

SHOW 8

NOTES

Too late. She's about to reach the front door of the car, but it suddenly flies open, revealing two MASKED MEN with guns. They step inside, sending Sarah running back to Jimmy's side.

MASKED MAN #1 is dressed in a dusty, black gentleman's outfit and gambler hat and sports two nickle-plated pistols with ivory grips at his hips.

A red bandana hides his face below the eyes. A black vertical stripe on the side of the bandana ends in a point. It looks like a long canine tooth.

MASKED MAN #2 stands behind him dressed in a dusty poncho and a cattleman hat. His face is also obscured by a red bandana with a similar design. He aims a rifle at the passengers.

MASKED MAN #1
Ladies and gentlemen!

He raises his hands to calm the passengers who shrink into their seats. He speaks with a bemused air about himself.

MASKED MAN #1 (CONT'D)
I apologize for the delay, but on behalf of the Unofficial Coalition of Chinese Railroad Workers, I regret to inform you that there's a problem with the tracks. But don't worry; once the station ahead realizes you're late, workers will be sent to have you on your way.

— I miss "post haste"!

OLD PASSENGER
Coalition of Chinese what? Never heard of you.

MASKED MAN #1
Well, we're a very small group.

A third masked man rides up on a cart drawn by two horses. He pulls up alongside the passenger car and draws a rifle aimed at the windows. Some passengers yelp when they see him.

MASKED MAN #1 (CONT'D)
Your donations today will help grow our membership.

Masked Man #2 shoulders his rifle and moves down the aisle with a large sack.

UGLY PASSENGER
Donations? You mean rob us blind!

LONG
 (in Cantonese)
 Bao, everything is fine. Bring the horses.

Masked Man #2/Bao (35) reluctantly shoulders his rifle and rides up with Long's horse in tow.

SAM
 We better git. The natives are getting restless.

Long looks up at the passenger car windows and sees curious faces peeking out. He draws his pistol on them, and they scurry away. All three men mount their horses and ride away from the train as passengers peek out timidly.

Bao points at some blood on Long's coat.

LONG
 (in Cantonese)
 Bao, I'm fine little brother. Just some white man's blood.
 (beat)
 Did you know my bounty is at \$2000 now?

Bao grunts and motions to himself.

LONG (CONT'D)
 They didn't say anything about you. Sorry.

Bao rides ahead indignantly. Long chuckles and falls back to Sam on the cart.

LONG (CONT'D)
 Alright, Sam. Stash this at the hideout and meet us at Sally's.

SAM
 I got it. I got it.
 (beat)
 This ain't much to split three ways. Heck, this ain't even enough for one of us.

LONG
 (beat)
 Don't get any ideas. This haul isn't half as good as what's waiting for us in town. And you don't want me on your tail.

*Maybe to make Long
 down cooler and more
 supernatural, he notices
 all this out of the
 corner of his eye and
 draws his pistol
 as the passengers
 without breaking
 his gaze w/ Sam.
 Cool.*

REBECCA

We'll see about that tonight.

She kisses her finger tip and playfully touches the tip of Stan's nose with it before walking away. Every man she walks by turns to watch her pass. Stan grins and takes his place by the store door once more.

Everett approaches and stands on the other side of the door with Stan. Several of Everett's posse file by. They nod, tip their hat, or otherwise thank him with some small gesture, as if knowing better than to speak to him.

STAN

The boys sure are grateful. I'm sure they all miss their families.

EVERETT

Don't we all.

Stan and Everett stand in silence for a moment.

EVERETT (CONT'D)

Where's the best place to get a drink around here?

STAN

Hey now! I never pegged you as the drinking kind. I always thought you were dryer than a snake's belly.

Everett gives him an expectant look.

STAN (CONT'D)

OK, since you want the best, there are only two bars worth going to in this town. The 9 Lives or Sally's. 9 Lives is cat house but liquor ain't watered down and the girls put on a little show on stage, if that strikes your fancy.

