

INT. STABLE - NIGHT

A horse NEIGHS loudly.

A terrified BIANCA tries to calm it down.

BIANCA
Sshh baby. Quiet.

The sound of a door SLAMMING open frightens the horse and it thrashes around, knocking Bianca, a pretty 14 year old girl, to the floor. She lands on the ground but doesn't seem at all worried about the horse anymore; her sole focus is whomever (or whatever) just entered the stables.

EMMETT
All I want is a ride, Bianca!

Bianca slides herself back into a corner. The horse continues thrash around in front of her.

A whip CRACKS and forces the horse back. It CRACKS again and the horse quickly backs away. The animal calms down and, as it moves away, we see EMMETT, a frightening twenty-five year old man with scarred skin on most of his face and hands, standing at the door of the stable.

Bianca scoots back until she hits the wall. She's cornered.

EMMETT (CONT'D)
Don't try to stop me.

Emmett moves towards the young girl. Slowly. Ominously.

BIANCA
Please.

Emmett takes another step closer. Bianca is now completely immersed in his shadow.

BIANCA (CONT'D)
No!

CUT TO BLACK

OPENING TITLE SEQUENCE

TITLE: Two days earlier...

EXT. JONESVILLE PROPER - DUSK

GEORGE AND WALT
Sheriff!

Two average five year old boys, WALT and GEORGE, sprint down the middle of the main street of Jonesville.

GEORGE AND WALT (CONT'D)
Sheriff! Sheriff!

EXT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DUSK

The two boys run up the steps to the Sheriff's office and open the door.

GEORGE
Sheriff!

WALT
You have to see this!

The boys' voices trail off as they disappear into the office.

Main Street, Jonesville, U.S.A. is the typical main street running through the typical Old West town. A man walks down the street, lighting the lamps of the main drag. Children hustle home as men carouse and head towards the saloon. At the end of the street stands the frame of what appears is going to be a fairly large building.

Finally, THE SHERIFF, a nice, intelligent looking man in his mid-twenties, walks out of the office. The only thing that makes him seem like an Old West lawman is the badge on his vest. George points towards the end of town as Walt tries to pull the Sheriff that way.

WALT (CONT'D)
Come on!

The Sheriff, clearly overwhelmed, holds his ground as he tries to figure out the best course of action.

THE SHERIFF
You boys haven't seen the Mayor lately, have you?

GEORGE
We seen him in the stables with--

Walt hits George on the arm and shoots his partner-in-peeping a dirty look. The boys then look up at the Sheriff with puppy dog eyes and shake their heads.

THE SHERIFF

That's where I suspected he'd be.

The Sheriff looks towards the end of the main street where a crowd of people are gathering. He opts to go in the opposite direction.

THE SHERIFF (CONT'D)

You boys stay here. I'll be right back.

The Sheriff jogs down the steps of his porch and hurries off.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DUSK

As The Sheriff strides down the street, he is wholly focused on fixing up his appearance. MS. AGNES, a woman in her mid-forties, steps in from out of the blue and starts to walk alongside him.

MS. AGNES

Excuse me Sheriff but I was wondering if you could look into Helen and her girls. I don't mean to be a busy body but--

THE SHERIFF

--Ms. Agnes, I promise you, I'm going to look into it. I just have more pressing matters.

Agnes struggles to stay up alongside The Sheriff who hasn't slowed his stride to accommodate the town busybody.

MS. AGNES

Oh, of course. I don't mean to sound like an old maid, but...

As Ms. Agnes falls behind the striding Sheriff, she realizes that an old maid is exactly what she is sounding like. Winded, she retreats to a bannister in front of a shop. She leans on the rail and looks at her reflection in the shop window.

MS. AGNES (CONT'D)

Sound like an old maid...

More admonishing her reflection than admiring it, she sighs and pushes herself away from the bannister.

INT. STABLES - MOMENTS LATER

The Sheriff throws open the doors of the stable. Near the back of the barn stands THE MAYOR, a jovial but weathered looking older man. He seems stunned by The Sheriff's entrance.

THE SHERIFF
Excuse me, Mr. Mayor.

The Mayor quickly catches his wits and laughs out loud. He moves towards one of the stalls and helps someone up.

THE MAYOR
Oh, Doc, it's only you.

The Mayor helps up Bianca from off of the stable floor.

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)
Can't believe I let the tinhorn
Sheriff scare me like that.

