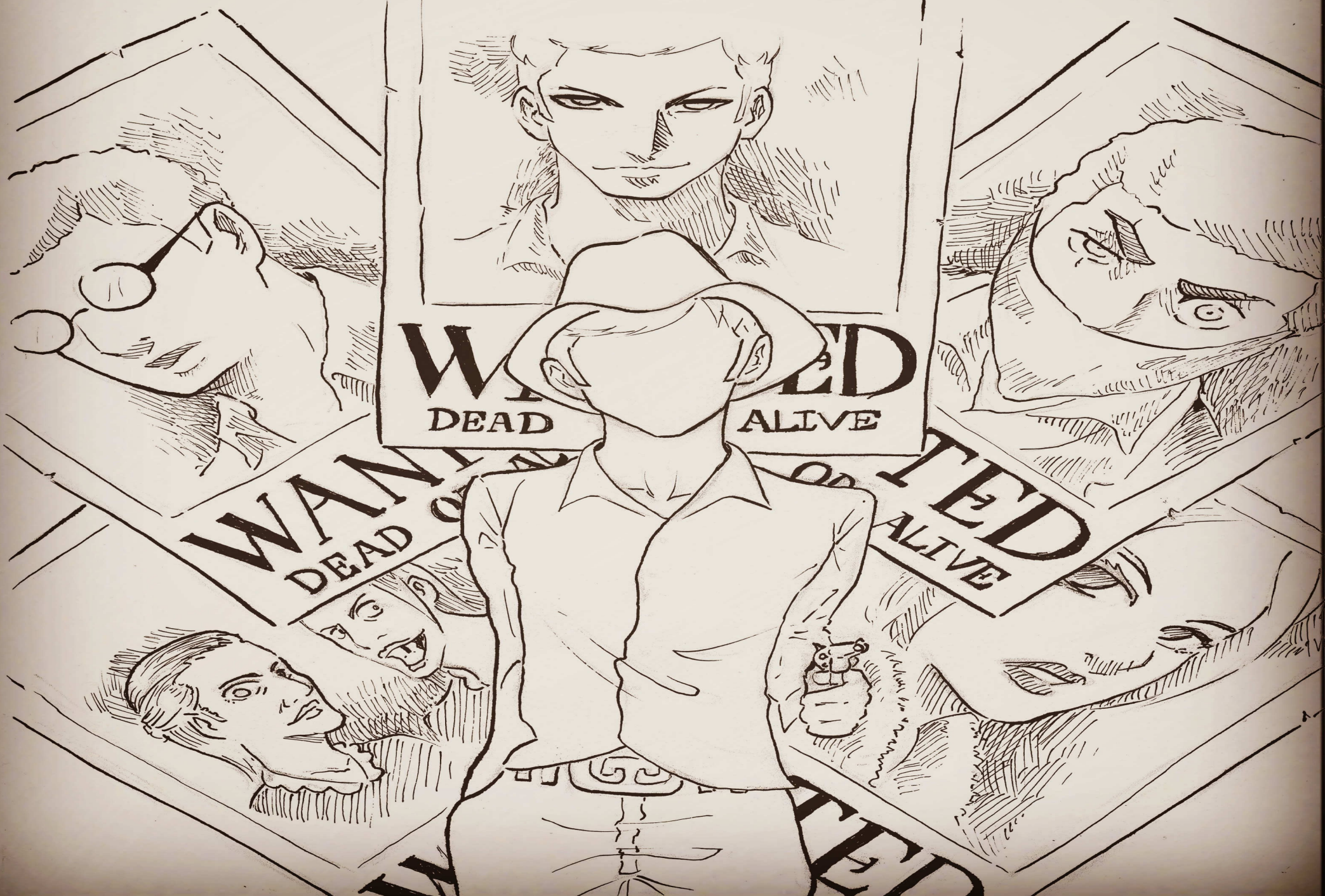


# TUMBLEWEED

BY: BRENT HOLLAND



# Tumbleweed

By: D. Brent Holland



*River Hedgepeth, Sam Weaver and Dallas Thompson perform as Theo, Tumbleweed and Jack in the premier of Tumbleweed at Laney High School in April of 2017*

**Cast List:****The Law:**

**Calvin Tanner:** An easterner new to Bannack, somewhat inept but a good person. Mid 20's.

**Jack Jackson:** The only surviving deputy at the start of the show. Also the town coroner, and a drunk.

**Theodore Crocker:** The 14 year old surviving son of the mayor. Is too young to be a deputy, but...

**The Outlaws:**

**Jim Mayfield:** The leader of the Innocents after the death of Henry Plummer.

**Christian Fields:** Young, not as rough as some of the other outlaws.

**Cyrus Skinner:** Former deputy of neighboring Dillon, not a nice guy.

**Hugo Cole:** Another member of the Innocents.

**Edna Black:** Tobacco chewing, ill tempered twin of Sophia.

**Sophia Black:** Outspoken, brash and generally unpleasant.

**Missy Simmons:** Attractive, refined. Not what you would expect from an outlaw.

**The Townspeople of Bannack:**

**Geraldine Crocker:** The wife of the deceased Mayor, colludes with the Innocents illegally.

**Jessie Crocker:** The love interest. Attractive, strong willed. 20 years old.

**Kate McMullin:** Owner of the local inn/saloon. Sarcastic.

**Sunny Whistler:** Bartender at McMullin's saloon.

**Anne Brown:** Waitress and do-it-all at McMullin's.

**Betsy Carver:** Town Gossip, generally means well.

**The Natives:**

**Chief Raging Bear:** (Manuel) In reality the chief and his daughter are Mexicans who have come north. They make their way by acting as wise men/trackers for the less educated Bannack townspeople.

**Gentle Flower:** (Rosa) The more desirable, respectable, well mannered daughter of Chief Raging Bear.

**Prickly Cactus:** (Teresa) Fiery, undisciplined, currently a hostage of the innocents who have discovered her father does not want her back.

*(The Lights come up on the citizens of Bannack, Montana watching something offstage. It's the hanging of their Sheriff, Henry Plummer, who was covertly the head of the band of outlaws who call themselves "The Innocents." There is a hush to the crowd)*

*(Theo Crocker Rushes in)*

**Theo:** *(excited)* Did I miss anything?

**Kate:** Theo, I know your daddy told you that you were not to be out here for this.

**Theo:** *(innocently)* He did?

**Kate:** *(not buying it)* He most certainly did.

**Theo:** Well, I guess it's a good thing I'm so short. Can't imagine he can see me from way up there.

*(Sunny laughs)*

**Kate:** Don't encourage him.

**Sunny:** I ain't hear nobody encouraging anything.

*(Theo and Sunny make eye contact and laugh)*

**Theo:** So, they're really gonna do it.

**Sunny:** It would seem so.

**Kate:** Right before they hung Sid White, he told the whole story.

**Theo:** *(Excited again)* I heard! He said Sheriff Plummer was the boss of it all.

**Sunny:** I still can't believe it.

**Kate:** Theo, you really should go on home, your daddy...

**Theo:** Shhh... he's talking.

**Voice of Ben Crocker:** By the Power vested in me, by the territory of Montana, The accused, Ned Ray, Buck Stinson, and Henry Plummer have been sentenced to swing by the neck until dead. Do you have any last words?

**Theo:** We're hanging Ned too? I always liked Ned.

**Kate:** Shhh!

**Voice of Henry Plummer:** You can burn in Hell, Ben.

**Voice of Ben Crocker:** May God have mercy on your souls.

*(The Sound of the Gallows is heard- The Audience Gasps)*

**Theo:** *(totally intrigued as the others are mortified)* Do they always wiggle around like that?

**Kate:** Shhh!!

**Theo:** I heard sometimes their heads pop off. Is that gonna happen here?

**Sunny:** *(irritated)* Hush child.

**Theo:** *(indicating)* Is that one...that wet spot... is that guy pissing on himself?

**Kate:** Theo! Watch your language!

**Theo:** *(not hearing)* You think he woulda taken care of that before he got out here.

*(Kate and Sunny look at him)*

**Theo:** What?

*(silence)*

**Theo:** I was really hoping to see a head pop off.

**Sunny:** That's it! *(She grabs Theo by the arm)*

**Theo:** What??

**Sunny:** We've seen enough of the hanging...

**Theo:** I wanna stay!

**Sunny:** Well, folks in hell want ice water.

**Theo:** What does that have to do with me???

*(Sunny has drug Theo off stage, as they leave Calvin Tanner takes over the spot where they stood. He, Kate and the others watch in silence for a few seconds.)*

**Calvin:** *(with finality)* Well, that's that.

**Kate:** *(she doesn't know him)* Beg your pardon?

**Calvin:** *(looking at the bodies)* They're dead.

**Kate:** I reckon so.

*(an awkward silence)*

**Calvin:** My name's Calvin. Calvin Tanner... folks say that you're Kate McMullin. That true?

**Kate:** Depends on why you're asking Calvin Calvin Tanner.

**Calvin:** *(dry)* Cute. Well, Mrs. McMullin, If you are indeed that person, You're the owner of the Inn over yonder right?

**Kate:** *(still watching the hanging)* Could be.

**Calvin:** Well, I'm new to Bannack... just arrived about an hour ago.

**Kate:** Good for you.

**Calvin:** *(letting that one go)* Good for me indeed! And I was wondering if you had any room at your fine establishment.

**Kate:** *(dubious)* Who told you it was a fine establishment?

**Calvin:** *(getting irritated)* Just answer the question, do you have a room?

**Kate:** I may. How long you looking to stay in Bannack?

**Calvin:** Depends on how much Gold I can scare up. A month, maybe longer. I'm just a tumbleweed these days.

**Kate:** Well Mr. Tumbleweed, It's a dollar and forty cents for a month...if you still want to stay around after that we can talk about it.

