

REVUE STUDIOS  
UNIVERSAL CITY  
CALIFORNIA

PROD. #12239

LARAMIE

"BUILD THE GALLows HIGH"

Teleplay

by

John Dunkel

Story

by

Dan Ullman

PROPERTY OF:

REVUE STUDIOS

PLEASE RETURN

WESTERN

LARAMIE

"BUILD THE GALLOWS HIGH"

CAST

SLIM  
JESS  
BILLY PARDEE  
SHERIFF  
BURT (DEPUTY)  
ELMER  
MAUD  
JUDGE  
CRUSE  
HYDE  
1ST TOUGH  
2ND TOUGH  
DEPUTY (TEASER ONLY)  
CREIGHTON  
TELEGRAPH OPERATOR (BIT)  
MARSHAL

SETS

INTERIORS:

JAIL  
RESTAURANT  
SMALL COURTROOM  
SHERIFF'S HOME  
DOCTOR'S OFFICE  
TELEGRAPH OFFICE

EXTERIORS:

LARAMIE STREET  
ROAD NEAR LARAMIE

"BUILD THE GALLows HIGH"

FADE IN

1 EXT. LARAMIE STREET - DAY - MED. SHOT 1  
It is early morning; very little activity is visible on the street. CAMERA PICKS UP two riders coming slowly and unobtrusively into town. They pull up in the f.g., look carefully over the street. Both notice something at the street's opposite end.

2 LONG SHOT - THEIR ANGLE - TWO OTHER RIDERS 2  
Two other horsemen are entering town from the opposite direction. They, also, ride unhurriedly.

3 CLOSER ANGLE - SECOND PAIR OF RIDERS 3  
PANNING with them as they sight the first pair, then continue to ride, eventually stopping outside a small building marked "WELLS FARGO". One of this second pair of riders is BILLY PARDEE, a lithe, hard, bright-eyed young man with a definite dashing air about him.

4 MED. SHOT - WELLS FARGO OFFICE 4  
The first pair of riders also tie up near the office; the four men do not talk, but all are watchful. The Wells Fargo office door opens and a middle-aged CLERK appears with a broom in his hand. He is sweeping the office. Two of the four riders dismount and walk quickly but not too quickly into the office behind the Clerk; a third rider steps up to him, his hand resting on his gun. Before the Clerk can say anything, Billy Pardee, at the hitchrail, says quietly:

BILLY  
Inside, old man. Now.

After a frightened look at Pardee, and at the large gunman facing him, the Clerk moves inside, with the gunman right at his heels. The door is closed. Pardee waits by the horses, assuming a lounging position, his eyes sweeping the street o.s. He sees something that alerts him.

5 LONG SHOT - DEPUTY 5  
From the Sheriff's office, a DEPUTY emerges without haste, starts across the street to a Diner or Restaurant. CAMERA DRIFTS with him.

6 CLOSER ANGLE - DEPUTY 6  
He is somewhat sleepy as he approaches the diner. Just before he enters, he looks across the street at:

7 MED. LONG SHOT - WELLS FARGO OFFICE 7  
Nothing appears wrong for a moment; there are, of course, four horses here, and Billy Pardee. As the Deputy from  
CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED (contd) 7  
the previous scene looks, however, the window shade is lowered...a thing one would not notice at all unless he happened to be looking right at it when it happened.

8 MED. CLOSE - DEPUTY 8  
He frowns curiously, then decides to walk across the street and up to the Wells Fargo office, which is a considerable distance away. He starts off.

9 MED. CLOSE - PARDEE 9  
He has seen the Deputy start. He raps his knuckles on the door or wall of the office three times, then three times more. This obviously means "Hurry up!" Then he moves to the hitchrail and as unobtrusively as possible unties the horses, holding all the reins in his hand.  
INTERCUT:

10 MED. LONG SHOT - DEPUTY - PARDEE'S ANGLE 10  
As he walks TOWARD CAMERA from some distance away.

11 MED. SHOT - WELLS FARGO OFFICE 11  
The three riders emerge quickly, alert, one carrying a small sack. Pardee orders in a calm voice:

BILLY

Easy, now. Ride out slow.

The three men look off at the approaching Deputy, then mount and move out. Pardee is the last up on his horse.  
INTERCUT:

12 MED. PAN SHOT - DEPUTY 12  
His curiosity has deepened as he sees the four men all leaving at once. He drops his hand to his gun butt and calls out with authority:

DEPUTY

Hold it a minute!

He draws his gun, and keeps advancing, a bit more quickly now.

13 MED. GROUP 13  
Pardee, a few yards behind his companions, shouts:

BILLY

Go!

He boots his own horse out, drawing and firing at the same time.

14 MED. CLOSE - DEPUTY 14  
He is hit and mortally wounded by Pardee's shot. He falls to the dirt; with his last bit of strength he aims and fires o.s.

15 LONG SHOT - STREET 15  
Pardee's horse, going AWAY FROM CAMERA, is grazed by the bullet and jolts to a stop, rearing in terror. Pardee pitches off onto the street.

16 MED. SHOT - SHERIFF'S OFFICE 16  
The SHERIFF, attracted by the shots, comes racing out of his office with his gun in his hand. Several other townspeople can be seen, also. Slim is among them.

17 MED. SHOT - PARDEE 17  
He is stunned by his fall, gets to his knees slowly, shakes his head and starts to reach for the gun he has dropped -- as the Sheriff and others hurry in, ringing him with drawn guns.

SHERIFF  
Don't try it! Reach!

Pardee realizes he hasn't a chance. Slowly, he rises, his hands in the air.

18 MED. GROUP - NEAR DEPUTY (FAVORING SLIM) 18  
Several men are beside the Deputy's body. One, a townsman named CRUSE, watches as Slim rises grimly after an inspection and says:

SLIM  
He's dead.

He and others glower as they watch the Sheriff taking Pardee across the street at gunpoint, toward the jail.

FADE OUT

(OPENING CREDITS AND COMMERCIAL)

ACT I

FADE IN

19

EXT. HILLS - DAY - MED. SHOT - SLIM

As he rides along, looking at the ground for sign. There are other riders in the b.g. doing the same -- this is a hillside with fairly scattered brush and trees. The Sheriff rides in from the side and joins Slim -- they pull up with others in b.g. With the posse is BURT, a young deputy.

19

SLIM

See anything down that way?

SHERIFF

(annoyed)

No. They couldn't've disappeared!  
Keep lookin'.

JESS' VOICE

(calling from o.s.)

Sheriff, over here.

They look down the slope, start that way.

20

CLOSE SHOT - JESS

As he leans over, studying the ground. The others come in from b.g. -- Slim and the Sheriff in lead.

20

JESS

Take a look.

SLIM

That's them.

SHERIFF

Can't be! That trail would take  
'em right back to town!

JESS

And that's probably just where  
they're headed. Along the  
North Rim.

SHERIFF

Not likely. If they doubled back  
that way we would've seen 'em.

SLIM

I've got a feelin' Jess is right.  
There may not be much cover along  
the Rim -- but there's enough to  
get by, if they were smart enough  
to use it.

CONTINUED

20

CONTINUED

(contd)

20

SHERIFF

What makes you think they'd take  
a chance like that, when there are  
a lot easier ways out?

JESS

You've got their pal in jail. Maybe  
they figure on breakin' him loose.

The Sheriff is staring in apprehension.

SLIM

How many men'd you leave at the  
lock-up?

SHERIFF

(uncomfortably)

Why -- there's Tooey, an' -- uh ---

JESS

Tooey? He couldn't keep track of  
a cow-bell if you hung it around his  
neck.

It is evident nobody puts much trust in Tooey.

SLIM

We'd better forget this trail and  
head back fast.

And, at a nod from the lawman, they start off.

DISSOLVE

21

EXT. JAIL - DAY - MED. SHOT

The door stands open and it looks deserted. Now the CAMERA SHIFTS AROUND to a LONG SHOT down the street, and we see the posse come pounding in and along the street to pull up hard in front of the jail. The men all swing down, guns drawn, and start in, led by the Sheriff, Slim and Jess, with Burt next. Suddenly, they stop at a sign from the Sheriff -- and now, in the new silence, we can HEAR a man laughing fit to bust. He is inside and the Sheriff, with a mystified look, leads them on in.

21

22

INT. JAIL - DAY - FULL SHOT - ELMER, BILLY

Billy Pardee is lying on his hard cot in the cell, and the jailer, TOOEEY, of probably advanced age and feeble intellect, is sitting on a chair in front of the cell, rolling with laughter. Billy has a humorous look on his face, but he is not laughing. The Sheriff comes busting in, gun in hand, with the others right behind him, they spill out into the room as the Sheriff stops and stares. Billy sees them, raises his eyebrows. But Tooey is practically crying with laughter and doesn't even hear them at first.

22

CONTINUED

SHERIFF

Tooey.

Tooey stops laughing, turns.

TOOEY

Oh, howdy, Sheriff.

(still chuckling)

If he ain't a card. I swear, he's  
'bout kept me in stitches the  
whole time you were gone.Now he sees them all, feels their sober stares, realizes  
something is amiss.

TOOEY (contd)

(trying to cover)

'Course I ain't forgettin' how he shot  
Tom. No, sir. An' Tom was a mighty  
fine Deputy, too.Billy Pardee speaks up, now. He is relaxed, but the hard  
gleam of reckless confidence in his eyes is always there.

BILLY

Nice, comfortable little jail you  
got here, Sheriff. How's the food?

The Sheriff looks at him briefly, then back to Tooey.

SHERIFF

You seen anybody around, Tooey?

ELMER

(blankly)

No. Should I of?

Billy chuckles. The Sheriff shoots him a hard look, then  
moves to the cell and looks at him more closely.

SHERIFF

I know your face. I've seen it  
on wanted posters.

BILLY

(feigning surprise)

No kiddin'? Now what do you suppose  
the law would want with a nice peaceful  
fella like me?

SHERIFF

(remembering; grim)

Pardee. Billy Pardee.