BIANCA
(teasing)
Oh he's not so bad.

Bianca gives The Sheriff a quick, flirtatious glance and then goes about brushing the dirt off of her clothes.

THE MAYOR
I forgot that we haven't had a real
lawman here since Ol' Red ran off
to join the U.S. Marshals.

BIANCA
I miss Red. He didn't even say good-
bye.

THE MAYOR
Well sugar plum, when the law
calls, you gotta go. Ain't no time
for long good-byes.

THE SHERIFF
Mister Mayor--

THE MAYOR
--I'm talking here, Doc!
(to Bianca)
(MORE)

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)
I will be back with you shortly, my
dear.

The Mayor gives Bianca a little kiss on the forehead and
walks off.

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)
(to The Sheriff)
Come on.

The Mayor passes by The Sheriff and EXITS the stables. The
Sheriff, however, stays behind, watching Bianca clean herself
up.

BIANCA
He's not going to treat you like a
sheriff until you start acting like
one. Doc.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DUSK

The Mayor checks his time piece as The Sheriff exits the
stables and walks towards him.

THE SHERIFF
Follow me, if you would, sir.

The two men start walking side-by-side.

THE MAYOR
So what's the problem, Doc?

THE SHERIFF
Sir, I understand that I'm new to
the post but I would greatly
appreciate it if, while I am
working in the capacity of lawman,
you would refer to me as Sheriff
rather than Doc.

The Mayor lights up a stogie and seems almost amused at The
Sheriff's request.

THE MAYOR
Son, that there was a lot of words
and ain't none of 'em "please".

THE SHERIFF
Please.

THE MAYOR
A sheriff shouldn't have to ask for
respect. Let alone say please.

The Sheriff stops dead in his tracks.

THE SHERIFF

When you see the badge, call me
Sheriff!

The Mayor doesn't break his stride.

THE MAYOR

Now that's more like it, Doc!

The Mayor exhales smoke back in The Sheriff's direction and
ups his gait.

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)

So what do we have here?

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

A large crowd has gathered at the boarding house. As The Mayor approaches, he can see a wagon sitting out front but the crowd blocks the view of what is going on beside it. The Mayor pushes his way through the crowd. The Sheriff follows him, nodding apologetically to each individual The Mayor displaces. Walt and George follow closely behind.

The Mayor finally gets to the front of the crowd but almost immediately takes a step back. As The Mayor falls back, George runs through his legs.

GEORGE

What are they?

Standing in front of the boarding house is MICHAEL, an average 27 year old townsman and an assortment of oddities: ROSE, a grim, older lady with glasses and a beard; ADAM, a young boy who is covered with peach fuzz and has a tail; JAMES, a gigantic black strongman; LINDA, a wiry bald contortionist; ALFRED, whose entire body is covered by tattoos; and Emmett, the scarred man we met earlier. Emmett eats up the attention; he licks his incisor tooth, unveiling his forked tongue.

Walt slides to the front of the crowd. He looks at the freaks and then up to The Mayor.

WALT

They ain't from around here, is
they?

THE MAYOR
 Um, well, I...
 (to The Sheriff)
 What's the doc talk for these
 people?

Before The Sheriff can respond, PREACHER, a stern-looking
 reverend, steps up alongside The Sheriff and The Mayor. He
 looks coldly at the new visitors.

PREACHER
 Freaks.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

JOHN, an elderly blind man, walks out of the boarding house
 and makes his way out onto the front porch.

JOHN
 Michael?!

MICHAEL
 Over here, John.

JOHN
 Ah, I didn't see you. Ha!

PREACHER
 John, let Sister June help you.

Preacher looks back at SISTER JUNE, a nun in her early 30's,
 who immediately scampers over to John's side. She takes
 John's arm and helps guide the blind man down the stairs.

JOHN
 Sounds like there's quite a
 hullabaloo out here, Sister.

Alfred steps towards John and Sister June.

ALFRED
 And I'm sorry about that, sir. My
 name is Alfred and I, and my
 friends, are part of a traveling
 extravaganza. Unfortunately, the
 traveling part of our show is
 busted up out yonder.

SISTER JUNE
 So you need a place to stay until
 your wagon gets fixed?

JOHN

Well, I should have space for them.

Standing in the front of the crowd, Preacher grabs The Mayor by his arms.

PREACHER

Get out there and do something! We can't allow them to stay.

