LARAMIE

"THE STAR TRAIL"

(7-31-59)

7-21-59

REVUE PRODUCTIONS, INC.
UNIVERSAL CITY
CALIFORNIA

PROD. #12230
July 21, 1959

LARAMIE

"THE STAR TRAIL"

By

Douglas Heyes

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WESTERN

LARAMIE

PROD. #12230
REV. 7/21/59

"THE STAR TRAIL"

CAST

SLIM
JESS

HATCH
EVIE
MA
CURLY
TROY
VIC
HOWARD

LUD
MINISTER
GRAT
CUTTER
THORNE
BOY
RAVIC (silent)

SETS

INTERIORS

SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL
HATCH'S HOUSE
STAGECOACH
SALOON
BANK
EVIE'S ROOM
HOTEL ROOM

EXTERIORS

SHERMAN RANCH GATE
ROLLING PRAIRIE
ROCKY HILLSIDE
MEDICINE BOW, WYOMING
STREET
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
SALOON
ROOMING HOUSE
BANK
HATCH'S HOUSE
HILLSIDE GRAVEYARD

"THE STAR TRAIL"

FADE IN:

1 EXT. MEDICINE BOW, WYOMING - NIGHT - LONG SHOT 1
A projecting sign in f.g. identifies the post office and the town. Rectangles of light pattern the street, slanting from stark-lit saloon and dancehall windows. Moving shadows, framed within them, show where the action is. It is not in the street -- not now. Cow ponies drowse at hitch rails. Buckboards stand idle beside the empty boardwalk. Falsefront buildings grow sparse in the distance, and the far reaches of the town disappear entirely into black prairie night. A jumble of rough voices and strident laughter competes with an indifferently fingered piano. These are the sounds of the silence, crowing the street with disembodied echoes. VIC STODDARD, a tall, heavy-shouldered, despairing man, approaches out of the darkness. His manner seems furtive. He avoids the bright saloon entrances. He carries an envelope in his hand and is moving toward the post office.

2 MOVING SHOT - VIC STODDARD 2
walks toward camera, his expression tense. Suddenly swinging doors burst open in b.g., and a man steps out on the boardwalk, hailing Vic. This is CURLY TROY: handsome, mocking, mercurial and deadly.

CURLY
Vic!

Vic stops as if striken. CAMERA HOLDS as he turns stiffly to face Curly. Other people drift out of the saloon behind Curly, grinning at Vic's discomfiture.

VIC
Oh. Hello, Curly.

3 ANOTHER ANGLE 3
Curly regards Vic admonishingly.

CURLY
I'm surprised, Vic. I really am. I could hardly believe my ears when folks told me you'd come into town -- after I told you not to.

The still-gathering spectators watch in fascination. If they have any sympathy for Vic, it isn't evident. Most seem pleased to see him suffer -- the guilty thrill that someone other than themselves is the victim. Vic is very much aware of their eyes upon him -- and it is this, as much as Curly, which will goad him to his destruction.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED 3

VIC
(uncertainly)
I said I'd stay out. I got a right to be here. It ain't hurtin' you.

CURLY
(seems pained)
Vic -- how can you say that? You know how deep it hurts me when you don't take me serious.

There are some nervous sinckers from the crowd. Among those snickering is GRAT, who wears a deputy sheriff's badge.

VIC
(the fear rising)
All right, Curly ... I'll be gettin' out, soon as I mail this letter ...

CURLY
Sooner than that, Vic. You got to admit I been more than generous. Have I ever once tried to cut that barbed wire you put up on my father's range?

VIC
(with shaky conviction)
That's my property now ...

CURLY
Sure. An' you got your rights. An' my pa respects 'em. Don't he?

Vic doesn't answer. He stares at Curly, transfixed, as Curly strolls out into the center of the street, his gun tied low.

CURLY
(continued)
But this town -- this ain't your property. An' as for me -- I don't like no sodbuster's boots markin' up this street.

Vic casts a hopeless glance toward the postoffice, then back to Curly and the mesmerized crowd.

VIC
All right, Curly. Just let me back to my horse. I'll get out right now.

CONTINUED

3 CONTINUED (cont'd) 3

CURLY
Fine. But first -- show some respect for my rights. Take the boots off, huh? Go on, Vic -- sit right down there and take 'em off.

The crowd watches. Vic straightens, having been pushed as far as he will be.

VIC
Curly -- let me by -- I'll be leavin' all right -- but I'll be wearin' my boots.

CURLY
(shakes his head)
I been more than generous already, Vic. You want to show your appreciation, you'll sit yourself down and do like I say.

Vic stands impaled by Curly's chill smile and the glittering gaze of the crowd. He hardens till he's brittle.

VIC
Stand out o' my way, Curly. I'm comin' by.

CURLY
Wouldn't try it in them boots, Vic.

VIC
(suddenly snaps)
All right! Have it your way!

He claws for his gun. Curly waits until Vic has cleared leather -- even until he is bringing the gun up -- before he draws and fires with incredible speed, drilling Vic's breast and sending him dead to the dirt. The letter flutters from Vic's hand as he falls. Curly holsters his gun and saunters forward as the crowd moves in, reassuring him. Over their general willingness to witness his act of self-defense, we hear, specifically:

GRAT
We all saw it, Curly. He went for his gun.

3 CONTINUED (cont'd) 3

Curly nods dispassionately, looking down at the dead man.

CURLY
Yeah. Too bad ... didn't have time to mail his letter.

He reaches down, picks it up, and looks at it with curiosity.

4 TWO SHOT - CURLY AND GRAT 4

GRAT
Go on; read it.

Curly glances at Grat reprovingly.

CURLY
That's against the law, Grat. Deputy Sheriff ought to know that.
(studies the address)
Least we can do is post it for him.

5 INSERT - THE ENVELOPE 5
- - showing the address as Curly's voice reads it.

CURLY'S VOICE
"Jess Harper -- Sherman Ranch -- Laramie, Wyoming."

FADE OUT

MAIN TITLE AND CREDITS

ACT I

FADE IN:

6 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH - DAY - CLOSE SHOT ON SIGN 6
It reads:

SHERMAN RANCH
STAGE STOP
LARAMIE, 12 MILES

CAMERA PULLS BACK as a crude cantilever gate, upon which the sign is posted, swings open to allow JESS HARPER to ride through. Jess closes the gate behind him, takes a lingering look back, then wheels his horse, boots it into a gallop, and rides off. CAMERA PANS after him.

DISSOLVE

7 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY - LONG SHOT 7
Jess rides a trail through smooth rolling hills. From beyond a hill in b.g., a second rider now appears, racing at an angle to intercept Jess. This is SLIM SHERMAN. He calls to Jess over the distance which intervenes.

SLIM
Jess! Wait up!

Jess turns in the saddle, sees Slim, and reluctantly slows his horse for a meeting he had hoped to avoid. Slim overtakes him, gentles his mount to a walk, and rides beside Jess, eyeing him in puzzlement.

8 MOVING SHOT - SLIM AND JESS 8

SLIM
What's wrong? You pick up and ride out without even sayin' goodbye?

JESS
(lamely)
I never could say that word.

SLIM
(concerned)
Jonesy said you got a letter.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED (contd) 8

JESS
(nods)
Came in on the stage. Friend of mine's got trouble -- over in Rock Springs.

SLIM
(grins)
Aren't we givin' you trouble enough?

JESS
You can handle yours, Slim. He can't.

SLIM
(with decision)
Then I'll ride along.

JESS
(shakes his head)
Somebody's got to take care of Andy.

SLIM
Jonesy's able.

JESS
He likes takin' care o' you. Let him. You're needed here.

SLIM
So are you. Thought you knew that by now.

JESS
Sure, Slim. But looks like I'm needed more in Rock Springs.

SLIM
(in rueful resignation)
Well -- don't forget where you started from.

He pulls his horse to a halt. Jess reins up. The CAMERA HOLDS. Slim offers his hand.

SLIM
(continued)
Come back when you can.

CONTINUED

8 CONTINUED (contd) 8

Jess looks at him fondly, and takes his handshake.

JESS
You'll never get rich, Slim.

SLIM
Why not?

JESS
Plantin' tumbleweeds. No profit.

The handshake holds for a moment. Then Jess turns his horse and rides out quickly. Slim sits his saddle, looking after him regretfully.

9 SLIM'S POV 9

The trail disappears over a hill in the distance, taking Jess with it.

DISSOLVE

10 EXT. ROCK SPRINGS - NIGHT - MOVING SHOT - JESS 10-

rides into Rock Springs. The town hasn't changed, but the night is younger and warmer than it was when Vic Stoddard was killed. There is some passing traffic, slowed to a walk by the heat. Jess reaches a big frame house with a sign above the porch: "ROOMS". Jess reins up and dismounts.

11 MEDIUM SHOT 11

A strong-featured old woman sits in a rocking chair on the porch, fanning herself. Her name is MA POOLE. On a wicker table at her elbow there is a tray. On the tray, there is a pitcher of lemonade and some glasses. Ma watches Jess as he inspects his roan critically, running a hand over the animal's heated flanks. Jess sees her watching and nods politely.

JESS
Evenin', ma'am.

MA
Best time o' day. Cooler. Be wantin' a room?

JESS
Yes, ma'am. Soon as I see t' my horse.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED (cont'd) 11

MA
There's a no-account boy under the steps. He'll take 'im 'round to the stable.
(yells)
Will! Will Howard!

The BOY crawls out from under the porch steps with an air of martyrdom, and shuffles over to take the horse's bridle. Jess hands him a coin with:

JESS
Give 'im a little walk first. Say ten minutes.

The boy regards the coin as a complication.

BOY
That's a nickle walk. This here's a dime.

JESS
Got to walk back, don't you?

The boy considers this logic and is impressed.

BOY
Well, that's so. Yes, sir.

Jess takes his saddlebags, slings them over his shoulder, and starts up the steps. The boy leads the horse away. Ma chuckles.

MA
That boy don't think things through; never did.

JESS
Can I see the room now?

MA
All the empty ones are standin' open. Help yourself. Keys on the credenza, prices posted. Sign the book.

Jess grins and EXITS into the house. Ma pours herself a glass of lemonade from the pitcher beside her and calls to the o.s. Jeff.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED (cont'd) 11

MA
Like a free lemonade?

JESS'S VOICE
My favorite kind.

He comes out on the porch again, carrying a key, as she pours the second glass.

JESS
Took 204. All right?

