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MAVERICK

A Western by  
William Goldman

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CREDITS COME QUICKLY.

No flourish, just names.

And what do we hear?

This SONG: the theme from the television series.

WHO IS THE TALL DARK STRANGER THERE?

MAVERICK IS THE NAME.

RIDING THE TRAIL TO WHO KNOWS WHERE.

LUCK IS HIS COMPANION.

GAMBLING IS HIS GAME.

SMOOTH AS THE HANDLE OF A GUN,

MAVERICK IS THE NAME.

WILD AS THE WIND IN OREGON.

FLOWING UP A CANYON, EASIER TO TAME.

RIVERBOAT RING YOUR BELL.

FARETHEEWELL, ANNABELLE,

LUCKY IS THE LADY THAT HE LOVES THE BEST.

NATCHEZ TO NEW ORLEANS

LIVIN' ON JACKS AND QUEENS,

MAVERICK IS A LEGEND OF THE WEST.

As the SONG FINISHES --

-- CREDITS COME TO AN END.

And the movie begins...

FADE IN ON:

1 EXT. DESOLATE LANDSCAPE - HANGING TREE - DAY 1

Rocks. Cactus. The occasional tree.

Not a place you'd like to spend your summer vacation.

Now there are sounds: A WHIPPING WIND begins to get LOUDER. And in the distance, but GROWING: THUNDER.

CAMERA STARTS TO MOVE --

SLOWLY, INEXORABLY, ACROSS this dead place --

-- suddenly it STOPS.

We are in a Sergio Leone TIGHT CLOSEUP of just a hideous-looking man. One eye looks straight ahead. The other wanders.

CAMERA MOVES AGAIN.

The wind is really kicking up --

-- suddenly, another STOP.

Another Leone CLOSEUP.

A second man. This guy makes the first one look handsome. Both his eyes work, which is an improvement. But his neck has been horribly burned as if from a noose.

CAMERA IS MOVING AGAIN.

LOUDER THUNDER. A storm is coming fast.

CAMERA STOPS.

We are LOOKING AT the least appetizing of the three. Not that he's scarred, not that all his parts aren't in proper working order -- it's just that he's so damn frightening.

Not to mention huge.

This is THE ANGEL and like the other two, he is seated on a horse. And he is staring intently at something. FROM The Angel -- we go to...

BRET MAVERICK

for this is who the trio is looking at.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

MAVERICK's 30, give or take. Enormously appealing. Whether that's because of his considerable physical skills or his sunny personality, who knows. It might be his quiet wit.

In any case, we are looking at a handsome young man that everybody likes --

-- oops --

-- make that almost everybody.

Because just now he is seated on a horse beneath a tree and a thick rope has been tied around his neck, the rope thrown over a branch. His hands have been tied behind his back. We are about to watch a hanging. His.

THE ANGEL

(riding closer)

I almost got hung myself once, didn't much care for it, how about you?

(as Maverick  
says nothing)

We're gonna leave now, but I'm worried about your well-being.

Maverick just stares at him, makes no reply.

THE ANGEL

He gestures for the other two to ride, and they take off.

THE ANGEL

See, I don't think it's a good thing for a man to be alone out here. Your mind can do cruel things.

And now he takes a burlap sack, tosses it toward Maverick. It lands nearby.

THE ANGEL

Enjoy the company.

He spurs his horse, rides away.

MAVERICK

managing to turn his head in the direction The Angel took.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2) 1  
THE ANGEL AND OTHER TWO  
disappearing over a nearby hill.

2 EXT. SKY - DAY 2  
The sky. Storm clouds convene.

3 EXT. HANGING TREE - DAY 3  
Maverick. He takes a deep breath, tries to wriggle  
free of the knotted rope around his neck.  
No luck.  
Make that bad luck.  
The horse has been surprised by his movement, takes a  
half step.  
MAVERICK  
Freezing.  
HORSE  
It relaxes, settles down.

4 EXT. SKY - DAY 4  
The sky, and a THUNDERCLAP.

5 EXT. HANGING TREE - DAY 5  
Maverick, staring at his horse. The noise was loud.  
Either the horse is deaf or it likes thunder. Doesn't  
budge an inch.  
Maverick starts to try and work his neck free again.  
This time the horse doesn't move at all.  
Maverick sighs with relief, glances around.  
BURLAP SACK  
It is starting to wriggle.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: 5

MAVERICK

He holds his breath.

HORSE

It hasn't spotted the sack yet.

SACK

Wriggling more. Pretty soon it's going to be hard not to spot it.

MAVERICK

caution to the winds now, trying desperately to somehow get free of the noose --

-- and miraculously, he's starting to make a little headway.

HORSE

Calm. Nothing flusters this animal.

MAVERICK

even more headway -- he's in pain but he ignores it.

6 EXT. SKY - DAY 6

The sky. More THUNDER.

7 EXT. HANGING TREE - DAY 7

The horse. Standing still.

8 EXT. SKY - DAY 8

The clouds are darker.

9 EXT. HANGING TREE - DAY 9

The horse. It could be a statue.

MAVERICK

one eye on the sack as he continues to work to free his neck. Now --

SACK

as a rattlesnake peeks out.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

MAVERICK

Jesus.

HORSE

Oblivious.

SACK

Half-a-dozen rattlers are moving out of the sack now. Close by. Some of them are big, some of them are very big. All of them have fangs.

MAVERICK

struggling harder than ever, and he's actually making more headway. It's exhausting labor. As he continues his fight for life --

MAVERICK (V.O.)

It had been just a shitty week for me from the beginning.

Now, FROM that --

9A FLASHBACK - EXT. ROAD - LONG LENS - AFTERNOON

9A

A lone rider rides through dusty area up and down dips in the road. It is Maverick. He rides a mule. Angel follows and then Coop follows.

\*  
\*

9B EXT. DUSTY CANYON - AFTERNOON

9B

Maverick rides his mule along dusty trail; as we PAN WITH him a wagon train travels in opposite direction; kids play poker in the f.g. -- one smokes a corn cob pipe; we CONTINUE PAN WITH Maverick and REVEAL the town of Crystal River, a ferry coming across the river in the b.g.

MAVERICK (V.O.)

I was heading into Crystal River to take some money from the bank. Probably I should have expected bad luck on the horizon when my horse got stolen and I had to replace it with something less than a thoroughbred.

10 EXT. CRYSTAL RIVER - AFTERNOON

10

Crystal River. Not much of a place. Dusty. One main street -- and almost every storefront indicates that it is either a saloon or a gambling hall.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 10

Just now the stagecoach comes off the ferry and drives through town kicking up dust.

10A EXT. CRYSTAL RIVER - AFTERNOON 10A

Maverick, riding into town from the other direction, as the dust whips up. He's wearing different clothes than in the hanging scene.

MAVERICK (V.O.)  
My luck had to change fast -- the poker game of the century was starting in St. Louis in just ten days, and I was still short three thousand for the entrance fee.

10B OMITTED (STABLE SCENE MOVED TO 11B) 10B

11 EXT. BANK - AFTERNOON 11

Maverick rides toward the bank, stops. A sign in front indicates "Closed 'til Morning."

11A NONE 11A

11B EXT. STABLES - AFTERNOON 11B

A stable as Maverick dismounts, does his best to beat some dust from his riding clothes. He grabs his saddlebag as a STABLE BOY hurries up.

MAVERICK  
(indicating the mule)  
How much?

STABLE BOY  
By the day, week or month?

MAVERICK  
No-no -- Not how much to take care of him, how much to just take him. Permanently.

STABLE BOY  
Pa. The man wants to sell the burro.

PA  
That burro's not worth a cent.

(CONTINUED)

11B CONTINUED:

11B

MAVERICK

You just made yourself a fine deal.

(they shake)

How 'bout the saddle?

PA

Five dollars.

MAVERICK

Five dollars. Nice doing business with you. Thank you. He doesn't eat much. He's a regular jackass ... Hee... haw... Hee... haw. Always likes to be called Arthur.

He opens the door. He bumps into Angel. They look at each other. Maverick exits and Angel looks and moves inside.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. CRYSTAL PALACE - AFTERNOON 12

The biggest establishment in town. This place actually has a second floor and advertises rooms as well as vices.

13 INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - STAIRCASE - AFTERNOON 13

Maverick is starting up the stairs when the REGISTRATION CLERK hurries over from his desk.

CLERK

You got a wire, want me to read it to you?

MAVERICK

(reaching for it)

No.

CLERK

(reading)

It just says, 'Watch your back.'

(beat)

No signature.

(hands it over)

Here.

Maverick takes it, glances at it, heads upstairs.

13A EXT. CRYSTAL RIVER - SUNSET 13A

The town and river look beautiful as the sun is going down.

14 INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - DUSK

14

The place is busy enough, the bar doing a brisk business.

A poker game is in session. Half a dozen play. A cattlehand, a preacher, a small-time local businessman. But it's the other three we pay most attention to.

First is a very young man. Late teens, looks less. Thin. Small. A hundred and thirty pounds after a big meal. This is THE KID. Seems ordinary.

Next to him sits, of all things, a woman. But not ordinary, certainly not in these surroundings. She's elegantly-dressed, close to being beautiful. She's married, has a deep Southern accent, and hasn't been poor for a long time. Maybe she's thirty. She seems a rotten poker player, but a wonderful flirt. This is ANNABELLE BRANSFORD.

Next to her sits The Angel. We met him already -- he tossed the burlap bag of rattlesnakes at Maverick just before the hanging. Huge, powerful, not much makes him smile, except winning at cards.

There is an empty seat at the table.

STAIRCASE

as Maverick descends. If before he was grimy from travel, he isn't anymore. He wears a black hat, a black jacket, a black string tie --

-- and just the most beautiful white lace shirt you ever saw.

POKER GAME

as Maverick approaches.

MAVERICK  
(indicating the  
empty chair)

Taken?

ANNABELLE  
(lilting Southern  
accent)

It is now.

(smiles at him)

My name is Annabelle Bransford.  
And what do people call you?

MAVERICK  
Bret Maverick, ma'm.

And as he starts to sit --

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

THE ANGEL

glaring at Maverick. (We know that within a week, he'll hang Maverick. But they haven't met before.)

THE ANGEL

I like the game the way it is.

MAVERICK

I bring all kinds of plusses to the table. I hardly ever bluff and I never ever cheat.

THE ANGEL

I don't believe it.

MAVERICK

Neither do I.

THE ANGEL

(voice rising, not in pitch, but intensity)

I like the game just the way it is.

MAVERICK

Bet I can change your mind.

(beat)

I promise to lose for at least an hour.

THE ANGEL

(without a pause)

We're playing five card draw.

As Maverick sits --

MAVERICK

losing a hand to The Angel. The Angel smiles --

-- but so does Maverick.

MAVERICK

losing again, this time to Annabelle. She's happy --

-- but again, so is Maverick.

And now we begin a SERIES of VERY QUICK CUTS.

Of The kid, holding his cards. Tightly.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

Of the cattleman casually making a bet. Very casually.

Of Maverick, who doesn't seem to be paying much attention.

He loses again, smiles.

Now the preacher is staring at his cards before betting. For a long beat.

And the cattleman is fiddling with his chips.

The chips in front of The Angel are sloppy.

The chips in front of Annabelle are neatly stacked. She flicks her fingernails against her front teeth, makes a bet.

The businessman is toying with his necktie.

The Angel is holding his cards, moving the top to the bottom, then repeating, the top to the bottom.

And Maverick loses again, smiles again, just happy to be there.

Annabelle is suddenly helpless, giggling, staring at what she's been dealt.

The Angel is smiling happily. He rakes in a pot.

The businessman's fingers are tapping on the table.

The Kid's hand covers his mouth.

The Angel is bored, looking neither at the other players or the pot.

Annabelle bets big and wins -- maybe she's not such a rotten poker player after all.

Maverick tosses in his cards. Another loss. He smiles, glances at the clock on the wall -- an hour and a half have gone by.

14A EXT. CRYSTAL RIVER - TWILIGHT

14A

It is getting dark. Fewer people move about. A lamp-lighter is at work; carriages pass with lanterns lit.

14B INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - TWILIGHT

14B

The table. Maverick and the kid are the last two in the game. The kid turns his cards over.

(CONTINUED)

14B CONTINUED:

14B

Two pair, aces over queens. Maverick has three sixes. He looks at his winning hand almost in surprise. It's a good sized pot he's won. As he reaches for it.

THE KID  
(mumbling something)  
Don't think...

The rest is unintelligible.

MAVERICK  
Didn't get you.

THE KID  
I said I don't think that hand  
should count.

MAVERICK  
You got any logical reasons going  
for you?

THE KID  
My mind wasn't on the game.

His voice is always soft.

CLOSEUP - THE KID

He stares at Maverick and something is suddenly clear:  
His eyes are deadly.

MAVERICK

Hesitating now.

MAVERICK  
What's your name, son?

THE KID  
Johnny Hardin.

MAVERICK  
And what do you do for a living?

THE KID  
Oh, mostly I kill people. I'm a  
gunfighter.

MAVERICK  
Since you're still alive, I have  
to assume you're good at it.

THE KID  
Care to find out?

(CONTINUED)

14B CONTINUED: (2)

14B

MAVERICK

(a beat -- then)

This hand definitely does not  
count.

(indicating chips)

Take whatever you think's yours,  
I'll be content with the leavings.

As The Kid does --

ANNABELLE

A quick look of disappointment crosses her face.

THE ANGEL

A look of contempt crosses his.

THE ANGEL

You always been gutless?

MAVERICK

(thinks a minute --  
then nods)

I think so. At least for as long  
as I can remember. My pappy  
always said, 'He who fights and  
runs away, can run away another  
day.'

(now he stands --  
like every other  
man in the room, he  
wears a six gun)

Here's the truth -- I don't see  
what's so great about being brave.

Pulls back his black jacket, clearing his gun.

KID

Watching. His hand begins to move to his gun.

ANNABELLE

This is not a nice place.

TABLE

All watching Maverick now.

(CONTINUED)

14B CONTINUED: (3)

14B

MAVERICK

(chatting idly away)

See, you're a gunfighter and I'm not, I like to play cards, so the fact is, if I'd faced you down, what chance would I have had? Answer? Zero.

MAVERICK

suddenly he draws -- and it's lightning -- you never saw anyone so fast.

THE KID

Stunned.

MAVERICK

His voice casual.

MAVERICK

No chance whatsoever.

And now he expertly twirls his gun back into its holster.

ANNABELLE

Leaning toward The Kid.

ANNABELLE

Was that fast?

(as The Kid manages  
a nod)

I thought it was fast.

MAVERICK

sitting back down at the table again. This has all gone quickly and quietly. Now he looks at The Kid.

MAVERICK

May I suggest that from now on you keep your mind on the game?

THE KID

Yes. Yessir.

MAVERICK

My deal?

\*

(CONTINUED)

14B CONTINUED: (4)

14B

THE ANGEL

Not remotely afraid of Maverick.

THE ANGEL

You say you like to play cards?

MAVERICK

Passionately.

THE ANGEL

How come, when you lose all the time?

MAVERICK

Oh, I don't lose all the time -- just the first hour or so. I like for people to be happy.

THE ANGEL

What happens after that?

MAVERICK

Probably I'll win all your money.

THE ANGEL

Aren't you a little overconfident?

MAVERICK

No. I've just been here before.

POKER GAME BEGINNING AGAIN

And again, we see a SERIES OF VERY QUICK CUTS.

In fact, we see many of the same cuts we saw before -- only this time, Maverick doesn't lose, he wins.

The Kid holds his cards tightly. Too tightly. He makes a bet. Maverick doubles it. The Kid folds. He was bluffing.

The Cattleman casually makes a bet. Very casually. Maverick doubles it. Another bluff. Maverick wins again.

Annabelle is suddenly helpless, giggling.

Maverick folds. The others bet. Annabelle wins -- she wasn't bluffing.

The Angel is guarding his cards with both huge hands. He makes a big bet. Maverick makes a bigger one. The Angel folds. Angrily. He was bluffing.

(CONTINUED)

14B CONTINUED: (5)

14B

The Businessman is playing with his tie. He bets. Maverick makes a big raise. The Businessman calls. They both have good hands. But Maverick's is better.

The Angel is bored, makes a bet looking at neither the other players nor the pot. Maverick makes a big bet. The Angel throws his cards down, his anger building as he was caught in another bluff.

CLOCK

Time is passing.

POKER GAME

Maverick has cleaned out everybody but The Angel.

The Angel hesitates, moving the top card to the bottom, does it again, moves the top card to the bottom --

-- now he makes a bet.

Now Maverick makes a bet. A huge bet.

THE ANGEL

scowling, staring.

MAVERICK

Nothing shows on his face. He just waits. Then --

THE ANGEL

He wants to bet but you can tell it in his eyes -- he's scared he's not strong enough.

MAVERICK

The others are watching. Annabelle smiles at him. He politely touches the rim of his hat.

THE ANGEL

he hurls his cards to the table. Maverick wins.

MAVERICK

putting his cards face down, starting to collect the pot.

THE ANGEL

suddenly reaching out, grabbing Maverick's cards, turning them over --

(CONTINUED)

14B CONTINUED: (6)

14B

MAVERICK'S CARDS

He has shit. Not even a pair. This time he was bluffing.

THE ANGEL

on his feet with a roar --

THE ANGEL

You said you never bluffed!

MAVERICK

(very calm,  
collecting the pot)

No, I said I never cheated, and I don't. I also said I hardly ever bluffed. This was one of the 'hardlys.'

THE ANGEL

You cheated the whole goddam game.

MAVERICK

What do you think I was doing that first hour? Learning your 'tells,' that's all. Once I could read your hands, once I could read you --

(shrugs)

-- things just kind of worked out.

THE ANGEL

I just called you a 'cheat.'

MAVERICK

You also called me gutless. I figured you were teasing --

THE ANGEL

blind mad. He reaches his huge arms across, starts to grab Maverick.

15 INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - NIGHT

15

FOUR UNSHAVEN BIG MEN bursting through the front door of the place, the LEAD GUY has his gun drawn --

LEAD GUY

(to The Angel)

Get away from him -- we get him first --

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

MAVERICK

and he's not so casual now. His eyes flick around, looking for a place to move.

FOUR UNSHAVEN BIG MEN

Three of them fanning out behind the Lead Guy, blocking anyplace Maverick might go.

LEAD GUY

I spotted ya through the window and it made me believe in The Almighty.

MAVERICK

You fellas were drinking, you played bad, whose fault is that?

LEAD GUY

Yours, bastard -- everything is your fault.

(beat)

But it's our time come now.

They advance.

MAVERICK

suddenly vaulting the card table, heading for the swinging front doors --

FOUR GUYS

and for just a moment they're surprised.

MAVERICK

taking advantage of the moment, sprinting away and --

FOUR

realizing now, turning, starting after him and --

MAVERICK

blasting through the swinging doors and outside and --

THE ANGEL AND ANNABELLE

out onto the saloon's porch to watch.

FOUR GUYS

bolting from the bar and as they leave --

CUT TO:

16

EXT. CRYSTAL RIVER - MAIN STREET - MAVERICK - NIGHT

16

outside, racing away --

-- and then he does a surprising thing: He stops.

THE ANGEL AND ANNABELLE AND THE OTHERS

rivited.

FOUR GUYS

outside -- they stop too.

MAVERICK

He turns now, turns to face them.

THE ANGEL AND OTHERS

watching as the Four Guys stare at Maverick, wary, ready for anything.

MAVERICK

MAVERICK

Hey, son. Take this. If they  
get to whooping me, just shoot me.  
Take care of this and make sure it  
doesn't get dirty.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

And now he does something else surprising. He takes off his gun belt and his coat and gives them to the boys.

\*

FOUR GUYS

Three of them look to the Lead Guy. He hesitates, drops his gun belt too.

THE ANGEL

watching.

\*

And now the Four Men begin to move slowly toward Maverick.

MAVERICK

Four of them and all of them dangerous, four of them coming closer in the night.

And now he does the most surprising thing of all:

He charges them.

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED:

16

FOUR GUYS - THE LEAD GUY

\*

cracks whip.

\*

LEAD GUY

\*

You gamblin' scum. I'm gonna cut  
you up.

\*

\*

They're surprised and then --

\*

MAVERICK

as he just explodes --

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

-- because if he was fast when he drew his gun, he's faster in a fight -- faster and fearless and as he wades in --

ANNABELLE

watching. Eyes bright.

THE ANGEL

watching, stunned at what he's seeing out there in the night, and --

MAVERICK

spinning, throwing an elbow into the gut of the nearest big man. The blow connects perfectly and the Guy starts to double over, his knees weak, and he falls.

SECOND BIG MAN

swinging viciously and he knows how to use his fists --

-- but he's slow, too slow.

MAVERICK

ducking the blow, coming up with a punch of his own that lands on the side of the jaw and the guy staggers back and down.

THE KID

watching and probably he's never seen anything like this, one guy attacking four.

THE ANGEL

and for just a moment now, as he stares out almost in disbelief, there's something new behind his eyes: Fear.

MAVERICK

leaving his feet, kicking out with both legs at the third guy, crunching him in the chest, sending him careening back, cartwheeling to earth.

LEAD GUY

diving at Maverick from behind, and for a moment he's got him, his arms tight around Maverick.

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED: (2)

16

MAVERICK

and the instant this happens, he lets his body go totally limp so the Lead Guy is left having to hold him up, and he hadn't expected this and as Maverick sags --

LEAD GUY

stunned as suddenly Maverick stiffens, tosses the Lead Guy over his head and through the air where he lands, hard.

MAVERICK

moving back on the First Guy, the one he creamed the air out of and as he approaches, the First Guy turns, runs.

LEAD GUY

on his feet running too.

\*

MAVERICK

watching as all four take off into the night. Maverick picks up his gun belt, straps it on as he heads back toward the frontier.

17

INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - MAVERICK - NIGHT

17

enters. He seems remarkably calm, considering what he's just done. Breathing heavily, sure, a little dusty, absolutely, but no more.

Annabelle hurries to him.