The Mayor doesn't take kindly to the Preacher grabbing him but before he can respond Ms. Agnes pokes her nose into the conversation.

MS. AGNES

They have a child with them, Preacher! Would forcing them out into the night with neither food nor transportation really be the Christian way?

PREACHER

I have to think of the safety of my parishioners.

MS. AGNES

Mark, Chapter 8, Verse 35: For whoever only wants to save his own soul will lose it.

PREACHER

Proverbs, 2:10. Discretion shall preserve thee. It shall--

ALFRED

--Do not judge, or you too will be judged.

Preacher, The Sheriff, and Ms. Agnes all look over to Alfred.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Matthew, 7:12

Ms. Agnes smiles, pleased to hear bible verse from Alfred.

MS. AGNES

You see, they are good God-fearing people.

Preacher looks to Sheriff who agrees with Ms. Agnes. He looks over to The Mayor who also seems to want the Freaks to stay. Preacher relents.

PREACHER

I just pray the rest of the proverb
isn't relevant.

Preacher WALKS OFF.

Ms. Agnes smiles at the young Adam but Rose grabs his arm and pulls him towards her. She stares down Ms. Agnes, who seems intimidated by Rose's glacial demeanor.

JOHN

It'll be ten dollars.

EMMETT

Ten dollars!

Alfred glares at Emmett for raising his voice. Unfortunately, Emmett's not alone in his disapproval.

LINDA

Michael assured us that we would be
able to find free room and board.

JOHN

Free?! I don't see why I should--

MICHAEL

(to John)

--John, the accident was partly my
fault.

THE SHERIFF

How much was partly your fault?

JOHN

Partly the whole thing...

Linda moves closer towards the blind man.

LINDA

(hisses)

If it wasn't for your friend, we
wouldn't be here needing shelter!
He caused the accident. He brought
this upon you.

Alfred steps in front of Linda, hoping to put a stop to the scene she's making.

ALFRED

What's done is done.

The Sheriff watches as Alfred looks back at James, who leans over and takes Linda's arm. She doesn't want to move but finally relents and joins the other Freaks behind Alfred.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

I'm sure there's some way we can work things out.

The Mayor sizes up James and then steps forward to take center stage.

THE MAYOR

I'd like to think so. As Mayor of this town, I think a good compromise would be to let you have free run of the town--

The crowd roars, shocked by The Mayor's suggestion.

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)

Within reason. In return, you donate some time and labor--

LINDA

--We didn't come here to be your servants.

From the middle of the crowd, a voice chimes in.

FRANK

Aw, y'all afraid of a little hard work?

FRANK, your run-of-the-mill town drunk, sticks his chest out, seemingly inviting conflict.

EMMETT

Who said that?!

Emmett and Linda walk towards the crowd, challenging the speaker to show himself. The crowd in front of Frank begins to part, everyone trying to get out of the line of sight of the two freaks. As the opening grows closer to revealing him, Frank's courage quickly dissipates.

The crowd finally opens up to reveal Frank. Now completely afraid of a possible altercation, Frank steps aside hanging a stunned Bianca out to dry.

Bianca watches nervously as Emmett scans her up and down. Bianca is stunned by the development and watches as a devilish smile crosses Emmett's lips. He then licks his incisor tooth with his forked tongue.

ALFRED
 (losing temper)
 Emmett, enough!

Bianca sees Alfred shoot an admonishing glare at Emmett, who sneers right back at him.

THE MAYOR
 People, people!
 (to the freaks)
 I assure you the work won't be
 much. The men can help us build our
 new bank. We won't ask for
 anything from the ladies.

LINDA
 This is completely unacceptable.

Walt and Robert as they giggle at Linda's anger. Their laughter ceases immediately when they notice that Rose is staring them down with an evil look in her eyes.

The Mayor makes his way towards Alfred and the Freaks.

THE MAYOR
 I propose that we set you up in
 your rooms so you can have a
 night's rest to think over the
 compromise.

ALFRED
 We shall consider--

LINDA
 --I don't think--

Alfred stands in front of Linda. He seems almost too eager to accept the offer.

ALFRED
 --your very generous proposal.

THE MAYOR
 That's all we can ask.

JOHN
 Sounds like the least we can ask,
 to me. God damned locusts are
 better tenants.

John STORMS OFF.

THE MAYOR

Well then, welcome again to our
humble town. Michael and The
Sheriff will be glad to help you
with your bags.

