

SNAKE OIL!

EPISODE 1:

"AIN'T NO REST FOR THE WICKED"

Written by

Seth Taylor

BLACK SCREEN. The sound of CHOKING and LABORED BREATHING.

GRIEVES (V.O.)
I.. uhh... don't suppose we could
all talk this through?

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Your stereotypical old western boom town, that would not look a hair out of place in a John Ford movie. The townsfolk are all gathered around a makeshift gallows, murmuring in unison.

SUPER: "1877"

Strung up for all to see is MISTER GRIEVES (40s) a well dressed, silver haired (and tongued), man with a walrus mustache.

His accent is difficult to place, but it's not American.

He's guarded by the SHERIFF (40s) and the DEPUTY (30s).

Beside him is another poor bastard about to be hung, uncontrollably sobbing. This is ULYSSES (20s), a total dandy. Grievess turns towards him.

GRIEVES
Hey, ease up on the crocodile tears
old boy. It's giving me a bit of a
headache.

ULYSSES
Oh, piss off! This is all your
fault!

GRIEVES
All I did, was perform a simple
serv--

A rifle butt slams into Grievess's face. Blood splatters down his waistcoat.

DEPUTY
Can it, mountebank.

Grievess laughs.

GRIEVES
Sheriff, may I ask, did you send my
letter to the governor as per my
dying wish?

The Sheriff rolls his eyes.

SHERIFF

Yeah, I'm sure he'll be here any minute.

GRIEVES

Thank you sir, you're a real gentleman.

The Sheriff walks away. Grievess looks skyward. Nothing but clouds.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

(praying)

God, it's me again. Look, I know you and I haven't always been on the best of terms but I'd really appreciate it if--

Grievess looks directly TO CAMERA.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Ah greetings and salutations, I didn't see you all sitting there.

(beat)

Now, you're probably wondering how I got here.

Ulysses looks at him, hysterical

ULYSSES

Who or what the hell are you talking to Grievess?

Grievess nods his head towards camera.

GRIEVES

Why, them, the viewing audience. Can't you see them out there?

ULYSSES

See who?!

(beat)

Oh god. I've soiled myself! Are you happy now?

GRIEVES

(to camera)

Anyways, I guess I should start telling my story. Or maybe I should be calling it our story because it all started with my friend Ulysses here last Tuesday.

(MORE)

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

(thinking)

Or was it last Thursday?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Dead quiet. Peaceful almost. A distant coyote CALLS.
Tumbleweeds blow in the wind.

SUPER: "Last Tuesday or Thursday... Still 1877."

ULYSSES (V.O.)

"Penelope, I... Uhhh..."

EXT. GREY ESTATE - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Ulysses, leans on a fence post facing a gothic manor.

With a cigarette in one hand and a bouquet of wildflowers in the other, he holds a conversation with himself.

ULYSSES

"Penelope how radiant you look tonight beneath the moonlight. I've been meaning to tell you..."

(beat)

Fuck.

He tosses his cigarette on the ground, stamps it out, smooths down his hair, and sighs.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

He takes one step before seeing another GENTLEMAN CALLER with his own bouquet of wildflowers, approaching the house. This is ALGERNON (20s)

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Who are you?

ALGERNON

"Who am I?" Who are you?

ULYSSES

I'm Ulysses Farnaby, Penelope's lover.

ALGERNON

Pfft. That was last week. Now, I'm Penelope's lover.

ULYSSES
No, I'm her lover.

 ALGERNON
No, I'm--

Algernon points to the sky.

 ALGERNON (CONT'D)
Dear god, what's that behind you?!

Ulysses spins on his heels. Algernon kicks him in the groin, and shoves him into the bushes.

Then without a word, he walks over and knocks on the door. It opens and PENELOPE (20s) receives the fella.

Ulysses scampers up from the bushes.

 PENELOPE (O.S.)
Algernon! Come right on in!

Algernon turns, winks at him, and disappears inside. Ulysses spits out twigs, and throws down the flowers.

SLAM.

 ULYSSES
Cocksucking motherfucker!

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Ulysses stands on a bridge staring at a gold locket containing a picture of Penelope.

He tosses it into the water with a SPLASH and walks away.

Seconds later, he runs back INTO FRAME and dives into the water.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Ulysses, now sopping wet, cradles the golden locket.

 ULYSSES
God, I wish I understood women.

BOOM! An explosion rocks the forest.

 GRIEVES (O.S.)
 (wheezing)
Oh balls!

Ulysses moves towards the voice.

ULYSSES
Hello? Is anyone there?

EXT. GRIEVES'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Beside an oxblood colored wagon and a dying camp fire, Grieves and FRANCIS (30s) fan away purple smoke, both covered in what appears to be lavender paint.

Francis is yet another dandy, wearing a straw boater hat.

Notably, a large coffin lies upright against the trunk of a tree.

FRANCIS
Grieves, I have had just about
enough of this nonsense!

GRIEVES
My boy, you will never get anywhere
with that attitude. One must have
chaos within oneself to give birth
to a dancing star!

FRANCIS
Ah, shit on you AND your dancing
star.

Francis storms off, leaving Grieves by himself.