*(Jessie Crocker enters)*

**Jessie:** Hey Kate, have you seen Theo?

**Kate:** Sunny just took him, probably headed back to the saloon. Should you be out here? *(indicating the men about to hang)* What with Buck and all?



**Jessie:** I'm fine Kate. I just need to find Theo. Daddy is gonna kill him if he catches him out there.

*(Calvin is obviously impressed with Jessie, as she is very attractive)*

**Calvin:** Howdy ma'am.

**Jessie:** *(seeing she interrupted)* I'm sorry Kate, it was rude of me just to come up on you like that, I don't think we've met before, Mr...

**Kate:** Tumbleweed

**Jessie:** Tumbleweed? *(trying to be nice)* Well, that's an interesting name.

**Calvin:** It's actually Calvin, my friends call me Cal though. Cal Tanner.

**Jessie:** *(Shaking hands with him)* Nice to meet you Calvin, I'm Jessie Crocker. *(To Kate)* The Saloon you say? Ok. I will check there. Thanks Kate!

**Kate:** Any time!

**Calvin:** *(Calling after her)* Nice meeting you!

*(she is gone)*

**Calvin:** *(totally enthralled)* Good God, she's beautiful Bannack may be even better than advertised.

**Kate:** Don't get your hopes up Romeo, that's not a flower for picking.

**Calvin:** What do you mean by that?

**Kate:** She was engaged.

**Calvin:** Was?

**Kate:** To Buck Stinson.

**Calvin:** Who?

**Kate:** The man who shot Willie Crawford, the deputy.

**Calvin:** Sorry... *(indicating himself)* New guy...

**Kate:** Right. Well, Willie was a deputy and apparently Buck, who we all thought was a stand up guy, was apparently a member of *(she whispers)* The Innocents.

**Calvin:** The innocents?

**Kate:** *(still not wanting to say it too loudly)* Yes.

**Calvin:** So, Her ex fiancé is a member of a group of innocents.

**Kate:** Not a group of innocents, *the* innocents. And Was, not is.

**Calvin:** Was?

**Kate:** *(points to the men swinging)* He's the guy on the left.

**Calvin:** *(almost giving up)* Gotcha. So who are the other two?

**Kate:** That's the Sheriff and the other deputy.

**Calvin:** *(dry again)* Of course it is.

**Kate:** *(sighing)* Ok... I guess that's confusing. You see the Innocents are a gang...the name is a bit misleading if you know what I'm saying. The Sheriff...that dead guy over there was the old leader

of the innocents... now apparently Jim Mayfield is. Young Jessie Crocker was engaged to Buck Stinson, on the left, but when all this came out a couple of weeks ago it got complicated.

**Calvin:** Sounds like there's plenty of reason to find a replacement. Something to look forward to here in Bannack. *(he smiles)*

**Kate:** Don't get your hopes up.

**Calvin:** *(changing topics)* Uh huh... So about that room...

**Kate:** Yeah, the room. Cash up front, you understand.

**Calvin:** Yes ma'am.

**Kate:** Then follow me Mr. Tumbleweed and we can get you all set up.

*(There is the sound of Gunfire. The people look around, confused and nervous)*

**Kate:** What was that?

**Calvin:** *(earnestly)* I think it was a gunshot

*(Kate looks at him like he is an idiot)*

**Calvin:** Then why did you ask??

*(another gun shot, a member of the crowd drops dead)*

**Kate:** Damn it all. *(she is now ducking)*

**Calvin:** What?

**Kate:** That corpse over there was Jeremiah Elmore. He never paid his danged bar tab.

*(Another gun shot...the crowd is fleeing as Cyrus, Christian, Sophia and Edna enter the stage. They are wearing bandanas over their face and are obviously outlaws)*

**Cyrus:** We're too late Christian, he's already swinging. *(He points to where the gallows would be)*

**Christian:** How long has he been up there? *(to the crowd)* I said, HOW long has he been up there. *(He points his gun at the crowd)*

**Betsy:** Just a few minutes sir.

**Christian:** Edna, Sophie...go cut him down. Be quick. *(They go to leave, but stop when Jessie steps forward and speaks)*

**Jessie:** They're already dead Christian.

*(Christian looks stunned)*

**Christian:** I'm...I'm not...

**Jessie:** I guess you think that if I can't see your mouth that you become all unrecognizable... You sat next to me through six years of primary school, you think I'm stupid?

**Edna:** Shoot her.

**Christian:** *(to Edna)* Shut up! *(to Jessie, angry)* Why you have to go and do that Jessie? Dang it.

**Cyrus:** We ain't got time for this Chris, Jim said we were here to get Henry and go!

**Jessie:** Is that You Cyrus?

*(Cyrus pulls of his bandana and swears)*

**Edna:** Can someone just shoot her?

**Christian:** Go grab Henry and the boys, NOW!

**Sophia:** Hold your dang horses! They look dead.

**Edna:** Do we take them down if they're dead?

**Christian:** (*pondering*) Jim didn't say.

**Cyrus:** I say we cut 'em down and take 'em. Edna, Sophie go cut 'em down.

**Edna:** I don't know about that Cyrus...

**Sophia:** Is Henry the one in the middle (*disgusted*) I mean, he peed on himself.

**Christian:** (*Angry*) So??

**Sophia:** I don't wanna touch him. You do it.

**Christian:** I'm keeping my gun on these here folks so they don't get any ideas.

**Cyrus:** (*obviously not wanting to touch them either*) And I'm helping him.

**Edna:** I don't see why we would need to cut them down if they're dead.

(*At this moment the scene freezes on stage and the light comes up on the office of the mayor. Geraldine Crocker is sitting at her husband's desk as Jim Mayfield enters*)

**Jim:** (*coldly*) Nice to see you again, Mrs. Crocker.

**Geraldine:** (*flustered*) Good God, Jim... you just scared the life out of me!

**Jim:** Thought I would come by to firm up a few details...

**Geraldine:** (*excitedly*) Is he dead? Is that what the gunfire is all about?

**Jim:** If he isn't dead yet he will be, I keep my word Mrs. Crocker. Hugo and Missy were taking care of it personally...the others, well...they're setting up a distraction.

**Geraldine:** How about Jeremiah Elmore?

**Jim:** Edna is taking care of him.

**Geraldine:** Have you checked it out for sure?

**Jim:** Just like the chief said... about 35 miles north east, the creek is there and there's gold alright. (*he reaches in his pocket and pulls a sizeable golden nugget out*)

**Geraldine:** (*inspecting the rock*) You got this from there? Did you give the chief back his daughter?

**Jim:** He wouldn't take her back! Hell, I actually got the information about the creek because I threatened to leave her with him. He started crying, and told me he would tell me anything if I would just keep her.

**Geraldine:** (*impressed*) Is she that bad?

**Jim:** (*Giving her a look that says she is that bad*) Words cannot describe it.

**Geraldine:** But this (*she indicates the gold rock*) came from there?



**Jim:** Yup. And there's more, I'm sure of it. Jeremiah Elmore has the claim, but he never had the money to build on it and undoubtedly had no idea there could be gold on the land.

**Geraldine:** Neither would have we if Chief Raging Bear hadn't run his mouth at the saloon. That slip of his is going to make us rich.

**Jim:** How long can you stall the paperwork letting his next of kin know he died?

**Geraldine:** A month, maybe two. He has a brother in Dillon but they aren't too close. If he comes for a visit it may make it difficult. There's an election in the spring so we will need to be finished with all of this before then for sure.

**Jim:** (*contemplating*) Should we kill the brother?

**Geraldine:** No. I don't think so... he has more family in Dillon and we can't kill them all.

**Jim:** Could we offer to buy the land?

**Geraldine:** If we discovered Gold on it shortly after the suspicions would be too much. It's better for us to stick to the plan. I hate we have to kill my poor ol' Ben. He's a good man, but he takes his job as mayor too seriously. We could never pull this off with him snooping around.

**Jim:** It's taken care of. Just keep up your end of the deal and this will all go smoothly. Stall the paperwork and I will get the men to mine her dry. Once we have mined her out, we can ride off into the sunset.

**Geraldine:** (*playful, but stern*) Now shoo on out of here. I've got to get busy trying convince the residents of Bannack to allow me to serve as mayor until the fall election.

**Jim:** You have a plan for that?

**Geraldine:** (*smoothly*) Of course I do.

**Jim:** (*He moves in and kisses Geraldine*) and that's why I love you.

**Geraldine:** (*being playful*) I can think of other reasons you love me...

(*Another gun shot*)

**Jim:** That's my cue, most of the gang thinks we're here to save Henry, and I can imagine they are trying to figure out what to do since we were too late. (*he laughs*)

**Geraldine:** (*laughing also*) Go then.

**Jim:** Saw your daughter on the ride in, hopefully she'll be smart enough to stay out of the way out there.

**Geraldine:** Who cares? Anyways, she's my step daughter. Surely I don't look old enough to be her real mama...

**Jim:** Surely... (*he leaves*)

(*as he leaves the office, the scene outside jumps to life again*)

**Christian:** Well go check if he's dead, if he's dead... YOU figure it out. If he isn't then cut him down!

(*as Edna and Sophia leave*)

**Sophia:** I swear to God he better be alive and able to cut his own self down. I'm not touchin' some piss covered man. I don't care if it is Henry.

