

TOMBSTONE

A Play

by **Don Nigro**



**SAMUEL
FRENCH**

FOUNDED 1830

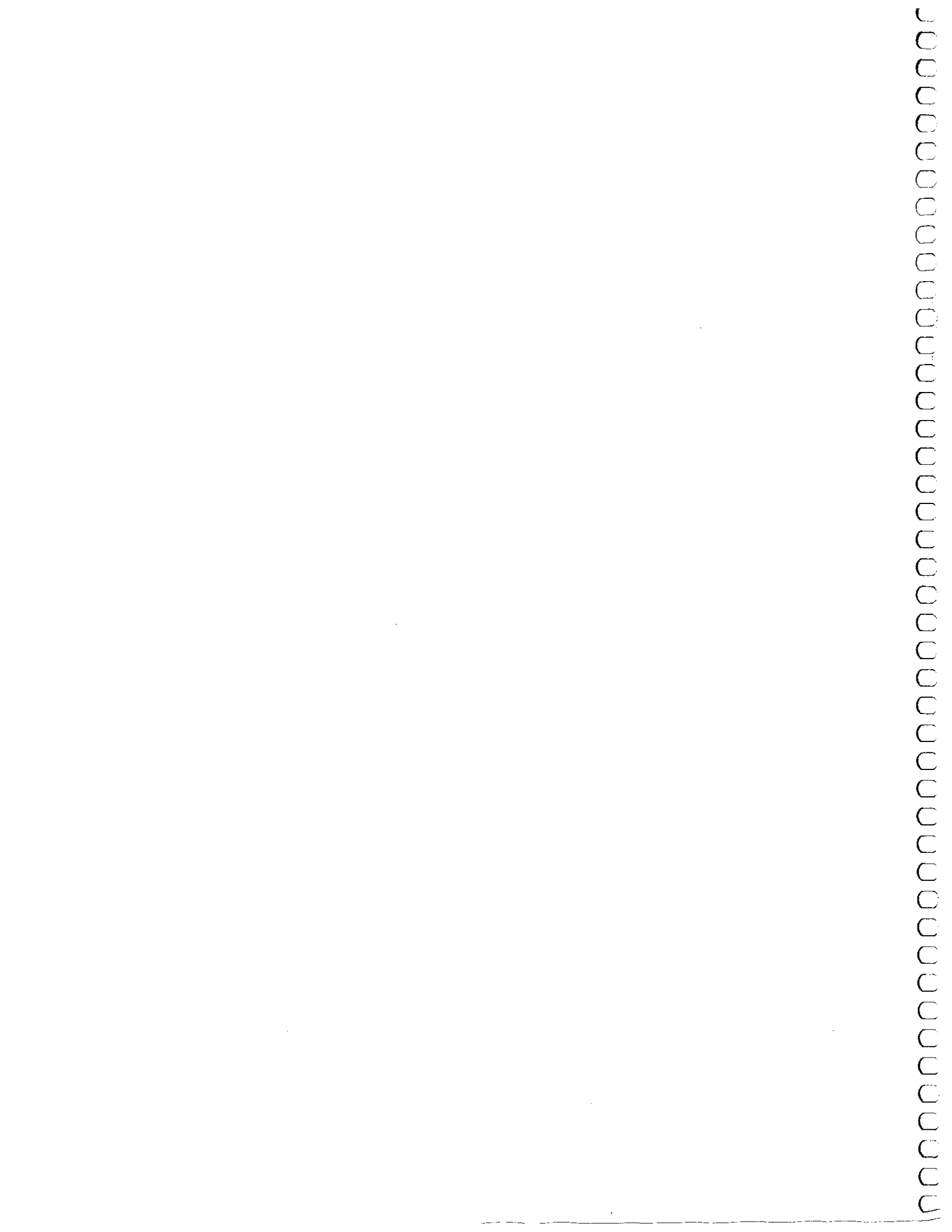
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Characters:

Wyatt Earp
Virgil Earp
Doc Holliday
Mattie Blaylock
Kate Elder
Morgan Earp
Josie
Blondie
Pauline
Johnny Behan
Billy Clanton
Tom McLowry
Frank McLowry
Ike Clanton
Drunk

Setting:

Tombstone, Arizona in the early 1880s. Wyatt's porch, his saloon, Doc's room, the jail, O.K. Corral, and elsewhere, in one unit set with minimal furniture including two round saloon tables, wooden chairs, rockers for the porch and a bed. There are no set changes and no blackouts. Louie the piano player may be imagined offstage, or his piano may be incorporated into the set if a live piano player is available. Ease of transition from one scene to the next is essential.

Tombstone was first presented on November 21, 1991 by Love Creek Productions at the Nat Horne Theater at 440 West Forty-Second Street in New York. Directed by L. R. Hults, with the following cast:

Wyatt Earp	Jeffrey Spolan
Virgil Earp	Peter Campbell
Doc Holliday	John Unruh
Mattie Blaylock	Cheryl Black
Kate Elder	CaSandra Brooks
Morgan Earp	Douglas May
Josie	Becca Greene
Blondie	Antonia Banewicz
Pauline	Kymm Zuckert
Johnny Behan	Paul Kawecki
Billy Clanton	Charles Navarette
Tom McLowry	David Benson
Frank McLowry	Chris Cuddihy
Ike Clanton	Jeffrey Swan Jones
Drunk	Craig Barnett

Set	Bill Swartz
Lights	Karen Kennedy
Costumes	CaSandra Brooks
Incidental Music	Jeffrey Jones
Piano	Diane Hoblit
Accordion	Rick Peeples

ACT ONE

(Wyatt's porch. Evening. Wyatt and his older brother Virgil sit in rockers, looking out at the desert. Bird sounds. Peaceful. But then, from afar, we hear the sound of an accordion playing 'Beautiful Dreamer,' very badly. A moment in which we watch Wyatt and Virgil rock and listen to this increasingly awful serenade.)

WYATT

(After a while, quiet and thoughtful.)
I thought you shot that accordion player, Virgil.

VIRGIL

I dreamed that I did, Wyatt, but when I woke up, I discovered I'd merely shot the cat.
(Another brief musical interlude in which the accordion player makes a number of rather unfortunate mistakes.)

WYATT

That don't make a whole lot of sense, Virgil.

VIRGIL

Well, now, it does if you investigate into it a little. See, the cat hated that damned accordion even more than I do, and every time that son of a bitch would start in to playing, the cat would commence to yowling and moaning something dreadful, and that wouldn't endear that there accordion player any more to my affections than he had already got, neither. So one night that there accordion playing started up again some time after midnight, and I was sleeping face down on my wife at the time, and I guess I got to hearing that accordion in my sleep, and the cat started to wail and squall and lament like a stuck buzzard, and I kind of half awoke whilst still partly within my dream, you see, and the next thing I recollect, my wife informs me I had shot the cat.
(Pause.)

WYATT

That's a sad story, Virgil.

VIRGIL

Well, I was philosophical about it. I figured at least one of us didn't have to listen to that damned accordion no more. And it coulda been worse. I coulda shot my wife.

WYATT

That's true, Virgil.

VIRGIL

No fun sleeping face down on the cat.

WYATT

I expect not.

VIRGIL

Still ain't caught up with the damned accordion player, though. Awful mysterious how that feller disappears the way he does. Kinda spooky.

(The song mercifully comes to a conclusion. Wyatt and Virgil rock.)

Does kinda give you pleasure, though. I mean, when it stops, you appreciate the silence more. I guess that's what music is for.

WYATT

I guess.

(Pause.)

I like this place, Virgil. This is a good place.

VIRGIL

Yeah.

WYATT

I hate to say this, but I think I finally lost the itch to move.

VIRGIL

Well, it's kinda like the clap. It comes and goes, but it ain't ever altogether gone. You know, I had a dream last night that you and me was dead. We was laying in our graves, see, side by side, out under Boot Hill, and we'd talk through our coffins to one another, to pass the time, which we had a lot of. And I says to you, I says, Wyatt, what's it smell like to be dead? And you says back, Virgil, you ought to know that better than me, as you been dead longer than I have, and I says, yeah, but I can't smell no more. My nose is all clogged up with something, And I thought in my dream that if I just had a pipe cleaner, maybe I could unclog my nose some, but then I wasn't entirely sure my nose hadn't just fell off, you know? I could still hear things, some—coyotes, somebody playing the accordion—but I had this uncontrollable yearning just to smell my feet again.

WYATT

I've smelled your feet, Virgil, and it ain't worth worrying about.

VIRGIL

Well, maybe. But in my dream, also, there was these here prairie dogs, and they kept trying to build this town through my esophagus, see, and—

WYATT

Virgil?

VIRGIL

Yeah, Wyatt?

WYATT

Shut up, Virgil.

(Pause.)

VIRGIL

Okay.

(Pause.)

You really lost the itch to move?

WYATT

Be quiet. I heard something.

VIRGIL

Somebody coming?

WYATT

Fraid so.

VIRGIL

I don't know how you do that, Wyatt.

WYATT

Easier to listen with your mouth shut, Virg.

VIRGIL

I never tried that.

(Both have carefully drawn their guns while continuing to rock.
Sound of somebody whistling "Buffalo Gals.")

WYATT

(Not seeing him yet, but reacting to the whistle.)

Oh, no.

VIRGIL

That ain't who I think it is, is it?

WYATT

Oh, no.

VIRGIL

It's him, ain't it? I was kinda hoping he was dead.

WYATT

Me too.

DOC

(Appearing, stopping to look at them.)
Anybody here need their teeth fixed?

WYATT

Hey, Doc.

DOC

Hey, Wyatt. You look pretty damned stupid in a rocking chair.

WYATT

Doc, I thought you was dead.

DOC

Me too. Nice place you got here. Hi, Virgil.

VIRGIL

Howdy, Doc. Where you been?

DOC

I can't remember.

WYATT

Stay for supper?

DOC

I was counting on that. Ain't nobody can cook like Mattie. You're still with Mattie, ain't you, Wyatt?

WYATT

Can't seem to get rid of her.

(Yelling into the house without getting up.)

HEY, MATTIE, WE GOT ONE MORE FOR SUPPER.

MATTIE

(From inside.)

The hell you do. You tell that Morgan Earp he better teach Blondie how to cook. We can't be feeding your whole damned family all the goddamned—

(She appears in the doorway, sees Doc, stops.)
—time.

DOC

Hello, Mattie.

MATTIE

I ain't feeding him.

WYATT

Mattie—

MATTIE

I ain't letting that man sit at my table. What's he doing here, anyway? I thought he was dead.

WYATT

Well, he ain't, not yet, and he's gonna eat supper with us.

MATTIE

Wyatt, that man ain't nothing but trouble. He's just gonna get you into some sort of lethal mess again. We got a nice place here, and we don't need no filthy, drunken, no-good gambling scumbucket to come here and wreck everything for us, so you just get rid of him, because he ain't setting foot in my house, and he sure as hell ain't gonna eat my meatloaf.

DOC

You're lovely as ever, Mattie.

MATTIE

Horse shit.

(She goes back into the house.)

DOC

I'm in love with that woman, Wyatt.

WYATT

You want her?

DOC

I would, but now and then I suspect she don't entirely return my affections.

WYATT

She's just shy.

VIRGIL

We heard you was dead, Doc.

DOC

I heard that rumor, too, but I decided not to believe it. I also heard you're doing pretty good out here, Wyatt.

WYATT

It's not bad. Morgan's here, too. We got us a saloon. Virgil and me's the law, sort of. Part of it.

DOC

Think maybe I'll stay a while, then.

(Pause.)

That okay with you?

WYATT

Doc, I don't know how that'd look.

DOC

Look to who?

WYATT

Well, to folks. You know.

DOC

I don't remember you ever giving too much thought to how things look, Wyatt.

WYATT

We got elections around here, Doc. Folks are already a mite suspicious of us Earps, cause there's a bunch of us, and cause they heard about Dodge and other places you and me was associated in the past, and because we all kinda descended on em in a bunch and sorta took over, kinda. We gotta be diplomatic. We don't want to make too much trouble.

DOC

I wasn't planning on making any trouble.

WYATT

I know that, Doc, but you see—

DOC

Maybe I ain't hungry after all.
(He starts to go.)

WYATT

(Going over and stopping him.)

Now, Doc, wait a minute. You get over here and sit down.

(Doc looks at Wyatt's hand on his arm. Wyatt lets go.)

It's just that we got to be more careful now than in the old days. We can't go off shooting wild any more and expect to get away with it. All I'm trying to say is that you got to keep your temper around here, go easy. Hell, Doc, any place I squat, you can squat. You know that.

DOC

You sure about that?

WYATT

Course I am.

DOC

You change your mind, you let me be the first one to know, okay? So I ain't surprised.

WYATT

I ain't gonna change my mind. Come on. Sit down. I see you finally got rid of Kate.

DOC

Well, I got hopes. I think I slipped her in Denver, but you can't never tell with that

woman. She's like some kind of fungus, just keeps popping up.

WYATT

I know what you mean.

DOC

No you don't. Mattie ain't no disease. Mattie's a good girl. Kate, on the other hand, has got part of her head loose, and she can damn near beat me at arm wrestling.

WYATT

I like Kate. I always liked Kate.

DOC

I'll trade you.

WYATT

I don't like her that much.

DOC

I hope you ain't got so respectable that you give up drinking and playing cards.

WYATT

Hell, no. I got to get away from that woman somehow.

DOC

You and Mattie having troubles, Wyatt?

WYATT

Nothing special.

DOC

No offense. Just wondered.

WYATT

I ain't nothing much.

VIRGIL

Her name is Josie.

WYATT

Shut up, Virgil.

VIRGIL

That's twice today you told me to shut up, Wyatt.

WYATT

Sorry. Lost my head.

DOC
Does Mattie know?

WYATT
No.

VIRGIL
Yep.

WYATT
Virgil—

VIRGIL
You gonna tell me to shut up again, Wyatt?

WYATT
No, Virgil, I was just gonna explain to you and Doc how I don't much like to talk about my private affairs on the front porch.

DOC
Fair enough.
(Pause.)
Josie who?

VIRGIL
She works at the saloon with—

WYATT
DAMMIT, MATTIE, IS SUPPER READY YET, OR ARE YOU GONNA WAIT FOR US TO DIE SO YOU CAN FEED THE GUESTS AT THE FUNERAL WITH IT?

MATTIE
(From within.)
I AIN'T SERVING NOTHING TO NO DIRTY, CROOKED, GAMBLING,
BACK-SHOOTING PIG OF A HALF-ASSED DAMNED DENTIST AT MY TABLE.

DOC
I like a woman can turn a phrase.

WYATT
MATTIE, YOU GET THAT DINNER ON THE TABLE OR I'M GONNA COME IN THERE AND WHACK YOU TILL YOU LOOK LIKE A BLUEBERRY PUDDING.

MATTIE
YOU JUST LAY ONE FINGER ON ME, WYATT EARP, AND I'LL TAKE THIS FRYING PAN AND FLATTEN YOUR HEAD LIKE A TABLE TOP.

VIRGIL
I sure do wish today was over. All this noise is giving me indigestion, and I ain't even et yet. Now all we need is for Kate to show up.

KATE

(From off.)

I KNEW I'D FIND YOU HERE, YOU SKUNK-SUCKING TINHORN.