23 TWO SHOT - SLIM, JESS 23  
They exchange glances; the name means something to them.

24 WIDER ANGLE 24  
Billy merely smiles, making no answer. The Sheriff turns from him, abruptly, motions with his head to Slim and Jess and the other members of the posse still in the office to move outside. He follows them out.

BILLY  
(calling off;  
after them)  
Now don't you go tellin' 'em bad things  
about me, Sheriff. Y'hear?

25 EXT. JAIL - MED. GROUP 25  
The Sheriff is definitely concerned, more upset than one would expect an experienced lawman to be.

SLIM  
The last I heard, Billy Pardee  
was servin' time somewhere in  
Texas.

SHERIFF  
(tensely)  
He busted out a couple months  
ago.

BURT  
He's one of Con Creighton's men,  
isn't he?

JESS  
He sure is. His half-brother, I think.  
Not likely Creighton'll let him hang  
for murder -- if he can help it.

SHERIFF  
(more nervous)  
He can help it, all right. Seems like  
about half the gunmen in the territory  
take orders from him.

SLIM  
Well -- the only thing we've got to  
worry about right now is those three  
we were trailin'. They'll probably  
make a try for Pardee sometime after  
dark.

SHERIFF  
Yeah...yeah. Let's see -- how many  
of us are there?

JESS  
Seven -- eight, with Tooey.

25

CONTINUED

(contd)

25

SHERIFF

More than enough to handle the  
three of them -- unless Creighton's  
got more men close by.

Both Slim and Jess are aware of the Sheriff's nerves.

SLIM

(calmly)

Seems to me if he had, he'd've sent  
more in on the robbery in the first  
place.

SHERIFF

'Guess so. Eight to three.  
Yeah...that should do it.

SLIM

Something's eatin' at you. What is  
it?

SHERIFF

You don't know Con Creighton like  
I do. I just wish we were in better  
shape to handle him.

JESS

Right now it's eight to three, stacked  
in our favor. I could get rich overnight,  
walkin' into a poker house with those  
kind of odds.

26

ANOTHER ANGLE

26

SHERIFF

It's not just the odds I'm thinkin'  
about. There's only three windows  
in the jail.

SLIM

We don't have to all be in there. Why  
not set up an ambush -- some of us  
across the street -- some up, some  
down? Ring 'em.

SHERIFF

(relieved)

Might work. Guess that's about the  
best we can do.

Jess and Slim exchange looks. They are concerned by this  
apparent inadequacy of the Sheriff, who now sounds more  
officious as he says:

CONTINUED

26

CONTINUED

(contd)

26

SHERIFF

Slim -- you better check the rifles -- one for each.

Slim nods, moves off, enters the office.

SHERIFF

Burt -- you'n me and Tooey'll be inside. The rest of you pick your spots.

Jess nods; he and the others begin to move away.

27

EXT. DINER - MED. SHOT

From the diner comes MAUDIE CRAMER, a trim, compact, very good-looking woman of about 28. She works in the diner, and she wears an apron. She doesn't laugh much, this girl; she can make jokes back and forth with her male customers, but she is somewhat remote, though not unfriendly. Jess encounters her as he walks in from across the street, tips his hat and smiles.

27

JESS

Hi, Maudie. What's for supper?

She stops, smiles slightly at Jess.

MAUD

Today's Wednesday. Pot roast.

JESS

Good. Jonesy's cookin' is makin' an old man out o' me.

MAUD

You figure mine's gonna make you any younger?

JESS

Can't tell. I'll let you know tomorrow.

Maudie, glancing toward the jail, says:

MAUD

The Sheriff's gonna feed the prisoner, isn't he?

JESS

I dunno. If it was up to me, I'd give him bread and water -- and not much o' that.

CONTINUED

MAUD

(smiles)

Hope our lawman doesn't feel the same way. The county pays me a dollar each for prisoner's meals.

She starts away briskly. Jess' voice, serious now, stops her:

JESS

Maudie...if you feed him, do it before dark. And stay indoors after that.

MAUD

Why? Expecting some more trouble?

JESS

Just do me a favor and stay inside.

MAUD

(nods soberly)

All right. Thanks, Jess.

She leaves. Jess watches her go, appreciatively, then turns and surveys the street, looking for the best place to station himself.

28 EXT. NEAR SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MED. SHOT 28  
Maud walks briskly into the office. Whatever men are nearby nod to her, or tip their hats.

29 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE & JAIL - MED. SHOT 29  
Slim is at the rifle rack, checking the small arsenal, which he does throughout the scene. The Sheriff is prowling nervously about, looking through windows, estimating the fields of fire from each. The door opens, Maud walks in, stops in the f.g., sees the Sheriff and, without looking at the cells, says:

MAUD  
Sheriff -- do you want a supper  
brought in for --

She stops, staring at the cell, upon which her eyes have lit because of some movement from there. INTERCUT:

30 CLOSE SHOT - BILLY 30  
lying on his bunk. At Maud's first word, he sits up, stares off at her. There is recognition, then a smile. Slowly, he gets up during the following and looks through the bars.

31 FULL SHOT - ROOM 31  
The Sheriff turns, says abstractedly:

SHERIFF  
Oh -- yeah, I guess so, Maudie.  
Thanks.

BILLY  
(smiling)  
And the prisoner thanks you,  
ma'am. If you cook as good as  
you look, it's gonna make it hard  
for me to leave.

Slim has noticed Maud's stare at the prisoner. He looks at her, but he talks to Billy:

SLIM  
You won't be goin' anywhere --  
except maybe to a gallows.

32 CLOSE SHOT - MAUD 32  
She has recovered her poise, but seems to react with a small wince to Slim's line.

33 ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING BILLY 33  
He smiles again, his eyes glued to Maud, says rather happily:

BILLY  
Don't you believe it, ma'am.  
No rope'll get me.

33

CONTINUED

(contd)

33

Maud does not answer; she turns silently to leave. As she approaches the door, Slim cocks one of the rifles. The SOUND seems to jolt Maud slightly, but she makes her exit with Slim's and Billy's eyes following her. Slim turns to look at Billy, as we

DISSOLVE

34

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - MED. CLOSE SHOT - JESS, SLIM

34

The two of them are half-concealed behind some boxes that lean against a building across the street from the jail. They are looking off at:

35

MED. LONG SHOT - JAIL

35

The Sheriff exchanges a word or two (unheard) with some of his men, who drift into the shadows around the jail; then, he walks inside the building itself, closing the door.

36

TWO SHOT - JESS, SLIM

36

JESS

(grimly)

Looks like we got a scared  
Sheriff runnin' things tonight.

SLIM

(agreeing)

He's edgy, all right -- but you  
can't blame him much. Con Creighton's  
treed a lot o' lawmen in his day.

JESS

Sure. But a man oughtn't to pin a  
badge on his vest if he's got any  
doubts about his nerves.

SLIM

Don't be too hard on him. It's a  
rough job.

JESS

Yeah -- and he's not rough enough  
to hold it down.

(changes position)

I don't mind sittin' all night on  
the cold ground to help out -- but  
I don't much like the notion that  
the law might run like a rabbit the  
minute somebody starts throwin' lead  
at him.

Slim's expression says he shares the same thoughts, as we

DISSOLVE

37 EXT. STREET - NIGHT - PAN SHOT 37  
The street is dark and deserted, except for occasional traffic between the two saloons remaining open. A piano, from one, can be HEARD, tinkling faintly. Suddenly the shape of an incoming prairie schooner is caught in the crosslight of the saloons. It is at the far end of the street and lumbers slowly forward. A man is driving.

38 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM AND JESS 38  
Slim nudges Jess, nods off toward the incoming wagon.

SLIM  
What do you think?

JESS  
(looking off)  
Kinda late for travelin'.

SLIM  
Yeah. Keep your eye on 'em.

Slim exits toward the Sheriff's office.

39 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 39  
Turning from Slim's direction, his eyes fasten on the incoming wagon.

40 MED. LONG SHOT - THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER 40  
as it continues forward toward the jail.

41 INT. JAIL - GROUP SHOT 41  
Slim steps in through the door, nods toward the Sheriff.

SLIM  
Looks like we might have some company arrivin' out in the street.

The Sheriff and Burt join Slim in the open doorway, follow the latter's gaze.

42 MED. SHOT - PRAIRIE SCHOONER 42  
steadily approaching. For the first time it becomes evident that some horses are tied to the tail-gate of the wagon.

43 EXT. JAIL DOORWAY - GROUP 43  
The Sheriff's face sets grimly.

SHERIFF  
Could be them all right. But let's not make any mistake.  
Wait 'til they're in close.  
I'll give the word.

Slim moves off toward Jess.

44 CLOSE SHOT - BILLY 44  
His face is pressed close against the barred window. His eyes strain to get a better view of the street. The o.s. wagon can be HEARD, faintly, as it approaches.

45 MED. CLOSE SHOT - THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER 45  
The driver unbuttons his coat as the wagon rolls forward.

46 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM AND JESS 46  
Jess glances at Slim as the latter MOVES IN beside him.

JESS  
I count two pair of horses  
trailin' behind that wagon.

SLIM  
(looking off; grimly)  
I know.

47 CLOSE SHOT - THE PRAIRIE SCHOONER 47  
lumbering forward.

48 CLOSE SHOT - THE SHERIFF AND BURT 48  
as they wait, guns ready, at a window of the jail.

49 CLOSE SHOT - BILLY 49  
at the window, beginning to sweat. We can see out the barred opening and now the wagon is plainly in view. In the quiet of the night, the sound of the wagon -- at least to Billy -- seems intolerably loud.

50 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM AND JESS 50  
their weapons are poised, ready.

51 CLOSE SHOT - PRAIRIE SCHOONER 51  
ANGLE to INCLUDE its near-arrival at the jail.

52 CLOSE SHOT - BILLY 52  
His knuckles whiten over the bars.

BILLY  
(shouting off)  
Look out! They're waitin' for you!

53A CLOSE SHOT - SHERIFF 53A  
in surprise and anger he turns toward Billy's cell.

BILLY (contd)  
(shouting off)  
Clear out!