*(They leave and then Edna runs back on)*

**Edna:** Shoot the girl.

**Christian:** Just go!

**Edna:** I mean it Christian, we don't need any more attention than we already have.

**Cyrus:** She's got a point there Chris.

**Christian:** Then you shoot her!

**Cyrus:** I will! Now get out of here Edna and let me get this over with.

**Edna:** No way. I don't think you'll do it.

**Cyrus:** Danged if I won't.

**Jessie:** Cyrus! I used to keep your little sister!

**Cyrus:** *(frustrated)* Shut up Jessie!

**Jessie:** You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

*(Cyrus points his gun at Jessie)*

**Voice of Sophia:** *(offstage)* OH MY GOD! I have just touched man piss. I have man piss on my hand.

*(Hugo and Missy run on stage, they are also wearing bandanas as a part of the outlaw gang.)*

**Hugo:** We've gotta go! Things have taken a turn...

**Jessie:** Hugo Cole?

**Hugo:** Uh... no... I'm not...

**Jessie:** Yes it is! You are Hugo! Is everyone I've ever known a criminal now??

**Hugo:** Ah crap! Dang on Jessie... how'd you know?

**Missy:** No time for that, we have to get out of here, The Mayor's dead.

**Jessie:** The Mayor...*(shocked)* My father... You killed my Daddy?

*(she moves in to hit someone, anyone... and then all five guns are on her. There is a moment of silence.)*

**Voice of Sophia:** *(Off stage)* It's not just piss either, Henry's done taken a dump on himself! This is gross. I'm not doing it.

**Christian:** We're leaving Sophia! Grab your horse!

**Jessie:** *(to Christian choking up)* Christian Fields... you killed my daddy.

**Christian:** I ain't kill anyone Jessie... that wasn't the plan we were just here for Henry.

**Edna:** Enough talking *(she aims to shoot)*

*(Calvin jumps in front of her)*

**Calvin:** Now hold on there a second.

**Edna:** Who the hell are you?

**Calvin:** *(not so keen on giving his name)* Just a tumbleweed... Now, you don't want to go and shoot this young lady now do you?

**Edna:** Why wouldn't I? We don't need witnesses...

**Calvin:** Well, I'm pretty sure that if you kill her, you are going to have to kill all of us.

**Betsy:** *(To Kate)* What did he just say?

**Edna:** Yeah... what did you just say?

**Calvin:** Because I think everyone here just heard that Christian Fields, Cyrus...uh...

**Jessie:** Skinner. Cyrus Skinner and Hugo Cole.

**Calvin:** That Christian Fields, Cyrus Skinner and Hugo Cole are a part of your gang... *(he has said this last sentence pretty loudly)* Did anyone here not hear that?

*(no one says anything)*

**Calvin:** You *(he points to Betsy)* What's his name?

**Betsy:** *(startled)* Uh... Christian Fields?

**Calvin:** Correct! *(to Kate)* and him? *(points to Cyrus)*

**Kate:** *(seeing the point of this)* Cyrus! Cyrus Skinner!

**Cyrus:** *(To Calvin)* You worthless four flusher!

**Christian:** What's your game here Tumbleweed?

**Calvin:** I'm just coppering my bets that you won't go and try to shoot us all.

**Missy:** We may have to shoot them all, Christian.

**Edna:** *(pointing at Missy)* What she said.

*(there is a silent moment and Christian lowers his gun)*

**Christian:** Innocents, mount up.

**Edna:** *(angry)* We're leaving??

**Christian:** Unless you want to shoot the whole town, that's exactly what we're gonna do.

*(The Christian, Edna, Missy, Hugo and Cyrus go to leave)*

**Christian:** Oh, and Mr. Tumbleweed...

**Calvin:** Yes?

**Christian:** *(he pulls in close)* We'll be seeing you again. I can spot a bunko artist from a mile off. Next time you won't get as lucky.

*(The outlaws leave)*

**Jessie:** Daddy! *(She runs off in a panic over her father)*

**Kate:** *(following her)* Jessie!

**Betsy:** *(to Calvin)* Mr. Tumbleweed?

**Calvin:** *(Realizing she is talking to him)* Yes?

**Betsy:** That was a mighty brave thing you did there.

**Betsy:** I mean, at first I thought you may be a little mental... you know? I thought you were gonna get us all killed.

**Calvin:** Yeah, sorry about that...

**Betsy:** Don't be! I see what you were doing now and it sure was brave.

**Calvin:** *(kind of embarrassed)* It was nothing, really.

**Betsy:** Well, I think that saving young Ms. Jessie was the most gallant thing I have ever seen.

*(the crowd starts to disperse)*

**Calvin:** Well, thank you. I guess I just thought it was the right thing to do.

**Betsy:** Are you hungry Mr...

**Calvin:** Tanner...

**Betsy:** *(putting it together)* Tumbleweed Tanner

**Calvin:** It's actually... *(then he stops)*

**Betsy:** What?

**Calvin:** Nothing... Tumbleweed Tanner it is.

**Betsy:** Are you hungry Mr. Tanner?

**Calvin:** Yes ma'am, actually I am.

**Betsy:** Well, I'm Betsy Carver and I would be honored to buy you dinner at McMullins if you would allow me.

**Calvin:** Kate McMullin's? The Saloon and Inn? I was headed there anyway, so thank you very kindly.

**Betsy:** Hopefully Sunny will be there cooking now... Kate may be a while. Poor Jessie.

**Calvin:** Her father was the mayor?

**Betsy:** Sure was... and a good one too. He was the one that figured out the Sheriff, Henry Plummer was the boss of the Gang of Innocents. First we lose the sheriff, then the Mayor... what's Bannack gonna do?

*(They go to leave, then Calvin indicates the dead body)*

**Calvin:** What do we do about him?

**Betsy:** That's Jeremiah Elmore. *(disgusted)* What a chiseler. He still owed me a dollar and a half for that saddle he bought from me.

**Calvin:** Do we just leave him there?

**Betsy:** Coroner will be by to pick him up soon I guess.

**Jack:** *(who is obviously drunk)* I'm here Betsy!

**Betsy:** Then get to doing your job, Jack!

**Jack:** *(disgusted)* Is this that coffee boiling Jeremiah Elmore?

**Betsy:** Sure is!

**Jack:** *(grumbling)* Owed me fifty cents! I wonder if he had it on him. *(he goes to checking Jeremiah's pants and sees Calvin)* Who are you?

**Betsy:** This is Tumbleweed Tanner! He's just arrived in Bannack today! *(whispering confidentially)* He just scared off the entire band of innocents by his lonesome!

**Jack:** *(dubious)* Did he now?

**Betsy:** And this is Jack Jackson, our sometimes coroner and sometimes deputy.

**Jack:** I'm the only deputy now.

**Betsy:** *(upsetting thought)* Ooh. That's right. What with Henry, Sid and Buck...

**Calvin:** Pleased to meet you Mr. Jackson. *(he goes to shake hands but to do so, Jack has to get his hands out of Jeremiah's pants)*

**Jack:** It's just Jack. Pleased to meet you too... Tumbleweed.

**Calvin:** *(awkwardly)* It's a nickname.

**Jack:** You don't say.

**Betsy:** Well, dinner isn't getting any hotter! Let's get on to McMullin's! *(They go to leave)*

*(black out)*

*(At McMullins, a saloon/restaurant and inn. It's the happening spot of Bannack in 1864. Sunny, the bartender is sitting at a table with Theo, who is obviously upset. Anne, the waitress is with them as Betsy and Calvin walk in)*

**Sunny:** Howdy Mrs. Betsy... if you're here for supper it's gonna be a bit. *(she indicates that she is sitting with Theo)*

**Anne:** I can get you something to drink in the meantime, stew should be ready in just a bit.

**Calvin:** I could really go for a beer.

**Betsy:** Whatever Mr. Tanner would like this evening is on me.

**Calvin:** *(smiling)* Thank you again, ma'am.

*(They sit at a table as Geraldine walks in)*

**Geraldine:** *(seeing Theo)* There you are! *(with a little less sympathy than you would expect)* Well, I guess you heard...

*(Theo nods)*

**Sunny:** I just can't believe that Mr. Ben is dead. What are we going to do without a mayor?

**Geraldine:** Well, there's an election in the spring, but until then I'm not sure. I need to talk to some of the business owners. Ben had a plan for Bannack and I would hate to see it... *(she acts like she is about to cry)* I would hate to think it wouldn't happen now that he's gone.

*(everyone looks stricken)*

**Sunny:** You could be mayor Mrs. Geraldine!

**Geraldine:** *(acting as if that was not her plan all along)* I hadn't thought of that Sunny... but it's not my place. My husband was the mayor and I am...was... just his wife.

**Sunny:** But you know what's going on better than anyone!

**Anne:** That's true! You would make a great mayor!

**Geraldine:** Well, that's a discussion for a different day. *(seeing Calvin)* Are you Mr. Tanner?

*(Calvin had only been half paying attention while nursing his beer)*

**Calvin:** Excuse me?

**Betsy:** (*making introductions*) Mr. Tanner, this is Geraldine Crocker.

**Calvin:** (*sincerely*) I am sorry for your loss ma'am.

**Geraldine:** Thank you very much. I heard what you did for my step daughter today. You saved her life and I owe you a debt a gratitude.

**Calvin:** (*embarrassed*) it was nothing really.

**Betsy:** (*telling it like she saw it*) It was certainly not nothing!

**Calvin:** But it was... I mean, one second I was trying to keep from getting shot, and the next I was standing there in front of her.

**Geraldine:** Well, you have done my family a big service Mr. Tanner.

**Betsy:** He goes by Tumbleweed!

**Calvin:** Well, actually...

**Theo:** (*still teary eyed speaking to Geraldine*) Who's gonna kill the man that killed my dad?

**Geraldine:** I am sure the territorial governor will send us a new sheriff soon.

**Theo:** That could take weeks!

**Geraldine:** I'm sorry Theo...

**Anne:** What are we going to do about a sheriff until then? Is it even a sure thing the governor will send a new one?

**Geraldine:** Ideally we can convince one of the men of Bannack to fill the spot, but that doesn't look too promising.

**Betsy:** (*Suddenly*) I bet Tumbleweed could do it!

**Calvin:** Do what?

**Anne:** That's a great idea!

**Calvin:** What is?

**Betsy:** You could be the sheriff!

**Calvin:** Me? No way... I wouldn't have any idea what to do.

**Anne:** (*joining in*) Actually it wouldn't be a bad idea really... he has to be better than any of the men we have around here right now.