MA
Nice room. Had m' first-born there. Two windows, close to the bath. Be keepin' it long?

Jess flops into a rockingchair across the table from Ma, as she passes him the glass.

JESS
Too soon to say. Came on account of Vic Stoddard. You know him?

MA
(her expression clouding)
Oh. Oh, sure. Just the one night, then?

JESS
(puzzled)
Why so?

MA
(surprised he doesn't know)
Funeral's in the mornin'.

JESS
(startled)
Funeral?

MA
Ain't that what ya come for?
(quickly contrite)
Oh, my. You hadn't heard?

Jess shakes his head, stunned. May looks at him sympathetically.

MA
(continues)
He was a good friend?

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED cont'd 11

JESS
(nods slowly)
How'd it happen?

MA
(studies him appraisingly)
Mightn't be wise to tell ya ...

JESS
Somebody will.

MA
(despairingly)
I know, boy. An' from the look o' you -- you might go makin' the same mistake he did.

JESS
What was that?

MA
(after a pause)
Pullin' a gun on Curly Troy.

12 CLOSEUP - JESS 12
He leans toward her intently, his eyes narrowing and a ridge of muscle hardening along his jaw.

DISSOLVE

13 INT. SALOON - NIGHT - CLOSE ON CURLY TROY 13
He is standing in a rear corner of the saloon, speaking sententiously to the o.s. crowd.

CURLY
Step up to the bar, boys -- I'm buyin'! An' we're drinkin' to Vic Stoddard!

14 MEDIUM FULL SHOT 14
Curly addresses the crowd from behind a table. Seated beside him is EVIE BLAKE, a dance hall queen who manages to appear both sharp and rounded. There are four other men seated at the table. One of them is Grat, the sheriff's deputy seen earlier. All are attentive to Curly, marveling at his forgiving nature.

CONTINUED

14 CONTINUED cont'd 14

CURLY
(continues)
Maybe you think that's strange -- knowin' how it was him or me out there. But right or wrong, Vic stood up for what he believed, an' I respect him for it. An' I want every man here to turn up tomorrow for that funeral. 'Cause Curly Troy don't hold a grudge.

The speech is loudly approved by its auditors, who are already en route to the bar. Curly sinks back into his chair, and Evie impulsively kisses him on the ear.

15 CLOSER SHOT - AT THE TABLE 15

Curly grins and wraps an arm around her, dismissing the other men at the table.

CURLY
Like I said, boys -- get your glasses filled at the bar. The lady an' me'd like t' be alone.

The others push back their chairs and clear out good-naturedly. CAMERA MOVES IN on Curly and Evie, as he leans close to whisper something in her ear. She laughs oddly.

16 ANGLE TOWARD THE DOOR 16
Jess enters, glances around appraisingly, and moves to one of the busy bartenders. CAMERA MOVES with him.

JESS
Someone said I'd find Curly Troy in here.

The bartender, whose name is LUD, nods to the corner table.

LUD
(grinning)
Over ther -- only I wouldn't go buttin' in about now. Meantime, Curly's buyin' drinks for the house. What's yours?

JESS
(shakes his head)
Just had a lemonade.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED cont'd 16

He moves away from the bar toward the corner table. Lud looks after him disapprovingly, but is too busy to protest.

17 ANGLE AT THE TABLE 17

Jess moves in as Curly continues to whisper in the girl's ear. She laughs again as Jess stands looking down at them. They are unaware of him until:

JESS
Which one of you is Curly Troy?

Curly glances up sharply, then speaks with scathing sarcasm.

CURLY
Now which one do you think? There's exactly two of us sittin' here, an' Evie don't look much like a man.

JESS
Neither do you.

Curly's eyes widen with shock, then fill with poison. Evie stares at Jess in disbelief. Those nearest the table have heard Jess, too, and the word passes quickly and quietly to the others. They watch Curly as he uncoils slowly. Evie slips out from behind the table and moves away cautiously.

CURLY
You come a long way to tell me that?

JESS
From Laramie. I'm a friend of Vic Stoddard's.

Curly nods in slow comprehension, his handsome face made less handsome by the smile which freezes there.

CURLY
Oh, yeah ... Jess Harper, wasn't it? Mailed a letter to you, couple days back. Vic couldn't make it to the post office, so I sent it on. Paid the postage, too. You owe me eleven cents.

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED cont'd 17

Jess, without taking his eyes off Curly, digs into his vest pocket with his left hand, finds some small change, separates two nickles and a copper cent, and tosses them deliberately into a brass gaboon.

JESS
Now maybe you can think of somethin' else I owe you.

CURLY
(still smiling)
You didn't have to do that. I'd have killed you for nothing.

Jess steps back and spreads his hands invitingly.

JESS
Get started then.

CURLY
(shakes his head)
I'd like these folks to remember how you drew first.

JESS
Like Vic did.

CURLY
Like Vic did.

JESS
Vic couldn't hit his foot with a gun; never drew down on any man. How'd you prod him into it? How hard you have t'push him?

CURLY
Not much harder than you're pushin' me.

18 CLOSE SHOT - AT THE BAR 18

Evie slides up close to Grat, who is watching Jess and Curly with fascination. She speaks urgently, under her breath.

EVIE
Grat -- break it up!

CONTINUED

18 CONTINUED cont'd 18

Grat's attention remains riveted to the belligerents.

GRAT
I ain't steppin' in 'less Curly says so.

19 ANGLE ON JESS AND CURLY 19
They stand measuring each other with their eyes.

JESS
You like witnesses; so do I. Only next time they tell about you, let 'em tell how I called you coward to your face, and how you stood an' took it.

Curly's voice comes out low, and trembling with rage.

CURLY
Someone get him out o' here....

Jess steps slightly to one side so he can watch Curly and the others, too, Nobody moves.

JESS
Vic wouldn't take it, would he? So that makes him a better man. He faced up to you, knowin' you were faster. But looks like you won't face a man till you're mighty sure he's slower.

CURLY
(savagely)
He had a gun in his hand! I don't see one in yours.

JESS
Never thought you would. 'Cause you got somethin' runnin' down your back that's not to be confused with a spine. Vic will still stand taller than you, six feet under the ground.

There is a long slience. Then:

HATCH'S VOICE
That all you got to say?

20 ANOTHER ANGLE 20
REVEALS TULLY HATCH standing in the doorway. He all but fills it. His shoulders and body are broad enough to make him seem shorter than he is, but what he seems is tall enough. He's an utterly imposing man, but not a handsome one. His thick, tough skin stretches thinner over wide cheekbones and a hard-muscled jaw. White lines in its brick-dust color, creasing from the corners of his eyes, bespeak a man who grins easily and often. But he's not grinning now. His rifle, angled into the room, seems dwarfed by the hand which holds it. Hatch is the sheriff. He wears his star like a challenge rather than a shielf. Jess stares at him.

JESS
Am I breakin' some law, Sheriff?

HATCH
Seems like you're tryin'.

JESS
Where were you when Vic Stoddard was killed?

Hatch's eyes go cold.

HATCH
You don't care who you pick your fight with, do ya?

JESS
You takin' this one over?

CURLY
Keep out of it, Hatch!

Hatch shakes his head soberly and speaks across his shoulder to Grat, at the bar.

HATCH
Get their guns, Grat.

Grat hesitates, then moves uncomfortably toward Curly, who watches him warningly.

GRAT
(apologetically)
I'm only doin' like he told me, Curly.

Curly finally shrugs and allows Grat to take his gun from its holster. Grat moves over to Jess, as:

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED cont'd 20

HATCH
(to Curly)
You can pick it up at my office, after he's gone.
(to Jess)
You can get yours on your way out o' town.

Jess stops Grat with a look, then speaks to Hatch.

JESS
I'm not leavin' town, Sheriff.

HATCH
(easily)
Oh sure you are.

JESS
Why me? Why not him?

HATCH
He lives here. You don't

JESS
I hear his pa owns half the town. That include you?

The brick-dust face darkens.

HATCH
Maybe you'd like a week to figure that out. I can fix a place for you t' stay.

JESS
(shakes his head)
Can't do it, Sheriff. Gotta go to a funeral in the mornin'.

HATCH
Your gun'll be at my office after it's over.

Jess surrenders his gun to Grat. Hatch, apparently satisfied, turns back to Curly.

HATCH
(continued)
Better run on home, now, Curly.

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED cont'd 20

CURLY
Don't give me orders, Hatch.

HATCH
(mildly)
Just a friendly thought. If I was you, I wouldn't do much walkin' 'round with an empty holster.

Curly stares at him bitterly, glances around, then starts toward the door, with:

CURLY
Guess it won't take long t' fill it.

Hatch's big hand moves out to stop Curly by the arm.

HATCH
You wouldn't wanta make it awkward for me, Curly....

Curly shakes the hand from his arm.

CURLY
You put yourself in the middle, Hatch. S'pose you get yourself out.

He EXITS. There is an audible release of tension. The crowd uproots itself and regroups at tables and the bar. Evie pushes away from the bar and moves up to confront Hatch waspishly.

21 CLOSE SHOT - HATCH AND EVIE 21

EVIE
You all through showin' off?

Hatch summons a look of mild surprise and hurt.

HATCH
Why, Evie -- thought you'd be thankin' me. Pulled your pet puppy out of a hole.

EVIE
(snaps)
Mind he don't put you in one.

She pulls away from him and out. He looks after her, troubled -- not by what she has said, but by her saying it.

22 ANOTHER ANGLE 22
Evie flounces up the stairs in b.g., as Hatch turns back to focus on Jess, who still stands watching him. He crosses to Jess, indicating an empty table.

HATCH
Now let's you an' me sit down an' cool off.

JESS
I'll cool off outside.

HATCH
(hard)
You'll sit down. You ast some questions a while back, an' you're stayin' for the answers.

Jess stares at Hatch for a moment, then sits at the table. Hatch pulls out a chair across from him and motions to Grat without sitting down. Grat comes over, carrying the two pistols.

GRAT
Want me t' lock these guns up in the jail?

HATCH
No. I'll take 'em.
(he does)
An' while I'm at it -- I'll take your badge.

Grat blinks at him, incredulously.

GRAT
Huh? How come?

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED (contd) 22

Hatch jerks a thumb toward Jess.

HATCH
The cowboy here ast me where I was when Vic was killed. S'pose you tell 'im.

GRAT
Why -- you was takin' a prisoner over t' Cheyenne.

HATCH
An' where was you?