DOC

Oh, no.

VIRGIL

I'm going out and sit in the outhouse. You call me when supper's ready,
(He escapes. Doc and Wyatt both sink down into their rockers.)

KATE

(Appearing, a handsome but rather alarming woman.)
Thought you'd got rid of me, didn't you?

DOC

Howdy, Kate. I thought you was dead.

KATE

What the hell you mean running off on me like that?

DOC

I left you a message, Kate. Didn't you get my message?

KATE

I got stuck with a four hundred dollar hotel bill, that's what I got.

DOC

Gee, that musta taken you a long time to work off, Kate, at fifty cents a crack.

KATE

Just what kind of a remark is that?

WYATT

You want to see my saloon, Doc?

KATE

Just what do you mean by that, anyway?

DOC

Sounds like a great idea to me, Wyatt.
(They bolt out of their chairs and elude Kate.)

KATE

HEY.

WYATT

DON'T WAIT SUPPER FOR US, MATTIE. WE GOT URGENT BUSINESS IN TOWN.
(Doc and Wyatt are gone.)

MATTIE
(Coming back out of the house.)
WYATT, DON'T YOU DARE GO RUNNING OFF WITH THAT WORTHLESS SON OF
A—
(She stops, seeing Kate.)
Hi, Kate.

KATE
Hi, Mattie.

MATTIE
Ain't you gonna chase them?

KATE
Naw. My feet hurt. He ain't going far with Wyatt around. I think I'll just set down and
rest a spell.
(She sits in a rocker and begins taking her shoes off.)

MATTIE
I heard you was dead, Kate.

KATE
Wishful thinking on somebody's part. How you doing?

MATTIE
Okay. I got a house.

KATE
Looks like a nice one, too. You got windows and everything.

MATTIE
It is. It's very nice. So you and Doc are still together, huh?

KATE
If you call this together. Things get rough, Doc disappears, I clean up the mess he left,
say good riddance, then I get to missing the son of a bitch. Sooner or

11 later I find him. It ain't too difficult. He leaves me a pretty clear trail. I get
him a little sober for a while, more or less—it ain't never advisable to get Doc entirely
sober—and things are okay for a while. Then he starts to get itchy and life gets rough
again. Things are going good with you, though, huh?

MATTIE
Yeah. I don't know. No.

KATE

Same old thing?

MATTIE

Seems like he wants to settle down, finally, Kate. He really does like it here, and he's got all involved with the town and everything. Politics. Part of him always did want to belong to a place. He's not like Doc. I thought maybe things were going to finally be all right.

KATE

Sounds pretty good to me.

MATTIE

Except I think he's got a girl in town.

KATE

Well, hell, you can't have everything.

MATTIE

I don't want everything. I just don't want to share him with no other woman.

KATE

You know who she is?

MATTIE

I think so.

KATE

Then why don't you shoot her?

MATTIE

(Laughing.)

Kate. Good old Katie.

KATE

Go on, plug her one. You don't have to kill her. Just shoot her in the ass.

MATTIE

Katie, I sure did miss you a lot.

KATE

I'd shoot her, if it mattered that much.

MATTIE

I don't believe in that sort of thing, Kate. I hate that. That's what's wrong with everything, everybody having guns and all. I hate it.

KATE

When you live in a pig sty, sometimes you got to root around in the slop with the rest of the hogs, or you die. It ain't pretty, but that's how it is.

MATTIE

Kate, you got to get Doc out of here, or he's gonna get Wyatt in trouble again. You know how he does. He don't mean to, but he always does. And Wyatt just can't resist him. I don't want to move any more. I'm tired of not belonging anyplace. I like it here.

KATE

I been trying to get Doc to come back to Denver, start up a saloon, settle down. He can run the cards and liquor, I can take care of the girls. We can have a nice, peaceful, respectable life, whatever years he's got left. And I don't think that's many, Mattie. You should see all the stuff he coughs up. All kinds of awful stuff. I don't even know what half of it IS. It's horrible. We could have a few nice years, if he'd just take care of himself. But he don't. I feel like a idiot, following that man all the hell over the place. But he's always glad to see me, deep down, for a while, I think. I don't know. It gives me something to do with my life.

MATTIE

Katie, if you can get him back to Denver, or Santa Fe, or any place but here, I'd be awful obliged to you.

KATE

I'll think on it, some. Oughta be some way to get the man to see reason. You want me to shoot that girl for you, Mattie?

MATTIE

No, I want you to come in and have some supper. Looks like I got nobody to feed but myself here, and there's plenty of it.

KATE

Don't worry. If it ain't moving, I'll eat it.

MATTIE

Come on in, then.

KATE

When I see you, Mattie, I remember what real folks is supposed to be like.

MATTIE

I don't feel very real, Kate. Not to Wyatt. He just looks right through me sometimes, like I wasn't there at all. Just spooks me right out.

KATE

For a man as smart as Wyatt, he's awful stupid.

MATTIE

Yeah. Me too.

(She looks at Kate, then hugs her.)
You want to see my house?
(They go in, arms around each other. Virgil's head appears, peering cautiously from around the corner.)

VIRGIL

I don't see no blood stains on the porch. I guess everybody excaped all right.
(He settles down into his rocker again.)
Ahhh. I sure do like this peace and quiet around here. Just like a cemetery. Maybe that's why they call it Tombstone.
(He begins to doze off. Then the accordion starts in with
'Beautiful Dreamer' again, very loud and very bad.)
THAT DIRTY SON OF A BITCH. I HEAR YOU, YOU BASTARD. I'M COMING TO GET
YA. I'M GONNA PLUG YOU SO FULLA HOLES, THEY'LL BE ABLE TO STRAIN
BANANAS WITH YOU, ~~GOD~~ DAMN IT!
(Gun drawn, he runs off to find the accordion player, and immediately
we hear the piano playing 'Buffalo Gals,' and the girls begin to sing.)

(The Oriental Saloon. Josie, Blondie and Pauline come out singing, as the others gradually form the world of the saloon: the cowboys Tom and Frank McLowry, Ike and Billy Clanton, and Wyatt and Doc at another table with Wyatt's younger brother Morgan.)

GIRLS

Ohhhhh, Buffalo gals won't you come out tonight,
 come out tonight, come out tonight?
 Buffalo gals won't you come out tonight,
 and dance by the light of the moon.
 I danced with the girl with the hole in her stockin
 and her heels kept a rockin and her knees kept a knockin,
 I danced with the girl with the hole in her stockin
 and we danced by the light of the moon.
 Ohhhhh, Buffalo gals won't you come out tonight,
 come out tonight, come out tonight?
 Buffalo gals won't you come out tonight,
 and dance by the light of the moon!
 (Applause and whooping by the cowboys.)

DOC

Nice place you got here, Wyatt. I could die a very happy death here.

WYATT

I was kinda hoping you'd die someplace else, Doc, if it's all the same to you. We just had the carpets cleaned.

MORGAN

(As the girls approach.)

Doc, I want you to meet my girl, Blondie. Blondie, this is Doc Holliday, the one me and Wyatt told you about.

BLONDIE

Oh, you don't look all that mean and nasty.

DOC

I am, though. I'm even meaner and nastier than Wyatt says.

BLONDIE

Then you just stay away from Morgan, because I like him the way he is—nice and innocent.

DOC

I don't think Wyatt'd let me corrupt his little brother too much, Miss. Although I might want to corrupt this little girl here, if Wyatt hasn't beaten me to the punch. What's your name, honey?

(He puts his arm around Josie.)

JOSIE

Josie. And Wyatt did beat you to the punch.

DOC

(Looks at Josie, then Wyatt, and carefully removes his arm from around her waist.)

Aha. Doctor Holliday's celebrated foot and mouth disease strikes again.

JOSIE

Maybe you could corrupt me some other time, Doc.

DOC

I doubt it.

PAULINE

Don't anybody here want to corrupt ME?

DOC

Sweetheart, you look like you could corrupt ME.

PAULINE

I resent that.

DOC

Then there's still hope. Why don't you buy us a drink, Wyatt? I ain't found me a group of card suckers right yet.

WYATT

If I buy you a drink, it'll be the last time I do.

DOC

It'll be the last time you need to, if I can find me a card game.

WYATT

No cheating in my saloon.

JOSIE

Oh, you don't cheat, do you, Doc?

DOC

I never cheat anybody I can beat, and I can beat anybody sooner or later, because I just do what the cards say, and the cards beat everybody by and by. I just wait respectfully and pick my way through the wreckage. Anyway, I make these yahoos so damned nervous they tend to fold up pretty quick, and if that don't do it, I just start coughing in their faces. Where'd you come from, Josie?

JOSIE

San Francisco.

DOC

Now why would a girl from a reasonably civilized place like that want to come to a godforsaken dump like this? No offense, Wyatt. It's kinda charming for a bunch of mud and wood out in the middle of Hell, but it ain't San Francisco.

JOSIE

I like it here. I like the men out here. They're bigger than other men. I like that.

DOC

I bet you do.

PAULINE

We was in the middle of a national tour of Gilbert and Sullivan high class favorites when due to the general low taste and lack of couth in this here part of nowhere we became financially embarrassed somewhere west of Squat Tit, Arizona, and Mr Earp was kind enough to take us in until we got back on our feet.

DOC

You spend much time on your feet?

BLONDIE

Morgan and me are getting married.

DOC

Good for you. Well, good for Morgan, anyway.

MORGAN

Thanks, Doc. Uh oh. Here comes puke on two feet.
(Johnny Behan approaches.)

BLONDIE

Hi, Johnny.

PAULINE

Hi, Sheriff.

BEHAN

Ladies. Josie. Wyatt. Morgan. I think I know who this gentleman is.

DOC

Chester Arthur. Glad to meet you. Sorry I can't stay.

BEHAN

I seen your picture, Chester.

DOC

Not in the post office, I hope.

BEHAN

No, not recently. In the newspaper. You look a powerful lot like Doc Holliday.

DOC

Name's U. S. Grant. You need a tooth pulled, see me in the afternoon. I'm mean in the morning and I work at night.

BEHAN

Glad to know you, General. I'm Johnny Behan. I used to be the only law around here until all these damned Earps started swarming into town. It's like a invasion of red ants.

DOC

Ain't they awful? I can't get rid of em, either. They're worse than the clap.

BEHAN

Wyatt invite you to town, Doc?

DOC

Do I need an invitation to get in? This some sort of tea party?

WYATT

It's a free country, Johnny.

BEHAN

Now and then. No offense, Doc. I'm a great admirer of yours, but I just wonder if your old friend Wyatt has thought about how it looks, having you operating out of his saloon, him being the Deputy U. S. Marsnall and all?

DOC

Wyatt never did care much about his appearance, did you, Wyatt?

JOSIE

Johnny, why don't you just mind your own business?

BEHAN

And how you been, Josie? I thought you was too good to speak to me, since you took up with Wyatt. Haven't seen much of you lately. Used to see a whole lot of you, didn't I? I guess times change.

DOC

This man is an oracle.

BEHAN

A what?

WYATT

Doc's okay, Johnny.

BEHAN

I'm not saying he's not okay, I just think—

WYATT

I said, he's okay.

(Pause. Wyatt and Behan look at each other.)

BEHAN

If you say he's okay, then he's okay. So if anything unpleasant should happen while Doc's in town, that's your bucket of worms, not mine. Is that fair?

DOC

Sounds fair to me.

BEHAN

Nice to meet you, Doc. Hope you enjoy your stay in Tombstone. Bye, Josie. Watch out for them Clantons and McLowrys over there. They got their eyes on you. If that was my girl, Wyatt, I wouldn't let no cowboys look at her like that.

BILLY

Hey, Johnny, is you talkin about us behind our back again? Why don't you tell that Josie to come over here and be sociable?

TOM

Come on, Josie. We like you.

FRANK

Come on over, Josie. Come on, girl.

BILLY

Here, Josie. Here girl. Soooooeey.

TOM

Sure do like them legs, Josie. Never did see a girl like you around here.

FRANK

Want to come over and put your head in my lap, Josie?

IKE

Take it easy, guys.

BILLY

Aw, Josie don't mind. She likes us to kid her, and Wyatt ain't gonna bother us, on account of we ain't got no guns or nothin. We're just talkin. He can't do a thing to us for just talkin. One wrong step and Wyatt loses his job. Come on, Josie. You know Johnny Behan's ain't no bigger than a pencil, and Wyatt's is cold as a icicle, I bet. I'll make you happy, Josie. Just come on over here and—

(Wyatt stands up. They all freeze.)

IKE

Just kiddin, Wyatt.

(Wyatt walks over to the cowboys' table.)

We ain't armed, Wyatt. And we ain't done nothin. Billy's just talkin. You can't touch him. We'll take you to court if you lay a hand on him.

MORGAN

Easy, Wyatt.

JOSIE

Wyatt, don't.

BILLY

He ain't gonna touch me. He wants his damned job too bad to touch me.

DOC

You boys ain't got a queen of spades in that deck, do you?

BILLY

Pardon?

DOC

You got a queen of spades in that deck of cards, there?

BILLY

Yeah. What about it?

DOC

That's a dangerous card, you know.

BILLY

How do you mean?

DOC

(Getting up and walking casually between Wyatt and Billy
and pointing down to the cards on the table.)

You got to watch the queen of spades, cause if you ain't careful, you see, she can bite.
Queen of spades is a vampire card.

BILLY

What are you, nuts?

DOC

(Picking up the queen of spades.)

No, she'll bite your nose, honest.

(He slices the card across the bottom of Billy's nose.)

BILLY

Ahhhhhhhhh. Hey. He sliced my nose open. Son of a bitch sliced my nose open with the edge of that card. I'm bleedin.

(He holds up his hand to his face and it comes away red.)

DOC

(Tossing the card back on the table.)

No, it wasn't me, son. It was the damn queen of spades. Jumped right up there and bit yer nose. I couldn't stop her. Don't worry, though. I'll git her.

(He pulls out a small gun, aims it nearly point blank at the queen of spades on the table, and pulls the trigger. BANG.

All the cowboys jump and scatter.)

Damn. I missed.

BILLY

You're nuts. You're nuts, mister.

DOC

Don't worry. I'll try again. Watch out though. My aim's kinda wild today. Don't want to hurt none of you boys.

IKE

You gotta arrest him, Wyatt. He's carryin a gun.

DOC

Maybe this time, if I throw her up in the air and shoot, I can catch her on the fly, like a duck.

(He picks up the card to throw it in the air.)

Watch out, boys.

(The cowboys run out.)

Where'd everybody go?

WYATT

Thank you, Doc, but I can take care of my own town.

DOC

I reckon.

WYATT

And I have to ask you for that gun.

DOC

You want my gun?

WYATT

Only deputized persons can carry firearms in town. That's the law. You're gonna have to give me the gun.

DOC

I ain't handing over my gun to any deputy marshall or any sheriff or anybody else with a damned badge. It's against my religion.

(Pause. They look at each other.)

However, I know you always did admire this particular gun, so I'm giving it to you as a present. One old friend to another. Don't say I never gave you nothing.

(He gives Wyatt the gun.)

KATE

(Her voice breaking the silence, from off.)

IS THAT DOC HOLLIDAY IN THERE? IS THAT A DAMNED GEORGIA TINHORN I SMELL IN THERE?