(to crowd)

Show's over people! I best not see
any of the you men here showing up
late to work on the bank tomorrow.

The Mayor WALKS OFF and the crowd DISPERSSES. Michael heads
over to Alfred, who looks around, admiring the town.

MICHAEL

Don't mind Preacher. He's never
been one for change. I think you
all will have a fine stay here.

ALFRED

Oh, I have no doubt about that.

INT. ALFRED'S ROOM - 20 MINUTES LATER

Michael and The Sheriff drop off a couple of bags in Alfred's
room.

ALFRED

Thank you very much for helping us,
Sheriff.

MICHAEL

Oh, it was nothing.

James WALKS IN carrying a dozen or so bags.

THE SHERIFF

Literally nothing.

The Sheriff watches in awe as James carries the huge bags,
sets them down with ease, and EXITS, closing the door behind
him.

ALFRED

Well, still... Kindness like that
will not go forgotten when the time
comes.

Alfred smiles awkwardly. Just then, the door flies open and
Linda storms in.

LINDA
I don't know what you think you are
doing?! If my brother was still
alive--

ALFRED
(nervously)
--As you can see, I have guests
Linda.

Michael and The Sheriff stare at Linda.

LINDA
Well what the hell are you looking
at?!

MICHAEL
Yeah, we'll get a-moving.

THE SHERIFF
And sir, if you could find the time
to think about the offer.

ALFRED
Don't worry. I'll handle
everything.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE HALLWAY - NIGHT

As soon as Michael and The Sheriff step out of the room, the door SLAMS shut and Linda and Alfred begin yelling at one another. Michael puts his ear against the door and tries to hear what the argument is about.

ALFRED (O.C.)
If you could ever show some
patience, Linda.

LINDA (O.C.)
I don't suffer fools--

ALFRED (O.C.)
--This town has exactly what we've
been looking for.

Michael and The Sheriff are so busy eavesdropping that they don't notice James and Emmett have walked up right behind them.

JAMES
Can we help you gentlemen?

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

George and Walt sneak around a corner to the back of the boarding house. George squeezes through some barrels and starts to climb up the side of the boarding house.

Walt stands back and doesn't join his friend.

WALT

I don't think we should do this,
George.

GEORGE

Come on. Don't you want to see if
his tail is real?

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

George climbs up to a ledge. He pulls off a small piece of wood which was covering up a hole in the wall. He looks down below to see where Walt is.

George

Walt, come on!

WALT

I'll... I'll be look out.

GEORGE

Scaredy cat.

George squeezes his way into through the compact space.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE WALLS - CONTINUOUS

There hardly looks like there's room to take a deep breath but George manages to work his way into the ceiling crawl space.

The crawl space is beyond confined and the only light comes from the three or four holes in the ceiling. George gets to a peephole and moves the small piece of wood covering it.

George looks in and sees Adam sitting on the bed, twiddling his thumbs. Adam gets off the bed and starts to creep towards the front door.

GEORGE

Hey, where are you going?

Adam freezes and immediately starts to cop a plea.

ADAM
I wasn't going anywhere I was
just...

George watches as Adam spins around to see who is talking to him and seems spooked that there is nobody in the room.

GEORGE
Up here.

Adam looks up and sees George.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
I'm George.

ADAM
Are you a ghost?

GEORGE
You've seen ghosts?!

ADAM
There are ghosts here?!

Before George can sort out what is going on, Rose BARGES IN.

ROSE
Who are you talking to?!

George rushes to cover the hole but Rose looks up and stares directly at him. George hurriedly backs out of the crawl space.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE WALLS - CONTINUOUS

George crawls quickly through the walls. He races through the narrow passageway and falls.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

George crashes to the ground.

GEORGE
Ow!

George is shaken up but not injured. He tries to squeeze through the barrels and other items that stand between him and freedom. He gets to the opening and reaches his hand out for his friend.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Walt, help me.

A hand grabs George's to help him out of the wall but when light from the nearby street lamp shines on the hand, George sees that it isn't Walt's. It's a woman's hand.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
No!

George yells in fear as the hand pulls him out of the crawl space!

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MS. AGNES
Do your mothers know you're out
this late?

George breathes a sigh of relief that the hand that grabbed him was Ms. Agnes and not Rose.

Just then, Rose COMES AROUND the corner. The bearded lady focuses in on the two kids but Ms. Agnes protects them by stepping in between them and Rose.