Striking a match on his boot, he lights up his pipe, before finally acknowledging Ulysses.

GRIEVES
And what ails *thee*, fisher king?

ULYSSES
If I may sir, who was that man?

GRIEVES
A man? Please men have minds of
their own. That fellow was a
parasite.
(beat)
Most people are other people. Their
thoughts are someone else's
opinions, their lives a mimicry,
their passions a quotation.

(beat)
(MORE)

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

But forgive me, where are my manners? I am Doctor Victor Grieves.

The two shake hands.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

And who might you be?

ULYSSES

Ulysses , I--

Grieves holds up a finger.

GRIEVES

Wait, don't tell me... You're a star-crossed lover... seeking a woman's favor?

ULYSSES

How did you know?

Grieves chuckles.

GRIEVES

You could say I have a sixth sense for that sort of thing. See, I'm in the love business.

ULYSSES

The love business?

GRIEVES

Agape? Philia? Eros The timeless art of seduction?

Ulysses smiles.

ULYSSES

If you mean talking to women, then yes!

GRIEVES

Well, as luck would have it I make up for the bits that god left out.

Ulysses looks stunned.

ULYSSES

Mister Grieves--

GRIEVES

Doctor Grieves.

ULYSSES

Doctor Grieves, I have a girl in town and she is just the divine feminine incarnate... She used to be sweet on me, but now--

He trails off. No words come.

GRIEVES

The initial infatuation is gone?

ULYSSES

Yeah, you could say that.

Grieves takes a step closer to the young man and examines his face.

GRIEVES

Well, you're not ugly. I always say it's better to be beautiful than to be good. But of course it's better to be good than to be ugly.

ULYSSES

Wait, what?

GRIEVES

I may have something for you.

He turns, grabs his cane and raps on the coffin.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Brian! Stop pissing about, and get the hell out of there!

The coffin rumbles. Grieves points with the cane.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

(to Ulysses)

You might wanna stand back.

He does so. The coffin rumbles again before BOOM!

The lid flies off as black smoke billows out from within, two pale hands emerge from the darkness and grip the sides of the box.

For a moment, nothing happens.

A tall man, steps out of the coffin. This is BRIAN (40s), who despite his appearance, is unremarkable.

Ulysses falls to his knees.

ULYSSES

Oh god, a creature of the night!
Please don't eat me!

Brian cracks his neck and yawns.

BRIAN

(to Grieves)
What's his deal?

Grieves puts his hand on Ulysses shoulder.

GRIEVES

At the moment, just lovesick.
(beat)
Brian, do be a dear and fetch him
that love potion?

BRIAN

Love potion?

Grieves waggles his eyebrows at him.

GRIEVES

You know, the love potion.

Brian finally gets it.

BRIAN

Oh, right. The love potion.

Brian digs around in the back of the wagon where there are many vials, flasks, bottles, and boxes. Ulysses stands up.

ULYSSES

You mean, he's not gonna suck my
blood?

GRIEVES

(sotto)
Please, he only thinks he's a
vampire... He's an escaped mental
patient. Total waste of oxygen.

BRIAN

You say something?

GRIEVES

(to Brian)
I said you're doing a great job!

Brian pulls out a vial with a bright yellow liquid inside. He hands it to Ulysses.

Ulysses looks down at the vial. It has a crude illustration of a rodent haphazardly plastered on its center.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Now, the only problem I can detect that might cause a lover to recoil from you Eustace-

ULYSSES

Ulysses.

GRIEVES

Right, that's what I said.

(beat)

Now, as I was saying. The only reason I could see that you might be rebuffed is your musk.

ULYSSES

My musk?

GRIEVES

Yes, your natural fragrance. But with these vole pheromones, she should be on you like stink on a primate, if you pardon the expression.

Ulysses takes the serum.

ULYSSES

Well, shucks I don't know how to thank you Doc!

GRIEVES

That'll be twenty-five dollars.

He holds out his hand.

ULYSSES

Oh, right.

He hands Grievs the money and smiles broadly.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Thanks a bunch Mister... sorry, Doctor Grievs! You won't regret this!

Ulysses runs away into the night as Grievs methodically counts the bills.

GRIEVES

Yes, yes, best of luck kid.

A beat. TAP-TAP-TAP. Grieves looks into the darkness to see A disfigured man dressed an an undertaker, limping towards him, cane in hand. His voice is an oily purr.

THE BURNED MAN

Victor Grieves. I see the rumors of your death are greatly exaggerated.

A wind blows the camp fire out, THUNDER RUMBLES, leaves fly in every direction.

Brian clears his throat.

BRIAN

I'll uhhh leave you two alone.

Brian backs away. Trembling.

GRIEVES

(startled)

Jesus Christ, do you always gotta sneak up on me like that?

THE BURNED MAN

Just part of the job, old man.

GRIEVES

Well, whaddy want? I'm very busy at the moment.

The Burned Man pulls out a pocket watch, clicks it open, and examines it with a milky white eye.

THE BURNED MAN

(emphasis on old man)

You're overdue on your last payment. Old. Man.

