

SCREENPLAY SAMPLE 1

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Two men, JAMES SMITH and ROBERT SMITH, are walking down the street. James's hand rests on the butt of the gun from his belt. A YOUNGSTER loading sacks of flowers onto a wagon brushes James. He pushes the boy and grabs his gun.

YOUNG MAN

(shaky voice)

Sorry, mister, honest I didn't see
ya fer the poke on my shoulder.

JAMES

(visibly angry, barks)

Name ain't mister, it's James,
James Smith... and don't fergit it,
kid. I'd soon's put a bullet thru'
ya as look at ya.

People walking around them stop and watch the outburst.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Now git out'a my sight, 'fore I
clean yer hide.

He walks closer to the youngster and gives him a backhand.
The youngster falls to the ground and people gasp.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(turns around)

What ya starin' at?

His hand rests on the butt of his gun again and the crowd disperses. The youngster also stands up, gathers his belongings and disappears into the crowd. Robert, who has found a good spot on a porch, bursts into laughter when James turns to him. He slaps his palms on his knees.

ROBERT

Why'nt ya shoot 'em, James, hell, I
wudda'.

JAMES
Difference 'tween you and me,
Robert, is I got a gun and you
don't. 'Sides, you prob'ly cudn't
hit him anyways.

Will stands outside a storefront, watching the entire incident. When he and James lock eyes, Will crosses to the other side of the road.

WILL
Hey, James. Buy ya a drink?

James sizes Will up quickly.

JAMES
I know you? You don't seem like
nobody I seen a'fore.

WILL
No, ya don't know me, but I heerd
'bout you'ens and I got a deal ya
might wanta know 'bout. Now how
'bout that drink?

James looks at Robert and he nods. James follows Will and Robert follows behind them.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The BARKEEP nods at ABIGAIL and looks in the direction of the new customers walking in. Will leads James and Robert to a table near the rear of the room. Abigail arrives at their table as soon as they are settled.

ABIGAIL
(forced smile)
What'er ya havin'?

WILL
Whiskey. And come see me in a
while, I got somethin' for ya
later.

Will grabs his crotch and laughs.

ABIGAIL

Ya surely do know how ta sweet talk
a gal. Name's Abigail and the
whiskey's four dollars. Is the kid
drinkin' 'er should I bring him a
sugar-tit?

Abigail tugs at the strap on her shoulder and her gingham top
slips down to reveal some cleavage, then walks away.

ROBERT

(smiling)
Godamn James, did ya see that?

ROBERT (CONT'D)

She gots thin's on her front just
like sister Bess. Bet she ain't got
no dick, neither. We git back to
Nacogdoches I'm gonna look at
sister Bess agin' when she's
a'washin' up on a Sattidy' night!

JAMES

Be still Robert, me an' this ole'
man got bin'ess to tend to.

James leans forward to Will and whispers.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You ain't told me who ya are yet,
an' maybe we ain't iner'sted in
what ya got'ta say. But fer a drink
o' yer whiskey, we'll lissen'; I
reckon it mus' have sumpin' ta do
with I ain't scared o' nobody and
I'd sooner shoot a man as look at
'im. 'Enny deal ya got fer me, ya
gotta cut Robert in on account I
gotta watch over 'im.

WILL

I got two partners, now, camped
outside o' town; one's been riding
with the Quantrill Gang. That bunch
is a fixin' to ride to Lawrence
next day or two an' shoot the place

up. I plan to follow along, pickin'
up strays and hittin' some o' the
merchants 'fore they know what's
happenin'. We split four ways on
account you an' him is together.

Abigail returns with the bottle of whiskey and three glasses.
Will throws a five dollar gold piece at her and it disappears
into her bosom.

WILL (CONT'D)
(looking at her)
Bet that's a real gold mine down
there.

ABIGAIL
Maybe ya'll find out sometime. But
take a bath first, you smell real
bad.