GRAT
(quavering)
Well, you know where I was. I was here. I seen it, Hatch. Curly had t' kill 'im. Was self-defense.

HATCH
But you coulda stopped it. Like you coulda stopped it tonight.

With impatience and contempt, he rips the star from Grat's shirt front.

HATCH (contd)
Get out.

Grat stands for a moment in shock and anger. Then, sullenly:

GRAT
You ain't as big as you think, Hatch.

Hatch doesn't have to answer. Grat is on his way, not choosing to put his statement to the test. Hatch turns back to Jess, dropping into the chair opposite him.

HATCH
Got back t' town an hour ago. Took that long t' get the story.

JESS
(after a pause)
Sorry, Sheriff.

HATCH
Never mind sorry. Don't matter what you think o' me.

Jess frowns, puzzled.

CONTINUED

22 CONTINUED (contd) 22

JESS
Then why make the point?

HATCH
(flatly)
T' prove another. Nobody owns the sheriff, cowboy. When I say somethin' -- there's nobody backin' it up but me. So remember: you got trouble in this town, you bring it t' me.
(rising)
Else you really got trouble.

Hatch turns and walks away. Jess sits, staring after him. He's not at all sure he likes the big sheriff. But he's starting to respect him.

23 ANGLE ON HATCH 23
He crosses to the bar and pushes the two six-guns and his rifle across to Lud.

HATCH
Keep 'em back o' the bar, Lud -- till I come downstairs.

LUD
(uneasily)
Evie said she don't wanta see -- uh -- anybody, Mister Hatch.

HATCH
(grins)
Oh, well I don't hardly think she means me. Do you?

LUD
Uh -- guess not, Mister Hatch.

Hatch grins again and goes to the staircase, CAMERA FOLLOWING.

24 BOOM SHOT 24
Hatch climbs to the balcony, where he stops to look down at Jess.

25 HIS POV - ANGLE DOWN ON JESS 25
Jess is looking up at Hatch. When their eyes meet, Jess breaks the look, rises, crosses to the swinging doors and exits.

26 ANGLE ON HATCH 26
He thinks about Jess for a moment, then forgets him. He moves to a door on the balcony and knocks tentatively.

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED (contd) 26

After a moment, the door opens and Evie looks out. When she sees Hatch, her eyes harden and she starts to close the door.

EVIE
Keep out o' here, Hatch!

He prevents her from closing the door, but with an air of apology. In Evie's presence, the big man's self-assurance vanishes. Awkward and cheerless but vaguely hopeful, he pushes into the room, with:

HATCH
Aw come on, Evie -- that's no way t' start off....

27 INT. EVIE'S ROOM - NIGHT - MED. SHOT 27

She faces him defiantly.

EVIE
We ain't startin' off! We're finished! Why won't ya believe it?

HATCH
(helplessly)
What'm I doin' wrong? Tell me.

EVIE
You're not doin' anything wrong! 'Cept hangin' around where you're not wanted!

Hatch is defenseless before her attack, because he has come to make peace.

HATCH
Evie -- I don't know why you wanta hurt me so bad. Nothin' in the world I wouldn't do for you....

EVIE
Then go away an' leave me be. <u>There's</u> somethin' you can do!

HATCH
(shakes his big head miserably)
That's about the only thing I <u>can't</u> do. Aw, why's it hafta be like <u>this</u>? Didn't <u>used</u> t' be....

Evie looks at him, moved to remember despite herself. Her tone softens somewhat.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED (contd) 27

EVIE
No...But I -- I'm all over that now.

HATCH
I ain't.

EVIE
(trying reason)
Hatch, listen. You were good t' me, an' I was grateful. That's all it was. But how long can a girl go on bein' grateful?

HATCH
You don't hafta be grateful. Doin' things for you -- takin' care o' you -- that's all I want out of it. Only let me do it, Evie. Please.

EVIE
It's no use, Hatch. You got nothin' I need.

HATCH
I know I ain't got much. I know I ain't much t' see. But I could be somethin', Evie. With you, I could.

EVIE
Sure. You could be twice as poor as you are.

HATCH
Money ain't no answer.

EVIE
(stubbornly)
It's the only one I haven't tried. An' I mean to.

HATCH
With Curly Troy?

EVIE
(firing defensively)
Yes!

Hatch shakes his head, looking at Evie with sympathetic concern. His stated wish for her protection is quite genuine.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED (contd) 27

HATCH
Then we both want somethin' we can't have. You think old man Troy's gonna sit still for that?

EVIE
(sharply)
Curly's got a mind of his own!

HATCH
Has he? Can't say I noticed. But you don't care 'bout his mind; ya said yourself it's the money. An' the money ain't his own. That's the whip the old man's got, an' Curly jumps to it. Aw, can't ya see it, Evie? He's makin' a fool out o' you!

EVIE
(angrily)
Don't say that!

HATCH
(gently)
I say it 'cause I care what happens t' you. Someday you'll know it.

Before Evie can answer, there's a KNOCK at the door. Both turn toward it as:

LUD'S VOICE
Mister Hatch! It's me; Lud.

Hatch shoots a look at Evie, then crosses to the door and opens it. Lud seems excited.

HATCH
What's wrong?

LUD
Curly Troy just come back -- lookin' for that same fella!

Hatch tenses. Evie starts forward, then stops, listening anxiously.

HATCH
Wearin' a gun?

LUD
Yessir -- an' Grat was with 'im.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED (contd) 27

Hatch turns a mirthless smile toward Evie.

HATCH
Well, well...Grat an' Curly. Now there's a sweet pair t' draw to.

LUD
They got a bottle an' took off down the street.

HATCH
(with the same grim smile)
Nerve medicine. Thanks, Lud. I'll catch up with 'em.

Lud nods and withdraws as Hatch closes the door and turns back to Evie.

EVIE
(sharply)
What're you waitin' for? Get after 'em!

HATCH
(casually)
No hurry. Curly needs the bottle first -- t' grow as tall as he was 'fore that cowboy shrunk 'im down t' size.

Evie moves close to him, speaking with measured intensity.

EVIE
Hatch -- you let somethin' happen t' Curly -- I won't stop blamin' ya. Never.

HATCH
(looks at her, then sighs)
Wouldn't want that, Evie. No, I'll wipe his nose an' send him back -- so you can find him out for y'self some day.

He opens the door and exits through it.

28 EXT. STREET - AT ROOMING HOUSE - NIGHT - MED. SHOT 28

Ma still sits on the porch, rocking thoughtfully. There's a crocheted afghan over her lap now. Jess walks up and pauses at the steps.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED (contd) 28

JESS
'Lo, ma'am. Still up?

MA
(nods complacently)
Old habit o' mine, boy; not worth keepin'. Can't go t' bed till the fam'ly's all tucked in.

JESS
Fam'ly?
(starts up the steps)
Hey -- you weren't waitin' up for me?

Ma continues her gentle rocking, unperturbed.

MA
Don't be cross. Folks passin' through -- takin' a room -- that's all the fam'ly I got left. Sit down, son.

Jess, who tries to avoid involvements, hesitates. Then he takes the rocker next to her, watching her warily. CAMERA TIGHTENS on them.

MA (contd)
You was wearin' a gun when you left here.

JESS
Yeah. Musta lost it somewhere.

MA
Think I'm nosy, don'tcha? Never mind; I heard about it. Curly Troy's been by. Said he'd be back. Left this for ya.

Jess has leaned forward sharply at Curly's name. Now he stares at Ma as she brings a nickle-plated Colt .45 out from under the afghan and passes it over to him, butt first. After a second he takes it, breaks it open, and spins the cylinder.

MA
Oh, it's loaded all right. I checked it over. Nice balance, smooth action. Nothin' wrong with that gun. 'Cept for bein' a gun.

Jess rises, tries a few practice spins with the pistol, slips it in and out of his holster twice, then settles it there lightly.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED (contd) 28

JESS
Curly's right neighborly.

Ma studies Jess with concern. Then:

MA
(tentatively)
Wouldn't cost ya for the room if ya left town now. Bed ain't been slept in....

JESS
(looks at her gravely)
What would you do?

MA
(deliberates briefly)
If I was a young man your age?

Jess nods.

MA (contd)
Guess I wouldn't ask an old woman my age. Wouldn't listen if she told me.
(she rises)
No, man's gotta do what seems right for him.
(a beat)
Like Vic did.

Jess looks at her respectfully. She a wise old bird. She's made her point without preaching. She starts for the door.

MA (contd)
If Curly comes -- best move off the porch.

JESS
(with a tight grin)
Away from the window glass?

MA
(in stern admonishment)
Don't want the light at your back, do ya?

His look of admiration deepens. Then he suddenly tenses at something he sees o.s., over her shoulder. He moves her gently but firmly toward the door.

JESS
Go on inside. He's comin' now.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED (contd) 28
Ma looks off, sees the o.s. Curly, and grips Jess' arm in urgent appeal.

MA
Don't use it, son -- if y'can help it. If ya can't -- take time to aim.

JESS
Thanks, Ma.

She gives his arm a final squeeze as he opens the door and pushes her through it, still looking to o.s.

29 HIS POV - LONG SHOT - CURLY 29
is moving slowly forward, down the center of the street. We cannot yet see Grat, who is pressed back into a doorway on the dark shadowed side of the boardwalk.

30 MED.SHOT 30
Jess steps down from the porch, his eyes on Curly's advance. He is suddenly frozen by a sharp, metallic SOUND directly behind him -- the sound of a rifle cartridge levered into the breech.

HATCH'S VOICE
(hard and quiet)
So ya got another gun.

Jess stands stiffly, never taking his eyes away from Curly, as Hatch moves up from around a corner in back of Jess. Hatch holds the rifle on Jess as he takes the gun from its holster. Jess nods toward the o.s. Curly, speaking with taut sarcasm.

JESS
Maybe you don't see <u>him</u>, sheriff.

HATCH
I see two of 'em. Grat's in the shadow.

Jess peers off, spots Grat in the darkness, and is somewhat jarred by the discovery.

JESS
Wasn't lookin' for <u>him</u>....

HATCH
That might o' been a shame. Keep out o' my way.

He steps out in front of Jess, gripping the rifle in his right hand and the nickle-plated Colt in his left.

31 FULL SHOT 31
As Hatch takes a stand in the street, Curly stops. Hatch hurls the Colt toward him. It falls halfway between them. Hatch now holds the rifle in both hands.