CLOSE SHOT - PRAIRIE SCHOONER  
The driver vaults free, taking a shotgun with him. Simultaneously, a pair of gunmen leap clear of the tailgate and swing up onto their mounts.

53B CLOSE SHOT - SHERIFF 53B  
He lunges toward the street, firing at almost the same moment he shouts:

SHERIFF  
Get 'em!

53C FULL SHOT - STREET 53C  
TO INTERCUT with above. The driver fires one barrel of his shotgun, runs toward the back of the prairie schooner where his two cohorts are giving him covering fire from their mounts. Slim and Jess can be seen firing in b.g., as the Sheriff takes cover along the boardwalk. Before the latter can reach a point of safety, however, a second blast from the driver's shotgun fells him. Slim and Jess center their fire on the driver -- who is literally blasted out of the saddle. The other gunmen take flight.

53D ANOTHER ANGLE - THE STREET 53D  
as Slim and Jess move out into the street in b.g., and fire after the receding outlaws, the Sheriff, in f.g., is trying to drag himself into a position to gun the fugitives. The effort, however, is too much for him and he half-collapses along the boardwalk. Seeing this, Burt runs in toward the lawman.

BURT  
Slim!

With the fleeing gunmen now out of range, Slim and Jess move back in toward Burt and the Sheriff. Other men are also converging in this direction.

53E CLOSE SHOT - SHERIFF 53E  
on the ground, as Slim and Jess come in and join Burt. They partly lift him up and Slim holds him.

SLIM  
How bad is it, Mort?

SHERIFF  
(gasping)  
I don't know. Better get me to the Doc.

Slim nods and they start to lift the Sheriff.

DESSOLVE

53F INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT - MED. SHOT 53F  
The Doctor comes out of an inner room and is met by Slim and Jess.

SLIM  
How is he?

CONTINUED

53F CONTINUED

(contd)

53F

DOCTOR

(palming buckshot)

Took about a dozen of these lead  
stingers out of him. The wounds  
aren't too serious -- he'll be  
on his feet in a week or so.  
But he seems to be suffering a  
good deal from shock. Wants to  
see you both.

They nod and move to the door, which the Doctor opens for  
them. Slim and Jess go in.

530

INT. DOCTOR'S INNER ROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE SHOT - SHERIFF  
He lies on a cot, looking whitefaced and sick. Jess and  
Slim come in the door in b.g., approach him.

530

SLIM

Sheriff -- ?

SHERIFF

(opens eyes)

Slim -- listen. I want you to  
take over my job. Jess can be  
your top deputy.

SLIM

(staring, appalled)

Me? I'm no sheriff!

He and Jess exchange a look.

SHERIFF

I'm out of action -- and there's  
got to be somebody. Somebody I  
can count on.

SLIM

What about your deputy -- Burt Mills?

SHERIFF

(shakes head)

Burt's not up to it. He'll tell you  
so himself. If Tom Worth was still  
alive, it'd be different -- but with  
him gone, there's got to be somebody  
like you take over.

SLIM

(floundering)

Maybe so -- but there's a whole trial  
to see to....

CONTINUED

53G CONTINUED

(contd)

53G

JESS  
(pointedly)  
And there'll be Con Creighton.

The Sheriff only gives him a look -- no love lost.

SHERIFF  
(to Slim)  
What about it?

SLIM  
(weakening)  
I don't know...

Jess is watching him, seeing that it's a temptation.

SHERIFF  
Just till I get back on my feet.  
Can't be too long.

SLIM  
What do you think, Jess?

Jess gives him a wry smile, shrugs.

JESS  
Up to you. I'm along, either way.  
But remember one thing: there's  
gonna be trouble. That you can  
count on.

SHERIFF  
Maybe not. For all we know, it  
might've been settled tonight.

JESS  
(quietly)  
Sure. Just like throwin' kerosine  
on a fire.

SHERIFF  
If there is trouble, you boys can handle  
it -- probably as good as me. Or better.

The Sheriff is looking at Slim, who slowly picks up a badge  
from the table, holds it in his hand. It is quite obvious  
that his mind is made up.

JESS  
Put it on, Sheriff.

Slim looks quickly at Jess, holds the look for a moment, as we

FADE OUT

END OF ACT I

ACT II

FADE IN:

54 EXT. LARAMIE STREET - PAN SHOT - DAY

Two evil looking characters, later to be identified as FIRST TOUGH and SECOND TOUGH, ride down the street, their dusty clothes and travel-weary postures indicating that they are newly arrived from a long journey. The CAMERA PANS with them to a CLOSE SHOT where they pull up at a hitch rail, dismount and look around the town, surveying it. In b.g., people pause to look at them, they are so obviously gunmen, and strangers. Then a man appears who is very like them -- their eyes meet -- a look of understanding passes between them. A nod, and without a word, the two toughs begin to take down their bedrolls. There is a sinister feeling to it all.

55 INT. MAUD'S CAFE - MED. CLOSE SHOT - DAY

Slim and Jess sit at a table in f.g., and in b.g., Maud is serving someone at the counter. As Jess eats pie, Slim sips coffee and stares glumly, thinking, oblivious to a small cat that is rubbing lightly against his boots, waiting for a hand-out.

JESS

One good thing's come outa this  
-- we've sure been eatin' high on  
the hog. It's gonna be tough  
gettin' used to Jonesy's hash  
again.

SLIM

Better fill up while you can.  
As soon as Mort's back on his  
feet an' able to wear this star  
again, he's taking over.

JESS

Wouldn't count on that bein' soon  
enough. I don't think he wants  
any part of a fight with Con  
Creighton. He's leaving that  
honor to you -- and me.

SLIM

(annoyed)

Nobody's holdin' you. You can  
quit whenever you like.

For a moment they stare at one another, tempers rising, then both react as the cat springs lightly up on the table. Jess puts the cat gently back on the floor before the tabby can pirate any food.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

JESS

Not a bad idea. Quittin' I mean.

SLIM

I know. How'd I get into this,  
anyway?He shakes his head and sips his coffee. Maud has come  
down to them carrying a tin of pie.

MAUD

How about some more apple pie?

SLIM

No, thanks.

JESS

(catching at her)

Hold it a minute, Maudie. He's  
speakin' for himself, not me.cot jumps  
cot upShe grins at him and dishes off another slice of pie.  
Then she gives Slim a glance. She is tense and alert,  
but she controls it well as she says:

MAUD

(lightly)

Lost your appetite, Sheriff?

SLIM

You can give the cat my share.

JESS

(smiles at Maud)

See what wearin' a badge does?  
Gets a man so mixed up he  
practically forgets to eat.

MAUD

He didn't have to take the job.

SLIM

Somebody had to.

MAUD

(shrugs)

I suppose.

SLIM

You know what happened last night.  
It could happen again anytime.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: - 2

MAUD

All I heard was -- some men rode in and the Sheriff shot at 'em.

JESS

And for good reason. They were gonna make a try to break that killer loose.

MAUD

(to Slim)

And you expect 'em back -- is that it?

SLIM

(nods)

With friends.

JESS

Probably a lot o' friends. Maybe even Con Creighton.

Maud looks them both over coolly, then says:

MAUD

Well...you both look real nice with those badges on. You really do.

She starts to saunter away. Slim's voice stops her:

SLIM

Maudie.

(she turns)

You know Billy Pardee, don't you?

MAUD

(frowning)

Who?

SLIM

Billy Pardee. The man in jail.

MAUD

Oh.

(shakes her head)

No. For a minute yesterday I thought he looked like somebody I used to know, but I was wrong.

## 56 ANOTHER ANGLE

She EXITS unhurriedly. Slim looks after her thoughtfully. Past him, through the window, a stagecoach can be seen pulling into town. Jess, facing the window, says:

JESS

Stage is in. Sure hope Judge Oliver is on it. I'd like to get this trial business over with.

SLIM

Yeah. Never knew there was so much paper work to do, just so a murderer can be hauled into court.

Both get up, interested in meeting the stage. CAMERA PANS them to the door. As they pass the end of the counter, Slim puts some money on it, and Maud takes it.

MAUD

Thanks, Sheriff. Take care of yourself.

SLIM

I'll do that, Maudie.

MAUD

(rather softly)  
I mean it, Slim.

There seems to be a sudden softness in her, noticed by both Slim and Jess. Slim exchanges a somewhat long glance with her, and both EXIT.

## 57 EXT. STREET - MED. CLOSE DOLLY SHOT

as Slim and Jess walk toward the o.s. stagecoach.

JESS

Hey -- you must have some kind o' hidden charm. She's never looked at me like that.

SLIM

Me either. Until I put on the badge.

JESS

Guess it's like they say. Pays to advertise.

Slim merely gives him a look, and they continue. . .

57A MED. GROUP - AT STAGECOACH

Slim and Jess arrive as the passengers begin to alight. The only person who could possibly be a judge gets out last.

58 CLOSE GROUP SHOT

As Slim puts out his hand to JUDGE OLIVER, a small and wiry man, as elegant as any circuit judge of the time, and as tough. He has learned to take whatever has to be taken without complaint, but he doesn't have to like it.

SLIM

Morning, Judge Oliver.

JUDGE

Who are you, sir?

SLIM

Name's Sherman. I'm the acting Sheriff. And this is Jess Harper, my deputy.

JUDGE

Where's the regular peace officer?

SLIM

In bed, wounded in a gunfight. I'm taking his place temporarily.

The judge gives him one searching look and starts on in toward the jail. Jess brings his valise.

59 INT. JAIL - FULL SHOT - DAY

The three of them come into the jail -- Jess puts the valise on a chair, as Slim looks uncomfortable. Then the Judge looks over at Billy Pardee, grinning insolently from the cell.

60 INT. JAIL - GROUP SHOT

JUDGE

(indicating Billy)  
What've we got here?

BILLY

(mockingly)  
Just a little packet of trouble, Judge, waitin' for you t'get here.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

SLIM

(to Judge)

Billy Pardee. 'Friend of Con Creighton's. He's up for murder, and armed robbery.

JUDGE

(to Slim; impressed)

Well, you've made yourself a man-sized catch.