**Sunny:** That's not saying much.

**Anne:** And he would certainly be better than Jack.

**Sunny:** Not saying much there either.

**Calvin:** Thank you for your consideration, but seriously...

**Betsy:** (*to Anne*) You should have seen him when those bandits came in today, he was so brave! When he stood up, they literally ran from Bannack!

**Calvin:** That's not exactly true!

**Geraldine:** Ladies! We hardly know Mr. Tanner at all and while the job does pay \$35 dollars a month plus room and board, there is no reason to think he would be interested.

**Calvin:** (*they have his attention*) 35 dollars a month? (*a pause*) But even so, I think you fine ladies highly over estimate my worth.

**Sunny:** (*Goes behind the bar*) I even have Henry's old badge here... Jack left here when he passed out the other night.

**Geraldine:** (*with finality*) Ladies! Enough, I am sure we will be fine waiting until the regional governor replaces Henry with a man of his own choosing!

**Betsy:** But if Tumbleweed wanted the job?

(*The next two lines are at the same time*)

**Calvin:** I don't.

**Geraldine:** Then I guess it would be in our best interest to let him have it.

(*a short pause*)

**Geraldine:** Although the decision is not mine to make of course.

(*Kate and Jessie enter. Jessie has been crying*)

**Geraldine:** I'm sorry Jessie...

**Jessie:** (*lashing out*) Don't go acting like you care about me just because my dad just died. You've been nothing but a nasty, horrible...

**Kate:** (*putting a hand on her*) Jessie... don't

**Jessie:** (*finishing*) Gold digger! Well, I guess you got what you've wanted now. He's dead. (*She starts crying*) And the men that did it just rode out of town, no one stopped them and no one is going to stop them!

**Geraldine:** Now Jessie...

**Jessie:** (*building steam*) Making Henry Plummer Sheriff was your idea! You're the one that set me up with that Rotten Buck Stinson! Daddy didn't trust either of them and now look what's happened! Every sheriff and deputy within fifty miles of Bannack has either been killed or is swinging out in the square right now! Who's left to kill the men that killed daddy?

**Anne:** Well...there's Jack.

(*Jessie shoots her a look*)

**Theo:** (*seething*) I'll kill them.

**Sunny:** (*whispering*) hush child.

**Theo:** Well, hell's bells...somebody has to try!

**Betsy:** I still think Tumbleweed could do it.

**Jessie:** Who?

**Anne:** Mr. Tanner...the man that jumped up in front of you this afternoon!

**Jessie:** (*seeing him...confused*) Your name is Tumbleweed?

(*Calvin looks at Kate, who just shrugs*)

**Jessie:** Is it true, Mr. Tanner that you're gonna be the new Sheriff?

**Calvin:** (*Stammering*) Well... I...

**Jessie:** That would be incredible! Mr. Tanner! That's so brave! You're exactly what we need! (*She moves towards him with the most desperate look in her eyes*)



**Geraldine:** Now, now Jessie. Don't get all excited. We all just met Mr. Tanner today.

**Jessie:** I think you would be perfect! You would get the men who killed my father wouldn't you?

*(There is a pause)*

**Jessie:** *(with doe eyes)* Wouldn't you?

*(At this point music starts playing and everything moves in slow motions. For the song selection I would choose something that is not from the time period or style. For our production I used "Temperature" by Sean Paul. So...as the music starts Calvin is obviously captivated Jessie and touches her on the chin as a way of saying "anything for you." Then he walks to the bar and grabs the badge Sunny put there. He puts it on and everyone starts to cheer. He then looks back at Jessie who blows him a kiss, winks and gestures and then walks out of the saloon. The music stops playing a few seconds later and all returns to full speed. The cheering dies down as Calvin re-enters)*

**Calvin:** Sorry... kind of got caught up in the moment there. *(he looks at Kate)* I'm staying here tonight right?

*(everyone kind of just stares at him)*

**Kate:** That was the plan...

**Calvin:** Good then. *(everyone is kind of awkward.)* I guess let's all eat then. *(To Anne)* Is that soup about ready?

*(Black out)*

*(outside of Rattlesnake Ranch, Hugo is standing guard)*

**Hugo:** *(pulling his gun as Geraldine approaches)* Don't take another step, who are you?

**Geraldine:** You know darn well who I am Hugo, I'm here to see Jim.

**Hugo:** Sorry Mrs. Geraldine, no one goes in without the password.

**Geraldine:** Password?

**Hugo:** *(Thinking that's her guess)* That's not it.

**Geraldine:** Not what?

**Hugo:** The password.

**Geraldine:** *(confused)* I'm sorry... I'm not sure I understand.

**Hugo:** You see, I asked for a password and you said "password." I was just informing you that our password is not password.

**Geraldine:** I see.

**Hugo:** That's not it either.

**Geraldine:** Hugo, go get Jim.

**Hugo:** *(obstinate)* Not it.

**Geraldine:** It's important!

**Hugo:** Try again.

**Geraldine:** *(getting angrier)* I swear it Hugo, you're gonna make me shoot you aren't you?

*(Jim enters)*

**Jim:** That won't be necessary, what's the problem Hugo?

**Hugo:** She doesn't know the password, Jim.

**Jim:** Well that is easily remedied, Mrs. Geraldine, the passphrase is "we are innocent."

**Hugo:** (*fiery*) Dagnabbit Jim! You can't just go and tell someone who comes up our blasted password! That defeats the whole dang purpose of having one!

**Jim:** But Hugo, we all know Geraldine and know she is with us.

**Hugo:** But what if it ain't really Geraldine? Ever think of that?

(*Both look at him like he is stupid*)

**Hugo:** (*calmer, but defensive*) It could happen.

**Jim:** (*leading Geraldine past him*) You are doing a fantastic job Hugo, thank you so much for your vigilance.

(*They are about to pass*)

**Hugo:** (*clearing his throat*) Beg your pardon, but I still can't let you pass without the phrase.

**Geraldine:** For the love of God...

**Jim:** It's "We are innocent!" There, now put your gun away.

**Hugo:** The rule is Jim, that she has to say it.

(*The is an awkward moment as this sinks in*)

**Geraldine:** Fine. "We are innocent."

(*Hugo puts his gun away*)

**Hugo:** Thank you. You may proceed.

**Geraldine:** (*exasperated*) Thank you!

(*Hugo exits as Geraldine and Jim continue speaking*)

**Geraldine:** We may have a problem.

**Jim:** What now?

**Geraldine:** Did Christian tell you about the man who stood up to him at the hanging today?

**Jim:** Yes. What of it?

**Geraldine:** That man has applied to be Sheriff and the businessmen all back him and want him installed now.

**Jim:** But Bannack has no mayor, he can't be installed can he?

**Geraldine:** That's just the problem. The business owners are looking to me... which is what we want. And they want me to decide, take action and sign off as him as the Sheriff.

**Jim:** I'm sorry, I'm not seeing how this is a problem.

**Geraldine:** What if this new Sheriff goes nosing around in the claim we want to stake?

**Jim:** (*realizing*) Ah... I see now. But he's new to the area right?

**Geraldine:** As far as I know, yes.

**Jim:** Then this is just a minor setback. If we asked the governor for a new Sheriff, it may have taken a few weeks, but we would have

eventually gotten someone who knew the area and had connections. This is going to be much better for us I think.

**Geraldine:** How so?

**Jim:** *(plotting)* Well, you go ahead and have him and that drunk deputy get on the job of bringing us in. Tell him to go talk to chief Raging Bear about our location. I will tell Raging Bear what to say and we will have this new Sheriff going all over the Montana Territory looking for us. We could turn weeks into months. By the time anyone figures out what's going on, we will be on our way to California.

**Geraldine:** With a cart full of gold!

**Jim:** *(Moving in on her)* You in a hurry?

**Geraldine:** Not so much.

**Jim:** Well let's head on up to the ranch then.

*(they go to leave, as the lights fade...)*

**Hugo:** *(all over again)* Who goes there? Password!

*(black out)*

*(The next morning, at the McMullin's Saloon. Calvin is at a table with Betsy and Anne Sunny is at the bar)*

**Betsy:** So, Mr. Tanner...

**Calvin:** *(full of himself)* Just call me Tumbleweed, Betsy.

*(Betsy, and Anne Swoon. Calvin notices that Sunny didn't react)*

**Calvin:** What's the matter with you?

**Sunny:** What?

**Calvin:** You didn't swoon.

**Sunny:** Was I supposed to?

**Anne:** *(exasperated)* Sunny!

**Sunny:** *(defensive)* It's an honest question!

**Calvin:** I dunno. When I've been the sheriff of other towns... bigger towns than Bannack... people just swooned. I guess I kind of expect it.

**Sunny:** You're not my type.

**Anne:** Not your type?

**Sunny:** Plus, no offense Mr. Sheriff, but you haven't done anything worth swooning over yet.

**Betsy:** But he was so brave yesterday!

**Anne:** So Brave!

**Sunny:** Yeah, well a blind hog finds an acorn every now and again. Look... It's not that I'm doubting you, but at this point I don't have any faith left for sheriffs or deputies.