DOC

You want to see another trick, Josie?

JOSIE

What kind of trick, Doc?

DOC

This is how you make a dentist disappear.

(He bolts up the stairs and vanishes.)

MORGAN

He sure moves fast for a sick man.

KATE

(Storming in.)

WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU, YOU DAMNED NEAR-SIGHTED SKUNK?

(She comes over to the table, sniffing.)

Yeah, he was here. Hi, Morgan.

MORGAN

Howdy, Kate.

KATE

Scuse me, folks.

(She downs Doc's glass of whiskey at one gulp, and looks up the stairs.)

My guess is, thataway.

(She bolts up the stairs after Doc and disappears.)

JOSIE

Interesting fella, that Doc.

(The piano begins to play "Sweet Betsy From Pike." Wyatt looks at the gun, shakes his head, turns and walks out.)

Wyatt? What's the matter? Wyatt?

(She follows him.)

BLONDIE
Hey, Morgan?

MORGAN
HMMMM?

BLONDIE
We're gonna get out of this place, once we're married, ain't we?

MORGAN
Let's dance.
(They dance. Pauline clears the table. Behan finishes his
drink and walks out, and lights fade on Morgan and Blondie
dancing rather nicely off as—)

(Doc appears, shaving, in his room. Morning. He cuts himself.)

DOC

Owww. Shit. Damn hand shakes like an exotic dancer. Still bleeding. Ain't dead yet. That in itself is a source of some amazement.

(He shaves. A knock on the door. Startled, he cuts himself again.)

Owww. Shit.

(The knock again.)

Go away.

JOSIE

(From off.)

It's Josie, Doc. I brought you some breakfast.

DOC

I don't eat breakfast. Leave me alone. I'm shaving.

JOSIE

Can I come in and watch?

DOC

Not unless you want to see a man cut his throat.

JOSIE

That might be kind of exciting. Come on, Doc. This tray's heavy.

DOC

Door's not locked.

JOSIE

(Appearing with breakfast tray. She wears a dressing gown, rather revealing.)
A man like you should lock his door, Doc.

DOC

I like to keep all my escape routes open.

JOSIE

(Putting the tray down.)
You sure you don't want something to eat?

DOC

Why don't you give Wyatt something to eat?

JOSIE

Wyatt went off early this morning. Something about a stagecoach robbery.

DOC

He investigating it, or committing it?

JOSIE

I like you. You're funny.

DOC

A lot of people I shot thought I was a riot.

JOSIE

I thought you slept mornings.

DOC

That son of a bitch with the accordion kept me awake all night. I'm gonna shoot that son of a bitch. Who the hell invented the ~~god~~ damned polka, anyway? I'm gonna shoot him, too.

(She watches him. Doc looks at her.)

Why don't you just get the hell out of here?

JOSIE

How come you don't like me?

DOC

I don't think anything about you one way or the other, I just don't like anybody watching me shave.

JOSIE

You liked me before you found out I was Wyatt's girl.

DOC

Some law says I got to like Wyatt's girlfriends? There's so many damned laws in this dump, I can't keep up with them.

JOSIE

I just wondered what you've got against me, is all.

DOC

I've got nothing against you.

JOSIE

Would you like to?

(Doc stops shaving, looks at her, then resumes.)

I just want all of Wyatt's friends to like me, is all. What can I do to get you to like me better?

DOC

Go back to San Francisco.

JOSIE

That's a mean thing to say.

DOC

If you don't want to hear the answers, don't ask the questions.

JOSIE

Why should I go back to San Francisco?

DOC

Wyatt's got a wife.

JOSIE

They're not married. They've got no papers. And just where the hell do you get off, looking down your nose at me? You're a damned drunken murderer and crooked poker player.

DOC

Don't press your luck, kid. I ain't had a drink yet today, and it's not generally a good idea to bother me when I ain't had a drink.

JOSIE

What do you care who Wyatt sleeps with? Me or her, what's the difference?

DOC

Mattie's a nice girl.

JOSIE

So am I.

(Doc shaves.)

I am. That woman's got no more claim on Wyatt than I do, or than Kate Elder's got on you, for that matter, so just get off your damned high horse.

(She pushes him.)

DOC

Owwww. You made me cut myself again.

JOSIE

Good. Bleed to death.

(She whacks at his razor hand, and he cuts himself again.)

DOC

Owwwwwwwwww. ~~God~~ damn it.

(He grabs her hand and yanks her towards him. She struggles.

They're close. She stops struggling. They look at each other.)

JOSIE

What's the matter, Doc?

DOC

You sure as hell don't smell like a nice girl.

JOSIE

What do I smell like?

DOC

A French whore.

JOSIE

I'm a nice girl. I'm a very nice girl. You don't know how nice I am.

DOC

Then why didn't you stay in San Francisco?

JOSIE

Why didn't you stay wherever the hell you came from?

DOC

Georgia.

JOSIE

Why didn't you stay there?

DOC

Because I ain't a nice girl.

JOSIE

You're not so tough.

(She kisses him.)

I wanted to see things. You want something, you don't go and get it, it's your own fault. That's what I think. You want it, go after it.

DOC

And just what is it you want now, Josie?

(She leans up to kiss him again, Doc still with the razor. Wyatt enters with Johnny Behan.)

BEHAN

Watch out there, Doc. You'll cut your throat.

(Josie steps back away from Doc. Wyatt looks at them.)

DOC

Didn't anybody teach you how to knock in school?

BEHAN

I musta been sick that day. Hi, Josie. I see you're dressed for church.

JOSIE

(Covering up her bosom a bit.)
How would you know?

DOC

Wyatt, why'd you want to bring this walking pile of shit in my room before breakfast?
You want to spoil my appetite?

WYATT

I got to, Doc. This is business.

DOC

You got to conduct business in my room?

BEHAN

Tell him, Wyatt.

WYATT

You just keep your damned mouth shut.

DOC

Tell me what? You got a problem, Wyatt?

WYATT

We got to arrest you, Doc.

DOC

For what? Shaving?

BEHAN

Stagecoach robbing and murder.

DOC

Donkey snot.

WYATT

It's true, Doc.

DOC

Now how the hell could I rob a stagecoach? I can't even hardly stay on my horse half the time. Can you see me coughing up my guts into a bandanna and trying to stay on a horse and shoot somebody all at the same time? I'd have to be a damned contortionist.

WYATT

Yeah, I know, Doc, but—

DOC

Well then what the hell kind of a stupid thing is that to be bothering a man about in the middle of the morning, for Christ sake? I got better things to do.

BEHAN

Yeah, we can see that.

WYATT

We got a warrant, Doc.

DOC

What evidence you got?

BEHAN

Oh, we got great evidence.

WYATT

You ain't gonna like this, Doc.

BEHAN

Hey, evidence, come on in here.

(Kate comes in, big smile on her face, but a little scared, too.)

KATE

Hiya, Doc.

DOC

Christ, I shoulda cut my throat when I had the chance.

BEHAN

This here is our star witness, Miss Kate Elder, and she's gonna testify against you, Doc. Says she heard you planning the whole thing. She says—

DOC

You better say your prayers, Kate.

(He starts moving towards her with the razor.)

WYATT

(Getting himself between them.)

Now, Doc, you don't want to make a mess, here. You'll just have to change rooms.

(Johnny and Kate are both trying to hide behind Wyatt and each other. Doc stops, Wyatt's hand resting on his chest.)

DOC

Is that my friend Wyatt with his hand on me like that? Is that the same fella I damn near got my sexual equipment shot off for in Dodge City when nobody else would give him the time of year?

WYATT

We just got to put you in jail for a little while, Doc. We'll get it all straightened out, I promise, but right now we got a warrant for you and we got to do things the right way.

DOC

That ain't how you and me used to do things, Wyatt.

WYATT

We got laws now, Doc.

DOC

Yeah. I can see that.

(He looks at Johnny and Kate, spits on the floor, looks at Josie, then back at Wyatt.)

Okay, Wyatt. It's your ball game.

(He wipes the remaining lather off his face.)

But when I get out of that jail, I better not see Kate Elder any place near where I am, or she's gonna be the best ventilated woman in Arizona.

(To Behan:)

Come on, chickenshit. Just stay down wind from me.

(He looks back at Joise.)

Why don't you put some goddamned clothes on?

(He grabs Behan and throws him out the door in front of him.)

Come on, you jackass. How the hell am I gonna get in jail if you don't open the damned cell door? Christ, this town is sure safe with you on the job. I don't know, Wyatt. I just don't know.

(Doc and Behan go out, Doc pushing Behan and glaring, Behan scared.)

KATE

(Yelling after them.)

I WAS JUST DOIN MY CIVIC DUTY, DOC.

DOC

(Yelling back from off.)

WYATT, YOU BETTER STUFF SOMETHING IN THAT WOMAN'S MOUTH, OR SHE'S GONNA HAVE TO MAKE IT DOWN THEM STAIRS WITHOUT A HEAD.

WYATT

I want to talk to you.

JOSIE

I didn't do anything. I was just—

WYATT

Not you. I mean Kate. Why the hell would I want to talk to YOU?

KATE

Well, maybe I don't want to talk to you.

WYATT

I don't give a damn what you want.

KATE

Now, Wyatt, you can't threaten a witness. That's the law.

WYATT

(Stalking her around the room as Kate moves backwards.)
You know Doc Holliday didn't rob no ~~god~~ damned stage coach.

KATE

I heard him planning it. I did. I swear. I ain't afraid of you, Wyatt. At least, not much, anyway. Now you just mind your own business. This here is between me and Doc.

WYATT

Not any more it ain't. You drug me into it when you told that stupid little fart Johnny Behan that Doc robbed the stage. Now you got to tell the truth, Kate.

KATE

I'm telling the truth. Now just leave me alone, or I'll have you arrested, too. I'm a law-abiding woman, Wyatt, so you just put your own house in order and get on home with Mattie and stop hangin around with this here little tramp. Now, excuse me, I got to give a interview with Mr Clum, the newspaper gentleman from the *Tombstone Epitaph*. I got a responsibility to my public, you know.

(She goes out with some dignity. Wyatt and Josie look at each other.)

JOSIE

If you're going to yell at me, then go ahead and yell, just don't look at me like that.

WYATT

I don't yell.

JOSIE

I know you don't yell. You just sit around looking like a snake that swallowed a rock. I wish you'd just yell or something. Doc didn't rob any stagecoach, did he?

WYATT

I don't think so.

JOSIE

You mean you're not sure?

WYATT

I'm pretty sure.

JOSIE

Wyatt, I was just—

WYATT

I don't want to hear it.

JOSIE

I was just lonesome, and I wanted somebody to talk to. If you're not off chasing after stagecoach robbers and bushwhackers you're home with that woman.

WYATT

Her name is Mattie.

JOSIE

I know what her name is.

WYATT

You can do what you please.

JOSIE

What pleases me is being with you, but I don't like sharing you with somebody else. Maybe you should start having to share me, too, just so you'll know what it feels like.

WYATT

I've got to do my job.

JOSIE

This isn't about your job, it's about Mattie. When I took up with you I stopped seeing Johnny Behan, but you still kept on with Mattie. That's not fair.

WYATT

I never said it was.

JOSIE

Do you want her more than you want me?

WYATT

No.

JOSIE

Then why do I have to share you with her?

WYATT

You don't have to do anything.

JOSIE

Why won't you talk about this? We've got to talk about it.

WYATT

Look, I never said a damned word about anything you've done. You just do whatever you want to do. It's none of my business. I gotta go now.

JOSIE

All right, Wyatt. I will. I'll do just what I please. I mean it. I will.

WYATT

You do that.

JOSIE

Fine.

WYATT

Fine.

(He goes out.)

JOSIE

(Calling after him.)

DAMN YOU, WYATT EARP. AND WHAT THE HELL KIND OF A STUPID NAME IS EARP, ANYWAY?

PAULINE

(Having passed Wyatt stalking stonily away, she now comes into the room with Josie.)

What are you doing in Doc's room, honey?

JOSIE

Just having a little discussion with Wyatt.

PAULINE

Yeah, we could hear you having your little discussion with Wyatt all the way to the funeral parlor. You know they took Doc off to jail?

JOSIE

I don't think Doc robbed any stage coach.

PAULINE

It's hard to tell with them kind. They can be real charming one minute and blow the back of your head off splat against the wallpaper the next. Wyatt'll get him off, though.

JOSIE

I don't know if he will or not. Wyatt's been acting awfully funny lately. He's not the same as he was.

PAULINE

Men don't change, honey. We just see through them after a while.

JOSIE

It's like he's always thinking about something.

PAULINE

Them Earps is just like that.

JOSIE

I wanted to ask Doc about it. Doc is a good friend of Wyatt. He knows him better than I do. I think maybe Doc knows what it is. Doc's smart.

PAULINE

Not smart enough to get away from Kate.

BLONDIE

(Coming in.)

Hey, Josie. There you are. What are you doing in Doc's room?

JOSIE

I'm polishing the doorknobs. Mind your own damned business.

BLONDIE

Okay, okay, you don't have to bite my head off. There's somebody here wants to see you.

JOSIE

I don't want to talk to any more cowboys.

BLONDIE

This ain't a cowboy.

JOSIE

I don't want to talk to any men at all. I'm sick of men.

BLONDIE

It ain't a man. Come on in, Mattie.

(Mattie comes in, shy.)

Pauline, Josie, this is Mattie, Wyatt's, uh—

MATTIE

Wife.

BLONDIE

Come on, Pauline. I need you to help me and Louie with our number for tonight, okay?

PAULINE

Oh, I don't believe in rehearsing. It just spoils the surprise.

BLONDIE

Pauline, we need you downstairs. Now, come on.

PAULINE

Oh. Sure. Well, nice meeting you, Mattie.

MATTIE

Yes.

JOSIE

I think I'll come down and help, too. I—

BLONDIE

Mattie wants to talk to you, Josie. Just for a minute. Come on, Pauline.

(Blondie gets Pauline out of there, the two of them whispering and snapping at each other until they disappear. Mattie and Josie look at each other, embarrassed.)

MATTIE

I can see why he likes you so much. You're beautiful.

(Josie tries to cover up some more.)

I never seen anybody so beautiful in my life. Everybody said you was, but I didn't believe them. But they was right.

JOSIE

Look, I've really got to go and—

MATTIE

No, don't go yet. I just want to talk to you for a minute. Just for a minute.
(Pause.)

JOSIE

Okay.
(Pause.)

MATTIE

Blondie says your folks have got money in San Francisco. I never had any money, myself. My folks used to raise pigs and chickens and such. Not a whole lot of future in that. I never had nothing till Wyatt come along. I know it must sound like I'm trying to make you feel bad, but I'm not. I just want you to understand what the situation is. See, Wyatt was married before. He didn't tell you that, did he?

JOSIE

No. He didn't.