BILLY

That's right. Now all they gotta do is hang onto me.

SLIM

(to Judge)

I'd like to get his trial set as soon as we can. Lot of strangers driftin' in.

JUDGE

(nodding)

I'm holding a ticket on the five o'clock stage. We can hold the trial this afternoon, if you have the court papers in order.

JESS

(handing Judge a thick sheaf of papers)

Hope you can carry 'em. 'Took us nearly two days to fill 'em out.

The Judge smiles indulgently at Jess; then turns to Pardee.

JUDGE

Do you want a jury trial, Pardee?

BILLY

(equably)

Suit yourself, Judge. It's all one to me.

JUDGE

All right. I'll try the case myself.

(to Slim)

You'll have to prepare an affidavit, defendant's waiving jury trial.

JESS

(groaning)

Oh, no, not another one.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE

We'll start in an hour at the usual place -- the lobby of the Laramie House. You should have all your witnesses there at least a quarter of an hour before court time.

SLIM

They'll be there.

JUDGE

(to Jess)

Deputy, I'd appreciate your carrying these for me...

(indicates sheaf  
of papers and  
documents)

...to the hotel.

Jess opens his mouth to say something that would not make for polite listening when a look from Slim checks him. As the Judge leaves, Jess carries the documents as bidden. Slim cannot restrain a smile, watching Jess go off like a storm cloud.

BILLY

(after their exit)

Hope that Deputy of yours don't trip. I sure wouldn't want anything messin' up my trial.

SLIM

I wouldn't worry about it.

BILLY

Oh, I ain't worried. Not even a little.

SLIM

'Guess there's no reason why you should be. After all, you can only hang once.

BILLY

(hard)

Nobody's gonna hang me....  
(the usual smile returns).

You want to know why?

SLIM

No.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: - 3

BILLY

'Cause hangin's too good for me.

He chuckles at his own humor. Slim goes to the desk, busies himself with some papers there, with Billy's amused glance on him.

BILLY

(after a moment)

Kinda nervous, ain't you, Sheriff?

(Slim ignores him)

Strangers in town got you jumpy?

(stretches out; relaxes)

Rough job, bein' a Sheriff. I wouldn't trade places with you, even now. No, sir. I sure wouldn't.

Slim attends grimly to his paper work, refusing to lock up. Billy chuckles softly, and we --

DISSOLVE TO:

61 INT. LOBBY, LARAMIE HOUSE - DAY - CLOSE SHCT - JUDGE

He sits behind the hotel desk for his bench. And he pounds the gavel for order.

JUDGE

The prisoner will rise and face the court.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal as much of the lobby as possible, with Slim, Jess, Burt and Elmer, spectators, witnesses, etc. And Billy Pardee, still smiling in unconcerned affability, steps up to face the judge.

BILLY

Sure, Judge.

JUDGE

I find you guilty of murder in the first degree as charged.

There is a murmur among the spectators, but Billy just grins and shrugs.

JUDGE

Sheriff? Step up, please.

Slim nods and steps up beside the prisoner, nervously.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

JUDGE

Billy Pardee, I remand you to the custody of the Sheriff of this County who will, within the first hour after dawn tomorrow take you from the jail and --

62 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM, BILLY

Billy listens with seeming nonchalance, but it is a chilling sentence nevertheless. And it hits Slim between the eyes, for he hasn't really thought of this.

JUDGE'S VOICE

-- hang you by the neck until you are dead. May the Lord have mercy on your soul.

Slim stares at the Judge, then he licks his lips, and turns to look into the eyes of Billy Pardee. Billy is now looking at him, with a fixed, forced grin.

JUDGE'S VOICE

Your prisoner, Sheriff.

Slim gives the Judge a look and then motions Billy ahead of him, taking him away.

63 FULL SHOT - COURTROOM

As Slim ushers Billy away, Jess falling in with him, watching him with some puzzled concern. For Slim is obviously upset, and nervous.

64 EXT. STREET, LARAMIE HOUSE - DAY - FULL SHOT

There is a small crowd outside -- joined by some of the spectators from inside, as Slim and Jess bring the prisoner out, followed by Burt and Elmer, all armed. They pause and Jess indicates something across the street.

65 LONG SHOT - LOITERERS

A small group of sinister-looking characters stand along a store front across the street, watching.

JESS

Those your pals over there, Billy?

66 FULL SHOT - GROUP

Billy only grins across at the men.

BILLY

Could be. A man never knows when friends are gonna come callin'.

67 MED. PAN SHOT

Taking Slim, Jess and Billy -- with Burt, the deputy trailing behind -- up the street toward the jail. CAMERA HALTS BRIEFLY on the Diner window. Maud is seen staring out, her face set and troubled.

68 CLOSE SHOT - GROUP

Billy, who has managed to regain a bit of his cocky walk, shoots a glance across the street to Maud -- a long, rather significant glance. Slim, troubled though he is, notices it. The group approaches the jail and enters, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

69 EXT. BRIDGE - MED. CLOSE - DAY

SCENE BEGINS on a shot of a bridge across a wash. The bridge is completely wrecked and impassable. CAMERA TILTS TO PICK UP a stagecoach approaching the ruined bridge. The Driver manages to yank his team to a halt before hitting the wash. He climbs down, as does a passenger from the coach. Both look down at the ruined bridge in silence, then start slowly back to the coach, and we

DISSOLVE TO:

70 EXT. LARAMIE STREET - DAY - FULL SHOT

Jess and two other men are busy completing the construction of a crude gallows -- a platform, with steps, a trap door, perhaps under a sturdy tree branch. CAMERA MOVES IN WITH Slim as he crosses to Jess, who pounds away with grim proficiency. He carries some nails in his mouth. Slim looks over the structure gravely:

SLIM

Need any more help?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

JESS

No. Pretty nearly finished.

(stops for a  
brief rest)Lot of trouble to go to for a  
convicted killer, if you ask  
me. A horse and a rope and a  
tree is all that's needed.

SLIM

According to territorial law,  
that's not civilized enough.

JESS

This is, I suppose? A hangin'  
right in the middle of town.  
Maybe we ought to sell tickets.Slim does not smile. Jess starts to work again; both  
look off at:

71 MED. PAN SHOT - GUNMEN

A couple of hard-looking men walk by, saying nothing but  
favoring the gallows and the men working on it with hard,  
level glances.

72 TWO SHOT - JESS, SLIM

SLIM

Looks like some more of Billy  
Pardee's friends.

JESS

Yeah. He's gettin' much too  
popular to suit me.Into the shot hurry Cruse and Hyde, two townsmen seen  
before. Both are agitated.

CRUSE

Slim -- the bridge on the  
Cheyenne stage road's been  
wrecked.

HYDE

And the eastbound's close to  
four hours late. That means  
Creighton's men are turnin' the  
stages back. Nobody's comin'  
in or goin' out except his  
gunslingers.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

SLIM  
(troubled)  
You got no proof of that.

HYDE  
How much proof do you need?  
I've counted a dozen hard-looking  
strangers already -- and there's  
probably a lot more.

SLIM  
(annoyed)  
Well -- what do you want me to  
do about it? Arrest 'em all  
for bein' strangers?

CRUSE  
Listen, Slim -- you know right  
well they're here to stop the  
hangin'!

Slim takes a breath, lets it out and says evenly:

SLIM  
Besides me and my deputies, there  
must be close to a hundred citizens  
in Laramie who know how to pull  
a trigger. I figure this is their  
problem, too.

Cruse and Hyde look at Slim, then at each other, then  
EXIT angrily without saying anything more.

JESS  
I wouldn't count on too much  
help from the "citizens".

SLIM  
(truculently)  
Why not?

JESS  
You're wearin' the star, not them.  
My guess is -- they'll give you  
all the moral support in the world.  
By lockin' themselves indoors  
until it's all over, one way or  
another.

Slim looks at him for a moment, then glances toward the  
gallows under construction again.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: - 2

SLIM

Just make sure that thing is  
ready.

JESS

(quietly)

It'll be ready....Sheriff.

Slim is going to say something further, when he looks across the street to see:

73 MED. LONG SHOT - MAUD - HIS ANGLE

Maud emerges from the cafe bearing a tray and starts carrying it across the street to the jail.

74 MED. PAN SHOT - SLIM

He leaves the gallows structure and strides across the street toward the jail himself. CAMERA PANS HIM THERE. He arrives a stride or two before Maud and opens the door for her.

75 INT. JAIL AND OFFICE - DAY - MED. SHOT

As Maud enters, she says calmly over her shoulder:

MAUD

Thanks.

Slim enters right behind her and says quietly:

SLIM

Little early for supper, isn't it, Maudie?

Tooley and Burt, both on guard inside the jail, look on as they talk.

MAUD

This is lunch. I just got around to fixing it.

76 CLOSE SHOT - BILLY

He rises from his cot and stands by the bars, his eyes bright and lively.

77 WIDER ANGLE

Slim takes the tray from her and crosses to the desk with it. He removes a large cloth which covers the tray, without comment, and inspects each covered dish. Maud looks at him calmly. Billy comments:

BILLY  
 Kinda short on manners today,  
 ain't you, Sheriff? Least you  
 could do was hide your mistrust  
 'till the little lady's gone.

Slim looks levelly at Billy; he is grim and tense, but keeps his voice even and controlled.

SLIM  
 Step back from the door.

Smiling, Billy does so. Slim moves to the cell with the tray, places it on the ground, then addresses Tooey.

SLIM  
 Unlock it, Tooey.

Tooey moves forward, does as told; Slim slides the entire tray into the cell with his foot, then nods to Tooey, who re-locks the door. Maud watches all this with no change of expression. Billy laughs softly.

BILLY  
 Thank you kindly, Sheriff.  
 (picks up tray, puts  
 it on his bunk)  
 Say -- what about tonight's meal?

SLIM  
 What about it?

BILLY  
 Condemned man gets to eat what-  
 ever he wants his last meal,  
 doesn't he?

SLIM  
 (to Maud; coolly)  
 What's your menu tonight?