**Calvin:** *(confidently)* Well, I plan to change that.

**Sunny:** And when you do...when you bring in members of that gang that killed Ben Crocker, then maybe I'll swoon.

**Calvin:** I'll take that bet.

**Anne:** (*Changing topics*) So, Mr... Tumbleweed. You were sheriff before?

**Calvin:** (*lying*) Sure was, before I felt the call to move out west.

**Anne:** Big towns?

**Calvin:** Ever heard of Wickford Village, Rhode Island?

**Anne:** No!

**Betsy:** Is it big?

**Calvin:** (*Blustering*) Is it big? (*he laughs*) There are buildings in Wickford Village bigger than all of Bannack!

**Betsy:** (*amazed*) Amazing!

**Anne:** Incredible!

**Sunny:** (*skeptical*) How is that even possible?

**Anne:** Hush Sunny!

**Sunny:** No seriously, I mean, Bannack's not gigantic or anything, but that would have to be a really big building.

**Calvin:** It is, I used to live there.

(*The girls, minus Sunny swoon. Just then the door opens and Geraldine, followed by Jessie walk in*)

**Geraldine:** I'm glad you're still here. (*She puts papers on his table*)

**Calvin:** What's this?

**Geraldine:** The citizens of Bannack have decided and we want you as our new Sheriff.

(*the girls cheer*)

**Calvin:** Well, thank you. (*he pauses*)

**Geraldine:** You do still want the job don't you?

**Calvin:** (*stunned at how quick the papers came back*) Well, sure. Being Sheriff of Bannack will be nothing next to the sprawling metropolis of Wickford Village, Rhode Island! What are these other papers?

**Geraldine:** Warrants.

**Calvin:** (*clueless*) What are warrants?

(*The girls laugh*)

**Betsy:** Mr. Tumbleweed, you really are too much!

**Anne:** (*laughing*) Acting like he didn't know warrants are papers for arresting criminals!

(*Calvin forcedly joins along in the laughter*)

**Calvin:** I was just testing you!

(*the girls laugh again*)

**Geraldine:** You will see there are seven there. All known members of the innocents and all very dangerous. I would recommend trying to isolate them one at a time if you can.

**Calvin:** Ok. Where do I start?

**Geraldine:** Do you know of Chief Raging Bear?

**Calvin:** No. Should I have?

**Geraldine:** He's the chief of Tamale Indians.

**Calvin:** *(confused)* Tamale?

**Geraldine:** Yes, Tamale. It's indian talk.

**Calvin:** Ok...

**Geraldine:** I take it you know where the jail is?

**Calvin:** I guess, sure.

**Geraldine:** Well, that's where you work. At least when you aren't out there serving these warrants. Your Deputy, Jack Jackson will swear you in.

*(There is a pause where no one says anything)*

**Geraldine:** Well, that's about it. Come Jessie, we're leaving.

**Jessie:** I need to speak to Mr. Tanner alone.

**Geraldine:** And I told you that now is not the time.

**Jessie:** Stop acting like you're my mother!

*(Geraldine slaps her hard across the face)*

**Geraldine:** As long as you and your brother live under my roof, I am the only mother you have.

**Jessie:** *(defiantly)* My mother is dead, and unless you want to be as well, I would recommend you NEVER hit me like that again.

*(There is a stand-off for a second)*

**Geraldine:** Well fine then, but if you want to stay here and act like a fast trick in front of our new sheriff then I guess you can find a new place to stay.

*(she leaves)*

**Jessie:** *(shouting after her)* Fine! I will. *(she starts crying)*

*(Sunny comes around from behind the bar and comforts her)*

**Sunny:** *(consoling)* There there miss Jessie... you know you can stay here at the Inn...

**Jessie:** *(Crying)* I know... I just hate her so much. Why did my dad have to marry her?

**Sunny:** Men are stupid sometimes dearie... *(seeing Calvin)* No offense intended. They start thinking about you know... other things... and that's that.

**Jessie:** She's so evil. I'm probably the only girl in the history of the world with an evil stepmother!

*(a second for that to sink in)*

**Sunny:** Yeah... well, no point in crying about things that can't be helped.

**Calvin:** You said you want to speak with me, Miss Jessie?

**Jessie:** It's just Jessie.

**Calvin:** Alright Jessie...

**Jessie:** I just wanted to remind you that I know most of the men on that list and I think I can help you find them.

**Calvin:** *(Finally looking through the list)* There are women on this list! They want me to arrest women?

**Anne:** *(curious)* Who are they?

**Betsy:** *(looking at the list)* Sophia and Edna Black...

*(everyone makes a face at that)*

**Calvin:** What?

**Anne:** Hard to even call those two women, especially Edna.

**Calvin:** That bad huh?

**Anne:** Worse.

**Betsy:** The other is Missy Simmons... don't think I know her. Do any of you?

*(they all shake their heads "no")*

**Jessie:** But the men, Christian Fields, Hugo Cole, Cyrus Skinner and Jim Mayfield. I went to school with Christian and Hugo... and Jim... well...

**Sunny:** *(saving her)* As evil as they come...

**Betsy:** *(dreamily)* But, boy is he a looker.

*(Sunny shoots her a look)*

**Betsy:** *(realizing)* Oh... sorry.

**Jessie:** Yeah... *(earnestly)* well I I just wanted you to know Mr. Tanner...uh...Tumbleweed... that I will do whatever it takes to bring these horrible people in. It's the least I can do *(she starts to break)* for my daddy.

**Calvin:** *(looking right at her, very much enamored)* I will do my best to bring them in.

**Jessie:** *(kissing him on the cheek)* I know you will. Now if you will excuse me, I need to go get my stuff from my dad's house before Geraldine throws it on the burn heap.

**Sunny:** Anne! Hold down the bar while I walk with Jessie to her house. I will be back soon. You need me to show you where the jail is Tumbleweed?

**Calvin:** I can probably manage.

**Sunny:** Well, then how about you escort the young lady with me and I will point you to the right spot.

**Calvin:** Would you like that Jessie?

**Jessie:** Yes I would, very much.

*(He takes her arm and the three of them leave, as they walk back and forth across the stage something like Wild, wild west by the escape club plays. They pantomime arriving at Jessie's house and Sunny points Calvin in the right direction. while this is happening, the girls from the bar along with Jack the Deputy change the stage from the bar to the Sheriff's office. When it is ready, Calvin walks in and finds Jack asleep in a chair)*

**Calvin:** Hello?

*(Calvin goes over and taps Jack. Jack wakes up, grumpy.)*

**Jack:** *(irked)* What in the hell you want?

**Calvin:** *(Taken aback)* I'm reporting to work.

**Jack:** What?

**Calvin:** I'm the new sheriff.

**Jack:** Already?

**Calvin:** *(what do you mean?)* Already?

**Jack:** The new one just died yesterday, we ain't even put him in the ground yet. Trust me, I know. I'm the one that had to clean him up.

**Calvin:** Well, I guess there was an urgency about it.

**Jack:** An urgency? Why?

**Calvin:** I think they expect us to go and arrest the men that killed the old sheriff?

**Jack:** *(a bit panicked)* How are we supposed to do that?

**Calvin:** *(nervous)* I was hoping you could tell me that.

**Jack:** You're the sheriff.

**Calvin:** And you've been a deputy here for... how long?

**Jack:** About two years. *(looking for his bottle)* But they never let me do anything serious, 'cept pick up the dead people. *(he finds the bottle)*

**Calvin:** Do you always drink at work?

**Jack:** Do you always ask so many questions?

**Calvin:** Yeah, I reckon.

**Jack:** Well, I've been at work all night, so I am headed to bed. *(he goes to leave)*

**Calvin:** Wait! You were asleep when I got here.

**Jack:** *(indignant)* I pulled an all nighter.

**Calvin:** All nighter? What are we going to do about the men who killed the mayor?

**Jack:** That sounds like a problem for the Sheriff.

**Calvin:** Jack, I'm going to need you for this.

**Jack:** And I need some sleep, I'll see you in a few hours and we'll talk then. *(he goes to leave and Theo comes in)*

**Theo:** So you're the new Sheriff?

**Jack:** Ah hell, *(To Calvin)* I thought you said you were the new sheriff.

**Calvin:** I am! Yes... I'm the new sheriff.

**Theo:** Well, I'm here to enlist, sign me up.

*(Calvin looks at Jack)*

**Jack:** Another problem for the Sheriff. If you need me... nevermind. Don't need me. *(he leaves)*

**Theo:** *(waiting)* Well?



**Calvin:** Well what?

**Theo:** I want to enlist!

**Calvin:** I'm not sure I understand what you mean.

**Theo:** Look, I know you're a fresh fish to this whole Sheriff-ing thing.

**Calvin:** (*indignantly*) I am not.

**Theo:** (*confidentially*) Look... you may have been able to pull the wool on the ladies back at the saloon, but if you've ever been the sheriff of anything larger than an irish shantee then I'm a six legged cow.

**Calvin:** Look... (*searching for his name*)

**Theo:** (*filling in the blank*) Theo.

**Calvin:** Look Theo, I appreciate you stopping by, but I'm not sure what you need.

**Theo:** You really are a half brain aren't you? I am here to enlist!

**Calvin:** Enlist... like in the army?

**Theo:** (*angry*) Enlist, join up...whatever. I want to be a deputy. I want to kill the men who killed my dad.

**Calvin:** How old are you Theo?

**Theo:** (*dodging*) Old enough.

**Calvin:** How old is old enough?

**Theo:** Old enough to know how to use a gun.

**Calvin:** (*agitated*) How many years, Theo?

**Theo:** (*mumbling*) Thirteen.

**Calvin:** (*not hearing it*) How many?

**Theo:** Thirteen! I know that seems young, but I'll be thirteen and half in only four months.

**Calvin:** So you just turned 13.

**Theo:** Technically, I guess so... but I can still shoot, better than you if I judge it right.

**Calvin:** Isn't Mrs. Geraldine your mom?

**Theo:** Step mom, but she kicked my sister out so I left too. I guess that makes me sort of an orphan. So, as an orphan I don't have anything better to do than to kill the man who killed my dad. I figure I can just sleep here at night.

