

THE ADVENTURES OF BRISCO COUNTY, JR.



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THE ADVENTURES OF BRISCO COUNTY, JR.

FADE IN:

ON A PERIOD MAP OF THE WEST

CAMERA MOVES IN on the map toward a mountain range labeled the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

SUPER: Somewhere in the Sierra Nevadas...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION SIGHT - DAY

The workers are all CHINESE COOLIES sweating under their wide-brimmed hats as they labor in the baking sun. Nasty-looking COWBOYS on horseback supervise, yelling and berating them.

There is the MUFFLED RUMBLE of an EXPLOSION. CAMERA TRACKS to find a tunnel under construction. Dust clears revealing a group of coolies huddled at its mouth.

MAN ON HORSEBACK

(yelling at Coolies)

All clear! Back to work!

The coolies re-enter the tunnel.

INSIDE THE TUNNEL

By torchlight, the coolies dig away the rubble with pick axes and haul it away in wheel barrows. There is a RHYTHMIC CLANKING as their axes work.

Suddenly, CLANK! One of the coolies HITS something METAL. He stops work and looks down. Another Coolie comes over. They question each other in CHINESE.

One of them brings a torch. By the flickering light Coolie #1 clears away the dirt to reveal a smooth METAL SPHERE about twice the size of a basketball! Four rods protrude at right angles. The other Coolies now gather around and stare.

Coolie #1 touches the sphere. Nothing happens. This gives him the confidence to pick it up. Coolie #2 helps. They each grab two of the rods and lift it, INSTRUCTING each other nervously in CHINESE. Without warning, powerful beams of colored light shoot from the ends of the rods! Like lasers, the beams bounce all over the tunnel. There is an unearthly HUMMING NOISE. Two of the Coolies are struck by the beams! They SCREAM!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Coolies drop the sphere and haul ass out of the tunnel. The moment the sphere is dropped the laser lights stop.

In the deserted tunnel we HOLD ON the mysterious sphere. It shines in the torch light.

"EXPLODING" WIPE TO:

EXT. THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS - DAY

A TRAIN THUNDERS through the mountains. It has the usual array of cars plus a heavily armored PRISON CAR. A score of federal marshals stand guard on the car's platforms.

SUPER:

Chapter ONE

"A Punch for Lunch"

CREDITS ROLL as the TRAIN THUNDERS ON.

INT. THE PARLOR CAR - DAY

More armed marshals. Smoking, playing cards, talking. Further back in the car, San Francisco newspaper columnist JONAH COLLIER interviews the legendary U.S. Marshal BRISCO COUNTY, 55.

COLLIER

So, Marshal County, now that you've rounded up the thirteen most violent, sadistic and notorious outlaws in all the West, including John Bly, their criminal warlord, what do you do for an encore?

Brisco County's face is a Monument Valley of strength, fortitude -- and, in this case, forbearance.

MARSHAL COUNTY

I believe I'll smoke this pipe.

County lights up and puffs the pipe to life.

COLLIER

Could you help me out here, Marshal. I've got a column to write. If you don't give me a decent quote, I'll have to make something up.

MARSHAL COUNTY

I'm familiar with your column, Mr. Collier. Why break with custom now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLLIER

Because in this case, the truth is just too damn good. Right here on this very train is the entire John Bly gang. In two days time, they will be safely locked up in the federal penitentiary in Pennsylvania. Every lawman west of the Mississippi hunted them, yet you single-handedly brought them to justice.

County turns to the Marshals seated behind him.

MARSHAL COUNTY

Hear that, boys? "Single-handedly!"

The Marshals look up and glare at Collier who quickly changes the subject, pointing to the fancy pearl-handled gun in County's holster.

COLLIER

Is that the famous gun I've heard about?

County takes it out. We see its magnificent carved handle.

MARSHAL COUNTY

Just an ordinary peacemaker with a pretty handle, Mr. Collier.

COLLIER

It's beautiful.

MARSHAL COUNTY

Maybe so. But that doesn't make it shoot any straighter.

DIAGONAL WIPE TO:

EXT. A NARROW PASS - DAY

A HUGE BOULDER has been rolled across the railroad tracks. A scrawny fellow named OWENS is painting a scenic mural on the side of the boulder that causes it to blend into the background and become virtually invisible. In other words, the mural depicts the railroad tracks receding into the horizon of the surrounding landscape.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An outlaw named PETE HUTTER rides up to Owens and inspects his work.

OWENS

Well?

HUTTER

You know what you've done here, Owens? You've captured the epic grandeur of the Great American West.

OWENS

Thanks, Pete.

HUTTER

Personally, I have little use for this current crop of Frenchmen who slap on their paint in thick bold strokes of vibrant color and call themselves "Impressionists." I guess I'm just a classicist at heart.

Owens is at a loss for words. He has no reply. Doesn't matter because a TRAIN WHISTLE is heard in the distance.

HUTTER

Here she comes! Clear the tracks!

Owens makes a few last touches then runs off the tracks.

DIAGONAL WIPE TO:

INT. THE PRISON CAR - SAME TIME

The THIRTEEN OUTLAWS are shackled and chained to the floor of the prison car, their heads all covered with black hoods.

JOHN BLY, the last hooded prisoner, is working with his hands behind his back . . . as if manipulating his shackle lock.

DIAGONAL WIPE TO:

INT. THE TRAIN'S ENGINE - SAME TIME

Smoking a pipe, an Old Engineer with glasses watches the track in front of him.

IN THE PASS

The outlaws wait, guns pointed.

IN THE ENGINE

The engineer blinks. Something is strange. He stares at the tracks; the painted rock looms up. He takes his glasses off and wipes them. He puts them back on but still can't tell what's wrong.

IN THE PARLOR CAR

Something triggers Brisco's sixth sense. He suddenly turns toward Collier.

MARSHAL COUNTY

Weren't you wearing a tie pin?!

COLLIER

Huh?...

MARSHAL COUNTY

When you came on board! Didn't you have a tie pin?!

Collier glances down at his missing tie pin as we --

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON CAR

CLOSE ON BLY'S HANDS working the stolen tie pin in the shackle lock. CLICK! His hands are free. He rips off his hood revealing a haunting, sharply angular face framed with long black hair.

CUT TO:

INT. PARLOR CAR

CRASH!! The locomotive has obviously struck the boulder on the tracks because the train comes to a sudden stop throwing County, Collier and the other Marshals to the floor. Collier HOWLS IN PAIN as bones in his arms are heard to SNAP.

INT. THE PASS

The outlaws start BLASTING! The guards on the outside of the train are shot dead instantly. Lawmen scramble up and appear at the windows to RETURN FIRE. Bullets WHIZ everywhere.

Two outlaws carrying a heavy canvas bag jump from the rocks down onto the roof of the train.

ON TOP OF THE PRISON CAR

One outlaw drags the canvas bag onto the roof. The other strikes a match and lights a stick of DYNAMITE. He shoves it under the lip of the roof vent. They duck. KA-BLAM! The dynamite blows a gaping hole in the roof! The outlaws hurl down the canvas bag.

INSIDE THE PRISON CAR

The bags split open at John Bly's feet. Guns, ammo, chain cutters -- all spill out.

BRISCO COUNTY

strides through the train heading for the prison car. He easily GUNS DOWN the three or four outlaws he encounters on his way.

OUTSIDE THE PRISON CAR

Brisco arrives. He KICKS open the door and enters with his gun drawn.

INSIDE THE PRISON CAR

Dark and smokey from the dynamite. Brisco is momentarily blinded.

Then the smoke clears to reveal Bly and the TWELVE OTHER OUTLAWS with guns pointed directly at Brisco. (Note: For future casting purposes the faces of the outlaws except for Bly remain indistinct.) They OPEN FIRE! Brisco is thrown backwards, his body riddled with bullets. He lands in a heap on the floor.

BLY

Sorry, Marshal. A little change of plans.

COUNTERCLOCKWISE WIPE TO:

INSERT - NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

From Kansas City, St. Louis, and San Francisco. They SPIRAL UP and hurl headlines into our faces: "FEDERAL MARSHAL BRISCO COUNTY MURDERED!" "THE WEST MOURNS A HERO!" "JOHN BLY GANG ON THE RAMPAGE!"

COUNTERCLOCKWISE WIPE TO:

INT. A NEWSPAPER OFFICE IN SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Reporter Jonah Collier, now sporting two broken arms, dictates a story to a FEMALE CLERK. Meanwhile, a MALE CLERK holds a cigar for Collier, which he puffs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLLIER

First hand I witnessed the
incredible cunning of the outlaw
John Bly as he masterminded his
own escape.

FEMALE CLERK

his... own... escape.

COLLIER

(continuing)

An escape which occurred despite
the massive security precautions
the railroad undertook. It seems
they thought of everything except
the eyesight of the engineer.

(anger building)

It still escapes me how anyone
could drive a train into the
side of a giant painted rock with
scenery on it no more believable
than the backdrops down at the
Horseshoe Club!

MALE CLERK

That's good.

COLLIER

Gimme the cigar.

The male clerk complies. Collier puffs furiously before
continuing.

COLLIER

(continuing)

Speaking of clubs, down at the
far more posh Westerfield Club
the leading robber barons of the
West have been convening.

(beat)

It seems the return of John Bly
and his gang is bad for business.
It also seems the robber barons
have lost faith in the very
government they bought and paid
for.

(beat)

Oh my God, it's itching again.

Collier tries to scratch one of his arms with the other,
but because both are bound in casts it is a comical
exercise in futility.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FEMALE CLERK

(trying to be
helpful)

Which one? The right or the left?

COLLIER

Both! Agghhh!

Finally, he gives up.

COLLIER

(continuing)

Word has it... that banking
magnate, Collis B. Gaspar, and
railroader, Randall Thorogood,
have given their lapdog and legal
counselor, Socrates Poole, the
responsibility for hiring their
own private bounty hunter.

MALE CLERK

(curious)

Who, Lord Bowler?

COLLIER

(continuing)

While the infamous tracker Lord
Bowler has made his appearance
here in town, he will not go
home with the assignment.

(beat)

My sources tell me the man with
the inside track is none other
than...

He pauses; both clerks look over at him expectantly.

COLLIER

... Brisco County, Junior.

(with sarcasm)

Now isn't that original?!

DIAMOND WIPE TO:

INT. THE WESTERFIELD CLUB - DAY

Lots of mahogany and leather. Seven robber barons sit
in a room. Among them: JAMES PAULSON, mining; RANDALL
THOROGOOD, railroads; FRANCIS KILBRIDGE; shipping; and
the oldest and most imposing: COLLIS B. GASPAR, banking.

PAULSON

Brisco County, Junior?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With them is SOCRATES POOLE, a dapper, tightly-wound young lawyer.

SOCRATES

Yes.

KILBRIDGE

Is he a lawman like his father?

SOCRATES

Well, no, not exactly.

PAULSON

Then what is he?

SOCRATES

By training, well, he's, actually... a lawyer.

THOROGOOD

So he's a crook!

The robber barons all chuckle.

PAULSON

This certainly is amusing, Poole, but let's get on with it. We need a legitimate bounty hunter. I say we hire Lord Bowler.

THOROGOOD

Never! The man's a lunatic.

PAULSON

Exactly what we need!

Collis Gaspar now speaks; everybody pays attention.

GASPAR

Tell us, Socrates, why are you recommending this man?

PAULSON

Yes, a lawyer? What's his background?

SOCRATES

His mother died when he was three. He was raised by his father Brisco County, Sr. and learned at his side. At eighteen he went East to Harvard, then Harvard Law. He practiced law for a time, then moved on to other endeavors.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOCRATES (CONT'D)

He currently is between situations
and, thus, available to us...

PAULSON

What's a Harvard boy know about
tracking outlaws?

SOCRATES

Everything his father knew.

That shuts them up.

GASPAR

When can we meet him?

SOCRATES

He said he could be here by the
end of the week -- if he wasn't
too tied up.

CIRCLE WIPE TO:

EXT. A SMALL VILLA IN MEXICO - DAY

A Mexican BANDIT with a sombrero and bandoleers SHOUTS
out to his companions:

BANDIT

Tie him up!

BRISCO COUNTY, JR. sits on horseback. He's around 30,
rugged and handsome, with a week's worth of beard growth
and two weeks' worth of trail dust. He is surrounded at
gunpoint by five Mexican bandits.

One bandit ties Brisco's hands behind his back. Another
puts a noose hanging from a tree above him around his
neck.

BANDIT #2

Adios, Senior Brisco. Better luck
in the next world.

The bandits all laugh. Brisco's horse, COMET, fidgets
nervously.

BRISCO

Easy, Comet...

BANDIT #1

Okay! Slap the horse!

One of the bandits SLAPS Comet. Comet fidgets some more,
but doesn't move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Easy Comet!... That's a good boy.

BANDIT #1

(agitated)

Slap the horse again!

The bandit slaps the horse once more. But again, after some fidgeting, Comet still doesn't go anywhere.

BRISCO

That's a good boy, Comet! Good boy...

BANDIT #1

(yelling)

What's wrong with this stinking horse?!...

CIRCLE WIPE TO:

INT. THE WESTERFIELD CLUB - DAY

The robber barons wait. Socrates glances anxiously at the LOUDLY TICKING grandfather clock. Thorogood taps his fingers impatiently.

THOROGOOD

Poole! How much longer must we be kept waiting?! Where is this Brisco County, Jr. of yours?!

Socrates is about to respond when the door opens and the BUTLER enters.

BUTLER

Gentlemen... Mr. County has arrived.

Socrates smiles with relief. And then Brisco appears. He looks worse than before. His SPURS CLANG and a cloud of dust engulfs him as he moves into the room. The robber baron's jaws drop.

BRISCO

Which one of you is Aristotle Poole?

SOCRATES

(stepping forward)

That's Socrates Poole.

BRISCO

Sorry. I suppose that's a common mistake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOCRATES

Not at all.

BRISCO

Well, it is if you flunked Greek
Philosophy two years in a row.

There is now a loud COMMOTION at the door as Comet tries
to follow Brisco into the room.

Brisco pushes Comet back out.

BRISCO

I told you to wait outside.

He closes the door on Comet, then turns to the others.

BRISCO

You'll have to excuse Comet. He
doesn't know he's a horse.

THOROGOOD

Mr. County... you're late.

BRISCO

I know. And if it wasn't for that
damn stubborn animal, I wouldn't
be here at all.

(beat)

Let me give you fellas a good
piece of advice. Anybody here
drink tequila?

(looks them over)

I guess not. But if you did, do
it in moderation. And don't ever
do it with a bunch of guys who
have bandoleers strapped across
their chests.

The robber barons shift uncomfortably in their chairs,
wondering if they have made a big mistake. Only Collis
Gaspar appears to be enjoying Brisco.