ANNABELLE

That was the most amazing thing.

MAVERICK

(shrugs)

Sometimes you get lucky is all.

And as he walks forward --

MIRROR

as he passes.

MAVERICK

a glance --

-- and then he stops dead --

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

-- now he moves forward --

-- he touches his beautiful ruffled lace shirt --

-- no question about it, it's dirty from the fight.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

A look of blind fury is there.

THE ANGEL

watching, as Maverick storms toward him.

MAVERICK

All right -- my shirt's damaged,  
what the hell else bad can  
happen? --

(pointing to The  
Angel)

-- you were saying something?

THE ANGEL

(pacifying)

-- Nothing, nothing, wasn't  
important --

ANNABELLE

(thinking back)

-- Didn't you call him a gutless  
coward? -- I'm pretty sure that  
was it.

THE ANGEL

(sweating)

-- never said such a thing --  
gutless cheat, yes, but I would  
never call a man a coward --

(hopefully)

-- and I was teasing.

Maverick studies the bigger man for a moment. Then,  
amiably --

MAVERICK

(as he sits)

Let's play poker.

18 EXT./INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - MAVERICK'S ROOM & BALCONY - 18  
NIGHT

Maverick in his room, still in his gambling attire. He  
is finishing counting his considerable cash winnings as a  
KNOCK comes on his door.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

He folds the cash into his jacket pocket, moves to the door.

MAVERICK

Who is it?

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

Annabelle Bransford.

\*

DOOR

as he opens it and there she is, stunning as ever, standing in the hallway. She looks up at him nervously. You can almost feel her Southern heart pounding.

ANNABELLE

I... I shouldn't be doing this.

MAVERICK

You're just standing in the hallway, Mrs. Bransford -- I think that's still legal in this state.

ANNABELLE

moving quickly into his room. She closes the door.

ANNABELLE

If only I weren't married --

And with that she goes into his arms, kisses him passionately -- as they break.

ANNABELLE

-- I couldn't help myself. My very being cried out for me to hold you.

\*

MAVERICK

Stop by anytime.

CLOSEUP - ANNABELLE

Eyes so bright.

ANNABELLE

We'll likely never see each other again so it's safe for me to tell you -- you're the most blindingly attractive man I've ever seen.

\*

(her cheek brushes his)

And now good-bye.

She takes a step toward the door.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED: (2)

18

MAVERICK

He is a healthy young man and this is a woman of passion and beauty. He reaches out, gently takes her hand, speaks soft, his voice husky.

MAVERICK

... Annabelle...?

ANNABELLE

all but trembling. There is a long pause. Then --

MAVERICK

He kisses her forehead.

MAVERICK

How can I go on without my wallet?  
... if you don't give me back my  
money, I'll have your ass thrown  
in jail. Hand it over.

\*

\*

ANNABELLE

Shocked. Hurt.

MAVERICK

He snaps his fingers sharply. He isn't kidding around.

ANNABELLE

as she realizes this.

ANNABELLE

Damn.

And with that, she takes the wallet she's heisted from his coat, slaps it angrily into his hand. He puts it back into his pocket.

\*

MAVERICK

Don't get mad at me -- I can't  
help it you're a miserable thief.

\*

ANNABELLE

I'm a good thief, mister -- I'm  
just having a run of bad luck.

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

I know about those --  
(studies her)  
-- where you from? Your accent  
could use a little work too.

ANNABELLE

(still using the  
accent)  
Most men enjoy my southern accent.

MAVERICK

I love it. And there isn't a  
Mister Bransford, is there?

ANNABELLE

No there isn't. And never will be,  
thank you very much.  
(looks at him)  
What happens now?  
(as he shrugs)  
You're not going to turn me in?

MAVERICK

I should, I'm a law abiding  
citizen, but what the hell. I  
got my money back. Let's call  
it square.

ANNABELLE

You're going to let me go?

MAVERICK

I'm just having mercy on the  
Sheriff, is all.

ANNABELLE

(crossing to the door  
and slamming it as  
he nods, a beat)  
Damn.

MAVERICK

What?

ANNABELLE

You -- you irritate me -- you're  
just so...  
(looking for the word)  
... likeable.

MAVERICK

I'll work on that.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (4)

18

ANNABELLE

There you go doing it again.  
Being likeable. You know what I  
think? -- if we'd met under  
different circumstances, we'd have  
just hated each other. There is  
not Mrs. Maverick, is there?

MAVERICK

I'm sure I would have remembered.

ANNABELLE

See? I can be likeable too.  
(quickly now, she  
comes into his arms)  
I wish we'd never met. Good-bye.

MAVERICK

Good-bye.

A quick embrace, a kiss on the cheek. They separate. She  
goes to the door.

MAVERICK

Touched.

Alone now, he reaches into his pocket for his money,  
it isn't there --

-- she's robbed him again --

MAVERICK

Son-of-a-bitch.

-- he breaks out laughing -- opens door, looks and  
takes off.

19 INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - ANNABELLE'S ROOM &amp; BALCONY - NIGHT 19

Annabelle, in her room, hurriedly finishing packing. She  
takes her suitcase, goes to the window, opens it, steps  
out onto the fire escape. It's clumsy going.

MAVERICK (O.S.)

Can I be of help?

20 EXT. ANNABELLE'S BALCONY - NIGHT

20

The balcony and Maverick, dressed as before, waiting.  
She slaps him.

(CONTINUED)

20

CONTINUED:

20

ANNABELLE

(sighs, hands him  
his money back)

You've got to admit, I was better  
the second time.

MAVERICK

Not just better -- good. No, no.  
Not just good... very good.

ANNABELLE

Thank you.

MAVERICK

Now it's time for you to do  
something I want.

ANNABELLE

Don't you dare. I'm a lady. Not  
in a million years... not if I  
was 100. Not if you were 100.

MAVERICK

Shut up, lady. I don't want to  
go to bed with you.

ANNABELLE

Why not?

MAVERICK

Why not?... I'd be too frightened --  
What if I dozed off? God knows  
what parts of me you'd steal. I'd  
wake up with things missing.

(indicating his  
smudged shirt)

But obviously I can't clean this,  
and obviously you must know how to.  
The laundry is closed and I'm  
leaving early, and you do owe me.  
Take it easy on the starch.

Annabelle smiles as he takes off his shirt, her Southern  
accent back again.

ANNABELLE

If I can't touch you, I can touch  
your shirt... and dream.

MAVERICK

Would you like some help?

(CONTINUED)

20

CONTINUED: (2)

20

She nods yes and begins back in -- Maverick pushes and she pushes plops back inside. He begins to walk -- remembers and comes back -- she hands him the wallet.

\*  
\*  
\*

ANNABELLE

Goodnight...  
(pause)  
... Bert.

\*

MAVERICK

(he hates that --  
correcting promptly)  
Bret.

And as he goes --

21

OMITTED

21

\*

22 EXT. MAIN STREET - MORNING (NEXT DAY) 22

as Maverick, dressed for travel, heads for the bank.  
He's in a good mood and why not? -- it's a gorgeous day.

BANK

Small. Quiet. Several horses tied outside.

23 DOOR OF BANK PRESIDENT, MATTHEW WICKER 23

Maverick is with an ELDERLY CLERK who points to the door, leaves. As soon as Maverick is alone, he draws his gun, bursts into the office.

WICKER

stunned, just stares.

MAVERICK

cocks his gun, gestures for Wicker to raise his hands.

WICKER

a distinguished looking man, slowly rises, his hands going into the air.

WICKER

(suddenly speaking in  
a high pitched voice,  
like a heroine in a  
melodrama)

Oh no, please do not hurt me,  
please, I'm just a frail flower,  
have mercy --

He is stopped as the Elderly Clerk looks in from the open door.

ELDERLY CLERK

Robbery --

WICKER

(closing the door)

No -- no, it's not a robbery,  
that's just Maverick saying hello.  
(to Maverick)

C'mere, you silly son of a bitch.

He embraces Maverick.

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

Hey, Matty, everything going good?

WICKER

(sour)

Couldn't be worse.

(dead honest)

Bret, I owe you a thousand dollars,  
I've got maybe a hundred.

(takes out a bill)

I never welched on a debt in my  
life. Give me to the end of the  
year.

MAVERICK

I need it now.

WICKER

It's that poker championship, I  
knew it -- what's the entry fee,  
twenty five thousand?

Maverick nods.

WICKER

Jesus, kid, I'm sorry.

MAVERICK

Porkchop Slim owed me too, but  
he died. Widow used my thousand  
for the funeral.

WICKER

I heard he was cremated.

MAVERICK

The Widow Porkchop conned me?  
(stunned)  
What is it with people nowadays?

WICKER

I feel the same way -- it's hard  
to trust anybody.

They are by the door. Wicker opens it --

-- and a masked man is pointing a gun at them.

WICKER

My God, there is a robbery.

The masked man grabs Maverick's hundred, frisks Wicker,  
takes a huge wad of bills from his inside pocket.

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK  
You said you were broke.

WICKER  
I am now.

23A INT. BANK - MORNING

23A

OUTLAW #2  
(lighting a fuse to  
dynamite on the safe)  
Here we go.

And he ducks.

23B EXT. BANK - MORNING

23B

WINDOWS BLOW; the door is blown off hinges; smoke billows.

Maverick, appearing through the smoke. Coughing, half blind.

The four guys he clobbered the night before are waiting. They look more menacing in the daylight.

Maverick sees them, cuts into an alley by the bank.

The four guys are right behind him.

Maverick moves quickly into shadow.

The four guys spread out, start to surround him. Nobody smiles.

MAVERICK  
Anybody see you?

LEAD GUY  
Not a soul.

Maverick turns to them.

MAVERICK  
You guys come in any later last night, that monster would have eaten me alive.

LEAD GUY  
Anyone suspect anything?

(CONTINUED)

23B CONTINUED:

23B

MAVERICK

(shakes his head)

You were great -- couldn't have gone better.

LEAD GUY

Truth is, we enjoyed it. Thanks for going so easy on us.

MAVERICK

Easy? Damn. Those were my best shots.

(beat)

What'd we agree on, five dollars a beating?

(as the Lead Guy  
nods Maverick unpins  
a hundred dollar bill  
from inside his shirt)

Who's got change?

They all AD LIB about money, the deal, etc. Maverick exits. \*

And as the Four Men bring out money -- More AD LIBS. \*

24 OMITTED 24

25 INT. MAVERICK'S ROOM - DAY 25

Maverick in his room. He has finished packing and draws a card from a deck on the dresser. The 8 of Clubs. He reacts badly to this turn of luck and moves to the bed. His gambling shirt is on his bed. He picks it up gently, takes the tissue off. \*

SHIRT

Except... she's shrunk the shit out of it.

He goes to the balcony and sees the stage heading for the ferry and Annabelle with several men carrying her bags running after her. He yells and she waves. \*

25A OMITTED 25A

&amp; 26 &amp; 26

27 EXT. CRYSTAL PALACE - MAIN STREET - DAY 27

The Main Street as Maverick explodes out the door. He wears the shrunken shirt and carries his belongings.

28 EXT. FERRY - STAGE STOP - DAY 28

The end of the street. The stage is on the ferry. Annabelle is standing nearby.

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED:

28

ANNABELLE

watching as Maverick reaches her. This goes snappily.

MAVERICK

You did this on purpose!

ANNABELLE

You bet I did. \*

MAVERICK

This was my lucky shirt.

ANNABELLE

Learn how to do your own laundry. \*

MAVERICK

(spinning her  
around, holding  
her shoulders)

My underwear comes from New York,  
where the hell you think that  
shirt was made? Paris, France,  
lady -- you think they sell them  
in the dry goods store?

ANNABELLE

Why don't you try the kiddies'  
department -- \*

Maverick grabs for Annabelle and she grabs him. \*

And now comes a new male voice, deep and powerful.

MAN (O.S.)

Remove your hands from the  
lady. \*

As Maverick turns --

JUST AN INCREDIBLE-LOOKING MAN

-- we'll find out soon enough his name is ZANE COOPER.

He is raw-boned, blue-eyed, muscle and sinew; rugged as  
they come. There is also something about him we don't  
know yet but we will: Coop is so good, so fucking  
honorable, he seems like someone out of another era --

-- which in point of fact, he is. Coop is the western  
hero who dominated movies for most of this century. In  
other words, we are looking at John Wayne or Gary Cooper.

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED: (2)

28

Not only has he never done anything bad, the thought of doing anything bad has never crossed his mind.

ANNABELLE

(very thick Southern;  
as Maverick takes  
his hands from her  
shoulders)

Sometimes when you least expect  
it, a hero arrives.

(as Coop is  
embarrassed)

Mister... \*

COOP

Zane Cooper. Folks call me 'Coop'  
which suits me just fine. \*

MAVERICK

(as Coop ticks him  
off on general  
principles)

Coop.

ANNABELLE

(indicating Maverick)

This silly-looking creature is  
named Maverick.

(a step closer  
to Coop)

And I'm Annabelle Bransford.  
I'm taking this stage. \*

COOP

(his hat has been  
off since she  
began speaking  
to him)

So am I.

MAVERICK

Death.

MAVERICK

So am I. \*

(beat)

Oh, this is just gonna be a  
helluva lot of fun.

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE

(a glance at  
Maverick)

I don't know what this ruffian  
would have done to me if it had  
just been the two of us alone  
on the stage.

COOP

I hope you can relax and enjoy  
the journey now.

(helps Annabelle  
into coach)

Here's my feeling -- if there  
weren't any women, we wouldn't  
be here.

MAVERICK

What kind of sense does that make?  
If there weren't any men, we  
wouldn't be here either.

COOP

He studies Maverick a moment. Then -- very flat --

COOP

Are you mocking me?

MAVERICK

Before I answer, does it bother  
you?

COOP

I can get ruffled.

MAVERICK

We don't want you ruffled. Why  
don't we just say I was agreeing  
with you in a totally unusual way.

As they study each other -- Annabelle leans out of the  
coach.

ANNABELLE

(a smile to Coop,  
her deepest Southern  
drawl)

What would the world be without  
true gentlemen like yourself?

(CONTINUED)

28

CONTINUED: (4)

28

A corpse walks up. Obviously, not an actual corpse, just the most SICKLY-LOOKING MAN you ever saw. He heads for the stage.

Maverick opens the door for him.

SICKLY-LOOKING MAN  
(pointing up to  
the front)  
I'm the driver.

MAVERICK  
You okay?

SICKLY-LOOKING MAN  
Why are people always asking me  
that?  
(holding out  
a shaky hand)  
Help me up, son, or we'll never  
get a move on.

Maverick jumps nimbly up to the seat, starts to pull the driver up -- it isn't easy, but the old guy gets there. Maverick and the Driver AD LIB about getting up on stage.

\*  
\*

DRIVER

in his seat now, the reins in his hands. Maverick gets down.

29

OMITTED

29

30

EXT. FERRY CROSSING - DAY

30

The stage, on the ferry, moves down the river away from Crystal River. HOLD briefly, then --

31

OMITTED

31

32

INT. STAGECOACH (ON FERRY) - DAY

32

A deck of cards. It is being manipulated dazzlingly with one hand.

Then the deck is put in the other hand. The manipulation is just as skilled.

Outside, the water flows by as the ferry moves ahead.

Annabelle gets out of the stage and moves to Maverick and Coop.

\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

32

CONTINUED:

32

ANNABELLE AND COOP

ANNABELLE

I think it's time we got to know each other. Mister Maverick here has aspirations toward someday being a card player.

\*

\*

\*

MAVERICK

standing. Makes no reply. Just continues with the cards.

\*

THREE OF THEM

COOP

I'm not totally ignorant of cards. Can't be in my line of work.

ANNABELLE

And pray what might that be?

COOP

Lawman.

ANNABELLE

(looking up at him, in awe)

I'll bet you're the best there is. I can tell things about a man.

MAVERICK

I can't quite place your accent, Mrs. Bransford. What part of the South you from?

\*

ANNABELLE

Ever been to Mobile?

MAVERICK

No.

ANNABELLE

Well, I'm from Mobile.

\*

MAVERICK

Oh, you mean Mobile, Alabama -- I been there -- betcha we know lots of the same people, you start.

(CONTINUED)

32

CONTINUED: (2)

32

ANNABELLE

(suddenly near tears;  
buries her head in  
Coop's shoulder)

I've tried so hard to forget that  
place --

(now she looks up  
longingly at him)

-- I endured such personal tragedy  
there.

Maverick claps his hands.

\*

MAVERICK

Bravo.

COOP

A woman's suffering's not a funny  
thing.

(beat)

Bertie.

MAVERICK

There are exceptions. Watch your  
billfold.

\*

\*

\*

Coop and Maverick stare at one another. You get the  
feeling they're not going off on vacations together.  
HOLD. Then --

\*

33

OMITTED

33

&amp;

&amp;

34

34

35

EXT. FERRY LANDING - DAY

35

Ramp splashes down into river.

DRIVER

Timberrr...

The horses splash into water and up the banks -- pulling  
hard on the stagecoach as it moves down the valley.

35A

EXT. DESERT MOUNTAIN AREA - DAY

35A

The stagecoach moves down the road past majestic rock  
formations.

36

INT. STAGECOACH - DAY

36

Annabelle has been flirting, drawing Coop out in conversation. Maverick, still playing unconsciously with the cards, can't help but listen.

ANNABELLE

(gasping -- caught  
up in the story)

But how could you face them down?  
Nine men, all of them armed.

\*

\*

COOP

(might be his credo)

A man gives his word to do his  
job, he's honor bound to do it.

\*

ANNABELLE

But you must have been afraid.

COOP

A mite.

\*

ANNABELLE

Mr. Maverick doesn't believe in  
bravery.

MAVERICK

Now, Mrs. Bransford, all I said was  
I think it's overrated, and it  
doesn't suit me.

\*

\*

COOP

He smiles. He has, by the way, a wonderful smile.

COOP

I just realized something.

MAVERICK

What's that?

COOP

You're spineless.

\*

MAVERICK

I hope so. It's kept me alive  
this long.

\*

\*

ANNABELLE

Where would the world be if  
everybody was like you?

(CONTINUED)

36

CONTINUED:

36

MAVERICK

World would be okay -- have a lot more poker tables, a lot less violence. When I went to war, my pappy said, 'Son, if you come back with a medal, I'll kill you with my bare hands.'

(beat)

Brought me up to be obedient.

ANNABELLE

You were in the war, Mr. Maverick?

MAVERICK

playing with the cards, staring out.

MAVERICK

No, I was captured early, prisoner for awhile, came out here and scouted, brought in Geronimo once, hell of a poker player. Helped him get free once, he did belong free.

\*

ANNABELLE

looking at him.

ANNABELLE

I don't believe you.

\*

MAVERICK

He was a wonderful poker player.

\*

\*

ANNABELLE

I don't believe anything you say.

\*

\*

MAVERICK AND COOP

(looks at her --  
quietly)

Neither do I...

\*

ANNABELLE

Thank you for the hanky.

\*

\*

As Maverick stares out again --

\*

36A

INT. CRYSTAL PALACE - MORNING

36A

The Angel, in a foul mood, walking into the dimly lit saloon. It's morning. He goes to the bar. The four Bad Guys from the night before are laughing and eating breakfast -- eggs and coffee.

\*

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

36A CONTINUED:

36A

FOUR COWBOYS

Maverick clobbered in the fight. They are down the bar from The Angel. And they are the ones laughing. Clearly, at him. As they whisper and their laughter builds --

THE ANGEL

He takes his second drink which is now poured, drops it down the hatch, and walks over to the Cowboys.

THE ANGEL

(dead sober)

One question -- are you, by any chance, laughing at me?

LEAD COWBOY

Heavens to Betsy, no.

Now they all four laugh again.

THE ANGEL

I want to know the joke.

LEAD COWBOY

You, asshole.

THE ANGEL

Explain that!

LEAD COWBOY

Not unless you pay us one helluva lot more than Maverick did.

And on that bit of information --

CLOSEUP - THE ANGEL

He's not taking this well.

THE ANGEL

(hard to talk)

He paid you to fall down.

FOUR LARGE GUYS

nodding.

LEAD GUY

Paid us good too.

(CONTINUED)

36A CONTINUED: (2)

36A

THE ANGEL

as he slowly rips off a piece of the bar and starts swinging it, catching them off guard -- it goes like a streak this next --

-- but what he does is cream each of them, they groan, fall to the floor --

THE ANGEL

(not even breathing  
hard)

I'll let you fall down for free.

(he looks down at  
the stunned  
quartet)

Maverick was mine anyway...

(beat)

... 'cept now it's personal...

HOLD ON The Angel. Now --

37 INT. STAGECOACH - MOVING FAST - DAY

37

Inside the stage. It's next afternoon. Both men doze.

ANNABELLE

(shaking them -- a  
bit alarmed)

Do you think he's found a  
shortcut?

38 EXT. DESOLATE COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

38

Clearly, the coach is out of control as it is flying down the road.

They are going like hell across very rough country. The rocking inside is bad and getting worse as we --

39 INT. STAGECOACH - DAY

39

Maverick and Coop, both sticking their heads out the window, shouting at the driver.

40 EXT. STAGECOACH - DAY

40

The driver. Slumped in his seat. Limp. Eyes closed.

41 INT. STAGECOACH - DAY

41

Inside the coach. Coop is getting ready for action.

COOP  
 (to Maverick)  
 Go on up there and stop the  
 stage --

MAVERICK  
 -- I'm not sure I want to do  
 that --

COOP  
 -- the wheel is coming loose! --  
 if it falls off, we're all of us  
 dead -- I'll climb out and secure  
 it, you handle the driver -- let's  
 go --

MAVERICK

He nods, reaches out for the nearest door, shoves it open  
 and --

42 EXT. STAGECOACH - DAY

42

Maverick, moving out the door -- and this is the begin-  
 ning of a really hairy journey.

TERRAIN

flying by. Bumpy and dusty and

MAVERICK

holding on to the side of the stage. It's not a matter  
 here of him falling off -- he's too powerful and athletic  
 for that -- but he's blinded by the dust and is trying  
 like hell to get his bearings. Plus, this is not  
 anyone's idea of comfort.