MAUD  
 (slight hesitation;  
 low voice)  
 Fried chicken and dumplings.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

BILLY

(happy surprise)

Well, now! A man couldn't ask  
for anything better'n that!  
Thank you kindly, ma'am!

Maud does not look at Billy. She merely turns and walks out of the jail, with Billy's chuckle following. Slim hesitates for a moment, then follows her outside.

78 EXT. JAIL - TWO SHOT

Slim comes out a step behind Maud and says:

SLIM

Maudie...

(she stops, turns)

Sorry if I embarrassed you by  
inspecting the tray. It's just  
routine.

*beat*  
Maud is cool, quite self-possessed.

MAUD

Sure.

(beat)

You're very good at totin' a  
badge. Like you'd been doing  
it for years.

SLIM

What's that supposed to mean?

MAUD

A compliment.

SLIM

(flatly)

Thanks.

Maud frowns, puts a hand on his arm.

MAUD

I'm sorry. This thing of hanging  
a man, it's --

SLIM

(cutting in; quietly)

I know.

(a beat; softly)

God, how I know.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

MAUD

You don't have to apologize  
for being suspicious of me,  
or of anybody else. You're  
just doing your job -- and  
doing it well. That's all I  
meant.

With a warm smile, she turns and leaves. Slim looks after her, his tenseness evaporating somewhat. He starts to return to the interior; through the partway-open door comes voices:

TOOEY'S VOICE

You know somethin', Burt? I  
been eatin' at Maudie's place  
three-four months now -- ever  
since she's been here -- an' never  
once had chicken 'n dumplings.  
Sure gonna fill up tonight.

Billy's chuckle is heard again; Slim's expression changes to a frown again; he looks off at Maud, then turns and enters the jail.

DISSOLVE TO:

79 EXT. STREET - NEAR GALLOWS - NIGHT - MED. SHOT

Work is completed on the gallows structure. The two men seen assisting Jess earlier are putting on their jackets, picking up their tools, etc. Jess says to them:

JESS

Thanks, boys. Go on over and  
collect your pay from the Sheriff.

They nod and EXIT. Jess takes one, last look at the structure -- testing a brace here, a crosspiece there, then moves to the b.g., where he bends to pick up his jacket, hammer, saw, etc.

80 CLOSER ANGLE

As Jess straightens up, his hands full, the First Tough saunters in from the street side and leans against the gallows, saying quietly but suddenly:

1st TOUGH

Must take a lot o' know-how  
to build a gallows.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

Jess turns toward the man, looks him over rapidly and does not like what he sees. He asks, levelly:

JESS

What do you want, mister?

The man's hand is close to his gun, but he does not draw.

1st TOUGH

Just a little conversation, that's all.

JESS

(shortly)

Some other time.

He starts to move past the man, when the unmistakable sound of a gun being cocked sounds behind him.

81 CLOSE SHOT - 2ND TOUGH

The 2nd Tough stands in the shadows, near a building corner, his gun levelled at Jess' back.

2nd TOUGH

Just back up this way, Deputy.  
And no noise.

82 MED. SHOT

Jess has no choice but to obey; he backs up slowly, moving further from the street and into the darker shadows. The 1st Tough follows him closely. CAMERA PANS THEM behind the nearest building. The 1st Tough suddenly uncorks a haymaker smack on Jess' chin, and he is knocked flat, dropping his tools.

83 ANOTHER ANGLE

Stunned by the unexpected blow, Jess' reflexes start his hand toward his gun. The 2nd Tough steps on his wrist, bends, removes the gun. He moves back, allows Jess to get warily to his feet. The 1st Tough moves in closer, says:

1ST TOUGH

We got a message for the Sheriff.

JESS

Yeah?

He belts Jess again, knocking him against the wall. Both men move toward Jess now, as we

DISSOLVE TO:

84 EXT. JAIL - NIGHT - MED. SHOT

Slim emerges, looking concerned. Two Guards are on duty (special deputies) outside; Slim questions one of them:

SLIM

Jess been by?

GUARD

Haven't seen him. Maybe he went to eat.

Slim nods, starts across and up the street toward the diner.

85 EXT. NEAR GALLOWS - MED. PAN SHOT

CAMERA PANS Slim as he passes the gallows on his way toward the diner. He slows his walk to look it over briefly, then is about to continue when he hears Jess' voice in a sort of grunt. He moves cautiously in that direction.

86 MED. CLOSE - BEHIND BUILDING - JESS

He is just coming to, trying to struggle groggily to his feet. He sways, holding to the corner of the building for support. He is dirty and banged up. Slim appears in the b.g., sees him, hurries toward him.

SLIM

Jess -- you all right?

He supports Jess while the latter shakes his head, clearing it. Finally, he nods, as his strength returns.

JESS

Yeah.

(moves arms,  
legs, testing)

Nothin's broken, I don't think.  
(straightens up;  
grim)

They just gave me a goin' over.

SLIM

Who did?

JESS

(searches for hat  
and gun, finds them)

Couple visitors I never saw before.  
(starts off; still  
wobbly a bit)

I'll know 'em when I see 'em again,  
though.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

Slim puts out an arm and stops Jess with:

SLIM

Hold it, Jess...They're sure to  
be among friends -- a lot of 'em.

JESS

(still smouldering)

Yeah...

(beat)

They gave me a message for you.

SLIM

Yeah?

JESS

(nods)

Two words. Get out.

Slim considers this with a grim expression. He and Jess walk  
silently to the street.

87 ANOTHER ANGLE - ON STREET

The jail can be seen plainly, as can the Guards outside it.  
CAMERA PANS Jess and Slim until they are almost there. Slim  
stops.

SLIM

You better go see Doc Hansen.

JESS

No.

Slim looks him over briefly, then nods.

SLIM

I'll see you in a while.

JESS

Where you goin'?

SLIM

To find out why anybody should  
want to wear this badge.Jess looks after him as he departs, then turns and enters the  
jail as we

DISSOLVE TO:

88 INT. SHERIFF'S HOME - NIGHT - MED. CLOSE SHOT - SHERIFF

The Sheriff is sitting up in a chair, still bandaged but not looking bad at all. And when he sees Slim coming in he frowns a little, knowing there may be trouble. His WIFE, follows Slim in, looking upset.

SHERIFF

Hello, Slim.

WIFE

I tried to tell him, Mort --

SHERIFF

It's all right, Sarah. What's on your mind, Slim?

SLIM

Sheriff -- I can't do it. You've got to come back and take charge. I wasn't cut out for this job.

SHERIFF

They're makin' trouble for you?

SLIM

I'm not afraid of trouble for myself, you oughta know that. It's the responsibility. Havin' to worry about others. Not knowin' what to do. This is your job.

The Sheriff looks pained, Sarah distraught -- Slim is vehement.

SLIM

(continuing)

I'll stay on as a Deputy and fight for you, but you've got to come back and take charge.

SHERIFF

(glance at wife)

Not now. You're wearin' the star.

SLIM

Here, take it!

He takes off the star, throws it down on table.

WIFE

(emotionally)

No! No, he can't!

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

SLIM

Why not? He's no sicker'n I am. If he can sit here, he's capable of sittin' in the jail and tellin' us what to do.

WIFE

I won't let him! He's not going back to that job, Mr. Sherman -- not ever, if I can help it.

SHERIFF

Now, Sarah --

WIFE

Anyway, not now! Not now!

Slim is staring hard at the Sheriff. He speaks calmly.

SLIM

It's your job. What you're paid for -- I don't want it.

For a moment the two men's eyes hold; the Sheriff shakes his head.

SHERIFF

I'm sorry, Slim. I can't.

He shoves the star across the table toward Slim. For a moment, Slim stares hard at him -- then, with one angry motion, he sweeps the star from the table and up in his hand. Then he turns and stalks out fast, as they stare after him. The CAMERA MOVES IN on the Sheriff's face. He looks ashamed, humiliated.

DISSOLVE TO:

89 INT. TELEGRAPH OFFICE - NIGHT - CLOSE SHOT - OPERATOR

The operator is bent over his key, a desperately harassed look on his face, and he is working hard to send a call. But by his face we can see he is not successful. In b.g. Slim storms in and comes to the counter, overlooking him.

SLIM

I want to send a wire. To the U. S. Marshal's Office in Cheyenne.

OPERATOR

(turning)

I'm sorry, Mr. Sherman. I can't do it.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

SLIM

What do you mean, you can't do it?

As Slim stares angrily, the operator indicates his key.

OPERATOR

I can't raise anybody. The  
wires must be down on both sides  
o' town. My guess is -- somebody  
must've cut 'em.

Slim can only stare at him in dismay.

FADE OUT

(END OF ACT TWO)

ACT III

FADE IN:

90 EXT. STREET - NIGHT - MED. DOLLY SHOT

CAMERA PICKS UP Slim, striding toward the jail. There is not much activity on the street, though lights are on in the saloons, etc. As Slim passes one saloon the sound of raucous laughter follows him. He keeps going.

91 EXT. JAIL - MED. CLOSE

Jess, with a rifle in his hands, is alone outside the jail. He is cleaned up, but still shows some of the effects of his recent encounter. Slim walks up and stops without speaking. Jess looks at his grim face for a moment.

JESS

I told Ed and Walt to go get supper. And I'll lay six to five they won't be back.

SLIM

(gloomily)

Figures.

(turns to look  
more closely  
at Jess)

You feelin' all right?

JESS

More or less.

SLIM

(looking off)

Funny -- I was born in this town.  
Spent most of my life helpin' to  
build it up. An' right now I  
wouldn't give you two cents for  
it.

JESS

(quietly)

What's wrong, Slim?

SLIM

Not a thing. The roads are blocked,  
the telegraph wires are cut, Con  
Creighton's got a couple dozen gun-  
pullers drinkin' it up around town.  
The Sheriff's got a scratch on his  
shoulder and a bad case o' the  
shakes -- and I gotta take a man  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

SLIM (CONT'D.)  
 out and hang him in a few hours.  
 Outside o' that, nothin' is wrong  
 at all.

JESS  
 That sounds like you just tried  
 to resign.