MATTIE

He was a lot different then, I think. Not so wild. And not so deep, maybe. She died real young, and he was real young, too, and Wyatt just kinda went crazy for a while, got arrested for stealing a horse, broke out of jail, got into all kinds of bad trouble. But then he got himself straightened out, went to work for the law, but he's still got these angry places in him, and if you happen to touch one of them, whether it's on purpose or by accident, you got to pay. And a part of him deep down that's still grieving don't exactly care if he lives or dies. And that's what makes him a good Marshall, because part of him don't care if he gets killed or not, and those dumb cowboys can kinda see that without knowing exactly what they're seeing, and it scares them. He met Doc in Dodge City, I think, or maybe Deadwood before that, I don't know for sure. Doc saved his life somehow. You never do hear the story told the same way twice, and Wyatt and Doc don't talk about it, but I believe it. You can tell by the way Wyatt acts with him. But I don't think that's why they're friends. I think they're friends because Doc is the only even half-educated smart person Wyatt's ever had a chance to talk to much, to understand the dead parts in him, because Doc's got the same kind of dead parts. Do you know what I mean?

JOSIE

I think so.

MATTIE

Not that they talk much. Sometimes them two just sit whole evenings on the porch and never make a sound. You'd think the two of them had passed away. But it makes them both feel not so lonesome, I think. Wyatt can't open up much to me because he thinks I'm not very smart, or because I ain't his real wife, the one that died, or because he's scared that if he gets to liking me too much I'll die on him like the other one did. So he talks to Doc. He knows Doc's gonna die, so it don't matter. But when Doc ain't around, and when there's nobody else, like before you come to town, Wyatt would give me as much of himself as he was capable of. And sometimes, in the dark, when it was just us, on that old lumpy mattress, under the quilts, listening to coyotes out the window in the cold, I'd feel like he was giving me a little bit of his soul, too. And he'd be nice to me. I don't know if in the dark he could pretend I was her or what, but I could feel him kind of relaxing with me. And I thought maybe if he just didn't get himself killed it'd be all right here, because Doc was off someplace, or maybe even dead by then. He always did look like he was about ready to drop over dead anyway. Doc's bad for Wyatt. He reminds him of the old days, of being cold and hard and mean all the time and not getting close to anybody and moving on all the time, and that ain't good. And just when I thought I was rid of Doc, and kind of settled in here, and Virgil and his wife are real nice and Morgan's kinda wild but there ain't no harm in him, and I thought everything was maybe gonna be okay, and then you come along, and you're so damned beautiful you get to reminding him of her again, and he feels guilty about it so he takes it out on me, and then damn if that son of a bitch Doc Holliday don't show up to make it all worse, and Wyatt tries to fight it,

because a part of Wyatt really does want to settle down here and stop running. It's a war

inside him, and it hurts to see it, because I want to comfort him and he won't let me, because he feels so bad about you, but he can't stay away from you because you remind him of her, but he hates you for that, because—

(Pause.)

I'm not gonna ask you to give him up. I'm not gonna ask you for anything. I just wanted you to understand how it is with Wyatt and me, because he wouldn't never tell you himself. I figure if you're a good person you'll know the right thing to do, and if you're not, there's nothing I can do about it anyway. I just wanted you to know.

(Pause.)

JOSIE

Mattie, I don't know what to say to you.

MATTIE

That's okay, because I don't want to hear it anyway. You ain't had things too hard in your life, and you're real young, and you think everything's gonna somehow be okay, whereas I know it isn't, and I'm just trying to hang onto what I got for a while. Partly for Wyatt, and partly for me.

(Pause.)got to go. You sure are a beautiful girl.

(She goes out.)

JOSIE

Mattie?

(She goes after her, but Mattie is gone. Josie stands there in the doorway.)

God.

(The piano begins to play 'Buffalo Gals,' a softer and rather melancholy version. Josie goes out as lights fade on the bedroom.)

(The piano continues as lights come up on Doc in a cell in Tombstone jail, fuming, throwing cards into a hat. A Drunk snores loudly on the cot beside him. Wyatt sits in his chair by his desk, brooding.)

DOC

Hey, Wyatt?

WYATT

What?

(The music fades but the snoring is worse.)

DOC

Can I have my gun back for a minute?

WYATT

What for, Doc?

DOC

I want to shoot this son of a bitch here who's snoring in my ear. Son of a bitch has been snoring for three days. I'm beginning to wish you'd just hang me and get it over with. He's worse than the damned accordion player.

WYATT

That's part of your punishment.

(Doc throws another card. It flies out beyond the bars of the cell.)

DOC

Wyatt, you want to get that card for me?

WYATT

Get it yourself.

(Doc sighs, gets up, goes over and kicks the bed under the Drunk, who turns over and stops snoring, then pushes the cell door open, goes out and gets the card, goes back in the cell and closes the door behind him.)

DOC

Queen of diamonds. I always been in love with the queen of diamonds. I love them all, but I love her the best. Queen of hearts, she's real soft and gentle, queen of clubs is a melancholy type of girl, queen of spades is a witch girl, cut your throat in bed but make you real happy first. But the queen of diamonds, she's smart, she looks at you with them eyes that see right through you, and you smile at her, and she smiles back, and her lips are red, and you just can't help but want to run your fingers on her body. I love the queen of diamonds. Yes I do.

(Pause.)

DRUNK

I like fat women, myself. Big fat ones. The fatter the better. More she looks like a damned steer, the happier I am.

DOC

Wyatt, can't I kill this guy? If you're gonna hang me anyway, it might as well be for something I actually did.

WYATT

You better be nice to him, Doc.

DOC

Nice, hell. Son of a bitch smells like a sack full of horse shit.

WYATT

I'm telling you, Doc—

DOC

What the hell you doing hanging around in a dump like this, anyway? You don't belong on a damn fart farm like this. Let's you and me get the hell out of here. We can go to California, or even someplace civilized. Any place but this. This place got all the charm of a mortuary.

WYATT

Can't do that, Doc. You got to go to trial.

DOC

For what? I didn't do nothing, and you know it.

WYATT

Don't matter what I know.

DOC

Well, it sure as hell used to.

(Pause.)

All right, you want to be respectable, then do right by Mattie. Marry her, and stop rutting around with that hot little slut at the—

WYATT

(Level but extremely dangerous.)

Doc.

(Pause.)

DOC

Do I detect a small threat in your voice, Marshall Earp?

WYATT

Maybe you just want her for yourself.

DOC

Which one?

(Pause.)

DRUNK

What I like to do is, I like to stick my nose in their navels. You get you a big fat woman with a nice sloppy stomach, see, and then you just bury your nose in her belly button. God, that's as close to heaven as I'm ever gonna get.

(Doc can no longer control himself. He lunges at the Drunk and begins to strangle him.)

WYATT

DOC.

(But Doc is stopped soon by a violent coughing fit. He gets out a handkerchief and coughs into it for a while. This is sudden and ugly, and very disturbing to Wyatt.)

You okay, Doc?

DOC

No, I'm not okay. What do you think, consumption is a damned funhouse? I'm dying, for Christ sake, and I'm doing it in a jail cell in the ~~god~~damnedest most shit-awful mudhole in the whole fricking desert. I'm just swell, Wyatt. How the hell are YOU?

(Wyatt looks at him, very unhappy. Then Kate bounces in cheerfully, with a picnic basket.)

KATE

Howdy, boys. Wyatt, I brought some good food for that desperado you got in there. Fried chicken. Doc can't keep his hands off a good soft breast for all the money in the world. Just throw it through the bars at him one piece at a time, okay?

(Wyatt looks at Kate, then at Doc, decides something, then grabs Kate and drags her into the cell, with basket.)

Heyyy. Watch it. What the hell are you doing, Wyatt?

WYATT

Something I shoulda done in the first place.

(He slams the cell door shut on them, then locks it.)

KATE

Wyatt, don't you dare lock me in her with him. He'll kill me, Wyatt, He will.

WYATT

That's what I'm counting on. Then we can hang him fair and square and I'll be rid of the both of you. Now, I'm gonna step outside a minute to take a leak and smoke a cigar. When I get back in here I want this damned thing all settled between you two, one way or another. You got that?

DOC

Wyatt, you leave me alone in here with this woman and I guarantee one of us is going to be dead before your piss hits the ground.

WYATT

(On the way out.)

Maybe you can kill each other, save us the expense of a trial.

(He is gone. Doc and Kate look at each other.)

DRUNK

Might as well kill me, too. I'm no damn good, either.

(He begins to sob loudly.)

I never have been no good. My mother always used to say, Wimpy, she said—she called me Wimpy, although my name was Julius—Wimpy, she says, you're about as much use to me as a breadbox is to a octopus. And I says—

Boh DOC

WILL YOU JUST SHUT THE HELL UP?

(The Drunk starts to say something, turns towards them, rolls off the cot and under it, disappearing. Doc sits down and starts shuffling cards. He botches it, and the cards go flying.)

Damn, I never could learn to do this right.

KATE

Do you want some chicken?

DOC

No.

KATE

Why not?

DOC

Because I don't like playing with a greasy deck, that's why. Besides, you probably put rat poison in it.

KATE

(Putting the fried chicken on the floor and gathering up cards.)

Doc, you want to make a deal?

DOC

I don't deal. Hell, I can't even shuffle.

KATE

You marry me and we go to Denver, buy that saloon and settle down.

DOC

You call that a deal?

KATE

Yes, I call it a deal. What's wrong with it?

DOC

What's wrong with it is, what the hell do I get out of a rotten, stinking deal like that?

KATE

You get me.

DOC

Hell, I already got you. I can't seem to get rid of you. God knows I been trying.

KATE

You get a saloon in Denver.

DOC

Which I got to pay for with money I ain't got.

KATE

And you don't get strung up for murder.

DOC

Which I ain't committed in the first place, at least not here, and I'm gonna die anyway. Some deal.

KATE

Do you want to force poor Wyatt to hang his best friend? Is that what you want?

DOC

Oh, gee, Kate, I never did think about it that way. Why, that just breaks my heart, to think of poor old Wyatt having to go to all the trouble of hanging me. That'd be real inconsiderate of me to make him do that, wouldn't it?

KATE

Not to mention the inconvenience it'd be to me.

DOC

I ought to wring your neck like a chicken, right here and now.

KATE

Get away from me.

DRUNK

(Reaching out from under the bed to get a piece of chicken.)
Aw, why don't you just marry her and get it over with?

DOC

Get your ~~sed~~damned hand out of that basket.
(The hand disappears under the cot.)

KATE

Well?

DOC

Okay. You win.

KATE

You mean it?

DOC

Yes, I mean it. Why the hell would I say it if I didn't mean it? Now tell Wyatt to let me out of here.

KATE

Oh, Doc, that's wonderful. That's just wonderful.
(She is hugging and kissing him.)

DOC

Yeah, yeah, get away, you're creasing my shirt.

KATE

HEY, WYATT? WYATT?

DOC

Don't yell in my damned ear, for Christ sake. Do you want a deaf husband?

KATE

Sorry, Doc. WYATT.

WYATT

(Reappearing.)

Yeah? What?

KATE

Get us a preacher, quick, Wyatt. Doc has just asked me for my hand in holy matrimony, and after some soul-searching I've decided to accept his offer. Now get me a ~~sed~~damned preacher before the son of a bitch changes his mind.

DOC

We can find us a preacher on our own. Let's just get out of here first.

WYATT

(Unlocking the cell.)

Just hold your horses.

KATE

No you don't.

(Bolting past Doc, she slips out of the cell and then slams the door shut in Doc's face.)

DOC

Owww. You want to break my damned nose, too?

KATE

First we get married, then you get out. I can't testify against him if I'm married to him, ain't that right, Wyatt?

WYATT

Seems like I heard that once.

DOC

(Opening the cell door and starting out.)

Aw, come on, Wyatt—

WYATT

Doc—

(A moment. They look at each other. Doc steps back into the cell, closes the door behind him, and sits down.)

DOC

It's a damned conspiracy.

WYATT

You mind if the Judge marries you, Kate? Somebody shot the preacher.

KATE

I don't care, just as long as it's all legal and proper. I just want to be a respectable woman.

DOC

And I want to be the King of France.

KATE

Watch it, Doc. I got your life in my hands.

WYATT

Okay, just hang on.

(He goes into the cell and yells under the cot.)

Hey, Judge? Get out from under there.

DRUNK

Underwear? I don't wear any underwear. I lost mine to a Navaho woman in a poker game.

DOC
That's the Judge?

DRUNK
(Crawling out from under the cot.)
What? Who? Him? Hang the son of a bitch.

WYATT
(Helping the Drunk up.)
Come on, your honor. We got a wedding for you here.

DRUNK
Oh, no, I been married six or eight times already and I ain't never gonna do that again, not for no amount of money. I'm drunk but I ain't crazy.

DOC
This is sure some classy town you got here, Wyatt. Shit.

DRUNK
No foul language in my court, ~~God~~ damn it. Fifty dollars and a week in jail.

DOC
I AM in jail.

DRUNK
What happened to that fried chicken?

KATE
First the wedding, then the chicken.

DOC
Wyatt, you ain't gonna make me do this, are you?

WYATT
I don't know, Doc. Seems like a good solution to me.

KATE
Come on, let's get on with it. I want to get to the damned honeymoon.

DOC
I changed my mind. Just go on and hang me.

KATE
Not till after we're married.
(Virgil and Morgan enter, trailed by Mattie, who's very upset.)

MORGAN
Hey, Wyatt?

KATE

Not now. You're obstructing my wedding.

MATTIE

Morgan, no.

MORGAN

Let me go, now, Mattie. I got to tell Wyatt.

WYATT

Can't it wait a minute?

VIRGIL

Wyatt, them Clantons and McLowrys is all over town, startin trouble and sayin they're gonna kill all the Earps.

MATTIE

Don't listen to him, Wyatt. Them cowboys are just blowin off some steam. They don't mean no harm.

MORGAN

They got guns.

MATTIE

So what if they got guns? You got guns.

MORGAN

It ain't legal for them to have guns.

MATTIE

You don't care what's legal. You just want to go out and shoot somebody.

WYATT

Mattie, why don't you just go home and let us take care of this?

MATTIE

Don't talk to me like I was a child.

WYATT

Where are they?

MORGAN

Down by the O. K. Corral, acting real mean and wild. Folks is scared to death of them.

MATTIE

Wyatt, that Johnny Behan put them up to it. I know he did. He just wants to get you in a big shootup so he can get rid of you.

WYATT

I can't very well let the damned cowboys take over the town, now, can I? They ain't supposed to have guns.

MATTIE

If you just let them alone, they'll get tired and go home.

WYATT

Unless they kill somebody first.

MATTIE

It's you they want to kill. They're just looking for an excuse.

WYATT

Those dumb peckerheads couldn't hit the wide side of a elephant.

MATTIE

Then you'll end up killing them, and Johnny Behan'll have you up before the Judge for murder. Hi, Judge.

DRUNK

Guilty. Twenty years hard labor at the fart farm.

WYATT

How do you know so damned much about this, anyway?

MATTIE

I heard Johnny talking to Ike Clanton at the saloon.

WYATT

What the hell were you doing at the saloon?

MATTIE

I went to visit Blondie.

WYATT

I told you to stay away from that place. What are you doing, taking up drinking?

MATTIE

I might.

WYATT

Come on. Let's go.

MATTIE

Virgil, stop him. Somebody's gonna get killed. I know it.

VIRGIL

You know, Wyatt, she might have a point. It smells like a setup to me, too.

WYATT

Well, what do you suggest, Virgil? You want me to sit here and play Go Fish with Doc while the Clantons shoot up the town?

VIRGIL

We could just let Johnny Behan take care of it.