COLLIS

Mr. County, I can say from
personal experience that your
warning is well-advised.

Collis steps forward to shake Brisco's hand.

COLLIS

Collis B. Gaspar. I own--

BRISCO

-- everything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLLIS

No. Just the banks.

(beat)

Of course, the banks own everything.

Thorogood interrupts with a definite edge to his voice.

THOROGOOD

Mr. County, would you mind telling us what you've been up to recently?

BRISCO

Recently?

THOROGOOD

Yes. Poole here seems convinced that you are the man for the job, but there appears to be a "gap" in your resume. Perhaps you can fill us in on your most recent activities.

Brisco is silently thoughtful for a moment. Then he plunks himself down into a vacant chair -- causing a big ball of trail dust to billow up. Everyone is hanging on his answer.

BRISCO

Well, I'll tell ya. I've been looking.

They all appear baffled.

KILBRIDGE

Looking??

BRISCO

For the "coming thing."

They appear even more baffled now.

PAULSON

The "coming thing?"

BRISCO

It's 1893. We're only seven years away from a new century. The 20th Century. Don't you sense it? The Coming Thing. It's out on the horizon. It's right around the corner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOROGOOD

(dubiously)

Exactly what is the Coming Thing,
Mr. County?

BRISCO

(smiling)

You guys aren't too bright for a
bunch of robber barons, are you?

(beat)

If I knew exactly what it was, it
wouldn't be coming... it would
already be here!

Only Collis seems amused by this. Thorogood quickly
consults with the others, then turns to Brisco:

THOROGOOD

I think we've heard enough, Mr.
County. We're not fools, and we
won't be treated as such. If I
have wasted your time, I cannot
say that I am sorry, because you
have wasted ours.

(beat)

Good day to you, sir.

Brisco looks startled by this. So does Collis.

COLLIS

Now just a moment, Thorogood! --

Brisco gets to his feet.

BRISCO

(to Thorogood and the
others; very
earnestly)

I want this job. And I'm the man
to get it done. Never mind that
I'm Brisco County's son. This
job isn't my birthright. The
important thing is that I can
out-shoot, out-ride, out-fight,
out-spit and out-think John Bly
and any one of his gang.

(beat)

You didn't make a mistake when
you hired me, but you're about to
make one now. That's all I've
got to say on the subject.

The robber barons exchange glances.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLLIS

Socrates! Take Mr. County into your office and have him sign the damned employment agreement.

Brisco smiles.

SOCRATES

Yes sir, Mr. Gaspar.
(to Brisco)
Come with me.

Socrates leads Brisco out a private door.

THOROGOOD

I hope you know what you're doing,
Collis.

In response, Collis gives Thorogood a look of steely resolve.

INT. SOCRATES'S PRIVATE OFFICE

Brisco bends over a wash basin, splashing water onto his face. Socrates is nearby, sorting through some papers.

SOCRATES

You're not quite what I expected,
Mr. County. I don't think you're
what anybody was expecting.

BRISCO

Expectations lead to disappointments,
Socrates. That's why I try not to have
any. Hand me a towel, will you?

Socrates hands him a towel.

BRISCO

Thanks.

He dries his face.

SOCRATES

Don't start getting the wrong
idea. I'm not your lackey or your
butler. I am a liaison between
you and your employers. You will
provide me with regular updates on
your progress and I in turn will
issue you bi-monthly pay vouchers
for your services. If you expect
to be reimbursed for any out-of-
pocket expenses, I suggest you
keep your receipts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brisco gives Socrates a curious look.

BRISCO

Do you make up these little
speeches in advance and then
memorize them?

Socrates looks embarrassed. He clears his throat, turns
and points to some boxes resting on the floor.

SOCRATES

These have been sent here for you.
Your father's things.

Brisco approaches one of the boxes and lifts the lid.
Inside is his father's carved pearl-handled revolver.

Brisco TWIRLS the gun skillfully on his finger. It
becomes a silver blur until coming to rest within the
holster on his hip.

BRISCO

(meaning the gun)
I'll keep this.

SOCRATES

What about the rest?...

BRISCO

Send it off to the dead sheriff's
museum.

Socrates gives Brisco a look of shock and disapproval.

SOCRATES

That's a bit cold, isn't it?

Brisco is silent. Socrates realizes he has overstepped
his bounds.

SOCRATES

I'm sorry. I withdraw the comment.
It's none of my business.

BRISCO

My father was the greatest lawman the
West has ever seen. But he knew it
was a risky profession, and so did I.
Ever since I was a boy.

Socrates nods in understanding. Brisco points to an
ENVELOPE on the floor next to the door.

BRISCO

Did you drop something?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Socrates bends down and picks it up.

SOCRATES

Someone slid it under the door.

BRISCO

See what it is.

Socrates opens the note inside and reads:

SOCRATES

"Stanyan's. Table 4. 3:00 p.m."

(looks up)

What do you think?

BRISCO

I think I'm starving -- I haven't eaten in two days -- and we're already late.

Brisco goes out the door ahead of Socrates.

INT. STANYAN'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Brisco enters, looking around. Socrates follows. A MAITRE D' approaches.

MAITRE D'

May I help you?

BRISCO

Yeah, I'm supposed to meet somebody here. Table four.

MAITRE D'

Ah, yes. Right this way.

The Maitre D' leads them across the room to table four.

Waiting there is LORD BOWLER. He looks quarter-Mex, quarter-Apache, and half-wolf. He wears a bowler hat and a classy white long coat over a black vest.

MAITRE D'

Here you are. Table four.

Bowler stands as if to shake Brisco's hand...

But instead, he lets loose with a SLEDGE HAMMER FIST that connects with Brisco's jaw so powerfully that it drops Brisco instantly to the floor.

BOWLER

Lord Bowler, manhunter. You may have heard of me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brisco rubs his jaw. Bowler stands over him.

BRISCO

Let me guess. You're sore because you didn't get the job.

BOWLER

Good guess. With your daddy around, I could barely make a living. Now -- just when things start to look up -- I find out there's another Brisco County!

Socrates pulls Brisco to his feet.

BRISCO

(to Bowler)

You want to go after Bly and his gang, be my guest. You get there first, the bounty's yours --

BOWLER

(angry)

I'm going after Bly and his gang alone! And if you so much as wish me a fond farewell, I'm going to kill you straight out.

Bowler looks like he means business.

SOCRATES

Gentlemen, I don't believe this is either the proper forum or decorum...

Brisco instantly swipes a champagne BOTTLE out of a nearby bucket and SMASHES it over Bowler's head. Bowler drops face-first into somebody's bowl of soup.

BRISCO

(beat)

Bon Voyage.

Brisco checks his jaw once again before casually lifting Bowler's head from the soup.

BRISCO

How is it? Or should I start with the salad?

Bowler responds by HEAD-BUTTING Brisco! Brisco crashes back through several tables.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bowler now pulls a knife the size of a jungle machete! He advances. Socrates looks quite alarmed.

SOCRATES

Wait now! I'm sure there's an amicable solution we can all reach... to prevent...

BOWLER

(turning on Socrates)
Stay out of this, you little monkey!

SOCRATES

(backing away)
Absolutely.

Bowler advances trapping Brisco in a corner! Brisco looks around. A potted plant to his left, a massive tapestry hangs to his right. There is no escape. Bowler closes for the kill.

BOWLER

You're nothing but a sugarfoot glory-grabber out to make a name for himself using his dead daddy's overblown reputation. What would your dead, dumb daddy think of that?

BRISCO

He'd think you were right.

BOWLER

When you see him, be sure and ask him for me!

Lord Bowler raises the knife and charges at Brisco!

CUT TO BLACK.

BURN IN:

COMING NEXT:
Chapter TWO

"Uptown Shakedown"

END OF CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER TWO

FADE IN:

INT. STANYAN'S RESTAURANT - DAY

REPRISE: Brisco backs into a corner as Lord Bowler advances on him with a huge knife. Brisco looks at the potted plant on his left, the massive tapestry on his right. There is no escape. Bowler closes in for the kill!

BURN IN:

Chapter TWO

"Uptown Shakedown"

SCENE CONTINUES: Brisco sees a gold, brocaded rope draping down from the tapestry. He yanks on it. The entire tapestry comes tumbling down on Bowler!

Brisco coils the brocaded rope into a lariat with the practiced hand of an expert. He whirls the rope above his head and catches the chandelier over the center of the room.

BRISCO

(to Socrates)

Find a waiter, would you, and
order me a steak...

RIIIIPPP! Bowler slices free from the tapestry.

BRISCO

Make it medium-rare. With a
baked potato.

Bowler lunges at Brisco! Brisco leaps up onto the rope and swings over Bowler's head across the restaurant! The chandelier CREAKS, but holds. Brisco lands across the room.

SOCRATES

(impressed)

Well done!

BRISCO

No, medium rare!

With murder on his face, Bowler charges. When he gets about half-way across the room...

Brisco tugs hard on the rope. The chandelier PULLS FREE from the ceiling.

Bowler looks up, panicked. The chandelier plummets downward! Bowler dives under a table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The heavy fixture CRASHES onto the TABLE! The table collapses. GLASS flies! Plaster rains down! Bowler is buried under all of it.

Brisco relaxes. Socrates, the Maitre d', and all the patrons look on, dumbstruck.

BRISCO

And for starters, I'll have a salad.

IRIS IN/IRIS OUT TO:

EXT. THE CITY JAIL - NIGHT

Brisco and Bowler are locked behind bars in adjacent cells. A POLICE SERGEANT arrives with bread and water on tin trays.

POLICE SERGEANT

Eat hearty.

IRIS IN/IRIS OUT TO:

EXT. A CANYON - DAY

A rider gallops down the canyon. He rides past the entrances of long-abandoned mines. Further down the canyon, he comes to an abrupt halt. Why? CAMERA PANS UP for the answer:

RIFLE BARRELS visible on the ridge above. Four or five of them. Pointed at the rider. The voice of a LOOKOUT drifts down from the ridge.

LOOKOUT

That's far enough!

The rider, LIGHTNING BILL, looks up nervously.

LIGHTNING BILL

I got a message for Mr. Bly!

INT. A MINING TUNNEL - DAY

The Lookout leads Lightning Bill into the entrance of a mining tunnel. He lights a torch, then guides him.

LOOKOUT

Careful. There's mine shafts all over the place. Stay left.

The Lookout guides Lightning Bill through the mine tunnels into --

A DEEP UNDERGROUND CAVERN

John Bly's lair. The size of a church cathedral and decorated like a Victorian mansion. Bly's number one henchman, BIG SMITH, stands in front of a group of OUTLAWS.

Big Smith is affable-looking but has eyes of pure evil. He wears a distinctive black hat: the hatband is lined with \$100 bills folded into triangles.

BIG SMITH
(pointing to a map)
This is the main rail line. Our tracks run south off it right here...

Lightning Bill and the Lookout enter from the back.

BIG SMITH
... after the train goes through this tunnel.
(tapping on the map)
The tunnel will be filled with knockout gas. The guards won't know what hit them.

OUTLAW #1
Neither will the engineer. How we gonna stop the train?

BIG SMITH
The train's got a dead-man's switch. For any reason the engineer lets go of the throttle, the train stops.
(beat)
We'll also be on board by then. We drive the train onto the spur and do what we gotta do.

Pete Hutter speaks up:

PETE HUTTER
Why rob a train and not a bank? Robbing a train is like robbing a moving bank. Bank's hard enough to rob without it speeding by at one hundred miles per hour.

OUTLAW #1
You're crazy, Pete! Train's don't go anywhere close to one hundred miles per hour!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLY'S VOICE

Enough!

All heads turn to see John Bly step from the shadows. He stops beside a massive pipe organ. A chill settles over the outlaws. They normally may be ruthless and deadly, but in Bly's presence they are fearful.

BLY

Let me tell you all a little story; one you never saw in any of the papers...

(beat)

Recently some Coolies working on a railroad line up in the Sierras found a mysterious metal ball buried in the ground. Nobody's ever seen anything like it. It appears that this object is from some other world out in the region of space...

All outlaws react with disbelief. But only Pete Hutter speaks up:

PETE HUTTER

An object from space?! Even so, what do we care?!

BLY

The two Coolies who found the thing were struck by light it gave off. They got scared. They bolted from their work crew. Naturally, the railroad sent men and dogs after them. They figured the Coolies, given their poor food and condition, might make a mile or two.

(beat)

Instead, they turned up less than twenty-four hours later in San Francisco. The Coolies ran there -- all night. San Francisco is a hundred and seven miles away.

This gets the outlaws' attention.

BLY

Even then they weren't exhausted. It took sixteen railroad cops to bring two Coolies in.

OUTLAW #1

How is that possible?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLY

Apparently this orb has the ability to give supernatural strength.

Lightning Bill looks on. His adam's apple bobs up and down in amazement.

BLY

Think how powerful we could be if we controlled it! Imagine the possibilities!

PETE HUTTER

Where is it now?

BLY

San Francisco. The government seized it. They are planning to transport it by rail to the Smithsonian in Washington for further study. And that's why we're going to intercept that train.

Bly pulls the map off the wall.

BLY

Tycoons and politicians... What gives them the right to rule this country?

An outlaw raises his hand.

OUTLAW #1

Money?

Another outlaw raises his hand.

OUTLAW #2

Power?

BLY

Correct on both counts. But after this we'll have both. The West will be ours and the East will follow. And this whole country...

(crumpling the map)
... will be in the palm of my hand.

Bly looks past the outlaws and sees Lightning Bill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLY

Who the hell are you?

LIGHTNING BILL

(awestruck)

I -- Um -- Lightning Bill Hookman,
From San Francisco, sir. I've got
some information for you, sir.

BLY

What is it?

LIGHTNING BILL

The tycoons. . . They've hired
a bounty hunter.

BLY

Who? Lord Bowler.

LIGHTNING BILL

No. Brisco County.

BIG SMITH

You idiot, he's dead!

LIGHTNING BILL

Brisco County, Junior.

Bly takes this in.

BLY

The son? . . .
(off Bill's nod)
... out to avenge his father's
death?

(thinks it over)

I like it!

(beat)

Thank you, Lightning Bill. You
can go now.

LIGHTNING BILL

My pleasure, Mr. Bly. It's
been a real honor to meet you.
You've always been my favorite
outlaw.

BIG SMITH

Get out!

LIGHTNING BILL

Sorry. I'm going.

Lightning Bill makes a hasty retreat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLY

Oh, Bill, be careful on your way out. Stay to your left.

LIGHTNING BILL

Yessir. Thank you, sir.

He disappears down the tunnel.

INT. TUNNEL

Lightning Bill suddenly plunges down a hidden mine shaft. There is a loud "Whooo-hooo-hooo!" and a final sickening THUD as he hits bottom.

RETURN TO UNDERGROUND CAVERN

The outlaws all cringe.