SLIM  
 I did. But it didn't work.  
 (shakes his head)  
 I'm just not cut out for this  
 job.

JESS  
 I don't know. Personally, I  
 think you make a pretty fair  
 lawman.

SLIM  
 Yeah, sure.

JESS  
 (quietly)  
 I mean it. You're honest and  
 you don't scare easy. That's  
 most of it.

SLIM  
 Who says?

JESS  
 I do. Creighton and his hard-  
 cases are a big problem, all  
 right -- but that's not what's  
 really botherin' you.

SLIM  
 No...  
 (looks off toward  
 gallows)  
 It's bein an executioner. No  
 man should have to do that.

JESS  
 Nobody's invented a machine to  
 do it yet.

SLIM  
 (half to himself)  
 I never gave it much thought  
 before...but when the Judge  
 said -- you take him, you hang  
 him by the neck until he's dead...  
 Me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: - 2

SLIM (CONT'D.)

(shakes his head)

I was in the war -- been in  
gunfights. But I never killed  
anybody unless he was tryin' to  
kill me.

JESS

People like Billy Pardee make  
executions kinda necessary.

SLIM

Could you do it? Could you  
hang him?

JESS

(thoughtfully)

I don't know, Slim. Are you  
askin' me to?

Slim shakes his head, finally.

SLIM

No.

(makes a  
decision)

I'm goin' to get word to the  
Marshal in Cheyenne...ask him  
to come here and perform the  
execution.

JESS

How're you gonna do that?

SLIM

Send a rider cross-country.  
There's time to get there and  
back before dawn.

JESS

If he gets by Creighton's men.  
And if the Marshal will come --  
and if he doesn't get shot to  
pieces on his way back.

SLIM

It's still worth a try.

As Slim exits, Jess looks after him, and we

DISSOLVE TO:

92 INT. JAIL - MED. SHOT - NIGHT

Slim and Jess are at the windows; Burt is resting on a cot. Tooey is playing checkers through the bars with Billy Pardee.

BILLY  
(making a move)  
There y're.

Tooey promptly jumps two pieces, says complacently:

TOOEY  
King me.

BILLY  
(sighing)  
You're mighty good at this game.

TOOEY  
(complimented)  
Been at it a good many years.

BILLY  
I never had the time to play  
much. Even when I was a kid, I  
was always too busy.

He glances off at Slim and Jess; there is a twinkle in his eye as he speaks mainly for their benefit.

TOOEY  
What doin'?

BILLY  
(straight-faced)  
Murderin' folks. Why -- 'time  
I was twelve, I had eleven notches  
on my gun.

TOOEY  
(amazed)  
You mean it?

BILLY  
I sure do. All us Pardees were  
in the same business. My pappy,  
bless his poor old soul, he's  
still got the record. Hundred  
and thirty-two.

TOOEY  
(fascinated)  
Is he still livin'?

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

BILLY

Like a newborn colt. He's  
retired, though -- don't do no  
more killin' except maybe on his  
birthday and the fourth of July.

Slim and Jess exchange glances of disgust at Billy's humor  
and Tooey's open-mouthed attitude. During the above, Jess  
moves closer to Slim.

93 TWO SHOT - SLIM, JESS

JESS

(low voice)

I'm gettin' a little sick o'  
this. Why don't you send Tooey  
home?

SLIM

I'd rather have him talkin' to  
Tooey than to us.

BILLY

Say, Sheriff -- what time is it?

JESS

(immediately)

What d'you care? You're not  
goin' anyplace.

BILLY

I'm hungry, that's all. M'stonach's  
sendin' me messages that it's gettin'  
late.

SLIM

Your supper'll get here when the  
lady in the restaurant gets around  
to bringin' it.

JESS

Waste o' good food, if you ask me.

BILLY

(hurt feelings)

You're mighty touchy, Mr. Deputy.

(appears to look  
more closely at  
Jess)

Say -- what happened to you? You  
fall down, or somethin'?

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

Jess glares, is about to say something. Slim interrupts quietly.

SLIM  
Someone comin'.

Jess turns alertly back to the window, ready.

94 EXT. STREET - NIGHT - THEIR POV

The townsmen, Cruse and Hyde and perhaps another man, are approaching the jail.

95 INT. JAIL - NIGHT - MED. SHOT

Slim moves from window to door and opens it. The citizens enter gravely; all are armed. They look around.

CRUSE  
What happened to the extra  
deputies you had outside?

SLIM  
They never came back from supper.

HYDE  
You expect to hold 'em off --  
more'n twenty guns -- with just  
you four?

Billy is attentive to what is being said.

SLIM  
We can probably do it -- from  
in here.

CRUSE  
Come 'morning, it'll be a different  
story.

SLIM  
That's right.

CRUSE  
Slim -- a bunch of us've been  
talkin'. We're gonna help you.

SLIM  
(genuinely  
appreciative)  
Glad to hear it, Sam. I kind've  
been wonderin' what happened to  
everybody. Tomorrow's liable to  
be a little rough.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

HYDE

Nobody talkin' about tomorrow.  
What we're talkin' about is now.

Slim stares at them, not understanding.

CRUSE

There are a dozen more of us out  
back. We'll take him out, up  
the hill...we got the tree all  
picked out.

HYDE

It'll be over in ten minutes  
and nobody hurt...

(looks at Billy,  
says grimly)

Except the one who's got it  
comin'.

JESS

You think Creighton's men wouldn't  
tear this town apart?

CRUSE

What for? There'd be no point,  
with Pardee dead.

96 ANOTHER ANGLE

Billy has forgotten his checkers game with Tooey. He is  
tense, now, showing strain for the first time. There is  
a brief silence, after which Slim says quietly:

SLIM

I've only been Sheriff for  
a little while -- and I admit  
there are some points of law  
I'm probably not too clear on  
...but I'm sure of this: what  
you have in mind is lynching,  
plain and simple.

HYDE

(hotly)

The Judge sentenced him to die,  
didn't he? What's the difference  
when or how it happens?

SLIM

The difference is due process of  
law. If we start foolin' around  
with it, we all might as well go  
back to livin' in caves.

(CONTINUED)

96

CONTINUED:

HYDE

You're not goin' to refuse,  
are you? Because if you do --

He lets his voice trail off significantly. Slim comes in, hard, with:

SLIM

I never could abide a man who  
doesn't finish a sentence --  
'specially if it's a threat.

HYDE

All right. We'll take him our-  
selves.

They both start reaching for their guns. Slim's is out, fast, and Jess' as well, covering them from behind.

JESS

Easy, now. No sense makin'  
the undertaker rich overnight.

There is a silence, during which the citizens glare at Slim and Jess.

97

ANOTHER ANGLE

HYDE

You're a fool, Sherman!

SLIM

I ought to throw you right in  
that cell with him. Get out.

HYDE

(hard; angry)

All right. But remember this:  
Come morning, don't expect any  
help from us. You just had your  
chance for that and turned it  
down.

He turns and exits, with Cruse striding along behind him. There is a brief silence, during which Slim locks the door. Billy breaks the silence by chuckling.

BILLY

(softly)

Nice work, boys. Thanks.

Slim crosses to the cell and grabs Pardee through the bars. For a moment it seems as if Slim is going to kill Pardee himself. Never before have we seen him so possessed with rage.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

BILLY  
 (continuing;  
 straining to  
 talk)

Don't you go hurtin' a prisoner,  
 Sheriff. Not after all that  
 talk about due process of law.

JESS  
 (touching Slim's  
 arm)

Slim...

Slowly Slim releases Pardee -- who backs off deeper into his cell. Burt, the regular deputy, comes forward, saying hesitantly to Slim:

BURT  
 I know how you feel -- but it  
 might've been the best way --  
 what they wanted to do.

SLIM  
 (not angrily)  
 Look, Burt -- if you and Tooey  
 want out, I wouldn't blame you.

BURT  
 (troubled)  
 I didn't mean it that way. I'm  
 stayin'.

TOOEY  
 (nodding seriously)  
 Me too, Slim.

SLIM  
 Thanks.

98 MED. SHOT - ROOM

There is a knock on the door, which startles everyone. Jess goes rapidly to the window; Slim asks:

SLIM  
 Who is it?

MAUD'S VOICE  
 Maudie Cramer -- with the food.

(CONTINUED)

98

CONTINUED:

Slim exchanges a glance with Jess, who is looking out of the window; Jess nods. Slim goes to the door and opens it. Maud is there, with a very large tray this time. Slim takes it from her. She comes in casually, not looking at the prisoner. She is quite pleasant, but underlying this pleasantness is a tenseness. As Slim crosses to the desk with the tray, Maud says:

MAUD

I brought some extra chicken  
and coffee for you and your  
deputies.

SLIM

Thank you, Maudie.  
(leaves tray on  
desk, turns to  
Maud)  
I'll take you back.

MAUD

(with a smile)  
Oh, I'm safe enough.  
(nods toward  
tray)  
Aren't you going to inspect it?

The words are delivered pleasantly; there is no sarcasm. During the scene, Maud has edged unobtrusively nearer the cell, with her back to it.

99

CLOSE SHOT - BILLY

He is, for once, silent. His eyes are bright, they flicker from the tray to Maud's hands, which are behind her.

100

VERY CLOSE - MAUD'S HANDS

as they move from under her apron. In one hand **now is a** small pistol -- a derringer, perhaps. Over these shots:

JESS

(pleasantly)  
I'll do it...mmmm -- look at  
that chicken!

101

WIDER ANGLE - ROOM

Jess has the cover off the tray, removes a large bowl of chicken, quickly inspects the rest. Burt and Tooey are watching with enjoyment. Slim appears to be watching the food, but he has more of his attention on Maud.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

TOOEY  
 I'm partial to drumsticks, if  
 nobody minds.

With this, INTERCUT:

102 CLOSE SHOT - HANDS

Maud's hand, with the little gun in it, moves unobtrusively back to where Billy can reach through the bars for it. As he starts to do so, a third hand enters the shot and clamps down on Maud's wrist.

103 FULL SHOT

To overlap above. Slim moves quickly and smoothly, reaches down and grabs Maud's wrist. She gasps in surprise and a little pain as he takes the gun from her.

