

~~BIG HARPE~~

~~Coffee?~~

~~MARY~~

~~I didn't hear Mr. Love leave.~~

~~LITTLE HARPE~~

~~He departed long ago.~~

~~The baby begins to cry.~~

~~BIG HARPE~~

~~Quieten that baby.~~

~~Mary takes her baby in her arms and the baby cries a little louder.~~

~~MARY~~

~~Shhhhh, shhhhh.~~

~~Mary cradles the baby in her arms and reaches for the handkerchief that lays on top of the sewing kit. She touches the hankerchief to the baby's lips, continues holding the baby in her arms and begins to pour water into a coffee pot.~~

~~Big Harpe walks to the open fireplace where the embers burn. He takes a bloody rag out of his pocket and holds it in front of the embers.~~

#### ~~CHAPTER IV: EXT. MOSES STEGALL'S HOME -- DAWN~~

~~We see the exterior of the home. We hear a blood curdling scream from Mary and through the window we see a ball of flame from inside the house.~~

**START**-----

#### **CHAPTER IV: EXT. MOSES STEGALL'S HOME - MORNING**

The remains of Stegall's home burns. Stegall kneels beside the half-burnt bodies of his wife and child, both lifeless. Also present are SQUIRE MCBEE (late 40's), SAMUEL LIEPER (20's), and JOHN WILLIAMS.

Stegall stands and walks toward his horse.

STEGALL

I'm not stopping 'til their dead.

SQUIRE MCBEE

Let the state take them.

(CONTINUED)

STEGALL  
Like hell I will.

JAMES TOMPKINS approaches on his horse.

STEGALL  
Saddle up, McBee.

SQUIRE MCBEE  
They'll kill us all!

STEGALL  
You're either with me or you're  
dead, McBee.

SQUIRE MCBEE  
Damn us all to hell!

Stegall mounts his horse.

STEGALL  
I can use all the fire power I can  
get but I get the kill. Both of  
'em.

Tompkins nods.

STEGALL  
Williams, you and Lieper, first  
mounts. Tompkins, take McBee and  
y'all cover either side. I've got  
our backs covered.

The posse take the path into the wilderness toward the  
Trace.

~~CHAPTER IV: EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY - MONTAGE~~

~~The men ride along a stream in the wilderness.~~

~~The men ride along the trace.~~

~~The men find the bodies of 2 men as they search the  
wilderness. Both bodies are gutted.~~

~~END MONTAGE.~~

~~CHAPTER IV: EXT. TRACE -- DAY~~

~~Lieper tops a hill at full speed and pulls the reins to take his shot. Lieper takes his shot but misses. Upon reload, Lieper discovers his ramrod stuck in its casing. Tompkins arrives.~~

~~TOMPKINS~~

~~Use mine. Its got his powder in it.  
Take him out.~~

~~Lieper takes the gun and spurs on his horse. At the top of the next hill, he stops again to take his shot. He hits Big Harpe square in the back.~~

~~Big Harpe lurches, one hand grabs the tomahawk and the other hand yanks the bridle causing the horse to buck and jump off the Trace and into the woods. Lieper and Tompkins follow.~~

~~CHAPTER IV: EXT. WILDERNESS -- DAY~~

~~Lieper and Tompkins approach Big Harpe as he lies on the ground, his horse nearby. Lieper takes Big Harpe's tomahawk from his hand. Tompkins grabs Big Harpe's shotgun from the saddle on the horse then stands beside Lieper looking down on Big Harpe.~~

~~LIEPER~~

~~He's still breathing.~~

~~TOMPKINS~~

~~Let's get him up on the horse.~~

~~The men pick up Big Harpe and lie him over his horse.~~

~~CHAPTER IV: EXT. WILDERNESS WATERFALL - DAY (CONT.)~~

~~Susan, Betsey and Sally sit on the ground with the babies. Tears stream down Susan's face.~~

~~STEGALL~~

~~Stop crying.~~

~~SUSAN~~

~~As long as there are men like you  
and them, it'll never end.~~

~~Stegall slaps Susan so hard across her face that she slumps over while grabbing her face.~~

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STEGALL

You're lucky to be alive.

SUSAN

I've been dead a long time.

Horses are heard as they rustle in from the thicket.

LIEPER

Stegall!

Stegall rushes to the men and approaches the horse Big Harpe is lying across. He pulls up the back of Harpe's head by the hair and stares into his face. Stegall suddenly grabs Harpe around the neck and yanks him to the ground. Once on the ground, he places the end of his foot under Harpe's body and flips him over onto his back.

STEGALL

(to Tompkins)

Set him up against that tree.

Tompkins drags Big Harpe and props him up against a nearby tree.

Williams rides in without Little Harpe but leading his horse.

WILLIAMS

He was like a ghost.

STEGALL

Imbecile!

Stegall takes his shotgun and puts the barrel of the gun between Big Harpe's eyes.

SQUIRE MCBEE

If he dies, let him die. If he lives, deliver him to Danville.

Big Harpe opens his eyes and looks up at Stegall. Stegall steadily holds the barrel of the gun on Big Harpe's forehead.

STEGALL

I'm not gonna kill him like this.  
I'm just getting his attention. I want you conscious when I take your head.

SQUIRE MCBEE

Haven't we seen enough?

McBee takes Big Harpe's shoe, walks to the river and fills it with water. Upon return, he holds Big Harpe's head back and gives him a drink. The water runs down Big Harpe's chin and into his mouth. He coughs then swallows some of the water.

~~BIG HARPE~~

~~The Lord put me on this path. In His words, evil shall slay the wicked and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate.~~

~~Stegall picks up Big Harpe's tomahawk.~~

~~BIG HARPE~~

~~I killed my own boy in a fit of rage. My only regret. He didn't deserve to die like that.~~

Stegall swiftly moves in on Big Harpe and cuts from the back of his neck. Big Harpe groans but continues to talk.

BIG HARPE

You're a goddamn rough butcher, but cut on and be damned.

Stegall cuts all the way around Big Harpe's neck, to the bone. He then rises and gets a bag out of the horse's satchel. He walks back to Big Harpe's body, puts the head in the bag and returns to his horse.

STEGALL

Anybody who's seeing this to the end, mount up. I'm going to get the other one.

Stegall, Lieper and Tompkins mount up and disappear into the forest.

**END**-----

~~CHAPTER IV: EXT. TRACE -- DAY~~

~~Stegall stands with the bag in front of a tree that splits at about 6 ft. from the ground. Lieper and Tompkins sit mounted on their horses. Stegall takes the head out of the bag and picks up a rock. He uses the rock to hammer a stake through Big Harpe's head into the area of the split in the tree.~~

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