Everett's attention is focused on an approaching horse-drawn cart. Riding on it are MAGGIE MILLER (30), her son TOMMY (7), and her hired Negro help RAY (35).

STAN (CONT'D)

Sally's is even more unsavory if you can believe that. Mostly the dregs of society and that includes Sally. Rumor is that they strung her up in Texas but that tough bitch wouldn't die.

(MORE)

He pauses to let a horse-drawn cart ride past him, but as it does so, his attention is drawn to a figure standing in the street further down the road.

Everett stops in his tracks as Long is revealed by the horse-drawn cart riding past. His EYES squint, unsure of what he's seeing. Then a whisper spills over his lips--

EVERETT

I don't...

Long finishes his sentence--

LONG

...believe it.

An alien silence falls over the once busy street.

Townfolk quickly understand the situation and begin disappearing into buildings but peek out of windows and doorways. Ms. Stapleton approaches with supplies in a basket, but ducks behind a corner when understands the situation.

nice touch.
Mortimer comes out of shop to see the Long and Everett squaring off. He's dumbfounded at first, but then pulls out his measuring rope to estimate the men's heights and widths. He compares his measurements to nearby caskets.

Long and Everett just stare at each other. The men stand roughly 50 feet apart and speak loudly, but not shouting.

LONG (CONT'D)

Marshal Everett James. Fancy meeting you here. How long has it been? Five years? We must do this more often.

EVERETT

Fang Long. You are under arrest for the crimes of--

LONG

I know my crimes, Marshal. Your last deputy read them to me right before I shot him in the face. What was his name?

EVERETT

(quieter)

Charlie Wright. From Missouri.

LONG

And the one before that? Outside of Benson.

INSERT STAN'S RIFLE SIGHT

At the last moment, Stan changes targets and aims at Bao.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. SALLY'S SALOON - CONTINUOUS

A rifle shot hits Bao in the chest as he squeezes his trigger. Bao's bullet grazes Everett across his temple, sending him to the ground. Long is stunned momentarily as he watches his brother fall, but regains his awareness quickly.

He senses attackers moving into position around him. Stan on the roof of Porter's. A man with a rifle hiding around a corner. Two men with pistols behind stacked barrels. Another man with a shotgun behind a low fence.

The anguish drains from Long's face as his instincts and reflexes take over. He draws both pistols.

The inexperience of the posse in a gunfight is apparent as the men are slow to fire and don't take time to aim. Nevertheless, the errant bullets force Long back into the street every time he moves for cover.

~~Similarly,~~ Long suppresses his attackers with well aimed and timed shots, especially at Stan whose hat is shot off the first time he rises out of cover. Every time he tries to take a shot, Long sends a bullet his way.

A bullet grazes Long's bicep. Almost without looking, Long returns fire instantaneously along the same trajectory, killing the shooter.

Another bullet nicks Long's ear. Again, without looking, he returns fire along that trajectory, killing another man. Another exchange sends another man down, but Long is grazed in the thigh.

The man with the shotgun seizes the opportunity and fires buckshot that clips Long, spinning him to the ground. But even while on his back, Long is deadly accurate and finishes off the man with the shotgun.

Without any bullets left to suppress Stan, Long reloads frantically, flicking chambers of his revolvers into place just as Stan rises. Long unloads all of his bullets.

~~the~~

EXT. DIRTY SHACK - GUANGDONG PROVINCE - CONTINUOUS

Outside is crippling poverty, but Bao is oblivious to it all, lost in his imagination. He walks a few shacks down the road and stops at a puddle of dirty water. He places the boat in it and guides it around in circles.

He doesn't notice wild dogs approaching until they're within striking distance. Surprised and panicked, Bao tries running back to his shack, but doesn't get very far before he's surrounded with his back to the wall. He cries out in terror.