**Calvin:** You can't sleep here.

**Theo:** (*arguing*) Jack does.

**Calvin:** Yeah, but that's different.

**Theo:** How?

**Calvin:** He's not thirteen.

**Theo:** (*sarcastic*) Really, I hadn't noticed that about Jack. Good eye!

(*Anne enters, looking for Theo*)

**Anne:** There you are! Theo, your mother has been looking for you.

**Theo:** Step mother.

**Anne:** *(Correcting herself)* Step mother.

**Theo:** What does “Old Scratch” want?

**Anne:** That is no way to talk about family, she sent me to bring you home.

**Theo:** Well you can tell her to go to hell. I’m an orphan now.

**Anne:** That will not do Mister.

**Theo:** *(imitating her)* “That will not do, Mister” Look you can go back and tell her that Sheriff Tumbleweed here has made me a deputy and she can go put her lips on the rail tracks if she doesn’t like it.

*(Anne looks at Calvin)*

**Calvin:** *(making a declaration)* It’s not true. I never deputized him.

**Theo:** You were just about to!

**Calvin:** No I wasn’t. I think you need to go home Theo.

**Theo:** Well that’s not happening. You can go back and tell that old shrew that I will go out and live the Tamale Indians before I go back and live under her rules. *(he leaves with a gusto)*

*(Anne looks at Calvin)*

**Anne:** You know, I don’t have children, and that child makes a strong case for it to stay that way. You weren’t really going to make him a deputy were you?

**Calvin:** No ma’am.

**Anne:** Well, then. Good day Tumbleweed. I’ll see you at McMullin’s tonight!

*(black out)*

*(At the Rattlesnake Ranch, home of the Innocents. The group sits around a table, there is a Mexican girl dressed in Indian wear of the period tied in the corner. The living members of the innocents are sitting at and around a table. Jim is not among them yet.)*

**Hugo:** *(agitated)* I don’t like that no one is standing guard.

**Christian:** Could you give it a rest on who’s on guard duty?

**Cyrus:** Yeah, I mean, who are we guarding from?

**Hugo:** We’re wanted men!

**Missy:** *(not a man)* Ahem...

**Hugo:** And women. There could be twenty men riding up on us right now!

**Cyrus:** We would hear them!

**Sophia:** *(bored)* And see them.

**Hugo:** Not while we’re sitting inside! Why can’t we have this meeting outside? *(as Hugo is complaining he backs into the Mexican girl who kicks him. She is gagged and mumbles something)* Danged indian! Why didn’t we give her back to the Tamales again?

**Christian:** Jim said the chief wouldn’t take her back. Said she had the stink of white men on her now. I thought we had kept her away

from Cyrus, but apparently not far enough. (*Christian and Hugo laugh*)

**Cyrus:** (*who is of African Ascent*) Do I look like a white man?

**Edna:** You all smell equally bad to me.

**Cyrus:** (*sarcastically*) Yeah... you surely smell like flowers Edna.

**Edna:** (*dryly*) I don't want to smell like flowers.

**Cyrus:** Well, you're succeeding wonderfully.

**Edna:** (*Pulling out a knife*) I wonder how well you could smell if I put a new nose in your neck?

(*Sophia pulls a knife out as well, Cyrus pulls out one as well*)

**Missy:** (*oh boy*) Here we go again.

**Christian:** Cyrus, if you and the twins are going to go at it with knives again, do it outside please.

**Hugo:** How about we all go outside?

**Missy:** It's cold outside, you idiot. That's why we're in here!

(*The twins and Cyrus seem like their going to boil to a head and then*)

**Sophia:** He's not worth it Edna.

**Cyrus:** (*thinking this a good reply*) You'd be surprised what I'm worth.

(*There is an awkward moment*)

**Sophia:** What was that supposed to mean?

**Cyrus:** Shut up! Do I need Hugo to explain it to you?

**Hugo:** I'm not sure I understood either.

**Cyrus:** (*looking a little desperate*) Christian?

**Christian:** Just give it up Cyrus.

(*another awkward pause*)

**Hugo:** (*interjecting*) So, everyone knows the password for this week right?

(*the group groans, but are saved as Jim walks in*)

**Jim:** (*feigning anger*) Why isn't anyone standing guard? (*He looks at Hugo, who starts to sputter*) Just kidding. Calm down Hugo, we can see anyone coming during the daytime hours long before they get here. (*he looks at the Mexican girl*) I see we have Prickly Cactus gagged again.

**Missy:** It was either that or shoot her.

**Sophia:** Or shoot ourselves.

**Cyrus:** Speaking of which, why haven't we shot her yet?

**Jim:** Chief Raging Bear didn't want her back, but he told me that we couldn't kill her, and since we need him for a little bit longer it's just going to have to be that way. I talked to your father today girl.

(*Prickly Cactus is saying something under her gag. Jim goes to remove the gag*)

**Everyone:** (*desperate*) Don't!

(*he undoes the gag*)

**Prickly Cactus:** (*in Spanish*) Les Voy arrancar sus lenguas de sus bocas, perros sucios!

(*Sophia kicks her*)

**Sophia:** English girl, we don't speak your Tamale language!

**Prickly Cactus:** My father is no fool! He will never help you.

**Christian:** (*To Cyrus*) That's a lot of loyalty considering her old man refused to take her back.

**Cyrus:** (*conspiratorially*) I never understand the way Indians do things.

**Prickly Cactus:** Si algun dia me escape, voy a matarlos a cada uno de ustedes. Se los aseguro! (*she continues on in both English and Spanish until*)

**Jim:** Hmm... I see. Your mood hasn't improved at all. Hugo, put the gag back in.

**Hugo:** Happily. (*he goes to do it and she bites him very hard*)  
Aaaahhhhhhh!

**Christian:** What?

**Hugo:** (*frantic*) She's biting me!

(*Chaos reigns for a second*)

**Sophia:** Get her jaws!

**Missy:** Let's just shoot her!

(*Finally Cyrus, Christian and Jim all pry her jaws off of Hugo and stuff the gag back in. Hugo is crying*)

**Edna:** Suck it up sweet girl.

**Hugo:** I hate that girl, the Tamales and all Indians everywhere!

**Jim:** (*sternly*) can we get to business now? (*they all look at him*)  
Gang, we're moving out.

(*They all cheer*)

**Christian:** We headed to Elmore's land?

**Jim:** (*smiling*) Yes we are.

**Missy:** and we know where the creek with the Gold is?

**Jim:** Yes we do.

**Christian:** What of the new Sheriff? That Tumbleweed?

**Jim:** That's all been taken care of, that's what I had to see her (*indicating Cactus*) father about. Missy, we need to talk. You're gonna lead our new Sheriff Tumbleweed on a goose chase while we set up our new camp.

**Missy:** (*excited*) Sounds fun.

**Cyrus:** Why don't we just kill this guy?

**Jim:** I tend to think it's better to know what we're dealing with here than have to worry about who the governor will send.

**Missy:** That makes sense.

**Jim:** Geraldine will be sending him to the chief and the chief and Missy will keep him busy for weeks while we bleed Elmore's land dry!

*(they all cheer as the lights black out)*

*(The lights come back up on Jack and Calvin sitting)*

**Calvin:** *(aggravated)* This is the third break in the last hour. Don't you ever walk anywhere?

**Jack:** Not if I can help it.

**Calvin:** We should have been there by now.

**Jack:** I told you we should take horses.

**Calvin:** And neither of us own a horse.

**Jack:** We're the law, couldn't we force people to let us use their horses?

**Calvin:** I didn't think of that, but I don't think it sets a good example.

**Jack:** I'm gonna need a few more minutes. How many warrants did Geraldine give you?

**Calvin:** Seven.

**Jack:** And you think we're going to arrest these seven.

**Calvin:** I dunno. I haven't thought that through yet.

**Jack:** *(curious)* Why are you doing all of this anyways?

**Calvin:** I don't know...

**Jack:** What brought you to Bannack?

**Calvin:** It's a long story. *(he pauses for Jack to say he wants to hear it but he doesn't say anything)* You want to hear it?

**Jack:** Not particularly.

*(During this exchange, Theo has come up and has sat down on the rock behind them)*

**Theo:** I would.

*(Jack and Calvin almost jump out of their skin)*

**Calvin:** *(surprised)* Theo!

**Theo:** *(mocking his surprise)* Tumbleweed!

**Calvin:** What are you doing out here?

**Theo:** Well I could lie to you and say I was just wandering out in the wilderness several miles away from the town. You two might actually believe that. But actually, I'm here to help.

**Calvin:** I don't think we need your help Theo, you're a child. You shouldn't be out here. What could you possibly do to help us?

**Theo:** I brought this. *(he shows them a gun)*

**Calvin:** What are you doing with a gun?

**Theo:** I always carry a gun. And I thought you might need one.

**Calvin:** I have a gun. I'm using the one the old sheriff used. *(he shows it to Theo)*

**Theo:** But it's not loaded.

**Calvin:** (*indignant*) Yes it is!

**Theo:** There's a box of bullets on your desk, looks like you didn't open them. I know for a fact that my dad unloaded Henry's gun when he was arrested.

(*Calvin is trying to see if his gun is loaded, but he is struggling to do so*)

**Theo:** Here let me show you. (*he easily opens the gun*) See? No bullets.

**Calvin:** Well, Jack has his gun.

**Jack:** (*at the same time as Theo*) No I don't.

**Theo:** (*at the same time as Jack*) No he don't.

**Calvin:** Why didn't you bring your gun??

**Jack:** (*duh*) Cause I'm not planning to shoot anyone!

**Calvin:** (*building*) Where did you leave it?

**Jack:** In the same room you left your bullets!

(*They both fume for a second*)

**Theo:** That's why it's a good thing I'm here!

(*another pause*)

**Theo:** I think you were just gonna tell us what brought you to Bannack.

**Calvin:** (*disgusted*) It can wait.

**Theo:** (*a little disappointed*) I was wanting to hear more about Wickford Village! Although I have some questions... How is it that you were the Sheriff of a city with like a million people in it but you never learned how to load a gun?