BLY

Did I say left? I meant right.
(then, to Big Smith)
Now take care of Junior.

BIG SMITH

You mean kill him?

BLY

That's right. Get Brisco in Frisco.

Bly sits down at the organ. Limbers his fingers.

BIG SMITH

How?

BLY

Use your friends.

BIG SMITH

I don't have any friends.

BLY

Then use your enemies.

Big Smith smiles at this insight. Bly attacks the keys. He pounds out a SWEEPING GOTHIC PIECE that REVERBERATES throughout the cavern. Several of the outlaws grimace -- very privately.

WIDENING TRIANGLE WIPE TO:

INT. A COURTROOM IN SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Brisco and Bowler are shackled together with a dozen other DEFENDANTS in front of a tough old hanging JUDGE who is dispensing the swift hand of justice.

JUDGE
Spitting is spitting!
(pounding gavel)
Sixty days hard labor!

The first Defendant is lead off, dazed. Another one is led up to take his place.

JUDGE
You discharge a firearm within
the city limits!?

DEFENDANT #1
Yes sir I did, but --

JUDGE
(pounding gavel)
Sixty days hard labor!

Bowler and Brisco are his next victims. The second Defendant is hauled away.

BOWLER
(whispering to Brisco)
I know this judge. He's tough.
Just keep your mouth shut and
take your sixty days!

JUDGE
Next!

A Bailiff now hauls Brisco and Bowler before the bench.

JUDGE
What do we got here? Disorderly
conduct, public fighting and
aggravated mayhem?!...

The judge raises his gavel but before he can bring it down, Brisco interrupts --

BRISCO
-- Excuse me, Your Honor --

JUDGE
What is it?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

I have a motion for the court. I would like to request a jury trial.

JUDGE

A jury trial?!

BRISCO

Yes, sir. That's right.

Lord Bowler pushes in front of Brisco.

BOWLER

Judge, so you know, I have nothing to do with this man! We're in this totally separately!

BRISCO

I also request a complete list of prosecution witnesses who will testify against me, and a continuance until such time as I have the opportunity to properly subpoena and depose these witnesses. . .

JUDGE

You -- are you a lawyer?!

BRISCO

Yes I am.

JUDGE

I don't have time for a jury trial!

BRISCO

Well, sir, the constitution requires that you make time.

JUDGE

All right, Mister, here's what I'm going to do for you: I'm gonna give you your jury trial -- and it'll make your hair stand up on end -- or you can take five days at hard labor!

Brisco realizes what he's up against.

BRISCO

A tough decision, Your Honor, but after a moment's thought . . . I'll take the five days.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE
(pounds gavel)
Get this damn lawyer out of my
courtroom!

BOWLER
(excited)
Hey! I'll take the five days too!

JUDGE
(pointing at Bowler;
pounding gavel)
Sixty days hard labor!

They are lead from the courtroom with Bowler screaming:

BOWLER
Hey! Wait a minute! That's not
fair! I'm with him! Brisco, do
something! I'm with him!

"HURRICANE" WIPE TO:

EXT. A SAN FRANCISCO CITY STREET - DAY

A cable car line is under construction. It's a lot like
the opening scene. Chinese Coolies do all the hard,
back-breaking labor under BERATING cowboy work bosses.

CLOSE ON ONE OF THE WIDE-BRIMMED COOLIE HATS

The brim fills the screen. As the brim tilts up, we are
surprised to see Brisco County, Jr. He works, sweating
alongside the Coolies.

A carriage pulls up. Socrates gets out with a policeman
who comes over and unlocks Brisco's ankle shackle.

SOCRATES
Come on, you're free to go.

BRISCO
What do you mean? I've got
three more days to go.

SOCRATES
I got your sentence reduced to
two days.

BRISCO
How'd you do that?

SOCRATES
I'm a better lawyer than you.

Socrates leads Brisco off.

INT. BRISCO'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Brisco comes out of the bathroom. Finally he is bathed, shaved and cleaned up. He looks great. He buttons up his shirt. Socrates is also present.

SOCRATES

I must say, Mr. County, you swing a pretty mean pickax.

BRISCO

Can we drop the "Mr. County" routine now? Just call me Brisco.

SOCRATES

Very well . . . Brisco.

BRISCO

(marvelling)

Imagine, Socrates, what the city is going to be like -- a whole system of cables hauling trollies up and down the hills --

SOCRATES

-- With all the attendant risks of negligence and liability. It's a lawyer's nightmare.

BRISCO

Get used to it. It won't be long before there are motorized trollies that don't need tracks.

Brisco picks up the newspaper and sits down to read it.

SOCRATES

It's admirable that you have this ability to constantly think about the future. I myself find I'm always bogged down in the present.

BRISCO

(reading)

Now this is interesting . . .

SOCRATES

What?

BRISCO

Jonah Collier's column. Ever read it?

SOCRATES

Never.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

I don't blame you. He refers to you as Thorogood's lapdog.

SOCRATES

What?! Let me see that!

Socrates reaches for the paper. Brisco holds it out of reach.

BRISCO

Don't be so sensitive! Calm down and listen to this. It's about Bly's escape:

(reading)

Blah, blah, blah . . . "how anyone could drive a train into a giant painted rock with scenery on it no more believable than the backdrops down at the Horseshoe Club?"

SOCRATES

So?

BRISCO

How many scenic painters are there around? Maybe we should go down to the Horseshoe Club and talk to this guy.

SOCRATES

(pause)

Is this the kind of deductive reasoning you learned at Harvard?

BRISCO

No, at Harvard I mainly learned drinking songs and --

There is a KNOCK at the DOOR.

BRISCO

-- Ah, my room service order.

Brisco opens the door. Standing before him are two fierce-looking Chinese TONG WARRIORS in black.

BRISCO

There must be some mistake. I didn't order Chinese.

One of the Tongs responds with a SPINNING BACK KICK to Brisco's head. Brisco crashes to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he gets up -- CRASH! -- a third Tong Warrior BURSTS through the WINDOW! We'll call him LUCKY because of the lucky charm he wears around his neck.

All three Tongs take up martial-arts fighting stances surrounding Brisco and Socrates.

SOCRATES

Oh, this is perfect. This is just wonderful. I'm about to get my head kicked in and I don't even know why. Can't you do something!?

BRISCO

Maybe I can get you an explanation.

The Tongs move in and the FIGHT IS ON!

Brisco grabs for his father's gun, but Lucky kicks the gun out of Brisco's hand.

Socrates swings wildly at a Tong. The Tong easily ducks, then uses a jump kick to deliver a KNOCK OUT blow. Socrates slumps to the floor.

Brisco takes all three on. He is a hell of a fighter, but the Tongs' martial arts skills are hard to overcome. They KICK, PUNCH, BREAK CHAIRS. As the fight rages, we notice that the Tongs have horrible burn scars on the bottom of their feet.

As Brisco turns a good portion of the furniture into match wood, Socrates comes to. He looks around, then crawls on all fours for the gun. He grabs it; he stands up triumphantly.

SOCRATES

Hah!

Just then Brisco takes a VICIOUS KICK from Lucky. Brisco flies back -- right into Socrates -- and both men CRASH back -- RIGHT OUT THE WINDOW!

OUTSIDE THE HOTEL

Brisco catches hold of the ledge. Socrates flies past him, but manages to grab hold of Brisco's belt. He dangles precariously, holding Brisco with one hand, the gun with the other. They hang three stories up.

A Tong sticks his head out the window. He SMACKS at the ledge with a piece of broken chair. Brisco's hands dance back and forth like a ragtime piano player as he dodges the Tong's BLOWS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Worse still, CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal a WAGON full of sharp PICK-AXES and other tools from the cable car construction parked directly below!

SOCRATES

Help!!

BRISCO

Hand me the gun!

SOCRATES

I can't reach!

BRISCO

Then shoot them!

SOCRATES

I can't!

BRISCO

(peevishly)

Then shoot me and put me out of my misery.

It's hard to imagine things could get worse, but that's when the EARTHQUAKE STARTS.

BRISCO

An earthquake!?

The quake rolls into high gear! The Tong retreats. The ledge bucks. Stones fall from the building!

SOCRATES

Oh my God!!

Below, the pick-axes sway. The wagon rocks. The attached horses rear and scream!

BRISCO

HANG ON!

The ledge disintegrates! They fall!

CUT TO BLACK.

BURN IN:

COMING NEXT:
Chapter THREE

"Hot Flames, Two Dames
and Loose Reins"

END OF CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER THREE

FADE IN:

INT./EXT. THE HOTEL - NIGHT

REPRISE: Brisco and the three Tong warriors fight it out in the hotel room. CRASH! Brisco and Socrates fly out the window and end up hanging from the ledge, three stories up. Below them is a wagon load of pick-axes!

That's when the EARTHQUAKE starts. The ledge crumbles. Brisco and Socrates fall...

BURN IN: Chapter THREE

"Hot Flames, Two Dames
and Loose Reins"

SCENE CONTINUES: To show that during the earthquake, the horses pulling the cart of pick-axes pull out and a new cart full of hay moves in to take its place! The new wagon passes under the window at exactly the right moment for -- WHOOF! -- Socrates and Brisco to land in the hay.

The earthquake stops. Brisco sits up.

BRISCO
(wincing a little)
You okay?

SOCRATES
I appear to be uninjured, if that's what you mean. But I'm not "okay" in the sense that I approve or consent to what just occurred.

BRISCO
Sorry I asked.

Brisco hops down from the wagon, brushing the hay from his clothes. He gives Socrates a hand down.

SOCRATES
Who were those people, anyway?

BRISCO
Your guess is as good as mine.

SOCRATES
No it's not. And I'm distressed that you think it is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

You know something, Socrates,
you really need to develop a
personality for those times when
you're not in court.

Socrates dismisses this remark with a snort and brushes
the hay out of his hair. During this, Brisco examines a
small object that he holds in his hand.

SOCRATES

What's that?

BRISCO

One of our attackers wore this
around his neck.

We now realize that Brisco is holding Lucky's lucky
charm.

SOCRATES

A cheap Chinatown trinket. The
city is full of them.

Brisco pockets the charm.

BRISCO

Do me a favor. Go down to the
Horseshoe Club and see what
information you can dig up on the
guy who paints their backdrops.

SOCRATES

Where are you going?

BRISCO

Chinatown.

CLOSING OVAL WIPE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Three horse-drawn wagons full of shackled Coolies move
down the deserted road. They are guarded by cowboys on
horseback.

A YOUNG WOMAN is crying in the back of one of the wagons.
She clutches a locket. Inside it is a picture of her
son. She looks at the picture, prays and cries some
more. Her husband, shackled next to her, can offer
little comfort.

A rider comes up alongside. It's Pete Hutter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETE HUTTER

The whining; the crying... it's
got to stop! It's getting on my
nerves! You understand?

He draws his gun and points it at her. She nods her head
up and down fearfully. Now Big Smith rides up alongside,
edges Pete aside.

BIG SMITH

(sotto)

Pete, if you have to make a point,
don't kill a young one... kill an
old one. They don't last long
anyway.

PETE HUTTER

(smiling)

The Oracle speaks! And Pete
Hutter listens. I bow to your
wisdom, Big.

Big Smith squints at Pete, not sure of his meaning.

BIG SMITH

Let's ride, Pete. We got a stage
to catch.

Big Smith, Hutter and half the gang ride off, away from
the wagons.

OPENING OVAL WIPE TO:

EXT. CHINATOWN STREET - NIGHT

Brisco approaches a curio shop and enters.

INT. CURIO SHOP

Cheap junk is crammed everywhere. LOO, the proprietor,
appears and after giving Brisco the once-over --

LOO

Can I help you?

BRISCO

I need some information.

LOO

Of course. Anything you want.
Information is free.

BRISCO

Good. I was wondering --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOO
(cutting him short)
-- wait! Perhaps you'd like to
buy something first. Then you
won't feel as if you have taken
advantage of me.

Brisco gets the point. He looks around and picks up a
small MUSIC BOX. He opens it and a ROMANTIC TUNE
tinkles out.

BRISCO
How much is this?

LOO
Twenty dollars.

Brisco glares at Loo as he counts out the money.

BRISCO
You're right. Now I don't feel
so guilty over all this "free"
information I'm about to get.

Loo sweeps the money into his pocket.

BRISCO
I need a receipt for that.

LOO
(irritated)
A receipt? Never mind that it's
just more work for me.

Loo begins to scratch out a receipt. As he does this,
Brisco sets the charm down on the counter. Loo sees the
charm, stops scratching and looks up.

LOO
Where did you get this?

BRISCO
You recognize it? What does it
mean?

LOO
I just remembered... we're closed.

BRISCO
What?

LOO
Closed! Chinese holiday! The
store's closed! Take your music
box and go!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Loo literally pushes Brisco out the door and slams it closed behind him.

EXT. THE CURIO SHOP

Now standing on the sidewalk, Brisco sees the shades being pulled down and a CLOSED sign being placed in the window. Then he realizes he left his charm inside.

BRISCO

Hey... my charm.

Brisco BANGS on the door.

BRISCO

Open up! I forgot my charm!

No answer. He tries to open the door, but it's locked. Finally he pulls out his knife, slides it up through the latch and opens the door.

INT. THE CURIO SHOP

Brisco looks around, but there is no sign of Loo.

BRISCO

Hello? Anybody here?

No response. He walks behind the counter.

BRISCO

I came back for my charm. Anybody here --

And that's when Brisco steps on THE TRAP DOOR IN THE FLOOR and DISAPPEARS FROM SIGHT.

BRISCO

Whooooaaaa...

INT. PASSAGEWAY BELOW CURIO SHOP

Brisco CRASHES down from above. He misses the ladder leading down from the shop. He picks himself up painfully and finds he is in an underground passage.

Brisco wanders down the passageway. In the distance he hears faint RITUALISTIC MUSIC.

INT. THE INITIATION CHAMBER

Brisco sneaks into the back of the chamber, keeping low and to the shadows. This is what he sees:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TWENTY CHINESE MEN are gathered around a bed of HOT COALS to witness a ceremony between two young Tong initiates who wait, barefoot and bare-chested, on each end of the coal bed ready to fight each other!

He sees that Loo is there TALKING ANIMATEDLY to an ANCIENT MASTER (LEE POW) who sits on an ornate throne. The master waves Loo off then GIVES THE ORDER. The FIGHT IS ON.

As Brisco watches, he senses something. He turns to see CHIN, a nine-year-old Chinese boy, right next to him. (We recognize this boy -- his photo was in his mother's locket on Big Smith's slave wagon.)

Chin stares up at Brisco with big open eyes. Brisco gives him a friendly smile, raises his fingers to his lips --

BRISCO

Sshhhh...