Abigail leaves and Will smiles as he fills the three glasses.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Some houses are smoldering. Everyone is grabbing what they
can from what's left of the fire. Some people roam about
aimlessly while some sit on the floor, all hope lost.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

There are more victims of the fire inside the church.
Everywhere is filled. There are injured people on makeshift
beds. Families are huddled into corners, protecting the
little bundles of what's left of their properties. Most of
them look tired and hopeless.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Will and his gang ride their horses into the street, they
slowly ride past the men who largely ignore them while others
watch them lazily. Loren rides south of the town while the
rest stop in front of a bank.

EXT. BANK - CONTINUOUS

Will and his gang all come down from their horses and mount

them in position for immediate escape once they come out from the bank. Will looks at Robert and nods at him, knowingly. Robert shakes his head.

Robert remains outside, watching the horses while Thomas, James, and Will enter the bank.

INT. BANK - DAY

The bank is scarcely filled and things look to be in some disarray.

JAMES

(loudly)

We be the Jones Gang and I'll shoot
any som'bitch gits in my way.

Will draws his pistol and goes directly to the teller cage. Thomas remains by the door, moving from side to side and watching the street. There's only one TELLER behind the teller counter.

WILL

(tosses canvas bag)

Everythin' in the bag.

WILL (CONT'D)

Make it fas' an' ya might jist live
ta see yor' wife an' kids a'gin.

James kicks in the small door separating the counter from the back room.

The BANK OWNER sits behind a large mahogany desk. He quickly raises his hands.

BANK OWNER

Please, please, don't shoot us.

They nearly cleaned us out two days
ago, what's left is in the safe and
it's open.

JAMES

Thanks fer tellin' me.

He spits and shoots the bank owner in the face. Blood and

brain matter splatter on the wall and the safe behind the desk.

WILL

Damn, why'd ya have ta go an' do
that, now the whole town'll know
somethin's wrong.
(throws bag to James)
Fill that sack from the safe an'
let's make tracks.

James faces Will whose gun is on the teller. His eyes are redhot and he stares intently at Will.

JAMES

Don't -- don't ever yell at me like
that a'gin.

He grabs the bag, opens the safe and dumps anything and everything into the bag; money and documents. He's about to leave when he's done, but he turns back and shoots the lifeless body on the ground.

Will and Thomas are out of the door first. James is out of the office and past the rail. He pauses at the door, turns back and shoots in the direction of the teller counter.

EXT. BANK - DAY

James steps outside and there's chaos everywhere. He sees Will and Thomas already gaining distance. Loren isn't too far behind. He takes the reins of his horse from Robert and jumps on it. Robert takes off and James follows him.

Men are on the street, shouting, doors and windows fly open and shots ring out from every corner. James struggles with securing the bag to the saddle-horn. He lets the bag hang temporarily and fires two shots from his pistol. The people in the street scream and the shots from the windows and doors, stop.

JAMES

Ride, ride, Robert, ride.

They gallop to catch up with Will, Thomas, and Loren.

EXT. TRAIL - DAY

Thomas, Loren, and Will slow down their horses, down an embankment and along a trail. They continue riding slowly, unspeaking, until James and Robert catch up to them.

LOREN

Heer'd all that shootin', thought
as how you'ens was maybe shotup
back there.

JAMES

Hell, fine bunch o' pardners
you'ens is; hell, me an' Robert
cudda' been kilt an' yu'n's never
wudda' even knowed it. Made me lose
the poke 'fore I even got mounted.

EXT. SLAVE CAMP - DUSK

The sun is going down when the group passes the middle of a slave camp. The SLAVES stare at them, quiet and intrigued.

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

The sun begins to rise when the sound of feet breaking twigs and horse shoes thumping the ground wakes up the five thieves. Will opens one eye and sees the police officer standing over him. He struggles to his feet and a gun is pointed at his head. The rest of his gang is awake and on their knees. The teller from the bank comes forward with U.S. MARSHALL CLEO BARNES.

TELLER

(points to James, Thomas, and Will)
This three where inside the bank.
(points to James)
He dispatched Mr. Friggs.

Cleo Barnes smiles at them.