HATCH
(calls)
Curly! That's the gun this man was wearin'! Now toss yours out there with it!

CURLY
(seething)
Still in the middle, Hatch?

HATCH
Looks like. Grat! That means you, too! Crawl out o' that doorway an' stand up next t' Curly!

After a moment, Grat emerges sheepishly from the shadows and moves out into the moonlight. But Curly stops him before he comes too close.

CURLY
(to Grat)
Keep separated.
(to Hatch)
I told you twice t' stay out o' this, Hatch!

HATCH
(dryly)
Looks like none of us been doin' like we're told.

People are watching now, from windows and doorways. Jess stands, awed and humbled as he sees what Hatch is doing.

CURLY
You gonna stand out o' my way?

His hand wanders suggestively toward his gun.

HATCH
If you're reachin' for that gun t' toss it over, Curly -- use your thumb an' one finger.

CURLY
(savagely)
Do I hafta kill you t' get t' him?

HATCH
Uh!huh. But don't try. I promised Evie t' keep you alive.

CONTINUED

31 CONTINUED (contd) 31

GRAT
(suddenly)
Back off, Hatch! There's two of us here!

HATCH
(soberly)
Oh, I ain't forgettin' you, Grat. Only in your case, I never made no promise.
(losing patience)
Now give up them guns!

32 CURLY AND GRAT 32
Curly hesitates, then suddenly draws. Grat follows, a split second later.

33 HATCH 33
hurls himself sidewise to the dirt, snapping off two rifle shots as he rolls. The slugs from the two .45's are kicking dust in his face en route.

34 FULL SHOT 34
When the smoke clears, Grat is dead on his back and Curly is stumbling crazily backwards, clutching his belly and staring in astonishment. He's already as dead as Grat, but it takes him longer to believe it. Then his legs buckle under him and he falls heavily. Nothing moves for a moment. Then Hatch pushes up from the dirt and walks wearily toward the dead men, carrying the rifle limply. People are emerging from their hiding places. Ma comes out on the porch.

35 JESS 35
has seen something he'll never forget. He moves compulsively, following Hatch.

36 MED. SHOT 36
Hatch stands looking down at Curly, his face tormented.

HATCH
Aw, Curly...Curly -- why'd ya make me do it? What'll I tell Evie? What'll I say t' your pa?

Jess has moved up beside Hatch and is staring at him in wonder. The big man seems close to tears. Hatch catches him looking and hardens.

HATCH
Satisfied?

He walks out. CAMERA CLOSES on Jess, still staring after him.

FADE OUT

ACT II

FADE IN:

37 EXT. BOOT HILL - DAY - LONG SHOT 37
ANGLED toward the crest of a scrubby knoll. Headstones are overgrown; wooden markers parched and split. Atop the hill, a little funeral is in progress. The new grave is sheltered in a hollow beyond the rise. But we see the mourners, gathered in a circle, heads bowed. Jess is there, with Ma. Lud is there, near the MINISTER. Hatch stands apart from the others.

MINISTER
An' we thank Thee, Lord, for lettin' us know Vic Stoddard for a spell ...

38 CLOSER SHOT - ANGLED UP - WITH MINISTER FEATURED 38
and Jess and Ma seen in b.g. In deeper b.g., Hatch stands alone.

MINISTER
Now we send 'im home t' Thee with our love -- our gratitude -- an' our regrets ... wishin' we could o' done better by him -- an' knowin' You will. Amen.

39 RESUME LONG SHOT 39
Heads lift, eyes blink out of reverie, and the little group begins to disperse. Hatch turns and starts down the hill first. The others wander after him.

40 TWO SHOT - JESS AND MA 40
He turns her from the graveside, but he is looking after Hatch.

41 HIS POV - HATCH 41
trudges down the hill. Beyond a sagging picket fence at the foot of the hill, we see horses, buckboards and buggys.

42 RESUME JESS AND MA 42

JESS
S'cuse me, Ma ...

She sees him looking after Hatch and nods. Jess raises his voice -- not calling, but speaking clearly.

JESS
(contd)
Sheriff.

43 **WIDE ANGLE** 43
Hatch stops, turns, and waits for Jess as he comes down the hill to join him.

44 **MEDIUM SHOT - JESS AND HATCH** 44
Jess reaches the Sheriff and begins awkwardly.

JESS
I, uh ... I'll be leavin' town today.

HATCH
(coolly)
Well ... your gun'll be at my office.

People pass in b.g., glancing neutrally at Jess and the sheriff.

JESS
What I mean to say -- I'm sorry. Your job's not easy and I -- I didn't make it easier.

HATCH
(relenting)
Forget it. Curly had t' tangle with me, sooner or later. You made it sooner, but -- well, he won't do no killin' in the mean-time.
(nods off)
See them riders comin' this way? That's the real hard part o' the job.

Jess looks off.

45 **LONG SHOT - WHAT HE SEES - A PARTY OF HORSEMEN** 45
is galloping toward the cemetery over open prairie.

JESS'S VOICE
Who are they?

46 **RESUME JESS AND HATCH** 46

HATCH
Old Man Troy an' some of his hands.

JESS
(tensing)
You need some help?

Hatch looks at him in surprise, then softens in a smile. But he shakes his head.

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED (contd) 46

HATCH
Thanks. But there's different kinds o' trouble.

He moves on, going down to meet the riders.

47 MEDIUM FULL SHOT 47
FRANK TROY gallops in with a dozen wiry, sun-baked range hands at his back. They pull their horses to a halt as Troy reins up and faces Hatch, who stands waiting for him. Troy is not more than fifty. He's the kind who's been called "The Old Man" since he was twenty -- a proud, powerful man, sitting the saddle like a throne. Jess, Ma and the others stop in b.g. to see what's going to happen.

48 ANGLE FEATURING HATCH AND TROY 48
Troy stares down at Hatch through eyes made red by grief. Though his manner is an uncompromised challenge, it's evident that he's torn apart inside, and is using wrath and recrimination to hold himself together.

TROY
Hatch!

HATCH
Hello, Frank ...

TROY
I come t' serve notice. You'll hang for what you did. Don't think you'll hide behind your badge. It's comin' off. I'll see t' that. An' then I'll see you hang.

HATCH
Guess I know how ya feel, Frank.

Troy still controls his anguish with anger.

TROY
You can say that? You can stand there an' tell me that? You can kill a boy -- my boy -- an' say you know how I feel?
(the harsh tone straining)
You don't even explain?

CONTINUED

48 CONTINUED (contd) 48

HATCH
(gently)
That's what ya really come for, ain't it? T' hear my side of it?

Troy's fury is turned by the sympathy and understanding he sees in Hatch's eyes. His hard veneer begins to crack, and the extent of his wound begins to show.

TROY
Why, Hatch? Why'd ya do it? He wasn't bad -- not bad enough t' kill ...
(staring at Hatch imploringly)
Was he?

HATCH
(softly)
You wanta hear me say what you already know? That Curly had a choice -- an' I didn't?

Troy tries to clutch at something -- anything, to justify his boy and thus himself. But even as he gropes, he knows there's nothing left to cling to.

TROY
He didn't mean it that way. Oh, I know ... he was flyin' high. But you coulda clipped his wings, Hatch. Ya didn't hafta kill him.

Hatch thinks for a moment, then speaks slowly.

HATCH
Ever see a bird with wings so wide he just don't b'long on the ground? Try makin' him walk, he just can't do it. Them big wings keep gettin' in his way.

Jess listens, his respect and admiration for Hatch solidly rooted now. Troy's look holds on Hatch for a moment. Then he breaks, slumping in the saddle, dropping his head forward on his chest, pulling a hand across his agonized face.

TROY
It's my fault. I should've taken him away from here. After his ma died, I should've sold out -- spent the time with the boy. I thought I was buildin' somethin' ... somethin' t' give him when I was gone. An' I didn't give him the years I had. It don't make sense.

CONTINUED

48 CONTINUED (contd) 48

Hatch moves compassionately to stand beside Troy's saddle, looking up at him.

HATCH
It does, Frank -- but it's hard t' see up close. What you built was needed more than Curly ...
(at Troy's shocked look)
That's right. More than him or even you. A town. A place. Part of a country. Lives for a lot of us. That don't come without cost. You paid. So did Curly.
(a beat)
You're both leavin' more than you ever got.

Troy lifts his head, looks at Hatch and then around at the others, as if he'd forgotten they were there. Now he straightens in the saddle, in control of himself again.

TROY
(to Hatch)
Curly's bein' buried t'morrow -- out at the ranch. I'd take it kindly if you'd come.

HATCH
Ya know I will. We all will.

TROY
(after a moment)
Thanks, Hatch.
(he turns to his men)
Tie up your horses. We'll stay a while -- pay our respects t' Vic Stoddard.

Hatch steps back as Troy swings from his saddle and his men follow suit. The crowd begins to talk in low tones.

49 CLOSE SHOT - JESS AND MA 49

JESS
(softly, to her)
That's a lot more sheriff than he looks.

MA
(nods)
I think the Lord put so much inside that man, He didn't have time for the outside.

Jess looks off after Hatch.

50 HIS POV - HATCH 50
mounts a horse and rides off, as Troy and his men start up the hill.

51 CLOSEUP - JESS 51
continues to look after Hatch thoughtfully.

DISSOLVE

52 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL - DAY - CLOSE SHOT 52
ANGLED toward a desk drawer as Hatch's hand pulls it open and takes out Jess's gun. CAMERA PULLS BACK as Hatch, sitting behind the desk, slides the gun across it to Jess, who stands on the other side. Jess takes the gun, slips it into his holster, and starts for the door. Then he pauses, looking back at Hatch. The sheriff has already turned his attention to some reports on his desk, but glances up when he doesn't hear the door open and close.

HATCH
Somethin' else you wanted?

JESS
I been doin' some thinkin'. I've tried settlin' down once or twice. Maybe I'd like to try again.

HATCH
(in some surprise)
Here?

JESS
Never tried it here. You got any objections?

Hatch considers, then shakes his head.

HATCH
Seems like the one I had's been taken care of.
(then, helpfully)
Two or three good spreads lookin' for boys . . .

JESS
I was thinkin' of somethin' closer in.
(moving toward the desk)
Aren't you needin' a deputy?

Hatch leans back in his chair, sizing Jess up all over again.

CONTINUED

52 CONTINUED (contd) 52

HATCH
There's more to wearin' a badge than puttin' it on.