WYATT

Then they'll be after me for not doing my job, and they'll be right. Besides, Johnny Behan can't half take care of himself, let alone anybody else. This is the guy that got beat up in a laundry last month by three old Chinese women. You want to stay here, Virgil, it's up to you.

VIRGIL

Now, don't get all het up. I didn't say I wasn't coming, did I?

DOC

What about me?

WYATT

Guess you'll just have to get married without me, Doc.

DOC

You need some help?

WYATT

I reckon we can take care of it, thanks.

DOC

Sounds like four against three. You might want to play better odds.

WYATT

Doc, you couldn't hit a fat lady with a shotgun if you was having intercourse with her.

DOC

Yeah, but they don't know that.

KATE

Doc can't go. He's gotta stay here and get married. Ain't that right, Wyatt?

(Wyatt and Doc look at each other.)

WYATT

Come on then, if you want.

(He gives Doc a gun in a holster as Doc comes out of the cell.)

DOC

Much obliged.

KATE

Hey. You can't do that. This man is under arrest.

MATTIE

Wyatt, this is stupid. You're doing just what they want you to do.

WYATT

Mattie, go home.

MATTIE

You don't care nothing about me, anyway, do you? What I think. What I feel. It just don't matter.

WYATT

This ain't the time to talk about that.

MATTIE

You're gonna get killed.

WYATT

Can't be worse than standing around here yakking about it.

KATE

Wyatt, you can't do this to me. You can't let this man out of jail. He's accused of robbery and murder.

WYATT

Did you rob that stagecoach, Doc?

DOC

Not that I remember.

WYATT

That's good enough for me. Come on.
(Wyatt, Virgil, Morgan and Doc go out.)

KATE

YOU GET BACK HERE. YOU DAMN BUNCH OF COWARDS. COWARDS. Damn. I almost had the son of a bitch, too. Damn. They keep any liquor around here?

DRUNK

(Pulling a bottle from under the cot and handing it to Kate.)
Here. On the house.

KATE

Thanks, Judge.

(She gets glasses from the desk and pours drinks as she talks.

The Drunk crawls back under the cot to sleep.)

I been chasing that worthless tinhorn around for years. I don't know why. I guess I'm just as stupid as he is. It's like they gotta run so fast towards being dead, they don't have no time to think about it. I don't know. Have a drink.

MATTIE

I don't want any. I got no tolerance for it.

KATE

Aww, drink it. That's what they do. Makes them think they're brave. Go on. What the hell.

MATTIE

(Hesitates, then drinks.)

It's good.

KATE

Damn right it's good.

MATTIE

What am I gonna do, Kate?

KATE

You know what your problem is?

MATTIE

Yes. My problem is Wyatt.

KATE

No it ain't.

MATTIE

My problem is Josie?

KATE

Your problem is, you got to take some positive action.

MATTIE

I went and talked to her, didn't I?

KATE

That ain't gonna do you much good with that kind of woman. That girl is from San Francisco. She can talk circles around a normal person like you and me. What you got to do is, you got to take action, and you got to do it now.

MATTIE

Like what?

KATE

If you was seeing some man on the side, what would Wyatt do?

MATTIE

I don't want a man on the side.

KATE

But what if you did?

MATTIE

But I don't want to.

KATE

YOU DON'T HAVE TO, DAMMIT. I'M JUST ASKIN YOU TO SUPPOSE WHAT IF YOU DID, WHAT WOULD WYATT DO ABOUT IT? USE YOUR FRICKING IMAGINATION FOR CHRIST SAKE.

MATTIE

He wouldn't care.

(She pours herself another drink.)

KATE

Oh, he'd care, all right. Men care about that.

MATTIE

I don't think so.

KATE

Well, if he did care, what would he do, Mattie? Go and have a nice friendly talk with the feller?

MATTIE

No, he'd probably just shoot him.

KATE

There you go.

MATTIE

So you think I should shoot Wyatt?

KATE

That might not be a bad idea, but what I had in mind was, you shoot Josie.

MATTIE

I told you, Katie, I can't do that. I'm just not that sort of person.

KATE

Mattie, you only got so much time on this earth, and you can do anything you want to, if you just put your mind to it, so you might as well do something constructive, something that will make you happy and them around you better off and contribute to the betterment of humanity in general, and frankly, Mattie, I can't think of anything you could do that would have a more positive effect on everybody concerned than if you just got yourself one of these here guns and blowed that sucker away.

MATTIE

But Katie—

KATE

Yeah? What?

MATTIE

Give me some more of that whiskey.

KATE

(Pouring her another drink.)

The way I see it, the only things a man will pay attention to for any real length of time besides drinking are sex and violence. If she's maybe got a little bit of an edge in the sex area at the moment, due to the unfortunate fact that she's nineteen years old and an all out slut, then maybe what you gotta do is out-violence her out of the competition. I do it all the time. Works, too.

MATTIE

Maybe for you.

KATE

Violence can work for anybody, Mattie, if you just give it a chance.

MATTIE

And I don't think she's really that much of a slut.

KATE

She's sleeping with Wyatt, ain't she?

MATTIE

Yeah, but I'm sleeping with Wyatt, too. Kate, to tell you the truth, I kinda got the impression that she was actually a pretty nice girl.

KATE

Now that's something else you got to watch, Mattie. You got to stop thinking of the enemy as nice. The enemy ain't nice. The enemy ain't even human. The enemy is dirt. The enemy don't deserve to live. You start feeling sorry for the enemy, girl, and you're dead as a mackerel before you get started. You got to learn to hate if you want to get on in this world, honey.

MATTIE

You really think so, Katie?

KATE

Trust me.

MATTIE

I don't know. I got to think about it.

KATE

Don't think too much. It's bad for your brain.

MATTIE

Besides, it don't matter, because them Clantons and McLowrys are gonna kill him anyway.

KATE

No they ain't.

MATTIE

They're gonna kill Wyatt and Doc both, ain't they?

KATE

Never happen. Consumption has made Doc a charmed man. Bullets just seem to go right around him. I know, I tried to shoot him a couple of times myself. And Wyatt's too cold to get shot. Bullets just bounce off him like a ice cube. Naw, I ain't worried about them two. Worry about Virgil and Morgan, maybe. They're good people. It's the good people get killed. You don't have to worry about Wyatt and Doc none. Them bastards are gonna live forever.

(They drink. Lights fade on them as—)

(A drum beats ominously. Sound of the piano playing an eerie version of 'Buffalo Gals'. The stage is darker, the light reddish, odd, shadowy. From various directions Virgil, Morgan, Doc and Wyatt enter slowly on one side, while Ike and Billy Clanton, Tom and Frank McLowry enter on the other. This should be very serious and rather chilling. When all have come to rest, staring at each other across the stage, the drum and piano stop. A moment of silence.)

VIRGIL

Hi, boys.

IKE

Hi, Virgil.

(Pause.)

VIRGIL

Nice day if it don't rain.

IKE

Smells like rain.

VIRGIL

Crops sure could use it.

IKE

Yeah, can't hurt the rhubarb.

VIRGIL

No, be good for the rhubarb.

IKE

Yep. I reckon.

VIRGIL

You ever had any of my wife's rhubarb pie?

IKE

Allie makes rhubarb pie?

VIRGIL

Best you ever et. You should come over for pie some time.

IKE

I'll do that, Virgil. Thank you.

VIRGIL

Of course, you know, rhubarb does color the urine.

IKE

That's what I heard.

VIRGIL

Don't know if it's true or not. Guess I never rightly looked into the matter, although I do seem to recall that rhubarb urine has a kind of musty smell like—

WYATT

Virgil.

(Pause.)

I hear you boys got guns.

IKE

Who's got a gun?

WYATT

You got a gun?

IKE

I ain't got no gun. Billy, you got a gun?

BILLY

I ain't got no gun. What's a gun?

WYATT

I heard you had a gun, Billy.

BILLY

Not me.

WYATT

Then what's that bulge there in your pants?

BILLY

Oh, that ain't no gun, Wyatt. I just got to thinkin about Josie naked, is all, and it give me a ridge in my midsection.

IKE

That ain't a very smart thing to say at a time like this, Billy.

BILLY

Well, I never was too smart, Ike. You got the brains in this family, and I got the good looks. I figure you Earps must be an awful smart bunch, because you guys sure is ugly.

IKE

Billy, why don't you shut up?

BILLY

What's your problem, Ike? You and Virgil want to talk about rhubarb some more?

VIRGIL

What's the matter with Frank?

TOM

Still, Frank. Stop fidgeting.

FRANK

I gotta go to the outhouse, Tom.

TOM

Why didn't you think of that before, Frank?

FRANK

I didn't have to go then, Tom.

TOM

I told you not to have that last bowl of chile. Didn't I tell you, Frank?

FRANK

I just couldn't help myself. Oh, this is bad, Tom.

TOM

Well, just wait a minute.

FRANK

I don't know if I can, Tommy.

DOC

Hey, Wyatt?

WYATT

Yeah, Doc?

DOC

If something don't happen pretty soon, I think I'm gonna puke.

WYATT

Don't do that, Doc.

DOC

I'm sorry, Wyatt, but I ain't had a drink today, and I ain't in a very good mood anyway, and I just kinda feel like there's a pretty good chance I'm gonna puke.

VIRGIL

I wish you wouldn't do that, Doc. It's against the law to puke in the street. I'd have to arrest you.

BILLY

You ain't scared, are you, Doc?

WYATT

Boys, you don't want to mess with Doc when he ain't had a drink, believe me. You better just give us them guns and then we can all go over to the saloon and have a drink and talk about this.

BILLY

We don't want to drink with you.

IKE

I do.

FRANK

I got to go real bad, Tommy.

VIRGIL

Why don't you just give us them guns so Frank can go to the outhouse? We ain't gonna—
(Virgil takes a friendly step towards them as he speaks.)

BILLY

DON'T YOU COME NEAR ME, VIRGIL.

VIRGIL

(Stopped.)
I ain't gonna do nothing to you.

BILLY

Damn right you ain't. You come near me, Virgil, and so help me I'll shoot you.

VIRGIL

So you do have a gun.

BILLY

I didn't say that.

VIRGIL

Well, how the hell you gonna shoot me if you don't have no gun? You gonna shoot me with a harmonica?

BILLY

Well, I might have a gun.

VIRGIL

But you ain't sure?

BILLY

No, YOU ain't sure.

WYATT

If we ain't sure, we're just gonna presume you got guns, and if you got guns, then we got to disarm you, and if you resist, then we got to shoot you.

IKE

Why?

WYATT

Because we got guns.

IKE

Oh.

FRANK

Can't I just take time out here and go around behind the back of the photography studio there for a minute?

TOM

Just hold it, Frank.

FRANK

I'm tryin to hold it, Tom, but it's gettin more and more difficult.

DOC

I'm gonna shoot somebody in a minute.

WYATT

Take it easy, Doc.

IKE

Billy, did I forget to feed my horse?

FRANK

You want me to go feed your horse, Ike?

TOM

Don't move, Frank.

FRANK

I can't stand still any more, Tom.

DOC

I GOTTA SHOOT SOMEBODY BEFORE I PUKE. I JUST HATE TO PUKE. I JUST HATE IT.

IKE

I'm just gonna go feed my horse now.

DOC

You move and I shoot you. I shoot anything that moves. I shoot the horse.

MORGAN

Dammit, Wyatt, now I got to go to the outhouse, too.

(From off, the sound of the accordion playing 'Beautiful Dreamer,' very badly. Loud and awful.)

VIRGIL

Oh, Christ.

DOC

THAT DOES IT.

(He turns around and shoots in the direction of the accordion sound.)

IKE

(Screaming and falling on his stomach, holding his arms over his head.)

DON'T SHOOT. DON'T SHOOT. DON'T SHOOT.

(Billy is disoriented, pulls out his gun, drops it, scrambles to pick it up. Strobe effect, like a nickelodeon, as the piano plays 'Buffalo Gals' fast, high and strange. Ike is trying to crawl away. Tom and Frank begin to shoot. Morgan is wounded. Doc and Wyatt begin to shoot. Billy shoots. Frank is shot. Virgil is hit. Tom is shot. Billy is shot. Ike is motionless. Wyatt and Doc remain standing, guns out, unhurt. Lights darkening. Mattie wanders out in the midst of all this carnage, with bottle, drunk, staring in horror at them, bottle cradled in her arms like a baby, backs away from them downstage, then turns to face out. Darkness. Music ends. End of Act One.)

ACT TWO

6

(The Oriental Saloon. Day. Pauline is rehearsing her song. The piano plays offstage. Josie and Blondie sit at a table, drinking coffee.)

PAULINE

(Singing, very simply and nicely.)

So we'll go no more a-roving
so late into the night,
though the heart be still as loving
and the moon be still as bright.
For the sword outwears its sheath
and the soul wears out the breast
and the heart must pause to breathe
and Love itself have rest.
Though the night was made for loving
and the day returns too soon,
yet we'll go no more a-roving
by the light of the moon.

BLONDIE

That's real pretty, Pauline. Make em cry in their beer.

PAULINE

Don't make much difference. They don't pay no attention unless you got your dress up over your head. How's Morgan today? He better?

BLONDIE

Yeah, it don't hurt as much, he says. Lord knows, he's as horny as ever. Allie says Virgil is up and around and feeling his oats, too.

JOSIE

I got to get Wyatt out of this town. Sooner or later his luck's going to run out. I know it is.

PAULINE

You got to get him away from Mattie first.

JOSIE

She seems to be doing a pretty good job of that herself. All that drinking. Wyatt said she didn't drink.

BLONDIE

She didn't used to, Josie.

JOSIE

What does that mean?

BLONDIE

It's just a observation.

JOSIE

You saying it's my fault?

BLONDIE

I'm not saying anything.

PAULINE

Come on, girls. We got to rehearse our other number so Louie can get over to Sunday School to play for choir practice. Let's do that *Camptown Races* now, okay, Louie?

LOUIE'S VOICE

(From off.)

Uhhhhhh huhhhhhhhhhh.

PAULINE

Tell you the truth, I understand Louie a lot better since John Ringo cut his tongue out. Now, the way I see it, this number ought to have feathers, and—

(Mattie and Kate burst into the saloon. Both have been drinking all night. Mattie has a shotgun.)

MATTIE

ALL RIGHT, BABY DOLL. SAY YOUR PRAYERS.

JOSIE

Pardon?

KATE

Don't try to talk your way out of it. Mattie's gonna blow you away.

BLONDIE

Mattie, you put that thing down.

MATTIE

Not till I blow her to pieces, that dirty little fussy.

KATE

Hussy.

MATTIE

Yes, that too. You gonna get out of town, Josie, or am I gonna give you a part down the middle of your face?

PAULINE

Mattie, honey, you don't want to do that.

MATTIE

The hell I don't. I shoulda done it two months ago. It woulda saved me a lot of grief.

BLONDIE

Mattie, you cut it out, now, and give me that gun.

MATTIE

Not until that slut leaves town.

JOSIE

I'm not going anywhere.

PAULINE

Mattie, Wyatt ain't gonna like this.

MATTIE

I sure hope not, Pauline. Now, you just get out of the way there so I can get a better shot.

PAULINE

Okay.

BLONDIE

(Getting between Josie and Mattie.)

Mattie, you just get on home right now.

MATTIE

Get out of the way.

BLONDIE

No.

KATE

Aw, come on, Blondie. Get out of the way and let them settle this thing fair and square.

BLONDIE

This ain't fair and square. Mattie's got a shotgun and Josie ain't hardly even got no clothes on.

MATTIE

Okay, then. I'll take my clothes off.

(She puts down the shotgun and starts taking off her dress.

Blondie reaches for the gun.)

KATE
GIT YOUR ~~USE~~ DAMN HANDS OFF THAT GUN, BLONDIE.

(Kate leaps for the gun and a big fight starts. As they struggle over the gun, Josie tries to help Blondie by pushing Kate. Mattie pushes Josie into Pauline. Much screaming and kicking. Wyatt and Doc come in. They watch this for a moment. Then Wyatt takes out his gun and shoots into the air. Everything stops immediately. Silence.)

WYATT
This some sort of a weird fire drill, or what?

MATTIE
You stay out of this.

JOSIE
Wyatt, she tried to kill me.

WYATT
Mattie, I told you to stay away from this place.

JOSIE
Why?

WYATT
I'm talking to Mattie.

JOSIE
Why do you want her to stay away from here? You think she's too good for a place like this?

WYATT
Josie, shut up. This ain't none of your business.

JOSIE
Don't tell me to shut up. She tried to kill me, for Christ sake. If that's not my business, whose business is it? And what business have you got telling me to shut up?

BLONDIE
It's Kate's fault, Wyatt. She's the one that got Mattie drinking. Mattie ain't used to that sort of thing.

MATTIE
Don't you blame Kate. She just opened my eyes to a few things, is all.

WYATT
Mattie, go home.

MATTIE

Don't tell me what to do. I ain't your dog. I'll do just what I please.

WYATT

(Moving towards her.)

Mattie—

JOSIE

Don't you touch her.

WYATT

Will you stay out of this? You want her to kill you?

JOSIE

Well, maybe she's got a right to be mad. Maybe she's just mad at the wrong person. You're the one that's doing her dirt.

WYATT

I ain't doing a damned thing to her.

JOSIE

The hell you're not. You think you can have it both ways, but you can't, Wyatt. You just can't. You've got to make a choice here. It's not fair to either one of us.

MATTIE

Why don't you just keep your nose out of this, you little trollop? I don't need you to feel sorry for me, and I don't want you on my side.

JOSIE

I'm not on your side, I just think Wyatt's got to stop being such a weasel and make a choice for once.

WYATT

Why can't you damned women just leave me alone for once? I ain't got time to worry about crap like this. Old man Clanton's brought charges against us, says we murdered Billy and the McLowrys. We're gonna have to go to court.

JOSIE

When?

WYATT

Just as soon as we can get the Judge sober enough to sit up in a chair.

JOSIE

But that's stupid. You were all deputized, weren't you? Weren't you deputized, Doc?

DOC
Shit, I don't know.

JOSIE
It doesn't make any sense.

DOC
It ain't supposed to make sense. It's the law.

WYATT
Ike Clanton says we provoked a fight. I don't know what all else they say. It's all a bunch of garbage. But I don't want to have to worry about you damned women shooting holes in each other while I got this on my mind, all right?

JOSIE
They can't prosecute a marshall for doing his duty, can they?

MATTIE
Blowing people's heads off? That's his duty?

JOSIE
Well, what the hell were you just going to do to me?

MATTIE
You got a point there, Josie.

(Pause.)

You're wrong, Kate. You can't beat a animal by acting like a animal. Even if you win, you lose. I don't want to be like the rest of these animals. That's their game. It ain't mine. I don't want to play this game. I aint gonna shoot her or anybody else. Not ever.

(She turns and walks out. Wyatt and Doc look after her. Then

Wyatt turns back to Josie. Doc continues to look after Mattie.)

BLONDIE
Well, ain't you gonna go after her?

WYATT
I need a drink.

BLONDIE
I swear, ain't one of you men worth the effort it would take to spit on you.
(She goes out after Mattie. Doc looks at Kate.)

DOC
What the hell you been doing to that girl, Kate?

KATE
Just tryin to make her aware of her rights and stuff.

DOC

By teaching her to get drunk and shoot people?

KATE

That's what you do.

DOC

You want her to be like me?

KATE

No, I want you to be like her.

DOC

I wish I WAS like her. She's a hell of a lot better than you.

(Pause. Kate starts to cry.)

I gotta get out of here.

(He goes.)

KATE

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt nobody. I just hate to see her get walked all over and not stand up for herself. She's got to learn to stand up for herself. Ain't nobody gonna do it for her. You don't understand what it's like, Wyatt. Hell, what am I talking to YOU for? Talking to you is like talking to a corpse. I gotta go find Doc.

(She goes out. Wyatt sits down, takes off his hat, puts it on the table and rubs his temples.)

JOSIE

I'll get you a drink.

WYATT

I don't want a drink.

(Josie looks at Pauline.)

PAULINE

I got to go feed the dog. The cat. I got to take a bath. I got to give the cat a bath. I'm going now. Nobody cares anyway. Goodbye.

(She goes. Josie looks at Wyatt.)

JOSIE

So what are we going to do now, Wyatt?

WYATT

I don't know.

JOSIE

It can't keep on like this. It really can't.

WYATT

I suppose not.

JOSIE

Could they actually convict you for murder?

WYATT

Could be.

JOSIE

I'm so tired of all this killing.

WYATT

So am I.

JOSIE

Are you?

WYATT

Yes. I am.

JOSIE

What are you going to do about Mattie?

WYATT

Let me think about it.

JOSIE

Do you still love her?

(Pause.)

WYATT

I got to go.

(He gets up.)

JOSIE

Why do you keep running away from this?

WYATT

I'm not running away from nothing, I just got work to do.

JOSIE

You're scared. You're not scared of guns, but you're terrified of women.

WYATT

That's the stupidest thing I ever heard in my life.

JOSIE

It's the truth. Wyatt, you've got to decide. I'm not going to put up with this any more.

WYATT

You don't want me, fine. That's up to you.

JOSIE

It's not that I don't want you. It's that you don't seem to know what the hell you want, and it's driving me crazy.

WYATT

WHAT I WANT IS FOR YOU DAMNED WOMEN TO JUST STOP NAGGING ME TO DEATH FOR TWO MINUTES. IS THAT POSSIBLE? CHRIST. YOU WANT A MAN BUT YOU JUST CAN'T LET HIM BE WHO HE IS. YOU LIKE HIM BECAUSE HE'S STRONG AND THEN YOU SPEND ALL YOUR DAMNED TIME TRYING TO MAKE HIM WEAK. YOU WANT HIM TO BE PERFECT BUT YOU GOT NO GREATER PLEASURE IN THE WORLD THAN POINTING OUT WHERE HE AIN'T. YOU WANT HIM TO MAKE A CHOICE FOR YOU AND THEN WHEN HE DOES YOU GET BORED AND TAKE UP WITH SOMEBODY ELSE. IF I HAD ANY BRAINS AT ALL I'D JUST TAKE DOC AND VIRGIL AND MORGAN AND GO LIVE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT WITH A BUNCH OF INDIAN WOMEN, EXCEPT THAT INDIAN WOMEN IS JUST THE SAME AS YOU ARE. THE ONLY REAL ~~GOD~~ DAMNED ANSWER IS TO JUST BLOW MY BRAINS OUT AND GET IT OVER WITH, BUT I DON'T WANT TO GIVE YOU ~~GOD~~ DAMNED WOMEN THE SATISFACTION.

(Pause.)

I am so tired. I never been so tired in my life.

JOSIE

You want to come upstairs and make love to me?

WYATT

Yes.

JOSIE

Well, I got a headache from all that screaming. Maybe tomorrow.

(She kisses him and goes. Wyatt stands there.)

(Murmuring of people as all converge on the saloon and turn it immediately into a courtroom. The Drunk, now in his judicial robe, bangs his gavel on the way in, hitting tables, the bar, and one cowboy's head. The three dead cowboys are now among the courtroom spectators, looking somewhat green and rotted, with blood splatters on their shirts.)

DRUNK

Order in the court. Order in the court. Let's have some ~~god~~ damned fricking order in here, for corn sake.

(Those who are standing sit down. Those who are sitting stand up. The judge has his robes on backwards and perhaps sideways, and one arm tangled up impossibly in his sleeve, although he does seem to be somewhat more sober.)

All right. I've had just about enough of this shit. Seems like this here trial has been going on my whole ~~god~~ damned life, and we got to get the damned thing over and done with today. I'm gettin the piles somethin awful. Now, who's the last ~~god~~ damned witness?

BEHAN

Ike Clanton, your honor.

DRUNK

Who?

BEHAN

Ike Clanton.

DRUNK

Is that absolutely necessary?

BEHAN

I'm afraid so, your honor. He was right there in the middle of it.

DRUNK

But I can't stand Ike Clanton. Ike Clanton smells. The man smells like something died in his overalls. Can't we fumigate these here witnesses before we let them in here? Or at least spray a little vanilla extract on them? This man smells like a fart factory.

BEHAN

State your name.

IKE

(Sitting down by the judge.)

Isaac Clanton.

DRUNK

Don't sit here. Move your chair over there.

IKE

(Moving his chair.)

Yes, sir.

DRUNK

Further away.

IKE

(Moving his chair again.)

Yes, sir.

BEHAN

Mr Clanton, were you at the O. K. Corral on the day of the alleged altercation alluded to heretofore in previous testimony in this courtroom?

IKE

What?

BEHAN

Was you there at the gunfight?

IKE

You bet your ass I was.

DRUNK

I don't want to hear any more talk about the prosecutor's ass.

IKE

Sorry, Judge.

DRUNK

Shut up.

IKE

Yes, sir.

BEHAN

Mr Clanton, did you see what happened gunfight?

IKE

You bet your wanger I did.

DRUNK

I don't want to hear nothing about his wanger, either.

KATE
(Yelling from the back.)
That's okay, Judge. He don't have none anyway.

BEHAN
The hell I don't.

DRUNK
Order in the court.

BEHAN
You ask Pauline if I don't.

DRUNK
I don't want to hear about it.

PAULINE
I was asleep, Judge. I didn't feel nothing.

BLONDIE
Let's see the evidence, Johnny.

DRUNK
Will you women just shut the hell up so we can get on with this damned thing?

BEHAN
Thank you, your honor.

DRUNK
Don't thank me. I'd lay odds you ain't got one, neither. Man like you probably takes a leak out of his nose. Now, shut up and try to ask this stinking jackass a intelligent question. I got the sorest damned rectum west of the Mississippi.

BEHAN
Mr Clanton, would you tell the court what you saw?

IKE
When?

BEHAN
AT THE ~~GOD~~ DAMNED GUNFIGHT, YOU SHITHEAD. Sorry, Judge.

DRUNK
That's all right. He IS a shithead.

IKE
That ain't a very nice thing to say, Judge.

DRUNK

I'm sorry, Ike. I lost my head. Would you mind moving your chair just a little bit further away?

IKE

(Moving his chair.)

How about if I take it to Albuquerque?

DRUNK

No, that's far enough. Now, tell us what happened at the gunfight.

IKE

Well, me and my dead brother Billy was unarmed in the alley by the photographic studio with our dead friends Tom and Frank McLowry, also unarmed, and we was just about to get on home to the ranch so we could study up for Bible school, see, all of us bein powerful religious people, and Frank had to go to the outhouse, and then that son of a bitch Wyatt Earp and that crazy murderin bastard Doc Holliday and a whole gang of vicious Earp brothers come up and damn if they didn't ambuscade us with shotguns and blowed the living shit out of us, and killed everybody deader than a potato.

WYATT

But you ain't dead, Ike.

IKE

I ain't been feelin too good, though.

WYATT

How'd you manage not to get killed?

IKE

I don't know, Wyatt. It was kind of a miracle. What it coulda been is that God spared me so I could come to this here court and tell the gospel truth about it.

WYATT

You think that's what it was, do you?

IKE

God's ways is entirely unscrutable to the frail minds of his mortal creatures.

WYATT

And you say none of you boys had guns?

IKE

No sir. Not a one.

WYATT

Well, if none of you boys had guns, then who shot Virgil and Morgan?

IKE

I don't know. I don't think anybody shot em. Not to my personal knowledge, anyways.

WYATT

Then how did they get all them bullet holes? You think that's another one of them miracles, Ike?

BEHAN

Your honor, I object. He's asking the witness to reply to a question he's too stupid to answer.

DRUNK

Johnny, just sit down and shut up. Ike, answer the damned question.

IKE

Would you repeat the question?

DRUNK

If nobody had no goddamned guns then how come Virgil and Morgan got all them frickin bullet holes?

IKE

Well, I guess some of em God put there, in his unscrutable strangeness, and the rest they musta got when they fainted from all the excitement and fell on their guns, unless Wyatt and Doc shot em by mistake, or maybe they shot each other whilst in a rage over a scarlet woman.

DRUNK

Ike, that dumbass story stinks worse than you do.

IKE

To tell you the truth, your honor, you don't smell too good yourself.

DRUNK

Then let's make everybody happy and get the hell out of here. This case is a bunch of bullshit. You boys was resisting arrest and some of you was carrying firearms and somebody shot Virg and Morg and everybody in town knows Ike Clanton is the damndest skunk of a lying jackass that ever crawled out from under a fat woman. Case dismissed.

(He bangs the gavel down hard twice, but on the third attempt falls off his chair and disappears. Cheers and boos from the disturbed onlookers, who wander off arguing about it, leaving just—)

(Night. Crickets. Mattie sits alone on her porch. Doc approaches.)

DOC

Mattie?

MATTIE

What the hell do you want? Get out of here.

DOC

Nice night.

(He sits down beside her.)

MATTIE

Who told you to sit down?

DOC

You know, Wyatt's worried about you.

MATTIE

I bet.

DOC

He is.

MATTIE

He's got Josie to keep him company.

DOC

Listen, Mattie. You got to stop this drinking and feeling sorry for yourself. You got to straighten up before it's too late. This ain't gonna help you get him back.

MATTIE

Maybe I don't want him back. What do you care, anyway? I'd think you'd be happy about this.

DOC

Mattie, you're a nice girl, and I'd like to see you get what you want, but you're not going to get it by trying to shoot Josie, and you're sure as hell not going to get it by sitting around here drinking yourself to death.

MATTIE

You been drinking yourself to death as long as I known you.

DOC

That is a purely humanitarian gesture on my part to keep me from killing more people than's absolutely necessary on account of my basically unfriendly nature when I'm sober.

MATTIE

What the hell are you doin out here botherin me, Doc?

DOC

Wyatt's my friend, and so are you.

MATTIE

The hell I am.

DOC

I know you don't have much use for me, but—

MATTIE

You're damn right I don't. You're bad luck, Doc. Goin around lookin for a place to die and tryin to drag Wyatt right into the damned grave with you.

DOC

I don't have too many choices left in my life, Mattie, but you still do, and—

MATTIE

I don't want to sit here and listen to no helpful advice from some ~~god~~ damned drunken murdering dentist.

(Pause.)

DOC

I used to know a girl named Mattie, back in Georgia. Nice girl like you. We were going to be married. Don't laugh, it's true. My daddy wanted me to make something of myself, so he sent me to dentist school in Baltimore. I don't know exactly what his thinking was there, but all I got out of that experience was a set of pliers and a fatal dose of consumption, from staring into sick people's mouths all day. The doctors said I was gonna die in six months, or maybe I could hang on longer if I went out west, where it's dry, so I said goodbye to Mattie and got on the train and came west, and I amused myself on the train by drinking myself damn near into a coma. I figured I only had a few months anyway, and I was never going to see Mattie or my folks or anybody I gave a damn about again. But the hell of it was, I didn't die. I don't know if the alcohol pickled my innards or what. And I was good at cards and smarter than most of these yahoos and I never did care much for staring in people's mouths, so I started gambling, and found out I could make a living at it, there being a remarkable abundance of stupid, greedy people in the world, only taking their money tended to rile them up, so I started practicing a little with guns, just to protect myself. The problem was, I was just awful at it. My eyes ain't too good at a distance. But the only way to stay alive in them saloons is to scare people enough so they leave you alone, so the first time some damned idiot twice as big as me picked a fight, I walked up till I was about a foot away from him and

told him to draw. Well, that fella looked at me like I was nuts, because in most gunfights nobody involved can shoot worth a damn, so most of them that gets hurt is generally innocent bystanders. You hit somebody you're aiming at it's

75 generally because the bullet ricocheted off a frying pan, but standing a foot away from each other there wasn't no way either one of us could miss, and this fella's eyes got big around as pie pans, and he turned white and all lumpy like, and I knew I had him, so I started cussing at him, used every filthy word I ever heard, and some expressions I made up there on the spot and had no idea what they meant even, and that fella just said, You're crazy, mister, and turned tail and ran, and that's how I got my reputation for marksmanship. It was pure cowardice. That's the person you hate, Mattie. That fella I made up. That ain't Wyatt's friend. But I am.

(Pause.)

You gotta be strong and give him a choice. You keep up this way, you're just pushing him right into her lap.

(Pause.)

MATTIE

If you can sit and talk decent to me like this, then why ain't you ever nice to Kate?

DOC

Because I don't want her around.

MATTIE

Why not? She loves you, Doc. She'd do anything for you.

DOC

I don't want some damned woman mooning around after me all the time. It just reminds me of what I can't have. But the damned stupid woman don't understand it, she just keeps on torturing the both of us, and she knows how it's gonna end, with her watching me cough up my lungs until there's nothing left. God never made a stupider woman in the history of the ~~god~~ damned universe.

(Pause.)

You go talk to Wyatt.

MATTIE

I can't.

DOC

Go and talk to him before it's too late.

MATTIE

No. Why has it always got to be me that goes to him? Why can't he come to me sometime? The hell with him.

(She is crying. Doc holds her for a moment. Quiet, just the crickets.

Then she pulls away and wipes her eyes.)

If he wants me, he knows where to find me. I mean it, Doc. I got some pride. You might

not think so, but I got some pride, too.

DOC

All right. He'll come and see you.

MATTIE

No he won't. He'll stay with her. She'll make it real easy for him.

DOC

He'll come and see you.

(He starts to go.)

MATTIE

Doc, what are you gonna do?

DOC

You just stay away from that liquor and clean yourself up a little. He'll be around tonight.

MATTIE

Doc—

(He goes. Mattie looks after him, then turns and goes into the house as—)

(Josie, with lamp, in her room, prepares to get into bed. Loud pounding from off.)

JOSIE

What? Who is it?

DOC

OPEN THE ~~GOD~~ DAMNED DOOR.

JOSIE

Wyatt?

DOC

NO, IT AIN'T WYATT, NOW OPEN THE DOOR BEFORE I MELT THE ~~GOD~~ DAMNED DOORKNOB WITH MY BREATH.

JOSIE

Doc?

DOC

I'M GONNA SHOOT MY WAY IN. I GOT MY GUN. WHERE THE HELL IS MY GUN? I KNOW I HAD IT A MINUTE AGO, ~~GOD~~ DAMN IT.

JOSIE

All right, just a minute. Don't shoot.
(She lets him in.)

DOC

It's about time. You think I got all day to stand around in the hall and wait? I'm a busy man. I got stagecoaches to rob.

JOSIE

Doc, what are you doing here? It's two o'clock in the morning.

DOC

I know what time it is. I don't know what day it is, but I know what time it is. That's why I never wind my pocket watch.

JOSIE

Doc, Wyatt's not here, he's—

DOC

I know he's not here. He's down there losing his damned money at the poker table, like the damn fool that he is.

JOSIE

Then what are you doing here?

DOC

Well, I didn't come to play checkers, honey.

(He flops down on his back on the bed, arms out in a crucifixion position.)

Okay, baby, come and get it.

JOSIE

You're drunk.

DOC

Drunk? Me, drunk?

(Lurching up in her direction.)

I? The great Doc Holliday? Inebriated?

JOSIE

(Backing away.)

Doc, you just stay over there, now.

DOC

Whatsa matter, cookie? You was all hot and bothered over me the other day. Lost your nerve? All talk? All tease and then freeze?

JOSIE

I don't like some drunk busting into my room in the middle of the night.

DOC

And you're right. You're absolutely right. I am a cad and a scoundrel, a louse and a flounder, and I beg your humblest apologies.

(He leans over to kiss her hand, and falls with his face in her bosom. They collapse onto the bed.)

JOSIE

(Pushing him away and retreating to her own corner of the bed.)

Will you just get your damned face out of there? What the hell's got into you? You were sounding pretty high and mighty about me not so long ago.

DOC

Well, I got to thinking, Josie, about how life is short, and mine is shorter. I ain't got much time left for this sort of thing. I ain't got much time left for any sort of thing. It just don't seem to make much sense to waste a beautiful woman when she's got good taste enough to want to debase herself with me.

JOSIE

I've never seen you like this.

DOC

Yeah, well, I save this sort of behavior for special occasions. Funerals. Hangings. Beheadings.

JOSIE

Doc, you just can't barge into my room like this. Wyatt'll be back soon, and—

DOC

Naw. That poker game'll last till dawn. I know a long situation when I see one.

JOSIE

Well, maybe, but still, Doc—

DOC

Do you know you're the most beautiful woman I ever saw in my life?

JOSIE

I thought you didn't like me.

DOC

I don't see where that has a whole hell of a lot to do with anything.

JOSIE

Mama always said beauty comes from within.

DOC

No. Your mama lied. Beauty comes from without. Shit comes from within.

JOSIE

If you're going to talk to me like that, I think you just better—

DOC

Tell me something, honeybunch. Tell me why the hell girls like you get so damned hot for men like Wyatt and me. Would you tell me that?

JOSIE

I'm attracted to dangerous men, sometimes. That's true, up to a point. But I also want them to have certain limits. I'm not sure you've got any limits, Doc.

DOC

Death, for one. I'm limited by death.

JOSIE

Yes. That's another attractive thing about you. You seem close to death.

DOC

That ain't much of an accomplishment.

JOSIE

And you talk like these people, and act like these people, sometimes, but it seems to me like you're playing a part. You're an educated man. You know things. You've read books.

DOC

Hell of a lot of good that's gonna do me out here.

JOSIE

Why did you really come up to my room tonight?

(Doc pulles her face gently towards his and kisses her.)

Easy.

DOC

I ain't got time to be easy.

JOSIE

Doc, I can't.

DOC

I ain't got time for much of anything.

JOSIE

I can't do this. I've got to—

(He kisses her again, then rolls over so that he is more or less on top of her when Wyatt walks in. Wyatt looks at them for a moment, then takes out his gun and points it at them. At the last moment he aims higher and shoots the wall above them.

A picture falls. Doc and Josie jump. She crawls out of bed.)

Wyatt, this isn't what it looks like. He just came barging in her and started to, I mean, I didn't know what to do. I just—

DOC

Oh, I think you knew what to do, Josie.

JOSIE

Wyatt, we didn't do anything, I swear.

DOC

Damn it, Wyatt, you could at least have the decency to knock. A gentleman always knocks first, so as to warn bushwhackers and such that I'm coming.

(He's lighting a cigar, sitting up on the bed.)

You want a cigar? How about you, Josie? I always like a cigar afterwards. Cuts down on the smell.

JOSIE

Wyatt, he's crazy. Don't pay any attention to him. He didn't mean any harm. He's just drunk. You don't want to shoot him.

DOC

Well, make up your mind, Josie. Was I attacking you, or wasn't I? Because if I was, then the man's got a perfect right to shoot me, and if I wasn't, then you must have invited me in. So which is it?

JOSIE

Will you shut up, dammit? I'm trying to save your life.

DOC

Don't waste your breath. Wyatt ain't gonna shoot me. Seems to me he's a lot more likely to shoot YOU. But probably he ain't gonna shoot anybody. The fact is, Josie, you and me was made for each other. We're the same kind of people. Ain't that right, Wyatt?

(Wyatt looks at them, puts the gun away, turns and goes.)

JOSIE

Wyatt? Wyatt, wait a minute. Wyatt?

(He's gone. She turns back to Doc.)

You bastard. What the hell did you want to do that for?

DOC

Well, he's gone now. We might as well fool around.

JOSIE

Just get the hell out of here. I should kill you myself, you filthy son of a bitch.

(She attacks Doc, hitting him hard with her fists, furious, crying.

Doc pretty much just takes it, and moves towards the door.)

You monster. You're a monster.

DOC

(Finally stopping her by taking her gently but firmly by the shoulders, looking into her eyes.)

I'm sorry.

JOSIE

Not as sorry as you're going to be.

DOC

I am genuinely sorry. You're not a bad girl. You're just real young, and too damn good looking. But you're gonna do fine. One way or the other, you're gonna do just fine. I ain't worried about you.

(He kisses her on the forehead and goes out. She stands there, still furious, but also confused. She's not sure what just happened.)

JOSIE

DAMN YOU. YOU'RE AN EVIL, HORRIBLE MAN, AND I HOPE YOU DON'T DIE FOR A LONG, LONG TIME.

(The light fades on her.)

(Morning. Birdsong. Mattie dozing in the rocker on her porch.
Wyatt approaches, stands and looks at her for a moment.
She looks up and sees him.)

MATTIE

How long you been there?

WYATT

Not long.

MATTIE

What do you want?

WYATT

Can I sit down with you?

MATTIE

It's your porch.

WYATT

(Coming up to sit down.)
You still drinking?

MATTIE

What do you care?

WYATT

I'm tired.

MATTIE

Well, I'm tired, too. For one thing, I'm tired of being taken for granted. Why is it that decent people get taken for granted while people like Doc Holliday get away with murder? I just don't understand it. It must be that God made us stupid and crazy both at the same time. That's the only way I can figure it.

WYATT

Mattie, will you start taking care of yourself again?

MATTIE

Give me one good reason why I should.

WYATT

What if I come back here and stay with you, come home every night?

MATTIE

I don't want to live with no lawman no more. All that violence. All that hate. I can't

stand that. I wasn't made for that. I'd rather be alone.

WYATT

All right. No more violence.

MATTIE

You say it, but you don't mean it.

WYATT

I mean it. No more violence.

MATTIE

I don't think you could do that if you did mean it.

WYATT

I can. I'll try. I will. I promise I will.

MATTIE

Then we got to get out of this place.

WYATT

Okay. We'll go wherever you want.

MATTIE

You sure?

WYATT

I'm sure.

MATTIE

What about Josie?

WYATT

That's over.

MATTIE

I don't believe you.

WYATT

Mattie, I swear, we'll go someplace where it ain't like this. I'll get some sort of quiet job and we'll forget all about this place. All right?

MATTIE

I want to believe you. But I been hurt so many times, I just can't let myself—

WYATT

They shot Virgil last night.

MATTIE

Who did?

WYATT

I don't know. Clantons. Somebody. Nobody saw it. He don't know. He's all right. He's shot up a little more, but he'll be all right. He was just healing up from the gunfight and somebody shot him in the back and left him for dead.

MATTIE

What are you gonna do?

WYATT

Morgan wanted to ride out to the Clanton place and shoot everybody in sight. And that was my first idea, too. Hate comes easy, once you get used to it. But I stopped, and I thought about it. There ain't no end to it. We kill them and then they kill us and then we kill them until there ain't nobody left. I want to stop now. But I need you to help me.

(Mattie looks at him. Then she rushes into his arms and holds him.)

MATTIE

You mean it. You do. You do mean it.

WYATT

Come on. Let's go see how old Virg is doing, okay? Son of a bitch is too damned stupid to get killed—he'd have to stop talking. Come on.

(They go, as the music begins and the people come out to form once more—)

(The saloon. Piano music, 'Buffalo Gals.' Doc sits at a table, in a vile mood. Virgil enters, one arm in a sling under his coat, with cane. Josie, Pauline and Kate.)

KATE

Doc, why don't we get the hell out of this town?

DOC

You're looking better, Virgil.

VIRGIL

Still smarts when I pee.

DOC

Yeah, well, me too.

KATE

Come on, Doc. There ain't nothin' here for us. Let's you and me head on back to Denver. Okay? Doc?

DOC

Woman, in your infinite and unfathomable stupidity, you have no idea just how close you are at this moment to being shot clean through the head. I have not slept in a week due to the unfortunate selection of polkas and cowboy favorites played in the middle of the night by that goddamned accordion-playing sadist. If I ever catch that son of a bitch, there's going to be pieces of accordion scattered all over the desert from here to Salt Lake City, and there's going to be pieces of accordion player attached to them.

KATE

Doc, I'm telling you, you're just gonna kill yourself with drink, mooning around here all the time. We got to go now. Maybe we could have a baby or something. Wouldn't you like to have a little baby to—

DOC

(Lunging violently across the table at her.)
AHHHHHHHHHHHHH.

KATE

(Eluding his grasp rather easily.)
You be nice to me or you're going right back to jail.

DOC

WILL YOU JUST SHUT UP AND LEAVE ME THE HELL ALONE? WILL YOU JUST PLEASE JUST LEAVE ME ALONE FOR ONCE? BABY. A BABY. CHRIST.

DRUNK

(Wandering in, holding his mouth, which has something stuck in it.)

Uhh, Dukk, oo ottt ooo ellp eeeeeee.

DOC

What?

DRUNK

OOO OTTT OOO ELLLLLP EEEEEEE.

DOC

WHAT?

DRUNK

(Pulling an old sock half way out of his mouth.)

You got to help me, Doc. You just got to help me.

PAULINE

You got a sock in your mouth. That's what's the matter.

DRUNK

No, I got a terrible toothache, and Doc's the closest thing to a dentist in five hundred miles of here. Doc, you got to help me. I can't take it any more. It's drivin me to drink.

DOC

Get away from me.

KATE

Judge, I'm not sure you ought to be botherin Doc right now, at this here particular point in time. He ain't in a real good mood today.

DRUNK

I got to do something. Please, Doc. I tried everything. I even tried playin my accordion, which in the past has always had a soothing effect on my nerves, especially late at night, when I got my insomnia and all, but even that ain't helped me with this here tooth.

DOC

Accordion?

DRUNK

Yeah. My accordion. I play the accordion for relaxation of the mind. Learned it from my mother, who was once engaged to marry an Italian banana salesman back in Albany, before he tragically choked to death on a bag of pistachio nuts.

(Doc and Virgil exchange a serious look.)

DOC

You're the accordion player?

DRUNK

Yeah, but it don't seem to help none with this thing. I can't concentrate on nothing else but my tooth. I can't even concentrate on drinking. Can you help me, Doc?

DOC

Oh, I'll help you, all right. I'll help you—

(Doc starts to move towards the oblivious Drunk with hands in the strangle position, but Virgil stops him.)

VIRGIL

Now, Doc, I think you ought to treat this man. I think in your capacity as the only dentist in five hundred miles, you got a responsibility to humanity and to your oath as a dentist to help this man. As a kind of a service to the whole community.

DOC

(Looking at Virgil.)

I think you're right, Virgil. Kate, get my bag.

KATE

Now, Doc—

DOC

(Smiling through clenched teeth.)

Just go and get my bag, Kate. We got to put this man out his misery. As a service to the community. Now.

KATE

Okay.

(She goes.)

DOC

Thank you. Now, why don't you just have a seat here, Judge, and make yourself comfortable.

DRUNK

(Sitting down.)

Well, thank you, Doc.

DOC

(Snatching a table cloth off a table, sending Blondie and Pauline after flying bottles.)

Let's just put this around your neck. We don't want to get blood all over everything, do we?

DRUNK

Doc. I really do appreciate you—

(Doc pulls the table cloth tight around the Drunk's neck.)

UGGGGGKKKKKK. Little too tight there, Doc.

DOC

Sorry, Judge. Been a while since I done this.

DRUNK

That's okay, Doc. I really want to thank you for this.

DOC

Oh, it's no trouble at all. It's my pleasure. I need the practice. You want to give me a hand with this, Virgil? Virgil is my dental assistant, you see, Judge. We want to take real good care of you, so you can get back to playin your accordion. Ain't that right, Virgil?

VIRGIL

Oh, we don't want the Judge to miss any time playin his accordion.

DRUNK

That's so nice of you fellers.

JOSIE

Judge, I think you might want to do this another time.

DRUNK

No, the sooner they do it, the sooner it'll all be over.

KATE

(Returning with the black bag.)

Here's your bag, Doc. But I think maybe you—

DOC

Thank you, Kate. Ain't she a sweetheart? Now, let's just see what we got in here.

(He pulls out an enormous, hideous pair of pliers from the bag.)

Here we go. Which tooth is it?

DRUNK

Uh, I ain't exactly sure. It's back in there a ways.

DOC

Well, let's just have a look. Open wide.

(He jerks the Drunk's head back.)

DRUNK

AHHHHHHHHHHH.

DOC

Uh huh. Uh uh. Kinda hard to see in there. I'd light a match, but I'm afraid your breath would cause an explosion. You had liver for lunch, didn't you?

DRUNK

Thought it'd take my mind off the toothache. I like it with onions and garlic.

DOC

Uh huh. What do you think, Virgil?

VIRGIL

Let me have a look in there.

DOC

(Jerking the Drunk's head around.)

Take a look at that.

VIRGIL

(Jerking the head in another direction.)

You mean right there? That's his tongue.

DOC

(Jerking the head back.)

No, not that. This.

DRUNK

Hey, uh, Doc, I don't want to criticize your technique or nothin, but I'm getting kinda dizzy here.

VIRGIL

I think that's the effect of the toothache, Judge. Or maybe the twelve quarts of rotgut you suck down every day.

DRUNK

Well, I don't know. Maybe I should just—

DOC

I tell you, Virgil, my opinion that if we can't see well enough to figure out which tooth is the problem, the safest thing to do is just take em all out.

DRUNK

Now, wait a minute.

DOC

Don't worry, Judge. I done this before, and one virtue of this here procedure is that your infected tooth ain't gonna bother you much because the agony from yanking out the rest of them is going to take your mind right off it, trust me. Now, you hold him down, Virgil.

DRUNK

I changed my mind. I want a second opinion.

VIRGIL

I'll give you a second opinion. My opinion is that you're the worst fricking accordion player in the goddamned western hemisphere.

DOC

(Straddling the Drunk and attacking his mouth with the pliers.)
Sometimes I like to whack my patients over the head with a two by four before I start, so as to put them in a semi-conscious state, but I'm gonna skip that here, Judge, because I want you to enjoy every step of this here procedure.

DRUNK

UNNNNNNG. UNNNGGGGGHHHHH. UNNNNNNNNGGGHHHH.

JOSIE

Doc, stop it, you're gonna kill him.

(The Drunk is screaming. Josie, Kate and Pauline are trying to pull Doc away. Wyatt enters, looks at them.)

WYATT

What the hell is going on in here?

(Doc looks at Wyatt. Everything stops.)

Doc. Good to see you practicing your trade again.

DOC

Got to make an honest living somehow.

(The Drunk slithers out between Doc's legs and scuttles away.)

WYATT

I guess. You ready to go, Virgil?

VIRGIL

Might as well.

WYATT

We're leaving town.

DOC

So I heard.

WYATT

Just come to get Virgil.

DOC

Yeah.

JOSIE

Wyatt—

WYATT

Mattie's waiting outside.

JOSIE

I want to talk to you in private.

WYATT

We got to go now.

JOSIE

I want to go with you.

WYATT

It's too late for that.

JOSIE

Whatever you want. Anyplace you want. You just say so.
(Wyatt looks at her. Mattie enters.)

MATTIE

Wyatt, come on.

WYATT

I'm coming.

JOSIE

You just want to get him out of town before he's had a chance to think about it.

MATTIE

I don't want to talk to you.

JOSIE

You think if you can just get him away from me, everything will be all right. But you're wrong. It's not me. It's him. It's something inside HIM.

MATTIE

Wyatt, we got to go, right now.

WYATT

I said I was going, and I'm going, so just shut up a minute, will you, Mattie?
(Pause.)

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

BLONDIE

(Running in, blood on her hands and dress.)

WYATT. WYATT. WYATT.

(She runs to Wyatt and grabs onto him, crying and furious.)

WYATT

What's the matter? What's wrong? You got blood all over you.

BLONDIE

It ain't my blood. It's Morgan's blood. Morgan's dead. They killed him. They killed Morgan. We was all packed up and I went to look for him so we could leave and somebody said he went to the pool hall, where he promised me he wouldn't go no more, and I went down there to get him. I was so mad at him. And when I went in, he was layin there with all this blood all over him. Them cowboys had snuck up behind him and shot him in the back while he was playin pool. I told him not to go in there. Damned stubborn, stupid man. We was goin away. We was all packed and ready to go away. And they killed him. It's friends of the Clantons, Wyatt. Some people told me where they are. You got to come and kill them, Wyatt. I want you to kill them.

WYATT

I'll take care of it.

MATTIE

Wyatt—

WYATT

If you ain't up to this, Virgil—

VIRGIL

I'm up to it.

MATTIE

No. Wyatt, you promised. You promised me. You swore.

WYATT

I can't help that.

MATTIE

You swore to me you was gonna leave town and never do this no more.

WYATT

For Christ sake, I can't leave now. They just killed my brother.

MATTIE

Wyatt, if you start this all over again, I'm not gonna be here when you get back. I mean it. I'm not goin anywhere with you if you do this. I swear.

WYATT

You do what you please. I'm gonna have to leave town anyway, after I get done settling this particular score. You want to come with me then, you still can.

MATTIE

I won't come.

WYATT

That's up to you.

(He starts to go.)

DOC

Hey, Wyatt?

WYATT

What?

DOC

I think maybe I'll come along, if that's all right. You might need a dentist or something.

(A moment. Wyatt looks at him.)

WYATT

If you like.

BLONDIE

I'll show you. I'll show you just where you can find the bastards. But you got to make sure and kill them all. I don't want any one of them sons of bitches to get away. You got to kill every damned last one of them. Every last one.

(Wyatt goes out with Blondie, followed by Virgil and then Doc, who looks back briefly at Mattie, then goes. Kate, Pauline, Josie and Mattie remain.)

KATE

Yeah, well, they'll be okay.

JOSIE

(To Mattie.)

You're really not going with him?

MATTIE

No. I'm finished.

JOSIE

You'll change your mind.

MATTIE

No.

JOSIE

Mattie, if you don't, I will.

MATTIE

You think he'd still have you now?

JOSIE

If he comes back and you're not here, he'll take me.

MATTIE

Yes. I expect he will.

KATE

Honey, don't let it happen that way. You want somethin, you got to fight for it.

MATTIE

I don't want to fight. I don't believe in that.

KATE

You might not like it, but it's true.

MATTIE

It might be true, but it ain't right.

KATE

Right is just a made up word. It don't mean nothin. Don't you know that?

MATTIE

It's never gonna end, is it? It'll just keep goin on until everybody's dead. Did you see the look on her face when she left with them? All that hate.

KATE

She's got a damned good reason to hate. So would you.

MATTIE

Yes.

(She pours herself a drink.)

PAULINE

Mattie, maybe you shouldn't—

MATTIE

Go away.

PAULINE

I just don't think you ought to—

MATTIE

JUST GET THE HELL AWAY FROM ME. DON'T TOUCH ME. GET AWAY, ALL OF YOU. YOU'RE ALL A PART OF IT. YOU WORSHIP IT. YOU WORSHIP THE DANGER OF IT. IT MAKES YOU EXCITED. YOU LOVE HEROES. YOU LOVE THEM AND THEY USE YOU AND YOU LET THEM BECAUSE YOU WORSHIP VIOLENCE. YOU KNOW WHAT HEROES DO? THEY BUTCHER PEOPLE. HEROES ARE BUTCHERS. THEY GOT TO BE BUTCHERS OR THEY AIN'T REALLY HEROES. I HAVE SEEN GOD'S WORLD, AND IT IS ONE BIG BUTCHER SHOP. YOU WORSHIP BUTCHERS. NOW GET AWAY FROM ME.

KATE

Let her alone for a while.

(Pauline turns and goes. Kate looks at Mattie for a moment, then also goes. Josie stays, looking at her.)

MATTIE

All the violent. Gone out to kill. Made a whole country out of it. Stole and murdered to get it. Took it from who lived there. Dressed it up with lies and self-congratulation. Killed everything that lived there. All the buffalo gals. All gone soon. Nothin left here soon. Ghost town. Nothin left but empty buildings, skeletons. Desert and wind. And here and there, with the writing all worn away, here and there, a blank, white, tombstone.

(Eerie 'Buffalo Gals' high on the piano, haunted. The light begins to fade. Josie, behind Mattie, looks at her, then touches her hair, very tenderly. Mattie looks out. Music continues. Darkness.)

NOTEBOOK: TOMBSTONE

These are mythological people. There were once people with these names, but they were no doubt rather different. In any case, they're dead, and art preys upon the dead. They are resurrected in the palace of art. The ghosts that move about and speak on stages are archetypal creatures who become the communal dream of the spectators. The playwright writes out plans for situations which bring ghosts to life and set in motion living mythologies. The play is not fair to these people. The play is not unfair to these people. The play is a poem of flesh and blood that moves.

If we hold the mirror up to nature, we cannot help reflecting violence. If we are made in God's image, and God is reflected in every fragment of his universe, then God and man and nature all manifest a fundamental violence which is built into the world. Ethical systems based on love generally feel compelled to deny this. But those who choose love over violence must pay a price. These people are crucified. The world kills them. So we pretend to worship a God of love while actually worshipping violence.

The worship of violence destroys a culture. The illusion that a hero is someone who is uniquely skilled in violence corrupts and degrades a people. The worship of weapons, the taking of profit from weapons, the influence of those who make weapons and of those who are good at using weapons, all this corrupts and ultimately destroys everything and everyone it touches.

History becomes mythology. It is the archetypal pattern in history that mythology saves, transforms, makes manifest in the ritual of theatre. Western heroes are archetypal figures in an American mythology of violence. They stole the land, massacred its inhabitants, and began the era of rape and plunder of the environment in which we still live. We do violence to the earth as easily as we do violence to each other. Business worships the violence we do to the earth, as it worships the violence we do to each other, because it takes profit from both. The heroes of business and industry do violence to the poor as a matter of policy. But these people did not invent violence. Violence was apparently invented by God. His universe is built of it. Evolution is violence on a grand scale. When we worship violence, when we make heroes of violent people, we make an alliance with death.

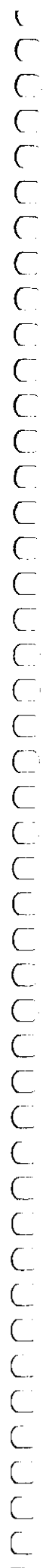
Wyatt and Doc are figures trapped in their own mythologies. They do not enjoy violence. They do not even necessarily practice it very efficiently. But they have, for whatever complex reasons, on occasion a good deal more courage than those who would worship them. They are not villains. They must simply play out their archetypal patterns like the living symbols they have become. They are absolutely lost. And they are not stupid men. They know they're lost. And the women who are drawn to them are also lost. The love of violent people is a destructive form of madness.

It is one of the many ironies of this violent universe that while it is most often both cruel and horrible, it also possesses great beauty and is upon occasion immensely funny. Sometimes it is horrible, beautiful and funny all at the same time. Experience defies a simple-minded insistence upon genres, but dramatic theory, being largely a history of rumor and hearsay, often prefers to ignore this. Shakespeare did not.

A play is a work of literature, meant to be read and then acted out by living people and for living people. But after the production ends and all the people are dead, the play lives on, like the soul migrating from body to body in Hindu mythology, the play migrates from production to production. It is the least mortal part of the theatrical event. The play is a written artifact in which is locked the potential for an infinite number of related finite universes. But it too, ultimately, being a created thing, is mortal. The violence of God's universe will devour the play as it devours all created things. There is, however, some comfort, irrational and inexplicable though it may be, in the act of making the written artifact, and in giving the artifact flesh and blood, and in sharing what results with other mortal creatures. This comfort, too, is no doubt based mostly upon illusion.

A tombstone is an indication that someone has died, but it also equally an indication that someone has lived. We are characters in a play by a playwright we have invented. We do not live long enough to solve this mystery. We do sometimes leave behind certain artifacts to mark our journey through a violent place. They mark our passing like tombstones.





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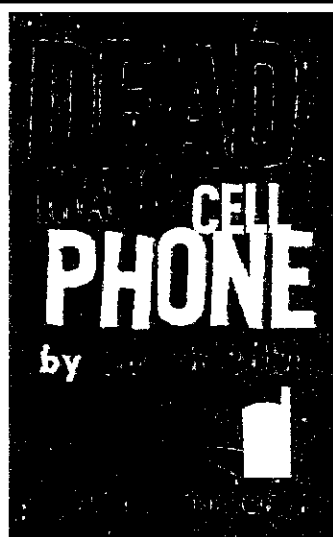


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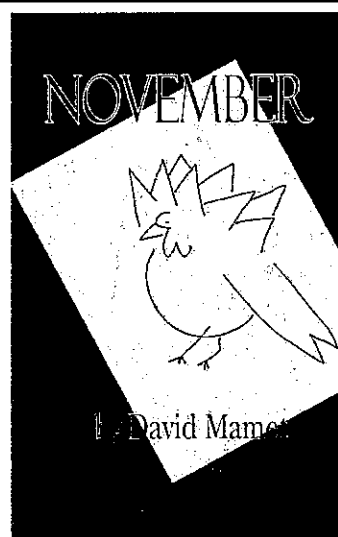


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