MS. AGNES (CONT'D)
Well, hello there. I was just out
walking with the boys. We were
wondering if your little one would
like to come out and join us.

Rose looks at the boys suspiciously.

ROSE
No... That's quite alright.

Rose stares directly at George who, frozen in fear, can't help but stare back. Ms. Agnes reaches back and nudges George to stand behind her even though she too seems intimidated by Rose.

Ms. Agnes spies Michael and The Sheriff high-tailing it out of the boarding house.

MS. AGNES
Sheriff!

Rose looks back at The Sheriff and Michael and then, without a word, walks back towards the boarding house. The Sheriff and Michael check in on Ms. Agnes and the boys.

THE SHERIFF
Everything under control here?

WALT
No.

MS. AGNES
It's fine.
(to George and Walt)
You shouldn't judge people so
quickly.

Ms. Agnes smiles at Walt but when she looks back at The Sheriff it is obvious that she doesn't believe her own advice.

THE SHERIFF
We'll keep an eye out.

MICHAEL
And I'll try to get them on there
way as soon as I can.

THE SHERIFF
Ms. Agnes, would you mind taking
these young men home?

Ms. Agnes nods and leads the boys away. The Sheriff looks up at the boarding house. He sees Alfred staring down at them from an upstairs window.

THE SHERIFF (CONT'D)
Oh, and Ms. Agnes, what was the
rest of Preacher's proverb?

MS. AGNES
Excuse me.

THE SHERIFF
The proverb Preacher quoted
earlier, how did it end?

MS. AGNES
Oh, well, let me think. Um,
discretion shall preserve thee.
It shall deliver thee from the
stranger which flattereth with
words; and forgetteth the covenant
of God.

There's a moment of foreboding silence.

THE SHERIFF

Michael will escort you all to your homes.

Michael WALKS OFF with Agnes and the boys. The Sheriff looks up at the window but nobody is there.

EXT. JONESVILLE PROPER - DAWN

The sun rises over the sleepy town.

INT. THE PREACHER'S HOME - DAWN

Preacher kneels by his bed in prayer. This deep contemplation is broken by a QUIET KNOCK on the door. Preacher turns towards the door, unsure if what he heard was actually a knock or just the house settling. He starts to turn back when the KNOCK, a mite louder, comes for a second time.

Preacher walks over to the door and slowly opens the cover to the peephole. As soon as the cover is moved off of the peephole, a thin, rounded, ice pick-like object comes crashing through, poking through Preacher's eye, and coming out the back of his skull. The pick is removed as quickly as it had been thrust into Preacher's head and then he falls to the floor, dead.

CUT TO BLACK

A beat passes.

The silence is broken by a loud, sudden BANGING.

INT. THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

The Sheriff's office is a typical Old West jailhouse. It is so dank and depressing that the faces on the wanted posters actually brighten up the place. The BANGING continues and finally The Sheriff APPEARS from the back. He tries to rub the sleep out of his eyes as he strolls to the front door. He looks out his shutters but sees no one there. The BANGING has grown in intensity so he slowly opens his door to see what is causing the commotion.

EXT. THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

The Sheriff pokes his head out and sees Bianca POUNDING on the door of the next house over. She slams on the door with one hand while pulling one of her boots off with the other.

Once the boot is off, she begins to hammer the door with it. Sheriff walks out of his office and across his porch towards Bianca.

THE SHERIFF

What in tarnation has gotten into--

BIANCA

--Aw shut it Doc.

The Sheriff grimaces at the lack of respect. He looks out towards the street and notices a number of people poking their heads out of their windows. Hoping to save some face, The Sheriff hops over his banister and jogs over to stop Bianca.

EXT. MICHAEL'S SHOP - MORNING

The Sheriff hustles towards Michael's front door.

THE SHERIFF

You're going to wake the whole town.

BIANCA

Good. Then everyone will know what a good-for-nothing horse thief Michael is.

The Sheriff gets to Bianca and grabs the boot out of her hand in mid-swing. Her hand slams down on the door.

BIANCA (CONT'D)

OW!

THE SHERIFF

Now you know how everyone's ears feel.

Bianca glares at The Sheriff.

THE SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Wouldn't it be better to tell someone what happened so we can fix this?

Bianca's face immediately falls back to normal. The Sheriff smiles, proud of his handling of the situation, but before he can get too full of himself, Bianca darts past him. The Sheriff turns to see where she is going and sees The Mayor heading towards him.