TERRAIN

A huge rut --

MAVERICK

flying half off the stage, managing to hold on, pull him-  
 self back to where he was and now, coughing and still un-  
 able to see a lot, he begins his climb.

RAILING

around the roof as he grabs hold, first with one hand,  
 then with the other and --

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: 42

HORSES

pounding along -- as they hit another huge rut --

MAVERICK

being flipped up and onto the roof, where he lands hard, but still manages to keep hold of the railing.

42A INT. STAGECOACH - DAY 42A

Coop sits as calmly and comfortably as possible, listening to the sounds of Maverick's efforts from above. Annabelle is confused, and just a bit frightened.

ANNABELLE

You said we'd die if the wheel came off.

COOP

Rest easy, Miss Annabelle, wheel is just fine.

ANNABELLE

(it's getting scarier  
-- she reaches for him)  
For protection, you don't mind?

COOP

(shyly)  
Proud as a peacock.

ANNABELLE

(glancing up as more  
sounds come from  
the roof)  
You don't think he'll kill you?

COOP

(nah)  
In the long run, the lad will thank me in his prayers.

As he continues to hold the frightened Annabelle --

42B EXT. STAGECOACH - ROOF & MAVERICK - DAY 42B

The terrain is getting bumpier --

(CONTINUED)

42B CONTINUED:

42B

-- and this is where it starts to get tricky -- he inches forward across the luggage toward where the driver is --

-- except there's a difference in level. The driver is several feet below and getting down has to be timed just right because if you hit a bump when you're trying to get off the roof -- not a good thing.

DRIVER

He lies sprawled and motionless on the seat. The reins are still in his hands -- but loose -- he has no control over the animals.

MAVERICK

getting ready to lower himself down and --

HORSES

picking up speed and --

TERRAIN

flashing by and --

MAVERICK

making his move and --

GIGANTIC RUT

and --

MAVERICK

thrown wildly off balance as he tries to get to the driver's seat and as he is about to fall off the entire rampaging stage --

42C INT. STAGECOACH - DAY

42C

Coop, peering out the window toward the front where Maverick is. He starts to chuckle.

COOP

(going back to  
Annabelle, a sweet  
memory)

How well I remember my first  
runaway stage --

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

42C CONTINUED:

42C

COOP (CONT'D)  
 (to Annabelle)  
 There's a knack to doing it.  
 (as she sits alongside  
 him now)  
 More protection?  
 (as she nods)  
 Thought so.

As she holds him tight --

43 EXT. STAGECOACH

43

Maverick, managing to grab the driver, who doesn't look any worse than when we first met him except now he is dead. Plus, being dead, he's not grabbing hold of anything that's of any use to Maverick, so his body begins sliding along the seat and --

MAVERICK

off the stage now and getting, he realizes, very close to shit creek --

-- he makes a desperate lunge, just manages to grab hold of the railing that circles the driver's seat as we --

DEAD DRIVER

sliding along, still holding the reins, his body coming closer and closer to Maverick and --

MAVERICK

letting go of the dead driver, grabbing the rail with both hands, forcing himself up to the seat just as the dead driver starts to fall off it --

-- but not before Maverick can grab him, pull him back on so now they're both on the driver's seat, Maverick reaching for the reins, which brings the dead driver's arms around his neck.

MAVERICK

doing his best to ignore the corpse and take control of the reins --

-- which at last, thank God, he does --

-- and laying the corpse onto the seat he takes the reins, one in each of his powerful hands --

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

MAVERICK  
 (roaring)  
 Just whoa, goddamit!

And as soon as he utters his mighty command --

HORSES

as they start to go faster --

-- they are zooming along now and --

Maverick, as their sudden burst almost pulls him out of the seat, catapulting him forward and --

43A INT. STAGECOACH - DAY

43A

Coop and Annabelle, getting bounced all the hell around.

ANNABELLE  
 You don't think it might be nice  
 to go out there and help him?

COOP  
 I could do that, absolutely -- but  
 after he's worked so hard, he  
 might resent it. Something tells  
 me that inside that buffoon,  
 there's a real human being trying  
 to get out.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ANNABELLE  
 You think it's possible.

\*  
\*

COOP  
 God moves in mysterious ways...

\*  
\*

From them --

43B EXT. STAGECOACH - DAY

43B

The corpse, lying on the seat, bumping up and down and --

MAVERICK

steaming mad now -- he takes the reins again, really  
 pulls on them with everything he's got. This time he  
 shouts --

MAVERICK  
 Timberrr!

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

Stunned -- my God, it worked.

44 EXT. STAGECOACH - SLOWING - DAY 44

The horses, at last slowing and, exhausted, as they come to a halt --

45 EXT. STAGECOACH - DAY 45

Stopped. Maverick, wiped out, taking a deep breath as he sits for a moment on the driver's seat.

COOP AND ANNABELLE

getting out of the stage.

MAVERICK

still bleary from what he's been through. Without paying attention, he jumps to the ground --

-- which is a mistake --

-- he should have been paying attention --

-- because the stage has been halted on the lip of a three thousand-foot cliff.

MAVERICK

landing, losing his balance --

-- the cliff is very sheer --

-- he realizes his situation now, begins waving his arms, trying to get balance as we --

COOP AND ANNABELLE

She is horrified by what could happen.

Coop moves quickly forward -- he's close enough to reach out a hand to Maverick --

-- only he doesn't. He just stands there, idly watching as we --

MAVERICK

and he is not a happy camper --

CLIFF DROP

Horrendous.

COOP

curious as to just what's going to happen. Annabelle, distraught, puts her hands over her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

MAVERICK

windmilling in desperation -- and for a moment it looks like he's not going to make it --

-- but finally he does, pitching forward safely to the ground.

COOP

(now he extends a hand)

Let me help you.

MAVERICK

(glaring up)

You've done too much already.

He gets to his feet. Still out of breath, he looks at the stage.

MAVERICK

What's with the wheel?

COOP

Turns out I was wrong -- wheel was fine all along.

ANNABELLE

He was doing you a favor -- don't you feel a whole lot better about yourself now that you've done something brave?

MAVERICK

There is a pause. Then, smiling amiably back at Coop --

MAVERICK

Oh, I get it, this was for my benefit. To help me. Build character.

COOP

Exactly.

MAVERICK

(shakes his head)

Funny, you'd think I'd be mad.

ANNABELLE

Look at him -- bursting with pride.

MAVERICK

One thing though?

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

Coop looks at him -- as Maverick does his lightning draw, cocks his pistol, aims it at Coop's head -- he could almost shoot.

MAVERICK

Try not to help me again!

From that --

46 EXT. GRAVESITE - AFTERNOON

46

A freshly covered-over grave. Maverick and Coop are covered with sweat from the digging. Annabelle is with them.

It's later in the afternoon now.

COOP

I suppose somebody ought to say something nice about the deceased.

ANNABELLE

How do we know he was nice? We don't know anything about him. All he had in his wallet was the names of some whorehouses.

And now, O.S., the sound Maverick's voice in song --

MAVERICK

who has started into "Amazing Grace" --

-- and the shocker is this: Not that the song is gorgeous, it's one of the most beautiful songs ever written -- no, the stunner is that Maverick can really sing. A strong, firm voice echoing out over the rough land.

MAVERICK

'Amazing Grace  
How sweet the sound...'

-- and now, surprisingly, Coop joins in. And here's something else you didn't expect: He can sing too.

COOP/MAVERICK

(in harmony)  
'... that saved a wretch like  
me...'

(CONTINUED)

46

CONTINUED:

46

And now Annabelle, touched by what's happening, joins them, her voice high and lovely.

ANNABELLE/COOP/MAVERICK

'... I once was lost  
But now I'm found...'

\*

And now, as they come to the end of the first verse, Annabelle sings different words from the men. She realizes her mistake, stops, and listens to them.

COOP/MAVERICK

'... was bound...'

ANNABELLE

'... was blind...'

Here she stops, lets them sing in harmony the last line.

COOP/MAVERICK

'... but now I'm free...'

COOP/MAVERICK/ANNABELLE

'Twas grace that taught my heart  
to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved,  
How precious did that grace appear,  
The hour I first believed...'

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

'Through many dangers,  
toils and snares,  
I have already come.  
Tis Grace hath brought me safe  
thus far.  
And Grace will lead me home.'

\*

They all stand close together as the ECHO OF the SONG DIES. Then --

\*

46A

EXT. TELEGRAPH WIRES - AFTERNOON

46A

CAMERA PANS ALONG telegraph wires TO a small telegraph office.

46B

HAND

46B

reaches across counter and accepts a telegram.

CLOSE ON TELEGRAM

It reads: "Don't let him (Maverick) reach St. Louis (the game)."

\*  
\*47  
thru  
49

OMITTED

47  
thru  
49

50

EXT. WAGON TRAIN - AREA #1

50

The stagecoach, moving along as before, when --  
-- there is the sudden sound of HIGH PITCHED SOBBING --  
-- as the stagecoach takes a turn in the road we see --  
SEVERAL COVERED WAGONS

Just the most pathetic sight. Filled with widows and children in tears. Several wounded men. Two of the wagons are smoldering and burned.

Coop vaults to the ground, hurries to the wagons as Maverick brings the stagecoach to a halt.

COOP

is talking with several women from the wagon train.

MAVERICK AND ANNABELLE

on the coach, watching. Annabelle silently gets out a flask, takes a pull of whisky, offers some to Maverick. He shakes his head. She shrugs, takes another pull, puts the flask away.

COOP

returning to the stage with a RAWBONED WOMAN and a PIONEER WOMAN.

COOP

They got hit by Indians --

RAWBONED WOMAN

(a little hysterical)

It was horrible. Those Indians snuck up behind us, and... and...

MAVERICK

It wasn't Indians.

RAWBONED WOMAN

They were in war paint and screamin' and yellin'...

COOP

I told 'em we'd take 'em back to Crystal City...

Annabelle and the two Women discuss aside the details of the attack; meanwhile Maverick and Coop:

(CONTINUED)

50

CONTINUED:

50

MAVERICK  
(overlapping and  
under his breath)  
Uh -- that's backtrackin' a little,  
ain't it?

COOP  
Just a day.

Maverick rolls his eyes.

MAVERICK  
(sotto)  
Look, I really got a poker game...

RAWBONED WOMAN  
(starting to cry)  
... and they wounded our men and  
they burned our wagons...

MAVERICK  
(sotto)  
Uh, Coop...

RAWBONED WOMAN  
(continuing the  
description)  
... And they shot our horses and  
they took the wagon with all of  
our money...

MAVERICK  
(turning)  
Money?

RAWBONED WOMAN  
(sobbing)  
... and my baby's music box --

OTHER WOMAN  
They even took my wedding dress.

MAVERICK  
(beat)  
Go back to the money part.

The Woman continues to wail.

COOP  
Jesus, Maverick.

MAVERICK  
(mock understanding)  
Ma'am, how much money exactly?

(CONTINUED)

50

CONTINUED: (2)

50

ANNABELLE

Jesus, Maverick.

Annabelle cuts in front of them.

ANNABELLE

(dripping with  
understanding)

Ma'am, how much money exactly?

BOTH WOMEN

(sniffling in unison)

Thirty thousand dollars.

There is dead silence for a beat before Maverick and Annabelle climb right in her face, yammering simultaneously. None of the words are intelligible.

MAVERICK

Ma'am, if I can get your thirty thousand dollars back, is it worth ten percent to you?

RAWBONED WOMAN

Five percent?

OTHER WOMAN

(sniffling)

Whatever you want.

ANNABELLE

Jesus, what kind of animal are you?

COOP

Vulture!

RAWBONED WOMAN

You think you could?

MAVERICK

(confident)

Well, ma'am, I think that --

ANNABELLE

You bet we could!

Maverick looks over at her and says...

MAVERICK

What's this 'we' shit?

(CONTINUED)

50

CONTINUED: (3)

50

RAWGONED WOMAN

For your ten percent, I want you to make those savages pay for what they done!

MAVERICK

Ma'am, there are no hostiles in this area.

Suddenly they are enveloped in booming sounds which are instantly recognizable as Indian WAR DRUMS.

CUT TO:

51  
thru  
55C

OMITTED

51  
thru  
55C

56

EXT. TRACKING AREA #1 - DAY

56

Maverick sneaks through the brush with Annabelle at his side. Coop follows a step or two behind leading the horses. He keeps his eyes peeled as they track.

MAVERICK

These ponies have been shod. Indians don't shoe their horses.

ANNABELLE

They could have been stolen. What's with you and Indians anyway?

MAVERICK

Yeah, you're right. They're just a bunch of thieves and savages. Don't get me wrong. I mean we've given them smallpox blankets. I figure they deserved it for being on our land before we got here. What are you doing here anyway?

ANNABELLE

I'm your partner. Fifty-fifty.

COOP

(nobly)  
Sounds like fifty-fifty to me.

MAVERICK

And what are you tagging along for? You want fifty percent too?

(CONTINUED)

56

CONTINUED:

56

COOP

I just want to see those fine ladies get their money back.

Maverick grumbles to himself and ducks under a low branch. Annabelle pushes it aside, snapping it back into Coop's face. He blinks a couple of times then moves stoically forward.

MAVERICK

(turning to  
Annabelle)

I don't split my bounty with anybody.

ANNABELLE

Well, I suppose sixty/forty would be acceptable if you're going to be recalcitrant...

Maverick and Coop do a double take on this.

MAVERICK

'Re' -- what?

ANNABELLE

(with condescension)

Education.

MAVERICK

(dumbfounded)

Sixty/forty! What are you gonna do for forty percent?

ANNABELLE

(lady-like)

I'm going to help.

At that moment Annabelle loses her footing on the trail and lurches forward. She grabs onto Maverick, clutching onto his gunbelt, as she tries to keep her balance. Annabelle FIRES ONE ROUND into the ground (with his gun still in his holster). Maverick turns and looks at her in amazement.

ANNABELLE

Seventy/thirty?

MAVERICK

(getting nuts)

Excuse me, but you're not exactly an experienced tracker!

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE

Big tracker! Follow a couple of horse tracks. Anyone could do that. You're not so great.

MAVERICK

(turning)

You see that hawk over there?

ANNABELLE

Yeah?

MAVERICK

You know what it means when it?

ANNABELLE

... What?

MAVERICK

Absolutely nothing. But you didn't know that did you?

ANNABELLE

(beat)

I did so.

MAVERICK

You did not.

COOP

(breaking it up)

Children...

They turn and look at him for a beat. Annabelle glances back at Maverick.

MAVERICK

(quickly turning away)

Shh...

Maverick quickly drops to the ground, putting his head down to the earth, listening.

ANNABELLE

Oh right! Lemme guess. You smell a bunch of Indians off in Montana...

Beat, hooked.

MAVERICK

(concentrating hard now)

No. Not Indians.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (3)

56

Maverick rolls over to his back still listening, half-way closing his eyes.

ANNABELLE

(really hooked  
now)

What are you doing?

MAVERICK

(pulling his hat  
over his eyes)

Just gonna take a nap here 'til  
the sun goes down. We'll sneak  
up on them at dark.

Annabelle fumes.

CUT TO:

57 EXT. TRACKING AREA #2 - DAY

57

Above the treetops -- FOLLOW a hawk soaring across the sky; as we PAN we reveal Maverick, on his haunches again, studying, studying.

GROUND

That's all it is, just dirt.

MAVERICK

still watching it. Then he rises, whistles for his horse, gracefully mounts.

And rides very slowly forward.

If it isn't clear by now, it should be: Maverick's following something.

Who knows? Maybe he was an Indian Scout after all. In any case, this much is clear: the man has instincts other people don't have.

58 EXT. TRACKING AREA #3 - WATERFALL - LATE AFTERNOON

58

Maverick, riding along, watching the terrain. The sound of a WATERFALL GETS LOUDER as he approaches it.

-- he stops --

-- listens --

-- no question, he's hearing something, it is FAINT MUSIC.

He urges his horse forward, very slowly.

58A EXT. WATERFALL AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

58A

The terrain they're going over. Rocky again. The HORSE'S HOOVES make sounds. Over the RUSH of the WATER-FALL Maverick hears the FAINT sound of OLD TIME MUSIC.

He quickly reins in, dismounts, moves a few steps away, studying. Then he gives an all but inaudible WHISTLE.

HIS HORSE

It obeys immediately, trots to him, stops.

(CONTINUED)

58A CONTINUED:

58A

MAVERICK

He ties the horse to a small tree, puts his fingers to his lips.

MAVERICK  
(as if the horse  
were human)  
Shhhh -- and stay that way.

HORSE

It nods as if it understands.

MAVERICK

MAVERICK  
(pats his horse's  
head, whispers)  
Ollie, if you're smarter than I  
am, keep it to yourself.

HORSE

It nods again.

MAVERICK

moving slowly away.

59 EXT. CAMPFIRE VICINITY - POND - LATE AFTERNOON

59

\*

Maverick, moving slowly forward.

He might be a shadow too -- he makes no sound. The MUSIC IS GROWING LOUDER.

HIS SHADOW

He moves silently forward. Slowly, without any sound --  
-- then he freezes.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

Staring ahead. Now --

60 EXT. CAMPFIRE AREA - LATE AFTERNOON

60

\*

Across a pond -- a campfire. Half a dozen men. They are all six of them white. And several still have paint on their faces and bodies.

A couple of them wash their faces in the pond. Others dance to an old-time music box. All of them are drinking. HOLD then --

61 EXT. WAGON TRAIN - AREA #2 - DUSK

61

Maverick comes riding up. Then --

COOP (O.S.)  
Bring it to a halt.

COOP

He lies against a rock. Annabelle lies close alongside. Maverick dismounts, moves to them.

MAVERICK  
Found 'em. Six men. Snow white.  
Some of them still had paint on.

(as Coop looks  
dubious)

Come with me -- it's not that long  
a ride, now that I know where they  
are. I need someone to vouch for  
what I'm saying.

ANNABELLE  
What's with you and Indians?

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

MAVERICK  
Not a thing. Personally I think  
we've spoiled them from the  
beginning. We've poisoned them,  
infected them, killed them -- but  
I say it's their fault for being  
on our land before we got here.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ALL THREE

Annabelle nods.

\*  
\*

MAVERICK  
Let's go -- these guys were  
drinking heavy, they're not up to  
anything tonight.

ANNABELLE  
(rising along with  
Coop)  
This could be exciting.

COOP  
Could be dangerous, too.

ANNABELLE

staring up at Coop.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

ANNABELLE

Couldn't be as dangerous as being a married woman and standing next to the most blindingly-attractive man on the face of the earth.

MAVERICK

His back has been to her but it's clear to him she's talking about him.

He turns --

-- oops --

-- she's looking at Coop and that's who she's been talking to.

Maverick, embarrassed, turns away.

62 EXT. TRAIL - DUSK

62

The three of them riding in silence. Still dusk. As they go across a small but fast stream, both Maverick and Coop lead her horse along.

62A OMITTED

62A

63 EXT. WATERFALL - TWILIGHT

63

Their horses are tied up in the same place as Maverick tied his before.

In the distance now, the sound of the MUSIC BOX.

THREE OF THEM

moving in silence. The MUSIC BOX is LOUDER.

ANNABELLE

(soft)

Could you teach me to be a great poker player?

MAVERICK

(stunned)

Now?

ANNABELLE

Well, you could be dead tomorrow and I need help.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

MAVERICK

I couldn't make you great if I lived to be even as old as Coop, but anyone can make you better.

(as Coop glares at him)

Poker's about bluffing and when you bluff, you've got two dead giveaways -- first one is you touch your thumb to your little finger. The other thing is --

COOP

(very flat)

Shut up. Shut up. Shut up.

64 EXT. CAMPFIRE VICINITY - NIGHT

64

The three walking in dead silence.

ANNABELLE

as her boot brushes a small stone, sending it skittering.

MAVERICK AND COOP

Both of them whirling, glaring at her.

ANNABELLE

She mouths "Sorry." They move on in silence again.  
Now --

65 OMITTED

65

66 EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

66

The six men we saw before. Under blankets, some snoring, some not. Whiskey bottles on the ground. Their six horses tied nearby.

There is the remains of a fire. It's not as high as it was, but it's still burning, giving off, along with the moon, the only light.

PULL BACK to reveal --

Maverick, Coop and Annabelle, on their haunches. Maverick and Coop have pulled back bushes, giving them room to see. This next is whispered and fast.

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

There they are. It's gotta be them.

COOP

It could be just a bunch of drunken cowboys fooling around.

MAVERICK

What are you talking about? Look at the warpaint... dressed up like Indians.

COOP

Proof is identification, right? What you got now is nothing.

MAVERICK

Nothing? What proof do you need? The music box, your sweetheart's wedding dress. Mary Margaret.

COOP

Margaret Mary. And what do you mean sweetheart? She's not my sweetheart.

MAVERICK

First name basis... I figured...

ANNABELLE

Quiet... Now, do you see any money?

MAVERICK

He's probably got it stashed in someplace unsavory.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

They're right. He glances at the six men.

MAVERICK

(to Coop)

We can bring 'em in easy, we can surprise them.

COOP

What's this strange new word that's entered your vocabulary? -- 'we'? -- this is your show. Ten percent, remember?

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

(stunned)

You'd let me face down six men?

COOP

Of course.

MAVERICK

I've only got one gun. That's only six bullets. They have six guns, so that's thirty-six bullets and they probably have two each so that's seventy-two bullets, so -- and rifles...

COOP

Shut up. Do you realize you're babbling?

MAVERICK

I'm not.

ANNABELLE

(her voice louder  
than before)

You are babbling. Don't worry -- they're probably drunk and Coop brought in nine dead sober.

MAVERICK

Coop's always dead sober --

COOP

-- She didn't mean that --

MAVERICK

-- She said that --

ANNABELLE

(louder)

-- The outlaws were dead sober --

The last three lines are done overlapping.

MAVERICK AND COOP

Both of them clapping a hand on her mouth as we...