INT. DIRTY SHACK - GUANGDONG PROVINCE - CONTINUOUS

Bao's cries penetrate Long's sleep and he grows restless. Suddenly--

INT. JAIL - SUNSET

Long wakes, and his eyes shoot open. He screams--

LONG
(in Cantonese)
Bao! I'm here!

He sits up quickly, but pain reminds him to move slowly. Realizing, Long looks up at the cell walls and bars. He checks his wounds and inspects the bandages. He sighs.

After a moment, he looks through the bars and into the dark jail. The setting sun has made the shadows impenetrable. Long hugs his knees before speaking to the room.

LONG (CONT'D)
When my brother, Bao, was born, our mother wept, but not tears of joy. She could barely feed me after my father had died months before. Five years later, she followed my father, leaving Bao with me.

He shuts his eyes for a moment and breathes in deeply, steeling himself for painful memories.

LONG (CONT'D)
She said...
(in Cantonese then English)
Look after your little brother. He is your only family now.
(beat)
I was fifteen.
(MORE)

Yes!
This works
very well.

New.
↑

OLD MAN PROFITT

good.

You know what I want. That stake of yours is worthless in your hands. You don't have the manpower or the gumption to make profitable. Sell it to me and live your lives!

BILL

Your offer's no good. Not when it's a fraction of what we paid. Not when we're about to strike it rich!

OLD MAN PROFITT

Listen boy. The only one getting rich around here is me. You don't want to sell? Fine. Work yourself to death.

He rides away. Bill watches him go and spits while Bud mutters something under his breath and spits. When Old Man Profitt is out of sight, the prospectors pick up to leave. They stop when they hear a whistling sound.

They look around and then slowly look up as the environment around them lights up green. A meteorite hurtles overhead and slams into their stake in the distance. Bill and Bud look at each other and then make a dash for the mine.

INT. PROSPECTORS' STAKE - MINUTES LATER

The meteorite has punched a hole in the mine ceiling and broken into a million shards that punctuate the walls and floor. They catch the light from Bud's lantern mysteriously, almost as if they're emitting light and glowing.

BILL

What is it, Bud?

BUD

best.

I don't know, Bill. They look like...gems.

Bill reaches out and touches one. Its sharp edge cuts his hand. He tries again, gingerly, and snaps off the shard.

BILL

Emeralds. These are emeralds.

(beat)

We're gonna be rich!

They hug each other vigorously and begin snapping shards and tossing them in the wheelbarrow. They repeatedly get cut, but it doesn't faze them.

EXT. ARIZONA PLAINS - STREAM - CONTINUOUS

The sun has just dipped over the horizon, casting heavy shadows on the uneven desert. Petrov counts his money as he absentmindedly drives his horses. He chuckles to himself. Suddenly, the horses halt. There's a log in the road.

Petrov looks at it with puzzlement. He hears movement, but before he can react, Indian bandits leap from their hiding spots and spring their ambush. Riders appear from nowhere and whoop and shout as they surround Petrov. He's trapped.

PETROV

(no accent)

Now...whoa! Wait just a minute.
There's no reason to be violent.

The BANDIT LEADER separates himself from the others. He steps forward and grabs the petrified Petrov from his seat. The Bandit Leader draws a mean knife from its sheath.

PETROV (CONT'D)

Take whatever you want! I have
money! I have liquor!
(to all)
You know, fire water! You like!

He begins pantomiming drinking exaggeratedly. The Bandit Leader sneers and drives the knife up through Petrov's throat and into his skull. Petrov goes limp instantly and dies. The Bandit Leader lets him fall and mutters to a fellow bandit.

That man springs into action, unhooking the horses and commanding others to help him push the cart off the road. The cart rolls down an embankment and topples over into the stream. Petrov's bottles spill, crashing open into the water.

The stream turns into a pastiche of bright colors that mix into a ruddy brown that's swept away by the current. Following it, the water disappears underground.