THE SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Aw jeez.

The Sheriff makes his way over to The Mayor.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Bianca hugs The Mayor, who pats her on the head. Any hint of affection leaves his eyes as soon as he raises them towards The Sheriff.

THE MAYOR

What's the meaning of this,
Sheriff?

The Sheriff looks at Bianca's boot in his hand and offers it to The Mayor.

THE SHERIFF

She was using it to slam on the
door.

THE MAYOR

I'm talking about Michael, dammit!

The Sheriff is surprised by The Mayor's anger. Taking advantage of the moment, Bianca grabs her boot from The Sheriff's hand.

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)

That fool made off with four of my
Bianca's horses.

The Sheriff stammers as he hunts for a way to reason away the missing mares. Luckily for him, Sister June comes **SPRINTING IN** like a bat out of hell.

SISTER JUNE

Sheriff! Mr. Mayor! Preacher is
gone! I have no idea where he
could be.

Bianca seems unnerved by Preacher's disappearance. She looks to The Mayor but he just shakes his head at Sister June's hysterics.

THE MAYOR

Calm down, Sister June.

THE SHERIFF

Did he say anything last night?
Was there some reason he would
leave town?

ALFRED (O.C.)

I believe I know where your
preacher is.

Everyone turns their eyes to the Alfred, who calmly makes his way towards them.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

I awoke this morning and heard a wagon leaving. I believe it was your man Michael off to fetch the supplies he needs to fix our wagon.

Alfred's story doesn't sit well with The Sheriff.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

And since your preacher seemed insistent on keeping our stay here as short as possible, I believe he joined him. To make sure that your man didn't make any side trips that could extend our time in town.

The Mayor stares at Alfred. He doesn't seem particularly swayed by his version of the story.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

And since we're going to all be here for a short while, I would be very interested seeing how we could help you all out. If I could hear the details of your proposal, Mr. Mayor....

This wins over The Mayor.

THE MAYOR

Now you're talking! The bank we're building is really going to put us on the map.

ALFRED

Well, let's see what we can do.

The Mayor lets Bianca's hand slip from his. He slaps Alfred on the back and leads him towards his office.

THE MAYOR
Welcome to Jonesville.

Bianca is stunned at being left behind so suddenly. Sister June nods to The Sheriff.

SISTER JUNE
I apologize for losing my head,
Sheriff.

Sister June WALKS AWAY.

Bianca puts her boot back on.

BIANCA
Have you ever known Preacher to
leave without word like that?

THE SHERIFF
I've never known him to leave town
at all.

A surprised Bianca looks up at The Sheriff. She then looks over towards Alfred and The Mayor heading into The Mayor's office.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Struggling with hangovers, Frank and JEB, another 20-something drunk, walk past the boarding house on their way to work.

FRANK
How's The Mayor going to just hand
the town over to them there freaks?

JEB
After all the work we done, he's
treatin' them better than us?
Offering up free run of the town
like that.

FRANK
It's makes us look weak. Town just
hands itself over to those crazies.

JEB
I don't trust 'em. I surely don't.

FRANK

I tell you this. If I wasn't so hungover right now, I'd go up there and learn them just what this town is about.

LINDA (O.C.)

So then...

Frank and Jeb turn and see Linda sitting in a rocking chair that had been hidden behind a post.

LINDA (CONT'D)

When will you all be feeling up to it?

FRANK

Any time Missy. Any time.

Emmett walks out of the front door and heads to the edge of the porch.

EMMETT

How 'bout now?

Frank and Jeb stare down Emmett but lose their courage once James ambles onto the porch.

JAMES

What do we have here?

Frank and Jeb back away from the boarding house.

FRANK

We got someplace to be.

JEB

It's called an honest day's work. But you wouldn't know about that would you?

Jeb and Frank spin around and walk as fast as they can away from the boarding house.

FRANK

The Sheriff needs to keep an eye on them.

JEB

You think The Sheriff's man enough to handle them?

Jeb looks over his shoulder at the freaks. Emmett and Linda are still staring in his direction.

JEB (CONT'D)
Well, I'll let him have first crack
and wrangling 'em.

EXT. THE PREACHER'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Bianca walks up to the front door. She tries to open it but it's locked. She walks over to a window and tries to look in but the curtain blocks most of her view.

Bianca heads to the back of the house and finds that the back window is open. She makes sure the coast is clear and then climbs in.