SIX MEN

One of them has heard something -- he goes up on one elbow, looks around. He reaches under his blanket for a moment, brings it back out -- he holds a gun.

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (3)

66

GUY WITH GUN

He stands -- he's wearing long underwear -- stares around.

MAVERICK AND COOP AND ANNABELLE

No one moves.

ANNABELLE

Still don't see any money. \*

MAVERICK

Coop, if he can cook, he looks better than Mary Margaret in that wedding dress. Even prettier. \*

COOP

Margaret Mary and shut up. \*

GUY WITH GUN

He takes a step in their direction, then another, another --

ANNABELLE

whose eyes are widening. Then --

GUY WITH GUN

suddenly stopping, reaching down, grabbing a whisky bottle which is what he was after all the time, drinking from it as he returns to his blanket, gets under it. He drinks a little more, eyes closed, then puts the bottle down.

THREE

Whispering soft again.

MAVERICK

(to Coop)

What if there's trouble?

COOP

I'll be right behind you. \*

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

Yeah, right behind me. And none of this 'wheel is coming off' shit?

COOP

(great lawman now)

That was about broken bones -- this is about dying.

MAVERICK

Dying? You better give me yours.

(moves to Annabelle)

I know you got one. Hand it over.

ANNABELLE

I'm a lady. No, you can't have it. Okay... Okay... Fifty-fifty.

MAVERICK

No. Sixty-forty.

ANNABELLE

Fifty-fifty.

COOP

Sixty-forty.

ANNABELLE

Fifty-fifty.

MAVERICK

Seventy-thirty.

COOP

Sixty-forty.

ANNABELLE

Okay. Sixty-forty. But it's just a little bitty thing and you're the fastest anyone's seen. What do you want my gun for?

COOP

Who says he's the fastest?

ANNABELLE

He says he is.

MAVERICK

I admit it, I am fast. But I also can't hit shit. When they're real people I'm aiming at.

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE

I never know whether to believe you.

MAVERICK

Neither do I.

ANNABELLE

... Bert...

MAVERICK

Bret. My name is Bret. You're Annabelle. He's Coop. I'm Bret.

ANNABELLE

Bret. Be careful.

MAVERICK

Of course. You too.

He heads off.

Annabelle and Coop reposition and look...

MAVERICK AND CAMPFIRE

sauntering toward them alone, his gun in his holster.

MAVERICK

Hi... Hello, everybody. I saw your campfire and thought I'd visit. I'm Burt... uh, Bret Maverick.

He makes a nice smile.

SIX GUYS

staring around at each other. What the hell is this?

MAVERICK

He moves closer, stops.

Just the flickering fire light with help from the moon. The terrain is flat, dusty.

MAVERICK

You're probably wondering why I'm here and it's just to give you one little piece of information --

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (6)

66

MAVERICK (CONT'D)

(beat)

-- right now, right at this very  
second --

(beat -- quietly)

-- guns are aimed at each and  
every one of your pretty little  
heads.

SIX GUYS

blinking. They've all had too much to drink, sure, but  
this is news you don't forget in a hurry. Now they stare  
at the area around them.

MAVERICK

Going on calmly, without a care in the world.

MAVERICK

Now, you've got a perfect right  
to know who's out there and why.

COOP AND ANNABELLE

crouched, hidden, watching. Coop misses nothing.

MAVERICK

pointing to the nearest of the six.

MAVERICK

The man who'll blow your brains  
out is Marshal Zane Cooper. I  
know what you're thinkin'. I  
know he's old and decrepit and he  
guns his food and his women. But  
he can still shoot straight.

(to the next guy)

Johnny Hardin's out for you. You  
probably know him, unbeaten as a  
gunfighter. And he's not dead,  
but he hangs out with dead people.

CUT TO:

SECOND GUY

The start of genuine fear among the six.

ANNABELLE

breath held, watching as before. Coop is ready for  
anything.

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (7)

66

MAVERICK

(to third guy)

You belong to Ugly Annie Bransford -- clocks have been known to beg for mercy when Ugly Annie comes near -- She's so ugly her mother had to hang pork chops around her so the dog would play with her. She's so ugly that when she's making love she has to pretend she's someone else...

Annabelle is steaming.

COOP

(whispered)

Admit it, that was funny.

ANNABELLE

I didn't think it was funny.

MAVERICK

chatting amiably on.

MAVERICK

Whistle... come on... what... another wheel off? Okay... clap. Why this fuss? 'Cause some Indians killed some whites attacking a wagon train. I believe that, but some of the women, you know how hysterical they can get, think it might have been whites masquerading. Silliest thing I ever heard of. Besides, no fool of a woman could recognize a man in war paint on horseback anyway. So all this is going to cost you is a few hours of beauty sleep.

THE SIX

scared worse than before; scared of all kinds of things now. He's getting them, no question.

MAVERICK

Convincing as hell.

MAVERICK

The reason I'm the one out here is, well, some people think I can talk pretty good -- not that I'm exactly helpless with a gun --

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (8)

66

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

-- and again he does what we saw back in the saloon --  
the phenomenal fast draw. In this light, it's blinding.

SIX MEN

Their fear is palpable.

ANNABELLE

Watching. Transfixed. Coop's eyes scan for possible  
trouble.

MAVERICK

expertly spinning the gun back into its holster.

CLOSEUP - COOP

Taut, sensitive to every nuance, every possible danger.

MAVERICK

He's got them and he knows it.

MAVERICK

So all you've got to do is stand  
up and put your hands on top of  
your heads. Here's a man using  
his head.

\*  
\*  
\*

SIX

A hesitation. Then --

NEAREST GUY

He scrambles to his feet, puts his hands on his head.

SECOND GUY

He scrambles up too, his fingers locking together on  
the top of his head.

\*

The third guy, jumping up --

-- but with a gun in his hand and --

The fourth guy, on his knees, but his gun's ready too  
and --

The shooting begins.

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (9)

66 \*

COOP WITH ANNABELLE

-- and Coop hasn't moved at all. Just stands there as the SOUND OF GUNFIRE begins --

ANNABELLE

Aren't you going out there?

COOP

(aghast)

A man could get killed doing that.

Now, from them --

MAVERICK

-- only he isn't there --

-- because from here on until it's over, he's in constant movement, and we've known he could draw and we've known he could play cards but we didn't know 'til now how quick he was --

-- plus one more thing --

-- every time he FIRES, he hits what he's aiming at --

-- and he's in mid-dive now, as the BULLETS land where he was, and he comes out of the dive into a roll, and as he comes up out of the roll FIRING --

FOURTH GUY

the one on his knees, as Maverick's BULLET hits his forearm and he screams, drops the gun, scrambles after it with his good hand and --

MAVERICK

risking one more shot and he squeezes it off, goes into a sideways roll as we --

THIRD GUY

the one who began the firing, as Maverick's SHOT crushes his shoulder and he screams too, but the pain has him and he drops his gun and falls and --

COOP

as a bullet hits the tree... watching the action unfold, not a muscle moving, and --

\*

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (10)

66 \*

FIFTH AND SIXTH GUYS

BLASTING away and --

MAVERICK

the roll over but still on the ground as he FIRES OFF TWO SHOTS and as he starts to get to his feet --

FIFTH AND SIXTH GUYS

one hit on the hand, the other on the knee, and the knee guy is done, crying out in pain but the hand guy, it isn't over for him and --

FIRST AND SECOND GUYS

the ones with their hands on the tops of their heads and by now they've managed to drop to earth, reach around, find their weapons and --

MAVERICK

diving again, rolling up --

-- but this time he doesn't fire, instead goes into a second dive, and we hadn't expected it and neither did anybody else as --

FIRST AND SECOND GUYS

doing their best to shift their aim and --

MAVERICK

coming up to one knee, concentrating on the first guy and --

SECOND GUY

moving away and for just a moment he's got Maverick dead in his sights and --

MAVERICK

BLASTING the first guy, hitting him in the thigh and as he starts to fold --

SECOND GUY

about to squeeze off a deadly shot when we --

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (11)

66 \*

ANNABELLE

terrified and then something amazing happens --

-- Coop draws. And if Maverick is fast, well, Coop is too, and TWO SHOTS come almost at once and --

SECOND GUY

as the first shot from Coop takes the gun from his hand, the next SHOT crunches into his shoulder and he cries out, begins to spin to earth and --

COOP

the gun already back in its holster --

ANNABELLE

did she just see what she thought she saw? Coop just stares out as before as if nothing had taken place.

MAVERICK

looking at the second guy -- watching him hit the ground and for just a moment he's not quite sure what happened but there isn't time to think as we --

FOURTH GUY

who was hit in the forearm and now he's got his gun in the other hand and as he does his best to aim --

MAVERICK

FIRING another perfect SHOT --

-- oops --

-- his GUN makes a CLICKING sound -- no more bullets --

MAVERICK

(cursing himself)

Learn to count, asshole --

And as he drops his pistol, reaches around for Annabelle's --

COOP

watching idly, Annabelle alongside.

COOP

The lad definitely has potential --

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (12)

66 \*

ANNABELLE  
(really isn't sure)  
-- did you just help him? --

COOP  
(shakes his head)  
-- it's his show.

ANNABELLE

studying Coop a brief moment, as we --

ANNABELLE'S PISTOL

in Maverick's hand now --

-- it really is small --

-- and now he does a move he hasn't tried before --

-- he jumps backwards, goes into a fast somersault,  
comes up with the tiny pistol almost disappearing in  
his hand and --

FOURTH GUY

FIRING, but wild and --

MAVERICK

FIRING --

-- dead solid perfect --

-- he's nailed him in the shoulder and as this guy cries  
out, drops the gun --

MAVERICK

staring at the little gun --

MAVERICK  
(to himself)  
Damn thing actually works --

FIFTH GUY

who was shot in the hand and he's trying to use both  
his hands now but no chance as we --

MAVERICK

spinning, FIRING, ONE, TWO, THREE times and --

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED: (13)

66

FIFTH GUY

and he's hit in the hand, the leg, the knee and as he screams and falls --

MAVERICK

The only one standing. All around him now, the six guys writhe --

-- and the SOUND OF GUNFIRE, which was so deafening just a minute ago, well, that's gone...

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

Exhausted by what he's just been through.

67

EXT. CAMPFIRE

67

Annabelle and Coop see what's happened and they cross over to Maverick.

ANNABELLE

You're wonderful. You're wonderful. Isn't it exciting. Six men. We had to wait so long.

Coop joins Maverick and Annabelle runs around and questions each Bad Guy about where the money is.

COOP

You know what you did wrong? You shot the guy in the front and you should have shot the guy in the back.

MAVERICK

What do you mean? I shot the right guy. How do you know?

Annabelle has found the box of money and is delighted. She is touching, counting and just enjoying this cash.

COOP

(to Danny)

Take that dress off!

ANNABELLE

How dare you.

COOP

Not you... him.

(CONTINUED)

67

CONTINUED:

67

MAVERICK  
Get your claws off.

They cross to her.

ANNABELLE  
I found it.

MAVERICK  
I worked hard for it.

COOP  
I'll take the money.

ANNABELLE  
I'll count it.

They head off.

COOP  
(to Maverick)  
Where are you going? You clean  
up this mess.

Annabelle and Coop move off.

The Bad Guys have realized that they're ignored and they crawl, trying to escape. Maverick finally notices.

MAVERICK  
(to Coop)  
Watch her.  
(to guys)  
Keep back. Line up. Put your  
guns in the middle.  
(the b.g.)  
Don't let her near you. She sold  
Mr. Bransford. She'd steal the  
cheese out of the rat trap and  
not get caught.

He keeps babbling.

COOP (O.S.)  
You're babbling.

MAVERICK  
No, I'm not babbling. I'm not!

He leads the guys out and, of course, continues babbling.

CUT TO:

68

OMITTED

68

69

EXT. WAGON TRAIN - AREA #2 - MORNING

69

It is morning and the six bad guys from the campfire are tied up to wheels, wagons and each other.

Maverick is building a fire for cooking for himself and Coop and Annabelle. Annabelle comes over.

ANNABELLE

You the chef?

MARGARET MARY

Bless you for finding my wedding dress. Now I can get married.

COOP

I know it will look lovely.

MARGARET MARY

The Lord says it is good for men and women to dwell together in unity.

COOP

I know that when you reach your final destination someone will be waiting for you. God will take care of you.

Mary Margaret is counting money. Annabelle and Maverick watch.

MARY MARGARET

Two thousand four hundred dollars.  
Two thousand five hundred dollars.  
Two thousand six hundred dollars.  
Two thousand eight hundred dollars.

ANNABELLE

Two thousand seven hundred dollars.

MARY MARGARET

Are you sure about that?

ANNABELLE

I'm sure.

MAVERICK

She'd know.

MARY MARGARET

Two thousand seven hundred... eight hundred... nine hundred... Three thousand dollars. Here you go Mr. Maverick. Ten percent that we promised.

(CONTINUED)

69

CONTINUED:

69

She hands it to him.

MARY MARGARET

That leaves us with twenty-seven thousand dollars, Margaret Mary.

MARGARET MARY

That's not enough for a mission, Mary Margaret.

MARY MARGARET

Don't you worry. The Lord will provide.

MAVERICK

Well, you know, Ma'am, my Pappy always said, 'Never sneeze when you hide. Never smile when you lie, and never, ever take money from ladies who've lost a dog and a wedding dress and whose wagon burned.

He hands back the money. They whoop and yell and are just thrilled.

Maverick takes off with Annabelle and Coop following.

ANNABELLE

I had a wedding dress once.

MAVERICK

But she got hers back.

ANNABELLE

We had a deal. You owe me thirty percent.

MAVERICK

Okay, here's thirty percent of what I got.

(hands her nothing;  
she spits)

Here, take it all.

COOP

Children... I hate to interrupt, but I got a problem.

MAVERICK

What?

(CONTINUED)

69

CONTINUED: (2)

69

COOP

Well, if these renegades aren't  
the real Indians, who was beating  
those drums?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

ANNABELLE

(looks up)

Maybe it was them?

\*  
\*

70

OMITTED

70

70.

71

EXT. WAGON TRAIN/BLUFF - MORNING

71

And maybe fifty Indians, maybe more. All mounted and  
armed. There are more on the other side of the stream.

All in war paint.

MAVERICK

getting to his feet. Carefully. Coop makes no move.

WOMEN AND KIDS

frozen.

SIX GUYS MAVERICK FOUGHT

Handcuffed to one of the wagon trains. Pale with terror.

INDIANS

A series of blood-curdling cries.

ANNABELLE

moving between Maverick and Coop. Neither of them is  
particularly overjoyed at this moment either.

SKY - DUSK

The Indians have the dying light behind them.

ENTIRE TABLEAU - LONG SHOT

The wagon train with its helpless wounded and women and  
children. Maverick and Coop standing on either side of  
Annabelle.

And surrounding them, above them, silent and deadly, the  
war-painted Indians.

For a long moment, no one moves --

-- then --

-- the sound of someone on HORSEBACK from behind the

Indians. A few of them separate, making room --

-- and there he is --

72

EXT. WAGON TRAIN/BLUFF - MORNING

72

The Indian of every white man's nightmares.

A massive figure, rippling with brutal power. There is a terrifying cruelty behind his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

72

CONTINUED:

72

He sits on a magnificent white horse.

He wears a long headdress.

And war paint that makes him seem, if that's possible, even more frightening.

He reins in at the top of the hill, glares down at the intruders.

MAVERICK

I'll take care of this.

\*  
\*  
\*

NIGHTMARE INDIAN

as suddenly, in a deep, guttural voice, he speaks.

NIGHTMARE CHIEF

(his words  
subtitled)

Hello, Bret, you've come for the money I owe you?

Maverick, glancing around at the others.

MAVERICK

Anybody get all that?

No one does.

ANNABELLE

(to Maverick)

You know about Indians, can you speak to him?

MAVERICK

I'll do my best.

\*

Now he takes a step forward and when he speaks, it's in Indian too. (THROUGHOUT THIS, HE AND JOSEPH, FOR THAT IS THE CHIEF'S NAME, SPEAK INDIAN -- AND THEY ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE.)

MAVERICK

(subtitled)

Joseph, go with me on this -- I'll explain later.

\*

JOSEPH

(subtitled)

How long will it take -- I'm getting hot.

\*

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

(subtitled)

I know it's hot, now scream at me.

\*  
\*

JOSEPH

letting loose a blood-curdling sound.

NEW ANGLE

Panic among those down below. Coop turns to Maverick.

COOP

What's he saying?

MAVERICK

(nervous)

We've committed a terrible sin -- this is sacred ground.

ANNABELLE

We didn't know it was sacred -- Can't you explain that to him?

\*

MAVERICK

I'll try my best.

(to Joseph; subtitled)

Shake your head and fire your rifle in the air -- look really mad -- lots of words.

\*

JOSEPH

doing as told. Even though you know he's obeying orders, it's very impressive.

ANNABELLE

edging closer to Maverick and Coop.

\*

MAVERICK

(nods -- upset)

Doesn't make any difference... His gods demand a sacrifice.

\*

COOP

Sacrifice?

\*

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK  
(long pause -- then,  
whispered)

Human.

JOSEPH  
(in English)  
What the hell am I doing? Son of  
a bitch.

MAVERICK  
(looks around)  
Anybody catch that?

No one seems to.

MAVERICK  
(up to Joseph in  
Indian --  
subtitled)  
You're doing great -- Point your  
finger around at everybody and  
speak angry.

JOSEPH

his long finger taking in everyone down below. Fury  
comes from his throat.

JOSEPH  
(Lots of Indian Ad Libs about  
Annabelle.)

MAVERICK

Really worried now.

MAVERICK  
If someone passes the Indian  
Bravery test, he won't kill the  
rest of us.  
(beat)  
But one of us has to go with him.

ANNABELLE  
What's the Indian Bravery Test?

MAVERICK  
He says he cuts off both hands --  
if you don't make a sound, you pass.

(CONTINUED)

72

CONTINUED: (4)

72

COOP

COOP

Both hands?

MAVERICK

up to Joseph.

MAVERICK

(subtitled)

Hold up one finger and holler  
some.

JOSEPH

As he does what he's told, he seems like a figure out of  
myth.

ANNABELLE AND COOP

staring at Maverick, waiting.

\*

JOSEPH

as suddenly he starts laughing and talking.

JOSEPH

(subtitled)

I never did anything like this  
before -- it's fun.

MAVERICK

quickly explaining --

MAVERICK

They're laughing about the pain to  
come -- he loves to see suffering --

\*

ANNABELLE

(glancing up)

-- you can tell that just by  
looking at him --

MAVERICK

Can't you tell? Blood thirsty  
savage.

\*

\*

\*

JOSEPH

firing his weapon at the skies again, shrieking louder  
than ever.

(CONTINUED)

72

CONTINUED: (5)

72

MAVERICK

MAVERICK

(up to Joseph,  
subtitled)

-- don't overdo it. \*

JOSEPH

(subtitled)

Who's the girl, she's pretty?

MAVERICK

(subtitled)

Point to her, say you want her.

JOSEPH

(subtitled)

I do want her, is she available?

MAVERICK

(subtitled)

Look at her passionately -- scream  
with lust --

JOSEPH

doing as he's told -- it's very clear he's hot for her.  
And other chant "Goldilocks." \*

MAVERICK

going bravely to a frightened Annabelle. He speaks in  
Indian and then corrects himself. \*

MAVERICK

I'll die before I let him touch  
you --

ANNABELLE

-- There's too many -- even you  
can't protect me --

MAVERICK

-- don't show fear -- it drives  
them crazy --

(to Coop)

We've got to end this before it  
gets bad -- it's got to be one of  
us -- \*

COOP

He nods. There is a long silence. Then he starts to  
talk -- \*

(CONTINUED)

COOP

I'll go. It's my turn -- I almost got you killed twice already.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

He shakes his head.

MAVERICK

I can't do the things you can. Take care of the women and the children. I gotta go with them. But it's okay -- third time lucky.

ANNABELLE

staring at Maverick. The bravest words she ever heard have just been spoken.

ANNABELLE

Bret --

MAVERICK

(to Joseph --  
subtitled)

One more minute and I'm coming.

And on that --

COOP

leaves to get a horse.

ANNABELLE

And it's clear in her eyes -- she doesn't want him to go.

MAVERICK

(soft; brave)

I liked it just now when you called me Bret. Listen to me now.

ANNABELLE

What? What, dear Bret?

MAVERICK

When you're going to bluff, don't flick your fingernails against your front teeth. That's the second giveaway you've got to work on.

(CONTINUED)

72

CONTINUED: (7)

72

INDIAN

Is he always this slow?

ANNABELLE

(coming apart)

Even at a moment like this,  
you're thinking of others.

JOSEPH

You should see him playing cards.

Annabelle grabs and kisses Maverick.

MAVERICK

Goodbye, my lady.

Coop has arrived with his horse. Maverick gets on his horse.

MAVERICK

You were right, Coop. I never  
felt better in my life than I do  
right now.

COOP

Take care of yourself.

MAVERICK

See, now when they cut my hands  
off, my lucky shirt'll fit  
again...And he mounts his horse, rides up toward his fate as  
we --

73

OMITTED

73

74

EXT. WAGON TRAIN - AREA #2 - LONG SHOT - MORNING

74

of the entire wagon train watching Maverick go. Each and  
every one of them desperately moved. HOLD...

75

EXT. HILL ABOVE WAGON TRAIN - JOSEPH - MORNING

75

as Maverick reaches him.

JOSEPH

(in English now --  
he speaks well)

What was all that?

MAVERICK

(at same time)  
What's with the drums  
and the war paint?!

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED:

75

MAVERICK & JOSEPH  
(together)  
Tell you later.

MAVERICK  
I could die happy right now...

Maverick turns back to wagon train, throwing a heroic wave. Everyone rides off in a cloud of dust.

76

EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE - DAY

76

Maverick and Joseph near a large teepee. Joseph is clearly the leader of his tribe and his teepee reflects this. Gorgeous skins as rugs, gorgeous feather head-dresses hanging from the walls.