EXT. EPITAPH - WATER PUMP - CONTINUOUS

The water comes out of a town water pump and into the bucket of Mortimer, the undertaker. He finishes and takes his bucket to leave. He turns and is surprised to see Ms. Stapleton.

MS. STAPLETON

Mr. Charon! How's the undertaking
business?

*Did the Indians want anything?
It seems like they want the horses but it's not clear. Maybe "dispose" of the cart to "drive the horses?"*

BUD

Me? I'm gonna spend a week at the 9 Lives!

ZEKE

Whatever you say boys.

Zeke heads over to his kegs as the prospectors walk off. Zeke bends down to pick up a fresh keg when he notices that some of Bill's spit landed on it. It glows a faint sickly green.

ZEKE (CONT'D)

Disgusting.

He picks it up and brings into the saloon.

INT. SALLY'S SALOON - FRONT ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Sally taps the keg and pours beers for patrons. They roar and cheer in approval. Bill's spit, however, appears to seep into the wood of the keg.

EXT. SALLY'S SALOON - CONTINUOUS

Stan looks in through a window and sees the raucous crowd. Not seeing anything wrong, he turns around and crosses the street to the 9 Lives.

INT. 9 LIVES - CONTINUOUS

The vibe inside is more subdued and refined. The men here are quieter, opting to listen to the women's whispers instead. A small band plays a whimsical tune as a burlesque show takes place on stage. The girls are all dressed the same.

The girls all place their giant feather fans in the center, then pull them away dramatically, revealing Rebecca sporting a scintillating short dress. She's obviously the star. She spots Stan at the bar and winks. He smiles back.

EXT. FORT BLISS - NIGHT

The soldiers from Epitaph ride up to the watch by the gate. Torches on the walls cast pools of light in the unending darkness of the desert. The Watch Commander approaches.

WATCH COMMANDER

State your business.

I like this transition.

SOLDIER #1

Yes, sir. We come from Epitaph.
Half a day's ride from here.

WATCH COMMANDER

I know it. Go on.

SOLDIER #1

Well, sir. We got a soldier that
came down with something awful. The
local doctor couldn't fix him, so
we thought we'd bring him here.

(beat)

But he passed a few hours ago. The
fort was closer than town, so we
came here.

One of the men on watch walks to the back of the cart and
flips the blanket back. The sick soldier is dead. The
watchman nods at the watch commander.

WATCH COMMANDER

Bring him in. Put him in the
infirmary for now, then get some
chow. We'll let the Lieutenant
Major decide what to do next when
he arrives in the morning.

INT. FORT BLISS - INFIRMARY - MINUTES LATER

The soldiers from Epitaph carry the body in still wrapped in
a blanket and lay it on table. They exit. The corpse lies
there in silence, completely motionless.

INT. UNDERTAKER'S - CONTINUOUS

Mortimer submerges his rag into his bucket of water that he
fetched from the water pump. He uses the rag to wipe the
blood off a naked body splayed out on a table. Other naked
bodies show they have been recently cleaned. They don't move.

INT. OLD SHACK - CONTINUOUS

The old man who bought the Waters of Life from Petrov dangles
the bottle in front of his roommate, another old man. The
first old man laughs malevolently as he snatches the bottle
away and downs it. He lies down on a cot to sleep.

The other old man makes a face and goes to his cot to sleep.

Cool/montage



INT. MODEST BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The homely woman who bought the Love Potion holds it to her chest, shuts her eyes, and breathes deeply before drinking it. She sets the bottle down next to a small framed portrait on her nightstand and smiles. She blows out a candle.

INT. NEAT BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A match is struck and it lights a small lantern, revealing Ms. Stapleton in her bedroom. She opens a book and begins reading it in bed. She reaches over to a wooden cup and drinks some water. She frowns at the taste, but finishes it.

AAAARGH... I WANT TO
READ THE TURN!

① *Bruno Research*
 Lt. Major - Pt. Commander
 (A. Commander)
 (A. Commander)