
Come on out, folks.
Are you the man who cut
the deputy's throat?
You don't interfere
with my business,
I won't interfere
with yours.
Come on, folks.
Come on down.
Come on.
Now Reese Paxton has
escaped from prison
and come back
from the dead.
So we're gonna need to
form a posse.
Uh, we're gonna
deputize you men.
Yeah, and maybe some
of you women too.
So grab a gun and
let's search the town.
Come on.
What...
what is it?
The preacher.
Sarah!
Hey, what's the matter?
What got into Sarah?
Foolishness!

Empty-headed
Negra foolishness.
Come help me with this.
You know, I haven't carried
a gun since the war.
Didn't enjoy them
then neither.
Whole world's
turning upside down.
We should've never
got involved.
You were plenty willing
to get involved at the trial.
This ain't about that.
This is about what happened
to his wife and
his little boy...
Now what do you know
about that?
I've heard stories.
Maybe we should have gone
to town after all.
Yeah, everything's
fine in town.
There.
You're all tied.
Give me my dollar. I'm supposed to get
a dollar every time we go to town.
Yeah, but we didn't
go to town.
Well, we were supposed to till
all this trouble come up.
Yeah, but even when we do go,
you never spend a dime anyway.
Yeah, but you're supposed
to give me a dollar.
Now you agreed,
right?
Now, Kate.
Don't you love
your Kate no more?
Oh, yes, ma'am.
I love my Kate.
Well then?

I've got to go find Delbert.
Make this place
defensible
in case Reese shows up.
Fine.
Delbert?
Delbert? I'm gonna
pull you off...
I got nothing
against you, Caleb,
but I'm gonna kill
your overseer.
And I'm gonna see your wife.
Kate?
Maybe you want to
talk me out of it?
What can I say?
Well, if you love her,
maybe there's some good in her.
She's a frugal
housekeeper.
God damn it, Caleb!
Do something!
Well, your darkies
have all run off.
But I believe it was Delbert
Paxton wanted, so...
y'all should be safe now.
I never touched
his wife or child,
but I was guilty too.
'Cause I kept silent,
but no more!
Now shut up, Caleb.
What's he want
with you anyway?
He just wants justice.
That's all.
Oh, he's delirious.
We need to put this right.
You got any wine opium?
You can end
the rampage.
You know you can.

All you have to do
is confess.

A large dose.

If you confess, Reese...

Reese'll let up.

- Now please.

- Hush up, hear?

Drink this all.

Come on.

Try to calm yourself.

Yeah.

Kate?

You know, in light

of recent events,

if something tragic were

to happen to your husband,

I think people are ready to believe

that Reese Paxton might have done it.

Billy.

You know, I think I better

check on Caleb one last time.

Kate?

You know, with money

so hard to come by,

I actually have

quite a lot of it.

I got some silver Liberties,

some gold Eagles,

some gold Indians,

half-Eagles.

I got \$50.

Hey, Billy.

Get off...

get your hands off of me.

I guess nowadays,

a little woman...

she needs about

every penny.

Hmm?

Inside.

Are you ready

to make atonement?

No, Caleb.

I hope you are.

All right.
I walked right
into her lap.
So for Caleb's demise,
Kate was laid.
You missed one.
I guess I'm a lot
luckier than you are.
You want more?
Help!
Help! Help!
I know you think you can
come and go as you please,
but this is my room.
And I don't share it
with anyone unless...
Well, for that,
you can stay the whole night.
Might as well. Your murders
frightened off most my business anyway.
I'll sleep in the chair.
I'm not good enough for you
because I screw for money?
It's the money of faithless men
that'll buy me a future.
Wanna step away, please?
Step away.
Step away.
Step away.
Oh my God.
He killed Kate.
Let's all go about our business.
Come on, step away.
Run home.
Let's go. Wrap it up.
- Step away. Come on.
- Sarah, y'all seen the sheriff?
Your father sent for him.
Oh, now I can make her
look so pretty.
He gonna find us too.
We gonna find him
first.
Well, we searched the whole town,

so what exactly do you recommend?

- Red.

