

LANGFORD

(to Sally)

You have a delightful voice, ma'am.

Little Harpe dismounts and takes down Sally.

SALLY

It's nice of you to say so, mister.

LANGFORD

Thomas Langford, ma'am.

Big leads both mules away as Farris comes out the door to see these new visitors.

LANGFORD

They've stopped for water. With your permission of course.

Big glances back and there's the slightest sign of hidden menace in him.

FARRIS

Yes, by all means.

(he studies the state of Harpes)

Those boiled eggs should be just about done, Mr. Langford, if you're ready for them? I cooked up some extras, for you to take on the road with you too.

LANGFORD

Yes, thank you. But then I really must be on my way. I'll be along momentarily.

Langford holds up his tobacco pipe to indicate that he hasn't finished smoking it. Farris nods, still apprehensive, and goes back inside.

SALLY

Can we get some eggs too? I'm famished.

Little acknowledges her with a smile and a wink before answering loudly.

LITTLE HARPE

And pay with what? No. You'll have to wait.

Langford eavesdrops on this interaction. Big re-joins them.

(CONTINUED)

BIG HARPE

I'll kill us something along the trail. We'll eat then.

Big and Little glance at Langford then secretly exchange malicious smiles. Susan holds her baby bump in both hands.

SUSAN

How am I supposed to grow this thing if I ain't even eating enough for one, let alone the two of us?

BETSEY

We only got the one meal yesterday. I'm starving. And if I'm starving, then this baby is starving too.

Big looks from one woman to the other like a dog about to strike.

BIG HARPE

I said we'll eat later. And we will.

The women fall silent and sit dejected on the boardwalk.

Langford finishes his last puff and approaches Little.

LANGFORD

Please excuse my boldness, sir, but I couldn't help in overhearing your predicament. May I invite you all to join me for breakfast, as my guests. If you are agreeable? We have all fallen on hard times at one point or another in our lives and there's no shame in accepting a helping hand from those more fortunate when one is offered. It would be my pleasure, sir, please.

Little steps forward and stands face to face with Langford.

LITTLE HARPE

(threateningly)

Are you implying that I can't take care of my own family, mister?

LANGFORD

No. No. Not at all, sir. I'm merely a lonely traveler craving some company and some conversation, nothing more. And if I can help

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LANGFORD (cont'd)
some fine folk who've fallen upon
hard times in the process, well
that will make me happier still. I
intended no offense, sir. Please,
allow me this small indulgence,
join me?

LITTLE HARPE
I ain't in need of, nor do I accept
charity.

Big steps in front of Little, he speaks in a friendlier
tone.

BIG HARPE
What my brother is trying to say
Mr. Langford is, yes, we will
breakfast with you, but we will
earn that meal. We will do
something for you in return. I see
that you are traveling alone.

Big gestures to the saddled horse.

BIG HARPE
Perhaps we could accompany you and
provide escort for you? Which way
are you headed?

Langford appears excited, moved by this offer.

LANGFORD
Toward Crab Orchard.

BIG HARPE
As are we. So, Mr. Langford, here's
what's going to happen. We will
partake of your very generous
hospitality and then by way of
recompense we will travel to Crab
Orchard with you. My brother and I
ensuring safe passage for us all.

Big taps the tomahawk on his belt. Little reveals his
musket.

BIG HARPE
As loyalist soldiers, we both did
our fair share of fighting and
killing when it was required. It
would be an ill-fated decision for
any highwaymen that may choose to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BIG HARPE (cont'd)
accost us along this wilderness
road.

LANGFORD
(smiling)
Gentlemen, we have an agreement.

Langford proffers his hand and Big and Little each shake it
in turn.

LANGFORD
Now, let us fill our bellies.
(to Betsey with his hand
offered)
May I?

Langford assists Betsey to her feet then leads them all
inside.

INT. FARRIS INN

As they enter:

LANGFORD
(to Farris)
Would you be so kind as to see if you
have a surplus of eggs that you
could spare for me? For my new friends
and traveling companions will no
longer be traveling unaccompanied
and you will be pleased to know.

Farris nods and retreats to the kitchen. The men pull two
tables together and place chairs around them.

SUSAN
If it's convenient you're after
Mr. Langford when you're
down right here.

Susan points to the seat between Farris and Sally.

SUSAN
You can talk the hind legs
out of a donkey.

LANGFORD
(to Little)
May I?