JESS
That's what I've been findin' out. That's why I'd like to try.

Hatch doesn't miss the compliment, but he's still doubtful.

HATCH
Some men ain't cut out for it.

JESS
You got a better man?

HATCH
Don't take a better man. Just a special one.

JESS
They got some special kind o' look?

Hatch smiles, then suddenly laughs.

HATCH
Guess if looks was it, I'd be in jail.

He fumbles in his shirt pocket and pulls out the badge he took from Grat. He rises, holding it in his open hand.

HATCH
For this an' ten dollars a week, you solemnly swear t' uphold the law if it kills ya?

JESS
Yeah.

Hatch, feeling this is not quite official, glances down, finds a book on his desk, and holds it out to Jess.

HATCH
Swear it on the book.

Jess puts his hand on the book.

JESS
I swear.

Hatch puts the book down, still not satisfied with the ceremony.

CONTINUED

52 CONTINUED (contd) 52

HATCH
(frowning)
Seems like there oughta be more to it than that ... oh yeah!
(holds out the book again)
Give your name.

JESS
Jess Harper.

Hatch nods, replaces the book on the desk, and gives the badge to Jess.

HATCH
Well, Jess, havin' been duly sworn in, you're entitled t' set behind this desk while I take a snooze.
(starts for one of the cells)
Pin on your badge.

Jess grins, pinning it on as he moves to sit at the desk.

JESS
What'll I do if anything happens?

Hatch is ~~stretching~~ out on a bunk in the cell, pulling his hat down over his eyes.

HATCH
(contentedly)
Wake me up.

DISSOLVE

53 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL - NIGHT - CLOSE SHOT - JESS is still seated back of the desk, leafing through a pile of "wanted" posters. He glances up and the CAMERA PULLS BACK as Evie ENTERS. She looks distraught, keyed to a high pitch, and seems to have been crying. She stops short at seeing Jess, and her tone is an accusation. 53

EVIE
What're you doin' here?

JESS
(uncertainly)
Why, uh -- I'm the new deputy, ma'am.

EVIE
(curtly)
Where's Hatch?

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (contd) 53

Jess nods to the cell.

JESS
Sleepin'. He was pretty worn out. Anything I can do?

EVIE
(acidly)
You've done plenty.
(she crosses to the cell door)
Hatch!

Hatch rouses himself, swinging his legs off the bunk and blinking in surprise when he recognizes her.

HATCH
Evie ...

Evie indicates Jess bitterly.

EVIE
So last night ya step in between him an' Curly! Now ya pin a badge on him! Killin' Curly wasn't enough!

Jess comes to his feet in protest as Hatch rises from the bunk, advancing toward Evie awkwardly.

HATCH
I come 'round two-three times, Evie -- you wouldn't see me.

Evie faces him coldly, her hostility palpable.

EVIE
I been locked in that room all day, Hatch -- thinkin' things out. Now I know what I gotta do. I'm gettin' out o' this town. Soon as I can scrape up the fare.

Hatch looks shocked, but before he can protest, Evie pulls a cheap little locket from her bag and throws it down on the floor of the cell.

EVIE
(contd)
Here's what I come for. T' give ya this. It's not worth enough t' owe ya for it.

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (contd) 53

Hatch stares at the locket, hurt and desolated. But he doesn't move to pick it up.

HATCH
Won't ya let me tell ya how it happened?

EVIE
(snapping)
I know how it happened! An' why it happened! One chance I had in this town -- one chance t' pull myself up out o' the dirt! So you made sure I couldn't have it!

HATCH
(tormented)
That's not true, Evie -- even if you had a chance. An' you didn't.

EVIE
He'd've married me! I could've got him to! I know I could!

JESS
(uncomfortable)
I'll wait outside.

Evie turns her attack toward him.

EVIE
Why? You an' him work so good t'gether! Don't he share his secrets too? Don't he tell ya how he killed Curly 'cause he wanted me?

JESS
(stiffly)
I don't know where you got the story, ma'am -- but there were two men shootin' at the sheriff, and he shot back.

HATCH
Never mind, Jess. Like ya said -- better wait outside.

Jess nods shortly and EXITS. Hatch moves up to the cell door as Evie swings back to face him.

HATCH
Evie --

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (contd) 53

EVIE
(cuts him off)
It's no good, Hatch! Maybe you couldn't help it. It don't even matter.
(vengefully)
You could kill every man alive, an' you still wouldn't have a chance with me. Not for love or money!

This finally stings Hatch to a hot reply.

HATCH
Not for love, anyway.

EVIE
(in sharp defiance)
You think that hurts me? You think that makes me feel cheap? You think I'm ashamed of wantin' money? I'm not! 'Cause I am cheap; I've always been! But only 'cause I never had it. All my life I been stepped on an' looked down at -- an' the only difference between me an' the ones lookin' down was a pile o' money!

Hatch, who is hopelessly in love with her, is moved again to compassion.

HATCH
They'd look up at ya too, Evie -- if you'd let 'em. If you'd let me put you high, where you belong.

EVIE
(scornfully)
I don't want a pedestal! I'm honest enough t' know this much: if I ain't worth money, I ain't worth anything! You cheated me out of it in this town. All right -- I'll try another town. But somewhere I'm gonna get it -- an' I don't care from who!

HATCH
(after a beat)
Even me?

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED (contd) 53

She has turned to the door. Now she turns back, to give him a final look of loathing. Then:

EVIE
Yes, Hatch -- even you. Now maybe you'll believe how little chance you got.

She EXITS, slamming the door behind her.

54 EXT. STREET - NIGHT - AT DOOR OF SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL Evie storms out past Jess, who is leaning against the wall, some distance from the door. Hatch comes out a second later, starting after her. When he sees Jess, he stops and collects himself. He's not sure how much Jess has heard. 54

HATCH
She, uh -- she's all upset. She don't know what she's sayin'.

JESS
Guess not ...

HATCH
(in defense of Evie)
She'd like ya t' think she's sort of hard, and -- well, mercenary. But she ain't. I know her. She's just puttin' all that on -- t' kind of cover up.

JESS
(neutrally)
She had me fooled.

Hatch shoots a sharp look at Jess, then adopts a business-like attitude.

HATCH
Well -- time you was learnin' the routine. We take a walk down the street every hour or so -- no special time, so no one can put a clock on it. You take one side; I take the other. We never walk it alone at night.

JESS
(looks off down the street)
Looks nice an' quiet.

CONTINUED

54 CONTINUED (contd) 54

HATCH
It don't act up too often.
(smiles)
Which side ya want -- deputy?

JESS
(smiles back)
The other side -- sheriff.

He crosses the street, EXITING. CAMERA HOLDS on Hatch, looking after him fondly.

55 MOVING LONG SHOT - JESS AND HATCH 55
begin to patrol the two sides of the street. Jess watches Hatch as he rattles doorknobs and peers through windows, then follows his example.

56 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - ANGLE DOWN THROUGH WINDOW TO STREET 56
In f.g., in the dark hotel room, two men stand back from the window, observing Hatch and Jess as they make their rounds in the street below. The men are named CUTTER and THORNE.

CUTTER
Didn't take Hatch long t' find himself a new deputy.

THORNE
That don't change nothin' -- does it?

CUTTER
No ... still only two o' them. An' there'll be three of us ---come Monday.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT II

ACT III

FADE IN

57 EXT. MEDICINE BOW - DAY - MED. SHOT 57
Jess and Ma come out of a grocery store. Jess is carrying some packages for her. The Minister, seen at Vic's funeral, approaches along the boardwalk and hails Ma brightly.

MINISTER
Mornin', Ma!

MA
(stops and smiles)
Mornin', Rev'rend. Guess ya know Jess, don'tcha?

MINISTER
Sure!
(to Jess)
Nice seein' you in church yesterday.

JESS
Nice bein' there.

MINISTER
You did some powerful singin'.

JESS
(grinning)
You did some powerful preachin'. Hope you weren't aimin' it all at me.

The Minister grins back and shakes his head.

MINISTER
Sermon's like a load o' buckshot. Don't have t'aim it. Bound t' hit somethin'. Got a corker shapin' up for next Sunday, too.

MA
Jess'll be there.

JESS
(fondly)
She'll see to that. Between her on Sunday and the Sheriff all week, I'm just about organized.

MINISTER
How ya takin' to it?

CONTINUED

57 CONTINUED (contd) 57

JESS
Can't say I'm feelin' any pain. Funny. Guess maybe I found myself a place to light.

MINISTER
Well, Deputy -- lots o' folks in town are hopin' so.

Suddenly all three react in shock to the violent eruption of GUNFIRE from o.s. down the street. They spin toward the source of the shots.

58 THEIR POV - THE STREET - FEATURING THE BANK BUILDING 58
Three masked men burst out of the bank and dash for their horses, shooting in several directions to cover their retreat. Two of the men are Cutter and Thorne. The third, still unrecognizable behind the mask, is a man called RAVIC. They gain their horses and start off down the street. Thorne is carrying a canvas bag, but in the confusion, this isn't too evident.

59 ANGLE AT SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL 59
Hatch boils out of the office, rifle in hand, catches sight of Jess in b.g. and waves to him as he dashes for a horse.

HATCH
Jess! Come on! Grab any horse!

60 MED. SHOT - FEATURING JESS 60
He shoves the packages into the startled Minister's arms, vaults the porch rail and slips the halter line of a bay tied to the nearest hitch rack. He swings into the saddle, wheels the bay and gallops out after Hatch, who is already mounted and halfway up the street in pursuit of the three gunmen. CAMERA PANS after them.

61 ANGLE ON THE HOLDUP MEN 61
As they reach the edge of town, the trio splits up in three separate directions. Cutter, in the lead, takes the straightaway.

62 ANGLE ON HATCH AND JESS 62
As they reach the place where the three men separated, Hatch gestures with his rifle, indicating to Jess that they should split up, too. He veers to the right, following Thorne. Jess peels off to the left in pursuit of Ravic.

63 RUNNING INSERT - RAVIC 63
fires back at Jess who is SEEN closing the distance between them.

64 RUNNING INSERT - JESS 64
flattens down along his horse's neck, not returning Ravic's fire.

65 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY - SEVERAL ANGLES TO INTERCUT 65
-- TO BUILD the chase between Jess and Ravic. Ravic shoots again at Jess.

66 ANGLE UP TOWARD APPROACHING HORSES 66
Ravic, twisted around to aim back at Jess, is suddenly hurled from his saddle as his horse stumbles under him and falls spectacularly.