INT. PRISON - DAY

There's an ongoing riot in the prison and the PRISON GUARDS are overwhelmed. Among the inmates beating up the guards and heading for the door are James, Thomas, Loren, Robert, and

Will.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

The group makes it out of the prison and runs out of the gate with about three dozen more prisoners.

SUPER: EIGHT YEARS LATER

Everyone of the escapees run in different directions, but the Jones Gang head west.

EXT. FOSTER'S BACKYARD/TOOLSHED - DAY

NATHAN FOSTER crouches inside the garden at the back of the house, lost in thought. Her gaze is fixed on a coyote peeking from behind shrubs some distance away.

She breaks her gaze and looks behind where her son, MANNY (6) red-haired, runs from the pen to the barn at the back of the house. He is playing with his dog, LOCKI.

Nathan pulls a sprout from the ground and pats it. She stands up and sees Manny hiding behind the bushes and Locki, whimpering. Nathan smiles and walks toward the house. She pauses at the toolshed and looks inside. Her husband, LEVI, is working on a blue metal on his Willch.

NATHAN

Time for dinner, Levi, time to get washed up. I'll have it on the table.

She pauses again as she is about to leave.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

And yell at Manny and GRANDPA BUDDY, will ya? They'll need to wash up too.

LEVI

Be right there.

Nathan starts walking away.

LEVI (CONT'D)

After we eat, I want you to see
this.

Levi peeps outside and sees Nathan shake her head as she
walks into the house.

Levi smiles.

LEVI (CONT'D)
(to himself)
She's probably holding her breath.

Levi pulls an old brass eye-piece from above the window. He
files it for a while before returning it. He dusts his
machine and leaves the toolshed. He walks toward the wash
house.

LEVI (CONT'D)
Grandpa, Manny, time for dinner.
Let's get washed up.

INT. FOSTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Nathan, Levi, and Manny are on the dining table when the door
opens and GRANDPA BUDDY walks in.

GRANDPA BUDDY
(muttering)
Better git a move on, 'else she'll
be a'tossin' my plate to the hogs.

He takes off his boots and walks as fast as he can to his
space on the table. He holds Manny's hand as Nathan is saying
the grace.

NATHAN
And Lord, bless this food to our
bodies, Amen.

ALL
Amen.

They start eating.

MANNY
Mom says she's gonna throw your

dinner to the hogs.
(giggling)
But she says I git your apple
dumplin.

NATHAN

Shush. I reckon Grandpa's just too
busy to git here to eat, or maybe
he just wanted to miss the sermon.

They all laugh.

Nathan stands up and dips a plate in the slum-gullion stew
she made. She carries the plate and places it in front of
grandpa. She pulls his head on her bosom.

NATHAN (CONT'D)

Grandpa, I love you. Now, you'ens
eat up that dinner so's I kin git
this place picked up and go see
what Pa's makin' me. Land sakes
alive, I can't even 'member; is it
my birthday already?

LEVI

Naw, it ain't nothing' like that.
Just somethin' I been a'workin' on
and I want you to come see it. Not
that you ain't worth somethin'
special, Nathan, you know that.
Anyways I got somethin' real
special for yer birthday, but that
ain't 'till spring so you got
plenty o' time to figger' it out.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Levi lies on his side as he watches Nathan wash the plates
and clean the kitchen. His eyes begin to dim and his vision
gets blurry. He wipes his face a couple of times but he dozes
off again.

Levi wakes up with a start, sitting up. He is woozy.

Nathan turns back and sees Levi rocking back and forth. She
runs to him, dropping the spoon and towel she's holding and

grabs his shoulder before he topples over.

LEVI
(wakes up)
I'm okay. I'm okay. Jest a little
dizzy spell.

He rubs his hands together.

LEVI (CONT'D)
Hand's asleep, need to move around
a bit.

He slowly stands up and walks slowly until he regains his
strength.

LEVI (CONT'D)
Now, what's that bear ya wanted me
ta skin!

As he nears the door, he stumbles forward and his shoulder
hits the door frame hard. Grandpa wears his boot and follows
Levi outside.