Joseph is helping Maverick test a brand new bipedal machine -- a primitive bicycle.

JOSEPH  
Gotta pedal... gotta pedal.

MAVERICK  
Where did you get this piece of junk?

JOSEPH  
I won it off a Russian in a card game.

MAVERICK  
I think I prefer horses.

Maverick falls.

MAVERICK  
What are you laughing at?

JOSEPH  
It's never been ridden before.

MAVERICK  
It's so beautiful here. You sure do pick the spots.

JOSEPH  
(nods)  
Too beautiful -- next time when you people drive us out, I'm going to find a nice piece of swampland -- something so awful you'll leave us the hell alone.

They AD LIB as they head for the teepees.

(CONTINUED)

77

EXT. TEEPEE - LATER

77

Joseph walks to Maverick at the fire with a bowl of food.

JOSEPH

Here.

MAVERICK

That good?

JOSEPH

Don't whistle.

The WAR DRUMS start.

MAVERICK

Why the drums? And the warpaint?  
The horses?

JOSEPH

We had a rotten harvest so when  
this Russian Archduke came along  
... That's where I got the bike...  
He wanted to see the 'real West' --

(shrugs)

-- I said okay. He pays well. We  
go whooping around in warpaint  
like idiots and beat those stupid  
drums. It's getting on my nerves.

(shakes his head)

He likes me to speak like we're  
supposed to in books.

(the cliché Indian  
now)

'How, white man.'

(beat)

You people are such assholes.

And now he lapses into silence. Not a happy man.

MAVERICK

Don't get so down -- it's not like  
you're married to him. He'll be  
gone and you'll have the money.

JOSEPH

(miserable)

That's not it -- Bret, I don't  
have the thousand I owe you -- I  
don't have the money. He has to  
change rubles to dollars.

MAVERICK

is really upset.

(CONTINUED)

77

CONTINUED:

77

MAVERICK

When?

(shaking his head)

Now I've got to win three thousand  
the next couple of days to get the  
damn twenty-five thousand entrance  
fee.

JOSEPH

You're in the big game?

JOSEPH

You've got twenty-two thousand?  
(off Maverick's nod)

Cash?

MAVERICK

Not frog skins.

JOSEPH

I've never seen that much --  
where is it, can I see it?

On that --

Maverick's saddlebag as he goes to it, opens it, takes  
out his leather drawstring bag --

-- Joseph is excited watching.

Maverick opens the bag --

JOSEPH

Ha ha.

-- after which he goes into shock -- the bag is filled  
with rolled-up Sears catalog paper. (Lots of AD LIBS.)

MAVERICK

That rotten Annabelle --

(big)

-- how could she rob me when I was  
going to face my doom? I could  
shoot her. -- I will.

(drops the now-empty

bag -- deep gloom

has descended)

I'm never gonna make it to that  
tournament... I'm a dead man.

JOSEPH

Goldilocks?

(commiserating)

You're a dead man.

(CONTINUED)

77

CONTINUED: (2)

77

MAVERICK  
Exactly. I'm a dead man.

JOSEPH

And now the thing you least expect: a smile.

JOSEPH  
No, you really are a dead man.  
Listen to me...

As Maverick looks at him as if he were crazy --

78

OMITTED

78

79

EXT. MEADOW/STREAM - JOSEPH - NEXT AFTERNOON

79

riding his magnificent horse at full gallop through a stream. A couple of braves alongside him.

PULL BACK to reveal...

A number of tents all of them surrounding something we hadn't expected to see: a large custom wagon (an 1870 motor home).

It rests in the middle of a meadow.

80

EXT. ARCHDUKE'S MOTORHOME - DAY

80

Near the wagon as Joseph arrives. It is ornate, filled with artwork of all kinds, clearly Russian in origin. An ARTIST, VILMOS, is painting. The Archduke comes out.

ARCHDUKE  
Where's the waterfall?

VILMOS  
I make nature more beautiful.

He's the kind of guy if he wasn't so rich and powerful, you'd want to clobber. Spoiled beyond belief, the product of decades of inbreeding, he is reminiscent of Peter Ustinov in Quo Vadis when he played Nero.

JOSEPH  
Look at his big asshole.  
(speaking in  
flawless French  
SUBTITLED)  
Good afternoon. I hope His  
Majesty has had a happy day.

(CONTINUED)

80

CONTINUED:

80

ARCHDUKE

(in flawless French  
too -- SUBTITLED)

I know you were taught by  
missionaries but I hate it when  
you speak that way -- it simply  
isn't authentic. Now do it right.

JOSEPH

(raising his right  
hand)

How, white man.

ARCHDUKE

(English now)

Hello, Noble Savage -- I've had a  
terrible day. I've killed every  
animal in sight and it's boring  
me.

JOSEPH

("too easy")

Maybe his largeness be interested  
in greatest western thrill of all.

ARCHDUKE

Greatest western thrill? What is  
it? What?

JOSEPH

(motions him to  
come around)

Come.

The Archduke and Joseph join at the wagon.

ARCHDUKE

What is greater thrill?

JOSEPH

Kill Injun.

ARCHDUKE

Staggered.

ARCHDUKE

Kill... are you crazy? No... No...  
Oh, I couldn't possibly... is  
that legal here?

(CONTINUED)

80

CONTINUED: (2)

80

JOSEPH

If no one find out, very legal.  
Besides, white man has been doing  
it for years.

(beat)

Much wampum needed.

ARCHDUKE

(into it now)

I've never shot anyone before.

JOSEPH

Now's your big chance.

ARCHDUKE

How much?

JOSEPH

Five... thousand dollars.

ARCHDUKE

Would we have to tie him up? That  
doesn't seem sporting.

JOSEPH

Him loose. But easy hit. Dying  
anyway. Put out of misery. Much  
pain.

ARCHDUKE

Deal.

JOSEPH

Deal.

Now, as the Archduke starts to get excited --

81

EXT. BURNED-OUT FOREST - AFTERNOON

81

Later in the afternoon.

Maverick, magnificently painted to look like an Indian,  
stands alone. From a distance, in point of fact, he  
actually looks like an Indian. Now, at the sound of  
horses, he bends over, groaning, his hands across his  
stomach as we...

JOSEPH AND ARCHDUKE

Joseph holds his giant bow and arrow, the Archduke his  
hunting rifle.

(CONTINUED)

81

CONTINUED:

81

JOSEPH

Me go give him courage.  
(as the Archduke  
starts with him)  
No -- Indian law say death be  
private. You wait here.

The Archduke nods. Joseph goes to look for Maverick.  
We see Maverick with all his Indian makeup on.

MAVERICK

Hey.

JOSEPH

Bret?

MAVERICK

Who else? Did you fix his gun?

JOSEPH

Couldn't -- he never let it out of  
his hands.

MAVERICK

-- what's in it for me if I die?

JOSEPH

I got him up to five hundred  
dollars.

MAVERICK

Worth the risk. Okay. Let's go.

JOSEPH

250 apiece.

MAVERICK

250? I'm taking all the risk.  
What do you need 250 for?

JOSEPH

Hey, that's my lucky shirt.

MAVERICK

Why don't you ever wash it? It  
stinks.

JOSEPH

You wash all the luck out of it.

MAVERICK

You got a point.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

JOSEPH  
(calls to Archduke)  
Soo... Archduke.

The Archduke comes to him.

JOSEPH  
Look sick.

ARCHDUKE  
Tell him to start running.

Maverick leaves. The Archduke raises his gun.

JOSEPH  
(moving into the  
line of fire --  
shouting)  
No -- no -- no -- wrong.

ARCHDUKE  
(as Joseph runs up)  
What's wrong? --  
(gesturing toward  
the sky)  
I don't want to lose the light.

JOSEPH  
Injun shot by white man's weapon  
never reach happy hunting ground.  
(handing over his  
bow and arrow)  
Injun must die Injun way.

ARCHDUKE  
(grumpily exchanges  
weapons)  
I've never used one of these.

JOSEPH  
Easy.

MAVERICK

sort of limping along.

ARCHDUKE

Aiming the bow and arrow.

MAVERICK

limping on, groaning brilliantly.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (3)

81

ARCHDUKE

Maverick dead in his sights now --

-- and he FIRES --

-- and he misses -- the ARROW THUDDING into a tree next to him.

-- and he stings his hand like hell. He cries out, shakes his hand.

Maverick reacts -- tosses his stick and runs.

Maverick tears through the forest.

JOSEPH

Not bad.

(to Maverick in  
Indian)

Not so fast.

(in English)

You lucky...

ARCHDUKE

(throwing the bow  
down, taking his  
rifle)No wonder you people were so easy  
to conquer.

JOSEPH

(moving in front of  
the rifle)

Two thousand dollars.

ARCHDUKE

Two thousand. You don't think  
he'll mind missing Heaven?

JOSEPH

Not if you shoot fast --

And on that they step.

ARCHDUKE

ONE SHOT RINGS OUT and...

MAVERICK

screaming in pain, his hands go to his heart. He staggers  
once, falls.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (4)

81

JOSEPH AND ARCHDUKE

ARCHDUKE

(thrilled)

I killed him. I really killed him. Can we do this again tomorrow?

JOSEPH

(shakes his head)

No rest of tribe healthy. Come back in winter.

ARCHDUKE

(on his horse now)

You're just going to leave him for the vultures?

JOSEPH

Never liked him much anyway. Come, we get the money.

The Archduke walks. Joseph does bird call. Maverick calls back and sneaks a look.

82 EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE - DUSK

82

Maverick is finishing removing his paint as Joseph rides up. Evening now. Fires all over.

JOSEPH

Partner. We did it.

MAVERICK

Get away from me you SOB. He could have killed me.

JOSEPH

We had to make it look real.  
(handing bow and arrow)

Fire. Shoot it. Go on. I saved your life.

Maverick does -- same as with the Archduke it hurts.

JOSEPH

Hurts, doesn't it? The Archduke's finger was so sore he couldn't shoot anything.

(hands 50)

Fresh from the mint. You earned it.

(CONTINUED)

82

CONTINUED:

82

MAVERICK

I'd kiss you, but too many people.

JOSEPH

So on your way.

He smiles.

MAVERICK

(wringing his hands  
still)

How'm I going to explain I got  
away with my hands still attached?

JOSEPH

Lie. Tell them you got us all  
drunk on firewater and escaped  
in the confusion.

MAVERICK

Think anyone will believe that?

JOSEPH

You people will believe anything.  
(beat)

Don't worry -- besides, I got the  
old dunce up to a thousand dollars.  
I can pay you what I owe you now.

MAVERICK

Why not two thousand?

JOSEPH

Be too much.

MAVERICK

Just need another twenty-four.

He counts.

JOSEPH

Don't insult me by counting it.

MAVERICK

Sorry, but lately my friends have  
been stiffing me.

JOSEPH

(an arm around  
Maverick)

What are friends for...?

They react and exit.

82A EXT. INDIAN VILLAGE - MORNING

82A

Maverick rides away from Village -- crosses stream.

83 EXT. TRAIL - DAY

83

Maverick, riding along a trail going the opposite direction as when he left.

TURNING IN TRAIL

Rocks on either side. As he takes it he sees a...

RIDERLESS HORSE

The rider, face down, lies moaning in deep pain. His body is at a funny angle -- legs could be broken.

MAVERICK

reining in, dismounting.

MAVERICK

Hang on.

GUY ON GROUND

Groaning is louder.

MAVERICK

kneeling, gently turning the guy over.

CLOSEUP - GUY

He's the first person we saw in the movie, the guy with the wandering eye who witnessed the hanging.

MAVERICK

Has no idea who the guy is.

WANDERING EYE

He whispers. As Maverick bends close --

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

83

ANGEL AND GUY WITH BURNED FACE

appearing behind him and while he is unaware, burned face grabs his gun from its holster while Angel delivers a vicious kick to the back of the head.

MAVERICK

falling to the ground, stunned, in sudden pain. He starts to rise --

-- but too late --

-- Angel delivers another terrible kick -- this one flush in the stomach. Maverick gasps.

ANGEL

Another kick into the stomach. This one harder. Maverick is beginning to go pale. Impossible to breathe now.

ANGEL

Should have paid your cowhands more, Maverick.

(and now kicks  
Maverick brutally  
in the neck -- )

Lucky for you I'm not the kind who minds being made a fool of.

As he gestures for others to join him in beating the hell out of Maverick --

ANGEL

I never would have let you make the poker game -- but before you done what you done, I might have let you live.

MAVERICK

trying to retaliate as best as he can --

-- but the attack was too sudden, too vicious --

-- and as the beating continues --

84 EXT. HANGING TREE - DAY

84

The sky. THUNDER.

-- we are back at the shot that ended the opening sequence --

(CONTINUED)

-- Maverick's hanging.

The rattlers are moving out of the burlap sack.

They wriggle closer to Maverick on his horse.

His horse is a rock.

Maverick struggles to free himself harder than ever, all he's got and more and

The rattlers will not stop -- will -- not -- stop --

The horse sees the rattlers now --

-- and doesn't budge.

Maverick in desperation increases his efforts.

THUNDERCLAPS.

Lightning.

The rattlers start to curl.

Totally without warning, Maverick's horse bolts.

Maverick's body drops into space.

He hangs helpless in mid-air.

The rattlers continue to curl.

Maverick fights somehow to free his neck from the noose --

-- trying somehow to find a way to survive.

No good.

Not enough breath.

His body's struggling becomes more feeble.

Then more feeble still.

He is a strong and powerful man but in the last hours he has been in gunfights, been beaten half to death --

-- his energy is going.

Going.

Almost gone now.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED: (2)

84

His body hangs motionless in space.

Nothing left.

As his eyes start to close --

85 EXT. HANGING TREE - DAY

85

-- the LOUDEST THUNDERCLAP of all. Deafening --

-- and the whole goddam branch Maverick is hanging from is ripped from the tree, and as it falls hard to the ground, Maverick with it --

-- the rattlers are all around him. He's landed stunned in their midst.

It's impossible to tell which one of them will strike first. Now --

TWO GNARLED HANDS

That's all we see at first, just the hands. One of them grabs the burlap sack, the other starts scooping up the rattlers, putting them back inside.

No fear of consequences. One-two-three-four-five-six, and the rattlers are gone from view. And once they are --

PULL BACK to reveal...

the MAGICIAN, for that, we will learn, is the name of the woman we are looking at.

Little old woman, more precisely.

Weird-looking little old woman, more precisely still. She is dressed in clothing that neither fits nor matches.

When she talks, she talks very loudly. Clearly she doesn't get a lot of company. Right now she isn't talking at all, just staring at Maverick's still body.

Mounted on her strange little cart is the biggest buffalo gun you ever saw. It is what blasted the tree branch to the ground. And smoke still drifts out of the barrel and hangs in the air.

Now she takes a foot, pushes Maverick over so he's on his back.

Next she aims the huge weapon at Maverick's heart.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

85

THE MAGICIAN  
I'm a gonna kill you.

MAVERICK

Barely able to speak. Still, this latest piece of news is not so much upsetting as it is strange.

MAVERICK  
(whispered)  
... if you're going to do that...  
why didn't you just let me  
hang...?

THE MAGICIAN

coming closer.

THE MAGICIAN  
'Cuz then you wouldn't have know'd  
your crime.

MAVERICK  
(blinking up)  
... who are you...? And what's my  
crime...?

THE MAGICIAN  
I'm nobody -- nobody a-tall --  
(a bit ticked)  
-- never mind who I am -- it don't  
matter a whit who I am --  
(more)  
-- how dare you ask who I am? --  
it's none of your business who I  
am -- the subject under discussion  
is you and your crime --  
(bigger)  
-- the crime you're gonna die  
for --  
(huge)  
-- the crime that's gonna condemn  
you to hell is this:  
(roaring)  
You stole my rattlesnakes.

MAVERICK

He's just in terrible shape but he didn't think he was going mad.

MAVERICK  
... do I look like a rattlesnake  
thief?

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED: (2)

85

THE MAGICIAN  
 (studies Maverick a  
 long while, the  
 huge gun still  
 aimed. Finally  
 she nods)

That's exactly what you look like.

MAVERICK  
 You're wrong -- I play cards.

THE MAGICIAN  
 (shakes her head)  
 A gambler? Not in that shirt.

MAVERICK

He closes his eyes, tries to laugh --

-- but he can't. Not just because he hasn't the strength  
 but because he is far beyond exhaustion. His body begins  
 to shake, as if with fever. HOLD ON Maverick. Now --

86 INT. MAGICIAN'S CABIN - CLOSEUP - BIG RATTLESNAKE - DAY 86

PULL BACK to reveal...

the Magician's cabin. Maverick lies on a cot. Clearly,  
 he has been ill.

The rattler begins to slither up a leg of the cot on  
 which he lies.

THE MAGICIAN

sitting across the room in a rocking chair.

THE MAGICIAN  
 (as if to a dog)  
 Henry, you get offa there this  
 minute!

RATTLER

It knows who's boss. It slithers down the leg of the  
 cot, scots across the room.

ROOM

Just as strangely furnished as the Magician is strangely  
 dressed.

It's not a small room at all. And on the walls are some  
 beautiful oil paintings. Some gorgeous handmade quilts.

(CONTINUED)

On the floor -- a large and obviously expensive oriental rug.

In the corner -- several huge bags.

Plus one more thing: The whole room is filled with rattlesnakes of varying shapes and sizes.

MAVERICK

eyes slowly opening. He manages to lift his head, take in his surroundings.

MAVERICK

... this hell...?

THE MAGICIAN

No, ya fool, it's my home -- I decided you was too dumb to steal my babies.

MAVERICK

How long I been sick? What day is it?

THE MAGICIAN

Son, I lost track of what year it was years ago. Couple days, maybe, maybe more 'na couple.

(glances at blue  
bottles over bed)

I wouldn't if I was you.

MAVERICK

(no clue)

Say again?

THE MAGICIAN

You was thinking of stealing my bottles -- don't deny it, the whole world wants my bottles, ain't a bottle collection in a thousand miles equal to mine and I'm telling you true, you so much as touch one, I'll have you fanged to death.

(beat)

You was almost hung.

MAVERICK

I was there, I remember.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: (2)

86

THE MAGICIAN

That's what got you off your feed,  
rest a little, you'll be fine.

Gets up, comes over, looks down at Maverick. Maverick's eyes are closed again before the sentence is finished.  
Now --

87 INT. THE MAGICIAN'S CABIN - TWILIGHT

87

The Magician cooking at the stove in another corner of her home.

MAVERICK

He sits in a chair at a small wooden table with two chairs. A thick blanket is thrown across his shoulders.

The Magician brings him a plate of food. Or at least a plate of something. Maverick looks at it suspiciously.

MAVERICK

What do you call this?

THE MAGICIAN

It don't pay to ask too many questions.

PLATE

At least nothing looks alive.

MAVERICK

He takes a bite; that's enough.

THE MAGICIAN

You'll wanna get your strength back.

Maverick says nothing.

MAVERICK

What do you call this?

\*  
\*

THE MAGICIAN

It's one of my specialties.

\*  
\*

MAVERICK

(toys with it,  
doesn't eat)  
I'm really not hungry.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

THE MAGICIAN

What do you think?

MAVERICK

(doesn't get it)

Sorry?

THE MAGICIAN

(roaring suddenly)

I was not addressing you. Now shut up.

(quiet tone)

What do you think... Henry?

(beat; listening)

You do? -- That's interesting.

(to Maverick)

Henry thinks you deserve to be punished -- Henry thinks all people who are rude and insulting to me deserve to be punished --

(building)

-- did you grow the food that made your meal? No. Did you cook the food that made your meal? No. Did you know it was something I was proud of? Yes. I told you it was a speciality but you decided, 'What does she know, she doesn't look like such a great chef to me, why should I eat her speciality?'

(roaring again)

You should eat it because you're a guest in my house and I worked hard to please you -- now we'll try it again, you ask what it is and I say it's a speciality, now what do you say? I'll tell you what you say. You say 'Yum.' Can you handle that?

MAVERICK

Yum.

(beat)

Should I rub my tummy too?

THE MAGICIAN

Suddenly laughing.

THE MAGICIAN

Now that was funny.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (2)

87

Suddenly she whaps his ear hard like he was misbehaving in school.

\*  
\*

THE MAGICIAN

I hate funny people.

\*  
\*

MAVERICK

\*

He starts to take small spoonfuls now. But his heart isn't in it --

\*  
\*

THE MAGICIAN

You'll want to get your strength back.

\*  
\*  
\*

MAVERICK

And this is the first time we've ever seen him like this: He's down. The optimism, the good-hearted quality that has always been with him -- that's gone.

MAVERICK

Right now, I don't know what I need it for. See, there's gonna be a poker championship -- twenty-five thousand entrance fee. Poker's what I've done all my life and I wanted to know how good I was. Once and for all.

(beat)

Got robbed. What I had's probably been spent. Game may have started already for all I know.

THE MAGICIAN

Lemme tell you something true -- money ain't worth shit.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

Long pause. Then --

MAVERICK

It wasn't the money... it was the knowing.

HOLD ON Maverick. Then --

88 INT/EXT. THE MAGICIAN'S CABIN - DAY

88

There's a strange feel to it. It's sunny but there's THUNDER. Huge clouds scud across the horizon.

(CONTINUED)

Two chairs set up alongside a large tree stump. Maverick sits in one of them, staring at the sky.

The ground around him is filled with rattlers, taking in the sunshine.

THE MAGICIAN

carrying a couple of the large bags we saw in a corner. They're heavy, causing a problem for her. She has a large pistol tucked into her belt. Maverick is unarmed.

Maverick is starting to look like himself again. His problem is the rattlers. He eyes them suspiciously as The Magician walks toward him.

THE MAGICIAN

(spotting the look)

Oh, don't worry none. They're sweet as pie --

(beat)

-- least, of course, I tell them to bite.

MAVERICK

But you wouldn't do that.

THE MAGICIAN

(means this)

Do it in a fingersnap if people rile me.

GROUND

as she puts the bags down --

-- a few RATTLEERS HISS, slither out of the way.