67 ANOTHER ANGLE 67
Ravic rolls and scrambles up to his feet, trying to get another shot at Jess as he thunders down upon him. Before Ravic can aim, Jess leaps headlong from the saddle, hitting Ravic and carrying him to the ground.

68 ANGLE ON JESS AND RAVIC 68
They struggle in close combat, Ravic trying to use the gun, Jess twisting it away from him until it explodes against Ravic's own body. Ravic jolts free of Jess, rolls over, and lies face up. Jess rises, panting, staring at Ravic's body.

69 EXT. ROCKY HILLSIDE - DAY - ANGLE DOWN ON THORNE 69
He forces his mount up a steep incline as Hatch continues to follow, below. Thorne fires back at Hatch.

70 ANGLE ON HATCH 70
His horse is hit, rearing. Hatch falls and tumbles down the hill, but retains the rifle.

71 ANGLE UP ON THORNE 71
He jams spurs to his horse and forces it on, turning back again for another shot at Hatch.

72 CLOSE SHOT - HATCH 72
flattens out on his belly, brings the rifle up to a careful aim, and FIRES.

73 ANGLE ON THORNE 73
Hatch's bullet knocks him from the saddle, and he falls amid a cluster of boulders.

74 LONG SHOT - HATCH 74
rises warily and moves up the hill at a crouch, his rifle ready.

75 MED. SHOT 75
Hatch reaches Thorne, who lies motionless on his face, and turns him over carefully with a boot, the rifle covering him. It is a needless precaution. Thorne is dead. Hatch lifts his eyes, looking up the hill.

76 WHAT HE SEES 76
Thorne's horse has come to a halt and is standing aloof from Hatch and the dead man. The canvas bag, tied to the saddle, is prominent now.

77 MED. SHOT 77
Hatch moves carefully up the hill, making soothing sounds as he approaches the nervous horse. He manages to catch the bridle before the horse pulls back. But Hatch has him now.

78 CLOSER ANGLE 78
Hatch reaches for the canvas bag, opens it, and pulls out a huge fistful of paper money. He nods with satisfaction, stuffs the money back into the bag, and ties it to the saddle horn. Then he mounts the dead man's horse.

79 LONG SHOT 79
Hatch rides the horse down the incline. Near the base of the hill, Hatch slowly reins up.

80 CLOSE SHOT - HATCH 80
raises his head, as he is struck by a strange and frightening revelation. He looks down at the canvas bag, the conflict within him evident in his eyes. He opens the bag again and stares for a long moment at the money. Then he sweeps the surrounding countryside with a searching look.

81 HIS POV - PAN SHOT 81
There is no sign of life visible for miles.

82 CLOSEUP - HATCH 82
His face twists in desperate decision.

83 MED. SHOT 83
Hatch closes the canvas bag suddenly, yanking the drawstring tight and twisting it around the neck of the bag almost viciously. He spots a clump of rocks and brush nearby, swings from the saddle, and carries the bag to the spot, where he kneels. He pulls the rocks aside compulsively, stuffs the bag in a hollow, then covers it over again with rocks and brush.

84 LONG SHOT 84
Hatch rises and stands staring at the hiding place for a moment. Then he moves back to the horse, mounts, and rides away. CAMERA PANS after him.

DISSOLVE

85 EXT. MEDICINE BOW - DAY - FULL SHOT - AT BANK BUILDING 85
A forlorn crowd of people is gathered in the street outside the building. This is no demonstration, nor even a

CONTINUED

85 CONTINUED (contd) 85

formal meeting. The people are simply standing in stark little groups, staring at the bank, rooted by a stunning and mutual loss. There is very little movement and not much talk. In the crowd WE SEE Ma, the Minister, Lud and others. The horse which Hatch took from the dead Thorne is tied to the hitch rail, next to the bay which Jess rode in pursuit of Ravic.

86 INT. BANK - DAY - MED. SHOT 86

We are in the office of the bank, nearest the street. Beyond a partition, WE SEE the bank itself -- cold and empty. In extreme f.g., MARK HOWARD, the banker, slumps in a chair in an attitude of despair. He is a handsome man, white-haired and genteel. He cradles his head in one hand, covering his eyes. Hatch stands in b.g., watching Howard unhappily. Jess stands against the wall beyond Hatch.

HATCH
I don't know what else t' tell ya, Mark. Jess got the man he went after; so did I...
(helplessly)
We done all we could.

Howard seems to nod, without raising his head.

HOWARD
I know...of course you did. Just a rotten break the third man had the money...

JESS
(sympathetically)
They get all of it, Mister Howard?

HOWARD
Every dime...over forty-two thousand dollars.
(sighs)
I can't pay back a loss like that. Oh, I'll spend the rest of my life trying...but the bank's finished. I know that. So am I. That's the least of it.
(lifts his head, staring toward the window)
Those people out there -- it's cost most of 'em everything they had.

Hatch looks genuinely concerned, and he is. He wishes there was some way to lessen the enormity of what he has done.

CONTINUED

86 CONTINUED (contd) 86

HATCH
Can't ya get a loan t' cover it? From some other bank? The Association?

HOWARD
(with a dim smile)
On what security?
(nods toward the window)
Liens and mortgages against their property -- mostly overdue? We've carried them through the bad years, knowing they'd be good for it. Another bank, the Association -- well...

He has trailed off, ending with a shrug. Hatch still gropes for an easier way out.

HATCH
What about old man Troy? He must have plenty...

HOWARD
Troy? He's hit the hardest. They say he owns half the town. He doesn't. It owns him. He's put himself in debt to subsidize others -- keep them in business, pay their bills...
(shakes his head)
No. Town can't survive a blow like this. Little or big, it hits 'em all.

He rises, crossing to the window, looking out at the o.s. street and the people who are waiting there.

JESS
Wish there was somethin' more we could do. But we don't even know what the other man looks like.

HATCH
(a sudden, double-edged thought)
The money. Is there any way to trace it?

HOWARD
It's paper -- mixed bills. No, Hatch -- it's hopeless.

CONTINUED

86 CONTINUED (contd) 86

Hatch lapses into silence, watching the banker as he stares through the window bleakly. After a moment:

HOWARD (contd)
Look at them. They're wonderful. No panic, no run on the bank. Not demanding their money; not blaming me. Just standing there. All they know is -- this morning they had something put away for tomorrow. Now it's gone.

JESS
Never thought of a robbery like that. I mean -- you think about the ones who took the money, not the ones who lost it.

Hatch shoots a look at Jess, his feelings of guilt almost breaking his resolve for a moment. Then he pushes them aside roughly.

HATCH
Well, maybe it'll turn up yet. He could get careless -- start spending too sudden and too much. And all in paper. I'll telegraph the other towns.

HOWARD
(nods absently)
Thanks, Sheriff. You too, Deputy.

Hatch and Jess stand indecisively for a moment. Then Hatch gestures to Jess to follow and they EXIT. Howard doesn't even notice they are gone. CAMERA MOVES IN on him, still staring out the window.

DISSOLVE

87 EXT. MEDICINE BOW - NIGHT - LONG SHOT 87

Hatch and Jess are once again patroling the street, holding to their opposite sides. When they reach the place where the boardwalk ends in f.g., they move out to join each other in the center of the street.

88 TWO SHOT - JESS AND HATCH 88

Hatch glances back along the quiet street, a few bright windows breaking its general melancholy.

HATCH
Well -- back t' normal, huh?

CONTINUED

88 CONTINUED (contd) 88

JESS
Can't help feelin' it's kind of pointless now...like lockin' the barn after the horse is gone.

Hatch studies Jess with speculation, then nods gloomily.

HATCH
I know that feelin'. Gets worse. Y' keep runnin' into walls... that's what I meant when I said most men ain't cut out for this job. There's no money in it, and precious little glory.

Jess's admiration for the sheriff has not been dimmed.

JESS
But you stick with it.

HATCH
(sighs)
Yeah. But there's no future in it. Think about it, Jess. Ten years ago there weren't no towns like this -- no jobs like ours. An' there won't be none ten years from now. The country's growin' beyond all this. Then where'll we be? Men like us?

JESS
Don't know about me. But they'll always be needin' men like you.

HATCH
(glances at him uneasily)
Yeah?
(after a pause)
I often wonder what kind o' man I am.

There is another pause, then Hatch shrugs and laughs, throwing off the mood.

HATCH (contd)
Hey, what's this all about? First thing ya know, I'll be talkin' myself out of a good deputy!
(puts a hand on Jess's shoulder)
Get some sleep, Jess. I'll mind the store.

CONTINUED

88 CONTINUED (contd) 88
Jess allows Hatch to propel him affectionately from him.

JESS
(good-naturedly)
'Night, Sheriff...

HATCH
'Night, Deputy...

Jess EXITS PAST CAMERA. Hatch stands looking after him for a moment. Then he turns and starts back down the street.

89 CLOSE MOVING SHOT - HATCH 89
is once again struggling against his own remorse. His angry battle with himself is suspended momentarily by the SOUND of a coach and horses arriving at the far end of town. Hatch stops, looking off. CAMERA HOLDS.

90 LONG SHOT - HIS POV - THE STAGECOACH 90
The driver hauls his team to a halt in front of the saloon. Doors open and passengers disembark, as the driver and guard scramble to the roof of the coach to unleash bags and baggage. Hostlers move out to unhitch the lathered team, while others bring a fresh team up from the stable. The arrival of the stage and its attendant activity occasions some idle interest from passers-by who have nothing better to do than stop and stare.

91 CLOSE SHOT - HATCH 91
walks out toward the stagecoach.

92 MED. SHOT - AT STAGECOACH 92
The arriving passengers move out, heading into the saloon or down the street toward the hotel. Evie comes out of the saloon, carrying a suitcase and dressed for travel. Lud is with her in shirtsleeves and apron, carrying two smaller bags and a hatbox. They stand back from the coach, waiting as the men on top finish tossing the load to the boardwalk.

93 CLOSE SHOT - EVIE AND LUD 93
Lud speaks awkwardly, having nothing to say but goodbye, and not knowing how to say it.

LUD
You got time while they're changin' teams, Evie. How 'bout one for the road? On the house?

EVIE
Thanks, Lud -- but I've taken my last look at the inside o' that hole. I'll wait in the coach.

CONTINUED

93 CONTINUED (cont'd) 93

The unloading is completed, so Lud starts passing Evie's luggage up to the driver.