**Calvin:** (*irked*) Maybe we didn't use guns.

**Theo:** (*huh?*) Didn't use guns? What did you use? Strong language?

**Calvin:** (*to Jack*) Let's get moving.

**Jack:** (*having heard enough*) Yup.

**Theo:** (*imitating making an arrest*) Stop Criminal, or I will be forced to use swear words.

(*Black out. Lights come up across stage on Chief Raging Bear and his daughter Gentle Flower. In reality, they are Mexicans who have struck it up north and make a living acting as shamans for the citizens of Bannack. They speak with heavy Spanish accents. The Bannack citizens are just too dense to know the difference*)

**Gentle Flower:** I don't think I understand, why are we helping the gringo's pull one over on the new Sheriff?

**Chief:** I have tried to explain it to you Rosa, but it's complicated. When they took Prickly Cactus...

**Gentle Flower:** Teresa.

**Chief:** I know her name, hija, but I just have found her new name to be more fitting. Anyways, when they took her, at first I tried to get her back, but then, you know...

**Gentle Flower:** Things were so easy when she wasn't around.

**Chief:** Si! And when they threatened to give her back...

**Gentle Flower:** *(finishing his sentence)* You cried like a baby.

**Chief:** Don't look at me like that! I am ashamed enough, but, in the end it may all work out for the best.

**Gentle Flower:** How so?

**Chief:** No time to explain now, the new Sheriff should be here any minute. Time to get in character.

**Gentle Flower:** Why are we still acting like Indians?

**Chief:** *(stern)* Because the citizens of Bannack would not pay us and feed us so well if they knew we were from Mexico. Telling them we are Indians.. gives us power! These hicks think Indians have black magic, comprende? Now here, sit at my side and try to look...

**Gentle Flower:** Native?

*(lights back up on Jack, Theo and Calvin)*

**Calvin:** So what do you know about the chief and the Tamale Indians?

**Jack:** They're a small tribe... I've only met three personally. There's the father, Chief Raging Bear and his two daughters. The one, Prickly Cactus is a pain in the tookus.

**Theo:** She is not! Tere..*(correcting himself)* Prickly Cactus is my friend!

**Jack:** *(ignoring that)* I heard the innocents are holding her from the chief for a ransom.

**Calvin:** They kidnapped his daughter?

**Jack:** All the more reason for him to help us. *(seeing they have arrived. The lights come back on the chief and his daughter. The chief is in a meditative trance and Gentle Flower looks bored)*

**Jack:** *(whispering)* Let me do the talking at first. These Indians use black magic for everything and that gives me the willies.

**Theo:** *(also whispering)* I've never seen them use black magic.

**Jack:** Hush!

**Theo:** And I have been around 'em a lot.

**Jack:** *(whispering still)* Here we are.

**Gentle Flower:** *(laying it on thick)* The all knowing, all seeing chief and shaman of the Tamale Indians. You are now in the presence of Chief Raging Bear

*(Chief Raging Bear lets out a giant roar while stomping around before sitting)*

**Jack:** *(to Calvin)* I know some of the Tamale Tongue... *(seeing the Chief and speaking very slow.)* Chief Raging Bear! Hola. *(Pause)* Que..Pasa?

**Chief:** *(answering in a lofty tone)* I am well pale face.

**Jack:** We seek your wisdom!

**Chief:** Have you brought the appropriate offering?



**Jack:** Yes I have. *(he hands a small package wrapped in a hankerchief to the chief. The chief opens it and looks in)*

**Calvin:** *(whispering)* What did you give him?

**Jack:** *(also whispering)* Half a dozen ham biscuits.

**Calvin:** What?

**Chief:** Gentle Flower, say the mystic incantation to cleanse this offering with black magic!

*(Jack Shudders)*

**Gentle Flower:** *(Saying a catholic prayer over the food)* Ave Maria, madre de dios. El senor es contigo. Bendita eres entre todas las mujeres, y bandito es el fruto de tu vientre jesus. Santa Maria, madre de dios, ruega por nosotros los pecadores ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte amen.

**Chief:** Amen.

**Calvin:** *(to Jack as the chief tears into the food)* Black Magic ends with Amen?

**Jack:** I don't know! Do I look like I do black magic??

**Chief:** So you are the new sheriff, come to ask wisdom of the Shaman and chief of the Tamale Indians?

**Calvin:** Yes! Uh... Pleased to meet you. I was told you are a great tracker and Shaman.

**Chief:** There is truth to that, pale face.

**Calvin:** I was told you would know where to find the men who killed the Mayor and that you may be able to help us to catch them.

**Gentle Flower:** *(not liking what she is hearing)* Father! I have felt a presence from the spirit world!

**Chief:** *(confused)* Say what?

**Gentle Flower:** I have felt a presence from the spirit world and must talk to you... *(with emphasis)* privately. *(she gives him a serious look)*

**Chief:** Mi Amigos! I must confer with the spirit world before answering your questions, one moment, please.

*(They walk off to confer privately)*

**Chief:** *(irked and confused)* What was that?

**Gentle Flower:** Did the sheriff say that we are going help him catch these bandits?

**Chief:** I wasn't really listening, did he?

**Gentle Flower:** Yes. Are we really going to do that?

**Chief:** Of course not. I was just told to waste their time, I am just going to say something cryptic and send them on their way.

**Gentle Flower:** Is that wise?

**Chief:** Everything will be fine, trust me.

*(They rejoin their visitors)*

**Chief:** I have consulted with the spirits and I have your answer.

**Calvin:** What did they say?

**Chief:** The first of the villains you seek is a maiden of golden hair.

**Jack:** *(to Calvin)* One of them was a blonde right?

**Calvin:** Yes. Missy Simmons. *(to the chief)* Did the spirits tell you where I can find her?

**Chief:** *(being very “mystical”)* The spirits speak through mystery pale face, but I was told that she moves with the wind, down to the streams and gullies throughout the badlands and her final destination will be the last place you would ever think to look.

**Calvin:** What does that mean?

**Chief:** The spirits have told me nothing more. You will find her in the last place you would ever think to look!

**Gentle Flower:** The Chief of the Tamale Indians has spoken!

**Jack:** *(To Calvin)* That means our session is over.

**Calvin:** But I have more questions!

**Gentle Flower:** The Chief of the Tamale Indians has spoken!

*(At this the chief turns and exits, leaving Gentle Flower alone)*

**Calvin:** Well, I guess that’s all we’re going to get, all the good it does us?

**Jack:** How are we going to figure out the last place we would expect to see her?

*(As they are leaving)*

**Calvin:** I guess we need a map of all of the streams and gullies. *(notices that Theo is not following)* You coming Theo?

**Theo:** One second, Just adjusting my boot.

*(Jack and Calvin leave as soon as they are gone he speaks to Gentle Flower in Spanish)*

**Theo:** alguena noticia sobre su hermana?

**Gentle Flower:** No.

**Theo:** Los banditos todavia la tienen?

**Gentle Flower:** Hasta donde se, si.

**Theo:** Ellos mataron a mi padre y yo tender mi venganza. Ademas, Teresa es mi amiga. La traere a casa sana y salva

**Gentle Flower:** *(in English)* The Innocents have left Rattlesnake Ranch so do not waste your time there, they have moved.

**Theo:** Where?

**Gentle Flower:** I do not know, I will try to find out.

**Theo:** Gracias, Rosa.

**Gentle Flower:** Take care of yourself Theo.

*(Theo leaves, and the Chief re-enters)*

**Chief:** *(peeking in)* Are they gone?

**Gentle Flower:** Yes. What was all that about finding her where you least expect her?

**Chief:** It's to keep them out of the way, Senora Crocker wanted them out and searching the badlands. That's why I told them she would be among the streams and gullies.

**Gentle Flower:** But you also said she would be where they least expect her...

**Chief:** *(explaining)* You know who Missy Simmons is don't you? She would not be caught dead camped out by some stream or in a gully. They should be smart enough to figure that out and when they do it will once again draw them far away from her.

**Gentle Flower:** *(doubtful)* I am not sure they are smart enough to figure out which end of the horse to feed. Where will she be in reality?

**Chief:** How should I know? Probably in a saloon somewhere, and probably somewhere with a nice feather bed to sleep on.

*(black out)*

*(Back at the Rattlesnake Ranch, the Innocents are setting out. Jim, Christian, and Cyrus)*

**Christian:** Everything useful is on a horse or in a sack.

**Cyrus:** Did you get the packs by the fireplace?

**Christian:** Yeah, and the salt beef.

**Jim:** Can we ride within the hour?

**Cyrus:** I wouldn't see why not.

*(Missy enters with Hugo following her. Missy is obviously very aggravated.)*

**Hugo:** Dang it Missy, you've gotta learn the password.

**Missy:** *(shouting back at him)* I said "we are innocent!"

**Hugo:** *(equally riled)* That was last week!

**Missy:** Why do we need a new password every week?

**Hugo:** *(Stammering)* What if we're infiltrated by the enemy?

*(There is a moment, then all present, minus Hugo, laugh)*

**Hugo:** *(in all seriousness)* This is not a laughing matter.

*(They all laugh again)*

**Hugo:** *(leaving)* I swear, can't keep a man alive if he wants to die.

*(after Hugo leaves)*

**Jim:** Would it really kill you all to learn the passwords?

**Cyrus:** Maybe if he'd leave it alone I might, Hell, I'm four or five back now. How long ago was the password "Spittoon?"

**Christian:** Good God, that was like a month ago.

**Cyrus:** *(proving his point)* See?

**Missy:** *(to Jim)* You needed to see me?

**Jim:** Yeah, I did.

**Cyrus:** I'm gonna go get the Tamale strapped in, I swear if she kicks, or bites or manages to put a pain on me in any way I'm gonna...