Chin responds by SMASHING a VASE down over Brisco's head! Brisco drops to the floor, out cold.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE INITIATION CHAMBER - LATER

Brisco comes to. He's tied to a chair and surrounded by the hostile Chinese warriors.

LOO

(to Lee Pow)

This is the man Big Smith sent!

BRISCO

What?...

Lucky steps forward from the crowd.

LUCKY

Yes. We know he infiltrated the chain gang posing as a friendly prisoner. He asked a lot of questions then two days later rode off in a fancy carriage...

BRISCO

Now wait a minute. I can explain that. You've got this all mixed up --

LEE POW

Silence!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Loo puts a dagger to Brisco's throat. He complies.

LEE POW

We are the scarred-foot clan.

BRISCO

(glancing at the coals)
No kidding.

LEE POW

We fight against the tyranny of
Big Smith.

BRISCO

Good! That puts us on the same
side if you would just let me --

LEE POW

Silence!!

(beat)

Since you are so interested in
the forging of our warriors...
you can see what it's like
firsthand!

On Lee Pow's nod, Brisco's boots and socks are stripped
off his feet. His gun is removed from his holster and
given to Lee Pow for safe keeping.

Brisco is shoved to his feet and pushed toward the bed
of hot coals. He struggles to escape but it's no use.

He's about to be forced onto the hot coals when:

LEE POW

Stop!

Brisco breathes an audible sigh of relief as Lee Pow
approaches holding Brisco's gun.

LEE POW

Where did you get this gun?

BRISCO

Who wants to know?

This seems like a pretty bold reply, but Lee Pow is not
offended.

LEE POW

My name is Lee Pow.

Brisco reacts. This name has meaning for him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEE POW

And who are you?

BRISCO

My father's son.

Lee Pow returns the gun to Brisco's holster and gives him a hug.

LEE POW

Brisco County, Jr.!

CORKSCREW WIPE TO:

INT. LEE POW'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

Lee Pow and Brisco sit on pillows. Lee Pow smokes a pipe. Chin, the young boy who conked Brisco over the head, pours tea, then hovers in the background to listen.

Lee Pow runs his gnarled old fingers lovingly over the handle of Brisco's pistol.

LEE POW

I carved this handle myself, in gratitude for a great favor your father once did for me.

(returns gun to
Brisco)

Now you must avenge his death.

BRISCO

No, Lee Pow. Not avenge his death... complete his work. And it looks like I'll be starting with Big Smith.

LEE POW

Big Smith is the first tentacle of John Bly's empire. Smith and his gang control a vast slave trade in Chinese workers.

BRISCO

How?

LEE POW

Through indentured servitude. He brings Chinese to America by promising them jobs. They get jobs, all right -- on the railroads, the cable cars -- backbreaking jobs for which they are paid almost nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Slavery in a legalized form.

LEE POW

(nods)

There is also something else you should know...

(beat)

Two workers fled from one of Big Smith's chain gangs. They made it here to San Francisco before being captured. Then one day later they died an unnatural death too horrible to describe.

Brisco takes this in, not sure what to make of it.

BRISCO

Where's Big Smith now?

LEE POW

Somewhere in the mountains. We don't know where.

BRISCO

I need a lead. A clue. Some place to start.

LEE POW

Big Smith has a woman named Dixie Cousins. I believe she lives somewhere here in town.

BRISCO

Dixie Cousins... thanks, Lee Pow.

Brisco rises to leave when Chin tugs at his shirt.
Brisco looks down.

CHIN

This man Smith has taken my parents. Can you get them back for me?

BRISCO

I'll do my best.

Chin watches Brisco push back the curtain and exit.

CHINESE "FIGHTING STAR" WIPE TO:

INT. THE HORSESHOE CLUB - NIGHT

A traditional saloon with a revue stage. Every bad-ass cowboy in San Francisco is in this place tonight, but they are all in a festive mood. Laughing. Drinking. Singing.

Socrates and Brisco are at the bar.

SOCRATES

The backdrop painter is named Owen. He quit a month ago, left town and never came back.

BRISCO

Right about the time of the train escape.

SOCRATES

What did you learn?

BRISCO

That Bly's right-hand man, Big Smith, has a girlfriend named Dixie Cousins, and that she may be here in town.

SOCRATES

That's it?

BRISCO

It's a start.

Brisco catches Socrates smirking to himself.

BRISCO

You seem to be enjoying this.

SOCRATES

I'm sorry, but this is a huge city. You really have your work cut out for you. How on earth do you expect to find this woman? Go knocking door to door? Be realistic, my dear Brisco, Dixie Cousins is not going to just fall from the sky into your lap.

Right on cue an ANNOUNCER takes the stage.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, for your musical pleasure tonight... the incomparable mistress of song, Dixie Cousins!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brisco smiles. Socrates looks astounded. Emerging on stage is DIXIE COUSINS. She sings the hell out of a hoot'n'holler drinking song as she struts across the stage. Socrates can't take his eyes off of her.

BRISCO

Not exactly my lap, but close enough.

Meanwhile, a commotion off to Brisco's right draws his attention. A tomboyish beauty named AMANDA WICKWIRE is trying to fend off a rough-faced COWBOY.

COWBOY

Come on, baby... Just one dance.

He punctuates his request by pinching Amanda's ass. Amanda whirls around to punch him in the face, but the cowboy ducks. She CONNECTS with Brisco's NOSE instead!

The cowboy rises back up, snickering. Amanda turns and KNEES HIM RIGHT IN THE NUTS. WHOOMP. He disappears below the bar.

Brisco is in great pain. He holds both hands over his nose, nearly covering his entire face.

AMANDA

Oh, dear. Oh, gosh. I'm so sorry...

BRISCO

(from behind his hands)

Mennuffuffruffgrenafen...

AMANDA

What? Can you take your hands away from your face?

Brisco lowers his hands. Tears of pain stream from his eyes.

BRISCO

I said, where'd you learn to throw a punch like that?

AMANDA

Catholic school.

BRISCO

That was going to be my first guess.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brisco now really sees her -- and he likes what he sees.

AMANDA

Are you okay?

BRISCO

Sure. It's just my nose. Now that other fella, he might have a hard time riding home tonight.

AMANDA

Can't these saddle tramps keep their hands to themselves? Look at me. Look at how I'm dressed. Do I look like somebody who wants to be pawed and fondled?!

The trouble here is that Brisco finds her tomboy look damned appealing.

BRISCO

Well, I, uh...

AMANDA

No. The answer is no.

Amanda's father, PROFESSOR WICKWIRE, now appears at her side.

WICKWIRE

Amanda --

AMANDA

-- just a minute, Dad --

WICKWIRE

-- we have to go now.

AMANDA

Okay, okay. Do you have everything? Your glasses. Your pills. Your notebook. Your pocketwatch.

WICKWIRE

Yes. Yes. No. And yes.

(to Brisco)

What would I do without her?

(extends his hand)

Professor Albert Wickwire.

Chemist. Physicist.

Experimentalist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Amanda takes her father by the sleeve and pulls him away.

AMANDA

C'mon, Dad.

Brisco turns his attention back to Socrates who is fixated on Dixie's performance, his mouth hanging open.

BRISCO

(to Socrates)

You better watch out.

SOCRATES

What for?

BRISCO

Somebody might step on your tongue.

Dixie finishes her number.

EXT. THE HORSESHOE CLUB - LATER

The last drunken patrons exit the bar. Dixie emerges carrying a suitcase and starts down the street. Brisco and Socrates watch her from a doorway.

SOCRATES

She's going somewhere in a hurry.

BRISCO

So are we.

They follow her.

EXT. THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Dixie stops and waits on a street corner. A hansom cab approaches. A hand emerges from the window and hands Dixie an envelope. The hand also clutches a cane with a wolf's head handle. The cab drives on.

Dixie takes the envelope and hustles down a side street. Brisco and Socrates hurry to keep up with her.

EXT. S.F. STAGECOACH STATION - NIGHT

Brisco and Socrates arrive just in time to see Dixie climb into a stagecoach that's about to depart.

STAGE DRIVER

All aboard!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brisco glances around. He sees a SALESMAN snoozing on the bench. His sample case is at his feet and his stagecoach ticket protrudes from his pocket.

Brisco swipes them both.

SOCRATES

What on earth are you doing?
That's larceny!

BRISCO

What?

SOCRATES

You took that man's ticket and his case!

BRISCO

I have no idea what you're talking about.

(swings up into the
coach)

Make sure Comet gets a green apple for breakfast, and he'll love you for life.

And the stagecoach rumbles off.

DIAGONAL WIPE TO:

INT. CITY STABLES - DAY

Socrates stands in front of Comet's stall. Comet's head sticks out right next to him. Socrates looks like he's never touched a horse in his life. Comet assesses him, impassively.

Socrates takes a red apple from his pocket and offers it to Comet.

SOCRATES

I couldn't find green. You'll have to settle for red. I'm sorry, but it's the best I can do.

Comet turns his nose up at the apple.

SOCRATES

(exasperated)
Oh, please. An apple's an apple.
The color is immaterial.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE

Where's Brisco?

SOCRATES

(looking around)

Huh? Who said that?

VOICE

Me. Comet.

Socrates' eyes shift suspiciously from side to side.
This is a very phony-sounding voice.

SOCRATES

Talking horse, huh?

VOICE

Yeah. I can talk. What's wrong
with that?

SOCRATES

(playing along)

Oh, nothing. Nothing at all.
More power to you, I say.

VOICE

So where's Brisco? Where's my
master? I need to find him.
It's, uh, very important.

SOCRATES

Sorry. That's privileged
information, Comet... or should
I say, Lord Bowler!

Lord Bowler jumps up from inside the stall. He brushes
away the hay from his face.

LORD BOWLER

You're smarter than you look,
Poole.

SOCRATES

I see you've escaped, Bowler.
So much for the virtues of our
criminal justice system.

LORD BOWLER

Where's County!?

SOCRATES

(calmly)

That's for me to know and you to
find out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LORD BOWLER
You little law-book-readin',
robber-baron-butt-kissin', Brisco-
hidin' sissy -- you tell me!

SOCRATES
(scoffing)
Why don't you ask Comet the
talking horse?

Lord Bowler lights up. He gets an idea.

LORD BOWLER
That's the best idea you've
ever had, counselor!

Comet lets out a concerned WHINNY. And before we find
out what this is all about we --

CROSSING BARS WIPE TO:

EXT. THE STAGECOACH - NIGHT

The TWO DRIVERS share a bottle as they steer the stage-
coach through the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE PERIOD MAP OF THE WEST

CAMERA MOVES IN ON an advancing RED LINE showing the
stagecoach's progress from San Francisco across the
Central Valley on through Stockton and up to the former
mining town of Sutter Creek...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE STAGECOACH - DAY

Dixie and Brisco are the only passengers left. Dixie
sleeps. Brisco eyes her, following the curves of her
body up toward her cleavage when Dixie stirs and
awakens.

DIXIE
Have we reached the mountains
yet?

BRISCO
I was just getting there. I
mean, we're almost there.
(beat)
Did you sleep well, Miss Cousins?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She smiles at Brisco, knowing that he was staring.

DIXIE

Not really, I hate sleeping alone.

BRISCO

You're not alone. I've been here all the while.

DIXIE

You miss my point, Mr. --?

BRISCO

Merriwether. Roscoe Merriwether.

DIXIE

What's in the sample case, Roscoe?

Brisco hesitates, but only for a second.

BRISCO

Let's take a look.

He reaches down and pulls out the sample case. He opens it, as full of anticipation as Dixie is. CLICK. CLICK. He lifts the top to reveal the gnarliest-looking set of brushes you've ever seen.

DIXIE

Oh, my.

BRISCO

You can say that again.

She strokes one of the largest ones.

DIXIE

I'd love to sample this one.
What's it for?

BRISCO

They're for grooming... animals.
Large animals. Zoo animals.

DIXIE

You mean, lions and tigers?

BRISCO

That's right.

DIXIE

Sounds like dangerous work.

Brisco closes the sample case with a SNAP.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Ma'am, I don't actually do the grooming. I just sell the brushes.

(beat)

But enough about me. Tell me where you're headed.

DIXIE

For trouble. I'm going to start some.

BRISCO

How's that?

DIXIE

That's between me and my boyfriend. He's waiting for me at the next stop.

BRISCO

(smiling)

Well, if your boyfriend's anything like a zoo animal, I have just the brushes for him.

They are interrupted by DRUNKEN LAUGHTER from above.

ATOP THE STAGECOACH

The Drivers are blind drunk and collapsed in laughter. Driver #1 is trying to say something. He finally gets it out:

DRIVER #1

Pickle.

They both collapse into convulsive laughter so strong that they KNOCK HEADS and rebound right off the stagecoach!

As they hit the ground, Driver #1's GUN FIRES. The HORSES spook! They WHINNY and break into a full-tilt gallop. The stagecoach rockets away at top speed! Driver #1 is so drunk he can barely pull himself up to his elbows.

DRIVER #1

Hey! Get back here!

But the stagecoach is long gone. Driver #2 is not quite so drunk. He watches bug-eyed from the dirt.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRIVER #2

This is bad.

FLIP WIPE TO:

INSIDE THE STAGECOACH

Brisco and Dixie are knocked off their seats. They fumble all over each other trying to get up.

DIXIE

What's happening?!

BRISCO

(looking out)

Looks like we lost our drivers.
The stage is out of control.

DIXIE

What?!

FLIP WIPE TO:

EXT. A SHORT DISTANCE UP THE ROAD - DAY

Big Smith, Pete Hutter and the Gang wait for the stage-coach at a crossroads. They are all silent except for Pete Hutter:

PETE HUTTER

(singing; slowly
with feeling like a
gospel spiritual)

Oh, she'll be com-in' 'round
the mountain when she comes...
She'll be com-in' 'round that ol'
moun-tain when she comes...

BIG SMITH

Shut up, Pete.

FLIP WIPE TO:

BACK INSIDE THE STAGECOACH

Dixie looks concerned.

DIXIE

What now?

BRISCO

I can swing out, get a good foothold
and climb up to the top of the stage.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO (CONT'D)

Then, if I'm real careful, and God is on my side, I can leap onto the back of the rear horse and work my way out to the lead team, taking care not to fall beneath their thundering hooves. Then -- reach out! Grab the bridle of the lead horse and rein him in to a safe and steady stop!

DIXIE

(excited)

Oh, my!

Brisco kicks open the door.

BRISCO

Or... we can jump!

Brisco kicks open the door, grabs Dixie and jumps! They leap out into oblivion!!

CUT TO BLACK.

BURN IN:

COMING NEXT:
Chapter FOUR

"Lowdown Showdown"

END OF CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. STAGECOACH - DAY

REPRISE: The two stagecoach drivers are dead drunk; they laugh, bump heads, fall from the stage. WHOOMPH. They hit the dirt. BANG! -- one of their guns goes off. The horses flee! The stagecoach careens off down the road out of control!