The Magician sits in the other chair.

THE MAGICIAN

Been thinking about your finances.

(pointing to a bag)

Guess what's in here?

(big)

The answer to your troubles.

BAG

as she opens it, pours out its contents.

It's shit -- worthless -- tin plates, cups, ladles.

(CONTINUED)

THE MAGICIAN

Some of them's real old --  
(pronounces this  
next anti-ques)  
-- antiques.

MAVERICK

I don't think the champion will  
accept --  
(beat)  
-- even genuine anti-ques.

THE MAGICIAN

There he goes again, right, Henry?

MAVERICK

What'd I do this time?

THE MAGICIAN

We're only on this earth to help  
each other -- when I say something  
wrong, you ought to help me -- you  
ought to say, 'I think it's  
pronounced antiques.' Do it.

MAVERICK

I think it's pronounced 'antiques.'

THE MAGICIAN

Well, isn't that interesting, thank  
you for the tip.

And on that, she belts him hard on the ear, like a  
schoolmistress to a recalcitrant child. Maverick just  
looks at her.

THE MAGICIAN

I'm your hostess, ya fool, what  
right you got correcting me?

MAVERICK

But you said --

THE MAGICIAN

Never pay attention to what I  
say --  
(beat; taking the  
second sack)  
-- now listen carefully --

As she opens it:

MAVERICK

Oh good, more plates.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (3)

88

MAVERICK

Shocked. And we find out why as we:

THE MAGICIAN

holding the other bag wide -- and it's stuffed with cash. The Magician grabs a handful, holds it out. It's tied up in a bundle.

THE MAGICIAN

I got twenty-five times twenty-five thousand in here.

(slaps the money  
down on the tree  
trunk)

There's more'n your entrance fee right there. Counted it out last night.

The two of them, the money and tree stump between them. And of course, the SNAKES HISSING contentedly on the ground.

MAVERICK

Incredible.

THE MAGICIAN

(shrugs)

Nah -- I been a hermit here forty years -- this is rough country, lot of people die. When I find 'em I keep what looks valuable.

(picks up the bundle  
of money, holds it  
out)

Want it? No loan or nothing, I'd just give it to you. I'd like that.

Maverick reaches for the money --

-- The Magician pulls it back.

THE MAGICIAN

(roaring)

Now I ain't no fool -- I want something in return --

MAVERICK

What?

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (4)

88

CLOSEUP - THE MAGICIAN

THE MAGICIAN

I want for you to do magic.

MAVERICK

Nothing makes sense.

THE MAGICIAN

tossing the money back and forth as she speaks.

THE MAGICIAN

See, when I was little --  
(pauses; then starts  
to cackle)

-- I am little, I meant when I was  
young -- yes I was once, a child --  
anyway, animals was always nearby,  
not dogs, not cats, different kinds,  
butterflies liked me, bees used to  
follow me around, and people  
thought I was magical but I wasn't,  
I just treated everything the way  
I wanted to be treated, if you're  
nice to bees, cordial and all,  
well, they like it, something most  
people don't realize 'cause most  
people don't take the time, where  
was I? --

MAVERICK

I have no idea whatsoever --

THE MAGICIAN

(mutters a moment,  
then)

Magic! It's inside you, somewhere  
it is, I know that.

MAVERICK

You don't know a thing about me.

THE MAGICIAN

(roaring)

I know what you was blabbing  
when you was sick!

MAVERICK

(can't remember)

What did I say?

(CONTINUED)

THE MAGICIAN

You did magic with the ace of spades, I want to know about it.

MAVERICK

(shakes his head)

That was personal.

THE MAGICIAN

I really am interested!

(pistol is out --  
but only briefly;  
puts it back)

Nah -- I saved you too often  
already to kill you now. But  
you owe me.

MAVERICK

A long pause.

MAVERICK

(soft)

I guess I do.

THE MAGICIAN

What was so personal about it?

MAVERICK

My mother was dying and I wanted  
to please her before she left.

(remembering)

I thought I had magic that day.

(beat)

But I was wrong.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

A reverie.

MAVERICK

I had a way with cards, even when  
I was little -- she used to like  
me to do tricks.

(beat)

And that last day -- I was doing  
the usual -- but then I felt I  
had to be special for -- I said I  
would close my eyes and cut her  
the ace of spades -- it was her  
favorite card. Whenever I'd ask  
her to think of a card, she always  
said 'ace of spades.'

(CONTINUED)

THE MAGICIAN

Watching. The snakes are moving around her chair. She gestures for them to stop -- instantly, they go still.

MAVERICK

Still in the reverie.

MAVERICK

I closed my eyes and she shuffled  
and I cut --

(beat)

-- but I failed. Got a spade, but  
it was just the nine, anyone can  
do that.

THE MAGICIAN

I'll get some cards. This time  
you'll cut the ace for sure.

MAVERICK

It won't work.

THE MAGICIAN

Try.

MAVERICK

I'm not going to do it. I'm not  
going to fail again -- get that  
through your head.

THE MAGICIAN

as suddenly she makes a sound we haven't heard from  
her before and --

RATTLERS

starting to go wild and --

MAVERICK

staring, frozen --

MAVERICK

Maybe I will give it a shot after  
all.

The Magician makes another strange sound. The snakes  
calm own.

(CONTINUED)

THE MAGICIAN  
Somehow I figured you might  
change your mind.

Now, from that --

DECK OF CARDS

The Magician is finishing shuffling. She plops them  
down on the tree trunk, makes a neat pile.

PULL BACK to reveal:

MAVERICK AND THE MAGICIAN

seated across from each other. The snakes are all around  
-- they seem fascinated, all of them facing the tree  
trunk.

Maverick eyes the snakes -- they don't do much for his  
peace of mind or his confidence -- but clearly, he has  
no confidence anyway.

THE MAGICIAN

She places the wad of money next to the cards, gestures  
for Maverick to start. He hesitates, then --

MAVERICK

He starts breathing more deeply. It's almost as if  
he's trying to enter a different state. He stares  
up --

GIANT CLOUDS

moved by the wind.

THE MAGICIAN

waiting.

RATTLESNAKES

waiting.

MAVERICK

Voice almost in a reverie.

MAVERICK  
I loved my mother a whole lot...  
she was everything you could  
want --

(CONTINUED)

THE MAGICIAN

You stalling?

MAVERICK

I guess.

THE MAGICIAN

Well, quit it!

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

He puts his hands in his lap.

It's as if he's trying to go into a deep trance now.

He's breathing deeply. And now something strange: the wind turns into MUSIC. A gorgeous theme. It plays on.

THE MAGICIAN

caught up in it, watching. The snakes seems caught up in it too -- they aren't watching the cards anymore; they're turned to Maverick.

MAVERICK

And now he closes his eyes. His breathing grows very deep. The wind MUSIC is louder, more beautiful.

He drops his hands into his lap.

His head lolls back -- and suddenly the music is gone --

-- his eyes open, he shakes his head.

MAVERICK

I was trying to go somewhere in my mind. Couldn't.

THE MAGICIAN

I was watching -- you were getting into a trance -- you were almost there.

MAVERICK

(dubious)

You just want it to happen, that's all -- nothing felt right.

THE MAGICIAN

You give up too fast -- if magic was easy, everyone would do it. You want to win that poker thing, don't you?

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

I do.

THE MAGICIAN

Well, you're not gonna win nothing without a spot deep inside that tells you it's okay. A spot that says, 'Be a fool if you want, just be the best fool around, and I'll stay with you forever.'

MAVERICK

I don't want to be a fool.

THE MAGICIAN

You think when I was little and playing with dolls I thought, 'I can't wait to grow up so I can be a hermit and have rattlesnakes for friends?'

CLOSEUP - THE MAGICIAN

THE MAGICIAN

I was whipped and beaten and left to die and I could have, but that spot talked to me, it told me, 'No, don't let the world piss on you, it's okay to live alone, rattlers don't talk back and they're more honest than most people, get a move on.'

(beat)

Now I'm a great hermit and I wouldn't be nothing else.

RATTLERS

They have been watching The Magician. Now they look at Maverick.

MAVERICK

(soft)

I was whipped and beaten and left to die.

THE MAGICIAN

Point of my story.

MAVERICK

For a moment, he doesn't move at all. Then he sits deeper in the chair again, closes his eyes, breathes deep, deeper. The wind MUSIC is back.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (10)

88

His hands are limp in his lap. The music is glorious.

THE MAGICIAN

Watching. She picks up a rattler, strokes it for luck, puts it back.

MAVERICK

His voice strange. The MUSIC CONTINUES through this.

MAVERICK

... right hand...

THE MAGICIAN

What about it?

MAVERICK

Take it. Lift it.  
 (as the Magician  
 obeys)  
 Now put it on the cards.

The Magician obeys.

CARDS

on the tree stump, Maverick's hand, still limp, resting on them --

-- then the hand gains tension --

-- the fingers move --

-- move up and down the deck.

MAVERICK

God knows where he is now but he's a long way from here. The breathing deep, regular; the eyes shut. The wind music has never been as fine.

THE MAGICIAN

watching Maverick's hand; it moves as if it had a life of its own.

MAVERICK'S HAND

It stops.

MAVERICK

Voice stranger than before.

(CONTINUED)

MAVERICK

... right hand...

THE MAGICIAN

What about it?

MAVERICK

... lift it...

(as The Magician  
obeys)

... turn it...

(as The Magician  
obeys)

... look...

The Magician stares.

CARD

-- and he's done it! --

-- cut the ace of spades --

-- at least that's what we think.

But on second glance, it's clear he's missed. The Magician holds the ace of clubs.

MAVERICK

Eyes open now, sees he's failed again. The wind music is dead, gone. Exhausted, he stares.

THE MAGICIAN

and she's never looked happy before. She grabs the money, shoves it at Maverick.

THE MAGICIAN

Give you my best horse too.

MAVERICK

Why? I failed again. You were wrong about me.

THE MAGICIAN

My lord, you are the dumbest creature on the planet --

(now she grabs  
his hand)

-- not to mention you give up too soon.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (12)

88

## THE MAGICIAN (CONT'D)

(she drops his  
hand back on the  
deck)

Lift it.

NEXT CARD

It was the ace of spades.

MAVERICK AND MAGICIAN

## MAGICIAN

Next time you'll get it right --  
-- maybe the time after the next  
time. But you got magic inside  
you -- knew it all along -- that's  
what makes me a great hermit --  
(beat)

I know things.

(throwing more  
money at Maverick)

Buy yourself some clothes that  
fit -- thank me I'll kill you --  
(she grabs up

Henry)

-- now get outta my life.

(sweetly, to  
Henry)

Yes... there's a good baby, yes...

Maverick reaches down, lifts her, kisses her, puts her  
back --

-- and she whaps him hard across the cheek.

## MAGICIAN

Never did like being kissed by  
strange men.

(beat)

And you're very strange...

She starts to cackle at her joke, closes her eyes,  
strokes Henry happily --

89 EXT. RIVER/RIVERBOAT - DAY

89

An explosion of people and noise.

We are on the front deck of a riverboat.

(CONTINUED)

89

CONTINUED:

89

We're on the Columbia River on a gorgeous afternoon. Off by the railing, a brass band blasts away. Behind them is a sign reading:

WELCOME TO THE FIRST ANNUAL-EVER  
ALL RIVER'S POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

PULL BACK to reveal the town they have left.

90

EXT. RIVERBOAT - DECK - DAY

90

Maverick, moving across the front deck. Ahead of him is another flight of stairs.

He makes his way through the crowd. He looks terrific again, wears new clothes --

-- not to mention a new shirt. This one fits. As he makes his way toward the staircase --

And on that --

91

EXT. RIVERBOAT - DECK - DAY

91

Annabelle, for it was her voice, as she goes to him. She's thrilled he's there, holds him, kisses his cheek.

ANNABELLE

Bret?! Bret Maverick!! Oh my  
god! My very own hero, alive  
and well.

She checks his body.

MAVERICK

You seem glad to see me... I'm  
not exactly a whole man anymore.

He holds up his right hand, which is up his sleeve, he reveals it into her face and she screams. She clutches it to her breast and then realizes its intimacy and slaps him.

ANNABELLE

How did you ever escape from  
those hostiles?

He doesn't answer.

ANNABELLE

Have I done something to offend  
you?

(CONTINUED)

91

CONTINUED:

91

MAVERICK

Mrs. Bransford, I like to think I enjoy a prank as much as the next man, but have you no memory of robbing me blind as I went off to face death with the Indians?

ANNABELLE

(hurt)

If you ever believed anything I told you, believe this -- I did not do it...

(as Maverick isn't buying -- he just stares her down)

... then.

MAVERICK

Then?... Then when and why?

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

I had to protect my fifty percent.

MAVERICK

Fifty percent? Last I heard it was thirty.

ANNABELLE

It was forty. I feel real terrible about it.

MAVERICK

Not terrible enough to give it back.

ANNABELLE

(fiddle-de-dee)

I hope nothing ever makes me feel that terrible.

CROWD AROUND THEM

Maverick spots someone but the guy turns away so that we're not totally sure who it was.

MAVERICK AND ANNABELLE

She's looking around too.

(CONTINUED)

91

CONTINUED: (2)

91

ANNABELLE

Oh Bret, my beautiful perfect male, I don't want to seem ungrateful but why did you omit that three thousand dollars?

MAVERICK

Did I do that? I'm sorry, I didn't mean to stiff you.

ANNABELLE

(looking around again)  
I've only been able to break even these last days at the poker tables.

MAVERICK

You mean you can't enter?

ANNABELLE

(she can't)  
And my poor pure heart was so set on it.

Maverick. Without hesitation...

MAVERICK

Well, set on this! You stay just as pure as you can!

Exit line because he has spotted the Duke.

ANNABELLE

Delighted. Grabs it.

ANNABELLE

Is there no end to your goodness?

MAVERICK

I've always been a sucker for a pretty face with a sad story.

ANNABELLE

Heaven will welcome you for this.  
(puts it in her purse)  
Now tell me how you escaped.

MAVERICK

Got 'em all drunk and slipped out in the confusion.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: (3)

91

ANNABELLE

How could I not adore you?

MAVERICK

You're irresistible --

ANNABELLE

(nods)

-- how true.

MAVERICK

(leaving her)

Make me proud.

As he goes --

91A EXT. RIVERBOAT - ON DECK - DAY

91A

Maverick, moving through the crowd. Now --

MAN

we didn't quite see before as Maverick taps him. \*

MAVERICK \*

Excuse me, folks. Could I have  
a word with you? \*-- It's the Archduke, very surprised at being treated  
this way. \*

ARCHDUKE

Do you know who I am? \*

MAVERICK

I know who I am and that's what  
matters --

(beat)

-- Maverick, Indian Affairs.

ARCHDUKE \*

Indians? \*

They walk away to be private. \*

MAVERICK

It's over for you, Dukey -- Joseph  
talked.

ARCHDUKE

I don't know anyone by that name.

(CONTINUED)

91A CONTINUED:

91A

MAVERICK

That's funny. That's what he said  
about you when I started  
investigating the murder. Once I  
jailed him, he told the truth.  
And I think you will too.

\*  
\*  
\*

ARCHDUKE

But I am no American.

\*

MAVERICK

Murder is murder, Dukey... minimum  
of ten years and a three thousand  
dollar fine.

\*

ARCHDUKE

(desperate)

Shit... I have three thousand  
dollars right here.

\*

Takes out a wallet.

MAVERICK

You know the penalty for bribing  
someone in Indian Affairs?

ARCHDUKE

(panicked)

I was going home anyway.  
(practically throwing  
three thousand at  
Maverick)

This way I pay my dues and save  
you the cost of the trial.

MAVERICK

(hesitant)

Court is overworked, I admit it.

(beat)

Give you a break -- Don't shoot  
anymore Indians.

Maverick takes the money.

ARCHDUKE

He starts off, stops, looks closely at Maverick's face.

ARCHDUKE

Why do I think I see you before?

(CONTINUED)

91A CONTINUED: (2)

91A

MAVERICK

There's a lot of tall, dark  
strangers in this part of the  
country.

He starts off down the stairs as the Archduke walks  
away. Maverick does an Indian war whoop. The Archduke  
reacts.

91B EXT. RIVERBOAT - DAY

91B

The Archduke on a small boat, hurries away.

91C LOWER DECK

91C

Annabelle is now surrounded by ten admirers. They are  
all chatting.

Maverick comes downstairs and crosses to her.

MAVERICK

Has there been an accident? I'm  
a doctor. Excuse me, Mrs. Bransford,  
I need to talk to you.

ANNABELLE

Excuse me, gentlemen...

They all AD LIB goodbyes as Maverick takes her upstairs.

MAVERICK

I want to show you something.

(stops)

Stand closer. I don't want anyone  
to see me get this out. Close  
your eyes, Annabelle.

Maverick takes out three thousand dollars and hands it  
to her.

MAVERICK

You're in the game.

Annabelle screams and grabs the money.

ANNABELLE

Is there no end to your goodness?

MAVERICK

Apparently not.

(CONTINUED)

91C CONTINUED:

91C

ANNABELLE

Heaven will kiss you for this one,  
Mr. Maverick.

MAVERICK

I just realized something.

ANNABELLE

What?

MAVERICK

You can't help it, can you? You  
are irresistible.

They move upstairs.

MAVERICK

If by some chance, you should win,  
I'd like fifty percent.

ANNABELLE

That goes both ways. I'll take  
fifty percent of your winnings.

She walks out.

MAVERICK

Let's consider it a loan.

And the follows.

CUT TO:

92 EXT. RIVERBOAT - DECK - DAY

92

Another GAMBLER, moving toward them. Handsome, tall,  
trim, he's got a smile that might melt the world.

MAVERICK

(they're friends)

Thought you'd be here.

(introducing)

Mrs. Bransford, this is Mr. Smith.

They nod politely.

STUTTERING (GAMBLER)

(said perfectly)

Peter Piper picked a peck of  
pickled peppers.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

MAVERICK  
(delighted)  
That's wonderful.

STUTTERING  
(it turns out he has  
a speech problem;  
explaining to  
Annabelle)  
Yeah -- b-b-but how often does  
it kuh -- come up in conversation?

\*  
\*

Now, from that --

93 EXT. RIVERBOAT - DECK - DAY

93

The brass band in all its glory.

Blasting on. Noise and excitement and --

94 INT. MAVERICK'S STATE ROOM - DAY

94

Maverick, being shown into a state room by a uniformed steward. He tips the guy who leaves. He seems casual and confident. Maverick takes out his money, stares at it.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

Holding the money. For the first time now we can see he's edgy. He tilts his head, as if listening for something --

-- and now, very faint, the WIND MUSIC is back --

-- but only for an instant. Silence in the room again.

Maverick's edginess increases as we --

95 INT. RIVERBOAT - MAIN SALON - DAY

95

A room that is definitely not silent.

We are in the main cabin of the riverboat.

It's got chandeliers, ornate woodwork, high ceilings --

-- it is also over 100 feet long.

With lots of people.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

They mill around, expectantly. Bars on both walls with busy bartenders.

Tables with leather armchairs have been set up in the center of the room.

People are already drinking heavily.

96 INT. RIVERBOAT - MAIN CABIN - DAY

96

The mob. Noisier now. Maverick, in a corner, watches it all. Annabelle joins him.

ANNABELLE

(quickly)

-- I remembered both giveaways you taught me and I won't touch my fingers together and I won't flick my teeth -- but if I'm going to win, I need more tells --

MAVERICK

-- you have zero chance of winning -- the only reason I gave you the three was in hope of personally ruining you.

ANNABELLE

(stung)

I could get lucky, Mister Man.

MAVERICK

Okay, you're right...

CAMERA begins to DRIFT AWAY. We hear Maverick, but what we see are:

Several other gamblers, nervously waiting. (We'll see them in the game.)

Several spectators, laughing and drinking.

Several musicians, perspiring. Silently fingering instruments.

Last: two men we've seen before. Buried in the crowd -- they're the two guys that opened the picture, Angel's cohorts who helped hang Maverick. During this we hear:

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

MAVERICK

If a guy's clothes look funny, he may be cheating with a holdout, watch for that -- if someone asks for a rule clarification, before he bets, run and hide, he knows the rules and is trying to sucker you.

Now as the music starts --

97 INT. MAIN SALON - DAY

97

Four musicians. They never stop playing. The group consists of a fiddler, a cornet player, a fifer, and the fourth has an upright piano.

Their repertoire is stuff like "Sweet Betsy From Pike," "Lily Dale," "The Yellow Rose of Texas," many lovely sentimental love songs of the 1870s.

They only add to the excitement and hubbub.

98 INT. MAIN SALON - DAY

98

Annabelle, eyes half-closed, muttering to herself, trying to remember it all. Now, suddenly --

99 INT. MAIN SALON - THE ANGEL - DAY

99

Better dressed than when we last saw him. Still the kind of presence that could scare children, but at least now he's clean. He stares at Maverick, shocked.

THE ANGEL

How the hell did you get here --  
tell me --

MAVERICK

-- No, bastard, you tell me --  
what did you mean when you said  
you never would have let me make  
this game? Who was trying to stop  
me?

THE ANGEL

(beat, menacing smile)  
Gonna be a real pleasure playing  
you again --

And as he goes --

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

MAVERICK  
 (shakes his head in  
 bewilderment)  
 Any others of the gang around?  
 It's like old home week.

ANNABELLE  
 (speaking to someone  
 unseen)  
 He got them all drunk on fire-  
 water and escaped in the confusion.

COOP

He never looked braver or tougher. He wears a Marshal's  
 badge. \*

COOP  
 Been expecting you. \*

100 INT. MAIN SALON - DAY 100

A gigantic GONG being STRUCK.

GONG

It is being struck by a powerful ship's steward.

101 INT. MAIN SALON - DAY 101

The room. Quieting. Bursts of tension laughter. Even  
 the musicians, for once, quiet.

MAVERICK

No doubt about it, he's anxious.

A REMARKABLY IMPRESSIVE-LOOKING MAN

Middle-aged, vigorous as hell, he moves up alongside the  
 gong. This is COMMODORE DEVOL who, we will soon find,  
 owns the ship.