- Howdy, Sheriff.

"Howdy, Sheriff. "

Never get used to that.

Boys.

You mind?

Yeah.

What'd my daddy want?

Uh, oh, you know,

the usual.

He was unhappy with how
you're handling the situation.

Well, you're the sheriff.

Mmm.

But Mayor, nevertheless,
all his hands have absconded
into the thickets.

It's just like it was
when the strike was on,
only now his son and
his overseer don't really seem to care.

Well, shoot,
if they all run off,
then there's nothing left
to oversee. Is there?

It's all because of that
goddamned war hero, Reese Paxton.

Son of a bitch.

I wanted him gone;

I got him gone.

Well, I want him dead and so
help me, I will get him dead.

Just have a little more
courage there.

Well, we didn't search
this whole town.

Didn't search the first place
I'd go if I got loose.

You'd risk everything for
a little bit of chicken.

Yeah, why not?

Stiff dick...

lead a man places he wouldn't go with

a double-barrel shotgun.

Wait your turn!

Ahem!

So how's the missus?

Good night.

Pardon the invasion.

Oh.

Now those are someone's
personal belongings.

Lord have mercy.

That's a gold half-Eagle,
just like I gave Kate.

New Orleans' mint presses
half-Eagles all day long.

Now come on, let's go.

Reese Paxton

give this to you?

- No.

- Huh?

- Hey!

- Come on.

Billy. Billy, come on now.

That's enough.

Where did you get this?

It was a customer.

A rich customer.

He owns a plantation.

Which plantation
was it?

I don't know.

He wanted something special.

He paid me extra.

I'm gonna give you
something extra special.

All right, come on.

There's no call for that.

- You want to stay, Sheriff?

- There's no call for this.

Hey!

Give me the cigar.

You seen Reese Paxton?

- Yes or no.

- No.

You are not doing this...

No, I swear!
You're not doing this!
- She ain't seen him.
- You all right, darling?
For God's sake, Amos,
be quick about it.
No.
Come on, Amos.
Come on now.
- Just leave her now. Don't...
- Let me see this.
Why don't you
leave her be?
Hey. I got two guns
cocked now.
Hmm?
Which one do you want me
to let go of first?
This is wrong.
You little thing.
How are you, hmm?
What has he done?
Well, how nice of you
to wait for me, brother.
Well, not riding home
by myself.
- Good night, Red.
- Good night.
The mayor was
looking for you.
Damn it.
Why didn't you tell him
what he wanted to know?
Hmm. He didn't
ask politely.
Turn towards me.
Turn towards me.
Ooh.
Is that
your family?
We were traveling.
Indians attacked...
with arrows and
painted faces,

just like you hear about.
When you're a child,
you think of fairy tales.
You just gotta
sit up for a while.
Let it lie.
Even my house niggers
have run off.
Goddamn slave uprising!
They're not slaves
anymore, Judge.
Daddy, why don't y'all
go home?
We'll find
the son of a bitch.
All you had to do was run a posse
when I told you to.
We wouldn't be in
this goddamned mess. Would we?
No.
I did the best I could.
That's why the room
was so crowded.
It was a bunch of old ladies
and little girls.
You know, people are saying...
folks are saying
that Billy started it;
maybe he should finish it.
If he can.
I want Reese Paxton.
We don't know
where he is!
Shh.
I ain't seen him.
Y'all living in
his cabin here.
Folks say it was haunted.
Please, master.
And what if there
were irregularities in Paxton's trial?
I put my faith
in the court.
So did Reese Paxton.

What if there were
extenuating circumstances?
- Mayor!
... circumstances!
You want to expedite
it in there?
See, now you've given
the warden a low opinion of me.
Oh!
Old lady, old man.
Whatever...
You all know what
an Arkansas Toothpick is?
Where is he?
Where is he?
Right behind you.
There may be two of us but there
are plenty of guns outside.
So we got you.
Not before I shoot one of you
sons of bitches in the belly.
I've seen it in the war.
A gut shot is a terrible
and painful way to die.
That's right,
you're a big hero.
All that made me
a hero
was a knack for killing...
a skill I'd almost forgotten
until you caused me
to remember.
I don't think the old couple
has cleared it yet.
They sound the bugle,
I shoot you
in the belly...
or the balls,
Billy boy.
Mayor, wanna expedite it
in there?
Hyah!
Damn!
Son of a bitch!