Brisco and Dixie are trapped inside. Brisco grabs Dixie and they jump!

BURN IN: Chapter FOUR

"Lowdown Showdown"

SCENE CONTINUES: Brisco and Dixie hit the ground -- WUUPMH! -- and tumble down a slope! The stagecoach THUNDERS OFF, the horses not breaking stride!

Rolling over and over, Brisco and Dixie finally come to a stop at the bottom of the grade with Brisco on top of Dixie, tangled between her legs.

Brisco hears HORSES SNORTING. As he looks over his shoulder we PAN UP to reveal Big Smith, Pete Hutter and the gang looming over him.

They pull their guns. We hear the CLICK. CLICK. CLICK. of HAMMERS being drawn back.

Brisco looks worried. He tries to extricate himself from Dixie but can't because --

BRISCO

(to Dixie)

. . . Your petticoat is stuck
in my fly.

DIXIE

I'll get that for you.

BRISCO

No, no I've got it.

Brisco unbuttons his fly, pulls the petticoat free. Buttons back up and stands. He helps Dixie up. The guns are still trained on him.

BIG SMITH

(double-edged; as he
climbs down from his
horse)

Hi, Dix. Have a nice trip?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dixie wraps her arms around Big Smith and kisses him in a big show of affection.

DIXIE

Not bad, all things considered.

BIG SMITH

You got what I need?

DIXIE

Don't I always?

Smiling, she presses his hand into her cleavage. He pulls out the envelope Dixie was handed earlier.

Brisco watches the envelope travel into Big Smith's pocket. Then Big Smith meets Brisco's gaze.

BIG SMITH

Who's your friend? . . .

DIXIE

Allow me to introduce somebody calling himself Roscoe Merriwether. Roscoe, this is Big Smith. That's Peter Hutter. And this is some of the gang.

Brisco conceals any reaction he has to being face to face with Big Smith.

BRISCO

My pleasure.

BIG SMITH

It was nice knowing you too. You can shoot him now, Pete.

DIXIE

You're going to kill him?!

BIG SMITH

You used my name, Dix. You know the rules.

Hutter motions Dixie aside with his gun.

PETE HUTTER

Dixie, I'm kind of a stickler for gun safety. Could you move a little bit to your left?

Dixie blocks the shot instead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DIXIE

Don't you get it? He's
somebody!

PETE HUTTER

Sorry, Dixie. Existential thought
doesn't hold much water out here
in the territories.

Brisco finally speaks up for himself:

BRISCO

Dixie's right. I'm not really
Roscoe Merridoodle --

DIXIE

-- Merriwether --

BRISCO

-- yeah. Merriwether. It's
Wylie Stafford. I'm an outlaw
on the run.

This name doesn't register, until a thin, VULTURE-NECKED
member of the gang pipes up, fear in his voice:

VULTURE-NECK

"Kansas" Wylie Stafford?

BRISCO

Do I know you?

VULTURE-NECK

No, sir.

BIG SMITH

Who is he?!

VULTURE-NECK

He's one crazy, mean sonofabitch,
that's who he is. I seen him kill
five men in a Dodge City saloon
nigh on two years ago. Five on
one, and he kilt them all. 'Course
I had my snoot in the sawdust to
keep my head from bein' blown off.
Sort of looks like Kansas
Stafford's build, though you know?

DIXIE

I knew it.

BIG SMITH

Kansas Wylie Stafford, huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OUTLAW #1
(speaking up)
Where you from, Kansas?

Brisco gives the outlaw a confused look: Is this a trick question? Pete Hutter points his gun at Brisco.

PETE HUTTER
Answer the man.

BRISCO
I'm from Kansas.

Silence. Brisco's fate is in Big Smith's hands and he's thinking it over.

DIXIE
Please, Big. Can't we keep him?

Big Smith glowers at Dixie . . . then he breaks into a wide smile and begins to LAUGH. One by one, the other outlaws join in. Pretty soon, they're all laughing their heads off.

BIG SMITH
(still laughing)
"Can't we keep him?!" Sure, sure we can, Dixie. He saved your life after all.
(to Brisco)
Mount up and ride with us, Kansas. Somethin' tells me we're gonna be the best of friends.

PAGE WIPE TO:

EXT. THE STAGECOACH ROAD - DAY

The stage drivers, dazed and hung-over, walk down the road trading recriminations.

DRIVER #2
Buffoon!

DRIVER #1
Cretin!

DRIVER #2
Moron!

DRIVER #1
Oaf!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Their insults are interrupted by a rider POUNDING DOWN on them at a hard gallop. He reins in and skids to a stop. To our surprise, it's Lord Bowler on Comet!

LORD BOWLER

Did the stage from San Francisco
go by here?

DRIVER #1

She sure did.

LORD BOWLER

Where's the next stop?

DRIVER #2

Well; today, that would depend --

DRIVER #1

-- but normally, Sutter Creek.

Bowler pulls a green apple out of his pocket and feeds it to Comet.

BOWLER

(to Comet)

Hear that -- Sutter Creek!

Bowler spurs Comet and gallops off.

PAGE WIPE TO:

EXT. THE TOWN OF SUTTER CREEK - DAY

Big Smith, Dixie, Brisco and the Gang ride into town.

BIG SMITH

Welcome to Sutter Creek. Five
years ago the gold ran out. Now
the sheriff's dead, the mayor runs
the brothel, the minister's a
drunk. . .

(beat)

My kind of town.

They reach the saloon. Everybody dismounts.

INT. THE SALOON - DAY

Brisco and Big Smith share a table alone. Two glasses
and a bottle of whiskey between them.

BRISCO

That's quite a hat you have
there, Big.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Big Smith takes it off for Brisco to admire.

BIG SMITH
You're lookin' at three thousand
dollars real money.
(bit smile)
Ever hear the expression, "He's
got a price on his head?" Well,
in my case it's the truth.

Big Smith tries to take the hat back from Brisco but Brisco engages in a playful tug-of-war with it. Finally he lets go. Big Smith smiles, but we can tell he's annoyed.

BIG SMITH
You'd have to kill me to get
this hat, Kansas.

BRISCO
Why would I want to do that?

Big Smith is silent. Then he refills Brisco's glass.

BIG SMITH
Tell me something, Kansas . . .
in all your travels, ever run
across a cowboy by the name of
Brisco County, Jr.?

Brisco thinks it over, then shakes his head.

BRISCO
Can't say that I have.
(beat)
Wait a minute. Isn't he a U.S.
Marshal or something like that?

BIG SMITH
No. That's the father. I'm
talking about his son.

Brisco just shakes his head.

BRISCO
Sorry. I'm drawing a blank.

BIG SMITH
I'm not too concerned about the
father anymore. He's dead.

BRISCO
That so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG SMITH

Not only that, but I'm the one
who killed him.

Brisco bites his lip, shows no reaction. Smiling, Big
Smith continues to bait him.

BIG SMITH

Me and twelve others, to be exact.
Drilled him full of holes like a
cheese.

(shrugs)

He had it comin' to him, though.
The man was a craven coward, a
whore-master, a squaw-lover and a
card-cheating drunk.

Big Smith scrutinizes Brisco for any tell-tale reaction,
but finds nothing.

BIG SMITH

You sure you never ran across
his son?

BRISCO

Nope. And now I hope I never do.
(getting to his feet)
Thanks for the drink.

Brisco calmly walks away.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Brisco exits the saloon. He walks down the street.
Heads for the General Store, glancing back over his
shoulder before going inside.

INT. THE GENERAL STORE

Brisco hands a piece of paper to the CLERK behind the
counter.

BRISCO

I want to send this by telegram
to San Francisco.

The clerk stares at the paper, puzzled.

CLERK

What is this? Spanish? . . .

BRISCO

Latin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLERK

That's what they speak in Latin America? Right?

BRISCO

Right.

CLERK

That'll be thirty-seven cents.

BRISCO

Send it now, and I'll make it a dollar.

The clerk happily complies. He pushes back his sleeves and starts TAPPING OUT the words.

BRISCO

Hold it.

(off his look)

You misspelled that word. Send it again.

The clerk is surprised and impressed. He taps out the word again.

INT. THE SALOON - SAME TIME

Pete Hutter sits at a table with Vulture-Neck and two other gang members: SCRATCHY and SWEDE.

PETE HUTTER

There's something about that Kansas guy I don't like.

SCRATCHY

The boss seems kinda fond of him.

PETE HUTTER

That must be it.

(looking around)

Hey, where'd he go?...

Brisco is nowhere to be seen. Hutter gets up. The gang members follow. They swing out through the doors.

INT. THE GENERAL STORE

Brisco pays the clerk, turns to leave when a woman approaches struggling with a large box that obscures her face.

BRISCO

Here. Let me help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

That's okay, I've got it. . .

Brisco helps her anyway. He takes the box only, to discover the woman is Amanda Wickwire!

BRISCO

Well! Hello again.

AMANDA

(equally surprised)
It's you. From the bar.

BRISCO

(indicating his nose)
Look. No permanent damage.
(smiles)
What are you doing here?

AMANDA

I live here.

BRISCO

Here? In the middle of nowhere?

AMANDA

It's not bad compared to other
ghost towns overrun by outlaws.

BRISCO

You know, I don't even know your
name.

AMANDA

(holding out her
hand)
Amanda Wickwire.

BRISCO

(hesitates)
Wylie Stafford.

They shake hands; it lingers. There is a spark between
these two. Brisco stares into her fiery eyes.

BRISCO

Is your father with you?

AMANDA

Yes. He's around here somewhere.
Buying more stuff for one of his
wonderful inventions.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The door BANGS OPEN. Hutter followed by Scratchy, Swede and Vulture-Neck enter the store.

PETE HUTTER

What are you doing, Kansas? We're all down in the bar.

BRISCO

Then why don't you hurry back before somebody misses you?

Amanda looks over at Brisco.

AMANDA

(shocked)

Are you with these people?

At that moment, Professor Wickwire staggers up to the counter carrying a huge stack of stove pipe. He doesn't see Hutter and -- CRASH! -- bumps right into him, burying him under an avalanche of pipe.

Hutter knocks the pipe away, furious.

PETE HUTTER

Stupid fool, old man!

PROF. WICKWIRE

I knew it! Carrying all that pipe I wouldn't be able to see a damn thing! And I couldn't!

Amanda realizes the danger her father is in.

AMANDA

He's sorry. It was an accident! Apologize, Dad!

The professor seems oblivious to Hutter's seething anger. He bends down to pick the pipe up.

PROF. WICKWIRE

Ack! What a mess!

(to Hutter)

I'm sorry. You mind giving me a hand?

Hutter turns apoplectic.

PETE HUTTER

You're about to have a religious experience, grandpa.

PROF. WICKWIRE

How's that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pulls his gun and presses it to the professor's head.

PETE HUTTER

You're gonna see Jesus!

BRISCO

(softly; but clearly)

Pete, put the gun down.

Hutter spins on Brisco. Vulture-Neck, Scratchy and Swede trade a glance.

Hutter drops his gun back in his holster.

PETE HUTTER

They say I'm the fastest draw west of the Colorado. You want to try me, Kansas?

BRISCO

I don't know. I'm not that good at geography.

Brisco's reply causes Hutter to relax his guard just enough for Brisco to PUNCH him in the face with his left hand and steal Hutter's gun away with his right!

VULTURE-NECK

(flabbergasted)

My God, he's touching Pete's piece!

SCRATCHY

Nobody touches Pete's piece!

BRISCO

(to Hutter)

The man apologized. Now get up and forget about it.

Hutter gets up off the floor. Brisco hands him back his gun. Hutter turns to Brisco, his face a mask of rage.

PETE HUTTER

I'm calling you out!

Swede takes off at full speed out the door.

BRISCO

You don't want to do that.

VULTURE-NECK

You touched Pete's piece. That's something you don't do with Pete.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETE HUTTER
It's done! Outside!

INT. THE SALOON - SAME TIME

Swede BANGS IN through the saloon doors.

SWEDE
(yelling out)
"Kansas" -- Wylie Stafford --
he just touched Pete's piece!

Every chair in the room scrapes back. There is a mad rush for the door.

EXT. THE STREET

The town quickly assembles on Main Street for the gunfight. Hutter stalks onto the street. Brisco reluctantly moves out opposite him. Amanda can't believe what's happening.

AMANDA
This is crazy! It was an accident!

BRISCO
Amanda! Take your father and go back inside!

Pete limbers his gun hand.

PETE HUTTER
You ready?

BRISCO
Pride comes before a fall, Pete.

PETE HUTTER
So does an ounce of lead in the brainpan.

BIG SMITH AND DIXIE

They step out of the bar to watch. Big Smith chuckles.

BIG SMITH
Well, it was nice knowing him.

DIXIE
(pause)
Which one?

PETE HUTTER

Gets into position. He assumes the classic gunfighter's pose.

BRISCO

stands ready. He wears an expression of annoyance and resignation, but he never takes his eyes off of Hutter.

FULL SHOT - THE STREET

The whole town looks on. Amanda and the professor. Dixie and Big Smith. The tension builds as they wait for somebody to make the first move.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Reveals Vulture-Neck moving into position on the porch across from Brisco. Swede takes up a position opposite him. Brisco is being set up for CROSSFIRE AMBUSH!

Worse still, Scratchy moves into position directly behind Brisco and draws his gun!

Brisco is going to get it from the front, the back -- and both sides!

We CUT QUICKLY to all four outlaws' POV'S: Hutter, Scratchy, Vulture-Neck, Swede. They line up Brisco in their sights, fingers dancing on their triggers.

Brisco is completely unaware of the danger he is in. At least it seems that way.

PETE HUTTER

Maybe you should've stayed in
Kansas, Kansas.

Brisco stares back. Suddenly, Hutter draws!

CUT TO BLACK.

BURN IN:

COMING NEXT:
Chapter FIVE

"Yell To Your Horse"

END OF CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. THE MAIN STREET OF SUTTER CREEK - DAY

REPRISE: Hutter threatens the professor. Brisco punches Hutter and takes his gun! Hutter calls Brisco out; the entire town assembles for the gunfight. As Hutter and Brisco square off, what Brisco doesn't see is that Scratchy, Vulture-Neck and Swede move into position to catch him in a 4-way CROSSFIRE AMBUSH!

BURN IN:

Chapter FIVE

"Yell to your Horse"

SCENE CONTINUES: Hutter limbers his gun hand. Brisco stands at the ready. The tension builds. Now we see Brisco's eyes shift from side-to-side. He does see the ambush. But what can he do?

Suddenly, Hutter draws! He FIRES. Vulture-Neck, Scratchy and Swede all step out and FIRE at the EXACT SAME MOMENT.