Grieves is rattled, he goes over to his wagon and grabs a bottle of whiskey, uncorks it, and takes a swig.

GRIEVES

I just need a little more time, okay? Then we can talk about your... payment.

The burned man snaps the watch shut.

THE BURNED MAN

Tick-tock, Grieves. Tick-tock.

He smiles revealing a mouth that's missing most of its teeth. Grieves shutters, as Burned Man tips his hat and wanders off into the darkness.

As if by magic, the camp fire relights itself.

EXT. GREY ESTATE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dressed in a fine suit and derby hat, Ulysses strolls up to the Grey Estate once more.

Penelope sits beneath a gazebo, beside her is her friend MARY (20s) as the two fan themselves from the summer heat. Our hero strides confidently up to her.

ULYSSES
Hello there, Penelope.

PENELOPE
Howdy mister do I know-

She sniffs the air.

ULYSSES
Ah, you noticed my new musk... I
can't blame you it's-

Penelope promptly vomits all over him, and runs away. Her friend covers her nose in disgust.

MARY
Oh that smells like horse jizzum!

ULYSSES
Well, no it's actually-

She too wretches violently. Ulysses just stands there.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Ulysses marches through the woods, still covered in Penelope's sick.

EXT. GRIEVES'S CAMPSITE - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Grieve shaves himself with a straight razor as he stares at his reflection in a mirror hung on a tree branch.

Brian is folding laundry beside a stream.

BRIAN
How much longer we gotta stick
around this--
(swats at a fly)
Place?

GRIEVES

Not much longer my gangly friend.
Just need a few bucks and we can
head out to St. Louis.

Brian swats another fly.

BRIAN

What's so great about St. Louis?
Why not Vienna? They loved us in
Paris!

Grieves pulls out a flier and hands it to Brian.

GRIEVES

What, were you born yesterday?
Don't you remember?

Brian looks down at the flyer. "THE WORLD'S FAIR 1877 IN ST. LOUIS." A smiling man with a top hat gives a thumbs up on the cover.

Grieves taps the paper with his finger.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

The World's Fair, Brian! Two
million people are expected to show
up! We sell a few inventions here,
a few elixirs there, and our debts
are paid off. No more riff raff!

FOOTSTEPS.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Speaking of the devil.

Grieves returns to shaving. Ulysses emerges from the brush.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Ah, Eugene my boy. How did it go
with the vole pheromones?
(sniffs)
Sweet Jesus, you smell awful.

ULYSSES

Yeah, all thanks to you!

He throws the vial of vole fragrance back to him.

Grieves catches it.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

I want my money back. Down to the
last red cent!

GRIEVES
You mean it didn't work?

ULYSSES
Course it didn't work! She threw up
all over me! Said I smell like
jizzums...
(beat)
Jizzums!

Grieves turns back to his mirror and continues shaving.

GRIEVES
I see... did you enter from the
east or the west? What time of day
was it?

ULYSSES
What? Why should that matter?

Grieves rinses his blade and wipes off his face with a pair
of long johns.

GRIEVES
(professorial)
Because the vole's secretions
behave differently depending on the
time of day. Now when did you make
your approach?

ULYSSES
I dunno. Midday?

Grieves throws the long johns down and turns back to Ulysses.

GRIEVES
Ah, see that's your problem. You
should've spoken to her in the late
evening. The pheromones hadn't
fully coagulated yet.

ULYSSES
How was I supposed to know that?

GRIEVES
Did you read the back of the
bottle?

A long beat. Ulysses looks down at his shoes.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)
Well?

ULYSSES

No.

GRIEVES

Mistakes were made. Not to worry,
Rome wasn't built in a day.

(snaps his fingers)

I got another idea! This one can't
miss!

ULYSSES

I dunno doc.

Grievess puts his arm around him.

GRIEVES

Shhhhhhh. Just trust me.

Brian sighs.

BRIAN

I'll get the jet pack.

'Tweedle Dee' by Lavern Baker plays.

MONTAGE OF FAIL

-Outside Penelope's house, Ulysses rides by on a penny-farthing bicycle as Penelope sits on her porch reading a book. He waves enthusiastically. She furrows an eyebrow. Promptly he hits a stone and catapults himself into the air.

-At a chalkboard Grievess is drawing up a new contraption while Ulysses stares in confusion.

-Wearing a massive trench coat, Ulysses sees Penelope and Mary watching him from the window of the house. He disrobes revealing a crudely made jet-pack. He pulls a rip chord and the device flies off into the sky, ripping his pants straight off his body, leaving him in his drawers. A passing cop raises his truncheon and chases Ulysses.

-Ulysses floats over Penelope's house in a hot air balloon, throwing handfuls of candy out. He gets too close to the open flame and it catches on fire. He screams in agony.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Ulysses walks through the woods, downtrodden. His hair is almost completely burned off.

ULYSSES
 Fucking fuck, I've put my faith in
 a madman.

 FRANCIS (O.S.)
 I'll say.

Ulysses turns.

 ULYSSES
 Who goes there?

A dark figure strikes a match, and lights his cigarette
 revealing... Francis.

 ULYSSES (CONT'D)
 Oh, you're that fellow from before.
 Well, what do you want? I have very
 important business to attend to.