SLIM  
 Chicken and derringers. Nice  
 meal you dish up.

He is mad, and he still holds her wrist. Billy says, in a rather different voice from before:

BILLY  
 You can let go now, Sheriff.  
 You don't have to break her  
 wrist.

Slim lets her go, looks at the gun, then back to Maud.

SLIM  
 You could've fooled me. I  
 never figured you wanted me  
 dead.

She buries her face in her hands, shakes her head. She cannot fight the tears back.

MAUD  
 I don't, Slim -- I don't! I  
 -- I just didn't want Billy  
 to hang!

(raises her  
 head)

He's my -- husband. We've been  
 married, off and on, a long time.

There is a shocked silence. Everyone in the room except Maud turns to look at Billy, who shrugs and says:

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

BILLY

That's right -- Mrs. Billy  
Pardee.(beat; then,  
to Maud)Don't worry, honey. Con and  
the boys'll get me loose.Slim merely looks at him, then back to Maud, who is  
gradually beginning to regain control. Then, quietly:

SLIM

Come on. There are some  
questions I need answers to.He takes her arm and moves toward the door with her. Jess  
steps closer.

JESS

Want me to come along

SLIM

I's all right. Just goin' across  
the street.

Jess unlocks the door; Slim and Maud exit.

BILLY

Maudie...

(she hesitates  
but does not turn)Thanks for rememberin' how much  
I like chicken and dumplings.

Slim closes the door behind them.

104 EXT. JAIL - NIGHT - MED. PAN SHOT

Overlapping their exit. Maud has heard Billy's remark and  
it has affected her.

MAUD

Slim...

He does not look at her nor stop. CAMERA PANS THEM BOTH  
across the street, which seems quite deserted. They reach  
the restaurant door across the street.

105 EXT. RESTAURANT - TWO SHOT

Slim reaches forward to open the door for her. She looks  
up at him, says miserably:

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

MAUD

Slim -- I'm sorry. I know how it looks, but I didn't mean you any harm.

SLIM

That's a little hard for me to believe, right now.

MAUD

It's true. Supposing it had worked and Billy escaped. Whether you realize it or not, that probably would've saved your life.

SLIM

Then you know for sure Creighton's comin' in...

MAUD

(nodding)

The only thing I don't know is when.

SLIM

How'd you happen to get mixed up with Billy?

MAUD

Met him at a dance in Cheyenne. He was different then.

SLIM

That's what they always say.

MAUD

Yes, I suppose so. Anyway, I left him over a year ago. Never expected to see him again. We were married five years. Some -- some of them were good years.

SLIM

You still love him.

MAUD

No...I don't think so. But -- if he got -- killed somewhere, it wouldn't surprise me... probably wouldn't hit me so hard as this -- knowing he's going to hang right here.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: - 2

SLIM

I'm sorry for you. And for  
him, too, in a way. But  
there's nothing I can do about  
it. Good night.

He exits from the shot. She looks after him, then turns  
slowly and enters her restaurant.

106 MED. PAN SHOT - SLIM

He walks back toward the jail, his face set and his  
thoughts still with Maud. The jail is in the b.g. A  
voice stops him.

CREIGHTON'S VOICE

Sheriff.

The voice is not unpleasant. Slim stops, turns.

107 MED. SHOT - CREIGHTON

He is a good-sized man, well-dressed, unarmed. He comes  
forward from the shadows and smiles, stopping a few feet  
from Slim.

108 TWO SHOT - SLIM, CREIGHTON

SLIM

Yeah?

His hand drops to his gun. Creighton shakes his head  
easily.

CREIGHTON

I'm unarmed, Mr. Sherman.

SLIM

(frowning at him)  
I don't know you.

CREIGHTON

I think you may have heard of  
me. My name's Con Creighton.

SLIM

(tensely)  
We've been expectin' you.

(CONTINUED)

CREIGHTON

One of the things that's come  
to my attention is that you're  
considered to be a good business  
man.

SLIM

Get to it, Creighton.

CREIGHTON

A thousand dollars.

SLIM

For what?

CREIGHTON

For just getting a good, sound  
night's sleep -- you and your  
deputies. And for leaving a  
door or two unlocked.

SLIM

(hard)  
Creighton --

CREIGHTON

(interrupting  
smoothly)

On second thought, make that  
two thousand.

SLIM

No deal. I'm a real light  
sleeper and unlocked doors make  
me nervous.

CREIGHTON

(the smile  
fading)

You're not as smart as I'd been  
led to believe.

SLIM

Neither are you. About all you're  
gonna get walkin' in here is a  
cell of your own next to Billy  
Pardee's.

CREIGHTON

(half-smiles)

I wouldn't try that, Sherman.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: - 2

SLIM

No?

His hand drops again to his gun. This time he draws it.

CREIGHTON

Not unless you want to argue  
with them.

Slim steps sideways in order to keep Creighton in his view, turns slightly to look around, ready to draw.

109 MED. SHOT - SLIM'S ANGLE - TWO TOUGHS

Two toughs are coming from an alleyway. CAMERA PANS RAPIDLY to another area; two more toughs approach from there. All have guns in their hands; all are very quiet as they approach.

110 FULL SHOT - SCENE

Slim crouches, ready to do battle, and the toughs continue their unhurried approach, as we

FADE OUT

(END OF ACT III)

ACT IV

FADE IN:

111 EXT. STREET - NIGHT - FULL SHOT

(No time lapse) Creighton's men are advancing upon Slim, when Jess' voice sounds, loud and clear:

JESS

Hold it!

112 MED. CLOSE - NEAR JAIL

Jess, his rifle braced against a building, has a fine bead on something o.s.

JESS

Creighton! There's a 30-30 pointed right at your head. You an' your men back off -- move!

113 MED. LONG SHOT - REVERSE - OVER JESS IN F.G.

Jess' rifle sight can be seen lined up exactly where he said it was.

114 MED. GROUP

Slim relaxes somewhat, looks at Jess in the distance, then at the gunmen, who have now stopped, irresolutely.

SLIM

Call it, Creighton.

He backs toward the jail, keeping his eye on the guns and staying out of Jess' line of fire.

CREIGHTON

No hurry, Sherman.

(a beat)

We'll be seeing you...

Slim reaches the jail; he and Jess enter and close the door behind them. Meanwhile, Creighton and his men have already disappeared in the darkness.

DISSOLVE TO:

115 EXT. GALLOWS - DAWN - MED. SHOT

The gallows, with hanging noose, is silhouetted against the lightening sky of dawn.

116 EXT. LARAMIE STREET - DAWN - LONG SHOT

Shooting down the street, past the gallows -- it is deserted as dawn lightens the sky in b.g. Or rather, it seems deserted -- no living soul is visible.

117 EXT. LARAMIE STREET - DAWN - MED. SHOT

As seen through the window of a store or house. There is a curtain of some type on the window which obscures part of the view. A hand reaches out and draws it aside, and we can see down the street toward jail. (No person visible except hand and arm).

118 EXT. STREET - DAWN - MED. SHOT

Shooting past the corner of a building, the street partly seen down toward the jail. Now CAMERA SHIFTS DOWN to CLOSE SHOT of a piece of bare ground right at the corner of the building as we hear FOOTSTEPS, stealthily, on gravel. And INTO SHOT comes a pair of boots, dirty and battered, with huge California-rowel spurs. They stop in a position which clearly suggests the owner is peering around the corner.

119 EXT. STOREFRONT - DAWN - MED. SHOT

The window shade is drawn -- but a hand carefully draws a peephole at the side. We see no face. Then the CAMERA PANS AWAY AND UP to the roof of the store next door. There is a false-front type of wall concealing the actual roof, there is probably a drop of two or three feet behind it. We see no person concealed there, but now we see a rifle barrel slowly pushed out over the wall, silhouetted against the sky.

120 EXT. JAIL - DAWN - MED. SHOT

Just an establishing shot, as if to underscore that this is the focus of all the attention of previous shots. Perhaps we catch just a glimpse of faces behind the windows.

121 INT. JAIL - DAWN - CLOSE SHOT - SLIM

He waits, hollow-eyed, face drawn and tense, at the near window. In b.g. Jess is posted at the other. Jess stirs, looks toward Slim.

121 CONTINUED:

JESS  
Gettin' light. Time we were  
startin'.

Slim only nods. Then slowly he stirs, stretches, turns to the cell, stares in.

122 CLOSE TWO SHOT - SLIM, BILLY

Billy stares back out at him. He is wide-awake, and we get the impression he hasn't slept too well. But he is his old cheerful self, grinning at Slim.

BILLY  
Mornin', Sheriff.

SLIM  
You want some coffee, Pardee?

BILLY  
No, thanks. I'll wait.

SLIM  
(unsmiling)  
Your last chance.

BILLY  
(shakes head,  
grins)  
I'll wait and have breakfast  
with Con.

SLIM  
(turning away)  
Suit yourself.

BILLY  
Sheriff -- it ain't the company.  
It's the place -- you understand?

Slim makes no acknowledgement, moves to a stove, pours himself coffee.

BILLY  
(continuing)  
You really gonna try it? Take  
me out there?

SLIM  
You guessed it.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

Billy's feigned cheer has left him altogether by now. Slim ignores him, so he turns his attention to Jess. His voice reflects the approach of panic.

BILLY

Hey, Deputy...

JESS

Yeah?

BILLY

You better talk some sense into  
your friend.

JESS

Relax. It'll all be over soon.

BILLY

(after a pause)

Listen -- be smart. ~~Con~~ and his  
boys -- they're out there, you  
know that.

(no answer)

Don't fight 'em. You won't have  
a prayer.

JESS

(quietly)

Speakin' of prayin', might be  
a good idea if you did some.

123 CLOSE SHOT - BURT

He is ready, armed, and scared.

124 CLOSE SHOT - TOOZY

He is tense, also, and scared.

125 CLOSE SHOT - SLIM

He sips his coffee, watching the sky.

126 STOCK SHOT (SKY)

A few feet of a sky at sunrise.