I'm taking charge.

From here on out,

this is

a military operation.

- Mount up!

- Get a horse!

Mayor, I'm starting to

worry about your daddy.

I think maybe I ought to

go and guard him.

Reese gets through here,

why, forget it. We're...

- Sheriff?

- Yeah?

Why don't you go on back

and find a good hiding space

behind the skirts of

the women and children?

Now that's good.

They would need

some protecting.

Um, pardon.

What kind of a chickenshit

operation you runnin'?

Through this holy land

of these infidels...

praise the Lord.

Let's go.

You stay together.

Don't go too far away.

- Look around!

- Show yourself.

- Where is Reese Paxton?

- We got a right to be here.

- Where's Reese Paxton?

- We got rights now!

- We ain't gonna wait all day.

- Where is he?

This is your

last chance!

Turn over Paxton now

or we start shooting!

- Paxton.

- Where is he?

Spread out.
We'll pick them off
one by one.
I got ya.
Paxton.
Paxton!
All right, fan out
and mop up.
Come on!
Get her!
Let 'em loose.
Let them do
the dirty work.
Come on.
This how it was
in the war?
Huh? You think
they got him?
Come on.
My daddy can't hardly
expect me to best reach Paxton
when he's got a whole colored
goddamned army behind him.
You know what I mean?
Ya! Come on.
Reese, watch out!
I'm all right.
I'm all right.
I'm out too.
Stay.
Don't get down
off that horse.
Why not, Daddy?
'Cause you
ain't smiling.
That means Paxton
is still alive.
Ezra and I don't want you
leading him here.
You a tired old man,
Daddy.
You got one foot
in the grave.
Soon enough, I'm gonna own

this whole plantation!
You kill Reese Paxton
and just maybe this old coot
will take you back into his bosom.
This is no time to be
taking a drink.
Just a taste to
steady my hand, Judge.
That your
cotton gin burning?
No, that's the mill, boy.
That's the cotton gin.
And that's
the plantation store.
Guess your theory about Reese only
going after Billy is a little outdated.
Shut up.
Did you see him?
I don't see shit.
Perhaps I should go
look for help?
He'd shoot you down.
Then what happens to me?
Judge, if he shoots me, what happens
to you is hardly my problem.
I can wait you out,
pick you off,
or burn you down!
Your point is?
This is the judge's
day to die.
And you, useless
son of a bitch, can go!
Don't forget
your duty, Sheriff.
Oh...
I was no more sheriff
than I was a lawyer.
You ain't going nowhere.
I hear there's an opening
for a preacher.
You wouldn't shoot a man
of the cloth, now would you?
Richmond, find me a horse!

Richmond!
Richmond!
Richmond!
Richmond!
I called you!
Come on, come on!
We gotta get on.
Reese!
You just made me
the richest man in Thibodaux!
Come on back here.
Let me thank you.
Come on!
Reese!
It's you and me now!
I'm gonna kill ya!
You hear me?
Are you packing to go?
You and I,
we'll go together.
There's nothing left of me.
I'm dead inside.
You go. You find
a safe place somewhere.
But I can't.
Hey!
Come out here, Reese!
Let's finish this
once and for all!
No weapons!
Just our bare hands!
Come on out here!
Let's finish it!
You a cowardly
son of a bitch!
Reese!
Reese.
You hidin' in
a whorehouse.
You devil.
You human after all.
Take a look at
my rock collection.
I ain't got

no guns, Reese.
No knives.
How about you?
That's right. Is it gonna be
bare knuckles or wrestling?
Huh? No bitin'.
No guns.
See, you didn't say
nothing about leather.
How about I'll just
take your head off?
Come on.
Now...
now what do you say,
Billy boy?
Hmm? Hmm?
No!
Paxton?
Mayor Paxton?
Mayor Paxton?
He's all mine now.