 FRANCIS
 With *Doctor* Grieves?

 ULYSSES
 As a matter of fact, I do.

 FRANCIS
 Oh we all have business with
 Grieves.

He points over Ulysses's shoulder.

 FRANCIS (CONT'D)
 Over there, that's Mister. Harlan
 Vonnegut.

Harlan, another meaner looking dandy sits smoking a cigar.

 FRANCIS (CONT'D)
 Grieves told him he could help with
 a certain farmer's daughter.
 (beat)
 No dice.
 (beat)
 And over yonder.

Ulysses spins. Yet another dandy, who dresses eerily similar
 to himself.

 FRANCIS (CONT'D)
 That's Kurt Ellison. Another one of
 Grieves's victi-
 (beat)
 I mean, customers!

Ulysses puts his hands on his hips.

ULYSSES
What are you implying?

Francis unfurls a piece of paper from his coat, and hands it to Ulysses.

A wanted poster for a man named Victor Lustig, whose likeness bears a striking resemblance to Grieves.

FRANCIS
Seems it's high time we pay the
good doctor a house call.

The men gather around the poster.

ULYSSES
Lynch mob?

Francis holds up a noose.

FRANCIS
Lynch mob.

They all murmur in agreement.

EXT. GRIEVES'S CAMPSITE - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

The oxblood Wagon is gone, along with any trace of Grieves. The only thing left is a smoldering camp fire, beside it an empty bottle of Vole Pheromones.

The boys investigate the remains. Ulysses picks up the bottle, and flings it against the tree.

ULYSSES
Fiddlesticks!

FRANCIS
I'll catch that carpetbagger, even
if it takes the rest of my natural
life.

SHERIFF (V.O.)
Oh get to the point already!

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY (PRESENT)

The prisoners are still standing on the gallows awaiting execution.

But this time everyone in the crowd is intently listening to Grieves's story.

SHERIFF

You've spent the last five minutes
doing nothing but pontificate and
lallygag.

(beat)

That's it, I'm pulling the lever!

The Sheriff puts his hand on the lever, but the crowd jeer and boo at this decision. In the crowd is the familiar face of Penelope.

PENELOPE

Oh come on, at least let him finish
the story.

ULYSSES

Penelope?! You're here? Please,
tell them I'm innocent!

She shrugs.

PENELOPE

I don't really know you that well.

He gasps.

ULYSSES

How dare you!

Murmuring. A single baritone voice.

THE BURNED MAN (O.S.)

Please, tell us more.

Grieves looks up to see the Burned Man in the audience. The Sheriff lets go of the lever.

SHERIFF

Okay, fine! But this had better be
good!

Grieves clears his throat. The Burned Man's presence clearly rattles him.

GRIEVES

Uhhh yes, well, after skipping
town, my assistant Brian and I were
trying to hoof it to St. Louis.
Before-

He locks eyes with the Burned Man.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)
-Unsavory parties showed up.

EXT. NEW MEXICO, BADLANDS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

SUPER: New Mexico, De-Na-Zin Wilderness

The CLOP-CLOP-CLOP of Grieves's wagon. Nothing but white sand in every direction. Grieves fumbles with a map while Brian holds the reins.

BRIAN
So what's so great about a world's
fair anyhow?

Grieves folds the map, and puts it in his pocket.

GRIEVES
Brian, I'm going to tell you
something I don't reveal to most
people.
(pauses for dramatic
effect)
I didn't always want to scam
people. I wanted to invent things.

BRIAN
Oh yeah? Like what, a device that
sucks your own dick?

Grieves reaches into the back of the wagon.

GRIEVES
No, but I do have a patent for
that.

He finally puts out a small piece of paper with designs and crude sketches of some futuristic device.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)
Behold! The speaking telegraph!

BRIAN
Speaking telegraph?

GRIEVES
Yes, with this you can actually
hear the other person speaking from
afar, isn't that neato?

FWUMPH.

Grievess continues to study his own drawings. The wagon stops moving forward.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Brian?

Brian makes a noise that almost sounds like words. Grievess looks up to see an arrow shaft sticking out of his throat.

FWUMPH! Another arrow hits Brian in the stomach, and he falls off the wagon with a THUD.

GUNSHOTS.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Christ!

More arrows hit the wagon, missing Grievess by inches. He leaps off the wagon and crawls under it.

EXT. BENEATH THE WAGON - DAY (FLASHBACK)

GRIEVES

(praying)

Well, God, I know you don't really approve of my life style choices... especially after that night in New Orleans, but if you could find it in your heart to-

Horses appear on all sides of the wagon. The riders dismount, Grievess can only see pairs of weathered cowboy boots with spurs.

The feet approach. Whoever is out there, there's a lot of them.

CLEMENS (O.S.)

Alright, come out with your hands up or prepare to get winged.

GRIEVES

Now, now, there's no need for that! I'll be with you in just a minute!

Grievess does the sign of the cross across his chest, and crawls out.

EXT. NEW MEXICO, BADLANDS - DAY

Grievess, now covered in dust rises to see a band of scalp hunters straight out of a Cormac McCarthy novel.