The Commodore is beautifully and expensively dressed.  
 When he smiles, which comes easily, it's very winning.  
 He's bright, shrewd, and has been a leader all his life.

(CONTINUED)

THE COMMODORE (COMMODORE DEVOL)

Welcome to my ship and the First Ever Annual Championship. The only reason it exists is because I have every intention of winning it.

(smiles)

Some of you know me. Some of you even like me. 'Course, some of you are probably fools.

(as there is laughter;  
he acknowledges it  
happily)

The truth is this: I'm a great businessman and a great poker player which, along with my great natural modesty, makes me so enchanting.

(now he turns  
serious)

Rules are simple. We play 'til we drop. Winner takes all. Dealer can call one break of one half hour. Soon as you're busted, you're gone. Twenty of us are playing which means there's gonna be nineteen broken hearts. Because I plan on winning it all -- half a million cash -- by morning.

And ON as before.

CROWD

Half a million is a fortune and this registers.

MAVERICK

The noise from the crowd is enormous. A rich Chinaman nods to him. Maverick smiles.

MAVERICK

(in greeting)

Twitchy.

(to Annabelle)

Never try reading him.

Annabelle nods, clicks her teeth with her fingernail, then remembers that's a no-no, slaps her own hand, folds her arms.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: (2)

101

THE COMMODORE

Asking for quiet.

THE COMMODORE

Gamblers -- every spectator has  
paid a hundred dollars to be here  
-- so let's make it a great  
contest.

(beat)

An honest great contest -- and for  
that reason, I have imported one of  
the remarkable lawmen in the west  
to run things. Marshal Zane Cooper,  
come here.

COOP

He moves up alongside the Commodore.

COOP

Thank you, Commodore Devol.

(beat)

Anyone caught cheating forfeits  
his entrance fee and is banned.

(raises his gun)

See this? It's the only one  
allowed in this room. Anyone  
breaking that law will risk me  
breaking their bones.

He's done.

THE COMMODORE

Contestants step forward -- and  
bring your money.

MAVERICK

as he makes his way forward through the crowd.

BUNCH OF OTHERS

We recognize Annabelle and the Angel -- doing the same.

102 INT. MAIN SALON - COOP - DAY

102

He holds a large satchel --

-- it is crammed with hundred-dollar bills.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

PULL BACK to reveal...

that the satchel is resting on one of the four poker tables. Coop is finishing counting.

Behind him, in the midst of the tables, is a decent-sized safe.

COOP

(to the Commodore)

Half a million.

(locks the satchel,  
pockets the key.

To the assembled)

I bought this satchel myself  
yesterday -- I have the only key.

SAFE

He deposits the satchel inside. Slams it shut, spins the dial.

COOP

This safe was made for this contest  
-- I selected the combination -- no  
one else aboard knows it.

(to the Commodore)

The money's as protected as I know  
how to make it.

GAMBLERS

looking at the safe. Not without a certain amount of  
lust.

103 INT. GAMBLING TABLES - DAY

103

The tables. Each has an immaculately-dressed dealer  
ready. One of them is older than the others, rougher,  
more experienced.

COOP

(to the assembled)

A moment of silence.

(bows his head)

When the great ship Constitution  
exploded and eleven died, here is  
how the papers reported the event.  
'Among the dead was a gambler, who  
was buried separately.'

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED: 103

COOP (CONT'D)

(beat)

Lord, may we bury no gamblers  
today.

GAMBLERS

(all together)

Amen.

Now, the formalities over, we...

PLAYERS

fanning out, taking seats, as the dealers open decks,  
begin shuffling cards and...

104 INT. MAIN SALON - EVENING 104

A large grandfather's clock. It reads six o'clock.

105 INT. MAIN SALON - EVENING 105

The crowd, deep around the tables. Many of them hold  
liquor glasses.

106 INT. GAMBLING TABLES - EVENING 106

The first table. Five players. Maverick sits; Stut-  
tering is alongside him.

107 INT. MAIN SALON - ANOTHER TABLE - EVENING 107

Five more. Annabelle sits; Twitchy, the rich Chinaman,  
sits across from her.

108 INT. MAIN SALON - ANOTHER TABLE - EVENING 108

Five men. The Commodore and Angel are here.

108A INT. MAIN SALON - EVENING 108A

A fourth table and five players we don't know. Cards are  
dealt.

109 INT. MAIN SALON - EVENING 109

Maverick, starting to pick up his cards until he looks  
around --

-- several people are bending over behind him, trying to  
spot what he has. He manages to avoid their glances,  
looks at his hand, tosses it in.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: 109

STUTTERING

He gives Maverick a questioning glance.

MAVERICK  
My pleasure.

Stuttering indicates his cards, shakes his head.

MAVERICK  
Stuttering checks.

As the others bet --

110 INT. MAIN SALON - ANNABELLE - EVENING 110

betting. Now she glances across the table toward Twitchy.

111 INT. MAIN SALON - TWITCHY - EVENING 111

And now we see what Maverick meant and why the nickname -- the guy is all tics. He blinks, mutters, fidgets, you name it he does it and it's impossible to tell what's conscious and what isn't. Plus, being Chinese, he wasn't all that easy to begin with.

112 INT. MAIN SALON - ANGEL & THE COMMODORE - EVENING 112

Angel can't stop smiling as he pulls in a pot.

113 INT. MAIN SALON - ANNABELLE - EVENING 113

winning a pot. Playing very professionally.

114 INT. MAIN SALON - MAVERICK - EVENING 114

Maverick, having folded again. Stuttering makes a gesture to him.

MAVERICK  
Stuttering raises two hundred.

Stuttering cackles.

115 INT. MAIN SALON - LONG BAR - EVENING 115

Customers are ordering drinks like crazy.

116 INT. MAIN SALON - GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK - TWILIGHT 116

After seven.

- 116A EXT. RIVER/RIVERBOAT - TWILIGHT 116A  
The Riverboat moves upstream.
- 117 INT. MAIN SALON - MAVERICK - TWILIGHT 117  
-- and now a series of flash cuts fly by, like we saw when he first played, only much quicker -- we know what he's doing now, clocking the enemy.  
SWEET-FACED GAMBLER  
across from Maverick. Well-dressed, a lovely shirt with beautifully ironed, very wide cuffs.  
MAVERICK  
folding again, standing, stretching, walking briefly away from the table.  
COOP  
as Maverick approaches, speaks to him briefly. COOP nods.  
MAVERICK  
sitting back down.
- 118 INT. MAIN SALON - MUSICIANS - TWILIGHT 118  
playing away.
- 119 INT. MAIN SALON - SWEET-FACED GAMBLER - TWILIGHT 119  
winning a big pot. As he rakes in his chips --  
COOP  
whispering in his ear.  
SWEET-FACED GAMBLER  
Totally shocked. He mouths the word "me?" as he points to himself.
- 120 INT. MAIN SALON - COOP - TWILIGHT 120  
escorting the guy away from the table to a corner of the room --  
-- and then ripping at his jacket, the wide-sleeved shirt.

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED: 120

The sweet-faced guy has been playing with a metal sleeve holdout -- a bunch of cards are held in place, hidden by the shirt.

Coop grabs the guy, pulls him the hell out of the room and --

120A EXT. RIVERBOAT DECK - TWILIGHT 120A

Coop and a steward throw the cheater overboard.

121 INT. MAIN SALON - MAVERICK - TWILIGHT 121

And now he wins a big pot, looks up.

COOP

standing across from him, mouths the word "Thanks."  
Maverick nods.

COOP  
(indicating the  
empty chair)  
Sudden illness, gentleman.  
(taking the guy's  
chips)  
Divide these among yourselves.  
House rules.

STUTTERING

Hot shit.

As they start to divide the chips --

122 INT. MAIN SALON - GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK - NIGHT 122

It's ten in the evening now.

123 INT. MAIN SALON - ROOM - NIGHT 123

The first of the ticket holders are beginning to fade.

COOP

never stops moving, watching everything going on.

124 INT. MAIN SALON - BAND - NIGHT 124

Getting tired.

125 INT. MAIN SALON - GAMBLERS - NIGHT 125

One of the tables is gone -- only three are left, fifteen players.

- 126 EXT. RIVER/RIVERBOAT - NIGHT 126  
 The ship sails up the river in the night. Tranquil.  
 Total peace.
- 127 INT. MAIN SALON - SECOND POKER TABLE - NIGHT 127  
 Annabelle has never been through anything like this and  
 she tries to relax her body, takes a very deep breath,  
 rubs her eyes.  
 (In truth, these marathon poker games were brutal for the  
 participants. The physical strain never stopped growing.  
 Their backs ached from slouching in the chairs for long  
 hours, their arms ached from leaning against the arms of  
 the chairs; their skin got soggy, their eyes got so it  
 was just damn hard to keep them open, much less concen-  
 trate. We're not at this stage yet --  
 -- but we will be.)  
 ONE OF THE BARS  
 Not many people and those that remain are drunk.  
 GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK  
 Two in the morning.  
 COOP  
 as before, in constant motion, no sign of fatigue.
- 128 INT. MAIN SALON - TABLES - NIGHT 128  
 Only two left, only ten players.  
 MUSICIANS  
 Not very peppy.
- 129 INT. MAIN SALON - MAVERICK - NIGHT 129  
 He now plays with four others, Stuttering and Twitchy  
 being the ones we know.
- 130 INT. MAIN SALON - ANNABELLE'S TABLE - NIGHT 130  
 The Angel and The Commodore and two others.
- 131 INT. MAIN SALON - OLD GUY - NIGHT 131  
 sits across from Maverick. He's exhausted.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

131

OLD GUY

Sorry, I'm wiped out, can't  
remember my own name anymore.

(pointing to the pot)

It's three thousand to me -- I can  
bet ten thousand, right?

TOUGH EXPERIENCED DEALER

Nothing surprises this guy. Along with Coop, he seems in  
better shape than anybody.

TOUGH DEALER

Up to you.

OLD GUY

Why don't I just do that then.

As he puts out ten thousand in chips --

COOP

watching the Old Guy.

OLD GUY

raking in the chips as the others fold. Now, as Coop  
approaches, grabs him --

132 INT. MAIN SALON - CORNER OF ROOM - NIGHT

132

Coop and the Old Guy. Coop rips open his shirt revealing  
a breastplate holdout. It conceals an entire hand of  
cards. As Coop carts him toward the door --

132A EXT. RIVERBOAT - TOP DECK - NIGHT

132A

Coop brings the Old Guy up to the top.

OLD GUY

(as he hands him  
his pocket watch)

If you would be so kind and please  
give this to the Captain. I'll  
pick it up next trip up river.

COOP

Be happy to.

OLD GUY

If you don't mind.

COOP

At your pleasure, Sir.

(CONTINUED)



135 INT. MAIN SALON - CHIPS AT MAVERICK'S TABLE - NIGHT 135

Maverick has more than any of the others.

MUSICIANS

"Sweet Betsy From Pike" was never played slower.

TOUGH DEALER

TOUGH DEALER

Break at four. Anyone not back in  
half hour forfeits everything.

CLOCK

as it starts to CHIME --

136 INT. MAIN SALON - GAMBLERS - NIGHT 136

rising, staggering away with fatigue. Coop, made of  
steel, waits by the safe. After a moment, he signals for  
a steward as we --

137 INT. MAVERICK'S STATE ROOM - NIGHT 137

The sounds of wild sex -- MAVERICK GROANING with  
pleasure, the BED SPRINGS IN constant MOTION. (We can't  
see the bed yet; we're looking AT a porthole which has  
the curtains closed.)

MAVERICK (O.S.)

Oh you are good -- yes, so good,  
the best, don't stop, please, I'll  
die if you stop --

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

-- how much am I worth?

MAVERICK (O.S.)

Five hundred. No. A thousand --

The loudest CRY OF PLEASURE yet as we --

PULL BACK to reveal --

We have been hearing a massage. Both are dressed as  
before. He lies face-down on the mattress. She  
straddles him, her fingers moving up to his back, his  
shoulders, his neck. As she stops --

ANNABELLE

Your turn to do me.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED:

137

MAVERICK

I'll give you two thousand if  
you'll keep at it.

ANNABELLE

No good, I've got two thousand.

Now she swats him.

MAVERICK

sitting as she flops face down. He begins massaging her.

MAVERICK

(irritated)

I think you're in better shape  
than I am.

ANNABELLE

It's ironing shirts gives me  
strength.

Now from them --

138 INT. MAIN SALON - THE ANGEL - NIGHT

138

in the darkness. He is talking to someone but we can't  
tell who. Finished, he turns, walks quickly away.

HOLD.

Now another figure moves out of the darkness. It's the  
one The Angel was talking to, the Tough Dealer.

HOLD.

KEEP HOLDING.

Unnoticed 'til now, a third figure becomes visible from  
deeper darkness. It's Coop. And as he hurries off --

139 INT. MAVERICK'S STATE ROOM - NIGHT

139

Maverick, massaging Annabelle as before. A POUNDING on  
the door.

MAVERICK

Open.

COOP

moving in.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

139

COOP

I was getting tired so I took some air.

MAVERICK

You? Tired? That's a first.

COOP

(urgent)

Listen to me -- I was leaning against the rail and these two guys started talking -- didn't see me -- the Angel and the dealer that always seems so fresh?

(beat)

They got something going -- couldn't get what, but it's going to be very big, Bret, and you can't win. I heard the Angel say to make sure of that.

MAVERICK

Amazingly, no reaction.

MAVERICK

(quiet)

I'd like a few minutes alone -- maybe catch a nap. If someone's going to try and cheat me, better be fresh.

ANNABELLE

(taking Coop's arm)

Escort me to my room, Zane dear -- I need to change clothes.

(as they go)

Don't worry about cheating -- I'm winning this anyway.

139A MAIN SALON - GRANDFATHER CLOCK

139A

It reads: 4:20.

139B EXT. ANNABELLE'S ROOM

139B

Coop waiting in the hall, she exits, wearing a lovely new suit, an exquisite blouse. New make-up makes her even lovelier than usual.

- 139C EXT. MAVERICK'S ROOM 139C  
A chair is silently being wedged against the handle making it impossible to open the door.
- 139D GRAND SALON 139D  
Annabelle and Coop entering.
- 139E MAVERICK'S ROOM 139E  
Maverick going to his door, turning the handle, pulling -- nothing. He pulls harder. It's jammed.
- MAVERICK  
(calling out)  
Annabelle, open the damn door.
- No answer.
- 139F GRAND SALON 139F  
People are drifting back. Annabelle and Coop enter. The clock reads: 4:25.
- 139G MAVERICK'S ROOM 139G  
Maverick, looking at his own watch -- 4:26 now. He tries one more pull, gets no reaction. He looks around his room.
- 139H MAVERICK'S ROOM - PORTHOLE 139H  
Beyond, turning in the night, the enormous paddlewheel.
- 139-I EXT. PORTHOLE - MAVERICK 139-I  
and he's climbing through --
- 139J MAIN SALON 139J  
More people file back. 4:27. Coop looks around, concerned, Annabelle too.
- 139K EXT. PORTHOLE 139K  
He's outside now, on the window, trying to keep balance and he grabs a flag and flies across to the deck next to a torch. \*  
\*  
\*
- 139L CLOCK 139L  
Turning to 4:29.

- 139M UPPER DECK 139M \*
- Maverick lands. He runs down the length of the boat. \*
- 139N MAIN SALON 139N
- as Maverick drips through the porthole back toward the game.
- MAVERICK  
Nothing like a cold shower.  
(New line to come... doesn't work now.) \*
- And as he sits --
- 139-O CLOCK 139-O
- 4:30 straight up as play resumes.
- 139P BAND 139P
- Wiped out.
- 139Q GAMBLERS 139Q
- Wiped out too. We're down to one table now. It's half past five.
- 140 INT. MAIN SALON - LAST TABLE - NIGHT 140
- The grandfather clock. Half past five.
- GAMBLERS
- only one table left. And six players. Maverick, Annabelle, The Commodore, The Angel, Stuttering and Twitchy. The five men all look weary.
- Annabelle has done her best to disguise any fatigue. Fresh makeup, a lovely new suit, a beautiful blouse.
- As the Tough Dealer flicks out the cards --
- BAND
- A fourth wind.
- 140A EXT. RIVER/RIVERBOAT - DAWN 140A
- Riverboat cruises upriver at dawn.
- 141 INT. MAIN SALON - DAWN 141
- The windows. Morning light starts streaming in -- coming up dawn.

142 INT. MAIN SALON - LAST TABLE - DAWN 142

The room. A few people enter. Hung over, wiped out.

PLAYERS

They all drink coffee now. It tastes like mud but they sip it and let the steam massage their eyes.

CHIPS

Maverick has stacks in front of him. So does The Angel. The Commodore and Twitchy are doing okay. But Stuttering and Annabelle are in trouble.

COOP

As fresh as ever, watching it all. The man is clearly without flaw.

143 INT. MAIN SALON - LAST TABLE - DAWN 143

Maverick and Annabelle, the last two left in a hand. Annabelle's pile has shrunk.

ANNABELLE

(tossing her head,  
she turns to the  
Dealer)

I can bet all I have left, can't  
I?

(as the Tough  
Dealer nods)

Then why don't I just do that.

(beat)

Five thousand, Mister Maverick.

MAVERICK

Stares glumly.

MAVERICK

Silly for me to match that.

ANNABELLE

says nothing. She gives away none of the tells she had earlier that Maverick told her about.

Just sits there blankly, waiting.

MAVERICK

folds his hand, gets set to toss it into the pile.

(CONTINUED)

143 CONTINUED:

143

ANNABELLE

couldn't be more disinterested.

MAVERICK

at the last second, pulling his hand back.

MAVERICK

I guess I feel like being silly.  
(pushes chips  
into the pot)  
Beat two pair and it's yours.

Shows her his cards -- tens and threes --

CLOSEUP - ANNABELLE

She stares across at him now with fury.

ANNABELLE

Bastard.

And with that, she flings her cards down -- she's been bluffing.

MAVERICK

gathering in the pot.

ANNABELLE

I'm out of the game.  
(as Maverick says  
nothing -- louder)  
You just put me out of the game.  
(as Maverick stacks  
the chips silently;  
still louder)  
I didn't do either of my two  
giveaways -- I never touched my  
thumb with my little finger and I  
never once flicked my teeth --

MAVERICK

-- you have three -- you always  
toss your head when you bluff --

ANNABELLE

(exploding)  
You didn't tell me that one!

MAVERICK

You never want to give everything  
away, Mrs. Bransford.

(CONTINUED)

143 CONTINUED: (2) 143

ANNABELLE

Well, I'll just try and pretend  
it was someone else's money.

\*  
\*  
\*

144 INT. MAIN SALON - LAST HAND - ANNABELLE - DAWN 144

She takes a deep breath, gets herself back in control. Then, a lady again, she smiles graciously at the Commodore, stands up, moves to Coop. As she distracts people, The Angel and the Tough Dealer exchange a glance.

Coop catches it.

MAVERICK

It's as if he hadn't seen the glance.

COOP

moving closer to the table, circling, checking.

TOUGH DEALER

casually dealing away.

MAVERICK

casually watching him.

145 INT. MAIN SALON - LAST HAND - DEALER - DAWN 145

-- only now we see him through Maverick's eyes -- and what he's doing, and doing brilliantly, is manipulating the cards.

Sometimes he deals from the top, sometimes the bottom, sometimes the second card, sometimes the third, and sometimes from the middle of the deck which is brutally hard.

TABLE

back in regular motion as the Dealer finishes.

Here is how the players are sitting: To the left of The Dealer, the first one to bet is Stuttering. Then Twitchy. After him, The Commodore, next, The Angel. Last, Maverick.

STUTTERING

as he looks at his cards --

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED:

145

-- he's been dealt a straight -- two, three, four, five, six -- of different suits. A sensational hand. Nothing shows on his face as he gestures to Maverick.

MAVERICK

Stuttering opens with two-fifty.

OTHERS

It's a considerable opener.

COOP

who is checking out the hands. He whispers to Annabelle.

COOP

Game's over, Stuttering's got a straight.

(looks at the  
next hand --

Twitchy's)

My God, it isn't over, Twitchy wins it --

ANNABELLE

(surprised)

What with?

COOP

Flush.

TWITCHY

And now we see his hand -- five hearts. All parts of his face are in motion as he matches Stuttering's bet.

COOP

Checking The Commodore.

COOP

(whispering)

They're both dead -- full house.

THE COMMODORE

Two tens and three nines. The best yet.

THE COMMODORE

Call me a fool, but I think I'll raise a thousand.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (2)

145

THE ANGEL

Coop can't see his hand; he keeps it hidden.

THE ANGEL  
Raise ten thousand.

MAVERICK

as we see his hand. The ten, jack, queen, king of  
spades --

-- plus the two of diamonds.

COOP AND ANNABELLE

She indicates Maverick.

COOP  
He's got shit.  
(can't help it,  
he's sorry)  
Don't give up on the boy -- at  
least it's shit with potential.

MAVERICK

He stays, pushing chips into the pot.

So do the other three.

POT

A lot of chips. Over fifty thousand dollars' worth.

The Tough Dealer. To Stuttering.

TOUGH DEALER  
How many cards?

Stuttering smiles.

MAVERICK  
He stands.

Twitchy nods.

THE COMMODORE  
Sounds good.

THE ANGEL  
One.

He gets it from the Dealer, looks at it, seems concerned.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (3)

145

TOUGH DEALER  
(to Maverick)

You?

MAVERICK

Quietly --

MAVERICK

Same --

(then his hand  
suddenly covers  
the Tough  
Dealer's)

-- but I don't want it from you.

THE COMMODORE

What're you pulling, son?

MAVERICK

I want a new dealer -- and I want  
a new shuffle -- and I want a new  
cut.

The Commodore looks to Coop.

COOP

Within his rights. I'll  
shuffle --

THE COMMODORE

-- I'll cut.

MAVERICK

(shakes his head)

No.