127 CLOSE SHOT - JESS

He is watching the window, also. A cock CROWS somewhere.  
He turns to look at Slim.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

JESS  
Looks like the Marshal from  
Cheyenne couldn't make it,  
Slim.

128 MED. SHOT - ROOM

SLIM  
Yeah ---

He moves to a peg, takes keys from it and unlocks the cell door.

SLIM  
(continuing)  
Ready, Billy?

Billy summons a last bit of bravado.

BILLY  
Sure. Question is -- are  
you?

SLIM  
As ready as we're gonna get.  
Let's go.

Jess unlocks the door, steps outside with his gun in his hand. Tooey and Burt follow, with shotguns. After them come Billy and Slim.

129 EXT. JAIL - DAY - MED. CLOSE GROUP SHOT

Tooey stands to one side of door, Burt on the other. Billy comes out and stands. Jess comes to stand behind him to one side, then Slim appears, his face tense and drawn, and stands at the other. They all look down the street.

130 EXT. LARAMIE STREET - DAY - LONG SHOT

It is as deserted as before. Maybe a chicken or two. Not even a horse.

131 CLOSE SHOT - STORE FRONT

The peephole at the side of the drawn blind disappears.

132 CLOSE SHOT - WINDOW

The hand holding back the curtain drops it.

133 CLOSE SHOT - ROOF

The rifle protruding over the wall moves, to ready.

134 CLOSE SHOT - BOOTS

The battered California-rowel boots shift position with a scrape of gravel. CAMERA MOVES UP AND BACK to include whole figure -- one of the toughs. He has turned away from the corner of the building and signals somebody behind. O.s. there is the sudden sound of HORSE HOOVES, receding fast.

135 EXT. JAIL - DAY - CLOSE GROUP SHOT

The SOUND of the horses' hooves receding is clear on the still morning air. That they know what it means registers on all their faces, with varying emotion. Now Slim, jaw hard, nods them on. And they start down the street toward gallows.

136 LONG SHOT - FROM DOWN THE STREET - TO GROUP

As they come out into the street, Tooey and Burt leading, Billy next, Jess and Slim in rear, spread out a little. They march toward the gallows, shadow of which might be seen on a wall in f.g.

137 MED. SHOT - GROUP

As they reach the center of the street there is the SOUND of a DOOR. They pause and look to one side.

138 MED. SHOT - MAUD

She has appeared outside the door of her cafe -- she looks stiff and straight and white-faced.

SLIM

Go back inside, Maudie.

Her eyes follow them as they pass her. Then she turns and enters the cafe.

139 LONG SHOT - FROM ROOF PERSPECTIVE - TO GROUP

As seen down the gun barrel trained on them, they march.

140 LONG SHOT - THROUGH WINDOW - TO GROUP

As seen through a window. They pass, then CAMERA PANS UP to the face of Cruse. He stands there watching, emotion working in his face. He is asmed of himself.

141 LONG SHOT - THROUGH UPSTAIRS WINDOW - TO GROUP

Again the CAMERA MOVES AWAY to focus CLOSE ON Mort Cory, the Sheriff as he stares out, ashamed. He looks over at a table, to his gunbelt.

142 LONG SHOT - SHOOTING PAST GROUP

Toward the gallows, seen farther down the street. Up ahead a group of men appears, turning into the street, coming toward them.

143 LONG SHOT - CREIGHTON AND HIS MEN

Creighton is in the middle, the others ranged across the street and they come on, not hurrying, walking with deadly calm.

144 MED. FULL SHOT - AT GALLOWS

The procession has almost reached the gallows but it is evident that they won't make it -- for Creighton is coming on, close. So they stop. Creighton raises a hand and stops his line some short distance away.

CREIGHTON  
(calling)  
Sherman -- give him up.

145 CLOSE GROUP SHOT

Slim and Jess have come up close beside Billy, whose eyes are sliding around looking for a way to escape. Slim just shakes his head.

SLIM  
Don't try it, Creighton.

146 CLOSE SHOT - CREIGHTON

CREIGHTON  
(angrily)  
What chance do you think you  
have? Just the four of you?

147 CLOSE SHOT - CRUSE

As he stands behind his window. His face sets, he opens door.

148 MED. SHOT - STREET

Cruse comes out the door, advancing into the street, turning back his coat to clear his gun.

149 CLOSE SHOT - HYDE

Inside a store, looking out, turns, sees Cruse, and starts also.

150 LONG SHOT - STREET

From one side Cruse, from another Hyde, and others are following, coming out into the street.

151 CLOSE GROUP SHOT

Slim and Jess are looking around, as Elmer nods toward the men coming out.

152 LONG SHOT - STREET

Maybe a dozen men are moving along the sides of the street, guns ready.

153 CLOSE SHOT - CREIGHTON

As he stares, angry.

154 CLOSE GROUP SHOT

Slim and Jess are beginning to smile as they turn back, Billy looks scared.

SLIM

Seems there's more than just the four of us. Maybe you better go back where you came from.

155 CLOSE SHOT - CREIGHTON

He stares, then grimly nods, starts to turn away.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED:

BILLY'S VOICE

Con!

Then, suddenly Creighton swings back gun up and throws a fast shot at Slim.

156 FULL SHOT - START OF BATTLE

The shot hits Billy, but we are not sure of that as Slim ducks and Jess pushes Billy ahead of him and to the side of the street. Billy goes down, Jess and Slim and the others have ducked for cover as the firing starts. The whole street clears and men are in doorways, etc. shooting. INTERCUT SHOTS OF: Creighton shooting, his toughs shooting, Slim, Jess, Tooey, Cruse, Hyde, others shooting.

157 CLOSE SHOT - BILLY

He is wounded seriously, but he manages to get partway to his feet and scramble toward a man who is down, between buildings, near the gallows.

158 MED. CLOSE - SHERIFF

The Sheriff, still bandaged, rounds a building corner, looks off at:

159 MED. SHOT - BILLY, SHERIFF

Billy gets the gun from the fallen man, turns, sees the Sheriff and fires. The Sheriff fires at the same time -- and his shot spins Billy backwards, dropping him in the shadow of the gallows.

160 MED. SHOT - CREIGHTON

He is firing from cover, retreating when he can.

161 CLOSE SHOT - JESS

firing off at various enemies. He runs out of shells, ducks down, starts to reload. Creighton appears in the b.g., sees Jess, takes a shot just as Jess sees him and rolls out of the way.

162 MED. CLOSE - SLIM

He rounds a corner, sees Creighton about to fire again at Jess, snaps off a shot.

163 MED. CLOSE - CREIGHTON

Slim's shot kills him, sending him into the street.

164 MED. SHOT - TWO CREIGHTON MEN

They see Creighton fall, look at each other, then turn and run.

165 MED. SHOT - OTHER CREIGHTON MEN

They move from cover and join the flight. One or two of them are dropped by accurate fire from the townspeople.

166 VARIOUS CUTS - TOWNSPEOPLE

Cruse, Hyde, the Sheriff and others are firing, advancing as they do so.

167 FULL SHOT - STREET

The Creighton men left race out of town with gunshots following them; finally, the last shot is fired and it is very quiet.

168 MED. SHOT - NEAR GALLOWS

Slim and Jess meet near the gallows, and Billy's body. The Sheriff enters the scene.

SLIM

The Sheriff's bullet finished him --but Creighton's might have been enough. The first shot fired.

JESS

He was right. He said he'd never hang.

SHERIFF

Slim -- I don't know what to say to you.

SLIM

You don't have to say anything. You were here when you were needed.

(looks around;  
proud)

So was everybody else.

(CONTINUED)

168 CONTINUED:

Slim unpins his badge and hands it to the Sheriff.

SLIM  
(continuing)  
I'm glad to get rid o' this.

JESS  
(handing over  
his own badge)  
Likewise.

The Sheriff takes the badges, looks somewhat thoughtfully at them. Pocketing the one Jess has worn, he puts on Slim's badge.

SHERIFF  
(puts on badge)  
I dunno what Sarah is gonna  
say -- but it'll be plenty.

He turns, walks away. CAMERA PANS AROUND. Standing not far away, her hands on her hips, is the Sheriff's wife. As he walks toward her, she is ready to let him have it.

169 TWO SHOT - SLIM, JESS

Smiling slightly as they watch.

FADE OUT

(END OF ACT IV)

TAG

FADE IN:

170 EXT. STREET - DAY - MED. SHOT

Slim and Jess are at a hitchrack, getting their horses ready to ride. They both look off, seeing:

171 LONG SHOT - MAUD

Maud is walking slowly toward the gallows, carrying a folded blanket. There is various activity of wounded men being helped, etc. Billy's body lays where it has fallen, still. Perhaps Burt and Elmer are approaching it, and they stop when they see Maud.

172 TWO SHOT - JESS, SLIM

They are watching Maud, when hurried hoofbeats SOUND. Both look off at:

173 FULL SHOT - STREET

A big MARSHAL wearing a big badge and riding a large horse, comes thundering down the street and pulls up in front of the jail, where Slim and Jess are near their horses. The Marshal dismounts and addresses Slim importantly:

MARSHAL

Where can I find Sherman? The Sheriff?

SLIM

Well -- I'm Sherman, but I'm not wearin' the badge anymore.

MARSHAL

What? I got an urgent message from a Sheriff named Sherman! Rode all the way from Cheyenne!

SLIM

(wearily)

Well...I'm not the one to talk to. Guess you'd better see the man in the office over there.

He looks off again, and his glance is direct enough to make the Marshal turn and look, also, at:

174 MED. LONG SHOT - NEAR THE JAIL

Maud carefully covers Billy's body with her blanket. Then, Burt and Tooey pick him up and carry him away. She walks slowly alongside them.

175 MED. SHOT - SLIM, JESS, MARSHAL

Slim shakes his head and says softly:

SLIM

I'm just not cut out for the  
job, that's all.

JESS

Let's go home, Slim.

Slim nods, and both mount. The Marshal stares at them, confused, then grimly heads for the jail itself, shaking his head. CAMERA PANS WITH the two as they ride slowly out of Laramie, and we

FADE OUT

THE END