There are nineteen in total, but only three are worth mentioning.

In the center of the crowd is a tall, hairless, man, in a wide brimmed hat. This is THE MAGISTRATE (50s).

Beside him is a mustached desperado, this is CLEMENS (40s), the leader of the gang.

On the other side of the Magistrate is a man dressed all in motley. This is HARLEQUIN (40s).

Grieves swallows, he looks downward to see Brian bleeding to death at his feet.

BRIAN

Victor, don't worry about me. I'll transform into a bat and escape.

GRIEVES

Yeah, about that... look there's no easy way to say this, but you're not a vampire.

BRIAN

What? Of course I am. I'll transform right now. Watch me.

Brian writhes on the ground, attempting to transform into a bat but nothing happens.

BANG!

Clemens shoots him in the chest.

GRIEVES

Sweet Jesus!

Brian goes limp. Grieves laughs nervously.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, is this display of violence really necessary I'm simply a merchant selling-

They all cock their guns and aim down at him.

The Magistrate dismounts and approaches Grieves, he towers over the little man.

THE MAGISTRATE

What a grotesque homunculus you are.

(MORE)

THE MAGISTRATE (CONT'D)

(beat)
Who are you?

Grieves furrows his brow.

GRIEVES
I'm sorry, grotesque what now?

THE MAGISTRATE
I said, who are you?

GRIEVES
Well, as I was saying, I'm just a
traveling merchant. There's really
no need to shoot me the way you...
(beat)
Y'know the way you did to my friend
Brian there.

Brian twitches. Clemens shoots him again. The Magistrate
smiles down at Grieves.

THE MAGISTRATE
A merchant you say? And pray tell,
what do you sell?

Grieves shuffles and puts his hands in his pockets. One wrong
word and he'll have a bullet hole where his nose used to be.

GRIEVES
Just various home remedies and
elixirs, see I'm a doctor and-

Without a word the Magistrate picks up a bottle from the
ground and stares down at it.

THE MAGISTRATE
You're a snake oil salesman,
peddling his wares of deceit and
deception in the marketplace of
credulity.

GRIEVES
Now, hold on, just one-

The Magistrate puts a hand on Grieves's throat.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)
(choking)
-minute.

He pulls away from the Magistrate.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Clearly I have done or said something to upset you fine gentlemen. But, if you release me you are entitled to all of my wares, including my most prized possession.

Grievess points at his head.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

My mind. Spare me, and I shall shall all of my secrets with you!

Clemens thinks on this.

CLEMENS

What kind of secrets?

Grievess swallows.

GRIEVES

Well, I know a good home remedy for gangrene.

Clemens points his pistol right at Grievess.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Moonshine! I can make moonshine! I have tons of it in the wagon and I can brew more!

(beat)

Assuming, I'm provided with the proper materials.

Clemens cocks the pistol.

CLEMENS

Go on.

A beat. Grievess steps onto his wagon, and pulls out a fine brownish powder.

GRIEVES

Opium, I have opium! Plus, I know how to make it!

CLEMENS

Good, good, anything else?

Grievess keeps pulling more and more out of his wagon, until he holds up a small photo.

GRIEVES

Photographs! Photographs of women
in various states of undress!
That's gotta be worth something!

Clemens strokes his chin.

CLEMENS

Okay, you're in the gang. Here's
your 'horse'.

They bring out a small donkey for Grieves to ride.

GRIEVES

Oh, it's rather small couldn't I
just keep my regular-

CLEMENS

Boys empty out his wagon.

Clemens grabs the photo from Grieves's hand.

GRIEVES

Ah, very well.

The boys start rummaging through his wagon, throwing bottles
and pans out the back of it.

Grieves takes one step but the Magistrate puts a hand on his
shoulder.

THE MAGISTRATE

Know this charlatan: I see through
your facade as clearly as a spider
discerns the vibrations of its
prey.

(beat)

Should you cross me, I shall
unravel all your schemes.

(beat)

And then your intestines...

Grieves pushes his hand off his shoulder.

GRIEVES

Has anyone ever told you, you smell
like fish.

(beat)

It's quit pungent actually, I'd get
that checked out.

The Doctor walks away, leading his donkey.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)
Might be a sign of hemorrhoids.

Grieves laughs, and goes up to Clemens who lights his pipe.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)
(to Clemens)
So what kind of operation do you
run here?
(beat)
I assume we steal from the rich and
give to the poor right? Sort of a
Robin Hood type situation.

Clemens smiles. Grieves does not.

CLEMENS
Guess you're about to find out Doc.

'Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive' by Bing Crosby PLAYS.

A blood curdling SCREAM.

EXT. BORDERTOWN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The Harlequin scalps a man in front of her husband as she screams herself hoarse. Suddenly her head explodes into red mist as a bullet hits her between the eyes.

Grieves stares in horror as the outlaws shoot, stab and scalp innocent people.

Clemens runs up and hands him a bloody knife.

CLEMENS
Come on Doc! Join in on the fun!
You haven't even gotten a single
scalp yet!

Clemens points at a little boy.

CLEMENS (CONT'D)
Look, there's one for you now!