INT. THE PREACHER'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Bianca climbs into the Preacher's house and begins to snoop around. She looks through some books and drawers but finds nothing.

Just then, she hears someone unlocking the front door. The door begins to open and Bianca runs towards a closet to hide.

INT. THE PREACHER'S CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Bianca shuts the door and sits in absolute darkness as someone enters the house. She peers under the door to try to see where the person is going. All she is able to make out are the visitor's feet as he moves around the room. The feet stop moving. They turn towards the closet. They walk right over to the door and stop. Bianca holds her breath.

The feet walk away. Bianca breathes a sigh of relief. She closes her eyes and crosses herself but when she opens her eyes, the feet are right back at the door. The door is ripped open.

THE SHERIFF
Y'know, if you're going to be
snooping around, you best not wear
so much of that fancy perfume.

The Sheriff extends a hand to help the young girl up.

INT. THE PREACHER'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Bianca gets up and steps out of the closet.

THE SHERIFF

Sister June would have you saying
Hail Mary's for months if she
caught you in here.

BIANCA

That's better than what happened to
The Preacher.

THE SHERIFF

Bianca, you don't know if anything
happened to him.

BIANCA

I know that you don't believe that
freak.

THE SHERIFF

Well, either way, that's something
for me to look into.

BIANCA

You afraid I'll start doing your
job?

THE SHERIFF

No. I'm afraid you'll get hurt.

Bianca looks up at The Sheriff, moved by his confession.

THE SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Now 'git. Before I tell The Mayor
what you've been up to.

Bianca smiles at The Sheriff trying to act tough.

BIANCA

Sure thing. Sheriff.

She EXITS. The Sheriff looks out the window, watching her
walk off. He then turns back towards the room and looks over
it.

THE SHERIFF

(to himself)

Now what the hell happened to you,
Preacher?

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

Ms. Agnes walks down the street. In the background, something darts across the road. Ms. Agnes turns around but sees nothing. She continues to walk and the figure once again sprints forward and, again, is out of sight when Agnes turns around. Agnes, still looking back, starts to move forward but then trips over something. She falls to the ground. LAUGHTER comes from above her and she slowly turns over to look up at what is cackling at her. Ms. Agnes sees Adam hanging underneath the awning directly above her.

ADAM

Peek-a-boo!

Adam drops down right next to Agnes.

ADAM (CONT'D)

You want to play a game?

Ms. Agnes catches her wits and smiles at the young boy.

MS. AGNES

Oh well, of course. Aren't you the cutest thing.

Adam looks away and suddenly looks scared.

ADAM

Uh oh, she found us!

Ms. Agnes looks over and sees Rose emerge from behind a shed. She starts striding towards Ms. Agnes and Adam. Ms. Agnes struggles to get up and starts walking away.

MS. AGNES

You better go with your mother.

ADAM

No. We have to run. You have to hide.

Ms. Agnes walks faster. She looks back and sees that Rose has picked up her pace so Agnes begins to jog. Adam is behind her, still running on all fours.

ADAM (CONT'D)

She's going to get us.

EXT. MS. AGNES'S HOUSE - DAY

Ms. Agnes is now running. She heads to her home and tries to open the door. There is a box in front of it so she bends down to move it and is stunned to see Linda, all folded up inside.

LINDA

Don't you want to play?

The contortionist unwinds herself and steps out of the box towards Ms. Agnes. Rose turns the corner, spots Agnes, Linda, and Adam. She slowly makes her way towards them.

ADAM

Aw, looks like the game is over.

Ms. Agnes trembles in fear.

MS. AGNES

I thought, perhaps, maybe, you would want to see what your gentleman have been working on today.

Linda and Rose seem surprised.

LINDA

(angrily)

They're doing what?

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DUSK

THE MAYOR

What is going on here?! There is work to do, Gentleman!

The Mayor walks over to the workers, all of whom are sitting around.

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)

This bank isn't going to build itself--

The Mayor freezes when he takes his first good look at the work site and sees that there has been much progress made. The Sheriff and Frank walk to the Mayor's side.

FRANK

The boys deserve the break Mr. Mayor. They did as much today as they did in the last two weeks.

THE SHERIFF

I think the new help made a difference.

The Mayor, The Sheriff, and Frank look over to where Emmett, Alfred, and James are standing. While the men around them seem exhausted, the three Freaks look like they could work another full day.

FRANK

Now hold on. They might have helped a little but no more than the rest of us. And I'd like to add that it took a seasoned leader to make sure everything went smoothly.