LUD
(to her, regretfully)
Guess you won't be the last one leavin' this town. Now that the money's gone.

EVIE
Can't say I ever got t' know it well, when it was here.
(pecks carelessly at his cheek)
G'wan now, Lud -- you still got a bar t' tend.

94 ANOTHER ANGLE 94
She starts into the coach. Lud lingers indecisively.

LUD
Don't forget t' write.

Evie, on the step, pauses briefly.

EVIE
Oh, sure -- every couple hours.

Hatch appears in b.g., staring in shock at Evie.

HATCH
Evie!

She turns, stiffening as she sees him, then quickly EXITS into the coach, slamming the door.

95 INT. COACH - NIGHT - MEDIUM SHOT 95
Outside, Hatch hurries forward, brushing Lud aside and pushing up to the window, as Evie settles back on the seat. Lud, a bit miffed, EXITS toward the saloon in b.g.

HATCH
(bewildered)
Evie -- what're ya doin'?

CONTINUED

95 CONTINUED (cont'd) 95

Evie looks up at the roof, as if tried beyond endurance.

EVIE
Oh, Lord -- no violins!

HATCH
(desperately)
You're not leavin'! Ya can't be.

EVIE
(faces him defiantly)
I told ya I'd be gettin' out, soon as I got th' fare. Well, I got it, an' I'm gettin'!

HATCH
(anguished)
Evie -- not now!

He jerks open the door and climbs in beside her as Evie pulls back, half in anger and half in fear of him.

EVIE
You can't stop me! Sheriff or no sheriff!

96 TIGHT TWO SHOT 96
Hatch grips her arms and speaks forcefully in tightly controller, hoarsely hushed tones.

HATCH
Listen! Ya gotta wait! Things're gonna be different! You'll see.

EVIE
(struggling against him)
Get out o' here, Hatch! Let me go!

HATCH
(his urgent words pitched lower still)
No! I can't tell ya now -- but -- ya gotta believe me! I worked it all out! Like you wanted it. For you, Evie!

EVIE
For me? What're you talkin' about? I told you, Hatch! You haven't got what I want!

CONTINUED

96 CONTINUED (cont'd) 96

HATCH
(whispers)
I have.

She stares at him, suddenly caught and held by his intensity. Something in it awes and frightens her too.

EVIE
(breathless)
What?

HATCH
(quick and low)
You said you didn't care where it came from ...

EVIE
(in a small voice)
Hatch ... what're you sayin'?

HATCH
Please ! Ya won't have t' wait long! A few weeks -- even less. Then I'll go with ya -- wherever you say. We'll be married. You'll have whatever ya want, what you've always wanted ...

EVIE
You're lyin'! You'd say anything to stop me! Say somethin' I understand!

Hatch glances around, making sure that no one on the busy street outside is within sound of his voice. Then:

HATCH
Forty-two thousand dollars.

Her eyes go wide with shock, as the connection dawns. She starts to gasp:

EVIE
The bank --

But his hand is over her mouth, cutting off the words. She stares at him excitedly, her mouth still smothered. He leans closer to her ear, whispering:

CONTINUED

96 CONTINUED (cont'd) 96

HATCH
I didn't take it. I found it ...
How about it, Evie? Finders keepers?

A pause, then Evie nods in full complicity. He takes the hand from her lips and finds them close to his own. He looks at her without moving. She doesn't move either. His mouth comes down on hers. Her arms go around him. The bargain is sealed. At last she pulls away, shakily.

EVIE
Why wait? Where is it?

HATCH
Safe. But we gotta wait. Just long enough t' make it look right...

97 EXT. STREET - NIGHT - MEDIUM SHOT 97
The fresh team is in the traces, and the leaders are being harnessed, as the door of the stagecoach opens and Hatch steps out, calling up to the driver:

HATCH
I'll take the lady's bags. She changed her mind. She ain't goin'.

The long-suffering driver shrugs and starts to unload Evie's luggage. Hatch extends a hand to assist her, as Evie alights from the coach.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

FADE IN

A98 EXT. MEDICINE BOW - DAY - MED. SHOT AT SHERIFF'S OFFICE A98
Jess approaches along the boardwalk and exits into the office.

98 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL - DAY - MED. SHOT 98
As Jess enters, Hatch hails him heartily from behind the desk. He has a tin cup of coffee in front of him, and a kettle boiling on the pot-bellied stove.

HATCH
Mornin', Deputy! Fine mornin'! Coffee's on!

Jess crosses to the stove with a slightly puzzled grin.

JESS
Well -- you've cheered up a lot.

Hatch beams at him, as Jess pours himself a cup of coffee.

HATCH
Ain't I? Yessir, got to admit -- the day looks pretty decent!
(boyishly candid)
Patched things up with Evie!

JESS
(startled)
What?

HATCH
Didn't I tell ya she was just puttin' on? Why, she's no different from any woman! They just gotta make sure a man wants 'em bad enough t' give up other things.

JESS
(sips the coffee guardedly)
Such as?

HATCH
Oh, I been stubborn. Knew all along I couldn't do right by her on any Sheriff's pay. So we'll be goin' east after we're married, and -- well I got some leads t' better things.

98 CONTINUED (contd) 98

Jess crosses to a chair by the desk and sits down. He has to. He places the cup on the desk. Then:

JESS
You're quittin'?

HATCH
(confidentially)
Don't get it around yet. Not for three or four weeks. Thought you ought t' be first to know, Jess. Since I'll be namin' you t' take my place -- if ya want it.

JESS
(dazed)
Well, I -- I like the town, but ...
(shakes his head)
I don't know what to say.

Hatch surges out of his seat and comes around the desk, with a laugh, slapping Jess's knee playfully.

HATCH
Well, say congratulations! You can think about the rest!

JESS
(grins sheepishly)
Sure, Hatch. Congratulations. Guess I was wrong about Evie.

HATCH
Lots' o' people were. They'll find out!
(enthused)
Some day, I'll bring her back here, drippin' diamonds! Then you'll see 'em change their tunes!

JESS
Diamonds?
(laughs uncertainly)
What kind of leads 've you got?

HATCH
(covers quickly)
Gettin' carried away, ain't I? Ah, but Jess -- a man sees how one thing's

98 CONTINUED 98

HATCH (contd)
possible, an' all of a sudden -- anything's possible!

JESS
(thinking of him and Evie)
Seems to be, at that.

Hatch grins and takes up his hat, moving to the door.

HATCH
So -- I'm takin' my best girl for a buggy ride, an' I might not be back before dark! Think you can handle things?

JESS
Do you?

HATCH
(amused and confident)
See ya later, Deputy.

He EXITS Jess sits alone. CAMERA MOVES IN on him as he takes up the coffee and starts to sip it thoughtfully.

DISSOLVE.

99 INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND JAIL - NIGHT - CLOSE ON JESS 99
He is seated back of the desk now, leafing through some circulars and bulletins. He glances up sharply as the door is suddenly thrust inward and Ma ENTERS in a state of alarm.

MA
Jess -- ya better come!

JESS
(rising)
What's wrong, Ma?

MA
Just went t' make up your room, and -- Jess, somebody's been there! It's torn apart -- drawers dumped out, mattress cut open, stuffin's on the floor --

Jess, shocked, crosses to her and catches her shoulders.

99 CONTINUED 99

JESS
What about the other rooms?

MA
None of 'em touched. Whoever he was, didn't take nothin'! Just lookin' for somethin'.
(anxiously)
Who could it be, Jess? What could he want?

Jess takes a turn away from her, almost knowing the answer already. Then he turns back, shaking his head.

JESS
I don't know ... nothin' I've got.

MA
You comin'?

JESS
(After a pause)
Too late to help by lookin' at it.
(half to himself)
Wish the sheriff was here ...

(looks at her)
Ought to be back by now ...
(suddenly)
Maybe he went on home. Tell you what, Ma. You stay here while I shag out to his place. If he comes back, tell him I've gone lookin' for him.

He grabs his hat and heads for the door, as:

MA
You ought to see that mess --

Jess pauses in the open door, grinning back at her.

JESS
I'll help you clean it up.

He EXITS

100 EXT. STREET - NIGHT - MEDIUM SHOT AT SHERIFF'S OFFICE 100
Jess reaches his horse, tied outside the office. He mounts up and gallops out, CAMERA PANNING after him.

DISSOLVE

101 EXT. HATCH'S HOUSE - NIGHT - FULL SHOT 101
It is a crude but neatly whitewashed cabin, settled in a hollow amid rolling hills. There's a small barn, a pump, and a privy. Two front windows are dark and the place seems deserted as Jess gallops in. He reins up and glances around in disappointment.

102 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 102
The appearance of the place is so empty and friendless that Jess is about to turn and ride back without investigating further. Then, from o.s. behind the house, he hears the sound of a horse blowing dust from its nostrils. He stiffens in the saddle, alerted.

JESS
(calls)
Anybody here?

There is no answer.

JESS
Sheriff?

103 MEDIUM SHOT - MOVING WITH JESS 103
as he slips from the saddle and streaks across the moonlit clearing to the house, drawing his gun. He gains the porch and edges toward the door cautiously, finding it a few inches ajar.

JESS
Hatch?

There is still no answer, or reacting sound. Jess flattens back next to the door, then nudges it with the toe of his boot. The door swings all the way inward on creaking hinges. Jess poises, then whips around the doorframe quickly into the house. As he does, two pistol shots from within punch loud, bright holes in the dark, the second one splintering the doorframe a split second after Jess is past it.

104 INT. HATCH'S HOUSE - NIGHT - MEDIUM SHOT 104
Jess flings himself to the shadowed floor next to the wall. The four walls of the house embrace the bedroom, kitchen, and not much living room -- though the furniture is only visible as hulking shapes in the darkness. What light there is comes from the moon, through the two closed windows in front and a single open window at the rear.

105 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 105
presses against the floor, searching the darkness with his gun and his eyes. There is a heavy silence. But over it, Jess can hear breathing other than his own.

CONTINUED

106 CLOSE SHOT - CUTTER 106
crouches behind an overturned table, his expression frightened and desperate. He looks wishfully toward the open rear window, not very far away.

107, 108 INTERCUT CLOSEUPS - JESS AND CUTTER 107, 108
Neither man moves, each waiting for the other to present a target. Sweat stands out on Cutter's brow. He can't take the waiting very long.

109 MEDIUM SHOT - CUTTER 109
suddenly makes his break, dashing for the window and firing frantically in the general direction of Jess. He dives for the window, still shooting.