Clemens is quickly distracted by a WOMAN running away. He chases after her.

CLEMENS (CONT'D)
Gotta go! Good luck!

Grieves stares down at the knife, then at the child. Promptly, he runs and throws up into a pig trough.

GRIEVES (V.O.)
I get the irony. I was no saint.
But these... people were pure evil!

SERIES OF SHOTS

-The boys set fire to the town.

-They scalp.

-They shoot innocents.

-They drink.

-They shoot.

-They scalp.

You get the idea. The music stops.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. SCALPER CAMP - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grievess sits around the campfire with the scalpers, while the Magistrate stands.

THE MAGISTRATE
In the vast absurdity of existence,
I find myself amused by human
behavior. Which brings me to the
topic of war.

Grievess groans.

GRIEVES
(sotto)
Oh here he goes again with war.

The Magistrate paces.

THE MAGISTRATE
You see war is the great equalizer,
reducing us to trembling, quivering
masses of flesh and bone.
(beat)
War my dear friends, is like a
relentless bout of dysentery. It
grips the bowels of humanity.
(beat)
(MORE)

THE MAGISTRATE (CONT'D)

And much like a particularly vindictive case of Montezuma's revenge, war spares neither innocent or guilty.

Grieves stands.

GRIEVES

That's great and all, but do we have to always be talking about war? Can't we just... I dunno ask each other how are day went? Harlequin how was your day?

HARLEQUIN

Raped, pillaged, and plundered.

GRIEVES

Okay, nothing to work with there.
(beat)
Uhhh, Clemens what did you do today?

CLEMENS

Pillage, scalp... mostly rape.

GRIEVES

Alright, I'm starting to see an inherent problem with this.

HARLEQUIN

Hey ass bandit, why don't you fetch us some of that homemade moonshine instead.

The boys hoot and holler, shooting their guns into the air.

GRIEVES

Yeah, sure. Sounds good. I don't care for the ass bandit comment but whatever.

THE MAGISTRATE

Now as I was saying, war is like a sea serpent coiling around the throat of mankind-

Grieves walks away to his Wagon.

EXT. WAGON - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Away from the camp Grieves looks at his now busted up wagon. It now has crudely drawn cocks all over it. Grieves sighs, and enters it from the back.

INT. WAGON - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grieves lights a lamp overhead, illuminating the interior. Various tchotchkes fill the wagon, including a few shrunken heads. Grieves fumbles around with bottles, but drops one.

GRIEVES

(sotto)

Son of a bitch.

He picks it up, in the dim light he reads the label: Vole Secretions. Grieves smiles.

'Tweedle Dee' by Lavern Baker plays.

EXT. SCALPER CAMP - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grieves returns with a handful of bottles under one arm, and what looks like a steel torpedo in the other.

CLEMENS

Finally, give em here doc! Hey, what's that thing in your hand?

GRIEVES

Oh this? Don't worry about it. Everyone drink up, this is a 'very' special brand of moonshine.

(beat)

Has a real kick to it.

Everyone hoots and hollers again as Grieves hands out the 'moonshine'. The Magistrate looks down at the bottle.

The boys all chug what they think is alcohol. Grieves smiles mischievously.

Clemens stands on an apple box.

CLEMENS

I propose a toast, to the fine Doctor Grieves!

They all clap.

CLEMENS (CONT'D)

Though he may be queer as a three dollar bill, and his feminine mannerisms betray his alternate life style. He is now truly one of-

Clemens twitches.

CLEMENS (CONT'D)

One of-

GRIEVES

Oh you were saying?

The boys groan.

CLEMENS

Man, I don't feel so-

Without another word Clemens wretches BLOOD onto the ground, and falls over twitching. All the outlaws begin violently vomiting and shitting.

Grieves pulls out a pocket watch and checks it.

GRIEVES

Well, it's been a lovely time boys but I think it's high time I hit the road.

(beat)

The next few days are gonna be loads of fun for you! Honestly, I envy you! I've never shit out all my internal organs before, but it sounds interesting!

Grieves walks away, doing a little Elliot Gould dance as he exits. The music stops.

EXT. WAGON - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grieves leisurely strolls to his wagon, whistling a jaunty tune. He opens the door to his carriage, and...

Standing in the doorway is the Magistrate, pistol in hand.

GRIEVES

Ah, hey... you.

(beat)

You know I actually never caught your name?

THE MAGISTRATE

You really think I was dumb enough
to fall for your ruse?

GRIEVES

Well, I mean frankly... yes?

He clicks the hammer back.

THE MAGISTRATE

But before I end your life, I have
to ask. What is that thing you're
holding?

GRIEVES

Oh this? It's a makeshift jetpack.

THE MAGISTRATE

A what?

Grievess flicks a switch on the jetpack and...

FWOOSH!

The rocket surges forward, impaling the Magistrate, causing
his pistol to clatter to the ground in front of Grievess. The
Magistrate coughs up blood.

THE MAGISTRATE (CONT'D)

Ah, the sweet release of oblivion
beckons, like a siren's call. But
my laughter shall echo throughout
eternity when-

Grievess picks up the revolver.

GRIEVES

Oh shut the fuck up!