(indicating The  
Angel)

Him. He cuts.

THE ANGEL

smiles.

THE ANGEL

I kind of like that. Shows  
trust.

Coop shuffles the cards quickly, hands them over.

MAVERICK

Throat dry. He sits back in his chair. The WIND MUSIC  
starts.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (4)

145

THE ANGEL

His huge hand slowly cuts the cards.

MAVERICK

watching.

COOP

Annabelle beside him. Watching, as The Angel finishes the cut.

MAVERICK

And now he closes his eyes. He seems, at this tense moment, remarkably at peace. The WIND MUSIC is LOUDER still. He listens a moment more, then opens his eyes.

DECK

as now The Angel takes a single finger, pushes the top card across the table to Maverick.

Who does an amazing thing --

-- he doesn't look at it.

Just leaves it face down on the table.

PLAYERS

who look to Stuttering to begin the betting. Stuttering holds up two fingers, wide apart.

MAVERICK

Two thousand.

Stuttering puts two thousand in the pot -- Twitchy watches it.

THE COMMODORE

Raise five thousand.

As the chips go into the growing pot --

THE ANGEL

He looks about to fold -- then he suddenly smiles at Maverick.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (5)

145

THE ANGEL

I liked it when you did that to  
the lady.

(chips in)

Raise twenty thousand.

MAVERICK'S LAST CARD

Still face down. Maverick hesitates.

THE COMMODORE

I'd look at it, son.

MAVERICK

No need.

(chips into pot)

Raise twenty-five.

THE ANGEL

exploding.

THE ANGEL

What kind of act you pulling?  
-- look at your card.

Maverick says not a word.

\*

STUTTERING

He pushes in all the chips he has left.

MAVERICK

Stuttering calls.

TWITCHY

(to Stuttering --  
apologetically)

Solly.

He pushes more chips in than Stuttering had.

THE COMMODORE

We're saying good-bye to the boys  
now.

(as all his chips  
go in)

Fifty thousand more.

THE ANGEL

Studying his hand.

And for the first time we see it --

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (6)

145

-- Five, six, seven, eight, nine. All of diamonds.  
A straight flush.

THE ANGEL

(to Maverick)

Want to see me, it'll cost you  
everything you got.

(pushes in all his  
chips too, a huge  
amount)

Hundred and fifty thousand. Half  
a million in the pot if you match it.

MAVERICK

Still doesn't look at his last card. Just pushes all his  
chips in silently.

Half a million in the pot. It's gigantic.

THE ANGEL

Turning over his cards.

CROWD AROUND TABLE

Stunned. It's a phenomenal hand.

MAVERICK

Silently turns over the cards we've seen.

Ten of spades.

Jack of spades.

Queen of spades.

King of spades.

LAST CARD

The one he hasn't looked at. Now he slides it toward  
him, starts to take a quick glance --

-- but first he closes his eyes again and there it is,  
the WIND MUSIC --

-- only now, without warning, it GOES SOUR. Then it  
DIES.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (7)

145

MAVERICK

Eyes open fast and now you can see it, his confidence isn't there. He grabs the card, looks at it.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

Stunned.

MAVERICK  
(hardly able  
to talk)  
... I... just don't believe it.

TABLE

The Angel reaches for the pot.

THE ANGEL  
Strange things happen at the  
poker table.

MAVERICK  
(hard to hear him)  
... I know...  
(beat)  
... but...  
(beat)  
... who ever dreamed of two  
straight flushes in the same hand  
-- lucky for me mine's higher.

CARD

as he flips it up into the air.

It spins down.

The ace of spades.

THE ANGEL

Dead pale as a wild fury begins and...

CROWD

exploding and...

MAVERICK

standing and...

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (8)

145

ANNABELLE

running into his arms, hugging him and --

ANNABELLE

Now that you're rich, I forgive  
you.

THE ANGEL

and in the instant Annabelle's in Maverick's arms he's  
screaming.

THE ANGEL

Miserable cheating son of a  
bitch --

And as he starts to rise, draws a gun -- and we're into  
SLOW MOTION.

MAVERICK

in Annabelle's arms is helpless --

ANNABELLE

sees what's coming, but it's too late --

THE ANGEL

is about to fire when --

-- his shirt is suddenly bloody and he falls back.

COOP

stands there, watching Angel die, his gun in his hand.

MAVERICK

out of Annabelle's arms now sees movement in the crowd.

ANGEL'S TWO HELPERS

are getting set to fire.

MAVERICK

grabs Coop's other gun --

-- draws like lightning, FIRES TWICE --

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (9) 145

TWO HELPERS  
are done.

MAVERICK AND COOP  
return both Coop's guns to their holsters at exactly the  
same time. We go back into REGULAR MOTION now.

146 OMITTED 146  
& &  
147 147

148 INT. MAIN SALON - MORNING 148

The satchel, with the money inside.

PULL BACK to reveal:  
Coop, pulling it out of the safe, standing --

COOP  
Sorry, Bret, wish your moment  
could have lasted a little  
longer, but there it is --

-- and his gun is back in his hand as he moves toward an  
open window.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK  
He hadn't expected this -- ever.

COOP  
his gun ready.

COOP  
I feel real bad about this but I  
saw all that money and, well,  
shit, I just wanted it --

And on that --

WINDOW  
-- he vaults gracefully out and --

149 EXT. RIVERBOAT/RIVER - MORNING 149

A small boat waits -- tied to the riverboat -- Coop races  
to it, leaps on, the small boat turns into the current  
and pulls away downstream.

149A INT. RIVERBOAT - MAIN SALON - MORNING 149A

Inside the salon -- this has all gone like a streak and what we have here now is confusion and chaos. The Commodore races out of the main cabin --

150 EXT. DECK - MORNING 150 \*

The Commodore races down the deck with his rifle and stops at the railing. \*

150A EXT. RIVERBOAT - ON DECK - MORNING 150A

As Coop gets further away The Commodore takes aim with the rifle. A hand COMES IN to knock it aside. \*

MAVERICK

(soft)

Let him go.

THE COMMODORE \*

... Let him go? \*

The Commodore stares at Maverick; so does Annabelle. There is a crowd gathering.

CLOSEUP - MAVERICK

MAVERICK

(addressing the crowd, quieting it)

The man saved my life. I can always win more money.

(beat)

Besides, I found out what I came for anyway.

THE COMMODORE

raising his hands. He controls the room.

THE COMMODORE

(to Maverick)

That's a half a million dollars, son. Do I have to remind you of that?

MAVERICK

Do I have to remind you it's my half million? It's only money. It's not worth taking a life over. \*

THE COMMODORE \*

Only money? \*

(CONTINUED)

150A CONTINUED:

150A

MAVERICK

Coop probably never had a dishonest thought 'til this happened. And for the rest of his days. He's going to be haunted whatever we do. And that's punishment enough for a man. I won't swear out a warrant against him.

\*

\*

\*

THE COMMODORE

(to the crowd --  
unexpectedly moved)

I'll be damned... I'll be damned. I know a little something about money -- made a lot in my lifetime, gonna make a lot more. But this young man has more wisdom now about what's really valuable than I'll ever have. I had two wives leave me on account of my obsession with making money.

\*

(almost in tears --  
to Maverick)

Don't you ever change.

(now, raising an  
imaginary glass --  
toasting)

To a champion.

All on board echo The Commodore's toast.

MAVERICK

as Annabelle joins him; doing his best to keep his emotions in check -- but no question about it, at this moment, he is a proud young man. Now, from that --

\*

151 INT. MAVERICK'S STATEROOM - MORNING

151

Annabelle, her eyes closed.

She's in Maverick's room and he is taking off her suit coat. He lays it over a chair. She stands as before, in skirt and expensive blouse.

ANNABELLE

When can I open my eyes? -- what is this gift I'm getting?

MAVERICK

(soft)

Just one minute more --

(CONTINUED)

151

CONTINUED:

151

And on that --

MAVERICK

as he suddenly grabs her lovely blouse and rips it wide open --

-- Annabelle, shocked, cries out, opens her eyes, her hands trying to cover her suddenly revealed body --

-- but too late.

Over her slip she is wearing the most Rube Goldberg-like thing you ever saw. (It was called the Kepplinger Hold-out and was a series of pulleys and cords that hid a remarkable number of cards. The thing worked, believe it or not, by using the knees, and is generally thought of as being the greatest card-cheating device of the past century.)

ANNABELLE

(embarrassed)

I didn't wear it 'til the break --

MAVERICK

-- and you didn't have to. Here's my gift to you: the truth. You were one of the six best players out there.

(pulling the holdout off her)

Get rid of this.

ANNABELLE

(confused, embarrassed, touched)

Would you believe me if I told you it didn't work? Look -- all the cards are still there -- Contraption just jammed on me, I couldn't get it to function.

(now, as her arms go around Maverick)

Let's hope I have better luck with you.

As they fall on the bed --

KEPPLINGER HOLDOUT

As suddenly, on its own, it starts working. An ace of spades rises, BLOCKING OUR VIEW. HOLD ON the card, then --

152 EXT. RIVERSIDE - FIREWOOD STOP - DAY

152

There are several carriages and various horses waiting.

Maverick and Annabelle, are by a waiting carriage. This is good-bye and neither of them is all that happy.

MAVERICK

Where you headed?

ANNABELLE

(a shrug -- she  
doesn't know)

Someplace else.

MAVERICK

I'm going there too. Want to travel together? I could use the protection.

ANNABELLE

Long pause. Then --

ANNABELLE

No. It would be wonderful, we could fight all the time. But I wouldn't learn anything about my tells now, would I? Take care of yourself.

TWO OF THEM

A final embrace. Meaningful. They kiss. She gets into the carriage and Maverick closes the door. The Driver gets on his seat.

MAVERICK

Annabelle?

She turns back. He hands her a wallet he's just taken from her purse.

ANNABELLE

(impressed)

That was good. You're getting better.

(beat)

Bert.

Now she hands him his watch she's taken.

MAVERICK

You are the best at that.

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

152

ANNABELLE

You are the best at this.

She kisses him. The carriage takes off. Maverick watches and steps away.

CUT TO:

153 EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

153

The half million in cash. Separated into two piles. The satchel is alongside.

PULL BACK to reveal:

Coop, nervously waiting alone in a rocky place on the edge of nowhere. A small fire is the only illumination. A stream flows by.

Now, the sound of a WALKING SLOWLY. The sound STOPS. \*

Coop draws his GUN, COCKS it -- it makes a distinct sound --

-- KUH -- LICK --

-- he stares out into the darkness, ready for anything. Then he relaxes, puts the gun back into its holster.

COOP

Where the hell you been?

PULL BACK to reveal:

The Commodore. He moves to the fire.

THE COMMODORE

I had to say good-bye. I couldn't risk looking like I was rushing any place. I took a lot of twists and turns, backtracking a lot. Made sure nobody was following me. You don't seem happy to see me. \*

COOP

(angry)

I thought you and me were in this thing together -- you win, I do nothing. Someone else wins, I do what I did. Why didn't you tell me Angel was in it too? \*

(CONTINUED)

153

CONTINUED:

153

THE COMMODORE

What did Maverick say to that sweet young thing? 'You never want to give everything away.' If Angel'd won, we'd still have split it the same way. I telegraphed him -- keep Maverick from the game. He messed that up. Poor dead bastard.

COOP

I just don't like secrets.

THE COMMODORE

Then you probably won't like this one either.

THE COMMODORE

as suddenly he draws his gun, cocks it --  
-- there's that sound again --  
-- KUH -- LICK --  
-- and the GUN is aimed at Coop's heart.

THE COMMODORE

I guess it's just my greedy nature. But I've decided not to share it with you --

COOP

(shocked)  
A deal's a deal.

THE COMMODORE

In a perfect world, that's true.  
(throws Coop's gun  
in the water, ready  
to fire)  
I just want you to know I've never worked with a more honest man in my life.

Now -- A familiar sound:

-- KUH -- LICK --

MAVERICK

I wouldn't give odds on it being a long one. Uncock it.

As they spin --

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED: (2)

153

MAVERICK

moving fast, gun drawn. With speed and precision he grabs The Commodore's pistol.

They raise their hands as he gestures for them to sit close together.

MAVERICK

Sit down, gentlemen. Let's get cozy. Have a parley. Put your hands down. You look ridiculous. I almost fell asleep with boredom following you -- you and that idiot speech about my wisdom -- how could you expect me to fall for that? You must think I'm awful damn dumb.

(to Coop)

But you... you fooled me. And not many can. But you saved me, so I won't kill you.

(beat)

Just remember, the whole world knows what you are. That's punishment enough. All your life's work, all the good you did, you wiped it away. You don't have anything to show for it.

COOP

You're young, so you don't know that much about mistakes, but you're making one now.

MAVERICK

Am I?

COOP

You can't leave me alive.

CLOSEUP - COOP

And we've never seen him like this -- out of control.

COOP

What you said, every word, that's right -- I traded every decent thing I know for that money --

(building)

-- and you better believe I'm coming for it!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED: (3)

153

COOP (CONT'D)

(bigger)

I don't care where you go, one night you'll relax -- and guess who'll be there waiting?

MAVERICK

Puts the satchel full of money down.

MAVERICK

You couldn't sneak up on a corpse, Coop; not anymore. You're just another decrepit old has-been.

\*

THE COMMODORE

scared, as Maverick studies his pistol.

THE COMMODORE

What're you gonna do?

MAVERICK

It's a problem -- if I don't kill you, what do I do?

COOP

watching, the fury still there.

MAVERICK

a shrug.

MAVERICK

What the heck!

\*

\*

MAVERICK

His hands fiddle a little with the gun, we can't really see what he's doing. Then he points the gun at the Commodore, as if to shoot him, then, at the last minute he flicks the GUN to the side and SHOOTS. The bullet just misses the Commodore and scares him very badly.

\*

\*

\*

\*

\*

MAVERICK

Maybe the fairest thing would be to just let one of you kill the other -- I'll let you decide which...

\*

And with that --

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED: (4)

153

GUN

as he heaves it high, high into the air and --

COOP AND THE COMMODORE

staring up after it and --

MAVERICK

watching them, satchel in hand, gun drawn, backing away  
and --

GUN

spinning in the night and --

COOP

still staring up, beginning to guess where it might land  
and --

THE COMMODORE

watching Coop and --

MAVERICK

The shadows have him and he's gone and --

COOP

starting to move and --

GUN

beginning its arc down and --

THE COMMODORE

suddenly sticking a leg out, tripping Coop and --

COOP

beginning to fall and --

THE COMMODORE

heading for where the gun might fall and --

GUN

dropping fast and --

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED: (5)

153

COOP

And he gets his balance, quickly goes into a roll, bounces up, breaks into a run and --

THE COMMODORE

no match for Coop's speed but --

GUN

landing, and --

COOP

the first one there, grabbing it, whirling and -- it slips from Coop's hand!!!

THE COMMODORE

can't believe his luck! The gun has been flung straight into his hand. He quickly points the gun at Coop and smiles with a deadly smile.

THE COMMODORE

Well, that -- as they say, is that!

And the Commodore pulls the trigger.

CLICK!

nothing.

CLICK, CLICK, CLICK!!!

There are no bullets in the gun!

Now obviously outclassed, the Commodore knows that he is a dead man. Panic starts.

THE COMMODORE

That Maverick... son of a bitch...

Coop stand up and knocks the gun out of the Commodore's hand. He punches him in the stomach and knocks his hat off.

Coop punches him in the face and the Commodore is knocked over a log. The Commodore tries to get up over the log. Coop hits him with an uppercut and knocks him over and on his back.

Coop picks up a stick.

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED: (6)

153

## THE COMMODORE

Please... no... no...

## COOP

You double-crossing... If I ever so much as hear your name... if I ever hear you're in the same town as me so I might see your face... If I ever get wind that you've hired another Angel or any of your assassins. I never did a cold-blooded murder in my life and I won't till I find Maverick...

He throws the stick down and walks. He picks up his hat and goes out.

CUT TO:

154 INT. FANCY BATHROOM - DUSK

154

A large communal bathroom in a fancy hotel. A couple of tubs, some sinks, thick towels.

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED:

154

It is the towels that alert us to where we are, for on them is embroidered the name of the hotel: THE SAN FRANCISCAN.

Maverick lies happily in one of the tubs. Eyes closed. His clothes are piled nearby. His gun too. And alongside his boots: the satchel.

He is at peace, listening to the sound of the WIND MUSIC --

Now another sound cuts through --

-- KUH -- LICK --

Maverick whirls --

COOP

standing there with the drop on Maverick. He isn't smiling.

COOP  
Decrepit has-been?

MAVERICK

Not a sound.

COOP

closing in. Louder.

COOP  
Couldn't sneak up on a corpse?

MAVERICK  
(beat)  
Actually, I kind of liked that one.

MAVERICK

watching as Coop holsters his gun.

COOP  
Lucky for you I have a forgiving nature.

MAVERICK  
I take it the Commodore will not be a problem.

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED: (2)

154

COOP

It was worth everything to nail  
that crooked bastard.

MAVERICK

My pappy always said nothing was  
a deeper religious experience  
than cheating a cheater.

COOP

(big)

Now I never once said that -- you  
been misquoting me all your life  
and I'm sick of it --

MAVERICK

You say such dumb things I've got  
to improve them.

As they look at each other --

155 INT. FANCY BATHROOM - DUSK

155

A deck of cards. It is being manipulated dazzlingly with  
one hand -- exactly as Maverick did before in the  
stagecoach.

PULL BACK to reveal:

We are in exactly the same spot as before only now it is  
Coop that is manipulating the cards.

Both men lie relaxed, eyes closed, in tubs. There is a  
sense of peace and harmony.

TWO OF THEM

relaxed. We are looking at both of their backs.

Now that sound again --

-- KUH -- LICK --

MAVERICK

(doesn't bother  
opening his eyes  
or turning)

Satchel's right here.

And on that, as both men open their eyes --

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED:

155

ANNABELLE

her gun aimed at them. She moves fast, grabbing their guns, their clothes. Then the satchel --

ANNABELLE

(tossing something to  
Maverick who catches  
it -- it's a silk  
shirt)

Hope it fits -- just know it's the  
best San Francisco has to offer.

PAPPY

(touched)  
Isn't that sweet?

MAVERICK

(snarling)  
Get hold of yourself, she's  
robbing us.

ANNABELLE

What a remarkable family.

MAVERICK

(to Coop)  
How'd she figure that?

ANNABELLE

Give me some credit -- you don't  
own the exclusive on tells --  
(rattling it off as  
Maverick had done  
with her)  
-- you're both the same height,  
you've got the same build, you've  
got the same eyes, you both kiss  
the same way, you both draw your  
guns the same way --  
(a breath)  
-- and you both sing the same  
wrong words to 'Amazing Grace.'

Now, she studies their naked bodies in the tubs.

CLOSEUP - ANNABELLE

ANNABELLE

Oh my yes, there are just a lot  
of splendid similarities...

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: (2)

155

She smiles her dazzling smile, goes to the door, opens it, blows a kiss -- impossible to say to which man -- and good-bye.

MAVERICK AND PAPPY

They stare at the door a moment. Neither of them seems anxious to get moving or particularly upset.

PAPPY

Woman with her looks can't hide.

MAVERICK

(nods)

Whenever we decide to catch her --  
(snaps his fingers)  
-- it's done.

PAPPY

(nods too)

The truth? If someone had to rob us, I'm glad it was my little Annie.

He's never called her that before.

MAVERICK

as this registers.

MAVERICK

Your little what?

(beat)

I'll tell you the real truth -- every time you got near her, it was...

(squints)

... I'm looking for the right word -- you are, after all, the man who raised me and I hold you in the highest respect...

(beat)

It was disgusting.

PAPPY

as this registers.

PAPPY

(chuckles)

My my, green with envy.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: (3)

155

TWO OF THEM

some heat now.

MAVERICK

You're right.

(beat)

After all, when she's a hundred,  
you'll only be a hundred and  
thirty-five.

PAPPY

I would be careful if I were you --  
just know that splendid creature  
was almost your stepmother.

MAVERICK

She was a lot closer to being  
your daughter-in-law.

PAPPY

Would have been sheer disaster --  
you're totally lacking in the  
maturity needed to satisfy a  
woman like that.

MAVERICK

Not what she said.

PAPPY

I know what she said about you --  
and I would never humiliate you by  
repeating those terrible words.

MAVERICK

I don't believe you.

PAPPY

Neither do I.

Now they both start to laugh, lie back. A pause.

PAPPY

What we ended up with is one half  
million dollar silk shirt.

MAVERICK

Quarter of a million's more like  
it -- I mixed in a Sears catalog  
along with the cash --  
Annabelle'll enjoy that.

(beat)

Hope you enjoy this.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: (4)

155

MAVERICK

as he takes a quarter of a million in cash from his boot and hands it to his father.

PAPPY

There are no words for what he feels, but you know he is deeply moved by the gesture.

MAVERICK

pleased and proud.

TWO OF THEM

as Pappy takes the money, holds it in one hand.

PAPPY

(soft; an emotional  
moment is on the  
horizon)

... Bret... son...

MAVERICK

(quiet)

Yessir?

PAPPY

(zap)

This feels like you shorted me --  
I'm going to count it back in the  
room.

MAVERICK

(zap)

That might take the rest of the  
week since we all know your  
trouble with counting once you  
get past your fingers and toes.

They look at each other.

And then they smile. And lie silent for a moment.  
Then --

CAMERA begins to PULL BACK.

and now Maverick begins to hum "Amazing Grace."

Pappy joins him, doing the harmony.

CAMERA continues PULLING BACK.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED: (5) 155

Maverick starts to sing the song.

Pappy joins him, doing the harmony.

It's just lovely.

156 INT./EXT. FANCY BATHROOM (SAN FRANCISCO) - DUSK 156

CAMERA PULLS BACK and OUT the window to reveal the exterior of the beautiful hotel and the city of San Francisco.

The two of them sing on. Their voices ring out loud and clear.

They've never sounded better.

Let's leave them there...

FINAL FADE OUT.

THE END