110 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 110
fires once.

111 ANGLE ON THE REAR WINDOW 111
-- where Cutter is framed in silhouette, seeming to hang suspended, half in and half out of the window. Then he sags back heavily and we hear his dead weight hit the floor behind a sofa.

112 PAN SHOT - JESS 112
moves warily toward the sofa, the gun ready. He pushes up next to it and looks down.

113 HIS POV DOWN ON CUTTER 113
He is sprawled with the awkward carelessness of death.

114 CLOSE SHOT - JESS 114
kneels down to look at Cutter's face, striking a match. Then he rises, still baffled. The match goes out, as he finds an oil lamp. He lights another match and touches its flame to the wick. Then he raises the lamp in his hand, casting its glow about the room.

115 WHAT HE SEES 115
The room is as Ma described his own: savegely and relentlessly ripped apart, torn inside out by a feverish search.

116 CLOSEUP - JESS 116
His face hardens in difficult and dreadful understanding. He lowers the lamp slowly and blows it out, plunging the room again into darkness.

DISSOLVE

117 EXT. HATCH'S HOUSE - NIGHT - FULL SHOT 117
Hatch drives up in a one-horse rig, halting it some distance from the house. Evie sits on the seat beside Hatch. The house is as it was when we first saw it: dark and seemingly deserted. There is no sign of Jess or Cutter, or of their horses. Hatch alights, wrapping his lines around the whip and turning to help Evie down.

118 CLOSE SHOT - HATCH AND EVIE 118
She declines his help with a wicked grin, handing him the canvas bag which has rested on the seat between them.

EVIE
I'll wait out here. Just take care o' the baby.

Hatch grins back at her and takes the bag.

HATCH
It'll be safe in the house.

He turns and starts for the house, CAMERA PANNING after him.

119 INT. HATCH'S HOUSE - NIGHT - ANGLE ON THE DOOR 119
-- as it opens and Hatch ENTERS. CAMERA PANS Hatch to a table by the window, where he sets the bag down and strikes a match to light a lamp. His back is toward the camera, and we see it tense suddenly as he is stricken by:

JESS'S VOICE
(softly)
Hatch ...

Hatch whirls where he stands, blocking the money with his body, as his gun comes out simultaneously.

120 ANOTHER ANGLE 120
He sees Jess standing against a wall across the room, He sags, shaken but relieved.

HATCH
Jess! What're you doin' here?

JESS
Waitin' for you. Somethin's gone wrong.

This is an understatement, so far as Hatch is concerned. There is something akin to panic in his eyes as he shakes his head nervously and wipes his forehead with the back of his left hand.

CONTINUED

120 CONTINUED 120

HATCH
Fool kid. Could've got yourself killed ...
(holsters the gun)
... takin' me by surprise.

JESS
I'm sorry, Hatch. It couldn't wait.

Hatch stares at him, then spreads his arms a bit, resting his hands on the edge of the table, making sure the moneybag is covered.

HATCH
What's wrong, Jess?

Now he sees the condition of the room for the first time. His anxious frown deepens.

HATCH
(continued)
What's happened here?

JESS
(nods toward the sofa)
Man who did it's over there.

Hatch looks in the direction Jess has indicated.

121 WHAT HE SEES 121
Cutter's legs twist on the floor, projected beyond the edge of the sofa.

122 BACK TO SCENE 122
Hatch makes a compulsive start toward Cutter, remembers the money, and backs up against it again.

HATCH
What the devil ... who is it?

JESS
Have a look. Maybe you know.

Hatch stares at him, his eyes narrowing.

HATCH
You kill 'im?

JESS
Yeah.
(a beat)
Y'see -- my place was searched tonight. I came to tell you. Found him out here, still searchin' yours.

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED (contd) 122

HATCH
(tightly)
Searchin'? For what?

JESS
Can't you guess? He's the last of the three men, Hatch -- the one who had the money. 'Least, that's what we thought. But he didn't. He came back lookin' for it. He thought one of us had t' have it. Only -- I didn't.

The shakiness is gone from Hatch's voice. It comes out lower, harder, and dangerous.

HATCH
What're you sayin'? That I did?

JESS
Well -- that's it, isn't it? On the table behind you? In the canvas bag?

Nothing changes in Hatch's face, but he is a long time answering.

HATCH
All right. What else do you have to say, Jess?

JESS
(hopefully)
I say one of the holdup men dropped it. Neither one of us knew it. But you had a hunch. So today you went out lookin' for it. And there it was. And now you're on your way to town again -- to give it back. That's what I say. Am I right?

Hatch continues to look at Jess, and his hard expression softens. There is gratitude, shame and repentence in it now. But there is no hope.

HATCH
I wish it was that easy.

JESS
(fervently)
It is! That's how it's got to be.

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED (cont'd) 122

HATCH
(almost absently)
Evie's waitin' ... I've got t' go ...

JESS
We'll go together. We'll tell 'em how you found the money. They'll be glad. So will you.

Hatch shakes his head tragically.

HATCH
Jess -- it won't work. Man draws a line for himself -- says one side's right an' the other's wrong. Don't matter what anyone else says. It's his own line that counts. So he stays on the right side long as he can. 'Cause if he steps across it, there's no steppin' back. Not over that line. Not if he drew it.

JESS
It's not much of a step yet. Don't let it be.

HATCH
(sees a ray of light)
I know you're tryin' t' help me, Jess. And I thank you kindly. Only -- only do it my way.
(eagerly)
I'll change my plans -- leave right now. Take Evie with me ...

His hands trembling, he unpins his badge and puts it on the table.

HATCH
(continued)
Look -- I'm leavin' the badge. You can have it. Fits you better'n me, Jess.
(prayerfully)
All I want from you is -- a head start till mornin'.

JESS
(after a pause)
You won't get a head start to that door. Not with that money.

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED (cont'd) 122

Hatch straightens as if he's been slapped. His eyes turn cold as two bullets.

HATCH
What was that?

JESS
(emotionally)
Hatch -- please! People like Ma -- Troy -- an' Howard -- don't they mean anything to you? The money's theirs!

HATCH
(deadly)
I said: what was that about the door?

There is another pause, then Jess sets himself regretfully.

JESS
I won't let you go through it ... not with the money.

A strange smile, half-satiric and half-tormented, twists Hatch's lips.

HATCH
You won't <u>let</u> me?

JESS
I'm sayin' please.

HATCH
You're takin' that badge awful serious.

JESS
I had a good teacher.

Their eyes lock and hold for a time, then Hatch's gaze seems to waver, his resolution ebbing. Then:

EVIE'S VOICE
(calls from the distance)
Hatch! You comin'?

Hatch lifts his head, listening, the hardness returning to his face. He straightens, facing Jess.

HATCH
Guess that's the answer, Jess.

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED (cont'd) 122

His hand streaks for the gun. Hatch is very fact, but he is a shade slower than Jess. Jess hurls himself aside as both their guns bark, the sounds so close that they congeal into one deafening blast. Hatch is hurled backwards against the table, and it splinters under him, dumping the moneybag and the badge beside him as he hits the floor. O.S., Evie screams.

123 ANOTHER ANGLE 123

Jess pushes himself from the floor to where Hatch is lying, mortally wounded. Jess huddles over him, his face agonized. Hatch groans and tries to struggle up on one elbow, staring in numb surprise at the welling bullet-hole in his breast.

JESS
Hatch ... don't try to move.

HATCH
(looking at the wound in wonder)
Well ... would ya look at that?
Right where the badge was ...
(looks up at Jess)
Never should've taken if off.

He dies. Jess drops his head and turns away, sickened with grief. On the floor he sees the badge. He reaches for it.

124 MEDIUM SHOT 124

Evie rushes up to the door, jolting to a halt in shocked horror as she stares through it. She braces herself with both hands against the frame, as Jess turns his tortured look toward her. She recoils from it, as Jess rises slowly, staring at her.

EVIE
So you -- you found out.

Jess nods miserably. Evie moves closer, her voice pleading and scared.

EVIE
I -- I'll tell 'em how it happened -- what he did. I'll tell 'em he drew first -- anything you say!

125 CLOSEUP - JESS 125

He looks at her with utter loathing.

CONTINUED

125 CONTINUED (cont'd) 125

JESS
You would, too. Man gives his whole life to the law ... makes one mistake -- you. And you'd let 'em remember him for that.

126 CLOSEUP - EVIE 126
She backs away from his look of repellence.

EVIE
What -- what else can I do?

127 CLOSEUP - JESS 127

JESS
(coldly, incisive)
Get out. You were never here.
(nods to o.s.)
There's another dead man there -- the one who got the money. Hatch tracked him down -- found him with it. The man started shooting. The sheriff killed him. But he killed the sheriff. That's how I found 'em -- out in the hills.
(a beat)
That's the way they'll want to hear it. And that's the way they'll remember Hatch.

He looks down at the badge in his hand.

128 CLOSEUP - THE BADGE 128
It rests in the deputy's hand. After a moment, his fingers close around it.

DISSOLVE

129 EXT. OPEN COUNTRY - DAY - LONG SHOT 129
A lone rider gallops across the free sweep of open prairie. It is Jess, riding back toward Laramie.

DISSOLVE

130 EXT. SHERMAN RANCH - DAY - CLOSE SHOT ON SIGN 130
The SHOT is identical to the first angle of the first act. But this time, as the cantalever gate swings open and the CAMERA PULLS BACK, Jess is riding through in the other direction. As he pauses to swing the gate shut, another rider appears in far b.g. It is Slim, reining to a halt as he sees Jess, then hailing him joyously.

CONTINUED

130 CONTINUED (contd) 130

SLIM

Jess!

Jess waves to Slim, grins, and rides to meet him as Slim gallops forward.

131 MEDIUM SHOT 131
They pull their horses to a halt, facing each other with awkward grins, a bit embarrassed by their mutual pleasure at seeing each other.

SLIM

You came back.

Jess glances around in seeming surprise at finding himself where he is.

JESS

Well, darned if I didn't.

SLIM

(with a tentative smile)

You decide you were needed here, more than there?

JESS

(after beat)

Found out somethin', Slim. It's not all in who needs me. It's what I need, too.

(another beat)

Let's get on home.

He kicks his horse into a gallop. Slim wheels his mount and takes off after him.

132 LONG SHOT - JESS AND SLIM 132
They are riding away from us along the road which will take them home.

FADE OUT

THE END