He empties all six chambers into the Magistrate's pale face.
Grievess flings the pistol down.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Pretentious bitch.

The Doctor spits and walks away.

EXT. NEW MEXICO, BADLANDS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grievess drives his wagon through the desert, now being led by
the donkey.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY (PRESENT)

Everyone stares up at Grieves, who's still hanging there.

SHERIFF

What are you talking about? That didn't explain anything!

The crowd jeers.

PENELOPE

Yeah, I'm still kinda lost. If you escaped how did you end up back here?

A throat clears. Everyone turns towards Ulysses.

ULYSSES

I believe I can finish that part of the story... you see-

EXT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grieves sits in a small wooden tub, with a washcloth over his eyes. CLICK.

Grieves pulls the washcloth off to see Ulysses standing over him with a drawn pistol.

GRIEVES

Ah, Eugene. Fancy seeing you here!

ULYSSES

My name is Ulysses you dumb son of a bitch!

Grieves snaps his fingers.

GRIEVES

That was it. My apologies. How are things going with what's her name?

ULYSSES

Cut the crap, you charlatan! I finally have you, right where I want you.

(beat)

I can't believe you were dumb enough to come back to town after what you did.

GRIEVES

Well, the room service here is just divine. You know, all of this comes free with the room? Plus you get these quaint little rubber duckies.

He holds up a rubber ducky.

ULYSSES

Any last words?

Grievs squeezes the rubber ducky, shooting water all over Ulysses, causing him to drop the gun.

Without missing a beat, Grievs jumps out of the tub, grabs a towel and runs through the doors.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Grievs sprints, through a crowd of townsfolk, still wearing nothing but the towel as Ulysses chases after him firing madly.

ULYSSES

Get back here! I will have my revenge!

One of the bullets flies over Grievs's head and hits a little old lady directly in the head. Spraying blood all over the throng of people. Everyone freezes.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)

Oh shit.

A woman screams.

DEPUTY (O.S.)

Hands up! Nobody move!

Everyone turns to see the Deputy on his horse, a shotgun pointed at Grievs and Ulysses. They put their hands up, and Grievs's towel falls to the ground.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY (PRESENT)

Finally, finally, it's over.

SHERIFF

(sarcastic)

Wow, wonderful. Glad we all took half an hour out of our day for that.

The Deputy places his hand on the level.

GRIEVES

Wait!

Everyone groans.

SHERIFF

What now?

GRIEVES

Look, I know I'm not a do-gooder...
but I've done good!

Ulysses turns.

ULYSSES

He conned me out of seventy two
dollars!

GRIEVES

Hey, but come on... Penelope would
you honestly have gone out with him
under ANY circumstance?

Penelope sucks in air between her teeth.

PENELOPE

Honestly. No.
(to Ulysses)
Sorry, it's true.

ULYSSES

Fucking bitch!

Everyone breaks into shouting.

GRIEVES

Look, people. I understand why
you're angry with me. I make a
living off selling people easy
solutions, get-rich-quick schemes,
and contraptions that... sometimes
work, though often not as intended.

The crowd murmurs in agreement. A lush instrumental version
of "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL" plays.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

But isn't that what America is
about? Creativity? Ingenuity?
Overcoming adversity? Second
chances?

A man in the audience wipes away tears.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

So if you've never taken the easy road, tried to make a quick buck, or been chased out of England for sexual deviancy-

PENELOPE

Wait, what?

GRIEVES

Then by all means hang me!

The music STOPS. Pigeons COO. The crowd stares at him.

DEPUTY

He makes a good point, Sheriff. I mean, I cheat on my tax returns constantly. Should I be hung?

SHERIFF

Jesus, gimme that thing!

The Sheriff grabs the lever.

GOVERNOR NILBOG (O.S.)

Hold it!

SHERIFF

Goddamn it what now?

The crowd turns to see a handsome man in a top hat and three piece suit standing beside a horse drawn carriage. This is GOVERNOR NILBOG.

Beside him is Algernon, the handsome dandy from earlier.

GOVERNOR NILBOG

Let that man go.

GRIEVES

Fucking finally.

The crowd gasps. Penelope runs forward and throws her arms around Algernon.

PENELOPE

Algernon!

ALGERNON

Sweetling!

They open mouth kiss. It's really gratuitous.

SHERIFF

Governor Nilbog! W-wh-what are you doing here?

The Governor steps forward and holds up a document.

GOVERNOR NILBOG

That man is under my diplomatic protection, and I order you to let him go.

SHERIFF

But, Governor Nilbog, this man... this man is a con artist!

GOVERNOR NILBOG

Pfft. That's no con artist, that's Doctor Victor Grieves, Europe's foremost expert on love!

SHERIFF

Love?

GOVERNOR NILBOG

Yes, agape, philia, eros? The timeless art of seduction?

(points at Algernon)

He helped my son Algernon get engaged to his fiancé Penelope!

The crowd gasps again.

ALGERNON

You weren't supposed to say that out loud father!

PENELOPE

Algernon, how could you?

ULYSSES

(re: Grieves)

What the fuck! I thought you were helping me woo Penelope?