Frank, clearly talking about himself, puffs his chest out and awaits the onrush of admiration.

THE MAYOR

Thanks for noticing my foresight. I just have a knack for seeing the big picture.

The Mayor steps past Frank to make an announcement.

THE MAYOR (CONT'D)

Gentleman. I believe this calls for a celebration. Tonight, drinks are on the house.

A loud cheer goes up from the men.

The Sheriff looks over the group of excited men and spies Bianca, carrying cups of water, heading over to the Freaks. He makes a bee-line over to her before she can reach them.

THE SHERIFF

What did I tell you?

BIANCA

I washed off the perfume.

The Sheriff glares at Bianca as if to say, "You know that's not what I meant".

A hand reaches over to the tray and takes a cup of water. Bianca and The Sheriff look over and see Alfred standing directly in front of them.

ALFRED

Is there anything I can do? My friends and I are always willing to lend a hand.

Emmett saunters over and snatches a drink off of the tray.

EMMETT

Well, maybe not always. But in certain cases.

Emmett looks Bianca up and down.

JAMES

Don't mind him, little lady.

James's hand engulfs two cups.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(to The Sheriff)

Sir.

James turns around and HEADS BACK towards the work area.

BIANCA

I guess I should get going.

The Sheriff puts his hand on Bianca's shoulder to help lead her away but it is immediately ripped away by The Mayor.

THE MAYOR

Don't be foolish. These men have helped us so much today.

Bianca and The Sheriff seem stunned by The Mayor. They share a look and turn to see how the Freaks respond. Alfred smiles politely and nods, accepting the praise.

ALFRED

Thank you sir. It's just the beginning of what we're capable of.

Alfred turns and leaves. Emmett takes his cup and throws it on the tray, almost knocking it out of Bianca's hands.

EMMETT

See ya tonight.

An evil smirk comes over his lips as he turns to walk away.

THE MAYOR

I have a good feeling about these freaks.

Bianca and The Sheriff look up at The Mayor, stunned by his naivete. Something catches The Sheriff's attention and he looks off towards the Freaks.

THE SHERIFF

I wouldn't be so sure.

The Mayor, The Sheriff, and Bianca looks over to see Linda storming towards Alfred. Rose tries to keep up with Linda's furious pace and is almost dragging Adam alongside her.

LINDA

Alfred! What in the blazes are you doing?

ALFRED

PLEASE! You are causing a scene.

ROSE

You probably should have talked to us beforehand.

The Mayor stops watching the Freaks fight and turns to The Sheriff.

THE MAYOR

It seems to me that the walking picture book wants to settle down. And he strikes me as a man who knows how to get what he wants.

The Mayor WALKS OFF. Bianca looks at him leave and then turns back towards the freaks.

BIANCA

That's what I'm afraid of.

INT. JONESVILLE - NIGHT

Night falls over the town. Much of the town is quiet but the saloon is filled with life.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

The Sheriff enters the boarding house and looks around.

THE SHERIFF

John?

Linda appears behind him.

LINDA

Do you want me to find him for you?

Frightened, The Sheriff spins around.

LINDA (CONT'D)

I mean, we're already doing everyone else's job.

Linda stares down The Sheriff but John breaks the tension by walking into the room.

JOHN

Was somebody calling for me?

The Sheriff heads over to John and pulls the blind man aside.

THE SHERIFF

(whisper)

John, I was wondering if you could tell me about anything out of the ordinary. I mean, have you seen anything strange recently?

JOHN

(loudly)

I'm a blind man in a house of freaks. Fuck you think, Doc.

The Sheriff grimaces and looks over his shoulder towards Linda. She scowls and starts to make her way over to him.

THE SHERIFF

But how have they been? Did any of them leave late last night? Did you hear them discussing anything?

JOHN

Well, I did think I heard someone coming in late last night. At first I thought it was the wind--

LINDA

--If you want to know about our whereabouts Sheriff, why don't you just ask?

THE SHERIFF

Fine. Where are your friends right now?

LINDA

The men went off to the saloon to celebrate with your Mayor.

THE SHERIFF

I see.

LINDA

You should tell him not to get his hopes up.

THE SHERIFF

Excuse me.

LINDA

I know your Mayor talked to Alfred but don't think for a second that we're going to stay here longer than we have to.

Linda gives The Sheriff one last icy glare and heads upstairs.