**Jim:** You can't kill her Cyrus.

**Cyrus:** *(adding)* Yet.

**Jim:** You can't kill her.

**Cyrus:** *(again)* Yet.

**Jim:** *(asking if he is for real)* Cyrus?

**Cyrus:** Dang it Jim, I won't kill the durned Tamale.

*(he leaves)*

**Jim:** *(to Missy)* You're not going with us.

**Missy:** I figured that may be the case. Where do you want me to go?

**Jim:** I want you to lead our new sheriff out to the badlands.

*(Christian groans)*

**Missy:** *(unbelieving)* The Badlands? Why would I want to lead him out to the badlands??

**Jim:** You're the bait.

**Missy:** Yeah, I figured that much out, but why can't I be bait back in Bannack? Or Dillon?

**Jim:** Well, In Bannack you would be seen and...

**Christian:** Elmore's brother lives in Dillon...

**Jim:** So we don't want anyone from our group getting things started there...

**Missy:** But why the badlands? There's nothing out there!

**Jim:** True...

**Christian:** Guess they wouldn't be badlands if there were.

**Missy:** Shut up.

**Jim:** Look, we just need you to be seen. Hit up every outpost and watering hole from here to the Little River. People remember you... Men remember you. If you pass through and keep moving then the sheriff will spend half the winter just trying to find you.

**Missy:** But it's cold out there!

**Christian:** Guess you might want to pack a coat.

*(She shoots him a withering glare)*

**Jim:** It's only for a month or two, soon as anything we will have stripped enough gold out to live comfortably until the end of our days.

**Missy:** It had better be worth it.

*(Sophia enters)*

**Sophia:** Jim, the Tamale just tried to crush, um... Well, she...

**Jim:** *(not understanding)* What?

**Sophia:** Well she took Cyrus and she... *(she pantomimes grabbing a man by the groin and crushing it)*

**Jim:** Good god...

**Sophia:** Edna and Hugo are holding him down, but you might wanna come talk to him.

**Jim:** *(calling out)* Cyrus!

*(Jim and Sophia leave)*

**Christian:** *(Looking at Missy)* Better you than me.

**Missy:** What?

**Christian:** Gonna be some cold nights out there in the hills.

**Missy:** You really think I'm gonna spend the winter in the badlands?

**Christian:** That's what Jim told you to do isn't it?

**Missy:** Well, if Jim wants that done he can go do it himself. As for me, I plan to spend the winter in Bannack. Since Raging Bear told him we would be out there, do I really need to actually be out there?

**Christian:** Well...

**Missy:** Of course not! I'll just lay low with some acquaintances of mine in Bannack and not worry about freezing my little self to death out there.

**Christian:** What if Jim finds out?

**Missy:** Jim won't find out, or by the time he does we'll all be on the way to California, that much richer!

*(Black out)*

**End of Act I**

*(It is a couple of days later, and Theo, Jack and Calvin are on the way back to Bannack. They are carrying back packs and have obviously been "roughing it")*

**Theo:** *(angry)* I still can't believe we are giving up like that.

**Calvin:** We aren't giving up!

**Jack:** We aren't?

**Calvin:** No!

**Jack:** Cause I'm all about giving up.

**Calvin:** *(Angering)* We're not giving up!

**Jack:** Because it's really cold out here...

**Theo:** It's only October!

**Jack:** And I have a bed that would look really nice...

**Theo:** You usually pass out at the Jail!

**Jack:** *(defensive)* Sometimes I work all night!

**Theo:** We've only been out here three days and we have hardly seen six inches of streams and gullies... we can't go back now!

**Calvin:** I've been thinking about that...

**Theo:** About what?

**Calvin:** About what the chief said.

**Theo:** He said to search the streams and gullies...

**Calvin:** *(being intentionally obtuse)* Did he?

**Theo:** *(duh)* Uh, yeah...he did.

**Calvin:** But did he *(pause)* really? *(another pause)* Jack?

**Jack:** *(irked)* I don't care.

**Theo:** *(insolent)* Yes he did!

**Calvin:** But as I remember it, he told us that we would find her at the last place we would ever think to look.

**Theo:** Among the gullies...

**Calvin:** He didn't say that.

**Theo:** But it was implied! Right Jack?

**Jack:** *(same as before)* I don't care.

**Calvin:** So where is the last place we would think to look? It wouldn't be the gullies and streams because that's where he said she was. So... she's not there.

**Theo:** The logic behind that statement escapes me.

**Calvin:** It's gotta be somewhere else!

**Theo:** The chief said the streams and...

**Calvin:** And that's why we don't need to look there!

*(Theo gives Calvin a long "you're an idiot" stare)*

**Theo:** You want to go home so you can see my sister.

**Calvin:** That has nothing to do with it. *(he looks at Jack)*

**Jack:** Don't care.

**Calvin:** Seriously Theo... Where would be the last place we would think to look? Where would be the last place Missy Simmons should be?

**Theo:** I imagine you're gonna say Bannack!

**Calvin:** Exactly!

**Theo:** Where do you think she's hiding in Bannack!

**Calvin:** *(Excited)* The last place we would ever think to look!

**Jack:** Outhouse.

**Calvin:** *(great answer!)* Great idea! I would never expect to find Missy Simmons in an outhouse!

**Jack:** *(he had not been following along)* No. I need an outhouse. We are only maybe 20 minutes away from the outhouse by the jail, but things are getting serious here. I may need to hit the bushes.

**Theo:** So you are saying that we are going to find Missy Simmons in the outhouse by the jail?

**Calvin:** Stranger things have happened.

**Theo:** I doubt that.

**Calvin:** We'll see. After we check though, I thought I might stop by and see your sister...

*(Blackout)*

*(Lights up at Macmullins. Kate and Sunny are behind the bar, Anne and Jessie are talking at a table.)*

**Kate:** *(walking over to the table...conspiratorially)* Any word?

**Jessie:** Not yet. I sent Mr. Adams out into the badlands looking for Calvin, but he's not come back yet.

**Sunny:** *(picking on her)* Calvin?

**Jessie:** *(playing it off)* His real name isn't Tumbleweed you know.

**Anne:** So you and "Calvin" are on a first name basis now?

**Jessie:** Shush you! *(pause)* And yes. We are.

*(Anne and Sunny "ooh" at the same time)*

**Kate:** You girls be quiet, we don't want to wake her up! *(she indicates upstairs)*

**Anne:** She could sleep through an explosion. *(there is disgust in her tone)*

**Kate:** Nonetheless, keep it down.

*(the group gets subdued)*

**Jessie:** I wonder where they could be?

**Anne:** Tumbleweed?

**Jessie:** Of course! If he were here, he'd fix this like it was nothing.

**Sunny:** Well I hope he hurries on back, if I thought I could get away with it, I'd smother her in her sleep.

**Anne:** *(appalled)* Sunny!

**Sunny:** Seriously though, she better be glad she always has that gun on her hip.

*(Missy Simmons enters, having heard the end of the conversation)*

**Missy:** And to think, I almost left it on the stand next to the bed. *(she shows Sunny the gun)* Good morning, Sunny.

**Sunny:** *(dryly)* It's one o'clock in the afternoon.

**Missy:** So? What's your point?

**Sunny:** So it ain't morning. We used to have this guy...

**Anne:** *(shuddering)* Weaver...

**Sunny:** That's the one. That barber's cat used to come in here every day, after noon bellowing out "Gooooood Morning Everyone!"

**Anne:** Until Jeremiah Elmore shot him.

**Kate:** Only good thing that swindler ever did .

**Anne:** Literally shot him right in the middle of saying "goooooood morning"

**Jessie:** *(laughing)* and the sheriff at the time didn't even press charges.

**Sunny:** *(also laughing)* Called it a justified homicide.

*(They are all laughing)*

**Missy:** Are you ladies trying to scare me?



**Sunny:** *(Still laughing)* Nooooo... of course not.

**Missy:** Cause I'm the one who put the bullet in Jeremiah Elmore.

*(All laughter ceases)*

**Missy:** *(to Sunny)* I'll take a couple of eggs and a bit of milk if you please.

**Sunny:** *(things have gotten serious)* Right on it! *(she goes to cook)*

**Missy:** I am so looking forward to continuing this cheery conversation right after I make a visit to the privy. *(she goes to leave)*

**Anne:** The Outhouse out back is being used. Big Fred's been in there for a bit now, and he always takes his time.

**Missy:** Well, to hell with waiting for that. Is there another one near by?

**Kate:** The one by the Jail is pretty close.

**Missy:** Well, I guess a little walk won't hurt me. *(To Sunny, off stage)* Have those eggs ready by the time I get back!

*(Missy leaves. Black out)*

*(Finally coming into town... Jack, Theo and Calvin are still deep in discussion. There is a door to an outhouse on the edge of the stage...or it could be just off stage.)*

**Calvin:** *(looking at a pocket watch)* It's just a little after one o'clock. Where do you think Jessie would be right now?

**Jack:** *(Bee-lining to the outhouse)* Another five more minutes and this would have been a tragedy.

**Theo:** I thought we were here to look for Missy?

*(Jack goes to open the door)*

**Jack:** Locked! *(pounds on the door)* Hurry up in there!

*(Jack continues knocking through the next few lines)*

**Calvin:** We are here looking!

**Theo:** *(disgusted)* This is such a waste of time.

**Calvin:** Just calm down Theo...

**Theo:** That's easy for you to say!

*(finally the door to the Outhouse opens and Missy walks out)*

**Missy:** *(To Jack while Theo and Calvin don't notice)* Hold your damn horses. I'm finished.

**Jack:** *(Grateful, he doesn't recognize her)* Thank you! Thank you so much.

**Missy:** *(Dismissively as Jack goes in the outhouse)* Don't mention it.

*(While Theo and Calvin continue this conversation, Missy brushes off her dress and walks by them)*

**Theo:** Your dad wasn't murdered by this gang of...

**Calvin:** I know! And I promised your sister...

**Theo:** Forget my sister! You're the sheriff, we should be out there looking!