GRIEVES

My dear boy, I was simply... leveling the playing field. Let's see, I believe it was last Saturday or Sunday.

The Sheriff waves his arms frantically

SHERIFF

Oh no, don't start agai--

EXT. GRIEVES'S CAMPSITE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

SUPER: "Last Saturday or Sunday"

Algernon stands holding a mysterious green vial, as the Doctor rubs his hands together. Brian is playing with a ball and paddle in the corner.

ALGERNON

Now, you're sure this will work? I thought I heard you say vole pheromones were the way to go.

GRIEVES

That's just what I tell my... less affluent customers.

(beat)

But since you're a part of my platinum members club, you get the premium stuff.

Grievess points at the label.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

These are the finest fragrances made from pure ambergris.

ALGERNON

Ambergris?

GRIEVES

Yes, it's from sperm whales. It's harvested by massaging the glands behind the--

ALGERNON

I don't need all the gory details.

He hands him a stack of cash. The Doctor counts it as Algernon walks away.

ALGERNON (CONT'D)

If there's anything my family can do for you...

(beat)

Don't hesitate to ask.

The two smile at each other.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY (PRESENT)

Everyone is stunned.

GRIEVES

Well, you heard the man. Untie me.

SHERIFF

Son of a bitch.

Grievess exhales in relief.

ULYSSES

Wait, do I get a pardon too?

SHERIFF

No! We got everyone together we got the catering in place, we gotta hang somebody! And you shot an innocent lady point-blank in the face!

GRIEVES

(to Ulysses)

Better luck next time, eh old chap?

The Deputy goes over to Grievess and cuts away at his bonds with a knife.

DEPUTY

Hey, I don't suppose you could score me some of that ambergris, the wife and I... Well, we been having problems in the bedroom.

GRIEVES

Yeah, sure, whatever. Just get these off of-

The Deputy's face bursts, covering Grievess in blood. Penelope screams.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ!

He wipes the blood off of his face. The Deputy's body slumps over.

Brian rides forward on a donkey, holding the biggest hunting rifle you've ever seen. His face and body are covered in BLOODY BANDAGES.

The crowd screams as all hell breaks loose.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

Brian?! What the fuck? I thought you were dead!

BRIAN

No, Victor, I used my vampiric magic to heal the wounds! Only a stake to the heart can kill me!

GRIEVES

For the last time, you're not a vampire!

The crowd tumult makes it hard to hear.

BRIAN

What? I didn't catch that!

GRIEVES

I said, you're not a vampire!

BRIAN

But I used my healing powers! Look, I'm all better now!

GRIEVES

Honestly, you look far worse. I'd get those wounds examined by a doctor. An actual doctor.

(beat)

Also, why did you have to shoot the deputy? They gave me a full pardon!

BRIAN

Oh, I guess I just saw you were about to be hung, and y'know... kinda assumed-

The Sheriff pulls out a gun and SHOTS at Brian.

SHERIFF

Seize him!

'AIN'T NO REST FOR THE WICKED' by Cage The Elephant PLAYS.

GRIEVES

Never mind that! Quickly! Brian! Quickly!

Grievs takes the noose off, kicks the Sheriff in the dick, causing him to tumble off the gallows.

GRIEVES (CONT'D)
 (to Ulysses)
 Best of luck, pal.

ULYSSES
 Grieves, no, cut me down too!
 Grieves!

Grieves takes a running jump onto the back of the donkey, landing on its back.

Brian kicks his heels and the two ride away as bullets WHIZ past their ears.

ULYSSES (CONT'D)
 I'll get you Grieves you son of a bitch!

Penelope taps Algernon on the shoulder. He turns, and she slugs him.

PENELOPE
 That's for trying to woo me using ambergris!

Governor Nilbog turns and punches her in turn.

GOVERNOR NILBOG
 Nobody strikes my son!

A brawl breaks out. Grieves looks back and sees the Burned Man, who waves at him.

THE BURNED MAN
 Till next time.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Still on horseback... even though it's technically a donkey, Grieves speaks TO CAMERA.

GRIEVES
 (to Camera)
 Well, that's just another day in the life of Victor Grieves, folk hero of the old west! Join us next episode when--

BRIAN
 I wouldn't say folk hero.

GRIEVES
 What do you mean?

BRIAN

Well, for starters, you conned innocent people out of their money.

GRIEVES

Yes but I also stopped a gang of murderous bandits!

BRIAN

Yeah but only after standing by while they massacred a village.

GRIEVES

I was overcome with... the horror!
The horror of humanity, Brian!
Anyways, where the fuck were you when I needed you?

BRIAN

Oh saving your life isn't enough, I have to be on call? Well, excuse me that I can't fix all your problems like I'm not your fucking mother. How about "Hey Brian, thanks for saving my neck back there."

GRIEVES (CONT'D)

They were horrible Brian. I had to use the jetpack to murder their leader, I got blood all over my best slacks, you have no idea what I've been through. And save my neck? They were gonna pardon me, you... you fucking fruitcake, you sick fruitcake.

The two continue arguing into the sunset. AIN'T NO REST FOR THE WICKED CONTINUES.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE