

EXT. FARRIS INN - NIGHT

Along a forest road sits an inn for travelers, now dark in the night.

The DAUGHTER of John Farris saddles a horse by the light of a lantern. She is apprehensive. A twig snaps and both she and the horse are startled. Her eyes search the shadows nearby. She continues her task.

The camera moves from her through a window into the inn.

INT. FARRIS INN

THOMAS LANGFORD is putting on his long coat. He is approached by JOHN FARRIS, the inn's owner.

JOHN FARRIS

I implore you Mr. Langford, to reconsider. All but a god-fearing man would be tempted to robbery upon finding such a well to do gentleman alone on the wilderness trace at night.

LANGFORD

I must make haste, sir, if I am to meet my associate at the predetermined time.

FARRIS

To live to meet with your associate at all, Mr. Langford, you should await other travelers and join company with them.

(beat)

Please do not travel alone.

Langford considers his words and then shakes his head.

JOHN FARRIS

Then at least await the light of day, remain here until morning.

The door opens and the daughter comes in. She appears to have heard part of this conversation, looking upon Langford with a similar concern.

FARRIS' DAUGHTER

I have a bad feeling about your leaving now, sir. It is foolhardy. Please, listen to my father and delay until morning.

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Langford checks his watch, then removes his coat.

LANGFORD

(says firmly)

As you wish. But I will depart at first light and will postpone no longer.

FARRIS

(to Daughter)

Put Mr. Langford's horse away safe.

DAUGHTER

Gladly father.

She goes as Langford reluctantly hands his quote back to John to be safely stowed away for now.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. FARRIS INN - EARLY MORNING

Langford steps out into the first light of day. His horse is once again packed and ready for travel. He breathes in the morning and starts to light his pipe. At a voice distracts him before as the flame does catch. It is a female voice singing an old English

Down the road, he looks to see where the voice comes from. Approaching on the road is BIG HARPE leading between and leading two mules. LITTLE HARPE and SALLY are sharing one mule and SUSAN HARPE and BETSY HARPE are the other.

They appear disheveled and dressed in tatty native style buckskins and Moccasins. It is Sally who sings and her song comes to a convenient stop as they draw within yards of Langford, who finishes the lighting of his pipe.

BIG HARPE
May we have our mules water?

LANGFORD

I am not the proprietor of this establishment but... I do believe the water is welcome to all who come and go.

Big Harpe nods his appreciation then lifts Susan and Betsy down from the mule.

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