And Brisco throws himself to the street.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! Four shots ring out. And four bullets find their mark. The four outlaws gun each other down in their own crossfire! A confused look spreads across Hutter's face as he stumbles back, mortally wounded. The same holds true for Scratchy, Vulture-Neck and Swede. One after another they drop to the ground dead! The amazed townspeople APPLAUD Brisco's performance.

BIG SMITH

(stunned)

Good God.

DIXIE

Good riddance.

Amanda and Prof. Wickwire look on in astonishment.

PROF. WICKWIRE

That was brilliant!

They start toward Brisco, but Big Smith and Dixie get there first. Brisco stands up, dusting himself off. Now Dixie helps with the dusting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG SMITH

Nice work, Kansas.

(with an edge)

You killed my four best men. Pete and Scratchy and... those other two...

BRISCO

Sorry, Big. I guess I was just thinking of myself.

BIG SMITH

What's done is done.

Now Wickwire arrives.

PROF. WICKWIRE

(to Brisco)

Bravo, young man! Did you employ vector calculations, or did you simply estimate the incidental angles of the bullets' trajectories?!

BRISCO

Actually, I just shut my eyes and hit the dirt.

Wickwire nods thoughtfully. Amanda tries to pull her father away.

AMANDA

Let's go, Dad.

That's when Wickwire recognizes Dixie.

PROF. WICKWIRE

Wait, you're that wonderful singer from the Horseshoe Club in San Francisco!

DIXIE

A fan!

PROF. WICKWIRE

(excited)

Are you playing here in town?

DIXIE

Yes, but only in private.

AMANDA

Dad. C'mon.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMANDA (CONT'D)
(glaring at Brisco)
I'm sure Miss Cousins is anxious
to try out her act.

As Amanda drags him away.

BRISCO
Amanda, wait a minute. I think
you've got the wrong idea . . .

She continues on without stopping. Big Smith comes up
behind Brisco and puts his big hand on Brisco's shoulder.

BIG SMITH
Forget about her. She's got no
use for the outlaw breed. And
those who tried now make up their
own soprano choir.

Big Smith walks off. Brisco looks distressed. Dixie
bats her eyelashes at him outrageously.

SCISSORS WIPE TO:

INT. WESTERFIELD CLUB - DAY

Socrates waits outside Randall Thorogood's office. He's
holding Brisco's telegram. A SECRETARY emerges.

SECRETARY
Mr. Thorogood will see you now.

INSIDE THOROGOOD'S OFFICE

Thorogood gestures Socrates to a chair in front of his
eight-foot mahogany desk.

THOROGOOD
I got your message. Our man
County has found Big Smith?

SOCRATES
Yes. In Sutter Creek.

THOROGOOD
(pause)
Why hasn't he killed him?

SOCRATES
Because, sir, apparently Big
Smith is up to something . . .
well . . . big.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOROGOOD

(intently)

Does County know what it is?

SOCRATES

No, not yet. But it may involve John Bly. Mr. County used a metaphor about not cutting off the snake's tail when you can cut off its head . . . if I'm translating correctly from the original Latin.

Thorogood looks very concerned.

THOROGOOD

(forced)

So he may get Bly. Wouldn't that be something.

SOCRATES

Sir, I think I may know what Bly and Big Smith are up to.

THOROGOOD

Oh, really? And what's that, Poole?

SOCRATES

I think they're going to rob the monthly gold train. It leaves tomorrow and it goes right through Sutter Creek on its way back East.

THOROGOOD

Impossible! First off, this month's train won't be carrying gold.

SOCRATES

(surprised)

It won't?

THOROGOOD

No. It's carrying a special, secret government cargo.

Socrates is intrigued.

SOCRATES

Maybe that's what they're after -- whatever it is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thorogood gives Socrates a piercing gaze. He is not forthcoming with any more details.

SOCRATES

Don't you think it would be wise for us to wire Mr. County and warn him of this possibility?

THOROGOOD

Absolutely not! The timetable of this train is a closely guarded secret!

SOCRATES

But --

THOROGOOD

How can they rob a train if they don't know when it's coming?

Socrates has no answer.

THOROGOOD

And not a word of this to anyone, do you understand?

SOCRATES

Yes, sir.

Socrates gets up to leave. Thorogood sits back, thinking for a moment.

THOROGOOD

Just a moment, Poole. . .

(beat)

I've had a thought. I want you to accompany the train.

SOCRATES

What?! Me, sir?

THOROGOOD

Yes, as a representative of the railroad. I want you to make sure the shipment makes it safely to the Smithsonian in Washington. It's very important.

SOCRATES

How can I when I don't even know what the shipment is?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOROGOOD

It's a big wood crate. What does it matter what's inside?!

SOCRATES

Is this necessary?

THOROGOOD

The U.S. government is our most important customer. And it is necessary, if you want to keep your job.

Thorogood returns to his papers. Socrates stands there.

INT. DIXIE'S ROOM - DAY

Dixie ushers Brisco into her bedroom located in the town's hotel. It is a frilly palace of pleasure.

DIXIE

Relax. Make yourself comfortable.

BRISCO

That shouldn't be too hard.

DIXIE

Do you like the bed? It comes from France.

Brisco gives the large frilly bed a glance.

BRISCO

Louis the 14th?

DIXIE

No. I think Louie was the ninth or tenth. But then a lady never counts.

Brisco examines the bedpost more carefully.

BRISCO

Then what are these notches in the bedpost?

DIXIE

Oh, those . . . just a few scratches that occurred during shipping.

She sprawls across the bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DIXIE

You know, I get all my best ideas
in bed.

BRISCO

Like what? Taking over Big
Smith's gang?

Dixie gives him a look.

DIXIE

Kansas, I'm surprised at you.
(beat)
You think I think that small?

BRISCO

But Big is pretty big, isn't
he?

DIXIE

Big's big, all right. But there
are those who are bigger.

BRISCO

Like John Bly.

DIXIE

(pause)
How do you know Bly's involved?

BRISCO

Involved in what?

DIXIE

Boy, we're really doing a dance
here, aren't we, Kansas? I knew
you'd be a good partner.

BRISCO

I can't dance without music,
Dixie. I think it's time for you
to sing.

DIXIE

There's a train coming through
tomorrow.

BRISCO

The monthly gold train. . .

DIXIE

Except it's not carrying gold.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Then what?

DIXIE

Would you believe me if I told
you it was an orb from distant
space dug up by some Coolies in
the mountains, and that it gives
off magical powers?

This definitely gets Brisco's attention.

BRISCO

An orb from space? That's a
little hard to swallow.

Dixie rises from the bed, comes up real close to Brisco
and runs her hand over his chest.

DIXIE

You don't have to swallow it
Kansas . . . all you gotta do is
touch it.

BRISCO

What's Big Smith's plan?

She begins to kiss him.

DIXIE

He's been working on the railroad
while someone's in the kitchen
with Dixie. . .

BRISCO

The railroad where? . . .

As part of her seduction she slides Brisco's hand down
her body. Brisco's resistance is melting.

DIXIE

South.

BRISCO

(losing
concentration)

How . . . far?

She guides his hand further on down her curves.

DIXIE

Pretty far. Over the hill and
down through the valley . . .

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DIXIE (CONT'D)
(she's got him)
Any more questions? . . .

They sink in a passionate embrace down into the
luxurious bed. As the "geography" lesson continues. . .

IRIS IN/IRIS OUT TO:

INT. DIXIE'S ROOM - LATER

Dixie snores in sartorial bliss. Brisco straps on his
gun belt and slips out the door.

EXT. THE COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Brisco rides east following the rails.

EXT. A CREEK - NIGHT

Brisco follows the track to the edge of a rushing creek.
He looks up in surprise to see a PROSPECTOR out at this
hour panning for gold. Brisco approaches him.

PROSPECTOR
You'd be killing me for nothing.
Haven't found a thing.

BRISCO
I'm not here to kill you. You
know anything about some rail
work being done around here?

PROSPECTOR
Craziest thing I ever seen.
Buildin' a track to nowhere. Been
workin' those poor bastards day
and night. Say they were about
finished.

BRISCO
What makes you say that?

PROSPECTOR
Chuck's gone.

BRISCO
Who's Chuck?

PROSPECTOR
Chuck wagon. Left at nightfall.
Happy to see 'em done. Couldn't
sleep with all that racket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Where are they working?

PROSPECTOR

Follow the rails.

BRISCO

I did. Five miles in both directions. I didn't see anything.

PROSPECTOR

You can't pan from the saddle, boy. Get your hands dirty.

(beat)

Look close on the far side of the tunnel. Now go away. That's all I know.

Brisco turns his horse. He pulls a coin from his pocket and drops it with a CLANK into the prospector's pan.

BRISCO

Thanks for your help.

Brisco rides off. The prospector looks at the coin then flips it out of the pan and into the water. He returns to his panning, looking for something finer.

WATER DROP WIPE TO:

EXT. THE TOWN OF SUTTER CREEK - NIGHT

Lord Bowler gallops down Main Street. He looks carefully around. Sees a lot of activity at the saloon. He reins in well short, and gets off Comet. He pulls his rifle from the scabbard.

LORD BOWLER

(to Comet)

Watch my back.

Comet responds with a contemptuous WHINNY. Bowler shoots him a look before sneaking down the street.

FAN OUT WIPE TO:

EXT. THE TRAIN TUNNEL - NIGHT

Brisco looks around near the mouth of the train tunnel. Doesn't see anything. He gets off his horse. He begins to walk along the track.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

That's when he notices the fresh dirt. He kicks the dirt away revealing the twin gleaming lines of a new rail spur! He kicks at the dirt and begins to follow the new tracks.

EXT. FURTHER ALONG THE TRACKS

Brisco follows the spur. He sees light and hears CLANKING ahead.

He creeps forward and peers through some bushes.

A crew of Chinese laborers lay track by lantern light. Cowboy foremen prod and bully them, and it is obvious that the Chinese are on the far edge of fatigue. Big Smith and his Gang look on from their horses.

BIG SMITH

Keep them working. It's got to be done tonight!

Suddenly, one of the workers pitches over from exhaustion. It is Chin's mother. She clutches her locket for strength and tries to stand. Her husband reaches over to help her.

But Big Smith rides over. WHOOMP! -- knocking the husband out of the way and KICKING her back down to the ground.

BIG SMITH

If she wants to live, she gets up by herself!

A look of seething anger crosses Brisco's face. He makes a decision. Right there in the bushes, he draws his gun and takes aim at Big Smith.

Suddenly, ZING! A SHOT RINGS OUT! Right past Brisco's head. He ducks, looking around. Two OUTLAWS are riding toward him!

OUTLAW #1

There! Get him!

BIG SMITH

(looking around)

What is it?!

OUTLAW #1

There's somebody in those bushes!

Brisco runs and swings up onto his horse. The gang members spur their horses and THE CHASE IS ON!

ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE

Brisco gallops. The outlaws are hot on his trail.

INTO THE WOODS

Brisco races through the trees. He puts a short lead on his pursuers.

EXT. THE WICKWIRE BARN - NIGHT

Amanda Wickwire is exiting the barn when suddenly Brisco comes galloping up. He hops off his horse, glances behind him.

BRISCO

Don't ask any questions! Just
play along

AMANDA

What are you -- ?

And with that, he grabs Amanda in a kiss. Just then, two of the OUTLAWS come galloping onto the ranch. They see Brisco and Amanda locked in an embrace. They rein in. Now Brisco breaks off the kiss and looks over.

BRISCO

(perturbed)
You want something?

OUTLAW #1

(unsure)
Uh, didn't mean to disturb you,
Kansas, or anything bu --

BRISCO

-- but --

OUTLAW #1

Oh hell, you see anybody ride
by here?

BRISCO

I wasn't looking.

Brisco gives them a hard, cold stare.

OUTLAW #1

(clearing his
throat)
Sorry, Kansas.
(spurring his horse)
Yah!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And they gallop off. Brisco and Amanda are left standing close, breathless, neither really wanting the embrace to end.

PROF. WICKWIRE

Hemmm. . .

They turn. The professor stands behind them. He's watched the whole thing.

PROF. WICKWIRE

. . . Kansas!

Brisco and Amanda instantly release each other.

BRISCO

Yes sir!

Brisco is expecting a reprimand, but he doesn't get one:

PROF. WICKWIRE

Let me show you what I've been working on. Excuse me, Amanda.

He slides the barn door wide open to reveal a 20-foot-tall ROCKET in the final stages of construction! Brisco gasps.

INSIDE THE BARN

All three enter. Brisco gazes up at the rocket in awe.

BRISCO

A rocket . . . it's beautiful.

Amanda is stunned by Brisco's interest in her father's contraption.

AMANDA

Beautiful??

BRISCO

(under his breath)
The coming thing . . .

AMANDA

Huh?

BRISCO

Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROF. WICKWIRE
(to Brisco)
I know what you're thinking.
She'll never fly.

BRISCO
Of course she will.

AMANDA
If she doesn't blow up first.
The last three did.

PROF. WICKWIRE
Fourth time's the charm. You
know, in the future --

BRISCO
-- Rockets like this will chart
the stars.

Brisco paces around the rocket in one direction. The
professor paces around it in the other.

PROF. WICKWIRE
(excited)
That's right! He's right, you
know!

BRISCO
(equally excited)
Nitro cellulose for propulsion?

PROF. WICKWIRE
Yes, that's right. The problem
is containing the rate of
combustion.

BRISCO
Yes, I can see that. Then, of
course, there's stabilization.

PROF. WICKWIRE
The other big problem! That's
why I'm working on this pair of
fins. . .

Amanda looks at them both, completely dumbfounded at
this meeting of the minds.

BRISCO
. . . You might try four instead
of two for complete symmetrical
placement.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROF. WICKWIRE

Yes, yes! You're absolutely right!

(beat)

Stay for dinner, Kansas! There's so much to discuss.

BRISCO

I can't . . . there's going to be a train robbery --

AMANDA

-- See, Dad? He can't stay because he's got to get back and rob a train!

BRISCO

I'm not robbing it, I'm trying to stop it.

(beat)

Can I borrow a fresh horse?

BOX WIPE TO:

EXT. THE BARN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Amanda finishes cinching the saddle on a horse. She and Brisco are alone.

AMANDA

I can't believe this. . . Now I'm giving you my horse!

BRISCO

In some countries that would constitute a dowry.

AMANDA

You're not an outlaw, are you?

BRISCO

No.

AMANDA

Then who are you?

BRISCO

Brisco County.

AMANDA

Is that where you're from?

BRISCO

No, that's who I am.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He waits for recognition; it doesn't come.

BRISCO

Maybe you've heard the name?

AMANDA

No.

BRISCO

It doesn't matter.

Brisco is about to swing up into the saddle, but Amanda stops him.

AMANDA

(then)

I'm twenty-five years old, unmarried, living in an isolated back-water town, on a ranch with my father, a hundred miles from the nearest real city. No prospects. No hopes. And then I met you, and I thought you were different. But then I found out, or I thought I did, that you were just like all the other worthless cowboys from town: a degenerate outlaw. And now I realize you're not an outlaw at all. Oh, no -- not you! You turned out to be just like my father! A dreamer with his head in the clouds, and I don't know which one is worse!

(beat)

Do you know what you're doing to me?!

BRISCO

(serious)

Yes . . . because you might be doing the same thing to me.

AMANDA

And now you're going to ride out of here, on my horse, no less!

Brisco just looks at her for a beat. She grabs the reins and slaps them into his hand.

AMANDA

What are you waiting for?! Go!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Instead, Brisco grabs her and kisses her hard. A serious, passionate kiss. When it's over, her head is spinning.

BRISCO

That one was for real.

Then he mounts up, ready to ride.

AMANDA

I want that horse back.

Brisco nods, smiles, and rides off.

BILLOWING CLOUD WIPE TO:

INT. THE SALOON - NIGHT

The place is filled with outlaws. Dixie and Brisco are at the bar.

DIXIE

Where have you been?

BRISCO

Getting some air.

DIXIE

Every time you leave there's trouble.

Brisco is about to reply when the doors to the saloon suddenly BANG OPEN and Big Smith enters with Lord Bowler in tow. Bowler is beaten and his hands are tied behind his back.

BIG SMITH

Look who we found snooping around in the dark: Lord Bowler. And he had some interesting things to tell me, too. Such as: Brisco County, Jr. is hot on our trail.

There is an AUDIBLE REACTION from the other outlaws. Brisco makes eye contact with Bowler.

BIG SMITH

Maybe he's right here in town.
(dramatic pause)
Hell, maybe he's right here in this room.

That's when we notice that Brisco is squirming a little; fortunately no one else notices.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG SMITH

Well, Bowler -- is he?! Point
him out to me! Do you see
him?!

But even Bowler has a code of honor.

LORD BOWLER

No.

Big Smith hurls Bowler to the floor in disgust.

BIG SMITH

Lying half-breed!
(turns toward the
door)
Bring in the horse!

The doors open again and Comet is led in. CLOMP.
CLOMP. CLOMP.

BIG SMITH

Where's Brisco, Comet? Find
Brisco.

Silence. Comet surveys the room. He looks back over at
Big Smith. NAYS.

BIG SMITH

That's what I thought you'd say.
But maybe you should check one
more time.

And Big Smith holds up a glistening GREEN APPLE.
Comet's eyes go wide. Big Smith has discovered Comet's
Achilles heel!

Brisco drops his head into his hands. He knows the jig
is up.

Comet tries to resist as Big Smith holds the apple under
his nose. Comet sniffs. Can't resist -- when suddenly
Big Smith pulls the apple away.

BIG SMITH

Uh-uh. Brisco first.

Driven by his stomach, Comet trots across the room. The
outlaws clear a path revealing Brisco at the far end of
the bar. Comet WHINNIES.

Even though Comet has sold him out, Brisco cannot resist
a show of affection for the big dumb animal. He pets
him on the snout.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Hey, Comet. How ya been?

Comet nuzzles Brisco's neck as the outlaws all draw their guns and aim them in Brisco's direction.

BIG SMITH

I knew you were too good to be true.

EXT. THE RAILS - DAY

Brisco and Bowler are tied to the railroad tracks.

BIG SMITH

(from the saddle)

Well boys, we've got to run.
We've got a train to catch. Of course, it's going to catch you first.

Big Smith and the Gang ride off. Brisco and Lord Bowler are left alone.

BRISCO

Thanks for not giving me away.

LORD BOWLER

Don't thank me for anything.
The last thing I want is for you to be beholden to me.

(beat)

Why didn't you kill Smith when you had the chance?

BRISCO

It's bigger than Big Smith.
Bly is coming here to rob a train.

LORD BOWLER

What train?

The shrill WHISTLE of a TRAIN sounds in the distance.

BRISCO

That train.

Lord Bowler turns in the direction of the train. The plume of smoke is visible on the horizon.

EXT. THE TRAIN - TRAVELING - SAME TIME

The train THUNDERS down the tracks.

INT. THE TRAIN - TRAVELING

Socrates looks nervous. He sits in the parlor car with a U.S. Army CAPTAIN. The car is full of U.S. Soldiers.

CAPTAIN

Relax, Mr. Poole. Everything is under control. That's what the government pays me for.

A LIEUTENANT approaches urgently.

LIEUTENANT

Captain, there's something you should see.

CAPTAIN

What is it?

LIEUTENANT

There appear to be two bodies on the tracks ahead, sir.

CAPTAIN

Get the men on post! Full speed ahead!

LIEUTENANT

Sir?

CAPTAIN

It's a ploy! Obviously somebody wants to stop this train. I'm not going to let that happen.

INT. THE ENGINE - TRAVELING

The engineer looks anxiously ahead. The lieutenant enters and raises a telescope to his eye.

THROUGH THE TELESCOPE (MATTE)

Brisco and Bowler can be seen tied to the tracks and struggling.

LIEUTENANT

(nervously)

Full speed ahead!

The engineer does as instructed. He presses the throttle forward. The train churns and chugs even faster.

EXT. THE TRAIN

It ROARS PAST CAMERA, wheels pounding, steam spitting.

EXT. THE TRACKS

Brisco and Lord Bowler struggle against their ropes. The train whistle SCREAMS! Bowler screams! Brisco's eyes grow wide as he sees how close the train is coming! The train pounds down on them! This is going to be a real mess!

CUT TO BLACK.

BURN IN:

COMING NEXT:
Chapter SIX

"Spur of the Moment"

END OF CHAPTER FIVE

CHAPTER SIX

FADE IN:

EXT. THE TRACKS - DAY

REPRISE: Big Smith and the Gang ride off. Brisco and Bowler struggle in vain as the WHISTLE BLOWS and the train THUNDERS closer . . .

BURN IN:

Chapter SIX

"Spur of the Moment"

SCENE CONTINUES: A shadow moves across Brisco and Bowler. But it's not the approaching train, it's --

BRISCO

Comet!

Sure enough, Comet stands over them. He looks down at them with a perplexed expression as if to say, "What are you idiots doing tied up to the tracks?"

LORD BOWLER

It's the nag that got us into this scrape!

(to Comet)

My only hope now is that I splatter my internal organs all over your stupid face!

BRISCO

Shut up! He can help us. He can bite through the ropes.

LORD BOWLER

He can!? You mean he's done it before?

BRISCO

Well . . . no. But it's worth a try, isn't it? You got any better ideas?

LORD BOWLER

Okay, okay! Get on with it!

BRISCO

(to Comet)

C'mere, boy. Thatta boy. Come on over here.

Comet approaches slowly. He snorts and rubs his snout against the back of Brisco's head, knocking his hat down over his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO
Good boy. Good Comet.

LORD BOWLER
You two having a friendly reunion?!
(yelling)
Because we're about to get a cow
catcher up the rear!!

BRISCO
Bite the ropes, Comet! Bite
through the ropes.

LORD BOWLER
Me first, Comet! Me first!

Comet turns to look at Bowler.

BRISCO
Hey! Don't confuse my horse!

LORD BOWLER
It's every man for himself,
County!
(beat)
Me first, Comet, and I'll show
you a place where there's so many
green apples they're growing on
trees!

Comet seems confused and conflicted and the train is
ROARING RIGHT TOWARD THEM! The WHISTLE SCREAMS!

BRISCO
COMET!

Here comes the train! Comet snorts --

LORD BOWLER
Aaaaahhhh! . . .

-- then raises his hoof and brings it down hard! It
slices the rope where it meets the rail!

Brisco rolls free of the tracks, the cut rope unraveling
around him. He reaches back and pulls Lord Bowler from
the tracks -- as the train RUSHES BY. Their hair blows
in the trailing wind.

INT. THE ENGINE - TRAVELING

The engineer and the lieutenant look back at Brisco and
Bowler.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIEUTENANT

It was a ploy!

INSIDE THE PARLOR CAR

Socrates stares out the window. He watches Brisco and Bowler recede into the distance. He spins back around to the captain:

SOCRATES

Stop the train! You must immediately stop the train!

CAPTAIN

I told you, Mr. Poole. This train stops for nothing.

Socrates reacts with extreme dismay.

NEAR THE TRACKS

Brisco gets to his feet and gives Comet a hug.

BRISCO

Thanks, Comet. And just for your information, all apples grow on trees.

Lord Bowler discovers that his hands and ankles are still tied.

LORD BOWLER

Untie me, Brisco!

BRISCO

(mounting Comet)
I've got a train to catch!

LORD BOWLER

But, but -- !

BRISCO

I'll come back for you!

Brisco turns Comet around and gallops off down the tracks in the opposite direction from the train!

LORD BOWLER

What the hell are you doing?! The train went that way!

EXT. THE COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Brisco and Comet THUNDER across the countryside.

SAWTOOTH WIPE TO:

EXT. THE WICKWIRE RANCH - DAY

Brisco gallops along the tracks. He approaches the Wickwire ranch. He reins Comet to a stop. Parked next to the tracks is a rusted HAND-CAR. Brisco looks it over before galloping on to the barn.

INSIDE THE WICKWIRE BARN

Wickwire is at work on the rocket as Brisco comes galloping in.

BRISCO
I need your rocket! Now!

LIGHTNING BOLT WIPE TO:

EXT. THE RAILS - MOMENTS LATER

The rocket is strapped horizontally to the hand-car. The hand-car is now up on the main tracks.

PROF. WICKWIRE
I don't know why I never thought
of this! It would have been
perfect for early propulsion
tests.

Brisco climbs up on top of the rocket.

BRISCO
I either catch that train or be
in Denver for lunch.
(beat)
Light the fuse!

Wickwire lights the fuse. FSSSSSS! -- it burns down fast.

PROF. WICKWIRE
I don't want to put too much
weight on past history -- but if
you don't mind -- I'm going to
step back a bit.

Wickwire retreats. That's when Amanda gallops up on her horse.

AMANDA
Dad . . . Brisco!!

BRISCO
Aman--

Suddenly, KA--WHOOOOSH! The rocket IGNITES and the hand-car SHOOTs OFF down the tracks!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Brisco holds on for dear life.

WICKWIRE

It works!

Amanda watches the rocket and Brisco disappear, a look of exasperation on her face.

FURTHER UP THE TRACKS

Lord Bowler sits by the tracks muttering to himself and struggling with the ropes. He hears a RUMBLE and looks back. He sees Brisco riding the rocket-powered hand-car towards him.

LORD BOWLER

Hey! Brisco! You came back!

WHOOSH!! Brisco speeds by. Bowler's head twirls to watch him go.

EXT. THE TRAIN - TRAVELING

The train speeds across the countryside.

EXT. THE HAND-CAR - TRAVELING

Brisco is gaining on it. He can barely keep his eyes open against the furious wind.

EXT. THE TUNNEL

The train approaches the tunnel. It shoots inside.

INSIDE THE TUNNEL

As the train rushes through, BOMBS mounted on the ceiling EXPLODE! Thick yellow GAS spews!

INSIDE THE TRAIN

The gas billows into the cars. Socrates stands. Everyone starts coughing.

SOCRATES

I told you! Something is happening!

CAPTAIN

(fading)

Nothing stops this . . .

He keels over. Socrates looks around with concern. Everyone passes out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Finally the gas gets to Socrates. He drops to the floor also.

INSIDE THE ENGINE

Yellow gas engulfs the cab. The engineer and Lieutenant pass out. Unfortunately, the engineer falls forward -- jamming the throttle into full!

EXT. THE FAR SIDE OF THE TUNNEL - SAME TIME

Big Smith and some Gang members wait on a rock ledge to jump onto the train. The train comes ROARING out of the tunnel much faster than they expected.

OUTLAW #1

It's going too fast!

BIG SMITH

Jump!

Big Smith jumps! The outlaws leap frantically after him onto --

THE TOP OF THE TRAIN

They slide and skid before finally getting their footing.

EXT. THE HAND-CAR - TRAVELING

Brisco sees the tunnel looming ahead -- and the yellow gas cloud outside the tunnel mouth. He takes a deep breath and holds it as the hand-car speeds into the tunnel and shoots out --

THE FAR SIDE OF THE TUNNEL

The gas doesn't have time to take effect. Brisco catches his breath. He sees the train looming ahead. He's closing on it -- very fast!

FURTHER UP THE RAILS

An outlaw throws a switch. The train is diverted off onto the newly constructed spur, still going top speed.

EXT./INT. THE ARMORED CAR

BANG! The lock is shot off and Big Smith and two Outlaws slide open the door. A huge wooden crate stands alone in the center of this boxcar, surrounded by a phalanx of passed-out U.S. soldiers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG SMITH

Open it up.

Outlaw #1 uses a crowbar to pry the crate open. The front and sides of the crate fall away to reveal --

THE ORB

sitting in a specifically-built cradle suspended four feet off the ground. The perfectly polished metal sphere gleams. It is an awesome sight.

OUTLAW #2

Wow!

The outlaw reaches out toward the orb.

BIG SMITH

Don't touch it!

The outlaw retracts his hand. Big Smith looks on, uncomfortable and somewhat wary.

BIG SMITH

(quietly)

I hope Bly knows what the hell he's doing...

Big Smith turns to Outlaw #1.

BIG SMITH

Follow me. Something's wrong.
This train isn't slowing down.

Big Smith and the outlaw exit the car.

CLOSE ON BRISCO - ON THE HAND-CAR

He's bearing down on the train and moving fast. Now he realizes there's another danger he never anticipated: The hand-car is going to be impaled against the caboose!

Brisco grabs the HAND BRAKE and yanks it with all his might! Sparks fly and the wheels SCREECH in protest, but the brake is no match for the power of the rocket. The hand-car hardly slows at all.

BRISCO

Damn. . .

As he speeds toward certain destruction, Brisco shakes his head as if to say: Some days nothing goes right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly, with a final spurt of fire -- FFTTT! -- the rocket runs out of fuel! The hand-car begins to coast and slow down!

Coasting, the hand-car brings Brisco closer to the rear platform. But the hand-car doesn't have enough momentum! The gap between the hand-car and the train suddenly starts to widen!

Brisco LEAPS toward the train -- grabs the rear railing -- feet dragging on the track. He finally gets a foot on the railing and swings up on board.

Brisco takes a moment to catch his breath, then draws his gun and enters:

THE PARLOR CAR

He steps over the unconscious bodies of the U.S. Soldiers. When SHOTS RING OUT! Two of the outlaws FIRE at Brisco from the front of the car.

Brisco shows off his shooting skill. He drops one with a SINGLE SHOT.

The other Outlaw is well-hidden behind some seats. He keeps FIRING AT BRISCO. Brisco's eyes travel to the metal front wall of the car.

He calculates a trajectory and SHOOTS a bullet into the corner. ZING! -- it ricochets off the wall and -- FINDS ITS MARK on the bounce! The second outlaw falls out of cover, dead.

Brisco strides on.

OUTSIDE THE ARMORED CAR

Brisco encounters yet another outlaw waiting on the platform. This outlaw draws a gigantic BOWIE KNIFE. A murderous smile crosses his face.

Brisco holds up his pearl-handled peacemaker. The outlaw's smile fades.

BRISCO

Jump.

The outlaw looks at him with concern. Brisco COCKS his hammer. The outlaw does a swan dive off the side of the train. Brisco now carefully goes --

INSIDE THE ARMORED CAR

He approaches THE ORB. He's completely mesmerized. It is the ultimate symbol of the future he seeks. He brings his hand close but doesn't touch it.

The rapid TICKING of the RAILS draws Brisco's attention away. He knows the train is going to run out of track. With a last look back, he moves out through the front of the car.

INSIDE THE ENGINE COMPARTMENT

Outlaw #1 is looking around frantically, trying to figure out how to stop the train. He can't even see the throttle because the engineer is slumped over it.

Brisco enters. Outlaw #1 turns and rushes him. Brisco hits him with a couple of punches then flips him overboard. Brisco moves to the controls when--

BIG SMITH

appears behind him brandishing a COAL SHOVEL. He swings it with all his might against Brisco's back. Brisco slumps.

Big Smith takes another swipe with the shovel. This time Brisco ducks. The shovel cuts through the air just inches above his head and connects with a steam gauge. It ruptures! STEAM SPITS everywhere!

Brisco pulls his gun but Big Smith grabs his hand and holds it against the boiler door. It SIZZLES on the hot metal.

BRISCO

Aggghhh!!

BIG SMITH

(laughing)

Your daddy screamed louder than that with a dozen bullets in his gut.

Brisco drops the gun, but now the FIGHT IS ON! In the close quarters of the train cab, Brisco and Big Smith go at each other with ferocity!

The cab fills with steam! The boiler door gets knocked opened revealing the white-hot coal burner inside! Neither Brisco nor Big Smith seem able to get the advantage.

EXT. AHEAD ON THE TRACKS

The CAMERA TRACKS AHEAD to show just where this spur is leading. It is not a happy sight. The track ends atop a cliff. And not a small one. The train is on course for a two-hundred-foot drop!

The train was never expected to go this far, but it will in about ten seconds!

BACK INSIDE THE ENGINE COMPARTMENT

Oblivious to the danger, Brisco and Big Smith continue to battle it out! The engineer remains slumped over the throttle! The train's pegged at full-speed!

EXT. THE CLIFFS

The train thunders toward the cliff edge.
There is no way it can stop in time!

CUT TO BLACK.

BURN IN:

COMING NEXT:
Chapter SEVEN

"Grave Peril"

END OF CHAPTER SIX

CHAPTER SEVEN

FADE IN:

INT./EXT. THE TRAIN - DAY

REPRISE: Brisco jumps into the engine cab to stop the runaway train! He easily dispatches one outlaw but then has to fight Big Smith! They battle it out! The train speeds relentlessly toward the edge of a 200-foot cliff!

BURN IN:

CHAPTER SEVEN

"Grave Peril"

SCENE CONTINUES: As Brisco and Big Smith fight, Brisco glances out the window -- and sees just how close they are to the end of the track! After trading another punch with Big Smith, Brisco looks around for a way to stop the train.

He grabs the BRAKE LEVER and yanks it back. The WHEELS SCREAM and lock up! Big Smith pitches forward. Trying to regain his balance, he grabs at Brisco. Brisco twists away and hits him with a SOLID PUNCH! Big Smith stumbles back -- and falls -- plunging right into the RAGING COAL BURNER! Big Smith is instantly burned alive!

Brisco winces. He sniffs the air and winces even more.

OUTSIDE THE TRAIN

The WHEELS SCREECH, steel on steel, as the train slides relentlessly toward the cliff! Closer and closer it comes! Finally, ten feet away -- with a final GROAN, SHUDDER and HISS of STEAM -- the train stops short!

INSIDE THE ENGINE CAB

Brisco breathes a sigh of relief. Exhausted, beat-to-hell, his body battered, he rests for a moment. Then peers outside the cab. He sees --

THE CHINESE LABORERS

who built the tracks. Shackled together, they stare up at the train. They don't know what fate it brings.

Brisco stares at them with compassion. Then he picks up the last remnant of Big Smith: his black hat, rimmed with the \$100 bills.

And he sails it through the air.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It lands at the feet of one of the Chinese workers. He lifts the hat up with wonder and surprise.

FAN WIPE TO:

THE PERIOD MAP OF THE WEST

CAMERA MOVES IN on the town of San Francisco...

DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. INITIATION CHAMBER - DAY

Brisco leads in the workers from the chain gang into the lair of the scarred-foot clan. The clan members and the workers see each other and embrace!

CLOSE ON CHIN

He searches the crowd for his mother. Finally he spots her. And she spots him! She lets out a cry. They run and grip each other in joyous reunion! Chin's father now joins in the embrace.

Brisco stands to the side watching along with Lee Pow.
CAMERA MOVES IN on LEE POW as he talks.

LEE POW

I never thought this day would come, Brisco. You have brought great joy and happiness to our people.

(beat)

More importantly, you have brought us freedom from our tyranny. How can we ever thank you?

He turns but Brisco is no longer there.

LEE POW

Brisco?...

Lee Pow looks around the chamber; Brisco has gone.

INT. THE WESTERFIELD CLUB - DAY

Brisco strides past Thorogood's secretary right into his office.

SECRETARY

Wait, you can't go in there!

Too late. He's already through the door.

INSIDE THOROGOOD'S OFFICE

Thorogood looks up from his desk.

THOROGOOD

What's the matter, Brisco? Don't you trust us to send you your bounty?

BRISCO

No, I'm here for something else.

The secretary enters behind him, concerned.

THOROGOOD

(to secretary)

It's okay, Mary. I can handle this.

She leaves, closing the door behind her.

THOROGOOD

I'm all ears.

Brisco doesn't speak immediately. He strolls around the lavish suite. He sees an antique umbrella box and pulls from it a wolf head's cane.

BRISCO

Beautiful cane... You ever use it?

THOROGOOD

Sometimes.

BRISCO

How about the night you passed Dixie Cousins the train schedule?

Thorogood leans back in his chair, amused and impressed.

THOROGOOD

Ah. Very good.

(smiles)

Yes, I did have it that night.

(openly)

Go on. Tell me what else you know.

Brisco studies Thorogood for a moment. He knows he's being toyed with and he's annoyed; but, he's also curious enough to continue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

I know you placed Socrates on the train so you'd have a scapegoat after it was robbed. But what I don't know is: Was it your plan to steal the orb or was it Bly's?

THOROGOOD

It doesn't matter. We have a partnership. We share equally in all the benefits.

(off Brisco's look)

What's wrong, County? Don't you appreciate my candor?

BRISCO

(pause)

How did Bly get his claws into you?

THOROGOOD

Partnering with Bly was my choice.

(beat)

You claim to be a man of the future, correct? Then surely you must see that in our age, crime has become a fact of life. A factor like many others, affecting profits and losses.

(beat)

When you encounter a rival like Mr. Bly who threatens those profits, you can either make a deal or go out of business. It's that simple.

BRISCO

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

THOROGOOD

One of my favorite expressions.

BRISCO

How about "crime doesn't pay"?

THOROGOOD

Ridiculous.

BRISCO

Not so ridiculous. I'm going to the police. It's over.

Thorogood gets up from behind the desk. He walks around to confront Brisco.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOROGOOD

You're not going anywhere.

BRISCO

(unimpressed)

What are you going to do? Hit me with your money clip?

No, Thorogood PUNCHES BRISCO IN THE FACE! The punch hits Brisco like a two-ton anvil! He flies back against the wall. Shocked and stunned, he tries to clear his head as Thorogood comes at him again.

THOROGOOD

I have to hand it to Poole.
You were the right man for the job...

Thorogood SLUGS HIM AGAIN, this time in the stomach. WOOOMPH. The punch is like a sledge hammer! Brisco doubles over and falls down! He can't believe it.

THOROGOOD

... but now I have no use for you.

Thorogood picks Brisco off the ground --

THOROGOOD

Eeeaaahhhaagghhh!

And throws him through the air! Brisco flies across the room CRASHING THROUGH SOME CHAIRS before SLAMMING into the front of the DESK. Thorogood's display of strength is clearly superhuman!

Brisco grimaces, barely able to pick himself up. He stares at Thorogood.

BRISCO

(with grave concern)
How long ago did you do it?

THOROGOOD

Do what?

BRISCO

Touch the orb.

THOROGOOD

The other day. When it was being loaded onto my railroad.

(beat)

I wish I could convey how it felt... the power as it coursed through my body!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

I have another expression for you,
Thorogood: "There's no honor
among thieves."

THOROGOOD

What are you talking about?

BRISCO

Bly betrayed you! The orb is
deadly!

THOROGOOD

Impossible!

BRISCO

The power only lasts for a short
time before it kills you! What
do you think happened to those
Chinese workers?! Bly knew this
all along and he never told you!

(beat)

He's murdered you, Thorogood.
You just don't know it yet.

THOROGOOD

Liar!

Thorogood lunges at Brisco and proceeds to STRANGLE HIM.
Brisco tries desperately to fight him off.

With every ounce of strength he's got, Brisco finally
manages to shove Thorogood away. Thorogood falls back-
wards behind the desk.

Brisco clutches his throat and GASPS FOR AIR, waiting
for Thorogood to reemerge. He doesn't.

Brisco goes over to look. Once he sees behind the desk,
he makes a horrible face.

CLOSE ON THOROGOOD

He is contorting on the floor in agony. CHURNING,
GURGLING, SPUTTERING NOISES come from his body.
Thorogood begins to DISSOLVE AWAY FROM THE INSIDE OUT
like some giant Alka-Seltzer! He SCREAMS!

Brisco takes a step backward.

BRISCO

Looks like the partnership's been
dissolved.

DRIPPING CURTAIN WIPE TO:

INT. CITY STABLES - DAY

Brisco saddles up Comet. Socrates stands nearby.

SOCRATES

Notice anything different about me?

Brisco looks him over head to foot but doesn't notice a thing.

BRISCO

Nope.

SOCRATES

No tie. I'm not wearing a tie.

BRISCO

Oh, yeah. Right...

SOCRATES

I'm trying to do what you said: Develop a personality for outside the courtroom. I'm also thinking of dropping my "g's"... as in, "I'll be waitin' for ya, Brisk."

(beat)

Did you notice I called you "Brisk?" It's something else I'm considering, giving people affectionate nick-names.

(beat)

What do you think?

BRISCO

Well... it's a step in the right direction.

SOCRATES

(very pleased)

Good, good. Thank you.

Brisco climbs into the saddle.

SOCRATES

Where are you going?! You still have a job to do.

BRISCO

There's somebody I need to talk to.

Then Brisco reaches into his saddle bag and removes the music box he bought in Chinatown.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Will you do me a favor, Socrates?
Will you send this out to the
Wickwire place to Amanda for me?

Socrates takes the music box from Brisco.

SOCRATES

Don't you want to take it out
yourself? I know she'd like to
see you.

BRISCO

That's the problem.

Socrates understands.

SOCRATES

Think you'll ever see her again?

BRISCO

I hope so. But right now, like
you said, I've got a job to do.

SOCRATES

I suppose some things just have
to wait.

BRISCO

Be back in two days.

SOCRATES

Be waitin' for ya, Brisk!

Brisco gives Socrates a tolerant smile and gallops off.

CLOSING RECTANGULAR WIPE TO:

EXT. THE COUNTY RANCH - DAY

Brisco's family's ranch is nestled in a beautiful valley
at the foot of some snow-capped mountains. On a grassy
hillside nearby, Brisco stands over the graves of his
mother and his father.

The first tombstone reads: Brisco County - b. November
3, 1838; d. May 10, 1893. The second one: Ruth Gage
County - b. August 9, 1848; d. March 1, 1868.

Brisco stares down at the marker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRISCO

Hello, Dad.

(pause)

This is tough work that you used to do. I don't know how you did it. This first one just about killed me, and I've still got twelve more to go.

(smiling)

Maybe it gets easier as you go along, huh?

(then:)

I guess not.

He reaches down and brushes some leaves off his father's grave.

BRISCO

You had one hell of a funeral, Dad. Governors from three states showed up. I'm sorry I missed it. I'm sorry I missed a lot of things...

Brisco holds his eyes to keep back the tears. It doesn't work too well.

BRISCO

I am going to finish the job you started. You can count on that.

He looks around at the magnificent countryside.

BRISCO

I'm off for Texas next. I'm going after Ned Zed. I hear he's down there rustling cattle, among other things...

(beat)

I hope you're looking out for me up there. I can use all the help I can get.

Comet WHINNIES. Brisco turns.

BRISCO

Okay. Take it easy. I'm done.

Brisco approaches Comet who WHINNIES again and then REARS BACK ON HIS HIND LEGS AND SNORTS.

Alarmed, Brisco spins around. His eyes travel across the valley and to see A RIDER on a distant hill. The rider is watching him. Silhouetted against the sky.

A CLOSER ANGLE ON THE DISTANT HILL

Reveals the rider to be John Bly! Bly observes Brisco, impassively. After a long moment Bly reins his horse around and gallops off down the hill and out of sight.

BACK TO BRISCO

He watches the rider disappear.

BRISCO
(under his breath)
Bly...

He knows somehow that they will meet again.

SLOW CROSSING WIPE TO:

EXT. THE TRAIN STATION IN WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

Steam hisses from the undercarriage of a train being unloaded. The crate containing the orb sits on the platform. The top is open.

A SCIENTIST from the Smithsonian peers into the crate.

LOADING FOREMAN
Everything okay?

SCIENTIST
Yes. Put the lid back on and be very careful placing it into the wagon.

The workers nail the lid in place and hoist it up. Then they drop it heavily into the wagon that is parked nearby.

SCIENTIST
I said careful! That's going to the Smithsonian. It's a very important piece!

The LOADING FOREMAN approaches with a shipping manifest for the scientist to sign.

FOREMAN
What are we hauling here?

SCIENTIST
(signing it)
It's an unearthed foreign object.

The Foreman takes his signed document.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOADING FOREMAN

That's kind of a mouthful, chief.

So the Foreman just chalks the following onto the side of the crate:

" U.F.O. "

FOREMAN

All right, take it away.

He bangs on the crate. The wagon driver CALLS OUT to the horses and pulls away. As the crate disappears down the platform and through the station, we --

FADE OUT.

THE END